

FREEDOM

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A GENERAL VIEW.

WHEN we cast a broad glance upon the history of mankind, we see one distinctive feature pervading it from the remotest antiquity up to our own times. On the one side there are the masses, toiling, labouring, creating wealth by the labour of their hands, and asking for nothing else but peace, liberty, and equality among themselves. And on the other side there is a minority, sometimes of foreign conquerors, and sometimes natives of the country itself, who continually aim at dominating the masses, at freely enjoying the fruits of their labour, and at rendering their own rule everlasting by means of Law and Force, by an appropriate education, and religious teachings. All the history of mankind is nothing but that struggle between the two hostile forces.

The pretext under which the rule of the minority is imposed upon the masses may vary to some extent in the course of centuries; but in fact it remains always the same, whatever the minor differences it assumes. Those who pretend to rule over the people maintain that the people are unable to protect themselves against foreign aggressors; that they are unable to keep internal peace; unable to organise themselves so as to permit to everybody the free exercise of his faculties; and that they—the minority of would-be rulers—are able to secure all this. If they restrain the liberty of the individual, it is only to give the fullest amount of liberty to society. And always through history, from its very dawn until now, we see that the minority of rulers do not keep their promise. They promise peace, and they bring war, external and internal. They promise liberty, and they bring oppression. They promise wealth and harmony, and they bring misery and disorder.

In olden times the baron arms gangs of soldiers—of robbers—in order to protect the labourer—from other gangs of robbers. "Till the ground in peace, we shall be on the watch," he says. But soon his gangs begin to oppress the labourers worse than the supposed foreign enemy. They plunder the peasant's house; they quarrel with one another. The peasant toils; he exhausts himself in labour to maintain the baron, his guests, and his soldiers—but he has no peace. His fields and his home are continually devastated; but he must put up with that rule, because he has no arms, and they are armed; he has no knowledge of warfare, and they have made warfare their speciality. He bears that oppression until finally he revolts—and we witness all over Europe the peasants' wars.

Later on, the king becomes his ruler. One of those robber-barons succeeds in overpowering the others, with the support of the masses. He promises to the peasant that he will prevent the barons from ruining the tiller of the soil by their continuous wars and exactions. Instead of the arbitrary and vexatious taxation by the barons, the king introduces a kind of uniform taxation for the benefit of the Crown, which enables him to levy and to drill an army, and to crush the rebel barons. He solemnly promises never to levy any taxes but those agreed upon by the Commons themselves. He grants full liberty to the cities, and within their walls we see wealth grow, trades develop, arts flourish. Supported by the towns and villages, the king succeeds in crushing the robber-barons who infest the country,—partly by force, but chiefly by money paid out of the pockets of the peasantry; and soon he becomes the supreme ruler of the country.

Does a time of prosperity soon follow? No; because the peasant and the city artisan soon feel the pressure of the new power. The king has never enough taxes, and he intrigues, he creates parties to bring the council of the Commons under his personal authority. Having an army at his disposal, he involves the country in wars, and the taxes steadily grow. He nominates officials, who are as vexatious as the barons of old. By and by he interferes with the internal affairs of the cities, creates parties within their walls, and under the pretext of protecting the poor against the rich, he breaks down their independence. After a few centuries of monarchy, peasant and citizen perceive that they are slaves again: slaves of the king and his court. Poverty and misery grow,—and a new revolt breaks out.

But revolt is already more difficult. The revolted peasants and artisans have to fight against a big army. They are opposed by thousands of men who have private interests that have grown up under the monarchy; they have to combat thousands of privileges, and also thousands of prejudices. To crush those forces they are bound to ally themselves with the growing middle classes against the court; and they have also to reckon with newly-developed prejudices. The king has not established his rule by brute force alone. Thou-

sands of lawyers, priests, and teachers have been busied for whole centuries in spreading ideas of submission to the royal authority, and bestowing on it the sanction of both science and divinity. Thousands of prejudices as to the benefits of that central authority have been nurtured by appropriate teachings and literature. And the revolution must be made in men's minds, as well as in the palace. Therefore, instead of making a revolution to liberate the masses, instead of reverting to the principles of freedom and decentralised organisation, a new central authority is created in the parliament.

