

Freedom

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THE INSURRECTIONS IN SPAIN AND ITALY.

At a time when everything seemed to be so quiet in Europe, and the working populations seemed to have been so well converted to the theory of trusting everything to their representatives—two great popular insurrections, in Spain and in Italy, broke out to remind us that until now, for the masses of the people insurrection still remains the only available means for redressing their wrongs.

Want of bread and famine were the causes of the upheavals in both peninsuls. By the end of the nineteenth century, after all the tremendous progress that has been realised in science and industry, the masses of the people have again only one means to escape starvation: to throw themselves, unarmed, against the soldiers; to see their wives and children throwing themselves under the hoofs of the cavalry horses, against the bayonets of the infantry, and under the guns of artillery... This is where we are after a century of all sorts of industrial improvements and of parliamentary rule.

And—let not our rulers say in excuse that they had before them in this case one of those great social problems which may require dozens of years for their solution. In Italy and Spain, the problem was as plain as its solution was simple. It was known, months ago, that the crops were very bad in those countries which usually export bread-stuffs; it was known that people were starving and plague stricken in India, and that a famine had broken out in the chief grain-growing provinces of Russia; that crops were bad in Hungary; that war was going to break out between the United States and Spain; that the corn-traders were going to bring bread to famine prices by speculation. Everyone knew that. But those gentlemen who undertake to govern and to represent the people, *had they done anything to prevent the starvation which everyone saw coming?*

No. They had done absolutely nothing; they had thought of nothing. It was only after they had shot hundreds of men and women of the people that they made up their minds to abolish the import duties on corn. It was only after the massacres which were perpetrated at Milan that the rulers of Italy thought of taking some measures to prevent famine; and by opening the granaries of the Ministry of War, reduced the price of the pound of bread from 2½d. to 1½d. And yet, no one—the so-called radical deputies no more than the others—had even so much as *thought* beforehand about what had to be done in order to prevent bread from reaching famine prices.

It was necessary that insurrections should break out in a hundred little towns of Spain and in 143 towns of Italy (according to official information); that the peasants should march against the townhalls, loot the grain-stores, shoot the corn merchants, and die by the hundred under the shots of the soldiers, before these gentlemen thought of bread for the people.

The result is that all over the country in Spain, insurrections bearing a truly popular character are now going on. In scores of small towns and villages the people march against the townhalls, take possession of all the taxation papers and property registers and burn them. The gates of the prisons are opened and all those who are kept therein are set free. The shops of the corn-dealers, and very often all richer shops as well, are plundered, and the richer citizens are compelled to disburse money for feeding the people. At the same time, the insurgents loudly proclaim that they have enough of the monarchy, enough of the Cuban war which is fought in the interest of a few big exploiters; and they proclaim the so-called "cantonalist" program, which means the independence of every city and township and their free federation. That movement grows every day, and it is certain that when it has reached Andalusia, the peasants, as they have already attempted to do more than once, will simply take possession of the big landowners' lands. When the war comes to an end, the movement will only take a still greater extension.

In Italy the insurrection took a still more determined character. For a fortnight in succession, there were, every day, from three to four insurrections in different towns, in which the workers came into an armed conflict with the army, and every day in succession there were from 15 to 50 killed in those conflicts.

In Milan, the insurrection took a much more formidable development. It is now known that for the last twelve months a general uprising was often spoken of in Italian workers' circles and amidst the advanced republicans. To overthrow the monarchy and to proclaim a federal republic, in which every province and every city would obtain full home-rule, in the same sense as it had in the mediæval republics—was an idea which began lately to be widely spread in Italy. The starvation-revolts

which broke out during last month with such an unexpected vigour, and the barbarous and cruel way in which they were suppressed, only increased the agitation which resulted in an outbreak of such force at Milan, that it could be considered as the beginning of the Social Revolution. Nearly all trade organisations took part in it. It was no more a famine-revolt: it was an uprising of the poor against the rich, with a vague idea of proclaiming the commune of Milan, and ultimately the commune of all the neighbouring region.

The people entered the palaces of the rich and built its barricades with carved-oak furniture and velvet cushions seized in these palaces. The rich shops and especially the grain stores were plundered, while barricades erected in the suburbs of Milan at all the gates, encircled the army which occupied the central parts of the town, and the circle grew narrower and narrower with every hour. There was a moment on Sunday when the position of the soldiers in the centre of the town became critical, and it was only the arrival of half an Army corps, with artillery, from Lodi, which changed the situation. The rescue-army opened for itself a passage from the suburbs of the town to its centre by sweeping the streets with the shot and the shells of its guns.

We learn from eye-witnesses that there was a moment at the beginning of the uprising when more unanimity on behalf of the workers and a more determined purpose might have turned the scales in favour of the insurrection. If the Commune of Milan had been proclaimed at the outset, and if the next purpose of the insurgents to establish a Federative Republic had been made widely known, it appears probable that the soldiers, who began the battle against the people most unwillingly, might have refused to perform the butcher's work which they did perform later on in the heat of the battle.

Unhappily, the railway workers, who first intended to join the insurrection and to destroy the railways, and had a great gathering at the station for that purpose, were persuaded by one of the deputies to return to their homes. He found of course that "the time had not yet come for a revolution," and advised inaction. As the revolution did not openly proclaim its wider purposes, a few hours of hesitation gave the rulers the time to concentrate their forces.

The people, unarmed, inaugurated new tactics, by storming the roofs of the palaces, and throwing therefrom bricks, tiles and marble-corners upon the troops; it fought desperately in the streets and on the roofs.

As to the butchers, they performed their work in the most outrageous way. When the soldiers entered a street, they occupied the side-walks and opened fire upon the windows, thus killing scores of inoffensive people—women and children—on the balconies and in the rooms themselves. They swept the streets, crowded with women and children, with artillery fire, and the most moderate estimates put at 500 the number of killed (38 women and more than 100 anarchists in their number), and more than 1,000 wounded—most of them in a ghastly way, by the modern small bore-bullets which, owing to their rapid rotation, make immense funnel-shaped holes in the body.

Now the courts martial and wholesale exile by order of the administration will complete the work of the butchers.

One thing, however, is certain. The idea of the Social Revolution, beginning by the Commune and extending in a federation of Communes, has been proclaimed in Italy. It will bear its fruit. And the chasm between the rich and the poor, the rulers and the ruled, has been dug so deep that nothing will ever be able to fill it. The people all over Italy learns how the noble ladies of Milan supplied the soldiers with wine and food, and decorated them with flowers, asking them "to strike hard" and "to shoot straight" when it came to the extermination of the workers and the salvation of their jewels and wardrobes. They now know that in the eyes of these ladies the life of a worker's wife and her child is not worth a silk-dress in the ward-robe of these ladies, or a piece of carved-oak furniture in their drawing rooms. And the most timid of the Milanese workers have now learned that their keeping aloof from the insurrection will not whitewash them in the eyes of their rulers. Insurgents or not, they are treated like a conquered nation; they are deprived of all their rights and forbidden even to meet and to discuss their needs.

Once more history has repeated itself. A great revolution has always been preceded by great insurrections. And it is certain that the uprising of Milan and the butchering of the people which followed it will do more to give a truly social character to the next revolution, which already thunders in Italy, than all that has ever been said or written by the revolutionists.

And then—Is the uprising of Milan the last or only the first act of the great struggle now going on in Italy?

AMERICAN NOTES.

Nothing of course occupies so much attention as the long threatened war with Spain. The Administration which, continuing its predecessor's policy, stood out like a wall against the popular outcry, was at length forced to yield, and is now bound to make or break itself. I confess my surprise. We have been so accustomed to see the government maintain commercial interests in defiance of popular clamours that surrender to the war-spirit after so much procrastination and "invincible calm" was scarcely expectable. The entire situation is critically interesting. The political condition appears to be this: The Democrats who have the majority in the Senate will get the responsibility for forcing the war, as it is there that the hottest talk has all along been indulged, offensive action urged, and the most ultra propositions offered. Hence if intervention by the European powers be offered that party will have to suffer the consequences. The Republican party on the other hand, possessing the majority in the House and the Administration, and the record of having fought off war as long as possible, is "in the double corner" so to speak. If Europe protests they will say to the people at the elections: "The Democrats did it." If the war is successful, upon them will redound the glory of the success, for being in the majority the management of the war comes upon them, the trump card being, "They forced it on us and then we footed the bills, the only thing the Democrats did being to oppose financial measures."

