

Freedom

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THE AWAKENING OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE.

The dream of our poets and political authors, the aspiration of a whole heroic generation of revolutionary Socialists begins to realise itself: "the vigorous arm of the workers raises itself against the hideous monster of Tsarism, against oppression and absolutism."*

Yes, this dream begins to be realised; wherever the revolted students have been attacked by the police and cossacks, hundreds and thousands of workers have fought shoulder to shoulder with the young men so deeply devoted to the cause of popular emancipation.

"The red flag unfolded, the workers of St. Petersburg within two weeks have held two imposing and bloody manifestations against despotism gone mad."

"Singing 'Arise and revolt, oppressed people,' the red flag unfurled, the workers of Kiev attacked the police and cossacks during the manifestations of the students."

"The red flag unfolded in the central market of Tiflis, Sunday 5th May, the workers and some students have fought against the police and soldiers.....revolver shots and dagger stabs..... numerous wounded on both sides."—So run the reports.

But the most important fact occurred at Moscow, at this true capital of Russian life, industry and commerce, this stronghold of conservatism where not for two centuries, not since the youth of Peter the Great has a popular revolt against the absolutism of the Tsars taken place. And it is here that the first Russian barricades have been raised. The telegrams of the English papers announce that "Thousands of workers came to the assistance of the revolting students; they besieged the palace of the Governor General (uncle of the Tsar!), smashed his windows and barricaded the streets, fighting more than three hours against the police and cossacks."

The red flag in two capitals of the empire and in the two ancient capitals of Little Russia and Georgia! Enough to make one lose one's head with terror. And our despots, by their atrocious prosecutions, by their savage brutality, prove the depth of their alarm. The oppressive bureaucracy with the sycophant Pobiedonostzev at its head, clearly perceives that this time the very foundation of its power is shaking; that it is the Russian people, so long oppressed and kept in complete ignorance by the Church, State and formerly slave-owning nobility; that it is the Russian people which begins to struggle against their Tsar, against their inhuman official system. Their terror is easily conceived.

The fact is perfectly well known by everyone in Russia that the enlightened and educated portion of the empire, what may be called Russian intelligence, is against the existing order, against the Tsar and his bureaucracy. This feeling does not date from yesterday. From the beginning of the XIXth century an enlightened and courageous minority continuously attempted to overthrow the absolutism which dishonors and oppresses the people. But each time the despots were quite able to suppress the conspirators, who were never numerous and who almost exclusively sprang from the nobility. The great mass, the real people, did not know them or considered them their enemies.

In bondage to the nobility, dressed in their national costume, ignorant, ill-treated by every wearer of uniform or European dress, the people included all such together under the collective name of "gospoda" (masters, lords) as their born enemies and their professional oppressors. Between the people and cultured society there was always an insuperable barrier which the government carefully maintained by every legislative and administrative measure possible. We have in Russia a special

* Words of Peter Alexyev, the worker, delivered before the High Court in 1877 at St. Petersburg. He was condemned to hard labor and deportation to Siberia, where he was killed by a savage.

† All these officials may deal with the peasants only; no middle class, no nobility, no clergy are under their authority.

‡ The majority of the factory and town workers are peasants who keep in close touch with their villages.

legislation for the peasants. Strange as it may appear, according to this legislation the rural commune enjoys (at least, on paper) much more autonomy than, for example, in France.

All the officials of the commune are elective, the collectors of rates and taxes included. The same with the mayor and judges of the district.† But the government has taken secure measures to prevent the administrative commune from becoming infected by men of education and initiative. Even a peasant of secondary and university education is not tolerated as a member of the commune and must send in his resignation.

Many times public opinion has claimed the right for all the local inhabitants to inscribe themselves as members of the commune and of the districts, without distinction of classes and ranks, which are so numerous in Russia. As answer, the government took the most rigorous measures for the complete isolation of the commune. Then we see from 1860—64 the beginning of that movement of the young generation of the educated and privileged classes "towards the people." Peaceful and legal at the beginning, this movement did not fail to take a revolutionary character under the stupid persecution of the government. Towards 1872—74 the movement had become so strong that thousands of young men and women from the universities appeared all over Russia, even in the remotest provinces, preaching Socialism and revolution.

