SOLIDARITY

A FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

of the Relations between different sections of the Working Community of the United States and an Exponent of Anarchist-Socialism.

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IS A SOCIAL REVOLUTION UNAVOIDABLE?

A Lecture.

THE SOCIAL QUESTION.

Since 1875 we have been blessed in this country with more than 25,000 strikes. What does this fact mean? What do thousands and hundred thousands of men fight for, if not because they believe they are wronged, and there is no means to ascertain what part of the produce of labor is due to them, if not the whole? There is no criterion of justice in the relations between employers and employees,—nor in the relations between producers (meaning the capitalists who dispose of the products of labor) and the consumers, nor in any other social relations. Everything is left to be settled by competition and social war. The war is not restricted between employers and employees, but is waged also between workmen and workmen, and between workmen and the Government. Moreover, the existence of an army of unemployed, the employment of so many children and women in factories, the state akin to slavery to which numberless laborers have been reduced, the Immigration question, the large number of tenement houses in great cities and the inhuman life to which their inmates are doomed, the sweating system, the extent of intemperance, vice and crime—what means all that, but that society is suffering from chronic illness, and that some extraordinary effort, some powerful remedy is needed to cope with its evils?

NO FAULT OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

You may assume that ignorance, misery and unemployment are the result of some fault of the individual. The supposition may explain a few cases, not the generality. Even in those few cases, if you inquire into the causes of the individual fault, you will find that the original fault lays with society, *i. e.*, with existing institutions. Take the case of tramps. Miss I. Van Etten has studied the tramps. What does she say? That tramps are not created by nature, but are gradually made by social circumstances, especially by occasional loss of employment. Take the other question of immigration. Do you wish to know why Italian peasants emigrate in such a large number, since 1888 especially, to this country? It is

A SAD STORY TO TELL.

They were very laborious people; you know they are. They tried everything in order to remain in their old country to which they were attached by the strong bonds of affection, habit and interest. After 1870, when the economical conditions of Italy underwent a real revolution, and, as the result of American competition, wheat growing ceased to pay, those poor peasants set themselves to the task of transforming their corn-fields into vine yards. They observed a strict economy in their domestic expenses, were satisfied with living on less than bread, sold their furniture, incurred debts, toiled hard for years, and they, the poorest men on earth (mind you, not the landlords, not the capitalists, but these poorest peasants) created an immense wealth, which did, indeed, not belong to them (*) but which they considered would at least secure them employment for life and a tolerable living. But, lo! the capitalistic class of Italy went into war, commercial war, with the capitalistic class of France, and as the Italian vine used to find its main outlet in the latter country, when the war broke out, and a prohibitive tariff was issued in France against Italian vines, all the labor and enforced thrift and hopes and dreams of the Italian peasant were destroyed at a stroke. He who had sown could not reap; his doom was ruin, misery or exile from his country and emigration to this continent. Yet, this was no fault of his; a treaty broken, a Government spendthrift and siding with the capitalist, and the Italian peasant was made as destitute as Job. You may say that they ought to have revolted against the Government. But then you ought to do the very same thing. Your Government is even more spendthrift than the Italian is, and it also sides with the capitalists. And it is due to your Government and to your capitalists that you have lost control of the land and other resources of the country.

THE MERITS OF MILLIONAIRES.

Let us turn to the other side—to the rich people. You cannot say that your rich people have deserved to be rich. Here, again, the rule is quite the reverse of the popular prejudice. A glance at the list of millionaires will show you that none of them owe their fortune to labor: some owe it to the growing of land value, *i. e.*, of population; others to speculation and stock jobbing; others to monopolies obtained at the hand of the Government with the complicity of political boodlers; none to his own labor. Not labor, but something else made them rich. May be you call their ability in amassing wealth out of the very sweat of the brow of thousands of workmen "smartness," but fraud and robbery would be better names.

The people of the "Standard Oil" owe their big fortunes to real acts of piracy. Jay Gould became a hundred times millionaire by bankrupting his railroads and throwing into misery his own associates and thousands of investors—just as in France the managers of the Panama enterprise have done. Some people say the capitalist risks his money. Again, this is only true in a very few cases. Enterprises which yield the greatest profits are also the safest. Bankers and stock jobbers usually risk more of others than of their own capital. Anyhow, the risk of the capitalist is not to be, by any means, compared to the risk of the workman. Take for an instance a ship: the sailor risks his life, yet he gets the poorest wages. The capitalist risks his merchandise, but gets the highest profit. Nay, he does not even risk his merchandise, he has insured it, and if the ship is lost he considers himself a lucky man. As to the rate of insurance, he charges it on the consumer. So his profit must need have another source than the risk. What is it?