The most important results to the workers so far have been the passage of the bill for increasing the army and the revenue bill. The former bill was disputed in some of its provisions by the Democrats and Populists as likely to create a large standing army in time of peace (which it most likely will); but the contenders were appeased with reassurances, or silenced with the lash: "You have forced into this; don't hinder and delay things now by tying our hands." In the case of the revenue bill which provides for a loan of 500,000,000 dollars opposition was more various and more prolonged, but was, of course, forced to yield before putting itself in the unpopular position of unpatriotism. The sole modification of this new bond issue was an ostensible sop in the shape of a "popular loan," instead of the original "high-priced shares" which "limited investment to bankers." The theory is that the good citizen who has 25 dollars tied up in his stock will now be able to buy a bond and help his country at 3%. The opposition in the House proposed free coinage of silver, coinage of the silver seigniorage, an issue of green-backs redeemable in either gold or silver, an income tax. The majority would none of it; bonds they wanted and bonds they got; and it is to be supposed that those capitalists whose interests are suffering through destruction or delay of commerce, will speedily seize the opportunity to reimburse themselves and heal their wounds. O ye foolish unborn ones! Why will you insist on coming in out of the untaxed nowhere to settle the bill? In the expressive language of the U. S. "your goose is cooked,"—and the other fellow will eat it! On this beautiful first of May, in the year of our Lord 1898, I am able to say what you joyous little kids now hilariously holding up imaginary Spaniards in the gutters, will be doing in the year 1907;—sweating to reward the patriots who sat in the fifty-fifth Congress and voted that other men should go to war and pay for it. That is to say unless Moses Harman, whose excellent editorial in re the subject appears in *Lucifer* of April 27, is right, and the increased debt exasperates you to repudiation; in which case, of course, the regular army will be needed at home.

In the strictly economic province we have not greatly felt the increased prices yet, but the markets are steadily rising, and we shall catch it soon.

"Nevertheless and notwithstanding," I, in common with John Edelman of *Solidarity*, cannot condemn the war. I remember Montjuich though I have not forgotten Chicago. I recognise that we are still in the era of political organisations; that most of people believe in them; and that at the present stage of the game there is no way to knock 16th century Spanish torture on the head save through such a breaking up of its political authority as will either wipe it out entirely or force it to humanise itself at least to the not very difficult ideal of modern commercialism, people's beliefs being what they are it requires a government to do it. Not that there have not been pluck and means and desire enough among a number of Americans from the start, to have combined voluntarily with the Cuban insurgents and driven the Spaniards out; but the government, for fear of the destruction of "our" European commerce, dared not countenance such voluntary efforts which would have drawn the fire of all Europe. And the people dared not do what their "representative government" forbade. Those who did, went to jail for it; so that in this city we have the tragi-comic spectacle of an individual now serving two years in prison for doing at his own expense what the government is now doing at others'.

And yet at the end of all its blunders, all its lies, all its furbished patriotism; in face of all the stealing and place-selling it is going to do, I must say that in this case the war is a people's war and that the government is the unwilling instrument of a splendid human sentiment;—a dangerous tool, a treacherous tool, a tool with more edges on its handle than its blade,—still a tool. And since the people are too ignorant to buy liberty wholesale, cheap, one must even content himself to see them buying it by retail, dear,—thimblefuls of it with oceans of tears and blood.

To be sure there is no strictly anarchistic comfort to be gotten out of the present situation; patriotism has been so quickened that it is doubtful if the workers would not voluntarily forbear to press an advantage against their masters, in order to "help the country." For instance at

the present moment the entire militia of this famous strike State of Penn. has been incorporated into the new Federal army, and in three days the State will be without its "defenders." A beautiful chance to strike, hard and heavy, before the new ones are organised. But they will not do it. I presume the like is the case in Spain. It's a case of Commercialism against Mediævalism, and the hearts of the people are in that, not in their own cause. Meanwhile, though it is certain that that question is bound to be settled first, the ground is at the same moment preparing for the new tyranny and the new revolt. The very first guns off the Philippines have shot more sense of the economic development of the world into American politicians' heads than ten years of socialist agitation. The thorough impossibility of universal commerce and the isolated State is seen with the recognition of the Dewey squadron's position, bound as it is to win a foothold from the enemy or sink.

Thus the Anglo-Saxon Alliance looms up as the future commercial State, and that means increased clearness in the marking of the battle-lines between rulers and workers.

Socialist papers generally condemn the war, together with the Single Taxers. In view of the fact that both are ardent upholders of the necessity of government it is difficult to understand their attitude, except that in general it is the duty of the "outs" to criticise the "ins" at all events. The S. T.'s, in accordance with their last century philosophy and commercial economy, object on metaphysical grounds,—the same sort which led them to declare that Carnegie had a "right" to fortify "his" steel-works and shoot the workers of Homestead who came too near. The Socialists with a more "material basis," (but greater inconsistency in view of their express principle that the State must represent existing material conditions) object because of the burdens with which the people are to be weighted and their understandings befogged, as well as the dangerous possibilities of the new army.

A propos of Homestead, *Free Society* of April 17 contains a most interesting account by Bauer (released a few months since from the Pittsburg penitentiary after four years imprisonment for distributing anarchist leaflets during the Homestead strike) of the facts of that famous distribution. The article should form part of every Anarchist's "archives"; it is history; it shows what sort of animal the working-man is, and rather emphasizes the good anarchistic principle of "let alone." A capitalistic rope is a legitimate consequence; but to be hung by the very people one is trying to help requires remarkable resignation.

Solidarity of May 1st prints a brief account of the *Firebrand* case of A. J. Pope, now serving sentence therefore, and a good article on certain prison-characters by Bauer. Articles by Kropotkin, Kelly and Turner in previous issues were greatly appreciated. As our Scotch comrade, Duff, suggests however, there is one great fault common to all our papers,—they are written for Anarchists, not for the unconverted, and, incidentally, they are woefully lacking in the humorous vein. Where is the good anarchist Voltaire that will make the government funny?

Emma Goldmann and Lucy Parsons, the former now in the west, the latter in the east, continue to represent Anarchism on the platform. No male speakers appear to be abroad.

The tolerance of the Socialist Labour Party is exhibited in their expulsion from the party of Thos. Grundy, their own candidate for governor of Pa. in 1894, for having presided at a Debs meeting. How social we Socialists are!

La Tribune Libre reports a lockout of the miners in nine Illinois towns, and a reduction of 20% in the unorganised districts of Iowa. In the organised eastern districts there has been a 15% rise. The New Bedford cotton-mills strike was lost. Typo Union No. 6 of Pittsburg has bought a farm near the city to accommodate its out-of-works. Printers must turn gardeners in their old age.

Edward Bellamy is reported dying of consumption.

Robert Reitzel is already dead. They who know him and his *Arme Teufel* say that the trail of a meteor has passed, and a coldness and a shadow is in their hearts where once flamed a roseate gleam; I—we—who did not know him, could not read him—it is our pain that we never received the light, and must envy the others even the shadow. All that I know of him I heard from lips now reflections of memory only,—and those lips said to me: "He was ready to die at Chicago."

Salut.

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE.

PAGES OF SOCIALIST HISTORY.

XI.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ETHICS.

In finishing, I ought to sketch their agitation tactics, their mode of propaganda and their polemics against Socialists in general, and especially against us, Anarchists. But courage fails me to undertake this disagreeable task. And then what use will it be to know how little by little their tactics of legal action and agitation led them to this strange conception of Socialism that makes them more reactionary in their claims than French Socialist-Radicals or simple English Liberals and Radicals? Also, I do not think it of much use to tell in detail how Liebknecht and his friends tried to make Bakunin pass for a Russian government agent; how the same Liebknecht calumniated Domela Nieuwenhuis, treated as charlatans and agents provocateurs men of

well-known purity of character, like the noble and generous Cafiero; how at last the same Liebknecht published in his paper that Werner, arrested in Berlin for having a clandestine printing press, was the same who conspired with Hoedel! No, I will not, I cannot trouble myself with the exploits of all these noble legislators; in what specially concerns Liebknecht, the epithets of "professional calumniator" and "Anarchist eater" that our German friends bestowed on him, suffice.

But two things in their tactics are too characteristic for me not to mention them here. One is their individual ethics; the other their behaviour towards revolutionists of other nationalities.

Faithful to Hegel's reactionary metaphysics which preached that the individual must submit completely to the authority of the State and that there is no question of individual rights or needs, the publicists and orators of the party preach the workers that the individual has no signification in history and in society, and that all those who think that individual liberty and the complete satisfaction of physical and moral needs of the individual will be guaranteed in a future society, are utopians. Consequently, the worker must know that he must submit to the orders... of whom?—Ah! of those two exceptional men, founders of "scientific" Socialism, who have discovered the law of concentration of capital, surplus-value, dialectics, materialism, monism, the materialist explanation of history, revolutionary tactics by legal means, communism with an "army of labor specially for agriculture," etc., etc. The individual in general is of no account, but Marx and Engels are the two exceptions of mankind. Their heirs are also exceptions: the Avelings, the Lafargues, as well as their adopted heirs, Liebknecht, Bebel, Auer, Guesde, Plekhanoff and others. The ignorant workman, the human flock, composed of insignificant nonentities must submit to and obey all these "superior beings"... This is what is called scientific and Social-Democratic equality.

And to think that such monstrosities are uttered in a European society that already possesses J. S. Mill's work: *On Liberty*, and that of Guyau: *Morals without sanction nor obligation*; when modern philosophy, according to Professor Wundt, asks the individual, not submission, but good-will.

