

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

VOL. 4.—No. 46.

SEPTEMBER, 1890.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

A PUBLIC MEETING

Will take place at

SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE,
ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10,

In commemoration of the

LEGAL MURDER AND IMPRISONMENT

Of our

COMRADES IN CHICAGO.

FULL PARTICULARS WILL BE GIVEN NEXT MONTH.

A SOCIALIST—NO DEMOCRAT.

It being the silly season, when members of both Houses are let loose and the Fabians write to the newspapers, their contributions being accepted which at other times might be rejected (*vide* recent circular of their Society), this article may not be so much amiss in the columns of *Freedom*. A paper was read on the 18th of July last, at St. James's Restaurant, by Bernard Shaw, on some of the writings of Henrik Ibsen. A large and varied audience gathered to hear it, having been led to expect big things. Mr. Shaw was to jump on everyone with damaging effect, and on the Anarchists in particular; but this part of the performance did not come off. They were alluded to twice, when they were lumped with the Democrats, doctrinaire Socialists, and other non-Fabians, the worst charge brought against them being that of Idealism, for which Mr. Shaw, being a very much this-end-of-the-nineteenth-century young man, expressed an excessive contempt. However, the best portion of the lecture, a summing up of the gospel according to Ibsen, proved to be Anarchism pure and simple.

To be one's own self and no one else, however admirable might be the model that another set before us, not because we felt the "self" to be better than that other, but because it was futile, and in the long run mischievous all round, to attempt to be anything but one's own self. This is what Mr. Shaw no doubt meant by his laudation of egoists and furious onslaught on the slaves of duty. Had he stopped there, few might have dissented from him; but he went on to find things in Ibsen's writings which even a more practised logician than Mr. Shaw would have found difficult to prove. Like Zenophon, *minus* the sarcasm, he suggested that the pursuit of virtue was a corrupting occupation, and that Ibsen obviously thought so, as he always made the villains of his plays the most moral characters. The paradox is at first alarming, but so easy to explain, when thought over, that the phrensy of the critic who styled this lecture "Socialism of the Sky," and refused to believe Mr. Shaw serious because he was not dull, can only be considered highly absurd. Mr. Shaw only erred in denying the moral man's right to exist, which Ibsen never does; and here peeped out the cloven hoof of Democracy, that must needs deny someone's rights. The moral man is a useful being so long as he does not make himself a law unto others. The Pharisee of old days thanked his God that he was not as other men. The Pharisee of to-day says, "Other men shall be as I," and at once becomes one of the most grievous stumbling-blocks on the path of progress. Even if he does not set himself up as an obstruction, he is used but too often as a weapon against those who, like Dina Dorf, prefer to be natural to being proper and moral.

A homely illustration of this was set forth the other day by a member of a body of workers who are striving to form themselves into a union for the purpose of exacting from their masters, not an extra shilling or two in the week, but an hour, or a day off now and then, so that they might have a little time to go pleasuring. "But," said he, "there's a man in our place named George, who's bin there nigh on forty year, and when one of us asks for a day off or a beanfeast, as the saying is, the master replies, 'Look at George; he don't want no day off, he don't want no beanfeast!' and of course there's no finding fault with George, as gets up at four and goes to bed at nine every day of the week, Sunday included. But it ain't fair to hold him up to us as cares for something else besides saving money." When the moral man gets into such a position as that, we ought all do our best to put him out of it.

Mr. Shaw's attack on "self-sacrifice" was more at variance with the spirit of Ibsen. We cannot do without the men and women who act upon generous impulse without a nice calculation of likely consequences to themselves. If our Ideals are to go, let this one linger to the last. Ibsen does not point out the folly of self-sacrifice so much as he shows the misery of a human soul when it finds that it has sacrificed itself to a base idol, and the abominable meanness of those who consciously accept such a sacrifice.

But the most serious misstatement in the whole lecture was that Ibsen was not a Socialist and had not intended to convey any social message by his writings. To refute this we have only to quote Ibsen himself, who, speaking in a workmen's club at Drontheim, in 1885, said: "Mere Democracy cannot solve the social question. The revolution in the social condition now preparing in Europe is chiefly concerned with the future of the workers and the women. In this I place all my hopes and expectations; for this I will work all my life, and with all my strength." Is it because Ibsen believes that Democracy cannot solve the social question that Mr. Shaw, as a Fabian, denies his writings the place they ought to occupy in revolutionary literature? When will he and his fellows admit that salvation may come from some point quite opposite to that upon which they have fixed their gaze? The task set the Fabian lecturers by their Society during the past half-year was to find "Socialism in Contemporary Literature," and the majority of them failed to find any—at least, not as they understood it, as one had the frankness to avow; with this rider everyone can accept their verdict.