You, again, say it is "saving." The capitalist saves and invests what he could have consumed. The fact is, that capitalists do not save anything; they enforce thrift on the workmen, but they themselves revel in luxury. Of course, they could not consume machinery; they could not eat a steam engine; they could not eat gold; they could not eat land. All these things they have not saved, but *taken* by some fraud, or bribery, or open robbery. Even supposing their capital to be the result of saving, they claim an interest on that saving, and, *besides*, a profit. What is then the real source of profit?

A very few of them manage personally their own enterprises, in which case they take a big salary for their exertion. What, again, is the source of their profit?

The economists have found it in "ability," ability in squeezing their employees, ability in cornering their competitors, ability in fleecing [illegible] February [illegible] death. Even the common thief must needs possess somewhat of it. But such "ability" is not useful, it is harmful to society; it deserves to be punished, not to be rewarded. The man who is enriched out of the result of such ability is to be proclaimed a public enemy.

THE GROWTH OF THE EVILS.

You may still say: Some evils are unavoidable in this world of ours, nothing can be perfect. But these evils of which I have spoken to you are very extensive. They are growing and ravaging social life. Look at the increasing number of unemployed; look at the accumulation of capital in fewer and fewer hands; look at the growing uncertainty of occupation; look even at the increase of the power of capitalists and at the growing perfection of their system of combines and trusts; look at the growth of drunkenness, of vice; look at the growing mortgages on farms and consequent evictions; look at the increase of suicide and crime; look even at the growing political corruption; your liberties becoming a farce, your justice, even your jury system becoming a mockery, your own militia becoming an auxiliary force of the police and of the Pinkertons.

All that was bad is becoming worse, and all that was good is being spoiled and corrupted. What will be the end, nobody can foresee. But what we can see, and most assuredly say, is that that tendency, that run towards an abyss, must be stopped.

AN ILLUSION TO BE DESTROYED.

Let me say a few sincere words on Government. There is a great illusion in the minds of many on the popular origin of Government. It is the very nature of Government to be oligarchic, *i. e.*, to be *by the few and for the few.* If you consider what the objects and prerogatives of Government are you will come to the conclusion that under any Constitution the Government will be practically in the hands of a few people, of a party or caucus. The bulk of the people is called to vote, but after the election, and even during the election, it has no control, nor is there any means to give to it a control over its pretended representatives.

The electoral corruption is the fault, not of the people, but of the system. Why, honest people

(*) The peasants received the land for a term of years from the land owners, free of rent, so long as the land would give no produce under the new culture, then the land, with its improvements, returned to the landlord.

say that they ought not to be worse treated, nor less paid than scoundrels, and hypocrite politicians say they are compelled to resort to corruption as a matter of self-defense. Thus everyone complains of the system. But the system cannot be bettered. In England the bribery is not carried so far as in this country, still the workman has no more voice in the Government of that country than he has got here. The form of corruption or pressure brought to bear on the people—the form of social illness may differ, but the result is the same. The man with a bag of money has to rule over the man with nothing but his two hands to sell. The man with a training for public speaking and private intriguing will always rule over the man who has passed from cradle to factory and occasionally left the factory to find himself in the street in the pangs of hunger. There is no legislative wisdom, no constitutional device which can prevent this. We must strike at the root of the evil, at economical inequality, *i. e.*, at economical slavery.

NOT PROGRESS, BUT RETROGRESSION.

We maintain that this present society is radically wrong, that it shall not be amended, but changed. We don't pretend to know the secret laws of history, if there are any, such laws are easily forged for one's own convenience. But this much we know, that there are cases in which nations have risen, and cases in which they have decayed. We don't believe in the theory of political circles (*corso* and *ricorso*) of Vico; but we no more are warranted in believing in continuous, fatal progress. Social progress, mind, does not consist in the mere accumulation of wealth. Rome became corrupted, and decayed precisely when it became rich. Progress means the constant elevation of mankind, the development of its mental and moral faculties, and the intensification of social life. Now, as the individual is concerned, do we see any progress? It may be that some may read now who could not spell fifty years ago; some dress like gentlemen who looked as poor peasants; people who remained their whole life in their native village now are driven by necessity throughout the world, and Americanized have become great politicians who do not over care now to care for their household.

But this is not progress. To this we have to oppose:

1. The more mechanical character of the work of the artizan, and the ultra-division of labor destructive of the intelligence and independence of the workmen.

2. The destruction of family life, as a consequence of the capitalistic system, and, therefore, the destruction of that sound education based on real life, not on books, which was given in the circle of the family and, I may add, in the little community of the native village.