The crowning point is their behaviour towards revolutionary acts in other countries. Their "Communist Manifesto" said that "Communists act everywhere in harmonious agreement with revolutionists." We know their "harmonious agreement" with the revolutionists of the Paris Commune. Let us see how they behaved towards other revolutionists.

In 1875-76, during the Servian-Bulgarian revolution, when all men sympathized with the insurgents, only Social-Democratic organs carried on a propaganda harmful to those who fought for liberty, in assuaging workers that the revolution was provoked by Russian despotism and to the latter's profit. They uttered the same infamous falsehood about the unfortunate Armenian nation massacred by the Turkish army, which is organised and commanded by German officers.¹

When our Italian friends organised the insurrection of Benevento in 1877, Social Democrats in Berlin cried out that Cafiero, Malatesta and their friends—among them was the hero of the Russian revolution, Stepniak—were all agents provocateurs. The conduct of these amateur policemen in Berlin was so revolting, that a bourgeois paper observed that Liebknecht and Co. could disapprove the action, but that it was hardly honest to dub as a criminal and an agent provocateur, Cafiero, who, renouncing a brilliant career, sacrificed his immense fortune for the social emancipation of the people.

It was especially towards us, Russian revolutionists, that their behaviour was revolting. From 1876 to 1881, at each revolutionary attempt, at each manifestation of the party of that heroic youth that commanded admiration from the civilized world, these international calumniators, with reactionary rage, uttered the most stupid and the most vulgar abuse.

At first, we Russian exiles, escaped from Siberia and prison, protested in the Socialist press against their attacks; but we soon understood that what could harm the Russian revolutionary movement was not their attacks, but their sympathy and co-operation. Those among us, Russian Socialists, who adopted Social-Democratic doctrines, and had Engels, Liebknecht and Co.'s sympathy, immediately became adversaries of the revolution and fought against revolutionists. One of these Russians, highly estimated and protected by Engels' set, N. Outine, distinguished himself by his exploits against Revolutionists and ended by imploring the Tsar's pardon.

Another favorite of Social-Democrats, Plekhanoff, who continues Outine's sad work, boasted in his report to the Social-Democratic congress of 1891, in Brussels, of having had, he and his friends, "to fight for many years against the different factions who held Bakunin's doctrines." (page 4).

To state it clearly, the report includes, under the name of "Bakunists" Russian Federalist-Communists, who were the instigators of the great movement of propaganda among the workmen and peasants (1873-78), inaugurated the heroic struggle of the executive committee and founded the famous Socialist Revolutionary party *Zemlia i Volia* (Land and Liberty). Plekhanoff and his friends followers of Outine, combated all revolutionary parties. "Observe citizens," thus writes Plekhanoff, "that it is not only Anarchists we mean by Bakunists. The late P. Thatcheff thought himself a partisan of Blanqui (so he was). He combated Anarchists and carried on polemics with Bakunin himself... It is also the same with the party *The Will of the People*, led by the celebrated 'Executive Committee.'" (page 5)

¹ The "great" Moltke was its organiser, Holz-Pasha and others are its commanders.

In other words, Russian Social-Democrats, faithful pupil and imitators of Engels, Liebknecht and Co., combated all factions of the Russian Revolutionary party. It is perfectly true; they fought them! And when? When proverbial stupidity and cruelty reigned in Russia under the name of Alexander III; when Pobedonostzeff that Russian Torquemada, when spies, police, and executioners hanged, strangled and transported to Siberian mines women, sublime in their devotion, men heroic in their struggle for the social emancipation of the Russian people, when the enlightened and peace loving bourgeoisie admired and glorified the martyrs of Russian despotism; it is then that the disciples of barracks, and of the army of labor specially for agriculture, combated them. While our great novelist Turgeneff was writing in praise of the modesty and devotion of revolutionary young girls—Plekhanoff was combating them; while the same Turgeneff, on his death bed, recognized "Russian terrorists (the Executive Committee) as men of great character"; while the American writer George Kennan was publishing his admiration for Alexander III's victims, Plekhanoff was combating them; while *Underground Russia*—that gallery so attractive and life-like of portraits of Russian Revolutionists which we owe to the valorous Stepniak's pen—was read everywhere in all languages, and honest men of all social conditions sympathized with them, and women, the world over were touched by these portraits, Plekhanoff was combating them; he was always combating, this courageous Russian Social-Democrat...

But what is the most revolting, and shameful, is that such a report could be presented, read and approved of in a congress of men calling themselves Socialists and Revolutionists.

That is to what an extent the propaganda of legalism, discipline, subordination had to demoralize Social Democracy, for it to approve of such dirt!

Not one indignant voice was raised to recall to decency that strange revolutionist. On the contrary, the reporter has become a popular man among Social-Democrats on account of this report. Like formerly Outine, shortly before he implored the Tsar's pardon, Plekhanoff since his apparition on the scene of Social Democracy in the West, has become a favourite with Engels, Liebknecht and Co. This worthy man declares again in the same report:

"We (Plekhanoff and consorts) can congratulate ourselves now of having swept the ground for scientific Socialism." (Report, page 4). No, it was not Plekhanoff that swept the ground of all revolutionary factions in Russia. If this sweeping of the ground really took place—which is not proved,—the entire glory is due to the great fetish of French patriots, to Alexander III, to his hangmen-ministers, to his innumerable spies... I believe even that the reporter triumphed too soon, judging from numerous articles published in Russian newspapers and reviews, judging from the hisses young Russian bestowed on Plekhanoff when honest and generous young people learned the contents of his report,—it seems, on the whole, that in Russia itself the ground is not swept for "scientific Socialism" and that the Russian Socialist world has more esteem for "Utopians" like Tchernychevski and his disciples... than for Engels and Plekhanoff.

Must we blame Russian Socialist society for this preference? According to the definition of Social-Democrats, each convinced Socialist, each enlightened friend of humanity can justly claim the title of an accomplished Utopian. In the pamphlet by Plekhanoff *Anarchism and Socialism*, warmly recommended by Mrs. Marx-Aveling, we read in italics:

"Utopian is one who, starting from an abstract principle, seeks for a perfect social organisation." (page 4.)

Read that sentence carefully and you will discover that Utopians are men of principle, and that they wish to reorganise present society, based on exploitation, ignorance and oppression, in order to make out of it a solidary and communistic society, where the individual will have liberty, education and happiness among his fellow-men, likewise free, enlightened and happy. I confess to being an Utopian. I am even afraid of not being so enough; for I might be suspected of being a man without principles, like Engels and his disciples, and like them of being capable of distorting scientific terminology, the conception of Socialism and lastly, instead of preaching emancipation and solidarity, of being capable of dishonoring myself so far as to preach the organisation of the army of labour, especially for agriculture, discipline, subordination, in a word Social Democracy...

And you also, friend and reader, I wish with all my heart that you should always remain a man of principle. Every honest man must have principles, and if this quality belongs to Utopians, be a Utopian. Say aloud and repeat without ceasing that the great Utopians,—Saint-Simon, Fourier, R. Owen, Tchernychevski—being men of principle, were at the same time great lovers of humanity; that they sacrificed both fortune and life to the emancipation of suffering humanity, while men without principle, Engels, Singer and others, multiplied their fortunes by exploiting workmen...² Let us add that as you are men of Socialist principles, you will never propagate exploitation and qualifying wages, that you will not calumniate anyone, especially men, parties or nations who struggle for liberty; that on the contrary, you will sustain always and everywhere the efforts of the disinherited to shake off the yoke of oppression and slavery, and that when events call for action and devotion to your principles, you will know how to bear, like others, long years of persecution and imprisonment, and will be even capable of walking to the scaffold as courageously and peacefully as John Huss, Thomas More, Varlin and Sophie Perovsky. W. TCHERKESOFF.

² Among Social-Democratic members of parliament are 7 manufacturers, 2 gentlemen of independent means, 3 traders, etc.

² According to the newspapers, Engels left an enormous fortune, due to his partnership in a Manchester factory.

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NOTES.

THE REVOLT IN ITALY.

The Anarchists of England feel the deepest sympathy for the starving Italian workers in their heroic struggle against the terrible economic conditions under which they groan. The unendurable burden of taxation, largely increased by the policy of the scoundrel Crispi, has reduced the people to the last stage of misery and despair. All honour to the men and women—especially the women—who died fighting for bread for their children. For in reality it was a struggle for bread, whatever other elements may have been there beside. The government—as governments always do—shot them down. But for all its brutality and bloodshed, it has the Social Revolution to face as inevitably as before. The Italian rising and its "suppression" is not the end but the beginning.

LEGAL MURDER NO MURDER.

When an Angiolillo kills a Canovas, some say "how terrible." But here is one who under "Law and Order," has caused the death of thousands in Italy and Spain, and starvation everywhere.