Ibsen, recently interviewed by a correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, repudiated any connection with the Social Democrats. He with justice might have thought that he had done that once and for all in 1890, when he said: "One's ideas demand a new substance and a new interpretation. Liberty, equality, and fraternity are no longer the same things that they were in the days of the blessed guillotine; but it is just this that the politicians will not understand, and that is why I hate them. These people only desire partial revolutions, revolutions in externals, in politics. But these are mere trifles. There is only one thing that avails—to revolutionise people's minds."

SOCIETY ON THE MORROW OF THE REVOLUTION.

Translated from the French of JEHAN LE VAGRE.

VII.—THE FREE CHOICE OF WORK.

ONE of the objections which are brought forward to show the necessity of an administration of some sort is this: "In the producing groups it will certainly be necessary to have a foreman, someone to give out the work. Without that there would be disputes as to who should do a certain thing, and in the end nothing would be done."

In our opinion this is looking at things from the point of view of the present society, and not at all from that of the future. What good would a foreman be, since the individuals who would compose the group, formed in order to produce a certain article required for consumption, would certainly arrange beforehand on what basis they wish to be constituted? Their ideas must necessarily be in accord, since they are associated of their own free will. Therefore there is not the slightest necessity for any authority to arrange the distribution of work. They will settle it without any wrangling whatsoever according to their aptitudes, and so much the better, because those who are not satisfied with the arrangement will be free to leave and seek another group, or form a new one which responds better to their wishes.

If to-day a worker chooses a particular sort of work, it is mainly because it is the most remunerative for him. The same motive would actuate him in a Collectivist Society, since under that system, as under the present one, work would be paid for by wages. But from the moment that the wage system is abolished, from the moment that the worker is only required to give a certain amount of labour-force to society in return for the satisfaction of all his wants, little will it matter to him whether this labour-force is expended in making boots or shoes, kettles or saucepans; he will choose the work which he can best do, guided as he will be by that self-respect which makes one wish to do his best.

Reference has also been made to painful and disgusting kinds of work. It has been said that if there were no special rewards given for doing such work, nobody would be willing to do it. We believe, for our part, that the individuals who are accustomed to a certain trade will continue in that trade after the Revolution, just the same as

before. They will be able to do it so much the better that the work can then be carried on under more healthy conditions, that the working day will be much shortened, and that by the extension of machinery and improvements that may be applied immediately we shall, so to say, have suppressed as manual work certain callings considered to-day as especially exhausting or repugnant.

The same reply may be made to the objection which is continually being brought forward—how, in a state of society such as the Anarchist-Communists desire, would such work as cleaning out the sewers be done? Nobody would be willing to work at such a trade. Very good. Let us follow our opponents even on to this ground, and let us suppose that, everyone being free to do as he pleases, no one would be willing to undertake such work. But do you imagine this unwillingness would last long? Do you not think the necessity of clearing the sewers would soon make itself felt? Then the people of a district or of a city would very soon arrange among themselves as to who should do the work, or, seeing that they all had an immediate interest in it, seeing that the danger of fever and death threatened all alike, they would all be glad to help, and they would also put their inventive ability to work to devise a machine to do the work for them. In saying this we put things at their worst, seeing that the progress which is being made in sanitary affairs easily permits us to suppose that things will never reach such a pass.

In fact, a good reason why we believe that the worker will be enlightened enough to know how to organise himself on the morrow of the Social Revolution is that already he will have broken the bonds which enchain his intellect. Certainly man will not be greatly improved by the simple fact that the Revolution has been made, but his surroundings will be changed. Instead of the selfish Individualist society of to-day, where every morning the starving worker has the terrible, and often unanswerable, question put to him, Where shall I get food to-morrow?—instead of this society, where the struggle for existence goes on without any cessation between all the individuals who constitute it, man will find himself in a society of wide hopes and broad sympathies, without any oppression, based on the solidarity of all interests, and in which the satisfaction of his wants will be assured, having in return only to supply his share of the work.