3. The growing uncertainty of situations, hence improvidence, gambling, rottenness.

4. A growing tendency to live in crooked ways rather than on productive labor. One of the most noteworthy fact of the present time is precisely the growth of unproductive and harmful exertions (I don't wish to use the word labor in connection with exertions consisting in preying on labor) at the expense of productive labor. A century ago the proportion of employers, bankers, lawyers, salesmen, usurers, financiers, politicians and the like to the real producer was certainly infinitely smaller than it is now.

THE MORALS OF THE PRESENT SOCIETY.

Are our rich people better? Certainly not. Their morals do not show any improvement.

The morals of trade are certainly much worse than they used to be. The morals of politics are simple detestable. The morals of private life do not need to be exposed. And the morals of social relations may be judged by the fact that war between classes has now become permanent. In past ages few wealthy men thought altogether of increasing their fortunes; they were satisfied with what they could consume. They generally devoted their surplus to help the poor and amend for their own usurpations. Just think of the immense beneficence of the Middle Ages. Why, in Italy the Government is still plundering the Charity Institutions of old, and almost living on the spoils.

Now, when you see such a course of things in society you may safely predict a cataclysm. In the past it was a war, or a foreign invasion to which the nation who suffered from such a disease succumbed, because it had lost its moral cohesion and force of resistance. Now it can only be a revolution.

NOT CHANGE, BUT RENOVATION.

But, whatever may happen, there must be a radical change, a renovation *ab initio*. We need a *social contract*. We have to set society aright, fix it on the basis of the greatest benefit to all.

Until now, we have had no society but a haphazard combination and conflict of energies and desires. An individual has occupied some land. He has put a price on it for all who might need it. Another man has built a railroad; he has done the same thing, he has levied a tax on those who want to use it. Then the former has perceived that there was a chance of his getting more and has increased the burden on the laborer. Other people have created other monopolies, charging the people to the full extent of their power to suffer and work. Men have found it easier to live on preying upon each other than by work and production. A host of usurers, go-between, speculators and retailers has sprung out of this "crave for profit." Labor has been degraded and enslaved. Useless work has usurped the fruits of useful toil. Here labor is needed, but there are no laborers. There there are workmen, eager to employ themselves, but no work. Here people live in plentiness and luxury; there other people linger in the most cruel misery. Land unoccupied, soil untilled; near by starving multitudes. Overcrowded cities; at a little distance deserts or shanties. Coal production is checked, and men shiver in the cold. Wonderous inventions for the comfort of the rich; laborers rotting in mud and water, killed or mutilated for lack of the most elementary precautions. Individual capitalists earning ten or a hundred thousands dollars per day, and millions of workmen struggling for a few cents more on their weekly wages. No justice, no equity, no previdence, no righteousness in social relations—but chaos, chance, crave for profit, selfishness, brutality, greed. The evils of the many are the opportunities of the few. No division of labor according to capabilities. How many workmen are estranged from their callings. The inventor is robbed by the capitalist; the shareholders of a company are robbed by the managers; the consumers are robbed by all. Things which are necessary to everybody are possessed by a few individuals. Centres of commerce are encumbered with population. Forests destroyed and fields overflowed. We do not realize that we are born to live in society, to benefit by the labor of each other, or to suffer by the injury of each other, except when a dire calamity, like the cholera, falls upon us.

We must stop living in that barbarous way. We must have no classes in society, no monopoly of the means of production, no exploitation of man by man, no capitalism, no commercialism. Labor must be performed with free materials by free men, associated together for their own benefit. Exchanges must take place between producers and producers, without intermediaries, on the principle of mutual aid. Equality of conditions must be established and maintained in society as the only safeguard of the independence of the individual.

GOVERNMENT A FAILURE.

The Government, let me repeat, does nothing to bring harmony into the social chaos of to-day. It rather increases the chaos by plundering the plunderers and re-plundering the plundered. People think the Government performs some social function. They are mistaken. The function of the Government is anti-social, it is to maintain and defend the barrier between the classes. The effect of the Government is to redouble the evils which it is supposed to cure. A man murders another, the Government murders the murderer. A man takes the property of another. The Government puts the thief in prison, but does not pretend to restore the property to the robbed man. A man claims he is suffering oppression at the hands of another man, the Government does not interfere with the latter, but watches the victim, lest he might revolt against his oppressor. Men make millions by speculations and combines and robbery. The Government finds they deserve to be protected in their trades. The Government knows they squeeze the workmen, still whenever the Government has to bestow some privilege or favor, it bestows it on the rich men that they may be somewhat generous with their employees. The Government asks the people to vote, and feigns to wait for their verdict, but the people who really are the Government use all sorts of honest and vile means to bully the people into voting for themselves.

