

# Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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## POLITICS AND SOCIALISM.

We have seen in our last issue how Socialism has been circumscribed and minimized since it became the watchword of a political party, instead of, as formerly, the popular labour movement. Now, when Socialism is spoken of, all that is meant is: State railways, State monopoly of banks and spirits, perhaps, in a remote future, State mines, and plenty of legislation intended to slightly protect Labour—without doing the slightest harm to Capitalism—and at the same time bringing Labour as much as possible into a complete submission to the present middle-class Government of the State. State arbitration, State control of the Trade Unions, State armies for working the railways and the bakeries in the case of strikes, and like measures in favour of the Capitalists, are, as is known, necessary aspects of "Labour legislation," in accordance with the well-known programme of Disraeli, John Gorst, "The People," and like Tory Democrat swindlers.

To understand Socialism, as it was understood thirty years ago,—that is, as a deep revolution which would free man by reconstructing the distribution of wealth, consumption and production on a new basis,—is now described by the "Neo-Socialists" as sheer nonsense. We have now "scientific Socialism," and if you would know all about it, read a few "authorised version" pamphlets, in which the guessings which Fourierists, Owenites, and Saint-Simonians used to make sixty years ago concerning the concentration of capital, the coming self-annihilation of capitalism, and like naive predictions—retold in a far less comprehensible language by Engels and Marx—are represented as so many great scientific discoveries of the German mind. Only, alas, owing to these would-be discoveries, the teaching which formerly, by its Communistic aspirations, inspired the masses and attracted the best minds of the nineteenth century, has become nothing but a mitigated middle-class State capitalism.

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To speak now of the Social Revolution is considered by the "scientific" Socialist a crime. Vote and wait! Don't trouble about the revolution; revolutions are mere inventions of idle spirits! Only criminal Anarchists talk of them now. Be quiet, and vote as you are told to. Don't believe these criminals who tell you that owing to the facilities of exploitation of the backward races all over the world, the numbers of capitalists who climb on the necks of the European working man are steadily growing. Trust to the Neo-Socialists, who have proved that the middle-classes are going to destroy themselves, in virtue of a "Law of self-annihilation," discovered by their great thinkers. Vote! Greater men than you will tell you the moment when the self-annihilation of capital has been accomplished. They will then expropriate the few usurpers left, who will own everything, and you will be freed without ever having taken any more trouble than that of writing on a bit of paper the name of the man whom the heads of your fraction of the party told you to vote for!

To such shameful nonsense the politician Socialists have tried to reduce the Great Revolution which calls for the energies of all the lovers of freedom and equality.

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And in the meantime reaction tries to take the fullest advantage of these suicidal preachings. It concentrates its forces all over the world. Why should it not? Where is the revolutionary party which might be capable of appealing to the people against its oppressors? And so it takes hold of all the channels of power which the present State provides for the ruling middle classes.

Look at education! They destroy with a sure and clever hand all that had been done in 1860-1875 for wresting instruc-

tion out of the hands of the clergy. Why should they not, when it was the once redoubtable but now tamed Socialist politicians who have helped at the last election the Conservatives to be so powerful in Parliament? The School Board teacher had ceased to tell the poor, "Suffer, it's the will of the creator that you should be poor." On the contrary, he told them: "Hope; try yourselves to shake off your misery!" The slum mother began to get into the habit of going to the School Board teacher to tell of her needs and sorrows, instead of going to the parson, as she formerly did. Down, then, with the School Boards! And why not? Why should they not dare anything when they know that it was the Socialists, the politicians who had helped them to win such a power in Parliament! Even in France, where they ostensibly fight to free the schools from the clergy, the best and largest colleges are in the hands of the Jesuits—within a stone's throw of the Chamber of Deputies. Everywhere the middle class return to religion, everywhere they work to bring the clergyman, with his ignorance and his eternal fire, back to the school—and the working men are told to take no interest in these matters, to *laissez faire* and to study John Gorst's program of paternal State legislation.

There was in the years 1860-1875 a powerfully destructive force at work—the materialistic philosophy. It produced the wonderful revival of sciences, and led to the wonderful discoveries of the last quarter of a century. It induced men to think. It freed the minds of the workers.... "Down, then, with Materialism," is now the outcry of the middle classes. "Long live metaphysics, long live Hegel, Kant, and the Dialectic method!" Why not? They know that in this direction, too, the reaction will find no opposition from the Neo-Socialists. They are also dialecticians, Hegelians, they also worship economic metaphysics, as has been so well shown by Tcherkesoff in his "Pages of Socialist History."

Happily enough, there is one element in the present life of Europe and America which has not yielded to political corruption. It is the labour movement, so far as it has hitherto remained strange to the race for seats in Parliament. It may be that here and there the workers belonging to this movement give support to this or that candidate for a seat in a parliament or in a municipality—but there are already scores of thousands of working men in Spain, in Italy, in France, in Holland, and probably in England too, who quite consciously refuse to take any part, even for fun, in the political struggle. Their main work lies in quite another direction. With an admirable tenacity they organise their unions, within each nation and internationally, and with a still more admirable ardour they prepare the great coming struggle of Labour against Capital: the coming of the international general strike.