Why should men not be able to understand one another? Yes, it is true that man is an egotist and ambitious; but when he can no longer flatter his egotism and serve his ambition by the possession of property, when it is impossible for him to rise above the crowd and to separate himself from the mass of human beings, who have all the faults of a bad training inherited from a society entirely corrupt, he will develop large and generous ideas, and display an abnegation of self and an enthusiasm such as we have seen in the revolutions of the past, where armed men clothed in rags have stood guard over millions of money and scrupulously preserved it for those who juggled them out of their victory. We do not wish to compliment them upon this. On the contrary, we should have preferred to see them take possession of these millions; but it was an instance of self-abnegation and enthusiasm which to us appears convincing.

We are always being talked to about evolution. We know very well that the evolution of ideas must take place before these ideas can be translated into facts; and it is precisely because we know that an idea, however just it may be, cannot be realised if the masses are not yet prepared to receive it, that we are trying to effect this evolution of ideas before the Revolution which events are preparing is upon us. As to the Revolution, when it comes we shall put our ideas into practice, and shall, by our example, call upon our companions in misery to do as we do. If they do so, it will be because the evolution of ideas will have taken place. If, instead of following our example, they oppose us, it will be because this evolution is not yet accomplished, and then certainly we shall succumb. But however little we may do in the coming Revolution, we shall have thrown our ideas forward into the domain of facts; and when the workers fallen under the yoke of new exploiters begin to see that again they have only drawn the chestnuts from the fire for a gang of schemers, they will reflect and will admit that we were right in telling them not to give themselves masters. And as our deeds during the revolutionary period will be in themselves an educational force, we may be quite sure that the following Revolution will have for its purpose the putting into practice of our ideas.

We Anarchists contend that work, being made attractive in the future society, instead of being a burden, as it is to-day, will be a recreation; we maintain that the hours of work required to supply the articles of consumption will be reduced by substituting for manual labour all the forces that nature and science have put and will put at the services of humanity, by the restitution to productive work of all the energies now employed upon useless toil, by the suppression of all the parasitical callings which serve only to augment the exclusive enjoyment of a class of individuals. We say and we know that work will no longer be what it is to-day; those who have been capable of carrying out a Social Revolution will be intelligent enough to know that if they wish to continue to draw from society all the happiness which they desire, they will have to contribute to the general production.

These facts appear to us so much more evident that each individual possesses in himself a certain measure of activity that he is bound to expend in some form or other. Nothing is more natural than that he should expend it in the work which enables him to live and to obtain the satisfaction of his wants. As association alone can enable him to accomplish this work with the greatest economy of effort, and to utilise the mechanical appliances which already exist, and which will be greatly improved and added to, it is then for the good of the group of which he is a member that he will exert his efforts, since his welfare will result from it. The exertion of all will therefore be devoted to useful work,

and only the enterprises which are evidently necessary or agreeable will be sufficiently attractive to induce people to start to work upon them. It follows, therefore, that we shall see all activity employed in adding to the general well-being, and we shall no longer see the heartrending spectacle which society presents to-day, in which the efforts of thousands of producers are expended for the satisfaction of the caprices of a few individuals.

To return to the question of organisation. Let us suppose a house is to be built. We take this work for example; we might just as well take any other. It is necessary, first of all, to make some sort of plan. Although Anarchists are accused of being crack-brained folk who do not know what they want, we will give them credit for not wishing to amuse themselves, when it is desired to build a house, by placing bricks one upon the other without knowing why or how. At the present time, if a proprietor wishes to erect a building, he seeks out an architect, who makes a plan, with estimates of the work to be done, and he has the work done in accordance with this plan. People will not build for the pleasure of building, in the future society, any more than to-day. When it has been decided to erect a building, it will be constructed in accordance with the peculiarities of the chosen site. Those who desire to build a house will know before the work commences how they wish it to be built; that follows as a matter of course. Two cases may be taken: the one in which a group of bricklayers, etc., builds on its own initiative, the other in which it builds at the request of another group. In the first case, they will have drawn up, or had drawn up, the plans of the building to be erected. In the second case, the group desiring the building would hand in to the builders the plans which they had made themselves or had had made for them. But in either the site would first of all be decided upon, and the plans made accordingly. To come to a satisfactory understanding, the groups would have no more need of authority than they would have to decide upon the plans to be adopted, for, the cause of all dissension and trickery amongst individuals—selfish personal interest—having disappeared in the relations of society, differences of opinion would only arise from the different ways of looking at and understanding things. Trifling objections would disappear in the discussions which would take place, and only differences of opinion too strong to be bridged over would remain. Then each party would set to work to carry into effect the plan it favoured. It might result from this that two, or even three, buildings might be erected in the place of the one originally intended. But who could complain? Beside, there would be this advantage, that each individual, being desirous of proving that the plan which he favours is the best, that the group of which he is a member is right, would bring to the work all his skill and energy. Here we find again the stimulant to the individual which the defenders of the present condition of things say would be destroyed by the suppression of private property.