WHAT WE HAVE TO DO.

We need to abolish this system—substitute common property of the means of production for private monopoly—mutual exchanges for commercial competition—co-operation for the wage system—and free associations of workmen, freely federated together for class struggle, governmental centralization and chattering congresses.

This is the goal to be attained and well is it worthy of our spending our lives to secure it, if possible, for ourselves; or, at any rate, for our children.

NOTES ON EVENTS.

GOING BACKWARD.

The resolutions adopted at the Congress of the Federation of Labor, at Philadelphia, Pa., are a masterpiece of political acrobatism. As a delegate to that Congress told, on Sunday 18th, at the "Socialist League," the leaders of the organization wished to appear radical to the radicals and conservative to the conservatives. Hence the miserable compromise on the question concerning the militia: the Congress pledging its action to have the command entrusted to the workmen! Hence, also, the endorsement of the harmless panacea of "direct legislation and referendum!" The only sensible measure of the Congress—the educational campaign—is a fraud on the face of it: it is a step in the way of political action and wholesale corruption. The whole business shows a sad lack of courage on the part of the workmen.

On the other hand, the fact that a resolution for the nationalization of the means of production was presented at this Congress, and that one-third of the votes were cast for it, is very significant. Such would certainly not have been the case one year ago.

The Editor of the "Twentieth Century," reviewing the Homestead affair, devotes two articles to Anarchist Communism. "Berkman's act" (he writes)—his propaganda by fact—"brought a dawn of anarchist thought to numberless discontented minds."

This is impartial testimony.

POVERTY IS THEFT.

A correspondent of Spring Valley to the New York *Anarchist* describes some of the frauds, by which the coal miners of Illinois are robbed of the poor wages allowed to them. The cart-load, which four or five years ago was paid to them 40 to 50 cents, is now paid only 18 to 25 cents. Meanwhile the size of the carts has been increased, the larger carts containing 700 to 800 pounds more of coal than the small ones, without the miner receiving any compensation for the difference. Moreover, half of the coal loaded is stolen away, without credit for it being given to the miners. It is true that the measurement is made in the presence of a representative of the miners, but this man cannot retain his position unless he shuts both his eyes to the robbery. The Company pays, nominally, 97 cents per ton of coal extracted, but, practically, the miner receives only 35 to 70 cents. The ton of coal in Chicago costs $9.50. It is clear that the coal-barons experience no difficulty in becoming millionaires.

ALWAYS TRUSTS.

Details are being arranged for consolidating the four mammoth export brewing firms of the United States, viz., the Anheuser-Busch and W. J. Lemp breweries of St. Louis, and the Schlitz and Pabst breweries of Milwaukee, the last-named with its four auxiliary establishments. The capital stock would be $40,000,000, with $200,000,000 in bonds, the object of the combination being to supply the world with beer. Mr. Adolphus Busch, president of the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company, said that he had reason to believe that this would be accomplished, but that the entreprise would not be an English one. "It is to be," he continued, "an institution of the world, with the four breweries mentioned consolidated. The world's market will be controlled from America." The combined output of the four concerns was at present 4,000,000 barrels annually, and could be increased.

TRIUMPHANT PLUTOCRACY.

A correspondent writes from Vermont to the London "Justice:"

"Dear Comrade,—When on your side of the Atlantic I worked for the cause in Aberdeen. I am a granite cutter by trade and came to this country last April. I have had, since coming here, exceptionally bad times, owing to a strike which broke out in my trade shortly after I arrived, and lasted close on five months. I have found, by experience, that the workers here, on a general average, are no better off than in Britain; if any difference, the workers here are more under the heel of the capitalist than in Britain.

"In Vermont there is no Employers' Liability Act of any kind. The result of the bosses not being held responsible for the safety of their employees is, that when a man happens to get killed or maimed at his work, he simply gets paid up to the time of the accident. While the law in this State regarding labor matters is far more infamous than in England. Worse than Chancery ever was. Chancery gave a decision of some kind when the suiters' money was all gone, but our law-givers here in Vermont have not even the above virtue. In a case of "Conspiracy" which was raised against the Granite Cutters' Union, two years ago, the State prosecuting on behalf of the capitalists, the case was tried and re-tried until everybody (the lights of the law excepted) was disgusted with it, costing the above-named Union six hundred pounds for expenses, while the devil a decision was ever given. The above is only one instance of the corruption prevalent here."

