

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

NOTES.

Too Much Lloyd-George.

It is good news to find the engineers rejecting, in their dispute with the employers, the compromise proposed by Lloyd-George. It is time "check" was cried to this man. His intrusion into the arena of industrial disputes may advertise him and satisfy his ambition, but it is a bad omen for the men. The scandal of the railway "settlement" is not yet forgotten, and for a man like Barnes to follow in the footsteps of a man like Bell only proves how weak these "strong" men are in the hands of political intriguers.—Every one must know which side Lloyd-George is on, and that no matter what he professes, he comes as a representative of capitalist society, *i.e.*, as an enemy of the workers. It would seem as though the men on the North-East Coast understand this. At any rate, they are beginning to discuss the general strike, and if they grasp the real significance of this, it will mean the speedy exit of Lloyd-George—and good riddance.

A Victory for the Women.

The division on the second reading of the Women's Enfranchisement Bill proves that nothing is squeezed out of the politician unless you have a vigorous and uncompromising agitation outside Parliament. It is, of course, only what may be termed a "moral" victory; and for the moment we are not concerned with the fact that the working woman will find no more help in the vote—if she gets it—than has the working man. The point is, that the tactics that have helped these middle-class women to gain a recognition of their claim would be denounced by the politicians of the Labour Party if used on behalf of the unemployed, or for a no-rent campaign, or for drawing attention to any of the economic evils that are crying for a solution. The respectable Parliamentary representatives of Labour who month after month are comfortably listening to the inane chatter in the House, and draw their allowance while the unemployed starve,—these ambitious persons have no intention of "doing time" on behalf of the cause they have at heart, nor do they wish that any troublesome agitation of the sort should be carried on by their followers. What a handful of women have done in a couple of years overshadows all that has been done by the Labour movement with its time-serving spirit and its pious resolutions. What a tremendous field for direct action lies waiting before us, and what progress will be made when the workers realise it!

Common Sense Better than Coercion.

It is often said that even if it were possible to attain to Anarchism, you would soon have to coerce the people to act in their own interests. Without stopping to explain that this *assumes* the authoritarians really know what is best for others, it will be more to the point to give an example of what recently happened to confirm the advantage of the Anarchist position. In Hackney there is a large firm employing some 900 women. Now it is well known how much ignorance still prevails—even in the House of Commons—on the question of ventilation. The managers of this firm tried in vain to persuade their workwomen to adopt a method of ventilation; but, bred and born probably in little backrooms, they doubtless regarded fresh air as a danger. At any rate, they would not submit; and the managers with much good sense and a wholesome dread of trying to coerce 900 obstinate women, bethought themselves of the more excellent way of enlightening them. So a lecture was arranged, to which they were all invited, and on a screen they were shown the contents of a sample of the air taken from the unventilated workrooms. This was compared with a sample of fresh air, and the comparison was so odious as to the atmosphere of closed-up rooms that they were easily convinced, and have adopted the suggested improvements with satisfaction. Nine-

tenths of the difficulties that arise under *present* conditions, and all that might happen in an Anarchist commune, could be similarly solved. However, there is no darkness but ignorance, and those who are always crying out for the law and coercion are the most ignorant of all.

Labour Politics in Australia.

Some months ago Ben Tillett added his voice to the universal chorus of despair over Labour Parties in Parliaments. In *John Bull* (November 30, 1907) he gave a gloomy enough account of things in Australia. "Surely," he said, "there is no country where parochialism and Bumbledom reign so supremely." Yet this is the country where the Labour Party has had its best chance; and for those who imagine that Parliamentary methods are going to solve the social problem, Australia should be an El Dorado of political promise. It is blessed (?), we are told, with "seven Governors and one Governor-General, seven Supreme Courts and one on top of that, sixteen Parliaments; and little more than four millions of people." What an opportunity for Parliaments to show what they are made of. And they have shown it with a vengeance. Nothing but corruption. Tillett says "they are busy with their mouths all the time," but nothing is done. They must, however, be credited with one success. Without opposition they succeeded in adding £200 per annum to their own salaries, which reminds us very much of the Socialists in the French Chamber.

Another Voice.

In the Melbourne *Socialist* of January 18, Tom Mann gives similar evidence of the futility of Labour men in Parliament. In Adelaide, "where a Labour Premier has had chief official position over a period of years," things are as unsatisfactory as elsewhere. Mann had made a propaganda tour to Broken Hill, and had found the workers enthusiastically responsive, so that there was no question of the people being indifferent to the message of Socialism. Yet in speaking of the South Australian Labour Members he writes: "I am bound to say that, in my judgment, these men have no desire, and make no attempt, to educate the electorate up to a knowledge of International Socialism. As an absolute fact, they have not the remotest connection with the International movement. The subjects that engage their attention are merely of the 'parish pump' order."

It may truly be said that from every country where Socialists and Labour men have entered politics there comes nothing but a cry of despair. Despair and the sickening spectacle of renegadism doing the foulest work of the capitalist class. Anarchists have been right in their antagonism to Parliamentary tactics, but it is none the less painful and disgusting to watch the political game being played and the workers being sold.

The Only Way.

The action of the Walthamstow Socialists in forcibly removing the barrier erected across a public road at Epping is an excellent example of that public spirit so badly needed nowadays in resisting encroachments on public liberties. The Epping Forest Committee, no doubt in the interest of some of their friends, thought to debar the public from the use of the road, and trusted to the apathy of the public to carry their scheme through. Although more trouble may arise, they at least know now that a stand will be made against their base trickery. It is a thing that cannot be too often insisted upon, that the preservation of our footpaths and rights-of-way have been maintained by a constant and forcible struggle against the descendants of those vultures who generations ago robbed the people of their land—with the help of the Government. It is worth noting that the interests of the public in this matter have been aided by a *voluntary* association, the Footpaths Preservation Society; while the State has always helped the robbers.

Why French Revolutions of the Last Century Did Not Succeed.

F. MAURICE in "La Réforme Agraire et la Misère en France."

(Translation from *Les Temps Nouveaux*.)

If, as is often stated, the revolutions of the nineteenth century, so far as their social consequences are concerned, miscarried in France, the reasons are not far to seek.

