

OUR GREAT EMPIRE.

FELLOW WORKERS:—

You who are toiling from morning until night to produce all the wealth we see around us, yet which we are never able to enjoy: did it ever strike you that the army and navy, for the maintenance of which we are taxed to the extent of many millions annually, are kept up solely for the benefit of the richer classes, and not for our benefit at all?

You talk a great deal about the necessity for defending your country from the Germans, the French or the Russians, but how many of you who talk in this way ever possessed a square inch of country that you could call your own? Not one of you; yet you allow yourselves to be gulled by the thieving rogues who have stolen your country, ruined your fields and forced your children to play in the gutters, to such an extent that, when they want to plunge the country into war in the name of British Glory and Civilization, you raise your voices and cry out "Hurrah for our country!" "Hurrah for our Army and Navy!" Fools all of you! Surely you can see for yourselves that England to-day, like every other country where civilization has gone, is in the hands of a ring of stock-jobbers, who will only allow the worker to gain a livelihood so long as he makes wealth for them.

You talk about your country, you, if you have not enough to meet the demands of the landlord every week, have your home stolen, the home that is so dear to you, that has cost years of toil to get together, and you, your wife and children are turned into the streets, and then if you are found resting yourselves by the roadside, you are perhaps sent to prison as a rogue and a vagabond.

Your country! when, go where you will, you see on every vacant piece of land, "Trespassers will be prosecuted." When you read of men being shot or imprisoned for attempting to take a hare in order to feed their families. The parson tells you "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," yes, the landlord's.

Look around at London and the other large towns of England. Are they anything to be proud of? What were once beautiful fields, interspersed with pleasure gardens and farm houses, through which pleasant streams flowed, and the birds sang, now a filthy festering mass of bricks and mortar; in place of the trees you have factory chimneys belching forth poisonous fumes; in place of pleasant streams you now have noisome canals, whose green fetid waters throw off germs of disease which your children have to inhale. "Merrie England" as the poets used to call it! "Merrie England" indeed, to the poor wretch who has to wander homeless and hungry in a land of plenty, seeing the rich feed on all the luxuries that other people's labour has provided for them, whilst he is forced, with thousands of others, to live a life of misery, and ultimately go down to a pauper's grave.

Wherever you go to-day you see the foul destroying hand of capitalism at work. We see our children growing up pale and sickly for want of fresh air and proper food; we see ourselves, we Englishmen, once the pride of the world for strength and endurance, gradually growing weaker day by day. We see the workhouses growing larger; we see the unemployed increasing year by year. Machine production taking the place of hand labour, factories taking the place of fields—and this is England to-day.

You patriotic Englishmen, who imagine that you are part and parcel of this Great Empire, dare you look into the future and think upon your old age? Dare you think of the time when through old age or decrepitude you will be incapable of working? Sometimes when you are walking through the streets you

will meet an old man or an old woman with shuffling gait and downcast looks, clad in a horrible garb, feeling that they are looked upon with contempt by the well-dressed "respectable" people who pass them by. These are the aged and infirm workers, who, having spent their younger days in producing wealth that the richer classes have stolen from them, are forced to end their days in that prison, the workhouse, where they are punished for the crime of being poor.

You call yourselves brave, courageous and noble-hearted! If you really are so how can you look upon these atrocities without feeling your blood boil with indignation.

But we kid ourselves that we are a free and happy people; but it's all bogey.

Millions upon millions are spent annually for the keeping up of the army and the navy simply for the benefit of the ruling classes—those brigands who rob you every day of your lives. They may well say that England is a fine country to day, it is for them, but for us it is a country of homeless, propertyless serfs, who are forced to work from morning till night in order to keep body and soul together.

But England can yet be a happy country if you really want it to be so. The matter is in your own hands. Is this state of affairs to continue or not? Have you a mind to alter it? If so tell your fellow-workers that you will no longer submit to quietly being robbed by the ruling classes; tell them that you wish to be free; get them to join in and help spread the idea of REVOLUTION—that is the only means by which we can alter this state of Society.

We want to see in England a time when all the means of production shall be in the hands of ALL, instead of being in the hands of a few. We want to see a time when there shall be an end to the Landlord, the Capitalist, the Lawyer, the Politician, and the other frauds who are living upon us to-day. We want to see man free to enjoy life, as he should, without the everlasting fear of poverty and seeing his family plunged into misery. When this comes about we shall then see great cities like London disappear, and once more see in their place the green fields and trees, for then there will be no necessity for men to crowd together in these huge masses in order to get a livelihood. Then all talk of patriotism will disappear with capitalism, and we shall realise the truth of those words of Robert Burns:

"Man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be, for a' that."

This is what we Anarchists are striving for. Will you help us.

Anarchist papers, pamphlets and other literature can be obtained at 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W.