Then, when the plans were adopted, everyone supporting the idea which he believes best, there would be no place for authority. This desire of individuals to do their best would urge them on to take up the kind of work at which they consider themselves best, no contrary interest urging them to choose another sort of work, since there would be no differing payment for work, and in the new society every individual would be entitled to the satisfaction of his wants.

When this division of labour is satisfactorily settled, everyone would set to work. If, during the work someone wished to change his occupation, he would seek out someone willing to change with him. Thus the work would be carried on to the satisfaction of all without any sort of disturbance or bitter feeling. It would be, in a word, that harmony which is the ideal of humanity.

If, for some cause or other, one or several individuals find that they can no longer agree with the group they have chosen, nothing compels them to remain, nothing forces them to stay; they can go to a group which is more in accordance with their taste. If such a group does not exist, they can seek out other individuals who sympathise with them, and make a group according to their ideas; and as every kind of man—unless he is quite an eccentricity—can find other men of his own ideas, as eccentricities are extremely few, and as society or association is or ought to be only concerned with sociable characters, it follows that we have no need to take into account these exceptional beings, who are brought forward as objections to our ideas.

Moreover, necessity compels. No master commands, but existence is not possible without association. If anyone wishes to perish, he is free to do so; but if he wishes to live he can only do so by finding comrades. Solidarity is one of the natural conditions of existence, and we believe in obeying the laws of nature.

What we have said about the construction of a building may be applied to all the wants of society—as well to the making of railways, canals, and telegraph lines, and to the putting into operation of new inventions, as to the manufacture of the most insignificant articles of production—in fact, to all the branches of human activity. Later on we shall try to show that all groups will be able easily to arrange matters between themselves without having need for any authority to compel this agreement.

We have been requested to state that next October there will be published in Paris an "Almanack of the Social Question," which will contain many interesting items; among others, notices of all the Socialist parties in the different countries, and a detailed catalogue of all the newspapers and reviews which concern themselves with social economy. The price of the volume is 1fr. 25c., or 1s. 0½d., and those wishing to have a copy are requested to write to Monsieur P. Argyriadès, 5, Boulevard St. Michael, Paris.

THE arm-chair Socialists have had a windfall of £100, which they are going to expend in a campaign in Lancashire. The Society is busy revising old lectures.

SOCIALISM IN SCANDINAVIA.

(From a Swedish Correspondent.)

[Concluded from p. 33.]

SWEDEN has to thank a tailor named August Palm, before all others, for the spread of Socialism within its borders. Swedish Socialism is the unadulterated article from Germany. Palm became acquainted with German Socialism on its native soil, where he resided for some time. Endowed with extraordinary energy and with a vivacious temper, Palm could not remain silent and view as a mere spectator the agitation for the spread of Social-Democratic ideas. Although the father of a family, he cast himself without hesitation into the strife, with the result that he was expelled from Germany, even before the Socialist law came into operation. He went with his family to Denmark, where he again threw himself into the agitation. And it was in Denmark that his thought of pioneering Social Democracy in Sweden ripened into resolution.

He was soon found in Malmö, a town in the south of Sweden. Here he started a paper called *Folkviljan* ("The Will of the People"), which, however, had to be given up ere long. He then betook himself to Stockholm, where, in the autumn of 1885, he commenced the issue of a new paper, *Socialdemokraten*, which is now the organ of the Swedish labour party. Cast early upon the world, Palm possesses no education except that which he has been able to acquire during a busy life. Therefore the difficulties he had to contend with in editing his paper were not a few. But at this time there came across his path a young student who was trying to pick up a livelihood by writing for various bourgeois papers in Stockholm, and who is now one of the most prominent of Swedish Socialists. This lad of two-and-twenty, who had been brought up in the modest home of the working man, joined Palm's paper, and improved it greatly in a literary respect.

Of a high-spirited and individualistic nature, Axel Danielsson could not long endure his subordinate position in the editorship. His love of independence drove him to Malmö, where he resuscitated Palm's *Folkviljan* under the name of *Arbetaren* ("The Worker"). He prudently refrained from setting up any hard and fast programme, simply aiming at making the paper the organ for the class-conscious labour movement. *Arbetaren* has followed recent labour movements with close attention, and is progressing rapidly in the direction of autonomy. It may be regarded as holding at present the same position as the *Commonweal* of London.