The parliament begins with the fairest promises. Again, there will be no taxes but those freely agreed to by the nation. Like the king in the first days of monarchy, the middle-class representatives begin by promising peace, security of life, freedom. They will listen to the voice of the nation, and never legislate otherwise than in accordance with that voice. The interests of the labourer and workman will be their supreme rule. "Only obey the parliament better than you have obeyed the king, and all will be right." They have seen that force alone will not do, and they try to establish their reign on persuasion. They surround parliament with a kind of sacredness; by their books, their schools, their press, they try to convince the nation of the benefits of parliamentary rule. University and pulpit unite in supporting parliament. The political powers are more and more concentrated, and the political machinery becomes so intricate as to make people believe that only men of superior intelligence, guided by a Peel, a Palmerstone, a Beaconsfield, or a Gladstone, are capable of holding the rudder of the nation amidst "the tempests." All must be centralised in the hands of these saviours of the people.

But there comes a time when the masses begin to perceive that they have been cheated once again. The promised peace does not come; wars, and loans to pay their expenses, become a chronic disease. The parliament becomes a nest of intrigues. It does nothing, it can do nothing. The slightest reform, like the repeal of corn laws or Home Rule for Ireland, can be obtained only by open revolt. The rule of the middle classes has resulted in oppression as bad as that of the barons of old. Industry is ruined, agriculture is ruined, foreign trade is ruined; terrible industrial and commercial crises succeed one another, and there is no better outlook for the future. And while the rulers do their utmost to maintain their rule and enforce the ideas of respect for authority, the masses lose that respect, and perceive that the rule of the middle classes and parliamentary rule altogether cannot last. New schemes are discussed; the necessity of a new departure becomes universally felt.

But what will be that new departure? Will it be a fresh remodeling of the institutions of private property, centralised government, and representation? Will it be again a repetition of the errors committed when absolute monarchy was substituted for the rule of the barons, or the parliament for absolute monarchy? Or must it be really a new departure?

The time has come for a really new departure. It becomes generally understood among the workers that the real basis of all human organisation must be the equality of its members and their liberty to organise themselves according to their own needs. It becomes evident that political liberty is possible only where there is economical equality; that the labourer who tills the ground for the landlord never will be the political equal of the landlord, nor the factory worker the equal of his employer, nor the ruled the equal of the ruler.

It becomes evident that all the wealth which we see around us has not been created by those who now possess it, but has been appropriated by them owing to a vicious social organisation. And it becomes obvious that as long as all the affairs of the nation—education, industry, commerce, navigation, national defence—are left in the hands of a central government, there can be nothing but what we see now, a state of affairs which has become unbearable for the masses.

A new departure must be made in a new direction. Monarchy has centralised all the life of the nation in its hands, and parliament has merely continued what monarchy has begun. We must decentralise. Thousands of cities and villages have their own interests, and they are the best judges of those interests. As to the nation, it can be nothing but the free union of those independent units. The twenty-two independent republics of Switzerland (the centralisers call them cantons) are as well united together; they are as much one nation—even more of a nation—than the centralised monarchies and republics. And yet they are as independent as each of those monarchies. They only make contracts for the achievement of certain common aims.

But the Swiss republics are not united within themselves, because each of them has repeated on a smaller scale the errors of the big centralised kingdoms, and therefore we see within them also the growing tendency towards a return to the time when each commune was as independent as each of the little republics (cantons) is now; when the republic itself was but a federation of free communes.

But even supposing these political changes, unity within each commune will not exist as long as there are within that commune the rich possessor of wealth and the hired labourer. And therefore the next step must be—and will be—the common possession by the whole of the commune of all its wealth: houses and gardens, fields and streets, manufactories and railways.

Already now we may see municipalities in possession of beautiful public buildings, universities, theatres, gardens, libraries, gas-works, tramways, railways, grain elevators, farms, docks, and so on. For, being managed by the city instead of private individuals, they are none the worse. But all this wealth—theatres and universities, beautiful streets and gardens—remains for the use of the few; the bare-footed boy who falls into an exhausted sleep with a bundle of newspapers under his arm on the steps of a theatre has no possibility of sharing in the enjoyment of that theatre, or of the intellectual pleasures of the university. The street and its brilliant illumination are no joy for him. He is an outcast of society. And yet he is as well entitled to enjoy all that as the millionaire's son. And therefore the next step to be taken is that the city must add to its parks and theatres, to its schools and tramways, the manufactory and the dwelling house.

It must take possession of these, and, by organising labour on the principles of equality, it will abolish the distinction between the sons of the ex-outcast and the ex-millionaire. Both will work in the same workshop; both will cultivate the same garden, run the same tramway. They will be equal economically and politically. And then they will be free.