Arrests at large, cruel sentences, deportation, executions even, could not stop the movement. Changing forms and formulas, sometimes peaceful, sometimes revolutionary and aggressive, the movement continued to grow and spread. In the place of those arrested new propagandists continually arrived and the number of workers and peasants among them grew from day to day. Once the worker‡ awakened, he knew better than the students how to organise the army of producers. Thus we see from 1894 the strike movement of organised workers growing, and taking (as in 1895) proportions imposing even in the eyes of the oppressors of Russia.

A period of thirty years (1864—1894) of propaganda and struggle—sometimes peaceful, sometimes hostile, but always full of abnegation and sacrifice—ends in levelling the barrier which separated the liberal society from the people. In spite of the sanguinary efforts of their oppressors the revolutionary Socialist of the university and the Socialist worker are now united.

The much longed for event has taken place. No persecution whatever will henceforth be able to check the triumphant advance of a social revolution.

Our despots could suppress revolutionary groups of isolated conspirators, they could even annihilate a whole revolutionary generation. But suppress a whole nation, or stay it in its course towards social emancipation—in this certainly no crowned puppet, no tyrannous ministry will succeed.

W. TCHERKESOV.

IMPERIALISM PILLORIED.

To the Person sitting in Darkness.

By Mark Twain. From "Harpers' Weekly."

Extending the Blessings of Civilisation to our Brother who Sits in Darkness has been a good trade and has paid well, on the whole.

There is more money in it, more territory, more sovereignty and other kinds of emolument, than there is in any other game that is played. But Christendom has been playing it badly of late years, and must certainly suffer by it, in my opinion. She has been so eager to get every stake that appeared on the green cloth, that the People who Sit in Darkness have noticed it. They have become suspicious of the Blessings of Civilisation. More—they have begun to examine them. This is not well. The Blessings of Civilisation are all right, and a good commercial property; there could not be a better, in a dim light. In the right kind of a light, and at a proper distance, with the goods a little out of focus, they furnish this desirable exhibit to the Gentlemen who Sit in Darkness:—

Love, Justice, Gentleness, Christianity, Protection to the Weak,

Temperance, Law and Order, Liberty, Equality, Honourable Dealing, Mercy, Education—and so on.

There. Is it good? Sir, it is pie. It will bring into camp any idiot that sits in darkness anywhere. But not if we adulterate it. It is proper to be emphatic upon that point. This brand is strictly for Export—apparently. *Apparently.* Privately and confidentially, it is nothing of the kind. Privately and confidentially, it is merely an outside cover, gay and pretty and attractive, displaying the special patterns of our Civilisation which we reserve for Home Consumption, while *inside* the bale is the Actual Thing that the Customer Sitting in Darkness buys with his blood and tears and land and liberty.

We all know that the Business is being ruined. The reason is not far to seek. It is because our Mr. McKinley, and Mr. Chamberlain, and the Kaiser and the Czar and the French have been exporting the Actual Thing *with the outside cover left off.*

It is a distress to look on and note the mismoves, they are so strange and so awkward. Mr. Chamberlain manufactures a war out of materials so inadequate and so fanciful that they make the boxes grieve and the gallery laugh. Next to our heavy damage, the Kaiser went to playing the game without first mastering it. He lost a couple of missionaries in a riot at Shantung, and in his account he made an over-charge for them. And by-and-by comes America, and our Master of the Game plays it badly—plays it as Mr. Chamberlain was playing it in South Africa. It was a mistake to do that; also it was one which was quite unlooked for in a Master who was playing it so well in Cuba. In Cuba he was playing the usual and regular *American* game, and it was winning, for there is no way to beat it. The Master, contemplating Cuba, said: "Here is an oppressed and friendless little nation which is willing to fight to be free; we go partners, and put up the strength of seventy million sympathisers and the resources of the United States: play!" Nobody but Europe combined could call that hand: and Europe cannot combine on anything. There, in Cuba, he was following our great traditions which made us very proud of him, and proud of the deep dissatisfaction which his play was provoking in Continental Europe. Moved by a high inspiration, he threw out those stirring words which proclaimed that forcible annexation would be "criminal aggression;" and in that utterance fired another "shot heard round the world." The memory of that fine saying will be outlived by the remembrance of no act of his but one—that he forgot it within the twelvemonth, and its honourable gospel along with it.