Danielsson has no more than Palm escaped the clutches of the law. Both have paid penalty for their courage, Palm with six and a half months' imprisonment, Danielsson with eighteen months and 500 *kronor* fine. During his long confinement, however, Danielsson managed his paper with unabated energy, and, almost unaided, issued it nearly to the end of his term three times a week. During that time he also managed to publish two Socialist pamphlets, and to increase his knowledge, which forced him still further towards autonomy.

Socialdemokraten, which used to be a weekly paper, and *Arbetet* have appeared as dailies since 1st April last. The editorship of the former was resigned by Palm in 1887, his place being taken by the present editor, Hjalmar Branting, who is not only an able writer, but an enthusiastic agitator and spirited speaker. He is a gifted university-trained middle-class man, and is one of the most talented advocates of Socialism in Sweden.

Branting's history differs widely from that of the Socialist leaders already mentioned. He bears a respectable bourgeois name, and, being the only son of a prominent educationalist, he got from his earliest youth a very careful and superior training. He studied at Upsala University, where he showed special aptitude for mathematics and astronomy. In 1879 he came to Stockholm as assistant in the Observatory, and was drawn by degrees into political life. He gave up his studies and became a contributor to *Tiden* ("Time") which was started to defend the interests of the Norwegian Left in Stockholm. Soon becoming editor, Branting converted the paper into a genuine Radical labour journal, which the Stockholm workers sorely needed at the time. It was given up in 1886, and Branting shortly afterwards became editor of *Socialdemokraten*.

Delicate and spoilt as a child, Branting, who was born in 1860, has grown in the course of his life to be cold and reserved in the extreme; but under his somewhat austere manner there lies repressed a passionate nature. He possesses a stable and reliable character, and is capable of making great sacrifices of self. He is wealthy, but has given away privately the greater part of his money to further the aims of labour. He has suffered several months' imprisonment on the Langholmen, in Stockholm. He is an orthodox Marxist.

In Sweden the law is eager to persecute agitators for political freedom, and at present has two Socialists under lock and key. Of the boasted freedom of Sweden there is at present not the slightest trace. We are more reactionary than Prussia herself, the land that the Swedish Government regards as its model. In legislation, police, etc., we are more German than the Germans themselves, and our excellent Parliament is in a fair way of introducing an exceptional law for Socialists similar to the German one.

Besides the papers mentioned there are two others in Sweden, but they are not nearly so important. I have given it to be understood that *Socialdemokraten* is orthodox Marxist. People have been so unaccustomed to hear of anybody but Marx and his followers that they seemed, until lately, to totally forget that there might be some other kind of Socialism quite as good as Marxism. *Arbetet's* criticism of *Socialdemokraten* has, perhaps, been as useful to Swedish Socialism as that of the Danish *Arbejderen* has been to Danish Socialism. When *Socialdemokraten* went too far with its shallow Marxism, *Arbetet* took it

to task. But the more or less heated altercation was soon given up, and now both editors are, so to speak, eager to shake hands with each other. But it is quite certain that much more trenchant criticism is needed, and I dare say it will come.

It is probably a mere matter of time when Anarchism, in one form or another, will become a momentous public question in Sweden. Sweden's whole history is at bottom anarchistic, and therefore it is only necessary to preach Anarchism with earnestness and devotion in order to have it much sooner understood and accepted than Marxism, which stands opposed to the genius of the Swedish people. But Anarchism is almost only known in its violent aspect as displayed in agitation. The bourgeois press has usually something to say about it in dealing with foreign news, and special attention was given to the Anarchist disturbances in France during the preparations for the demonstration of the 1st of May. *Socialdemokraten*, to its credit, was unprejudiced enough to publish a defence of Anarchism—of course with comments—which displayed a scanty knowledge of Anarchist theories. For the rest there is a translation of "Law and Authority," published at the expense of a Scandinavian political club in America.

But we have kept the best to the last. At the end of 1887 an Anarchist appeal was widely circulated in Sweden which caused great excitement. It was thought we actually had Anarchists in our very midst. Nobody knew whence it came or how it reached Sweden. It is now commonly believed that the appeal emanated from the Anarchists in England. It had been translated into Swedish and printed in London; but it might have been written with a better knowledge of Swedish affairs.