To begin with, the intellectual development of the masses is slow and works slowly; far-reaching views of the future, of the evolution of nations, the attraction of current politics, do not come quickly within their grasp. To touch the crowd, to interest, stimulate, move it, there must be something more directly personal, more real and more definite than the formulation of remote reforms. The necessary, indispensable factor must be a vital interest of the moment, such as tyranny, a wrong or injustice that stabs mentally or physically, according to whether the suffering entailed is material or moral.

During this hundred years—and what is a century in the life of a people?—the intellectual progress of the masses has not evolved rapidly enough to enable every one to realise the viciousness of our social organisation or to cause public opinion to be struck with the dangers of the situation. On the contrary, during the course of this century the material conditions of life, however precarious and miserable they may have been, have never attained the high-water mark of persistent acuteness, the sense of general calamity, such as drive a population beside themselves and force them, arms in hand, to determine upon a definite destruction of abuses and tyranny. In our day there have been some very violent crises; periods of misery have been both numerous and cruel enough to embitter character and push men toward revolt, thus giving a social tendency to the resultant revolutions. But on each occasion this tendency has deviated. In 1830 it was lost through duplicity; in 1848 it sought success merely in a sanguinary struggle; in 1870 it strangled itself under the illusion of assured triumph.

This deviation of the people's efforts to ameliorate its social condition is due to two principal causes, the first being purely economic.

Industry within the century developed in an extraordinary manner; every human effort and activity was concentrated upon it. The multiplicity of machines, the simplification of labour by mechanical tools, far from driving men from factory and workshop, as at first was feared, on the contrary called the workers to the factory, and in spite of their numbers, in spite of times of industrial crisis and depression, of long periods of over-production, for fifty years every wage-earner seeking work found it for himself and his family.

This industrial development led, among other things, to as great an expansion of commerce, whilst vast undertakings began to change the surface of the country. Industry, commerce, and huge works thus opened up and created situations which the population was quick to note, and seized with avidity. In this movement upward, which drew the masses towards a certain ideal in life, there was satisfaction for all.

The aim of the bourgeoisie, its apeing of and pretensions to equality with the nobility, became during this century a general mania; the evil not only rapidly increased, but tainted the very dregs of society. The characteristic of this epoch became a shrinking from manual labour, considered servile, and desire for employment that would first enrich, next raise, refine, and embourgeois, and finally turn the individual into a seeming aristocrat. Under the impulse of this displacement of original conditions, the great public and private administrations, the industrial and commercial offices, the liberal and artistic professions, the army—all these multiplied, until there was a plethora that suffocated. It was not every one who reached his aim, who became rich, or entered the highest grades of office—but then, what degrees there are within this social hierarchy, from the millionaire to the small investor, from the highest to the lowest functionary!

To judge of the importance of this economic fact, let us simply compare the France of 1789 with the France of to-day. The nobility of the date named possessed what the bourgeoisie now own; but mark the difference in density between the industrial, commercial, military, and bureaucratic population of a hundred years ago and that of our epoch. The rural population, that great reservoir which industry and bureaucracy have drained to excess during the century, at that period retained the mass of inhabitants now absorbed by city and factory. It is

this displacement of an enormous portion of the population through a complete change in the original conditions that has become one of the two principal causes of the miscarriage of the revolutions of the century. For a revolution to be realised to the full, two essentials are necessary—the suffering that embitters the heart and nerves the hand must be of the intensest, and be felt equally by every class of the wretched; and, secondly, the people must thoroughly understand their aim and have a clear conception of the régime they intend to establish in place of the one they propose to sweep away.

Now, at each revolution of the century uniform suffering was lacking, the result being partial explosions of anger only. It was the worker in the cities, in the excess of his misery, gripped by all the difficulties of a painful existence, faced by the iniquities of his employer, who single-handed led the combat. His irritation was skilfully exploited by a bourgeoisie which knew how to use it for the benefit of its own vexations without giving him anything on the morrow of victory, but instead abandoned him, exhausted, alone, half-dead with the conflict. The small bourgeoisie and the country folk not venturing even so far as a change in the régime, the worker was powerless to push his claims. Thus, if the industrial worker has not been followed by the mass of his fellows, it is because the general suffering was not of the same bitter, grievous, or desperate character. To the sons of the small bourgeoisie, to the unfortunate peasants of the countryside, the development of business, of vast undertakings, presented openings and positions which to them meant advancement, often social progress of an un hoped-for sort. Each revolution as it forced power from the hands of one set of officials and paved the way to new masters at once opened up places for a hungry *clientèle*, the more easy to satisfy as the parallel increase in the centralisation of power, of business and undertakings multiplied offices and employments *ad infinitum*. To the proletarians of the countryside the increased wages, the seeming benefits of gratuitous public assistance, the stupid vanity that tends to make them think themselves superior to the city-bred, have been, and still are, highly prized advantages sufficient for their ambition. To the land-owning agriculturist or farmer, as to those in the smaller industries and petty trades, in a word, to all the lesser bourgeoisie, the pride of seeing their sons dressed in an administrative uniform or entering a city office becomes all-sufficing.

The economic fact we state is so emphatic that to measure it one need only glance at the direction popular education takes in our country. From our colleges to our primary schools, does not the instruction given tend to unclass the individual? Where is it sincerely practical, logical, technical? Either in village or town does it consider the position of the family or the necessities of the future? Everywhere instruction is abstract, and ascends—not with a view to further study of trades and crafts, but to the vainglorious task of turning the humblest bourgeois into a bourgeois of rank. From the highest to the most elementary, our schools only consider what are called the liberal or bourgeois professions—commerce, administration, teaching. Have we not, even in Paris, seen the primary schools for girls in less than six years produce twelve thousand aspiring teachers incapable of entering any other profession—twelve thousand unfortunate girls whom later on the administration repudiated, leaving them probably to face starvation? The same with boys. Every desk or office where a pen is needed is greedily fought for by the scholars of the primary schools. The Post Office sees thousands come up for its annual examination, the easiest of any. Is not the canker of existing Parliamentarism the obligatory and compulsory search for places in private or the public services for a host of individuals who have neither trade nor profession?