Mr. Joseph Leiter is a millionaire and hails from Chicago, where they hanged Anarchists. This 30 years old Leiter is mainly to blame for wheat selling at 52s. the quarter in England, for a penny being added to the price of the 4-lb. loaf in London, for the bread riots in Spain and Italy, and for all the pangs of hunger suffered by the very poor in Europe. Leiter's corner in wheat will bulge his purse at the expense of the poor in many countries. And this is the brother-in-law of Curzon, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the House of Westminster.

Leiter has killed thousands, but this colossal thief and murderer will not be hanged.

REAN.

SOCIETY'S "JUSTICE" AGAIN.

Need we add anything to the following to impress upon any reader the necessity for each one of us to do our best to end such a cursed system of society as permits such a thing to happen in its midst?

A Prisoner's Story in His Own Words.

I have been locked up three times. As long as I was in work I was never in trouble, then I got out of work, and everybody preferred putting on younger men. I was hungry—did you ever know, sir, what it is to be downright hungry? Well I begged at a door. I knew it was wrong, but I begged and got locked up for it. When I came out, I said, I won't do that again." So I got some leather and cut out a pair of bootlaces, and tried to sell them. Then I got run in again for hawking without a licence. When I came out I said, "I won't do that again." And I walked and I walked, and could get no work, nor find food either. I was dead beat, and I lay down under a hedge—then I got locked up for sleeping out of doors.

A WEEKLY PAPER.

A Group of London Anarchists are collecting funds for a weekly English paper. Would all those interested please communicate with the Secetary, H. Jones, 10 Penton Place, Kennington Park Rd., Kennington, S. E.

Held over till next number: "International Notes," "A 'No-Rent' Campaign," by E. L. Page, and a report of Emma Goldman's propaganda in America.

WILLIAM FRANCIS BARNARD,

Anarchist Poet and Lecturer (Spencerian Essayist at Chicago Exhibition, 1893), is now in England on a lecturing tour and can accept engagements to lecture on any of the following subjects:

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<i>Religion and Freedom.</i>	<i>Why we want Liberty.</i>
<i>The Scope of Freethought.</i>	<i>Free Love and Marriage.</i>
<i>The Evolution of Love.</i>	<i>Civilisation and Freedom.</i>
<i>Herbert Spencer and Anarchism.</i>	

For terms and particulars apply to H. Kelly, 127, Ossulston Street London N. W.

THE STATE: ITS HISTORIC ROLE.

By PETER KROPOTKIN.

X.

If you look still deeper into all the categories of facts which have been hardly touched upon this evening, if you see the State as it was in history, and as it is in its very essence to-day, and if you consider moreover that a social institution cannot serve *all* aims indifferently, because, like every other organ, it is developed for a certain purpose, and not for all purposes,—if you take all that into consideration, you will understand why we desire the abolition of the State.

We see in it an institution developed in the history of human societies to hinder union among men, to obstruct the development of local initiative, to crush existing liberties and prevent their restoration.

And we know that an institution, which has a whole past dating some thousands of years back, cannot lend itself to a function opposed to the one for which it was developed in the course of history.

To this argument, absolutely unassailable to anyone who has reflected on history, what replies do we get?

We are answered by an almost childish argument: "The State is there,"—we are told—"it exists, it represents a ready made powerful organisation. Why destroy it instead of making use of it? It works for ill, that is true, but that is due to its being in the hands of exploiters. Having fallen into the hands of the people, why should it not be utilised for a better end and for the good of the people?"

Always the same dream, the dream of Schiller's Marquis of Posa trying to make autocracy an instrument of enfranchisement, or the dream of the gentle priest Peter in Zola's *Rome*, wishing to make the Church a lever of Socialism!...

Is it not sad to have to answer such arguments? For, those who reason in this way either have not the least notion of the real historical role of the State, or else conceive the Social Revolution under such an insignificant form, and so tame, that it has nothing more in common with Socialist aspirations.

Take a concrete example, France.

All of us, all here present, have noticed the glaring fact that the Third Republic, in spite of its republican form of government, has remained monarchical in its essence. Every one has reproached it with not having republicanised France. I do not speak of its not having done anything for the Social Revolution, but of its not having even introduced the simple republican habits and customs and spirit. Because the little that *has* been done during the last twenty-five years to democratize customs, or to spread a little enlightenment, has been done everywhere,—even in the European monarchies, under the very pressure of the times through which we are passing. Whence comes then the strange anomaly that we have in France—a Republican Monarchy?

It comes from France having remained a State to the same extent it was thirty years ago. The holders of power have changed their name; but all the immense scaffolding of centralised organisation, the imitation of the Rome of the Cæsars which had been elaborated in France, have remained. The wheels of this huge machinery continue, as of old, to exchange their fifty documents when the wind has blown down a tree on the national route. The stamp on the documents has changed; but the State, its spirit, its organs, its territorial centralisation, and its centralisation of functions, have remained unaltered. Worse than that: like so many blood-suckers, they extend from day to day over the country.

Republicans (I speak of sincere ones) nourished the illusion that the State organisation could be utilised to operate a change in a republican sense; and here is the result. When they ought to have destroyed the old organisation, destroyed the *State*, and constructed a *new* organisation, by beginning at the basis itself of society—the free village commune, the free workers' union, and so on—they thought to utilise "the organisation that already existed." And for not having understood that you cannot make an historical institution go in any direction you would have it go—that it must go its own way—they were swallowed up by the institution.

And yet, in this case, there was no question of modifying the whole of the economic relations of society, as is the case with us. It was only a question of reforming certain points in the political relations among men!

But after this complete failure and in face of such a conclusive experience, they obstinately continue to say that the conquest of power in the State by the people will suffice to accomplish the Social Revolution! That the old machine, the old organism, slowly elaborated in the course of history to mangle liberty, to crush the individual, to seat oppression on a legal basis, to lead the brain astray in accustoming it to servitude—will lend itself marvellously to new functions: that it will become the instrument, the means of making a new life germinate, that it will seat liberty and equality on an economic basis, awaken society, and march to the conquest of a better future!... What an absurdity! what a miscomprehension of history!

To give free scope to Socialism, it is necessary to reconstruct society, which is based to-day on the narrow individualism of the shopkeeper,

from top to bottom. It is not only, as they have been pleased sometimes to say in a vague metaphysical way, a question of returning to the worker "the integral product of his work," but a question of remodelling in their entirety all relations among men, from those existing to-day between every individual and his churchwarden or his station master, to those existing between trades, hamlets, cities and regions. In every street, in every hamlet, in every group of men assembled about a factory or along a railroad, you must awaken the creative, constructive, organising spirit, in order to reconstruct the whole of life in the factory, on the railroad, in the village, in the stores, in taking supplies, in production, in distribution. All relations between individuals and between human agglomerations must begin to be remodelled on the very day, at the very moment we begin to reform any part of the present commercial or administrative organisation...

And they expect this immense work, demanding the full and free exercise of popular genius, to be carried out within the frame-work of the State, within the pyramidal scale of organisation that constitutes the essence of each State! They want the State, whose very reason for existence lies in the crushing of the individual, in the destruction of all free grouping and free creation, in the hatred of initiative and in the triumph of *one* idea (which must necessarily be that of the mediocrity), to become the lever to accomplish this immense transformation!... They want to govern a newborn society by decrees and electoral majorities!... What childishness!

Throughout the whole history of our civilisation, two traditions, two opposed tendencies, have been in conflict: the Roman tradition and the popular tradition; the imperial tradition and the federalist tradition; the authoritarian one and the libertarian one.

And again, on the eve of the great Social Revolution these two traditions stand face to face.

Between these two currents, always full of life, always battling in humanity,—the current of the people and the current of the minorities which thirst for political and religious domination,—our choice is made.

We again take up the current which led men, in the twelfth century, to organise themselves on the basis of a free understanding, of free initiative of the individual, of free federation of those interested. And we leave the others to cling to the Roman, Canonic, and Imperial tradition.

History has not been an uninterrupted evolution. At different intervals evolution has been broken in a certain region, to begin again elsewhere. Egypt, Asia, the banks of the Mediterranean, Central Europe have in turn been the scene of historical development. But in every case, the first phase of the evolution has been the primitive tribe, passing on into a village commune, then into that of the free city, and finally dying out when it reached the phase of the State.

In Egypt, civilization began by the primitive tribe. It reached the village community phasis, and later on the period of free cities; still later that of the State, which, after a flourishing period, resulted in the death of the country.

The evolution began again in Assyria, in Persia, in Palestine. Again it traversed the same phasis: the tribe, the village community, the free city, the all-powerful State, and finally the result was—death!

A new civilization then sprang up in Greece. Always beginning by the tribe, it slowly reached the village commune, then the period of republican cities. In these cities, civilization reached its highest summits. But the East brought to them its poisoned breath, its traditions of despotism. Wars and conquests created Alexander's empire of Macedonia. The State enthroned itself, the blood-sucker grew, killed all civilization, and then came—death!

Rome in its turn restored civilization. Again we find the primitive tribe at its origin; then, the village commune; then, the free city. At that stage, it reached the apex of its civilization. But then came the State, the Empire, and then—death!