One may judge of the terror which this movement, unostensibly prepared by the workers, inspires in the middle classes, by the terrible prosecutions—which have not stopped even at torture—which they have carried on against the revolutionary trade unions in Spain. One may judge of that terror by the infamous repression of the Milan insurrection which was ordered by King Humbert, or by the measures which were going to be taken against railway strikers in Holland. These measures, as is known, were prevented by the splendid act of international solidarity accomplished by the British Dock Labourers' Union, and immediately followed by the menacing declarations of the General Union of the French Syndicates. It hardly need be said that all the Parliamentary Socialists of France, Germany, Spain, &c., headed by the famous Millerand and Jaurès (one year ago this last, was for the general strike—now he writes long articles against it), bitterly oppose this idea of a general strike. But the movement spreads every month, and every month it gains new support and wins new sympathies.

We shall try to give in our next number a survey of the work already accomplished in this direction.

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## NOTES.

### FIRST MILLERAND—THEN JAURES.

"All who enter here leave Socialism behind." That is what should be written over the doors of all parliaments to warn the workers what they may expect from their "representatives" whom they elected at such a cost of money, time and trouble.

In *Justice* for March 21st, Hyndman, in a much-needed protest, has pilloried the two renegades Millerand and Jaurès, and has dealt them some well-deserved blows with all his fiery indignation. If he had been logical this attack would have been of inestimable worth, but unfortunately Hyndman himself is too much tied to the wheels of the political juggernaut, too much imbued with Marxism and State Socialism, to hew straight to the line of true Socialist principles. Were it otherwise, Hyndman would see that his impeachment of Millerand is an indictment of the whole policy of the parliamentary Socialists, who, following religiously their "scientific" theory, work for the "conquest of political power." For it is not merely that Millerand is a traitor, a murderer of the workers: he justifies himself on the very grounds assumed by Social Democrats for the taking of the first step which costs so much. Hyndman says, however, "Yet Millerand is no worse than others would be. He meant well, I have no doubt, but he could not rise superior to his surroundings. He could not be Minister of Commerce in a bourgeois government without swallowing a lot of bourgeois dirt. And he has swallowed it. It seems to have agreed with him." Very well; but why blame him? If you encourage a child to play with the fire when you know it will burn itself, who is responsible if the house is burned down? Yet the same policy is being pursued in England. Comrades who have done good work in the early days of the movement get themselves elected, and immediately (as Millerand has done) they deny the Revolution. We have enough "shocking examples" at home without looking abroad. The pressing need of the moment is not a "united political Socialist party," but that all Socialists, in face of recent events, should reconsider the whole position and return to first principles.

### THE NEMESIS OF IMPERIALISM.

Imperialism covers a multitude of sins. But its inky cloak is not wide enough to hide all its infamies. Besides Nemesis dogs its footsteps, and lifts the veil that all may see. We say nothing of this present Government of rogues; but where are the other gods? Some carry their diminished heads on their shoulders but without the applause of the crowd. Others are in the dust. The inevitable financial scandal is well to the fore, and Whitaker Wright drags at his heels the reputations of Royal pets and Court officials. It is a great harvest for England, after three years debauch of Jingoism. It is a sublime message to the oppressed of all nations this country sends forth to-day! Truly, we have all the virtues necessary for governing all the millions under our sway. And the true object of the war—the providing slaves for the mine owners—is as good as accomplished. Having realised all this do not talk of a revolution, but give three cheers for Will Crooks, M.P. for Woolwich!

### COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.

We get so little reference even to Socialism now in the *Clarion*, that we cease to look for anything of interest in that direction. Nevertheless we are hardly prepared to find such reactionary stupidity as an advocacy of compulsory arbitration for English workers. Yet we find a note claiming that such a thing has innumerable advantages for the workers. If the writer is sincere, he is blind to the fundamental cause of strikes, and incapable of gauging the outcome of the compulsory method. He might have enlightened himself somewhat by a perusal of the *Daily News* of March 4th, wherein appears a report of an address by the Attorney-General for New South Wales to the Australasian Chamber of Commerce in London. The large audience, we are told, included Lord Rosebery—happy omen for the workers.

The report says Mr. Wise began his address by reference to the fears of Socialistic legislation in Australia, and said it would be his endeavour to show that there was no cause for alarm on that score. No country in the world offered greater security to capital than New South Wales. Why? Because of the stability insured to political

and industrial institutions by Old Age Pensions and Compulsory Arbitration! And the *Clarion* advocates this and yet claims to write for Socialists! Why does not it leave these absurdities to our enemies the Capitalists?

One other cheerful result of compulsion we must not forget to mention. The Court makes it a misdemeanour for one workman to urge another to go on strike. Bravo, *Clarion*!

We should like to have congratulated *Justice* on its thousandth number, but what is there to say? Years of hard toil and self-sacrifice have been given for the paper; yes, we know it well. But what is it teaching to-day? Is it teaching us what true Socialism means? Not at all. It is teaching always palliatives, reforms and political compromise. Does it put principle before personality? No. For the homage paid to persons who have worked for the paper has warped the editorial sense of fair play.

Spite of the assertion to the contrary, the present number compares very unfavourably with the first, so far as the preaching of pure Socialist principles is concerned. *Justice* has done some good work, but what might it not have accomplished had it not so early developed all the crass theories of State Socialism.