Sweden was once visited by Bakunin. Everywhere he went he excited admiration. But he awakened mixed feelings in the various political groups. The Government's official gazette, *Post och Inrikestidningar*, tried to make a political affair of his sojourn in this country, but without result.

INDIVIDUAL OR COMMON PROPERTY.

THE discussion which has been going on in *Freedom* on this subject for the last few months has given rise to a good deal of comment on the part of our Social Democratic contemporaries issued in the German language. The *Chicago Vorbote*, an important Anarchist weekly formerly edited by our murdered comrade August Spies, has also had something to say on the matter, and has in its turn been criticised. For the benefit of the discussion we print below a translation of an article which appeared in the *Vorbote* on the 9th of July, 1890:

We have at different times expressed the following ideas: 1st, that we did not wish to break the heads of posterity; 2nd, that we advocated justice to the future as against the total abolition of private property.

To the first idea we gave once, unfortunately, a humorous form, by declaring that we had no mind to hatch "future eggs."

This modesty on our part seems to have much annoyed our friends in London, and has caused them to drag us into the above discussion. We are glad of this, in the interest of the discussion, and should like to give once more the reasons why we cannot believe in the abolition of all private property, even if we wish it. That we strive for the abolition of all property which for production is in great measure indispensable to labour—nay, more, that we entirely deny the right of bequest and object to the recovery of debts through the State, is sufficiently known by our readers; as also that we deny there is any justification for the existence of the three chief supports of capitalism—rent, interest, and profit. We have quoted the radical sayings of Rousseau, Proudhon, and most sociologists against usury, interest, and the accumulation of private property, in order to show that great inequality in the distribution and the enjoyment of the gifts of Nature leads to slavery. But at the same time we are always quite aware of the fact that the present generation is not ready for the total abolition of all private property, and will not be in the future, as far as we can see into it.

Should we be mistaken as to this, should it be really possible to change so radically the whole manner of thinking and acting at present in vogue as to render a perfect Commune possible, we should be very glad, as the worst form of Communism, or Socialism, or Anarchism, or Individualism would be preferable to the present truly shocking form of society. In our editorial columns are constantly to be found expressions like this:—

"Nature knows no private economy and no private property. The reason men suffer so much is that they believe they must always have something peculiarly their own."

So much to reassure our London colleagues. In order to prevent the entirely barren discussion about private property, we have always (and, if we mistake not, the *New York Volkszeitung* has also) used the expression *freindthum* ("other people's property") to signify property not acquired by one's own honest labour, and it appears to us that this word, which is a definition in itself, should be sufficient for all practical purposes, and is specially suited for the present generation.

We may inform our worthy critics that we have noticed, even in the case of professed Socialists, about whose faith in the principles there cannot be the slightest doubt, a pronounced and intense love of private property, as soon as the question is removed from the purely theoretical to the practical ground.

We have known "good Socialists" who became regular "property fiends" if a comrade caused them some slight loss; others who presented a heathenish spectacle if their boss kept back their wages or had to defer payment because he had no money, while these "good

comrades" cut down their workers' hard-earned wages or refused to pay them at all. That was, of course, a denial of property, but a very one-sided one. Again, other objectors to property borrow as much money as possible from their comrades, and, when asked to repay it, reply with a phrase from the programme of the party.

It is said these are exceptions, and we wish to give due weight to this objection in favour of the Socialist party; but it is not exceptional to find everyone in present society insisting on the prompt payment of his wages, his rents, and his interest.

The property idea is so deeply rooted in the nature of modern man that at least three generations must come and go before one can hope to transform this fixed idea into something socialistic.

It is easy to speak of the abolition of private property. It is a captivating theory for a poor devil, an easily-practised theory for a spendthrift, so far as he himself is regarded; but it will be infinitely difficult to convince the world of its necessity and expediency.

The difficulties in the way of the abolition of private property are so enormous that to most reformers there exists no criterion by which to judge it. Besides, if everybody no longer thinks "capitalistically," yet their whole study is to acquire property of some kind, be it a modest cottage or a sharp pocket-knife.

Would it, therefore, not be wise to limit the attacks on property to some of its injurious forms, namely, to what we include in the term *freindthum* (property of others), as opposed to *eigenthum* ("own-dom"), the ordinary term for property?

STRIKES.

(From the State Socialist Point of View.)