The nation of the future will be the federation of these free organisms, economically and politically free. Slaves cannot easily federate; free men can and do. And free communes, freely federated, will constitute a nation much more closely united than the nations which consist now of Rothschilds and paupers.

But, however limited its area, the commune must not repeat within itself the error of intrusting a few men with the management of all its affairs; it must not commit the error of creating municipal parliaments which will be as instrumental for the creation of privileges as the national parliament has been. It must organise itself on the principle of "no rulers."

NOTES.

This is the day of small things. Let us be glad that an audience of London workmen decline to listen to a lecture from the chief commissioner of police, even when that pious bully proposes, with the aid of dissolving views, to discourse on Palestine at an entertainment "for the benefit of the working classes." The row at the Oxford, and even the "conversation" in Trafalgar Square, are symptoms of a certain amount of vital energy in a handful of Londoners; and anything is better than lying prone in the dust for tyrants to trample us. If we raise our little finger it is at least a sign of life, and who can say when the whole body may follow.

It seems as though the Boulanger craze would die a natural death, despite all the stock-jobbers of the "bakery" (as "boulanger" means baker in French, so "boulangerie" is the street name for the followers and backers of the "big, big B"). The hero of French Revenge has obtained but a few hundred votes in Haute Savoie, a department of peasant proprietors of ancient Bonapartist leanings, and he has been defeated in the manufacturing district of Isère. Both losses are significant. Of the 170,000 votes in the Nord, announced with such a flourish of trumpets, 130,000 were those of Bonapartists and Royalists, who were obviously trotting out the general as a stalking horse for their own pet schemes of reaction. His other supporters were peasants who remembered the cheap purchase of communal lands under the last Empire, and workmen, sick of the middle-class Republic and the farce of representative government, who looked on Boulanger and his revision of the Constitution as a handy battering-ram to upset things as they are. An insane venture with an ambitious intriguer who avowedly sets Napoleon the Little before him as a model! But despair ties a close bandage over the eyes of hungry men.

Happily the noisy general, with all his ambition and hypocrisy, seems about as wise as the famous owl that sat all night in a tree and cried "Tuwhit, tuwhoot, tuwhee." He has been making overtures to all sections of revolutionists, but Nature in his negotiations has apparently denied him the ready wit of the ordinary Frenchman. A few days ago the Possibilists (Workman's Party) sent a worker much respected in his quarter, a Communard of '71, to interview the new saviour of society. The delegate enquired how it happened that this zealous friend of the people had taken part in shooting down Paris workmen after the Commune. "Oh," replied Boulanger, "I shot no Frenchmen. I only fired at the foreigners!" After this it is to be hoped that even the authority-loving Banquists will give up this Versailles hero as a revolutionary agent. Our Communist-Anarchist comrades and the French Socialists generally regard him with as much contempt and detestation as they do the middle-class Republic itself.

To make himself completely ridiculous the would-be dictator is about to imitate Louis Napoleon's example to the letter and dabble in popular literature. From the preface to his 'War of 1870,' just published, it appears likely that Boulanger's ill-wishers cannot do better than echo the malicious exclamation, "Oh that mine enemy would write a book." Copies of the work are to be distributed by the million!

The Roumanian peasants, like those of Russia and the Scotch Highlands, are suffering from insufficiency of land. They were emancipated from serfdom in 1864, three years after the Russian *Moujiks*, and, as in Russia, the "freed" villages were allotted too scanty a portion of arable land to allow each family a holding large enough to support its members; whilst the redemption taxes were fixed at a rate out of all proportion to the value of the produce each family could raise. After twenty-four years of meek submission as law-abiding citizens to the exactions of government and of the large landholders, the peasants have at last been reduced to such straits that they have taken matters into their own hands. Result of a week or two of open revolt: A wholesale distribution of maize to relieve their starvation, and a promise of double-sized holdings and a reduction of dues. How soon would even this have been obtained by Parliamentary agitation?

A correspondent of *La Révolté* remarks that in the present state of tension in European politics, the Roumanian peasant insurrection is a seriously significant omen. The revolutionary activities of 1830 and 1848 were both heralded by an outbreak in the Danubian provinces.