It has remained for those staunch defenders of restraint, the Individualist Anarchists, to out-do the daily press in their cheap sneers at the refusal of Voltairine de Cleyre to prosecute (restrain is their word) Herman Helcher for the attempt on her life. Messrs. Tucker and McDonald, editors and publishers of *Liberty* and *Truthseeker* (N.Y.), are naturally quite upset over Voltairine's absurd conduct in trying to practice Anarchism as well as preach it. Some men reach their second childhood early, and if we refrain from comparing Mr. Truthseeker McDonald to the "sere and yellow leaf" it is because we sympathise with a brother who has gone astray, but truth (seeker) compels us to say he is old enough to know better, and if he does not it is not our fault. As for Mr. Benjamin R. Liberty, his case has been diagnosed years ago—and declared hopeless. When the average man discovers a truth he is a hard man to get along with, when he *thinks* he has discovered a truth and has not—he is impossible. Ben belongs to the latter genus. Long ago he discovered that "the only good Injun is a dead Injun," and the best way to make people peaceful is to hit them over the head with a club (voluntary, of course), the best way to abolish prisons is to call them houses of restraint; in short, he has discovered the best way to abolish a thing is to strengthen it—and change its name. Anarchism to him is a philosophy to be discussed after a sixty-cent dinner, a cigar and a cup of coffee (why not velvet smoking jackets and silk tea-gowns) and I would warrant that the tenor of his articles depends entirely upon the state of his digestion. The best and the worst thing that can be said about the editor of *Liberty* and his misuse of the word "liberty" is what Edelman once said, "Ben Tucker is much better than his philosophy." Meanwhile here is a pointer for the voluntary police libertarians. We shall continue to propagate Anarchism and—to practise it.

The Labour Representation Committee decided at its recent conference to grant a salary of £200 per year to all of their candidates who are elected to the House of Commons. This is rather a small (?) salary for such arduous duties as gentlemen in that institution are subjected to. On second thoughts, however, when we remember that most of them are salaried officials in trade unions or professional gentlemen, things look different. Richard Bell, we understand, is in receipt of £300 a year from his union, and if he receives £200 from the L.R.C. he will have a real working man's salary. Or take Pete Curran and John Ward, both officials of trade unions and candidates of the L.R.C., if they only receive £150 a year each from their unions, that with the salary of L.R.C. would make their total incomes equal to that of five navvies or gasworkers at 30s. per week. They probably think they are worth it, but we wonder what the slaves who toil in the gasworks and in the docks think of it. For our part, we hope this point will be driven home by comrades throughout the country, and especially by those who are trade unionists. Point out not only the danger but the stupidity of boosting navvies and gasworkers to power and paying them the wages of a bank clerk, and expecting them to remain in touch with their downtrodden brethren. They are adopting the very best way of turning working men into middle-class men, and no one need be surprised if they fall victims to the exploiting class, as so many have done before them.

The Chapman poisoning case furnished food for a little more cant on the part of those gentry who uphold a system which creates such men. Justice Grantham, in his summing up, said to the prisoner: "The only satisfactory feature in the case we have just completed is that I am able to address you as a foreigner and not as an Englishman." To a simple uninformed man it would appear from the above words that murder is an unknown thing among Englishmen. The hysterics of the *Daily Mail* reporter were even more far-fetched. He said Chapman was a good-looking man, and before the trial would quite readily have passed for an Englishman, but just previous to sentence being passed on him, and while he was quaking with terror, there could be observed in his eyes a distinctly foreign look. If the above statement was not such obvious cant we might be tempted to ask, What is a "foreign look?" As it is, we say simply that the hypocrisy of these vultures who have hungered for this poor wretch's blood for weeks is sickening.

## J. B. CLEMENT.

### COMMUNARD, SOCIALIST, REVOLUTIONARY POET.

Had death waited but a few days Clément would have closed his eyes on the anniversary of the 18th of March.

Year by year the survivors of the dread hecatomb of 1871 grow fewer; Urbain, Champy, Henri Place are gone, and now Clément leaves us; so the years pass on. And all to their last hour seemed to live on the watch, as though they waited for something—as indeed they did—the Revolution that should herald in an era of Justice and Truth.

J. B. Clément was born, in 1837, at Boulogne-sur-Seine. His father, a miller, was unable to afford him other than a meagre education, but such was his ardour for study that he seized every opportunity for self-tuition.

Clément was a poet. We were all poets in those days, although few wrote verses that would live. His *Carmagnoles* had the honour of bringing him two years' imprisonment under the Empire. He was among the first to dream of the Republic, and collaborated with the newspapers that commenced the struggle. Then came the great conflict—the International, the Vigilance Committee of Montmartre, the 18th of March, the Commune, and in all, and through all, Clément in the vanguard, whether of intellect or battle.

When the Commune was about to die, when before the great white wall of Père Lachaise, the handful of brave comrades who had escaped death among the tombs, was being massacred in cold blood by a victorious army—another handful, composed of members of the Commune and Central Committee, with one Garibaldian, was still defending the barricade in the Rue Fontaine-au-Roi. Against this was approaching a body of Versailles wolves. The only Communards left standing when the cannon in Père Lachaise ceased firing were those in the Rue Fontaine-au-Roi, who were raking blood-bespattered Versailles with grape-shot.

Over the barricade floated an immense red flag; beside it stood the two Ferrés, Theophile and Hippolyte, Clément, Varlin, Vermorel, Champy. Their ammunition was all but spent when the Versailles turned on them.

They were about to fire their last shots when a young girl hurrying from the barricade in the Rue Saint-Maur, which had been captured, came and stood beside them in spite of their protests that she was courting death.

A few moments later the barricade, blown up by the ignition of what ammunition remained, gave its parting salute to the Commune.

From Sartory, where I was a prisoner, we heard this explosion, and I knew it meant the end. Yet, turning to our conquerors, I said, "The struggle will recommence in even a more terrible form; the Commune is not dead." And in spite of their anger my calm assurance seemed to trouble them.

After that came death to some—exile and transportation to others.

The young girl was never seen again; it was in memory of her that Clément wrote his *Song of the Cherries*.

