

To the MINERS!

AN ANARCHIST MANIFESTO.

FELLOW WORKERS,—In the midst of the terrible struggle in which you are engaged, we, the Anarchists, ask you to consider for a moment why you are fighting, and for what purpose.

Is it simply to retain the bare and meagre livelihood on which you have hitherto existed? Then even your success would be a failure, for the struggle would only cease to again break out with renewed bitterness before many months had elapsed.

To-day you are the slaves of those who neither toil nor spin; you work for others who do nothing for you but to rob you of the greater part of your earnings. Do the wages you have been receiving represent the wealth you have produced. On the contrary they simply suffice for your bare necessities. All that you have produced above and beyond has gone to make riches and luxury for the landlord and capitalist.

The reason is simple. The soil, the minerals which nature provides, and to which all have equal right, the capital, *i.e.*, the machinery, buildings, plant, railways, manufactured goods, &c., which are the product of the labour of generations and thousands of workmen, are monopolised by the few who have appropriated them by force and fraud, cunning, and the tricks of trade, extortion and unpaid labour.

You, the workers, helpless, propertyless, and starving, must sell your labour to get bread for yourselves and children, you must work on the terms laid down by the boss, or starve. And those terms are that all you produce above a bare subsistence wage goes to the masters in the shape of rent, royalty dividends, profit, wages of management, official salaries, &c. You are thus the mere beasts of burden whom the master uses and exploits. As long as he can make profit out of your labour he allows you to sweat and slave in his mine (or factory, or workshop); when you are incapable he turns you adrift—to starve, to suicide, to beg, or to live on the charity of friends and relations. You make all wealth. You toil under dangerous and cruel conditions, and in return you barely get the means to live.

You die before your time; your wives are worn out by care and anxiety; your children are killed by preventable diseases; your daughters are forced to work in sweater's dens and sometimes to eke out a scanty living on the streets, while the master grows fat on your misery, and if you dare rebel he turns you out till your starving bellies and your children crying for bread compel you once more to cringe at his feet.

These monsters do not care for your welfare. Then why care for them? Strike, not for a matter of wages, but to put an end to this system of legalised robbery and murder once and for ever, and if they attempt to crush you by force show that you are men and have the courage of men.

Do not listen to those humbugs who tell you to be moderate and law abiding. You have been moderate and law-abiding in the past, and you are starving. The Law, the Government, is your enemy. It is simply the weapon of the capitalist robber to crush you. It exists to protect his property, *i.e.*, the booty he has plundered from you; to prevent the outraged and disinherited of the earth from taking back the wealth they have produced to satisfy their natural cravings.

Whenever you demand even the least portion of your rights, or even protest against injustice, the Government sends its hired bullies—the police, and its uniformed cut-throats—the soldiers, to crush and terrorize, and if need be to maim and massacre you. At Hull, at Bristol, &c., this was made clear. To-day in South Wales especially but also more or less throughout all the mining districts it is equally clear.

It matters not which party is in power; all are alike, thieves in the pay of thieves. Politicians of all shades, Conservative, Liberal, or so-called Labour, are simply humbugs who would draw you from the only effective method—your own action. They talk on trivialities and side issues while you are starving. Their only remedy is lead and steel to murder you.

No! If you would be free you must take the matter in your own hands. You must put an end to the system that enslaves you. You must sweep away masters altogether, and take back all the wealth you have made, and which is necessary to production—all land and capital, in short—to be the common possession of all, and used through your own free organizations for the common good of all. Thereby you will put an end to poverty and overwork, prostitution, and involuntary idleness, and make this earth a paradise, instead of the hell it is to-day.

To do this you must show no respect for law or property. You, the miners, must take the mines and lock out the masters, instead of allowing them to lock you out. This is the only method of effectually ending all strikes and all wars whatever. The extinction of mastership means the free co-operation of labour.

But if you are not prepared to fully assert your rights as men you can at least move in the right direction. You can show your masters that you are determined not to starve quietly, while you are surrounded by wealth. You can teach them that it is dangerous to drive you to desperation. As long as you merely rely on strike funds and outside assistance you will never succeed, the master can always hold out longer than you. By disposing quickly and effectively of the stocks of coal the coal owners possess, you will do more to end the strike than by weeks of starvation. By refusing to pay rent (or allowing the landlord to charge you with it when the strike is over)—and thereby also stopping the taxes you pay in your rents, you will do more to injure the propertied classes, and therefore benefit yourselves, than by any amount of purely constitutional resistance. By taking of the wealth around, of which you and your family have need (for which at the worst you will only get food and shelter in Her Majesty's Gaol) you will show your bosses that you are in earnest, and at least compel them to refrain from carrying their tyranny too far.

Your own mind will offer other suggestions. Remember that everything which makes it dangerous and unprofitable for some to accumulate riches out of others labour is good for the worker. Everything that makes it hot for the tyrant is good for the oppressed.

Miners, be determined! Insist on your rights. If you only dare to set the example the workers of the world will follow. Everywhere they will take back the wealth of which they have been plundered, and on the ruins of wage-slavery and the workers misery they will rear a new society where none will command and none obey, where none will be rich and none poor, but all will live in equal fellowship and all will be assured of plenty and comfort, culture, and freedom; in short, Anarchist Communism.

Miners to the Front! Down with the Robbers.