The late Matthew Arnold was no friend to Socialism. He figured as the apostle of the intellectual development of property monopolists, as a man who, when the children of the poor cry for bread, would offer them a handbook of classical literature. Nevertheless, his mind was far too keen to permit him to be really ignorant of the fierce elements of Social Revolution fermenting beneath the careless world of "Culture" and "Philistinism." Those who heard his speech at the unveiling in 1884 of the fresco outside Mr. Barnett's church at Whitechapel (the fresco is copied from Watt's painting of "Time, Death, and Judgment") will never forget the vibrating tones in which Arnold pronounced the judgment of time against "the prince of this world, which is the perpetual ideal of selfishly possessing and enjoying." "One world and another has gone to pieces because it was fashioned to the inspiration of this ideal, and that is a consoling and edifying thought. Above all, it is a consoling and edifying thought for those classes, which—in comparison with the great possessing and trading classes, which may be described as the fortunate classes—may be called the sacrificed classes." "Will the change come soon; will the renovation be in our own time? There are seasons, and this in which we live is perhaps one of them, when the crackings which we hear, and the swayings and the rockings which we see, and the signs and warnings on every side seem to say that the change cannot be very far off."

A FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF REASON-WORSHIP.

IN our last two articles we have summarised a somewhat unusual, and therefore unpopular, view of the great intellectual movement that, during the last three centuries, has gone hand-in-hand with the growth of the idea of private property and economic individualism. Thereby we have gravely scandalised certain devotees of reason-worship, who have mistaken our criticism of their superstition for an attack on human reason.

Now we Anarchists protest against the superstitious worship of anything whatever. We protest against an *exclusive* reverence for any one human function or faculty as a mental attitude unworthy of the dignity of man.

Human beings have continually displayed a curious inclination to adore themselves piecemeal. Everyone has heard of the sacredness of a Chinaman's pigtail; of the American Indians who attach such religious value to their back hair as not to cut it even when it trails on the ground, but rather carry it under their arms wound round a wooden block; of the divine strength that resided in Samson's flowing locks; of the Asiatics who hold their finger-nails in so much reverence as to let them grow into claws. Far more important is that widespread worship of the function of reproduction and all pertaining to it, to which we alluded in a previous article—a superstition so universal and deep seated that it has coloured language, art, and even modes of thought in civilised communities down to the present day.

These superstitions strike people now as simply absurd. They have outgrown them. They see them to be based on narrow, partial, one-sided, exaggerated, and therefore foolish and degrading views of human experience. But a similar exclusive reverence for special mental and moral attributes of mankind does not at first strike those who are living in the midst of it as an unworthy superstition or a social danger. And yet it is both.

Freethinkers will readily acknowledge the superstitious narrowness of the theological idea that man's body is vile, his will depraved, and his intellect a snare and a delusion, while his whole worth lies in certain moral qualities, to cultivate which he is not only to "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts," but to keep his intellect in

subjection, lest it should question the utility of ascetic virtue. Muscular and rationalistic Christians, on the other hand, will eagerly admit the one-sidedness, the inadequacy in face of the problems of existence, of mere logic and the exaltation of reason into the motive force and sole controller of human conduct; whilst practical materialists act and sometimes speak as if the sole desirable direction of human endeavor were to secure a superfluity of animal pleasures. It is rare to find deep and thorough recognition of the fact that the man is more than his moral faculties, more than his intellect, more than his physical needs and functions; that he is the unity of all these combined, and that in this "trinity in unity," to borrow an ancient form of words, "none is afore or after another, none is greater or less than another." That is, neither has a separate and distinct existence, or can safely be treated as a fact apart. Neither is entitled to overlordship and superior honours.

The whole tendency of recent enlightenment and modern thought leads up to the recognition of the unity of man as a fact of paramount importance in forming truer and juster theories of conduct and social relations: new principles and habits to take the place of that dying morality of the past which assumed the imaginary two-fold or three-fold nature of man as its starting-point.

But before looking into this question more closely, and especially its connection with that main fact of spontaneity to which we drew attention in our first article, let us cast a glance upon the great thought-movement the excesses of which we have dubbed Reason-worship. Let us briefly note the vast moral and intellectual deliverance wrought by the increase of mental activity and by the faith in man which it has aroused and stimulated.

First and foremost amongst the benefits of the rationalistic movement has been the restoration of that self-respect undermined and wellnigh overthrown by the degrading terrors of ignorance erected into a system by theological superstition.

The dread of the ill-understood and uncontrollable forces in the midst of which our consciousness wakes to self-knowledge is increased a thousand-fold whilst we suppose these forces to be the playthings of some capricious and incomprehensible will, or of a variety of beings of unknown powers and doubtful intentions. In face of such an idea the heroic enthusiasm of faith in the supremacy of goodness, which exclaims: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," is the exception, the cowardly grovelling of Browning's Caliban is the rule.