We should be wrong, however, to lay exclusive blame for the formidable social and class displacement of the epoch upon a mania of the bourgeoisie. We do not pretend that the difficulties of existence or in the choice of a career by the breadwinner are of little account in this assault upon desk and office employment by the bourgeois; a number of economic factors have concurred to produce this displacement. But none can deny that the craving to raise oneself by any means above humble conditions leads a large proportion of the nation to drop manual labour and to detach itself from the lowly position of the parent family. There, at once, we have the instinct of a proud and intelligent people, educating itself rapidly towards the ideal of a fuller and more dignified life, and a blind caprice to imitate old aristocratic customs, due to the haste to climb out of original conditions. Industrialism, which led to the concentration of capital and the subordination of the masses to the interests of the few, would never have resulted in such consequences had it not profited by the unreflecting infatuation of

the populace for a life not merely above necessity, but outside the pale of common sense.

Whatever the cause, one fact is clear and should be noted: viz., the large number of persons who for close on a century have found positions in the various employments which the expansion of new sources of production has multiplied to infinity. Thanks to its facile change of condition, the mass of the workers has very nearly acquired the first necessities of life. To the manual labourers especially the change from field-work to the factory assumes almost the form of progress. It is only after having suffered the vicissitudes of the city proletariat that they are undeceived, finding themselves exposed to a more obstinate misery—that of labour underpaid, of an eternal struggle that appears imposed by fatality, their very wrath seeming impotent.

(To be concluded in our next issue.)

THE ANARCHIST ABROAD.

Let me tell a simple little story of to-day, and then let me draw a simple little moral.

Not a hundred miles from Monte Carlo some English people settled; that is, they built many villas, many hotels (indirectly), a church, a library, tea-rooms, and so forth; in fact, a cleaner little bit of their own England than they could in that country itself because of the insistent presence of the dirty working classes and their disagreeable social problems. And everybody took the *Morning Post*, and some of them made clothes for the natives of Lebombo, besides "supporting the Church,"—that is, putting a half-crown in the plate on Sundays. Thus was their sense of social duty satisfied, and lunches and teas and dinners followed each other in a blissful stream of Riviera seasons.

But one season a Socialist came. Not an ordinary Socialist, but by birth an aristocrat. So of course it was easy to get up a Socialist meeting—no, not quite that; it was "to explain the objects of the Christian Social Union." A bishop spoke, a canon spoke, a banker spoke; all spoke with sincere moderation. But, alas! they were but the tools of the aristocracy, and for once the national spirit of snobbishness was rewarded. The young Socialist spoke, but without any sincere moderation. Belonging mentally to the youthful period of Socialism when it was really Anarchism, the speech dealt not with Bills and laws and parties, but with platitudes about brotherhood and equality and economic freedom, those platitudes that make the intellectual bourgeois so uncomfortable.

A list of books recommended had been placed on every chair, Tolstoy leaflets were fluttered by four hundred hands. In the list figured Carpenter, Whitman, Kropotkin, and Stepniak; but the bomb of the day was the leaflets. Well, this Tolstoy dynamite did its work—the English were scattered. That which had been a compact mass of self-contented prejudice became a mass of struggling atoms, individuals blindly hitting out at each other who had hitherto been satisfied to shake hands and gossip. Parsons, churchwardens, admirals and colonels hammering at each other; gentle old ladies insulting gently those who called themselves Socialists, and as gently apologising; Tolstoy denounced from press and pulpit, and dark suggestions about the killing of kings in Portugal. And then the founding of a Christian Social Union branch, with a committee proposed by a non-Christian, and the active element mostly non-Christian "associate-members"; the secret meeting of these, the parson-chairman resigning his seat to an engineer—Reader, what is the meaning of all this? And the short but private conversation between the parson-chairman and an Anarchist behind the meeting-room door? Anarchist? What is an Anarchist doing in that crowd at all? And the list of books, then? And the Tolstoy dynamite and resulting "anarchy" of the English? Well, of course the Anarchist was simply earning his living in the place and happened in; struck up with the young Socialist and a few others, and although there's no flag flying, he's still there.

And now the morals of this simple little story are simply these: where two or three are gathered together in the name of prejudice, there is the place for the Anarchist. Also, don't be afraid of fingering Tolstoy dynamite among Christians; it will explode freely where the Atheism dynamite will merely make a noise. Another: don't be too anxious to call yourself names; do something and you'll be called alright.

But seriously, the pleasure of consorting with Anarchists, is it not the great luxury of the Anarchist? And is this the time for a life of luxury? I don't think it is; but, then, perhaps some one will say this is only the envy of the Anarchist abroad.

K.

SONG OF THE WORKERS.

Work, work, work,

From the time that the sun gets up
Till it sinks again in the glowing west;
From the morning's dawn without thought of rest
Save a moment's pause for a bite or sup.
Work, work, work.

Toil, toil, toil.

What to us is the social throng?
To feed our children, to pay our way,
We toil without grumbling for scanty pay,
Our nose at the grindstone our whole life long.
Toil, toil, toil.

Grind, grind, grind,

Till old age creeps on us apace;
No time for the man to develop within,
Our strength all exhausted a living to win;
The scars of the conflict all seaming our face.
Grind, grind, grind.

Die, die, die,

Without knowing what 'tis to live;
Working machines without any rights,
Acting, or trying to act, up to our lights.
Our muscles, our sweat, our life's blood we give.
Die, die, die. F. J. F.

A LESSON FROM IRELAND.

OLD IRISH SOCIALISM.

Mr. Standish O'Grady's fine lecture on "Clans, Communes, and Nations," at the Calaroga Club, Dublin, under the auspices of the Ard Chraobh, on Friday evening last, was one of the most interesting we have attended for some time. Mr. O'Grady had a message to deliver. It was the revival of the communal life which was such a feature of early Ireland. He did not want to revive the early clans, of course. The commune was what he aimed at. In his opening remarks he said the clan was a large family, holding together as a social, political, and martial unit, through several generations. "Nation" originally meant a family and nothing more. Dealing with the revolt of the servile clans, who were described by Keating in some such terms as the "scum of the earth," he thought that one would hardly expect such language from a learned divine, and then went on to deal with the monarchist ideas to be found in most historical writers. In reading history, one who believed in the principles of equality, freedom, fraternity was often rubbed the wrong way, as mechanics and the working classes very often were looked upon as low people. The clan system originally existed all over Europe. It was still to be found among the Hindoos. The land belonged to the village and was common property. So also were nearly all the implements of production, such as the mills, weavers' looms, etc. Of course, there was private property in personal necessities, such as clothing, etc.