Only just before his death, as I was leaving for Havre, he sent me a few lines of greeting and remembrance.

Clément's poems are many; some of them set to music by A. Renard, of the Opera, had a great vogue at one time. Among these the *Cherries*, *The White Traveller*, *Goodman Misery*, *The Sower*, etc., will live long after we are gone. His last work was the Library of Socialist Propaganda, 60, Boulevard de Clichy, Paris, into which he had put his whole heart.

March, 1903.

LOUISE MICHEL.

### COMMUNE MEETING.

The meeting to celebrate the thirty-second anniversary of the Paris Commune was held this year at the Athenæum Hall, and considering the disadvantages we laboured under it was a decided success. Even as it was the meeting was the most successful we have held for several years. Kropotkin was unable to be present owing to his recent illness, but he sent a vigorous letter which we print elsewhere.

Louise Michel was as enthusiastic as ever, and bid us hope for the dawn of the new era with all her old energy. Briefly, yet vividly, she sketched the history of the Commune, and adduced her moral as only Louise can, pointing out that the future lay with the young, and we should strive to instil into them the principles of brotherhood and freedom. Lothrop Withington, in a short speech, drew a graphic picture of the power of the gold kings, of their gambling and speculating with the means of subsistence of millions of people, and of the necessity of educating as many people as we can, so that when the next financial crisis comes we shall have an intelligent minority who know how to take advantage of the situation. He repeated the oft-told tale of how the Communards guarded the Bank of France, and his watchword was "Never again! Never again!" Malatesta urged the importance of revolutionary action, and lamented the fact that the workers of Milan, in 1898, limited themselves to throwing stones at the troops who were shooting them down, instead of turning their guns on them. Marmol, among other things, drew attention to the powerful influence of women in the movement, and cited the cases of Louise Michel and Voltairine de Cleyre to show the great work that can be done for humanity if women only try.

F. Kitz gave reminiscences of past Commune meetings, how twenty

years ago it was impossible to get an English speaker to defend the Communards. He described, humorously, how the workmen, who could put all of their belongings in a cigar box, spoke of the destruction of property in an aggrieved tone, as though they were multi-millionaires. Kitz held that when we could get such a meeting in times like the present there was cause for hope.

E. Leggatt addressed the meeting in vigorous English, and urged the necessity of organisation and education to prepare for the impending storm. Seraphine Pajaud said a few words for peace on earth and good will to men; that men should live as brothers, and not in the terrible way they do at present.

Our comrade Jenny Atkinson sang, and quite charmed the audience with her beautiful voice. It was a variation and doubly welcome, the songs being so beautifully rendered that it was with difficulty she was allowed to withdraw after singing.

H. Kelly was the chairman, and comrades Shepherd and Wess, who were advertised to speak, were present, but owing to the number of speakers and the lateness of the hour they were unavoidably crowded out. The meeting was so successful that we feel as if the tide has turned, and now that the workers seem to have returned to sanity it may be possible to do some good work once more.

### LITERARY NOTES.

*The Reformist General Strike and the Revolutionary General Strike (La Grève Générale Réformiste et la Grève Générale Révolutionnaire).* This penny pamphlet is issued by the Committee of Propaganda of the General Strike, which was nominated by the French Trades Union Congress, held at Lyons, 1901. We regret that we cannot give larger abstracts from this remarkable pamphlet, in which the advantages of a general strike, both in a revolutionary period and in a pacific period, for enforcing reform upon the ruling classes, are discussed with great lucidity. The main conclusions are formulated as follows:—

"1. In the present circumstances, discussing only what can be realised in our actual surroundings,—the revolutionary general strike appears as the only possible and efficacious means for the working classes to free themselves entirely from the Capitalist and the Governmental yoke.

"2. Even if it be used as an arm for obtaining partial improvements, the general strike, being an economical arm, is far richer in good results than the attempts that are being made in parliaments, in order to compel the governments to interfere in favour of the exploited workmen.

"3. The general strike, whether revolutionary or reformist, is always the result of the efforts of conscious minorities, which, by their example, move the masses and urge them forward."

*The General Strike—a Revolution (La Grève Générale—Révolution),* by E. Girault, a twopenny pamphlet published by *Le Libéraire*, 15, Rue d'Orsel, Paris. Various Social-Democratic theories (concentration of capital, &c.) and so-called Labour legislation are analysed first, and then the general strike is treated as a beginning of the Social Revolution.

### THE WORD—REVOLUTION.

The word we awaited is spoken, the word of the promise of life; Behold, take heed to the token, and gird your loins for the strife.

The sleepers awake from their slumber, shake sleep from their eyelids, and night;

Who is there shall reckon their number; who shall withstand their might?

Their strength is the strength of the waters that murmur and gather and rise;

Humanity's sons and daughters, with Humanity's hope in their eyes.

They are armed, and their heart is steady with hope of the things to be;

The sword is unsheathed, they are ready; the word passes round—Anarchy!

The might of the masters is shaken, they shall tremble with fear and shame;

The rods in their hands shall be taken, their power be an empty name.

Nor the sword shall be sheathed, nor the fighting shall cease, nor the flame shall die out,

Till the task is accomplished of righting the wrongs that ring us about.

Then the world shall be filled with the voices of them that shall live through the strife;

They shall sing as a sick man rejoices when he tastes the wine of new life.

But ours is the joy of the morning, the joy of the earnest fight, To welcome the glad red dawning, marching forward towards the light.

Our chains shall be smitten and broken, forward into the strife.