"He doth his worst in this our life,
Giving just respite lest we die through pain,
Saving last pain for worst—with which an end.
Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire
Is not to seem too happy. . . .
If He caught me here,
O'erheard this speech, and asked, 'What chucklest at?'
Would, to appease Him, cut a finger off,
Or of my three kid yearlings burn the best,
Or let the toothsome apples rot on tree."

The vague sense of our own real weakness, our deficiencies of social feeling, of knowledge, of brain power, our uneven flow of energy, our partial consciousness, the imperfection of our whole equipment for self-defence amidst the ceaseless action and reaction of inward and outward conditions, mingles with the phantoms of imagination to create an abject self-loathing and self-distrust, a frame of mind which has always proved an irresistible temptation to the desire to dominate in certain ambitious persons, and opened a wide door for the entrance of priestly authority.

But when the discovery is made that there is some sort of established order in the action of the forces of nature, when we realise that we can find out that order, can understand and conform to it, can use it, can even make it the servant of our conscious purpose, the whole situation is altered. The new knowledge restores our self-confidence, stimulates all our faculties, gives us courage, gives us hope. Instead of studying how best we may grovel in the dust, and, by morbid introspection and ruthless asceticism, mutilate our own nature to propitiate a divine tyrant, we stand erect, our whole intensity of purpose strained towards a mental grasp of the true conditions of existence, that by conformity thereto we may secure space and scope for the fullest self-development.

This mental attitude, as it spreads amongst the masses, slowly and steadily undermines the vital force of authority. It is fatal first, of course, to the authority of the priest, whose occupation of mediator and interpreter between gods and men it utterly destroys. But in the long run it becomes fatal to the authority of the "superior person" of every grade—scientist, legislator, administrator. Faith in reason has turned men's eyes from the heavens to their own selves. Inspiration, guidance, enlightenment, support, may—nay, as it seems daily more clear, *must*—be sought from within, from human nature itself, and not from any exterior power. And experience, as we study it more closely, reveals that this aid resides not in classes or groups or selected portions of the community, but must be sought and gathered by each for himself throughout the length and breadth of the association with his fellows possible to him, and from his own communion with extra-human nature. Men with special gifts or special opportunities may help us with their counsel, enlighten us with their experience, inspire us with their enthusiasm, comfort and strengthen us with their sympathy and love; but whence comes their warrant to bend our will to theirs, to form rigid and arbitrary rules for us, to control us and enforce our obedience to what their intelligence or moral sense commends as rightful, and ours condemns as erroneous? Such a claim can spring only from superior force; and our conquest of the secret of gigantic natural forces,

once deemed the despotic masters of human feebleness, has taught us to scorn all blind, unquestioning submission to sheer despotism.

"Why, slaves, 'tis in our power to hang ye!"
'Very likely;
'Tis in our power, then, to be hanged and scorn ye!"

The first victims who defy human authority are hanged, but they have struck the keynote of human dignity in face of arbitrary coercion. The next batch of "slaves" use their intellect to discover some method of escape (Parliamentary intriguing, may be). The third set their minds to the destruction of the office of hangman altogether.

And so gradually recognition is secured from the social feeling of the community of the claim of each full-grown and sane person to be freely acknowledged by his fellows sole judge and sovereign of himself.

In the more highly-developed races this claim is already (except under stress of special panics) conceded with regard to individual opinions. Its full acknowledgment in relation to conduct waits the overthrow of the existing despotism of private property. For freedom of action is impossible for all who have no access but at the will of others to the necessaries of life; and, of course, the monopolists are slow to admit in theory the right of their slaves to a freedom which would cut the ground from under the special privileges they have secured for themselves by much past ingenuity and hard fighting. And yet the very intellect, on the possession of a larger share of which their claim to monopoly is based, is slowly and surely preparing the way for its utter destruction.

(To be continued.)

FREEDOM DISCUSSION MEETINGS.

WE had a rough and ready sort of meeting on April 12, for the opener mistook the date and did not appear, and the notices were sent too late to *Justice* and the *Weal*. So Comrade Kropotkin opened the debate with some general remarks on voluntary association.

A common objection, he said, to Communist-Anarchism is that men are not yet good enough to organise themselves on a basis of perfect freedom, or to behave like social beings without government control. But in truth, authority in itself has a depressing influence, corrupting even good men, and already more of our social life is founded on voluntary association than we at all realise. If it is true that amongst the workers to-day there are many men who are as ready as any bourgeois to compete with their fellows and live on other people's labour, it is because they are the creatures of their conditions, because in our existing monopolist society they see that those who live by their own labour are miserable. But where the pressure of economic evils is not so sharply felt, we see, even under present conditions, much public-spirited voluntary co-operation.