Mr. O'Grady advised those who wanted a clearer insight into the clan system to read Sir Henry Maine on "Early Institutions" and "Village Communities," also Kropotkin's work, "Mutual Aid." He then dealt with the transition of the land from common to private property, which, he submitted, was a fraud upon the young and the unborn, as they, too, had their rights in the communal property just as much as the others had. Each clan held land and property in common, and governed themselves without armies or police. It was assumed that man was so wicked, egotistical, and predatory that he could never live in society except under the restraints of strong government and drastic criminal legislation. This may be true of our present state of society. This state began only the other day in comparison with the great range of history. For thousands of years man lived in a state of society essentially Communistic, in which there was no government but will of the commune. He would like to drop into his hearers' minds that it might be possible to revive the commune again amongst them. They had been brought up in a society founded upon individualism, but the young could be educated into the Communistic idea. They should be able to do this. Where there were millions of armed men there was sure to be injustice.

Mr. O'Grady said that Ireland at one time was a nation of nations. He enumerated various Irish clans, and dilated upon the glories of ancient Greece: Sparta, Attica, Bœotia. These were extraordinarily populous. The commune stood between the infant and the grave. The land, too, must have been intensively cultivated. Slavery led to the destruction of these old nations. We now have the classes at the top and the proletariat at the bottom. Justice and fair play should prevail. He thought that Ireland might yet become a nation of little nations. When an empire was obliged to have an army and police, judges, executioners, gaolers, and the like to enforce her laws, it seemed to him that she was too big. When the nation was equal and healthy there would be no necessity for these. —*The Peasant*, March 7.

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SOCIALISM AND ITS ENEMIES.

The attacks of the Yellow Press on the Socialism preached to-day has rendered this service to the cause: it has shown the weak position held by many of the leading exponents on questions affecting what may be called "basic principles." This is an awkward phrase, but taken as standing for what are regarded as our fundamental conceptions of a new era in our social life, it will perhaps be clear enough.

The main points selected for attack by such papers as the *Telegraph*, the *Mail*, and the *Express* have been Socialism in relation to property, to religion, and to the family. The defence has been taken up by Socialists of all shades of opinion, and representing all sections of the movement. H. M. Hyndman, Robert Blatchford, H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw—all these have had something to say, and their replies have been taken by the ruling classes, as well as by the unenlightened masses, as representing the Socialist attitude towards these vital questions.

Now, for those of us who understand Socialism and its deepest and broadest conceptions, who are revolutionists in the real sense; who make no compromise with political institutions, who by expropriation would end once and for all the curse of exploitation in all its forms, the attitude of these defenders of the Socialist position must have seemed weak and vacillating in the extreme.

In the Fabian Tract, "What Socialism Is" (No. 4), it was pointed out years ago that Socialism was taking shape in two distinct schools, Collectivist and Anarchist. "English Socialism," it explained, "is not yet Anarchist or Collectivist, not yet definite enough in point of policy to be classified. There is a mass of Socialist feeling not yet conscious of itself as Socialism. But when the unconscious Socialists of England discover their position, they also will probably fall into two parties: a Collectivist party supporting a strong central administration, and a counterbalancing Anarchist party defending individual initiative against the administration." It is worth noting that in 1886, before politics had emasculated the ideas of Social Democrats, even Collectivists had the decency to admit that Anarchists formed a wing of the Socialist party. Soon, it would seem, there will be none but the Anarchists left in the present confusion to defend a Socialism worthy of the name.

But now let us see how the enemies of Socialism are being dealt with by its chosen defenders. It must be remembered that so far this defence has been undertaken by the Social Democratic, or "Right wing" of the Socialist party. But as they speak in the name of Socialism, and, with the exception of Robert Blatchford, ignore the Anarchist Communists—in some cases even denying them the right to be included as Socialists at all—we are entitled, for more reasons than one, to criticise this defence from the Anarchist point of view.

First, as to property. It is clear that our ideas as to the holding of the wealth of the community will inevitably decide the fundamental conditions of life of any new order of society. If it is to be transferred to the State, as the State Socialists affirm, we shall all be subjects of that State, and all social life will take the complexion of a State-organised community. We shall be well-drilled "citizens," members of an industrial army, State-paid, State-regulated, under the heel of bureaucracy and officialism.

Or if we take another view suggested by some Collectivists who assure us that "the government of persons will be replaced by the administration of things," then "the machinery of the Collectivist State will consist of executive committees in each local commune," which is gilding the pill of a coercive State by

tacking on municipal management. Obviously, this compromise does nothing to assure our personal liberty as against the State. Obedience to an "executive committee" is just as essential to the authoritarian conception of life as it is to what is called "good government." But we have had some experience of executive committees; and no matter that you can elect and re-elect, they are still afflicted with the "never-ending audacity of elected persons." And even if municipal control should lengthen the chain of our bondage, it is as certain as anything can be that we shall not have gained that economic freedom which we all need, and which a *revolutionary* change to a Socialist society most certainly implies.

On the other hand, we have the Anarchist Communist contention that property as at present considered must disappear, to be replaced by the communal ownership of all the means of production, for the benefit equally of all members of the community. Many Socialists—even Social Democrats—admit the justice of the Communist ideal, but they decline to preach it. Why? Because Communism implies, firstly, the complete expropriation of the capitalist thieves, and an economic equality which State Socialism by the very nature of things denies. It is ridiculous to talk of "the government of the people by the people." There is only "government of the people by"—a Government. No matter from what class elected, a Government remains always a Government: it has power, it makes our laws, it must be obeyed.

Now perhaps we shall begin to understand why there has been so much parleying with the enemies of Socialism over the question of "property," and why even good Socialists like Blatchford are discussing how much compensation the thieves are entitled to, and why Hyndman, who stands first amongst Social Democrats, is compromising with the exploiters on the question of equality. It is because the bedrock question of all questions is the holding of property, and if you are to deal with it in a revolutionary spirit, you must be a revolutionist and be prepared to face the bitter antagonism of the capitalist class and the prejudices of the uneducated workers. To take up such an attitude means to destroy all hope of ever becoming a "Socialist" M.P., which, unfortunately, is the way most leaders of Socialism are going at the present time.