The word we awaited is spoken; the word of the promise of life.

## EVILS OF CENTRALISATION.

*Local Self-Government and Centralisation.* By J. Toulmin Smith. 1851.

The above-mentioned book, though not strictly speaking Anarchist, yet contains an interesting exposition of the evils of Centralised Government. The author compares it with regard to its principles and effects with Local Self-Government, that is the management of all local affairs, of common interest, by the whole body of those whom they concern. Such a position has an interest for Anarchists. We therefore give the following extract.

"The fundamental idea of Centralisation is *distrust*. It puts no Faith in Man; believes not in Hope, nor in the everlastingness of Truth; and treats Charity as an idle word.

"Its synonyms are, irresponsible control; meddling interference; and arbitrary taxation.....

"Under Centralisation the forces always acting towards Progress are crushed out. Should it ever happen that the assumers of authority seek the good of others, instead of self-interest, it has a logical and physical impossibility that the true steps of progress can be taken. Whatever is done will be done by fits and starts. The ground which alone can be fruitfully worked is kept untilled and barren. At length, some great and accumulated wrong, suddenly seen in its enormity, arouses a spirit of uncontrollable indignation—the stronger because ignorant—and a Revolution follows. And revolution may follow revolution; but until Local Self-government—the only system which gives freemen a place, and implants the consciousness of duties and responsibilities—has rooted out centralisation—the prop and means of despotism and tyranny—there can be no hope of lasting peace, a sound condition of society, or a steady progress. The minds and energies of those whose welfare is in question, instead of having been habitually roused, themselves to grapple with each want that rises, have been systematically dwarfed and deadened. Though the might of the people has been spasmodically asserted, the paroxysm soon subsides, and others step in instead, either to order or to control the ordering.

"To tie up all to the tether of the leading strings which its various irresponsible functionaries shall hold, and to guide all according to the crude pedantries of individuals, is the object, and the result, of centralisation. What the end is when, those strings once burst, unbridled fury and just indignation are poured upon the upholders of the system, the history of France supplies sad illustrations. The same history has been for some time assiduously weaving for England.

"The earnest man, unshackled by the blighting influence of centralization, will always know that steady perseverance and unswerving confidence in truth will be crowned with success. It is the man who is unearnest that seeks to gain his ends by means of Acts of Parliament, which shall enforce and control free thought and action.

"Nominated by the usurped power of what should be a merely ministerial executive, and dependent on its pleasure, the functionaries who thus get themselves appointed neither acknowledge nor have any responsibility to the nation, or to any part of it. The 'reports' which they may, with officious parade, sometimes make public, instead of helping progress and truth forward, and putting their authors in a more responsible position, are merely a convenient means to disseminate manufactured evidence, the distorters of the truth, and always utterly untrustworthy. They but serve the further to blind and mislead those who have already ignobly submitted to a degrading system. They are but some of the crafty devices by which the shackles are being continually the tighter fitted on.

"Universal obedience to the pedantic schemes of a few closet theorists is proclaimed to be more conducive to human progress than the spreading of the truths wrought out by the ceaseless and multitudinous energy and enterprise of millions of active, thoughtful and practical men, daily meeting face to face the difficulties to be overcome, and conscious of the responsibility that lies on them to grapple with and overcome them; and directly interested in attaining the best results. This is what centralisation really is, stripped of the disguises under which its advocates always seek to cover its natural repulsiveness. The empirical and undiscussed projects of interested individuals are enforced as law over the whole land, instead of that law which the folk and people shall have chosen by their own counsel and consent.

"By those who have usurped, or who are seeking to usurp, powers inconsistent with the rights and responsibilities of a free people, the machinery of centralisation will always be delighted in. To make stronger their hold on power, they thus spread, through all the ramifications of society, a system of bribery and corruption the most insidious and powerful—namely, the temptations of offices and appointments on which to live at the expense of the public; and by means of which these still exist, throughout all ranks, an army self-interested to uphold a corrupt and blighting system. Under such a system the functionaries, as it has been well said, 'are not there for the benefit of the people, but the people for the benefit of the functionaries.'

"A numerous body of civil functionaries,' is created, 'living upon

the people for the performance of duties, partly useless, partly such as a people imbued with public spirit would discharge for themselves; and extending over them, in their private affairs and movements, a superintendence and interference which a people with any sense of liberty and personal rights would not tolerate.'"\*

## EXTRACTS FROM "VISTAS OF DEMOCRACY."

BY WALT WHITMAN.

### THE RIGHT LITERATURE.

I know nothing more rare, even in this country, than a fit scientific estimate and reverent appreciation of the people—of their measureless wealth of latent power and capacity; their vast artistic contrasts of lights and shades, with, in America, their entire reliability in emergencies, and a certain breadth of historic grandeur, of peace or war, far surpassing all the vaunted samples of book heroes, or any *haut ton* coteries, in all the records of the world.

### THE PURPOSE OF DEMOCRACY.

The purpose of democracy—supplanting old belief in the necessary absoluteness of established dynastic rulership (temporal, ecclesiastical and scholastic) as furnishing the only security against chaos, crime and ignorance—is, through many transmigrations and amid endless ridicules, arguments and ostensible failures, to illustrate, at all hazards, this doctrine or theory that man, properly trained in sanest, highest freedom, may and must become a law, and series of laws, unto himself; surrounding and providing for, not only his own personal control, but all his relations to other individuals, and to the State; and that, while other theories, as in the past histories of nations, have proved wise enough, and indispensable perhaps for their conditions, *this*, as matters now stand, is the only scheme worth working from, as warranting results like those of Nature's laws, reliable, when once established, to carry on themselves.