Amongst several existing examples of this, comrade Kropotkin instanced the successful Life-boat Association, which allows particularly wide scope to individual and local initiative. The central committee do not even fix the make of the boats, and the labour of the crews is purely voluntary, though it involves tremendous exertion and is so perilous that, on an average, two men of each crew are drowned every year.

He also touched on the history of weather forecasts as an example of the possibility of free co-operation covering a wide and complex field of action. To obtain the necessary facts close and accurate observations must be continuously taken at the same time in a great number of widely distant places and carefully and regularly compared. A process requiring continuous and minute and conscientious accuracy and punctuality, and a complete understanding between people of various countries and nationalities, united only by this one interest in common. Have the present important results been obtained by a central parliament of scientists, armed with powers of coercion over their subordinates? No; by individual initiative and a series of free congresses. When Government has intervened, its officials and their red-tape have been the chief hinderances of the work. The main end served by official administration in general is to manufacture occupation for fresh officials and a further demand for red-tape.

As to the necessity for a central authority to start a new co-operative organisation after the Revolution, remember the post-office in the Paris Commune. When the Government called all its officials to Versailles, believing that that would bring all public business to a standstill, a sensible workman, with no official experience, called the letter-carriers and sorters together, consulted them and found that they were perfectly able to go on with their work without the supervision of any officials at all. Will it not be much the same in all departments of necessary social labour when workmen find themselves responsible for their own organisation? The way to get improvements in organisation is to leave the widest possible scope to individual initiative.

A brisk discussion followed, in which Blackwell, Sorell, Blundell, White, Chatterton and others took part. The general impression seemed to be that Social Democrats needed to clearly define their position and their own view of the differences between themselves and Communist-Anarchists, and it was agreed that after Dr. Merlino's paper "Is Anarchist Communism the logical outcome of Socialism?" on May 10th, Blackwell should reply at length on behalf of Social Democracy.

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.

SPAIN.

Hunger reigns in Andalusia. At Quersado the workmen are literally starving. At Sevilla they are demonstrating for the same reason, and the civic guard has been sent to preserve order and starvation amongst them. At Pedroso the same condition. At Loja people parade the streets demanding bread or work. At Linares the work is suspended in ten mines.

ROUMANIA.

In Roumania the peasants have revolted. They have marched through the country sacking and destroying barns and houses, attacking and punishing proprietors, agents, prefects, and fighting the troops. The militia, and even the regulars have shown an admirable disposition to fraternise with the people. The cause of the revolt, it is hardly necessary to say, is sheer misery. The condition of the recently freed Roumanian peasantry is recognised to be one of the most miserable. They live in huts made of straw and clay, having only one opening—the door—and a layer of reeds on the bare ground. Their daily meal, when they have one, consists of mamaliga, made of maize and water, a little cease, and sometimes some rotten fish. Milk, butter, and eggs are unknown to them. For four months in the year they are short of even the scanty fare above mentioned.

The peasants are still indebted to their proprietors for the redemption price of their land, and must besides pay rent for the pasture. A bad harvest and a bad winter, like the last, are enough to reduce them to the very verge of misery.

PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE.

'Chants of Labour: a Song Book of the People, with Music,' edited by Edward Carpenter, with a title-page drawn by Walter Crane, published by Swan Sonnenschein and Co., is a most useful addition to Socialist literature. There is a growing sense amongst energetic propagandists that the Cause suffers seriously from lack of the emotional element, of some efficient means of appeal to the feelings of the people. Several attempts have lately been made to introduce singing at Socialist meetings; but one great obstacle has always been the want of a suitable song-book. Comrade Carpenter, therefore, has rendered signal service by devoting his knowledge, taste, and poetic feeling to the collection of socialist and revolutionary verses and stirring or pathetic popular airs. Many fine old tunes have long been wedded to some ancient form of words, which nowadays has lost all gist and meaning. Several beautiful new lyrics and many rougher verses containing genuine poetic fervour have hitherto found no worthy or appropriate musical setting. Comrade Carpenter has set himself to supply both deficiencies, and with commendable success. "The book," as he writes in his preface, "is in no sense a merely 'literary' production—but emanates rather from the heart of the people." We warmly echo its editor's wish, "May it help to give voice to those who have so long been dumb!"