It is the political turn which Social Democracy has given to Socialist ideas that is responsible for the confusion in which so many of the issues are involved. In 1883, writing on the "Socialisation of the Community," Bebel could say: "The State expires with the expiration of the ruling class" ("Woman," p. 178). After twenty-five years of political life, he—and his followers—are all for the State and reformism. It is the same in England. Revolutionary ideas are discarded in favour of paltry measures suitable for Parliamentary elections; and the ruling classes are to be soothed with the knowledge that Socialism does not mean equality (Bebel has said, "It gives to all equality in the conditions of existence"), and better still, that it does not necessarily imply expropriation without compensation. It is difficult to decide which is the most disappointing spectacle—to see Hyndman denying economic equality, or Blatchford discussing the question of compensation with the worst exploiters of the people.

It is pitiful to find intelligent advocates of Socialism taking up such illogical and (it must be said) anti-Socialist positions. And if it is not to pacify the ruling classes and to disavow the Revolution, why is it done? What should we care about Captain Jessel's views on human equality? Or, indeed, what does he and the whole gang of exploiters care for humanity, much less equality? He and they are, by the economic position they maintain, those who live by the robbery of the workers. If Socialism is to end exploitation, the workers must take back all the wealth stolen from them by the barbarous methods of the feudal baron and the capitalist employer. To compensate these thieves implies that they will still have the privilege of exploiting; otherwise of what use would the price of their compensation be to them?

And the cruel irony of it all! Let us take some facts of comparatively recent history. By the year 1843 the robbers had stolen in little more than a century 7,000,000 acres of common land from the people. In face of such a crime, has one the patience to talk about "compensation"?

It is known to-day that 5,000,000 people, mostly parasites, take £830,000,000 of the annual national income. It is stolen from the workers. Does Socialism acknowledge this colossal theft by "compensating" it? And the holocaust of victims that is offered up to this Moloch of monopoly! Take the death-rate of our industrial centres—who is responsible for this hideous human sacrifice? The capitalist and the system he upholds. Shall we compensate him for all the murders of which he is

morally guilty? It does not bear thinking of. We do not talk of revenge, but we affirm that all the exploiters who may have to earn their livelihood in a Socialist society will receive a compensation which never before has been vouchsafed by mankind to its oppressors. The capitalist must understand that the dawn of equality is the end of private property. That is the message of true Socialism.

(To be continued.)

AN APPEAL FOR "FREEDOM."

The response to last month's appeal was hardly so good as we had hoped for, and we would again impress upon our readers the necessity of a substantial increase in the contributions to the Guarantee Fund if FREEDOM is to continue as an 8-page paper.

The sums received during the month are acknowledged on the back page.

THE IMPRISONMENT OF JOHN McARA. POLICE PERSECUTION AT BELFAST.

Comrades who read the *Anarchist International Bulletin* will have seen the brief account of the malicious attack on McARA in Belfast. He had but recently gone there in search of work, and his activity as a speaker and seller of literature being well known, it is not surprising that he soon commenced his meetings. The Belfast crowd, which is noted for its "loyalty," gave him a fair hearing, and even subscribed 6s. for him to obtain literature to sell the following week. Events in Lisbon induced him on the next Sunday to refer to what every one knows to be a fact: that the King of Portugal had been assassinated (not by Anarchists) through his own folly, and that if a king is fool enough to try to govern as he did, by robbing the Exchequer and crushing all liberty, then he must be content to live as the Czar does—imprisoned in a palace and out of the reach of the people.

McARA pointed out that even King Edward would not be safe if he attempted to act as did Dom Carlos, and every one knew that his immunity from attack was not due to the "vigilance" of Scotland Yard, but to the fact that he had never attempted to interfere with the liberties of the English people. All this was well received by the crowd, which, as McARA pointed out in his defence, being so "loyal," would have resented any violent attack on Royalty. He was, however, arrested and charged on the evidence of a police official with having said that "he was prepared to do for King Edward what had been done for Carlos in Lisbon."

Having no friends and no means of defence in Belfast, the police evidence was accepted before McARA's own statement, and he was ordered to find two sureties of £20 each or to go to prison for three months. He is now serving his sentence, as it is impossible to obtain sureties in Belfast. He writes to say he does not mind his imprisonment, but he is anxious for his wife and three children, who are at present in Dundee. We have opened a fund on their behalf, and shall be glad to receive any help that comrades may send. The following sums have already come to hand:—

Collected at Bath House 8s. 6½d., Essex 1s. 3d., Voice of Labour Group 3s., J. Dubois 6s., W. Wess 2s. 6d., W. Fraser 2s., Liverpool Direct Action Group 5s., Mrs. Morris 7d., Collected by Greenboam 2s. 3d., Weckruf Group 1s. 6d., Collected at a Group Meeting of the Leeds Self-Educational Society 3s. 6d., Miscellaneous 6d., total £1 16s. 7½d.

"Voice of Labour" and International Groups.

A

GRAND LITERARY EVENING ENTERTAINMENT

Will take place on

Wednesday, March 25,

AT THE

Bath House, 96 Dean Street, Soho,

In aid of the Wife and Children of Comrade McARA, who at present suffers imprisonment for our cause at Belfast.

Comrades and their Friends cordially invited. Commence at 8 p.m.

GENERAL STRIKE IN ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

The stokers and sailors on the steamers plying between Buenos Aires, Monte Video, Rosario, Fray Bentos, Paysandu, and other river ports have been agitating for a strike for a considerable time. Their grievances were many: poor pay, bad food, long hours, despotic treatment, unseaworthy ships, and last but not least, the masters have been attempting to force a *libreta* on them—that is, a pocket-book to be carried by every worker, containing his measurements, weight, finger impressions, and photo.

This last bit of capitalistic impudence was the "last straw," for it meant bringing the men down to the level of professional criminals. The men, as could be expected, bitterly resented such an outrageous imposition. They, naturally, protested that it was bad enough to be treated like so many dogs at the hands of every little upstart of a petty officer, but it was adding insult to injury to classify them—the masters' breadwinners—as so many confirmed criminals.