On the ruins of the Roman Empire, Celtic, Germanic, Slavonian and Scandinavian tribes began civilization anew. Slowly the primitive tribe elaborated its institutions and reached the village commune. It remained at that stage till the twelfth century. Then rose the Republican cities which produced the glorious expansion of the human mind, attested by the monuments of architecture, the grand development of arts, the discoveries that laid the basis of natural sciences. But then came the State...

Will it again produce death?—Of course it will, unless we reconstitute society on a libertarian and anti-State basis. Either the State will be destroyed and a new life will begin in thousands of centres, on the principle of an energetic initiative of the individual, of groups, and of free agreement; or else the State must crush the individual and local life, it must become the master of all the domains of human activity, must bring with it its wars and internal struggles for the possession of power, its surface-revolutions which only change one tyrant for another, and inevitably, at the end of this evolution,—death!

Choose yourselves which of the two issues you prefer.

THE END.

FACTS ABOUT THE ITALIAN REVOLT.

"In the name of the Italian trade-unionists, I beg to inform you that in Italy the social revolution has broken out"—these words, the beginning of an appeal addressed to English trade-unionists and laid before the London Trades Council, embody in terse style the hopes of friends of freedom all over the world when the news of the first week in May reached them from Italy. 1898 stands vindicated now as the anniversary of 1848 when also Italy was the first to rise, before even Paris, in February. The present revolts have failed again though carried on on a scale never seen since the Commune of Paris and the insurrection of June 1848; therefore I do not call it a revolution, reserving this word for the final revolts which will make an end to this intolerable system.

The facts are, as happens in life, more simple than one might imagine beforehand. The greatest perfection of capitalism has brought it nearest towards its own end, "as every development necessarily implies a negation of its base or point of departure." (*God and the State*.) The food supply is no longer connected with the real needs of any locality, but becomes entirely an object of speculation of greedy hosts of middlemen in commercial centres. The admirers of the present system must be satisfied to see how completely modern man is severed from any obsolete birthright in the soil and its products, how everything is somebody's absolute property to use it or to abuse it at his will, and what other place do workingmen take in these speculations but that of some kind of raw material or tools, still necessary for production but replaced at will by cheaper machinery or less skilled workers? Private property triumphs and yet its fall comes nearer by this: for when it comes to the last, man is before all an animal that requires a limited regular supply of food and whilst many starve individually and slowly, they will never starve collectively and rapidly. And here the crisis comes: capitalism cannot stand still, it *must* extend to the very necessities of life and this is something which the most patient people *cannot* and will not bear, and they revolt and will continue to revolt until they win.

Mr. Leiter of Chicago is, in the exercise of his right to make millions in a smart business way, sitting on the safety valve of capitalist society and many honest farmers in all countries join him there to sell breadstuffs at starvation prices. The results are the Italian bread-riots of January and the present revolts in Italy and Spain. It is also seen that it is impossible for any government or parliament to mend the situation and that brute force, *murder* in one word, is the only resource, momentarily effective, of statesmanship in those days just as it was throughout the darkest times of history.

Mrs. Jessie White Mario, who devoted many years of her life in helping Mazzini create a united Italy, has to admit—in two articles in the *Daily Chronicle* of May 14 and 16—the responsibility of all the Italian governments, since 1860, for the present disaster. "All have adopted," she says, "the motto of one of the pillars of the Moderate Church—'taxation on a broad basis,' i. e., taxes that can be laid on the largest number, consequently on the poorest. Such was the grinding tax, the *macinato*, which brought in 80,000,000 lire (£3,000,000), but led to the disorders of 1875-76, when the people rose in all the towns and cities, broke the grinding mills and the famous *contatore* (the instruments for counting the turns of the mill which regulated the tax). Finally they secured the abolition of the hated *macinato*. Such is the still more infamous tax on salt, the only condiment of the poor in the northern provinces, who live on *polenta* (yellow maize flour boiled to the consistency of pas-pudding) from harvest to harvest, thus incurring the hideous disease of pellagra, which after reducing the body to an almost leper-like condition, sends the poor creatures to the idiot asylum or to the madhouse. Such is the triple tax on wheat, flour and breadstuffs—(1) the custom-house tax on corn; (2) the government tax at the city gates; (3) the octroi or municipal tax, also collected there. And not upon corn only, but upon eggs, fruit, vegetables, upon all that forms the staple food of the very poorest classes, who never taste animal food from year's beginning to year's end; who drink water exclusively, and in many cities even this impregnated with deleterious matter. What led to the Sicilian revolution in 1892-93 but this peculiar form of iniquity? The Sicilian peasant and workman live actually by bread alone, or, rather, by bread and horse beans, etc. The absentee landowners let their lands to *gabellotti* (middlemen) who again let and sub-let, until the peasant who does all the work has nothing left for himself. The Sicilian agitation of five years ago led to the state of siege, thousands of arrests, *domicilio coatto*—"i. e.," says Mrs. Mario, "cast adrift on islands or island rocks, compelled to herd with mulefactors of the worst species, to exist in enforced idleness on the government pittance of 5d. per day—shut in all night in filthy, stinking barracks, hopeless of redress, as this form of punishment can be inflicted without trial by judge or jury."

"But, as the result of agitation, of violence," she continues, "the government consented to forego its share of octroi, or tax on corn, flour, breadstuffs at the city gates, and the corn tax was reduced for the whole of Italy by so much as the government had pocketed hitherto. This fact must be borne in mind when we come to the details of the present disorders. The warnings of the few men among the governing classes who saw whither the nation was drifting, and the clamours of the opposition press had availed nothing. But violence had availed; *neminisne jurabit* (it is useful to remember this) said the people in their various dialects."

On the present situation she remarks: "The upshot is that violence has triumphed once more and this time 'all along the line.' All that was demanded calmly and while there was yet time—all that was then refused—is now granted, to wit, corn laws suspended; octroi abolished; food freight reduced 50 per cent by land and sea; corn and flour purchased by government and municipalities; wind and water mills set to work; military and municipal bake-houses opened; bread distributed gratis. Even the rice-field owners of Molinella have yielded, the *risaiule* (women rice workers, see last month's *Freedom*) are free and at work at increased wages." At the same time military law reigns supreme almost over the entire country.

I doubt whether these economic reforms will be seriously carried out or have only been promised to tide over the present panic. The conclusion that all momentary relief is obtained only by violence is obvious, but another conclusion is also forced to the front, namely the inefficacy of all these paltry tinkering measures. The best possible intentions—if we suppose them theoretically—of an Italian government have no influence on the international wheat market nor even on the local middlemen who will pocket most of what the government gives up, and the government will refund itself by some other means of taxation, as they, (i. e., the enormous number of officials and their soldier-protectors), want the money for themselves.

State Socialists are equally powerless; even if every State monopolised the

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distribution of wheat and corn—which the Swiss Social-Democrats have long since advocated—the different States would face each other as so many greedy hostile speculators on the world market and in an age when wars threaten to burst out over so many minor questions, who would dream of an international agreement on the all important question of food supply?

The only serious remedy would be that every locality starts to provide for its food on the spot, independent of all others, for which there is plenty of land and labour everywhere; this would mean the economic independence of each locality, the evident uselessness and disappearance of the political State, in one word: Anarchy. Whether this arrives now or after many more revolts, over the ruins of what might have decayed quietly and peacefully, arrive it will and must.

To all interested in the origin of the situation in Italy and the character of the Italian peasants and workingmen I recommend a perusal Bakounine's letter to Celso Cerretti (1872) in the *Societe Nouvelle*, Febr. 1896, a truly prophetic insight of what did happen in Italy.

It is impossible to give even the barest outlines of what happened from the end of April till the first fortnight in May all over Italy; we must refer to the daily press where—besides the lying official and police telegrams—quite a number of independent accounts found space, dealing sometimes very fairly with the economic exploitation by capitalists and governments as the true cause of the rising. Italy is a miserable far off foreign country and such truths will not affect the loyal and prosperous English, these papers probably thought.

Some events preceded which contributed to rouse and rally the advanced elements. Such were the bread riots in January, the celebrations of the anniversary of '48, the death and funeral demonstrations of Cavallotti, the old republican and the infamous trial of the anarchists of Ancona, Malatesta and other comrades as *malfattori*. On all these occasions the forces of progress had the chance to muster in common fight, demonstration or protest. This may explain to a degree the apparent solidarity of republicans, socialists and anarchists in the middle and the north of Italy, which gave rise to so many phantastic lies of plots and conspiracies. Still the ferment of hunger was the strongest and when the speculation in wheat, at the beginning of war, made the price of bread rise, the purely economic revolts began, chiefly in the South which is the poorest and most backward part of the country.