For, presently, came the Philippine temptation. It was strong; it was too strong, and he made that bad mistake; he played the European game, the Chamberlain game. It was a pity; it was a great pity, that error, that irrevocable error. For it was the very place and time to play the American game again. The game was in our hands. If it had been played according to the American rules, Dewey would have sailed away from Manila as soon as he had destroyed the Spanish fleet—after putting up a sign on shore guaranteeing foreign property and life against damage by Filipinos, and warning the Powers that interference with the emancipated patriots would be regarded as an act unfriendly to the United States.

The more we examine the mistake, the more clearly we perceive that it is going to be bad for the Business. The Person Sitting in Darkness is almost sure to say: "There is something curious about this—curious and unaccountable. There must be two Americas: one that sets the captive free, and one that takes a once-captive's new freedom away from him, and picks a quarrel with him with nothing to found it on; then kills him to get his land."

The truth is, the Person Sitting in Darkness is saying things like that; and for the sake of the Business we must persuade him to look at the Philippine matter in another and healthier way. We must arrange his opinions for him. I believe it can be done; for Mr. Chamberlain has arranged England's opinion of the South-African matter, and done it most cleverly and successfully. He presented the facts—some of the facts—and showed those confiding people what the facts meant. He did it statistically, which is a good way. He used the formula: "Twice 2 are 14, and 2 from 9 leaves 35." Figures are effective; figures will convince the elect.

Now my plan is a still bolder one than Mr. Chamberlain's, though apparently a copy of it. Let us be franker than Mr. Chamberlain, let us audaciously present the whole of the facts, shirking none, then explain them according to Mr. Chamberlain's formula. This daring truthfulness will astonish and dazzle the Person Sitting in Darkness, and he will take the Explanation down before his mental vision has had time to get back into focus. Let us say to him:

"Our case is simple. On the 1st of May Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet. This left the Archipelago in the hands of its proper and rightful owners, the Filipino nation. Their army numbered 30,000 men and they were competent to whip out or starve out the little Spanish garrison; then the people could set up a government of their own devising. Our traditions required that Dewey should now set up his warning sign, and go away. But the Master of the Game happened to think of another plan—the European plan. He acted upon it. This was to send out an army—ostensibly to help the native patriots put the finishing-touch upon their long and plucky struggle for independence, but really to take their land away from them and keep it. That is, in the interest of Progress and Civilisation. The plan developed, stage by stage, and quite satisfactorily. We entered into a military alliance with the trusting Filipinos, and they hemmed in Manila on the land side, and by their valuable help the place, with its garrison of 8,000 or 10,000 Spaniards, was captured—a thing which we could not have accomplished unaided at that time. We got their

help by—by ingenuity. We knew they were fighting for their independence, and that they had been at it for two years. We knew they supposed that we were also fighting in their worthy cause—just as we had helped the Cubans fight for Cuban independence—and we allowed them to go on thinking so until *Manila was ours and we could get along without them.* Then we showed our hand.