Now it so happened that these stokers and sailors belonged to a society called "Cabotaje Nacional," and to this society they appealed for protection in the defence of their rights as honest citizens and breadwinners. But the "Cabotaje Nacional" was no longer its original self, and could not respond to the men's call. It had been started many years ago with the object—the express object—of upholding the men's rights; but, as so often happens in the Trade Unions of England, it had been cleverly and surreptitiously undermined by the masters themselves! And so when the critical moment came, the men found that their Union of comradeship and, as they thought, strength had been turned into a Union of officialdom and compromise. Fortunately, however, there were more than a few level-headed fellows among the stokers and sailors, who immediately understood that it were madness to expect their rights to be properly or honestly upheld by this, their old Union. On the strength of such a conviction, a letter was immediately published in *La Protesta*, exposing the official poison in the heart of the "Cabotaje Nacional," and calling upon all comrades to meet at the headquarters of the Carmen's Union, with the object of starting a fresh Union and deciding on a course of action.

Such a call was almost unanimously responded to by all the men in the old Union, and especially by those who up to then had been non-Union men. At the very first crowded meeting a list of conditions for the masters was drawn up, a list which would take too much space to detail here. Suffice to say that it demanded higher wages, shorter hours, better food, and seaworthy ships; and a flat refusal was given to the idea of accepting the unjust humiliation of the *libreta*. If these demands were not acceded to by the masters, a strike was to be proclaimed.

I may here state that the *Protesta* had much to do towards this quick and strong organisation of the semi-scattered stokers and sailors on river boats. And the *Protesta* took a deep interest in this organisation for two important reasons: one, that it had all along seen that this very much ill-used lot of men were in absolute need of unity; and secondly, that the time was ripe for striking a telling blow at capitalistic and governmental tyranny. The *Protesta* therefore suggested to the Argentine Federation of Workmen that a general strike should be proclaimed, firstly, to back up the claims of the stokers and sailors, together with other justly dissatisfied trades, but principally as a universal workmen's protest throughout the country against the Law of Foreign Residents, and demanding its repeal. This is the law, as comrades will recollect, which was voted by Congress at twenty-four hours' notice, and which gives the Government the power to expel an alien "undesirable" within thirty-six hours after arrest without even the scant privilege of a trial. This means, in other words, that the police—in conjunction with the Ministers in office—can overrule the Constitution of the country and do all the hellish deeds they wish with alien workmen who may commit the unspeakable crime of taking the platform at some of their meetings and proclaiming that they are men! This in a Republic that was fought for and founded on democratic lines, and where there exists universal suffrage for all native-born males over 22 years of age! What wonderful things the voting paper does, and its unique power on behalf of the voters is—every reader can fill up the gap to his own liking.

Well, to continue my narrative, the Argentine Federation of Workmen called a meeting of the delegates of the different Trade Unions, and at this meeting it was unanimously decided to proclaim a general strike for January 10 last. The general

strike—which was not general, for reasons I shall presently explain—lasted more or less three days. As a protest on the part of the workmen against the aforementioned Law, it was an undoubted success; as an end to obtain a means, it unfortunately proved a failure. But the proletariat of Buenos Aires has not been disheartened at this failure; on the contrary, he seems more disposed than ever to gather up all his forces so as, sooner or later, to overthrow capitalistic greed and governmental despotism. So I may truly say that the army moving towards emancipation in this part of the world is, to say the least, extremely active, and means to attain the goal for which it is fighting.

Now to the cause of the failure to bring about the general strike. For some time past there has been a slight split in the ranks of the workers, owing to disagreement between Anarchists and Syndicalists at last year's Labour Congress. The Congress was called by the Syndicalists with the object, as they put it, of unifying the forces of Labour. The Anarchists protested against this action of the Syndicalists, as they said it was quite unnecessary—there existed already a "Pact of Solidarity" signed by all the trades in the Republic. This brought much abuse from the Syndicalists, which was responded to in equal measure by the Anarchists. Evidently the Syndicalists feared they could not win the day by fair means, so they stooped to foul ones. They started by attempting to expel some Anarchists from the Congress on the plea that they were not bona-fide delegates. The result of such an anti-Anarchistic, coercive measure you can well imagine. To cut a long story short, the Anarchists got 186 votes against 9 in favour of Anarchist Communism once the Social Revolution was declared by the proletariat of the Republic. The Syndicalists found themselves utterly beaten, and they have not ceased barking ever since.

Now let me explain that the Argentine Federation of Workmen was founded by Anarchists; that the Syndicalists have been working hard to overthrow the Federation—or F. O. R. A., as it is called—by starting a counter Federation. This was the cause of the failure to bring about a general strike. The delegates gathered at the F. O. R. A. declared unanimously for a general strike, the Syndicalists refused to join; the trades affiliated to the F. O. R. A. went out on strike, and those few in sympathy with the Syndicalists went on working. Of course, what with some ill-advised trades (to obtain a petty revenge) continuing at work, with non-Unionist blacklegs, and the usual help given the capitalists by the Government's soldiers and sailors, the strike could hardly prove as successful as it might have been. Still, it was successful in scaring more than a few capitalists, with the police into the bargain.

Yours for the Revolution,

JOHN WALDO SMITH.

PROPAGANDA NOTES.

NEWCASTLE ON-TYNE.—The one subject of discussion here is the strike. That is all one hears in the street, among the crowds at the corners, and those who stroll from street to street. We have found this a good opportunity to spread our ideas, and we are trying to arrange some open-air meetings.

Comrade Heron has given an address on "Mutual Aid," which was interesting and well received. On the 29th inst. we are to have John Turner down to speak at the hall of the Newcastle Socialist Society, 77A Blakett Street, at 8 p.m. Subject: "What Anarchism Really Means."
H. RUBIN.

BURNLEY.—There is no group formed here as yet, but there are some avowed Anarchists, and many who are interested in our literature. A comrade who has been in the habit of selling FREEDOM and pamphlets at the S.D.F. Club has had a rather rude experience of what Social Democratic "liberty" amounts to. His case was brought before the committee, and it is understood they decided that he would have to wait till we had Socialism before he could be allowed to sell in the club! He, however, announced his intention of selling outside—where, fortunately for liberty, Social Democracy has no power—and succeeded very well.
M. S.

Group Notice.

The Newcastle-on-Tyne International Anarchist Communist Group hold their meetings and lectures every Wednesday at 8 p.m. in 71 Cookson Street.

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INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

France.

The situation in France should be closely watched by English comrades. The Antimilitarist propagandists are being bitterly persecuted by Clemenceau and Co. Hervé is again in prison, as are also Almeyreda and Merle, all of that excellent paper *La Guerre Sociale*. The idea, however, is spreading—whether quickly or slowly does not matter; it will grow.