### THE UNPOPULAR CAUSE.

Judging from the main portions of the history of the world, so far, justice is always in jeopardy, peace walks amid hourly pitfalls, and of slavery, misery, meanness, the craft of tyrants, and the credulity of the populace, in some of their protean forms, no voice can at any time say "They are not." The clouds break a little, and the sun shines out—but soon and certain the lowering darkness falls again, as if to last for ever. Yet there is an immortal courage and prophecy in every sane soul that cannot, must not, under any circumstances, capitulate. *Vive* the attack—the perennial assault! *Vive* the unpopular cause—the spirit that audaciously aims—the never abandoned efforts, pursued the same amid opposing proofs and precedents.

## AN APPEAL.

Comrades,

The wife of our Comrade MacQueen (the latter being in America, and condemned to five years' imprisonment) in attempting to join her husband in America, was prevented by the authorities from landing. Mrs. MacQueen and her two children were sent back to England under cruel circumstances; the Steamship Company refuses to restore her effects until she has paid her return fare for herself and children.

Help is urgently needed, therefore we appeal to you to give what pecuniary assistance you are able, thereby helping the family of a Comrade in distress.

THE LEEDS COMRADES.

All moneys should be made payable to

DAVE WORMALD,

7, Jack Lane, Holbeck, Leeds.

All donations will be acknowledged in *Freedom*.

|                                | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------------------------|---|----|----|
| Amount previously acknowledged | 3 | 17 | 3  |
| Leeds Comrades                 | 0 | 6  | 3  |
| W. Jago                        | 0 | 5  | 0  |
| Gott                           | 0 | 1  | 0  |
| Malfew Seklew                  | 0 | 1  | 0  |
| G. Glassman                    | 0 | 2  | 6  |
| Manchester Comrades            | 0 | 5  | 0  |
| Ditto                          | 0 | 4  | 6  |
| Ditto                          | 0 | 4  | 6  |
| Ditto                          | 0 | 4  | 0  |
| Per J. Young                   | 0 | 7  | 3  |
| J. Conolly                     | 0 | 1  | 0  |
| Arnold Lupton                  | 0 | 5  | 0  |
| Leeds Jewish Comrades          | 0 | 14 | 6  |
| Leicester Anarchist Group      | 1 | 0  | 0  |

Money is urgently needed for above fund.

\* Laing's *Observations on the Social and Political State of Europe, in 1848 and 1849.*

## THE ONLY WAY.

### II.

We have said that the invasion and domination of combined capital across frontiers and oceans has been foreseen by all Socialists from the beginning of last century. Some among them wished to check it by State action. In England, in 1802, Parliament, under the influence of Robert Owen and his friends, carried the first law for the regulation of hours of labour for women and children employed in factories. Starting from this first Act of so-called labour legislation, under the influence of the said Robert Owen, and afterwards of Place, Sadler, Osteler, Lord Shaftesbury, and many others, but especially under the pressure of workers' agitation organised by the followers of Owen,\* labour laws succeeded each other in 1815, 1817, 1819, 1832, 1834, 1836, 1847, etc. Up till our time capitalists and their instrument of oppression—the State—have always consented to cede to the energetic claims of united workers. And strange—the masters found on each occasion that whilst diminishing the hours of labour, they gained, because the production increased.

But the intervention of the State and the conciliating action of the English bourgeoisie during the nineteenth century have not solved the social question: the misery, the ignorance, the suffering of the starving masses have not diminished in England. The processions of thousands of unemployed which we witness nowadays are convincing proofs.

The French Socialists adopted other tactics. Instead of partial legislation for the benefit of labour, they advised the people to take possession of the State as it stood, by a revolutionary movement, and to proclaim, in the name of the sovereign people, by a "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," the Socialist State. Courage and devotion were not wanting in the French proletariat; revolutionary attempts succeeded each other; the revolution of 1848 put into power men like Ledru-Rollin, who said, "through politics to social transformation," or, as Louis Blanc, "the State must organise the production, the national workshops," based entirely on Communism. . . . And what has been gained? Nothing. Nevertheless, Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin and their friends were perfectly honest men.

But as long as the State which they desired to conquer remained untouched, with its budget, its social classes and privileges, it is evident the possessors must remain masters and governors; the Socialists, with their good, progressive, working programme and laws, were powerless and failed to alter the economic order, with its political, judicial, military, and clerical organisation. Certainly, like the English State and bourgeoisie, the French Government made some labour concessions, but the social order, the reign of misery, continued as in England, without any modification. The political and capitalist State, being an organization for guaranteeing the exploiters the obedience of the exploited, could not act against the interests of its creditors, its officials, judges, clergy, and spies.

The relations between the possessors and the exploited are based on material interests; the power of the possessors imposes itself upon the State and upon the people owing to the owners accumulating in their hands all natural riches as well as those created by scientific inventions and their adaptation by the workers. Monopolising all the fruits of human progress, the possessors—the bourgeoisie, nobility, clergy, bureaucracy, and especially the great number of workers and proletarians who are enriched a little and admitted to the servants' hall of the rich—unite in a supreme effort to perpetuate for ever their domination.