At Bari and Foggia (the native place of Angiolillo) in Apulia, on April 27 and 28, the townhall, the government offices, the octroi and tax collectors houses, etc., were invaded by the people and burned; particular care was taken to destroy the registers and archives kept in these buildings, a common proceeding in Italian revolts on which Bakounine remarks: "The autodafé of all official, legal and criminal documents seem to me one of the finest actions of a frankly socialist revolution. It is more human and much more advanced at the same time than to cut off heads in the matter of the Jacobins." The magasins and shops of grain-speculators were sacked, but little further or more concerted action could be taken as gendarmes and soldiers intervened and some were killed and many wounded.

These riots spread day by day towards the middle and north. Faenza (Romagna), San Giovanni a Feduccio, Aryano, Secondigliano (near Naples), Benevent, Prato, Lugo, Tinoia, Ravenna, etc. The largest demonstrations and fighting occurred at Florence, at Leghorn and at Naples. From Leghorn it is reported (*D. News*, May 13) that "the wife of a man who was shot seeing Commandant-General Hensch, threw her arms round his neck screaming. Another woman embraced his feet, calling out in pitiable accents: 'Have pity on the poor people, have pity.' The General, it is said, had to withdraw to hide his emotion. He could not procure bread for starving men and women. His orders were merely to shoot rebels." (This same general repressed the revolt at Massa Carrara early in 1894 and presided over the ensuing ferocious court martials). At Naples a students' procession protested against the murder of the young student Massi at Pavia; the police attack on the procession led to a rising where barricades were soon erected, but after several days agitation massacres and the state of siege restored "order" for the moment.

All this was surpassed by the events at Milan, chiefly on Saturday, May 7. The origin of the movement is uncertain; a number of events co-operated. The news of fighting in the South, day by day for almost a fortnight—the arrest of socialists among the india-rubber workers of Pirelli, their liberation by these workers, skirmishes with the police, the next day a general strike by tens of thousands of workers being called out to strike by the strikers of Pirelli's factory,—the alleged intention to hold a mass meeting before the cathedral in the centre of the town, which the soldiers prevented by barring the way of the mass of workers converging towards this centre,—the demonstrations at the large railway station to prevent the departure of troops to the South, to be used against the people there—all this and many acts of brutality and provocation by police and soldiers co-operated and led to a rising of the people all round the town, centring on the wide boulevards round the city, before and at the large city gates, and in one or two main streets in the interior of the city leading towards the cathedral. Barricades were numerous and fighting lasted for many hours. The massacres are terrible—from 300 to 1000 are killed, several thousands are now in prison awaiting their trial by courts martial, and whoever of any advanced opinion is not arrested or killed, has to hide himself or to seek refuge in neighbouring Switzerland, where hospitality is but unwillingly given and arrests have also commenced already!

Letters printed in London papers tell many striking episodes, but space forbids to give even extracts. Of general facts I mention that the soldiers' bullets did wonders, rivaling the famous dum-dum bullets in explosive force. So the results of civilisation are not only wasted on Indian and Soudanese rebels (or patriots, as you take it), but European workers also get to know them! The greater was their courage, as they had scarcely any weapons, and with stones, bricks and a few revolvers faced for hours not only rifles but also guns. Foremost were women and even children who seemed unable to imagine that soldiers, but a few years ago their fellow workers, should now become their murderers. When more soldiers were to be sent to Abyssinia, in 1896, to fall a prey to Crispien's ambition, the people prevented it at the cost of many lives—their massacre by these same soldiers is their reward. I wish they had let them all go to Africa, had let the Abyssinians make short work of them. It is manifest that discipline and authority make scoundrels of everybody and once a person is infected by them, generosity is wasted on him. Another feature of these days was the sympathy and co-operation of the peasants living round Milan who came before the town in large masses, armed as best as they could and fought hard to force the gates, but unsuc-

cessfully. When we think that almost every capital is surrounded by a peasant population hostile to the city and in the hands of reactionists, *this first act of fraternal co-operation of townfolk and peasants* is of very great significance. Another hopeful sign is the Pavia students' journey to help Milan where they had, after defeat, to barricade themselves in a convent. Italian students are poor and ardent in the cause they take up; they conspired with Mazzini, fought with Garibaldi and propagated Anarchism with Bakounine; if now, after a long interval, they become active again, they are welcome; if the rising generation deserts the old system, it is doomed to fall.

And what shall we say of the thousands of Italian workingmen in Switzerland who, if it had only been possible, would have hurried to help the Milanese, laying everything aside, starting as they stood, ready to cross the Alps at this time of the year? A generous spontaneous outburst of solidarity of which nobody thought before, a symptom of how many fine inspirations lie silent now and will burst out on all sides when once things will be moving. It was impossible this time to carry out their intentions; even if hundreds had withstood the hardships of ten hours walk over the Simplon, for hours perhaps in two or three feet of snow; then must descend into a narrow valley between high rocks, with an Italian blockhouse not far from the frontier from where a handful of soldiers and a few guns absolutely control the road,—and before they proceeded by train to enter Italy for Como or Luino, Swiss soldiers would stop them or, if they arrived without arms at the frontier, they would become a prey to the Italian soldiers there.

It is reported (by Reuter from Berne and Lugano, May 15) that at Faido (Ticino) "a company of Swiss soldiers of the canton of Ticino surprised 120 Italian workmen coming from Lucerne while they were all asleep. They were at once disarmed and taken to Chiasso, where they were handed over to the Italian authorities." The same is reported from Lugano, locating only the scene of arrest at Ambri, a little higher up than Faido, but on the same railway. If this is true,—I have not seen anything further—the Swiss republic has sunk deep, indeed! And what about the shadowing and annoying of Italians here in London?!

It is not the time now to make comments on the action or attitude of the different socialist and anarchist parties during this crisis. At present everything is suppressed in Italy, thousands await their trial by court martial, the rest is—order like at Warsaw. The price of wheat is going down, the next crop is near and perhaps some of the promises of the government are held for a few weeks. So perhaps the end is not yet near. But the reverse may as well be the case.

All news of conspiracies is absurd on the surface of it. It required a good deal of conspiring, among others, to weld together this artificial modern State, united Italy; it seems to fall now to pieces all by itself. Curiously enough, even the reactionists do this: do they not do all they can to spread the belief in a conspiracy for the *Commune of Milan* or for the *independent State of Lombardy and the Swiss canton of Ticino*? This idea of the destruction of the centralised State and the federation of independent cities—like those of the Middle Ages to which Italy owed centuries of prosperity and happiness—is hurled at the Milanese rebels as their greatest crime whilst in reality it is one of the first signs of progress in our direction, an idea held but by a few some weeks ago but now known to everybody thanks to the zealous enmity of the government and sure to make immeasurable progress.

In short, hardly ever has a revolt resulted in so much moral discomfiture to its enemies, however victorious they may be for the time being, and in so many hopeful symptoms of vigorous, generous, unabated progress.

Similar revolts occurred in the south of Spain, at Murcia, etc.; destruction of public and octroi buildings, etc., and repression by murderous massacres. The voice of Spain is silenced as that of Italy by the state of siege in all provinces except only one. Once the patriotic infection caused by the war is over (if it is more genuine than Spanish war news usually is!), the people will reckon with their oppressors even in a more determined way than in Italy.

The materialist conception of history apparently triumphs: dearer bread—misery—revolt. But why is not a finger raised e.g. in Germany where bread is also dearer now? Such considerations show that something more is needed than mere economic reasons, that the temperament of the people, their mental education towards discipline or towards freedom, etc., are also potent factors, and this enjoins upon us the necessity of *propaganda* before all. Opportunities arise from themselves but pass away if propaganda has not carried the minds of the people towards freedom. And thirty years of propaganda in Italy have done this to an enormous extent. It seems to one like looking backwards in the dark ages when one thinks that whilst Italian and Spanish workers fought, the French socialists were voting and the German social-democrats are preparing next month's election and probably praying every evening that no riots might occur in their country and spoil their chance as a well-behaving statesmanlike party at the coming poll!

The last few weeks gave us object lessons of the vital importance of *coal* and *corn*, and showed how the regular supply of both is inseparable from the regular working of the capitalistic system. Now on coal depends the very possibility of naval war which is coming forward as the most decisive form of war, and on coal depends the regularity of the carrying trade, the food supply and on the food supply depend revolt and revolution in more than one country. What immense influence then a general strike of miners would have—it controls war and the food supply; it wields an immense revolutionary power and the richer countries where the food supply is not immediately urgent (but how soon would it become so!) would be brought to a revolutionary situation by the cessation of industry from want of coal.

So the capitalist system—after destroying every old local and independent productive power—worked everything into a huge machinery which seems inexpugnable if one does not know where to attack it. But the weak point, the main pillar on which all rests—the production of motive power chiefly by *coal*—becomes more generally recognised and, sooner or later, it must fall.

"The Free Commune."

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An Inquiry Concerning Militarism and War.

The editors of *La Vita Internazionale* and *L'Humanité Nouvelle* have sent the following questions to many well-known Socialists in England, whose answers are to be published in both magazines.

1. Is war still desirable among civilised nations?
2. What are the intellectual, moral, physical, economic and political effects of militarism?
3. What are the best solutions, in the interest of the future of the civilised world, of the serious problems of war and militarism?
4. What are the means that are leading most rapidly to the solution of these problems?