The Paris Communist-Anarchists have lately undertaken a propagandist campaign amongst the peasants of the country districts. They have just issued an earnest appeal 'From the Workers of the Towns to the Workers of the Country' (Les Travailleurs des Villes aux Travailleurs des Campagnes), pointing in the simplest terms to social revolution as the one means of deliverance alike for the half starved peasant proprietor, weighed down by mortgages and debts, and the propertyless artisan or factory hand, each being equally a victim of capitalist monopoly.

Comrade J. Sketchley, 8, Arthur Place, Birmingham, sends us two useful tracts written and published by himself. Price 3d. each. 'The Workman's Question' and 'The Irish Question' (2nd edition). Both supply many telling facts and figures illustrating the robbery and oppression of the workers by the ruling classes of landlords and capitalists in England and Ireland.

'The Chicago Martyrs: their Speeches in Court, with a Preface and an Extract from the Record prepared for the Supreme Court of Illinois.' (International Socialist Societies of London. Price 6d. Apply for copies to H. Reuter, 101, Albert Street, Camden Town, N.W.) The preface gives a brief and clear account of the circumstances connected with the famous Chicago trial. The extracts from official documents relating to the judicial proceedings are well selected to illustrate the prejudices of the jury, the perjury of the police and suborned witnesses, and the gross injustice of the verdict. The speeches of our murdered and imprisoned comrades are an admirable exposition of the economic and political beliefs of revolutionary Communist Anarchists.

'Was it a Fair Trial? An Appeal to the Governor of Illinois from General Trumbull on behalf of the condemned Anarchists,' is now published in pamphlet form, and can be obtained from Mrs. Lucy Parsons, Room 35, 169, Washington Street, Chicago. Price 6d. It deals in detail with the legal aspects of the Chicago judicial murders, and demonstrates the utter failure of the State prosecution to prove the existence of the imaginary conspiracy for which the eight men were condemned.

Any of our readers who want printing well and honestly done may safely go to the Justice Printery, 181, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., where two or three members of the S.D.F., working for an eight hours' day at trades' union rates, undertake as much extra work as the weekly issue of *Justice* permits. They have lately published the two following penny pamphlets:

'John Burns' Defence at the Old Bailey, January, 1888,' when he was tried in company with Cunninghame Graham for riot, etc., in Trafalgar Square on Bloody Sunday. In his usual bold and manly style, Burns claims the right of free speech and sets forth the demands of Social Democracy; a style which gains much force in our comrade's spoken utterances from his giant voice and powerful personality.

'A Commune for London.' By H. M. Hyndman. A summary of the shameful and manifold abuses of metropolitan local government, drawn up in Mr. Hyndman's lucid and readable style, with intent to demonstrate the necessity of municipal reform on a broadly democratic basis. We utterly disbelieve that a representative Central Council elected by universal suffrage will make London much less of a hell for the mass of its inhabitants, unless its appointment is accompanied by wholesale expropriation of the appropriators of land and houses, and all other forms of social wealth; and then the relief will result from the expropriation not the Council. The real value of this contribution to revolutionary literature lies not in the contents but in the title. Widely advertised, and noted by numbers who will never read another line of it, 'A Commune for London' supplies the English Socialist movement with a new watchword and a rousing battle-cry.

'The Deistic Pestilence,' price 1d., a somewhat halting English translation from the German of John Most. We doubt if the reproduction of this bitter tirade against Christian dogma, written many years ago, is likely to be of much service in freeing its readers' minds from the tyranny of the superstitions of today. The Secularist party and Freethinkers in general have carried on such an energetic war against the most crude and absurd dogmatic beliefs, and the results of scientific investigation have been so widely spread abroad, that the grosser

forms of superstition have little hold upon the mass of English workers. The emotional element amongst them, now captivated by such agencies as the Salvation Army, cannot be satisfied by mere destructive criticism. The human craving for development and joy needs the appeal of a new social ideal of happy life to be attained upon earth to turn it from the old baseless dreams of heaven, which have always afforded so tempting an opportunity for the selfishness of despot and priest. The preaching of Anarchist Socialism is the best antidote to superstition.

THE PROUDHON LIBRARY.

Comrade Tucker sends us the second volume of his capital translation of Proudhon. It is admirably printed on toned paper, and strongly and neatly bound. We recommend all our readers who can afford it to send for a copy. The following notice gives all particulars:

"SYSTEM OF ECONOMICAL CONTRADICTIONS; OR, THE PHILOSOPHY OF MISERY. By P. J. Proudhon. Vol. I, 469 pages octavo. Price in cloth, 14s. 6d.; in full calf, blue, gilt edges, 27s. Published and sold by Benj. R. Tucker, Box 3366, Boston, Mass.