They fear one single thing; that is, to be deprived of their possessions, their lands, capital, tools. The history of political and Communist revolutions has taught them that all governments, without distinction of name and form, must before all be their servants, in order to protect their interests and riches. Until the moment that the exploited, the people, lay hold upon all individual or social possessions, the power of money-grubbers and monopolists will be unshaken. The rich of our time understand better than Parliamentary politicians that only one revolution may be ruinous to them—the economic revolution, which possibly will start by a national general strike, and accomplish itself by the people taking possession of all existing wealth upon *their own initiative, after their spontaneous decision.*

Yes, the rich know quite well that all legal and Parliamentary reforms, even the most radical ones, if not touching their possessions, are rather to their benefit, affirming their domination. As real business people, the exploiting monopolisers organise their material domination; they allow political declamators and Social Democrats to amuse themselves as much as they like with partial reforms and their so-called Socialist legislation.

Provided that the capital and tools remained in their hands, they are ready to consent to any reforms. You claim an eight hours' day? Ironically smiling, the monopolists say: "Be it so, we agree to it; we are your friends—real, generous friends of national progress. . . ." But among themselves the money-grubbers say cynically: "Stupid creatures! They have improved their work to such a

degree that they produce at present in four hours more than their grandfathers did in fourteen. . . . and they think to have triumphed! If they do not touch our possessions, we will consent even to a five hours' day; more, we will let the Socialist members of Parliament and ministers talk what they like, make as many Socialist laws as they choose. . . . If we remain the possessors, we will know how to govern them, to make them our servants."

And the most famed money-grubbers of all—those of America and England—graciously acquiesce in an eight hours' day. . . . making hundred millions of profit yearly.\* They go yet farther; they give to their exploited workers even a certain part of the profit. Last year the Steel Trust made their workers a present of fifteen millions of dollars in shares; the New York bankers distributed among their officials five million dollars in Christmas boxes.

The monopolists, the exploiters, can and will cede still more than that. Because the marvellous progress of the past century works to their benefit, many of them realise at present profits which surpass many a State budget of the eighteenth century. To try to liberate the people from their subjugation by partial State reforms will be simply to consolidate it for ever.

(To be Continued.)

## The Czar's Manifesto.

In the *Daily News* of March 17th and 18th Kropotkin gives his views of the reactionary manifesto of the Czar which some silly people thought was intended as a boon and a blessing to the Russian nation. Briefly summarised, Kropotkin argues: That the manifesto emanates from the Conservative, anti-Reformist camp, and has in all probability been "inspired" by the two arch enemies of the people, MM. de Plehve and C. Pobiedonostseff. In reality, it is an attempt to hoodwink all classes of Russian society by promises of reform, as it is clearly seen by these reactionaries that things are serious in Russia—more serious, says Kropotkin, than they have been for the last 120 years. This state of affairs is the result of discontent on all hands—of the nobility, the students, the peasants and the workers of the large towns.

The recent revolts of the students was replied to at Kieff by sending 160 to be soldiers, and by the whips of the Cossacks on a St. Petersburg square. After this, even the "Fathers" sided with sons and daughters, and the disgusted Cossacks of the Guard refused to do police duty again.

All this time peasant disturbances were rife. Some of them, reduced to starvation, helped themselves from their landlords' stores. For this whole villages were flogged. Of still more significance, however, was the steady growth of the Labour movement. Helped by the students, the Russian workmen spread their organisations. The movement became so important and the strikes so serious that a police official, backed by the Grand Duke Sergius, started an opposition union. But the strikes and revolts have shown that solidarity between the students and the working men is assured. To all this MM. de Plehve and Pobiedonostseff—those infamous twins—answered with wholesale floggings.

But there is still another and very important reason why a manifesto, full of false promises, became a necessity for the reactionaries. It was to checkmate M. de Witte, who had organised a deep and serious inquiry into the needs of agriculture and the causes of the growing distress. Strong suggestions were made for convening a general assembly of representatives from all the provinces. But as this would have become a Parliament, it was not to be tolerated. The manifesto was the counter-move; and "the Czar having to choose between two different issues, chose, as he always does, the more reactionary."

When we remember what are the needs of Russia—how to get rid of autocratic rule—how to restore prosperity to the peasants—more liberty for education—to rid her of the infamous irresponsible police rule, and the floggings—not to have convoked a general assembly of some sort is a political mistake of the first magnitude. All the same, it will come very soon, but then it will come as a defeat of the Imperial powers. The result of it all is that MM. de Plehve and Pobiedonostseff win "a few additional years of power, and do they care, after all, for more than that?"

Everyone, of course, expected a speech from H. M. Hyndman at his welcome at Queen's Hall, and no doubt all his supporters were glad to hear he hoped to be "returned" for Burnley at the next election. He is mad to dabble in the bourgeois mud, as he calls it, and no one can cure him of his mania. But as an educated and enlightened man he is simply dishonest to denounce, as he does, the present system as Anarchy. Whatever his prejudices may be, he knows well enough what the Anarchists strive for, and the present system—well, we all know what that is. Such paltry claptrap is unworthy of Hyndman.

\* The Labour and Socialist movement in England from 1830 till 1850 was very powerful. The General Union of the Productive Classes numbered, in 1832, more than 500,000 members. The first Congress of Trades Unions, in 1834, was presided over by Robert Owen; 400,000 men took part in the manifestation for the condemned workers of Dorchester.