E. LEMMON.

Box 87, Barre, Vermont, U. S. A.

THE REIGN OF STATISTICS.

Mr. Lorenz Groenlund has had further opportunities, at the "Socialist League" and elsewhere, to expound his views about the "co-operative Commonwealth." His cardinal idea, briefly stated, is that the future society will be ruled by a commission of statistics, sitting at Washington, for the United States.

Now we have no objection to statistics, though we believe that statistics, like many other things, must needs be done by the whole people, not by a committee. But, when it is proposed to give a committee of statistics the control and management of all the capital, industries and exchanges of a country, we cannot help looking aghast at the prospect.

Who are the men in a country who can work out of their minds such a wonderful plan, where the most important functions of the life of sixty-two or more millions of men will be regulated with methematical exactitude? Society is not a mechanism, it is an organism. Figures cannot rule men. You cannot organize society merely by counting heads and putting each man down for an equal amount of work and food. The interests, feelings, exertions and needs of men cannot be all statistically estimated, neither in dollars, nor in hours of labor nor in unities of commodities. Every man puts a price on his own labor and on his own enjoyments: situations, opportunities and needs differ very much from one place to another. To submit all men to one and the same rule, or to attempt to make special rules, keeping a strict account of all the possible varieties of cases, would be equally impossible. A committee in Washington, organizing, controlling and managing the whole business and all the affairs of all the people in the United States!—A more bewildering proposition was never made!

Yet, suppose that the plan could be elaborated; and just think of the immense power which would be weilded by the Commission of Statistics. It is a poor argument to say that "figures cannot wrong anybody:" firstly, because not all questions can be solved by figures; secondly, because if figures can do no wrong, those who handle them undoubtedly can. This commission of statistics would wield an immense power over the labor, enjoyments, liberty and the very lives of every man, woman and child in the country; and we are requested to believe that its members would use this power in the most scrupulous, impartial, disinterested manner, without any regard to their own private interests or to the interests of people near them! Why should those people act differently than all rulers and despots past and present? What better safeguard would the common working people have against arbitrary acts of their rulers than that which they have now, of voting them out of office? But we know what this only resource of an outraged nation amounts to. You can put some out, only on condition of putting others in. The victorious party rewards its supporters by allowing them good places, big salaries and some out-of-way privileges. What a poor figure would cut the "statistics" in the resulting industrial arrangements, we can easily foresee. It would not help the poor oppressed people anymore than religion, or political economy, or the latest ethics do at present.

If we had to stand the tyranny of the commission of statistics alone, the evil would not be very great. But a commission of statistics cannot be expected to rule without some assistance. Under or above the commission of statistics, a few ministerial departments would be established; an army of public officials would be needed all over the country; a huge mass of legislation ought to be prepared, discussed, and from time to time repelled or repaired; and then forces, police and military forces, would be required to carry out the regulations against restive people, and a system of taxation, to defray the expenses of this gigantic administration. In one word, we would have the costly mechanism of the modern State extended to all industrial and commercial concerns of the nation. This is what any plan of *pan-nationalization* practically amounts to. It is exploitation of the workmen by the bureaucrat, instead of exploitation of the workmen by the capitalist; but exploitation with a vengeance.

Now, we Anarchists say:

1. The means of production must belong to the workmen who use them, *i. e.*, to the associations or co-operatives of workmen, beyond the control of any central commission or administration.

2. The associations must organize their own labor, manage their own affairs, and agree (federate) together, to carry on exchanges and to further their own interests.

3. No central administration or government is needed in society; no power, civil or military; no bureaucracy; no legislature; no taxation. This old, rusted machinery is not fit to a "commonwealth."

Socialists ought to look forward, not backward; they ought, after having walked out of the present society, not retrieve their steps.

THE ANARCHIST CONVENTION

DURING THE "WORLD'S FAIR."

It seems to be a pretty general idea among our comrades that there shall be some sort of convention or conference of Anarchists in Chicago during the World's Fair. In order that such an idea may assume a concrete form, it is necessary that all those who agree in it should say so. We will gladly publish any correspondence which may be addressed to us on that subject.

One thing to be decided upon is the date at which the convention ought to take place.

Another open question is whether the convention ought to be national or international; we mean, whether it ought to be composed of delegates of anarchist groups in the United States, or of anarchists of all countries. The decision of this question, however, lays with our European comrades; they will have to say whether they expect to be present or not.

Meanwhile, supposing the convention to be limited to United States anarchists, the subjects to be discussed remain to be settled. On this point especially, it is necessary that all comrades and groups manifest their views, in order to agree on a programme broad enough to satisfy the desires of all.