The twelve comrades of the General Confederation of Labour who were singled out for prosecution by the Government were acquitted after having been tried for signing an appeal to the soldiery not to fire on the workers in time of strikes. Whether or not this is to be taken as a bona-fide reply to the Government's attitude towards the Syndicalist movement is not easy to decide in view of the brutal sentences passed on the Antimilitarists of *La Guerre Sociale*.

On every hand France is preparing for extraordinary developments, and even the capitalists feel that something may happen in the near future, perhaps not altogether to their advantage. All revolutionists look to France to lead in another great effort for mankind.

Spain.

Surrounded by the life and activities of the twentieth century, and suffering the persecution and torments of the days of the Inquisition—that is the fate that has fallen upon our comrades of Barcelona.

Writing on January 10 from the prison of Barcelona, a comrade sends to the *Bulletin de l'Internationale Anarchiste* an account of things happening there that recall the doings of a Torquemada. The agents-provocateur have played the game of bomb outrages to such an extent that they have found excuses for laying hands on all whom their spite and suspicion have marked as their prey. The homes of the Anarchist comrades have been brutally raided, papers and letters seized, comrades arrested and thrown into prison, where they remain, tormented by vermin, sleeping on the bare ground, with the worst of food and not enough to stave off the pangs of hunger, half dead with cold, and no hope of a trial, such even as Spain offers to the victims of the priestly reactionists. Meanwhile their families remain in utter misery and suspense. So once again we ask all friends of liberty to raise their voices against that hideous anomaly—the Spanish Inquisition in the twentieth century.

Portugal.

Very little news is allowed to filter through from Lisbon, but it is known that the whole political régime is changed since the assassination of Carlos. The barefaced thieving of Franco has given place to a reformed financial administration, constitutional guarantees are restored, and a general amnesty of all political prisoners will shortly be proclaimed. Such are the consequences of a violent end to a stupidly selfish tyrant. It is in accord with English hypocrisy that those who enjoy liberties gained in the past by the most bloody and brutal struggles should express holy horror at the revolutionary action of the Portuguese rightly struggling to be free.

Switzerland.

A little piece of news from Switzerland has much significance. The *Labour Leader*, in reviewing Lloyd's book on the Swiss Democracy, has been lauding the democratic institutions of that country. In view of the situation, perhaps they will now enlighten their readers as to how these institutions are used in the interest of the workers. Firstly, then, the right of asylum for Russian political refugees has been signed away by these democrats; so democracy and despotism are hand and glove. And we have not forgotten Millerand—the *Social Democrat*—with his love for the Czar. Secondly, by a trick in the use of the Referendum, the authorities in Berne have managed to squeeze through a law against the strike, which the *Voix du Peuple* of Paris says is an attempt to suppress the right of Labour to combine. *Vive la République! Vive l'Etat Democratique!* Is it not encouraging for the future, when we may be under the heel of Burns or of John Ward, the brute who discusses the best weapons for shooting strikers? And there are others of his kidney.

Japan.

From Japan comes news of the definite formation of a Land Restoration Society, which has headquarters at No. 1, Mazimachi, Shitaya-Ku, Tokyo. Its object is "to restore to the people the equal right to the land, and thereby secure to every

individual the foundation of a free and independent life." In the "Declaration" we read the following, which reminds us so much of conditions at home. Speaking of the condition of the people, it says:—"They are compelled to submit to the power of the landlords and bear the heavy burdens, or to crowd into the towns and lower wages by competition, or separated from their families to wander from place to place. . . . Let politics and laws be ever so much improved, and the means of production and utility developed, yet if the present system of landlordism be not abolished, and the true foundations of equality, by granting to all their natural right to the use of the land, be not established, the people will suffer under their enslaved conditions for ever."

Our Japanese comrades are displaying as much intelligence as courage and determination in their propaganda.

Australia.

Here in Broken Hill are at present 2,000 miners, truckers, etc., out of work. It means starvation and misery, at a time when the workers and their families should have all the comfort they possibly can get, as the thermometer points to 100 and even 110 degrees in the shade.

The recent crisis over in America is even felt here in Broken Hill. Lead, zinc, etc., went down in price, hence the slackening of hands. In fact, all over Australia starvation is prevalent.

Mr. Keir Hardie, by the invitation of the Barrier Social Democratic Club, paid us a flying visit. He was accorded a public reception, and after they had gone through the farce of welcoming the great political battler, he addressed the people of Broken Hill at the Hippodrome.

He outlined the form of Socialism he wants, and said that it was not opposed to religion, that he was a Christian himself, that he would bring it about without bloodshed, and that if the workers would only stick together and vote for the right men for Parliament then things would be all right. At times it seemed as if Keir Hardie ventured too far into boisterous water, but becoming aware of its dangers, and not being a good swimmer, he struck out for the calm again, and there he stuck.

He gave us a little of Scotch history, and how the poor peasants were driven from the land which their fathers and grandfathers already had in their possession, incidents which were quite enough to call forth a rebellious spirit in the audience; but he smoothed it down and told us that all will be squared in Parliament. After speaking for an hour and a half about nothing in particular, he left by the night express for Ballarat, where he gave a similar performance, and so on. But I could not help wondering whether he really was the great Keir Hardie, or only the shadow of the genuine one they are making so much fuss about in the capitalist press.

About three weeks ago Tom Mann came to the Hill; he also received a public reception. (By the way, I wonder whether they would accord a public welcome to Comrade Fleming, or any other advocate of Anarchism.) I had never heard Tom Mann before, but his frank manner struck me considerably. That Tom can't work himself up to Anarchist Communism is a pity. He is still a mixture of politician and direct actionist. He does not believe in the present form of capitalistic governments, but wants local governments instead (officialism). He has done some good while here in Broken Hill. He formed a Socialist Sunday School, and enrolled 38 pupils. Many a miner has had his eyes opened by Tom Mann's announcement that electioneering will help them but little, and that they had to bring it about themselves by combining political with direct action. Here is where Tom didn't come to the point in denouncing Parliament altogether. Notwithstanding his lack of comprehension in various matters, it was a treat to listen to him; but what I missed was a discussion—he did all the talking himself.