To which a comrade has sent the following answers.

1. There are no civilised nations yet, although there are many civilised individuals; I cannot, therefore, reply to the first question.
2. I believe that the intellectual effects of militarism are dubious; that the moral effects vary according to the nation and its object; that the physical effects are often good; that the economic effects are always disastrous and the political effects unsettling.
3. I believe that the best solution of war and militarism, in the interest of the future, would be to insist that those who desire war for any reasons whatsoever should serve in the front ranks.
4. I believe that the means leading most rapidly to this solution are, for the cowardly, the deadliness of modern war-weapons, and, for honest folk, the spreading of international feeling and the vanishing of race and class prejudices.

N. F. D.

THE VOICE OF LIBERTY.

Now, Man, thou dost awake.
Put the sleep from off thine eyes,
At last the dark of ages dies;
A flush is in the eastern skies;
The morn begins to break.
Hear thou, arise, arise!

Let thy dreams be done;
Master and slave shall be no more!
Around the earth, from shore to shore,
Cry 'tis ended, past and o'er!
Turn and face the sun,
With glory all before!

WILLIAM FRANCIS BARNARD.

The Immorality and Cowardice of Modern Loan-Mongering.

Taxation itself determines the fortunes of the multitude of people now in every country, and the heavier taxation becomes the sharper tends to become the dividing line between the "Haves" and the "Have-nots." Debt too, is a great determining factor everywhere in the imposition of taxation. Looking abroad we see France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy, Spain, ay, Switzerland the Happy itself, plunging deeper and deeper into the Serbonian Bog of debt. Across the Atlantic the same spectacle meets the eye. (The national debt of the world amounted in 1892 to over £8,000,000,000.) Every parsimonious rentier in France who has scraped together enough to purchase an income of 5 or 10 francs a year in the great book of the National Debt is an ally of the potentates of finance, who can say to the political puppets to whom power is given by the "votes" of the "enfranchised": "This tax shall you impose," "This bribe must you distribute." Only when the tax of human misery, begotten of the waste which always attends the free creation of debt, rises to a height which submerges the said rentier, and when the burden laid upon the backs of the people as a whole reaches a height that threatens to cause the entire fabric of State credit to founder in bankruptcy, is there a coalescence of the two halves of the nation to be feared by the men who hold them as pawns in the international game of "high finance"

Beheld without glamour such is the essentially unmoral, inhuman character of "high finance." In its broadest aspect it is nothing better than a fleshless and bloodless effort to make a profit out of the follies, the ambitions, the despair or legitimate aspirations and it may be the misfortunes of nations. All motives are alike to the world banker. Perhaps it is as well that this should be so for in the ultimate result this system seems bound to collapse of its own unwieldiness and ruthless greed. Expedients like that to be tried in Greece, like the one in Egypt, cannot always be available. Neither Spain nor lesser Portugal, to take hardy instances, can be put in possession of for bailiffs, and if all communities could be so as they fell into bankruptcy, the day must still arrive when their credit would be unmarketable. The snowball of public debt cannot be rolled up for ever and ever. Its weight must in time break the back of the strongest nation, and the longer the effectual check of total bankruptcy is in coming, the faster grows the speed at which Nemesis advances. In India now the loan dealer is our master, in all our colonial dependencies, without exception, he is more or less so. Great is the development of man's power over the forces of nature, great his progress in the arts and sciences, mightier and mightier become the agents he wields to conquer and subdue; and as fast as a new element of strength is acquired it is put in pawn. So comes it that the products of human labour and ingenuity have been utilised to multiply the fetters in which men work. In some countries the weight of these fetters is even now so great that a rage to throw them off has entered the hearts of the people, a rage from whence come anarchists, social revolutionists, class jealousies and all those fermenting discontents whose energies have only to unite, and the civilisation which they now sullenly sustain, plotting against, would disappear like a midsummer night's dream.

A. J. WILSON. (Ed. Financial Rev.) in *Contemporary Review*, March '98.

"Free Society." An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism.
13 Oak Grove Av., San Francisco, Cal. U. S.

Pin Pricks, or Let Us Be Logical.

A street.

Bourgeois. Ah, Mr. Anarchist, so I have met you. Well, I'm going to astonish you! Imagine, for once I share your opinions!

Comrade. Oh, bah!

Bourgeois. Seriously! I have just been reading in my newspaper an account of the sufferings of the Italian peasants and workmen. It is horrible!

Comrade. You don't say so!

Bourgeois. I mean it—it is horrible. These poor folks were really dying of hunger. They became enraged, tried to avenge themselves, and I admire them for it.

Comrade. You would not say as much if it had happened in France. Answer honestly.

Bourgeois. I certainly would. I am not so selfish as you think. To be sure I do not share your opinion regarding the future and of the methods by which the present society is to be changed, but I understand that a people must revolt when overwhelmed with misery.

Comrade. A people? Very well! What do you call "a people"? Is it for example 10,000 individuals? Good! Then you admit that 10,000 men might justly become enraged?

Bourgeois. Yes.

Comrade. And 20,000, and 40,000, or 100,000 men?

Bourgeois. Good Heavens! Certainly! One must be logical.

Comrade. Very well! Then also 5,000 men—or 2,000 or 500?

Bourgeois (disturbed). What are you driving at?

Comrade. Say 200—or 50—or 10—or 5—or 3—or 2, or one?

You must be logical, you know!

Bourgeois. Excuse me! I am busy and must be off!

(He runs off—logically.)

From *Le Libertaire*.

Notes on Libertarian Naturalism.

The Naturians are rebels, libertarians, anti-scientific anarchists, who want humanity to return to a natural, not to a primitive state which is impossible. They believe neither in so-called regenerating science nor in machinism, which in the opinion of our scientific anarchist comrades would help to guarantee social harmony; we believe these comrades whom we actively support in their struggle against authority, to be wrong and we are eager for discussion wherever we meet loyal opponents. The Naturians are revolutionists, anti-parliamentarians and internationalists. They are opposed to all political and legislative action. They took an active part in the propaganda in favour of the victims of the infamous torturers of Montjuich. Several papers are now published to popularise their ideas: *L'Etat Naturel*, by Em. Gravelle, *Le Naturien*, by Hon. Bigot, *La Nouvelle Humanité*, by H. Zisly and H. Beaulieu (all of Paris).

Down with Civilisation! Long live Nature! Long live Anarchy!

Paris, April 13, 98.

HENRY ZISLY.

[We print the above note as being a brief statement of an interesting movement which is showing some activity in France. It is not clear to us why science—true science—should be regarded as in conflict with a "natural" life. Quite the reverse, we think; for surely it implies a higher appreciation of nature and a more intelligent regard for her laws. The same with civilisation, which surely implies something quite different to the hideous life conditions imposed on "civilised" man by the capitalist.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The Presidential address of Lillian Harman, president of the Legitimation League, has been published in pamphlet form, making a document of very considerable interest. Herself an advocate of "freedom in sexual relationships," the author announces her purpose and at the same time gives good reasons for the faith which is in her. In an age of specialisation she is a specialist who proposes to concentrate her fire on the fortress of sexual slavery, always keeping in mind that this slavery is a part of that general exploitation which is a great lasting blemish on our social body. And further, she holds that we need freedom from sexual slavery to initiate freedom in social relationships in general, because the highly artificial attitude of the sexes towards each other to-day prevents a mutual recognition of the advantages of freedom in general. When the barriers between the sexes are broken down we may hope that the problem of liberty will move forward to its solution, and that large benefit to the individual, which the social organisation is fitted to develop, be achieved.

The dexterity with which the small pitfalls dug for her feet by the critics of sexual liberty are avoided by the author of this pamphlet is brilliant. The wonder in cramped and narrow minds over what would become of us if sexual liberty were gained is given its well-deserved castigation of contempt.

The title of the address is "Some Problems in Social Freedom," and it is issued from the office of *The Adult*, 16 John Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C. The price is threepence.

W. F. BARNARD.

"FREEDOM" CAN BE OBTAINED AT:

London,

Otto Matthias, 20 Little Pultney Street, Wardour Street, W.
Heigelstein, 39 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square.
F. A. Jones, 9 Little Queen Street, Holborn, W. C.
W. Reeves, 185 Fleet Street, E. C.

B. Ruderman, 71 Hanbury Street, Spitalfields, E.

Sheffield

E. Delorme, 54 Daniel Hill, Upperthorpe.

Glasgow,

W. Duff, 9 Carfin Street, Govanhill.

Manchester, J. Welsh, 37 King Street, Ardwick.

New York, A. Levin, 340 Cherry Street, U. S. A.

Philadelphia, H. Weinberg, 50 South and 2nd Street, U. S. A. Pa.

THE PROPAGANDA.

SHEFFIELD.

On the 4th of May, comrade McQueen delivered a lecture on the Monolith in this town. The subject treated was: "Is Anarchist Communism Practicable?"