The points which may come in discussion may be be classified under the following three headings:

1. *Principles.*—It is absolutely necessary to rediscuss the Pittsburgh Proclamation, and agree on a new declaration of principles.

2. *Tactics.*—The different views about the best methods and tactics of propaganda ought to be discussed with special reference to this country, and with a view to coming to a general understanding. Another important point is that of the relations of the anarchist to the labor movement.

3. *Organisation.*—Concerning organization, there are several questions. One is, how to increase the vitality of existing groups. Another is how groups of different nationalities may be brought to work together.

Another still is that of the relations between so-called internationalists and autonomists; a settlement of this question is of the greatest importance for the future of the anarchistic movement in the United States. Lastly, the ways and means by which the propaganda in the English language could be made more effective, would have to come under the consideration of the convention. Of course, this is but a rough scheme, and in drawing it we have had no intention of limiting the scope and object of the intended convention. We have tried to show the importance of pending questions, and, therefore, of the work which the convention is called on to perform. Now it is for our comrades to state their views, send in their proposals, and work for the realization of the idea.

On our Chicago comrades fall, of course, a large part of the work. They ought to meet at once and appoint a committee to send around invitations and correspond with all the groups wishing to take part in the convention.

ANARCHIST MOVEMENT IN EUROPE.

SPAIN.

The reader remembers the insurrection which took place on January 8, in Xères, Andalusia (Spain). A large crowd of people, mostly peasants, proceeded to attack the only barrack of the town, where there were troops and the prison. It seems that the revolutionists, known as anarchists, had ground to expect that the military would join them, and the movement was to be the signal of an anarchist insurrection throughout Spain. No wonder, therefore, that the Government, in its fear of an imminent revolution, resorted to the most stringent measures to avert the danger. The *état de siège* was proclaimed all over, public meetings prohibited, private houses ransacked, and a frightful chase was given to the anarchists. In Xères were made altogether 346 arrestations, of which, however, only 54 were maintained. In February, [illegible] Martial Court sentenced four anarchists to death, and an equal number to imprisonment for life; the sentence, in the case of the former, was executed. Forty-six more prisoners have been brought, in the last week of November, to trial; the sentences passed upon them being yet kept secret, for fear of another popular outbreak. The Public Attorney has asked imprisonment for life for 18 men, 15 years for ten others, 12 years for another, and for others various terms. There is little doubt but that his request has been complied with. Now, it must not be supposed that all the men thus convicted were responsible for the outbreak on January 8. Most of them have only been convicted of "conspiracy" and anarchist propaganda among the peasants. Comrade Salvocheda was even in jail at the time of the insurrection, and he is in for twelve years.

FRANCE.

The situation in France is approaching a crisis. The Panama scandal has torn the mask of democracy from the present Government. The nation, however, is threatened with a monarchical reaction. All this time, France, when disgusted with monarchy, turned to republic; and when disgusted with republic, went back to monarchy. But, in 1870, there was a gap in the proceeding, and the gap was filled by the Commune. Nowadays, there is a chance for anarchistic movement, the anarchists being of all socialists the only fighting force.

Under the title: Dynamite and Panama, a manifesto has been issued by the French anarchists, stating that if they have resorted to dynamite in order to strike at some of the bitterest foes of the workingclasses they know what a gang of highway robbers and ruffians the rulers of France are. "We can live without masters," they say; "it is not the Government that cause wheat to blossom, though it taxes it; it is not our employers who have invented the machines, though they avail themselves of them; we have to take possession of our workshop or factory, and go on working for our own benefit, without parasites. Instead of the present monopolistic system, we demand free federation of the workmen's associations throughout the country, and the world; common possession of all the means of production, (land,

mines, factories, machinery, inventions, etc.); well-being for all."

François, the French anarchist who, after the explosion at the Véry Restaurant had taken refuge in London, has been given up by the English Government, although there was absolutely no evidence of his complicity in the explosion, and although the affair was evidently of a political nature. The London *Daily Chronicle*, a paper advocating "a moderate collectivism," and having on its staff many "Fabians," has made itself prominent in its support of the extradition.

ITALY.

The peasants of S. Gervasio (Basilicata), fearing the approach of the winter, have revolted and destroyed the Town-hall, asking for bread.

BELGIUM.

A miners' revolt has broken forth in Liège.

THE POLITICAL SIFTER.

We gladly reprint the following Anarchistic article from the *Labor Exchange*, Warrensburg, Mo.

"We claim to have a democratic form of government. We claim that the power of this nation abides in the people. All of this we claim and neither men on earth nor angels in heaven dispute our claim.