Altogether, in another year or so the Australian Labour movement will be as good as any wellwisher desires it to be. Great splits for the better have already taken place, which will bring it nearer and nearer the realisation of its aims.

January 19.

E. P. HONICKE.

United States.

The unemployed problem is assuming extraordinary developments. At the present moment, however, the centre of interest is Chicago, where a brutal and organised attack on the Anarchists by the police may lead at any moment to events similar to those of 1886. Already the tactics of the brute Shippy, chief of police, have brought about an attempt at his assassination, although, in spite of the vicious perversion of facts indulged in by the *Daily News* correspondent, the

assailant has not been identified as an Anarchist. The truth is, all progressive and advanced individuals and societies are up in arms against the police methods, which are used to support all the capitalist corruption of the Jungle City and crush popular liberties. To prove this, we quote the following letter sent by the editor of *To-Morrow* to the *Chicago Tribune*. (*To-Morrow* is not an Anarchist journal, but an advanced sociological magazine.) He writes:—

February 4, 1908.

Dear Sir,—Referring to your "Red Peril Again" article in to-day's *Tribune*, I desire to point out the close analogy between the conceptions of law and order held by Chief Shippy, if the quotations in the *Tribune* are true, and by the late Premier Franco of Portugal, to whose methods of suppression and conceptions of force rule are directly blamed the assassination of King Carlos and the Prince.

Uprisings, defiance of the law, are made of the same material, whether in grammar schools, in boards of bank directors, in municipal governments, or in the conduct of the monarchies of Europe; and the same psychological conditions that will bring about upheaval, rebellion, "anarchism" in one will bring it about in the others, and, conversely, the same procedure that will eliminate the tendency to destroy in one will do it in all.

History is prolific in instances to prove that it is never the "Populace," but always the attitude of the enthroned powers that has fanned revolution into a flame, and the law holds good in that even intellectual, social, and economic progress is not so much the result of what reformers do as the effect produced by the naive performances of those who enjoy privilege and are permitted to continue with their abuses merely because it is "custom."

Those who are posted know that here in Chicago there is no menace of the "Red Peril," except the menace results from the mental attitude of Chief Shippy, whose very fear that there will be a meeting of a few independent spirits who might criticise drastically not only the abuses that surround us on every side, but also the orders from a chief of police which, under a subterfuge, are in direct contradiction of personal liberty and free speech guaranteed under our Constitution.

I am no prophet, but to a certainty there will very shortly be at the polls, if not otherwise, a rebuke administered to all American officials who adopt Russian and Portuguese methods of muzzling the protests of an abused class.

PARKER H. SERCOMBE.

Canada.

The secretary of the Workers' Friend Group of Montreal writes:—"We had a largely attended English meeting on February 16, addressed by our comrade Emma Goldman, the subject being 'The Relation of Trade Unionism to Anarchism.' We sold a good many of the FREEDOM pamphlets, which shows that we are succeeding in the English propaganda. Greetings from all the comrades."

DEBATE AT BATTERSEA.

Those who were fortunate enough to be at Laburnham House, 134 High Street, Battersea, on Sunday, February 23rd, had an interesting and pleasant experience in hearing the Anarchist position debated by two such able opponents as our comrade N. Walter and J. Fitzgerald, of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Comrade Walter defended our position in a masterly way, and in spite of all the manoeuvres of his opponent he certainly showed very clearly the scientific basis of our ideal. The numerous Anarchists who were present were enthusiastic at our comrade's success. It is unfortunate that such an able exponent is not more often in the field.

Comrade Walter, who opened the debate, alluded to the mistaken conceptions of Anarchism. Contrary to the ideas of many, it is not opposed to Socialism; he insisted that he spoke as a Socialist and an Anarchist. He reminded his opponent of the pernicious influence of politics; how Socialism had become less revolutionary as a consequence of the use of political methods. Success had paralysed parties, and the S.P.G.B. might become victims of it also. For success meant compromise, and that meant the sacrifice of principles. In asking him to debate on "Anarchism versus Socialism" they proved they had not grasped the situation. While Anarchists appreciate the evil influence of monopoly and exploitation, they understand that authority and government are the mainstay of the present system. We Anarchists, he said, are Socialists, but we negate all authority. He then pointed out that the debate was really a question of Anarchism versus Democracy. He also dealt with the question of organisation without authority, and gave an example of this in the life of the Redskins. Social Democrats do not understand how this is possible, and claim that their State would be different to the capitalist State. Then he spoke of the fallacies of man-made law and majority rule—how illogical it is to suppose that any question can be decided by a majority. Man is a social animal, and he can organise on the basis of need.

Experience of things acts as a guide, and in order to secure the greatest happiness customs and habits have evolved which maintain social relationship, but their influence is not based on man-made law.

This is a brief summary of our comrade's remarks, but it is impossible to do justice to his eloquent exposition of Anarchism when one has to rely solely upon memory.

In replying, J. Fitzgerald spoke of the satisfactory manner in which his opponent had explained his position. But still, he argued, you could not have organisation without authority of some sort. None of the Anarchist writers, with the exception of Stirner, followed out their theories to their logical issue. They sooner or later gave expression to statements which implied authority. He knew of only one logical Anarchist, Stirner, who recognised that to postulate any form of organisation was to sacrifice his Anarchist theory. To prove his point, Fitzgerald quoted a lengthy extract from Stirner's writings. He (Fitzgerald) cared not what you called it, to organise for production on a basis of need, as Comrade Walter laid down, was admitting authority, the authority of necessity (!) The Anarchist objected to man-made law, but did not negate the authority of natural law. With regard to the co-operation of individuals, where agreement existed the issue was clear. But who, he asked, was to decide in the event of disagreement? This question demanded a definite answer.

The debate was followed by questions and discussion, in which several comrades took part, Fitzgerald and Walter replying to the various points raised.

One good feature of the evening was the large muster of comrades residing in the district, and it would be comparatively easy to form a strong group to carry on outdoor work in the approaching summer. Who will take the first step?

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(February 9—March 12.)

FREEDOM Guarantee Fund—J. S. Richfield 1s. 6d., E. P. Honicke 9s., R. O. 6d., A. G. 6d., J. B. 1s., F. Baker 1s., M. Brodman 2s. 6d., W. Fraser 1s., K. W. £1, W. Wess 3s., H. Glasse 5s., R. F. Muirhead 3s., W. Ms. 2s.

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