THE leader on this subject in last month's *Freedom* justly counsels workmen who are tempted to indulge in denunciation of the blackleg to reflect what are the social conditions that produce him. What we have to remember is that the blackleg presently is likely to come from the inside. The failure of the policemen and postmen does not prove that collective management is necessarily oppressive to the employé, but it gives a hint to the employer how to strengthen his position by introducing a pension system. In this way he can act on the maxim of "Divide et Impera," knowing that his workmen would find it difficult to present a solid front when the older of them have to make larger sacrifices than others. Let the employing class once adopt these tactics, and Anarchists will find the strike a weapon of lath, as it has proved lately in State departments.

Much as they may be irritated by Mr. Sidney Webb's somewhat roseate picture of the advancing socialisation of our life, Anarchists do not help things by their persistent efforts to cry down all forms of collective administration, which must, indeed, like all institutions, partake of human infirmity, and require, therefore, our joint efforts to make the best of it. One cannot learn much of the nature of State Socialism from the action of existing Governments, which have to be made democratic and popular in substance as well as in form before they can serve the ends of common life in the manner intended by Social Democrats and Fabians. While Parliaments and other governing bodies are recruited from the classes interested in keeping the present state of things going, it is only too likely that they will wield their powers, their police and soldiers, their judges and parsons, for the maintenance of class rule and the suppression of those who attempt to overthrow it. But let workmen sit in proper proportion in Parliament and Council, and let the workman be tried by a jury of his equals, as the law directs, and there would be much less occasion to condemn *in toto* social machinery which may work imperfectly, but which no one has shown that we can yet dispense with altogether.

The leader in *Freedom* declares that the nationalisation of land and capital would make no odds to the workman, because his State Director might possibly draw as large a salary as his present private master. Surely this is to confuse the manager's salary with the company's dividends, irrespective of the fact that the wages of business managers are more likely to fall than to rise. The salaries of Mr. Cecil Raikes and the upper officials round him are, it is true, assessed on an artificial scale, in virtue of their being influential members of the ruling classes. But their salaries do not by any means absorb the profits of the nation's postal and telegraph business, from which, were we a truly democratic State, with no army and navy to waste our wealth and energies on, every man, woman, and child would derive a benefit. No. The moral of the postmen's failure is that we must quicken the popularisation of our administrative bodies. When Mr. Bradlaugh and other such *laissez faire* fossils come along and tell the workman to keep his independence and not go whining to the State, the workman should answer: "L'etat, c'est moi. We don't give up our independence by sending a representative to discuss and vote in Parliament, any more than when we send a delegate to the Trade Union Congress." The exigencies of class politics have placed the franchise, that "secret of power," within the workman's reach, and it is surely the height of folly to bid him refrain from using it. As Shakespeare says, "Nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so," which is surely a reason why none but purists will exert themselves to denounce representative institutions. That these involve majority rule is undeniable; but so do trade unions. Indeed, was it not an ideal *bourgeois*, Richard Cobden, who said he would rather live under the Dey of Algiers than suffer the dictation of a trade union committee? Majority rule is just one of those things no fellow can help, and a Parliamentary majority—under democratic conditions—would have a juster claim to our allegiance than would that of a trade union.

A FABIAN.

NOTES.

Burns "Going to the Country."

The Anniversary Meeting of the Dockers' Strike was a big affair, but the most noteworthy thing about it was the big idea put forward by John Burns in the course of his speech. It was, perhaps, put more clearly in a newspaper interview two days later, in the following words: "I should like to go into the country for a few years to organise the agricultural labourers. In London, here, we are simply damming back capitalism by mere organisation of numbers. We must get to the country, and get to the root of the whole labour question. So long as the country continues to supply the town with raw, unthinking blacklegs, so long will strikes be conducted with disadvantage to the men. Organise country labour, and you'll stem the blackleg torrent. It seems to me that there is an immense field for effort in that direction."

We don't know whether Burns is really willing to give up his candidature for a seat in Parliament, and his County Councillorship, to stir up an agitation in the country amongst the rural population, but we quite agree with him as to the necessity of the work, and we feel sure that a man of his energy and influence could do much in that direction. Burns is an opponent of Anarchist principles, and has not hesitated to misrepresent us on at least one occasion. But we are rather inclined to smile at the abuse of a man who, because he has never taken the trouble to investigate and understand our theories, goes out of his way to denounce them, and yet, by force of circumstances, is compelled to reject his own Social Democratic Parliamentary methods and adopt that Voluntary Association and Direct Action which we are always urging for the adoption of the working class. We are referring now to what he did in the Dock Strike; and whilst we are about it we take the opportunity of pointing out that it is the direct Revolutionary action of Burns which has brought him to the front and made him a popular idol. The 8th of February, the 9th of November, and the 15th of August are revolutionary dates, and Burns is known chiefly because of the prominent part he took in the movements those dates represent.