But what is the real truth of the matter? What does this democracy of ours consist in? When political affairs are concerned we place our population in a national sifter and at the first shake we fling out one half of them, the female portion, old and young, asserting that nature has not endowed them with rational capacity relative to public affairs as He endowed them in domestic and educational affairs, in fact we get them out of the sifter as too refined to remain in contact with coarse politicians or because they are not PEOPLE. Another shake and we get rid of all the males below twenty-one years of age. Of course nature never puts a bright idea, a bright thought into the brain of a boy until he reaches twenty-one years, at least not on political affairs. These boys may be allowed to fill the ranks of our army, man our navy, help pay the taxes, clerk, under some elderly sinecure who cannot or will not clerk for himself, but are utterly incapable of filling any political office or to VOTE for the best man to fill it.

"These two shakes of the sifter get rid of the finest materials, virtually the most refined thoughts and leave but one-fifth, the coarsest portion, and to these we allow but one vote in two years on state affairs and one vote in four years on national affairs. But hold on. State and national AFFAIRS we said! No, we allow this fifth a vote only to elect men to go and manage those affairs as they chose, viz, to fix their own salaries, levy whatever taxes desired and in manner that suits them best, appropriate public funds for shows or anything they may fancy, plunge the nation under avalanches of debts, pass laws to legalize all such deeds, and appoint judges to decide in their favor, and of this without any reference to these poor, deluded SOVEREIGNS who are left at home to toil, make up the enormous taxes and submit to any and all iniquities until the next two or four years when the national farce of VOTING comes around again. Behold the sum total of liberty in America! Yet we are politically the freest nation on earth, except Switzerland, and this mockery is what Patrick Henrry demanded or death itself! Goddess of liberty where art thou! Yet the reforms of our land appeal to this biennial mockery of voting to correct the financial ills under which the masses of the people are suffering. Yes, vote together and all will be right. The earth will yield more bountiful crops, the brain and brawn of the workingman will be stronger. Vote together, friends, and poverty will disappear from the world!

"This is now the siren song of the leaders of the labor forces. It used to be, STRIKE BOYS. It is now strike at the polls." It ought to be REVOLT.

CONTROVERSIAL COLUMNS.

We receive two more communications from Individualists, and as we have already devoted too much of our space to the Individualist, versus Socialist-Anarchism controversy, we cannot publish both correspondences. Mr. John Beverley Robinson has opened this debate; he contributes new arguments; therefore, it is only just that he be given the preference. To the other correspondent we wish only to say that the accusation he makes against us that we are trying to dodge the question at issue, recoils on himself. We have maintained, against Mr. Tucker, that the wage-system is incompatible with liberty, and that co-operation on the basis of common possession of the means of production, is the only rational solution of the social problem. This our correspondent practically admits. Then, "what is *he* hollering about?"

Now, to Mr. Robinson. Here is his letter:

To the Editor of SOLIDARITY,

The fundamental difference, as you explain, between Individualists and Socialist-Anarchists is that the former regard the capitalistic wage-system as caused by slavery; the latter regard slavery as caused by the capitalistic wage-system.

The first of the opinions is mine, that slavery is the cause, and not the result, of the capitalistic wage-system. I go further, I trace the cause of slavery to governmental regulation, to respect for an alleged entity called the State, said by one of its expositors to be "a supra-human entity;" the cause of this respect, identical in quality with respect for a deity, I trace to man's gradually dissipating ignorance of the true relations among things around him,—which is the bottom fact.

As for you, in holding that the wage-system is the cause of slavery, you encounter a dead wall. What is the cause of wage-slavery?

I ask it of you in vain. A necessary historical phase, you reply. True enough; but why did it come; why should it pass away?

The era of fellowship which we both anticipate can only come through a change in the ideas which support the present regime: those ideas are not economic, but are moral ideas of a quasi-religious aspect, and are the ideas which I most antagonize. Among such are the sentiments of patriotism, of family prejudice, of deference to parental authority, of respect for the law, regardless of its justice or injustice, and so on.

As for the wage-system in itself, you oppose it, I presume, not because it is a wage-system, but because it is capitalistic. That is to say, because one receives the product of many.

If a wage-system existed under which the product was necessarily equally distributed, you could not, I think, object to it. Such will be the effect of freedom from governmental regulation. Employee and employer will share alike. Virtually, the employees being able at any time to dispense with an employer and to organize themselves otherwise, the employer becomes a sort of employee of employees, who devide their product with him in the form of wages, because it appears to them the most convenient method. If they prefer to work as a community the way is clear; but if any man wants to hire another he can only do so by paying him his full share of the product;—this is what liberty will accomplish.