Several hundreds people came to hear our comrade who dealt with Property and Government in a superior fashion and well deserved the applause of the audience. The verve with which he attacked Property in all its forms captivated the attention of all listeners. And when he had shown the inutility and evils of government which exists only to support property, our comrade explained to the apparent satisfaction of the audience how a society based on the absolute freedom of the individual could be established on the ruins of the old society which, in spite of its upholders, is trembling on its stand and will soon die of old age and necrosis or rottenness of its structure. One contradictor presented himself in the person of Mr. Beresford, one of the stoutest pillars of Individualism in Sheffield. That he has been cleanly beaten everyone knows, but for him to admit it is quite another thing, and when our comrade had replied to a professional Anarchist meeting obstructor, a water drunkard named Liddle, and was preparing to leave, Mr. Beresford made a mad rush towards an American comrade who had begun to speak, trying to pull him down from the platform; but had it not been for my kindness in repulsing him rather more violently perhaps than he expected, seeing that only three of us were on the platform and a great number of his admirers behind him, our American comrade—who, by the way, does not believe in passive resistance—would undoubtedly have sent this individual to the ground, with the mission to pick up his "Individualism" already severely handled by our comrade McQueen.

I should not have mentioned this little incident were it not that every Anarchist meeting at the Monolith is attended by several systematic Anarchist-meetings-obstructors, to whom we shall plainly indicate that their tactics will not have the success they expect, and that while we mean not to be aggressive in the least, we mean to preserve our right of speech on that platform, should we have to use all the energy of which would-be free men are capable.

Be it known to them.

E. DELORME.

MANCHESTER.

We have been very quiet during the last few months; holding no meetings other than our ordinary group meetings and several small meetings of comrades at which we have discussed questions of principle, the most keenly discussed point being that of the Majority v. the Minority, two or three comrades being of opinion that in cases where the majority and minority cannot agree the majority must inevitably and *quite properly* have their way, and that it would be quite consistent with Anarchism. Other comrades objected being of opinion that any such action would be subversive of the fundamental principles of Anarchism—No Anarchism.

Comrade Barton has spoken several times at I. L. P. clubs; comrade McQueen two or three times and comrade Kelly once at an I. L. P. and once at an S. D. F. Club.

We have also had two or three social gatherings. But the most notable thing that has occurred here has been Barton's secession from the "ould" group. He and another comrade—McQueen, who is also a seceder—have formed another group and are issuing for free distribution a small printed sheet called "The Free Commune," which according to the publishers has a *tendency* towards Anarchism. It is however bound to no doctrine, not even of an Anarchist character, but it is a free lance in the realm of thought.

We have started an open-air propaganda at Stevenson's Square and the New Cross. Had fairly good meetings and a fair amount of literature sold. The speakers who have taken part so far are Houghton, Welsh, and Kelly. We had a rather large demonstration here on May-day organised by the Manchester and Salford Trades Councils, the I. L. P. and S. D. F. The part we took was selling literature. We sold about 12s. worth.

Now a word to Anarchist millionaires. We have a little type, three cases, a small wooden press, and several would-be printers. Also the promised assistance of a Socialist who has been a printer for 40 years. Now some of us are not speakers nor likely to become speakers; still though we may not be able to express our thoughts on the platform we might on paper or we might at any rate be able to print other people's thoughts. Besides many join us but drop away after a while, the reason being, I believe, that we can find them nothing to do. A printing and publishing group will find plenty of work. Again what latent talents may we not possess amongst us? A printing group will tend to develop any such. A small sheet published at regular periods will help the local propaganda. A printing group can produce one. Our meetings want advertising. A printing group can do the necessary printing. I might fill a page of *Freedom* with the advantages of such a group. But we want more type, more cases, and an iron press. To get a press cheap a comrade who is a pattern-maker is engaged in making patterns of the various parts of one. But the getting of the parts cast, iron and certain parts planed will cost £2 or £3. Who can and will help? The treasurer of the press fund is J. Warwick, 36 Hancock, Rusholme, Manchestr. P. J. KELLY.

ITALIAN RELIEF FUND.

An "Italian Relief Committee" has been formed by the London Trades Council, which has published a manifesto appealing for funds for those left destitute through the recent riots. An application has been made for Trafalgar Square for a meeting on Sunday afternoon, June 12th. Any contributions to this fund sent to *Freedom* will be acknowledged in our next issue.

A NEW WORK BY KROPOTKINE,

A splendid propaganda pamphlet, to be published on June 30th,

THE STATE: ITS HISTORIC ROLE,

Neatly bound in cover, 50 pp. Price: 2d.

Orders with cash should be sent at once to ensure prompt attention.

Sheffield Free Communist Group.

Everyone thinking the Anarchist Communist ideas worth discussing and spreading is invited to communicate with E. Delorme, 54 Daniel Hill, Upperthorpe, Sheffield.

FREEDOM PAMPHLETS.

- No. 1. THE WAGE SYSTEM. By PETER KROPOTKINE. 1d.
- No. 2. THE COMMUNE OF PARIS. By PETER KROPOTKINE. 1d.
- No. 3. A TALK ABOUT ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM BETWEEN TWO WORKERS. By E. MALATESTA. 1d.
- No. 4. ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM: ITS BASIS AND PRINCIPLES. By PETER KROPOTKINE. 1d.
- No. 5. ANARCHY. By E. MALATESTA. 1d.
- No. 6. ANARCHIST MORALITY. By PETER KROPOTKINE. 1d.
- No. 7. EXPROPRIATION. By PETER KROPOTKINE. 1d.
- No. 8. ANARCHISM AND OUTRAGE. By C. M. WILSON. 1d.
- No. 9. ANARCHY ON TRIAL—George Etievant, Jean Grave and Caserio Santo. 32 pages; 1d.
- No. 10. ANARCHISM: ITS PHILOSOPHY AND IDEAL. 1d.

Other Pamphlets.

- LAW AND AUTHORITY. By PETER KROPOTKINE. 2d.
 EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION. By ELYSEE RECLUS. 1d.
 AN APPEAL TO THE YOUNG. By PETER KROPOTKINE. 1d.
 THE CHICAGO MARTYRS. Their speeches in Court and the record of their trial, with the reasons given by Governor Altgeld for pardoning Fielden, Schwab, and Neebe; price sixpence. Spies speech in pamphlet form, 1d.
 GOD AND THE STATE. By MICHAEL BAKOUNINE. Price fourpence.
 AN ANARCHIST ON ANARCHY. By ELYSEE RECLUS. 1d.
 THE TABLES TURNED; OR, NUPKINS AWAKENED. A Socialist interlude. By WILLIAM MORRIS. 1s. each.
 (Only a few of these original copies left.)
 THE COMMUNE OF PARIS. By WILLIAM MORRIS, E. BELFORT BAX and VICTOR DAVE. 2d.
 THE IDEAL AND YOUTH. By ELYSEE RECLUS. 1d.
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 MONOPOLY; OR, HOW LABOR IS ROBBED. By WILLIAM MORRIS. 1d.
 USEFUL WORK VERSUS USELESS TOIL. By WILLIAM MORRIS. 1d.
 BIBLIOGRAPHIE DE L'ANARCHIE par M. NETTLAU. Preface d' ELYSEE RECLUS; Brussels, 51 rue des Eperonniers, 1897; 294 pp. 5 francs; post free for 4 shillings *prepaid*.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

In future we must request that all orders for pamphlets be accompanied with cash. We are compelled to adhere to this as we need funds for reprinting.

ATHENÆUM HALL.

73, Tottenham Court Road, W.

ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 5th, 1898

A lecture will be delivered by

W. F. BARNARD, of Chicago,

Spencerian Essayist

at the Chicago Congress, Exhibition 1893,

On "HERBERT SPENCER AND ANARCHISM."

Doors open 3.30. Admission: 3d., 6d., and 1s. Commence 4.

LUCIFER. An exponent of Anarchism in sexual relationships. Price single copy, 1d.; one year, 6s., direct post paid. Edited and published by Moses Harman, Chicago, U. S. A. English agent: George Bedborough, 16 John Street, Bedford Row, London, W. C.

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Sales of FREEDOM.—Delorme 4/6, Swenson 1/4, Edwards 4s., Reeves 1/10, Norwich 4s., Cantwell 1s., Duff 17s., Manchester Group 12s., E. Goldman 4/1, H. Levy 1/4, Marsh 8d., Higgingbottom 1/4, N. Shaw 1s., Marlborough 1/4, Taylor 1s. N. Robinson 2/8, B. Smith 2/8, N. Notkin 12/5, "Free Commune" 1/4, Ruderman 1/4, Wess 1/4, Edith G. B. 1/7, Newsagents 2s., Office 1s.

Sales of FREEDOM Pamphlets.—"Free Commune" 1/4, H. Clay 3/9, A. Levin £1-8-9, Tchaykovsky 1s., B. Smith 9s. 4d.

[Will comrades in the London and provincial Groups make a point of furnishing us with reports of their meetings and progress by not later than the 20th of each month.—Ed.]

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