THE PROPAGANDA REPORTS.

SOUTH LONDON.—Some good propaganda has been done in this district during the past month by the South London Anarchists. Comrades Casey, Buckeridge, and Smith, of the South London Freedom Group, have taken part as speakers in the open-air meetings organised by Comrade Wright, of the Socialist League, in the New Cut, Lambeth, in addition to the indoor meetings. A room was taken at the Westminster Coffee Palace, 106, Westminster Bridge Road, early in the month, and indoor meetings have been held on Monday evenings. On the 11th Buckeridge lectured on "Anarchist-Communism." On the 18th Casey opened a discussion, in which Wright, Hearn, Blackwell, Smith, and Buckeridge took part. On the 25th, Cooper, Miss Lupton, Casey, and others took part in a discussion.

LEICESTER.—On Friday evening, July 25th, an open-air meeting was held at Anstey, near Leicester. Miss Warner, A. Gorrie, and T. Pearson addressed the meeting. Opposition was offered by the manager of a local factory.

FREEDOM GROUP.—On Saturday, August 9th, at 7 p.m., a meeting was held in Hyde Park. Neilson spoke on "Anarchist-Communism." Opposition was offered by White and other Social Democrats, who all disagreed as to what they meant by Social Democracy. White stated that in a society in which no man would want to take advantage of his neighbour's weakness, life would become monotonous and existence unbearable. A Socialist, who stated that he had often lectured for the Social Democrats, soundly rated the Social Democrats present for using against Anarchists the superficial arguments and petty quibbles which they so much complained of when used against themselves.—On Saturday, August 16th, at 7 p.m., in Hyde Park, a meeting was held. Neilson and Pearson were the speakers. Opposition was again offered by the Social Democrats.—On Sunday morning, August 17th, an open-air meeting was held at Battersea Park Gates. Neilson and Pearson spoke. A Social Democrat, upon ascending the platform to oppose, coolly requested us to take our banner down while he spoke, as he refused to speak under an Anarchist banner. Upon our declining, he went on to advise the audience not to listen to our speeches, but to look to the ballot-boxes, see that their names are on the register, and send Social Democrats to Parliament. He finished by deprecating revolution and resistance to laws.—At Clerkenwell Green, on Sunday, August 24th, Neilson spoke on "Anarchism and Democracy." Charley Morton followed in support.

ST. PANCRAS ANARCHIST-COMMUNIST GROUP.—This group has held meetings at Prince of Wales Road every Wednesday evening, at 8, and at Regent's Park every Sunday, at 6.30., for the last two months. The opposition has come chiefly from teetotallers and Christians. These meetings, which have been carried on without a chairman or any authority, have been held without disorder. At one of our meetings in Prince of Wales Road, Wayland, a teetotaller, in opposing, gave the following amusing account of the starting of the St. Pancras Group: About ten years ago, the Radical hen laid an egg; that egg was Social Democracy. Presently the egg was hatched and a chicken came forth, and that chicken was Anarchist-Communism. At another meeting a Christian asked if Anarchy included the abolition of the marriage laws. Upon Pearson answering in the affirmative, some hotter opposition was offered. Neilson then gave an interesting lecture on the sexual relations, which was well received. We have made collections and sold a large number of *Freedom's* and pamphlets at these meetings. We are making arrangements for starting indoor meetings for winter propaganda, and details will be announced next month.

NOTICES.

St. Pancras Communist-Anarchist Group holds meetings on Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., in Prince of Wales Road, Kentish Town, near "Mother Shipton"; and on Sundays in Regent's Park, at 7.30 p.m.

East London Communist-Anarchist Group will hold open-air meetings on Sundays at 11.30 a.m. outside Hoxton Church (bottom of New North Road) and at 3.30 p.m. in Victoria Park. Comrades are earnestly invited to roll up and support.

Anarchist League (Individualist) will hold open-air meetings on Sundays in Victoria Park, at 11.30 a.m.; Hyde Park, at 4.30 p.m.; and discussions in the hall of the Autonomie Club, 6, Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, at 8.30 p.m.

"*Freedom*" Publication Fund.—H. G., 12s.; J. E. B., 2s.; International Conference, Collection divided between the seven Anarchist Journals, 1s. 5d.

Printed and published for the proprietors by C. M. Wilson, at the Labour Press Limited Co-operative Society, 57 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.