"This constitutes the fourth volume of Proudhon's Complete Works, and is uniform in style with the first volume, 'What is Property?' The second and third volumes of the Complete Works have not yet been published in English.

"The next volume to appear will be the fifth of the Complete Works—that is, the second and final volume of the 'Economical Contradictions.'

"The Complete Works will comprise about fifty volumes, which are being published in quarterly parts of 64 pages each, as a periodical under the name of the 'Proudhon Library.' A prospectus giving full details of the enterprise may be had by applying to Benj. R. Tucker, Box 3366, Boston, Mass. As these are subscription books, no discount on them is given to the book trade, but subscribers to the 'Proudhon Library' get them at a saving of about 30 per cent."

PROPAGANDA IN THE EAST END OF LONDON.

We are requested to insert the following notice:—

"The East-end branches of the Socialist League and our foreign comrades at the Princess Square and Berners Street clubs, have just formed themselves into The East-end Socialist Propagandist Committee, and are commencing a systematic distribution from house to house in all the streets, lanes, etc., of leaflets, pamphlets (which are left in the houses of one street one week, then called for and taken to another street the following week) and other literature, as well as posting up leaflets, bills, etc., on the walls, hoardings, lamp-posts, church notice-boards, and other similarly available places. They have besides commenced holding regular open-air meetings at about twenty places in the district. Contributions, however small, which will be entirely devoted to the purchase of literature for distribution, will be gladly received by the treasurer, J. Lane, 38 Ainslie St., E., and any London comrades who can help personally in the work, should communicate with the secretary, F. Charles, at the same address, and in view of the threatened anti-foreigner agitation they specially appeal for the assistance of all the foreign comrades in London to show they are not the enemies of the English worker, but comrades working with them for the emancipation of labour the world over."

SOME REMARKS ON THE IMMIGRANT SCARE.

The defenders and guardians of property are trying to raise such a dust in one corner of the labour market as to divert public attention from the general misery of the workers and stave off the Social Revolution with one more quack reform. They feel specially called upon to enquire into the condition of the comparative handful of Jewish and other foreign immigrants who have fled to London from the persecution and oppression of the ruling classes elsewhere. Very probably the Tory Government might find a new and stringent alien law convenient in dealing with other foreign refugees, besides the victims of the sweating system, if only they could establish any sort of pretext for proposing it.

What would these disinterested philanthropists think of a law to forbid the emigration of English capital to search for cheap labour in other countries? Yet to the English worker it is much the same if his labour-force is undersold at home or abroad.

Is the terrible fight for a day's employment that takes place every morning at our dockyard gates caused by the competition of Russian and Polish Jews? In a recent report to the House of Lords, it was stated that in the months of January and July, 1887, 440,000 cases occurred of railway servants on the five great English railways working from 13 to 18 hours out of the 24. Is this the outcome of foreign immigration? The pitiless machine of monopoly and competition is everywhere grinding its slaves, English or foreign, down to the lowest conditions of existence they can be forced to accept rather than fight or die. The only possible remedy is the international combination of all workers to resist this international tyranny of property by every means in their power, until they can finally overthrow it.

Our Socialist comrades amongst the East-end Jewish immigrants are doing their level best to bring about this combination. Their weekly paper, *The Worker's Friend*, printed in their own dialect of Hebrew, is obtaining so good a circulation that it has been publicly denounced by the middle-class Jews and determined underhand attempts made to suppress it. It holds its own nevertheless, though our comrades have hard work to pay their way. Several English groups of Socialists gave practical proof how thoroughly they appreciate the international character of the labour struggle by helping *The Worker's Friend* over a financial crisis the other day. If any of our readers care to send subscriptions, large or small, for the support of this Jewish Socialist paper, we shall be very glad to receive them and forward them to our East-end comrades.

Our Jewish comrades are not only Socialist propagandists. They are energetically occupied in organising trade societies to combat the sweating system, raise the rate of wages to subsistence level, hold out a helping hand to friendless immigrants, who being ignorant of English and English wage rates, are helpless victims of the sweater and his agents, and to communicate the real state of affairs in the London labour market to their brethren abroad.

NOTICES.

Annual Subscription one shilling. Post free in England and within the Postal Union one and sixpence.

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FREEDOM can be obtained in London from W. Reeves, 185 Fleet Street; the Freethought Publishing Company, 63 Fleet Street; the Socialist League Office, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.; or ordered through a newsagent.