When you realize the power of liberty, I do not think you will sneer at it.

I appreciate fully the work that you are doing in arousing feeling. Without the emotions that spur to action, the intellect accomplishes little; it is equally important that once aroused, emotion should guide itself by intellect. Heart is the steam-engine; brain is the rudder.

Both must work well or the ship will be wrecked.

JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON.

On the above letter we make the following comments:

1. Slavery may be in turn, the cause *and* the effect of the wage-system. The immediate cause of wage-slavery nowadays is monopoly in land, machinery, opportunities of any kind, knowledges, situations. This cause would subsist even after the abolition of government, unless we substitute common property, for "private property," and co-operation for the wage-system.

2. Such monopoly is not always and altogether the gift of a government. More often government is the outcome of monopoly and economical inequalities. In old England, the men who had more cattle than they could attend to, by hiring them to others who had less or none, acquired a political power on the latter, and made of them their vassals and serfs. Here, government is clearly the result of economical inequalities. The Italian Republics, the Hanseatic League, etc., are other examples of political power grown out of economical inequalities. The liberty of the people of the United States has been lost, because wealth has been allowed to accumulate in a few hands, mainly in consequence of the wage-system. F. Engels has shown in a little book (a summary of greater works) that the State has been the outcome of private property—and ever will be.

3. The wage-system is essentially capitalistic. It implies the division of society into two ranks: the employees and the employers; men toiling for wages and men looking for profit. Such a division may be temporary at first; it will become permanent.

4. There is no possibility of giving to the wage-worker "his full share of product": firstly, because the employer has to gain something from the bargain; secondly, because in a system of production for profit, the value of the commodities is not determined by the labor performed, but by the relation between offer and demand, *i. e.*, is not a cost-value, but a speculation-value; lastly, because it is not possible to estimate the special usefulness of different kinds of labor.

5. To say that the employer may become a sort of employee of his employees is to repeat a social-democratic fallacy. The employer will always be the ruler and take the lion's share of the product; just as the politician will always be the master, never the servant of his constituents. The only remedy is to do away with employers, as well as with politicians, and do away with the whole system of "production for a profit." This "hiring of men" must be stopped in society, because it is slavery, and because it is fraught with terrible danger. The immense growth of the wage-system during this century, and the effect of modern inventions and a world's trade only increases the danger and evils of that system for the future.

6. We do not sneer at liberty, but we ask for *practical* liberty, the outcome of an equitable social organization.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

GENOSSEN AUS NEWARK.—M. was admitted at the Congress under the name of Levy, as he had been expelled from Belgium. But his true name being mentioned several times by the speakers and even in the official organ of the Social-Democratic Party, *Le Peuple*, he was arrested the third day of the Congress. Besides M., two more Anarchists were admitted as members of the Congress: the Spanish Anarchists and others, however, were refused admission, although representing several thousands of organized workmen.

BEN BILL, SEC. CLEVELAND.—We have received, through comrade M., only $6 for subscriptions of the German and Bohemian groups. The other $4 were sent by comrade A. to *Freiheit*, and have been confiscated by the editor of that paper, together with other small sums, under the pretext of covering the expenses of a May-Day Manifesto, for which neither SOLIDARITY, nor any member or SOLIDARITY group is responsible. SOLIDARITY at May-Day did not even exist.

The valiant champion of Communist-Anarchism, in French, *Le Réveil des Mineurs*, will reappear as a monthly paper. Address Louis Goaziou, box 82, Hastings, Pa.

Received $4.50 from Bedford, Mass; $4 from Kopt; $3, French Group; $1 from A. Evalenko; $1 from L. P. Smyth; $1 from Bernarding; $1.25 from Maur; $1 from Charleston, S. C.; $1 from Goaziou; $1, Leviajon; $4, Philadelphia Group.

We receive, too late for insertion in this number, a letter from Chicago, and other valuable correspondence.

Why Government at All? A Philosophical Examination of Human Government, involving an Analysis of the Constituents of Society, and a Consideration of the Principles and Purposes of all Human Association. By William H. Van Ornum. Charles H. Kerr and Co. Publishers, 175 Dearborn street, Chicago, Ill. Price, 50 cents.

SOLIDARITY PAMPHLET, No. 1. Facts and Figures for Workingmen, 32 pages. Five cents per copy. $2.50 per 100 copies. $20.00 per 1,000.

All communications and remittances must be sent to Post Office Box 2618, New York.

"SOLIDARITY" may be had at Cor. 5th and South Sts., and Cor. 3d and Market Sts., Philadelphia.