\* Last year the Steel Trust had a profit of one hundred and forty million dollars; Pierpoint Morgan one hundred million dollars; Rockefeller, one hundred and ten million dollars, etc.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

HOLLAND.—On February 25th, Dr. Kuyper, the Dutch Premier, introduced his Anti-Strike Bill to the States-General. What they will do with it remains to be seen, but owing to its very stringency the probability is that it will be shelved! Its first measure authorises the formation of a military railway brigade to run the traffic in the event of strikes. The second provides for "the protection of all employes who are willing to work, and the punishment of those who absent themselves." Workers who combine to start a strike may receive a maximum of six months' imprisonment, coupled with a fine of 300 florins, while a leader or organiser may get as many as four years. If a strike takes place, those implicated may be imprisoned for 18 months and the leaders respectively for six years. As the provisions of the Bill are a direct invitation to "blacklegs," as much as a menace to labour organisations, the latter have determined to initiate a general strike throughout the land should the Chambers dare to make such unjust and drastic measures law. It is interesting to know that similar Bills were once drafted in Germany, but provoked such a storm that the reactionists had to drop them. The State and the People now face each other, with the eyes of Europe upon them. Which, if the worst follows, will win? That the fight will be dogged, perhaps sanguinary, who can doubt. "For the first time," writes a comrade, "a quiet, sober and steady northern people will act on lines which as yet have been more frequently adopted in the fervent Latin countries. Will the Dutch become the Boers of the Labour movement, showing determination and steadiness united with enthusiasm and solidarity? It is likely. Only the unfortunate fact remains that here, as elsewhere, the large nations are likely to enter the arena and sacrifice the smaller one." Little doubt but what, did the chance offer, Willie over the border would like to stick his bayonet into Holland and say *Mine!* But the senators at the Hague may be too wise to give him that chance by rousing the workers to a white heat by enacting legislation of the extreme kind contemplated. At the same time ominous signs are not wanting. Some of the railway men suspected as ringleaders in the late strike have been dismissed, while the Postmaster-General in a circular advises such employes as are inclined to join a general strike to ask for dismissal first, since it is sure to follow if any existing rule is broken. The Government is about to arm and equip three levies of reserves, and intends to prosecute all persons known or suspected of tampering with the troops by means of Socialist literature, especially M. Vandergoes, a lecturer at Amsterdam University, who advised the soldiers "to shoot in the right direction." On the other hand numerous petitions against the laws are circulating in the towns, one in Amsterdam alone obtaining over 30,000 signatures, while the Labour Unions are buoyed up by anticipation of financial and perhaps militant help from the International Federation of London. It is this latter report is founded on fact, it should show Capitalists and Governments once for all the true depth and meaning of the phrase "International solidarity." But the hasty framing of such laws as those under discussion in the Dutch Parliament proves that the shaft has gone home. The workers begin to feel their strength; to sap it or crush it has become the cherished ideal of every Government. Success depends not so much upon the power, the capacity, the foresight of a Government as upon the grit and devotion of the workers. Now the blood-stained veldt of South Africa shows that Dutch grit to-day is pretty much what it was three centuries ago, when it fought the Spanish kings for eighty years—and beat them.

GERMANY.—The comrades in Berlin have issued the first number of another paper, *Der Anarchist*. At present a four page monthly, it will be published fortnightly as soon as possible, and become a weekly not later than 1904. It is well-printed and got up, and will appeal to all bitten with the microbe of rebellion as regards majority rule, private property, and the State yoke. The question is how long the censor may permit this fresh sign of Anarchist energy to live. Revolvers, we hear, which fire seven shots in five seconds and kill at 660 yards have lately been served out to the Berlin police. Dear William! how he loves his Berliners, Anarchists or not. To offset this act, however, he has rescinded some of the penalties attached to *lèse majesté*. Newspaper editors will no longer be led through the streets handcuffed to a felon, need not clean out their cells or take exercise with other prisoners, and may receive a daily paper. The world advances—in Germany!

## KROPOTKIN'S LETTER TO THE COMMUNE MEETING.

DEAR COMRADES,

I am so sorry that the state of my health prevents me from being with you to-night.

It is always good to refresh one's energy by the commemoration of the glorious fight which the working men of Paris fought, thirty-two years ago, against the united forces of International Capitalism.

The more so now when we enter a period of general awakening of the working men of all nations; when the ideas of international solidarity amongst labourers of all nations and all trades are so loudly proclaimed, and so well practised, as they have been during the last twelve months.

The spirit of the old *International Working Men's Association*, which has made the Paris Commune, is alive once more. It is that spirit which has breathed in the general strikes at Barcelona, at various smaller towns of Andalusia, in Belgium, at Geneva, in Holland.

It is that same spirit and that same enthusiasm which have inspired the

downtrodden working men—Poles, Jews, and Russians—in Poland and in Western Russia, at Rostoff, and so on.

The same spirit which has inspired the *Dock Labourers' Federation* in their menace of boycotting Dutch commerce if the Dutch Government dare to take its measure for paralysing the strikes. That same spirit which breathed in the great *Cool Strike of America*—a strike which has shown the powers of united labour and the weakness of the Capitalist State.

The same spirit, again, which inspires the great, deep, and powerful movement that goes on in France for preparing the GENERAL STRIKE. Its possibility has been proved. Its significance is self-evident. This is why it is so dreaded by the middle classes. The general strike is not yet the Social Revolution. Surely it is not. But it is the act which will unite the workers, the act which will divide Society into two camps—those who work and those who don't; and will put the great problem of *Work and Exploitation* before mankind in all its nudity, free of all the political tinsel.

Thirty-two years have not passed in vain, especially in the Latin countries. A new Commune movement is already ripe. The lesson of the Commune:—*Act for yourselves, and let the others follow. Do not order, but preach by example.* This lesson has been understood by the proletarians. The other lesson—*Communalise, without delay, what is necessary for life and work*—begins also to be understood.

Both—let us hope and work for that—will soon be put into action.

March 18, 1903.

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