"We kept the positions which we had beguiled them of; and by-and-by we moved a force forward and overlapped patriot ground—a clever thought, for we needed trouble, and this would produce it. A Filipino soldier, crossing the ground, where no one had a right to forbid him, was shot by our sentry. The badgered patriots resented this with arms, without waiting to know whether Aguinaldo, who was absent, would approve or not. Aguinaldo did not approve; but that availed nothing. What we wanted, in the interest of Progress and Civilisation, was the Archipelago, unencumbered by patriots struggling for independence; and War was what we needed. We clinched our opportunity. It is Mr. Chamberlain's case over again—at least in its motive and intention; and we played the game as adroitly as he played it himself.

"We and the patriots having captured Manila, Spain's ownership of the Archipelago and her sovereignty over it were at an end—obliterated—annihilated—not a rag or shred of either remaining behind. It was then that we conceived the divinely humorous idea of *buying* both of these spectres from Spain! In buying those ghosts for twenty millions, we also contracted to take care of the friars and their accumulations. I think we also agreed to propagate leprosy and small-pox, but as to this there is doubt. But it is not important; persons afflicted with the friars do not mind other diseases.

"With our treaty ratified, Manila subdued, and our Ghosts secured, we had no further use for Aguinaldo and the owners of the Archipelago. We forced a war, and we have been hunting America's guest and ally through the woods and swamps ever since."

Having now laid all the historical facts before the Person Sitting in Darkness, we should bring him to and explain them to him. We should say to him:

"They look doubtful, but in reality they are not. There have been lies; yes, but they were told in a good cause. We have been treacherous; but that was only in order that real good might come out of apparent evil. True, we have crushed a deceived and confiding people; we have turned against the weak and the friendless who trusted us; we have stamped out a just and intelligent and well-ordered republic; we have stabbed an ally in the back and slapped the face of a guest; we have bought a Shadow from an enemy that hadn't it to sell; we have robbed a trusting friend of his land and his liberty; we have invited our clean young men to shoulder a discredited musket and do bandit's work under a flag which bandits have been accustomed to fear, not to follow; we have debauched America's honour and blackened her face before the world; but each detail was for the best. We know this. The Head of every State and Sovereignty in Christendom and ninety per cent. of every legislative body in Christendom, including our Congress and fifty State Legislatures, are members not only of the church, but also of the Blessings-of-Civilisation Trust. This world-girdling accumulation of trained morals, high principles, and justice, cannot do an unright thing, an unfair thing, an ungenerous thing, an unclean thing. It knows what it is about. Give yourself no uneasiness; it is all right."

Now, then, that will convince the Person. You will see. It will restore the Business. Also, it will elect the Master of the Game to the vacant place in the Trinity of our national gods, and that on their high thrones the three will sit, age after age, in the people's sight, each bearing the Emblem of his service: Washington, the Sword of the Liberator; Lincoln, the Slave's Broken Chains; the Master, the Chains Repaired. It will give the Business a splendid new start. You will see.

Everything is prosperous now; everything is just as we should wish it. We have got the Archipelago, and we shall never give it up. Also, we have every reason to hope that we shall have an opportunity before very long to slip out of our Congressional contract with Cuba, and give her something better in the place of it. It is a rich country, and many of us are already beginning to see that the contract was a sentimental mistake. But now—right now—is the best time to do some profitable rehabilitating work—work that will set us up and make us comfortable, and discourage gossip. We cannot conceal from ourselves that, privately, we are a little troubled about our uniform. It is one of our prides; it is acquainted with honor; it is familiar with great deeds and noble; we love it, we revere it; and so this errand it is on makes us uneasy. And our flag—another pride of ours, our chiefest! We have worshipped it so; and when we have seen it in far lands—glimpsing it unexpectedly in that strange sky, waving its welcome and benediction to us—we have caught our breath and uncovered our heads, and couldn't speak for a moment, for the thought of what it was to us and the great ideals it stood for. Indeed, we must do something about these things; we must not have the flag out there, and the uniform. They are not needed there; we can manage in some other way. England manages, as regards the uniforms, and so can we. We have to send soldiers—we can't get out of that—but we can disguise them. It is the way England does in South Africa. Even Mr. Chamberlain himself takes pride in England's honorable uniform, and makes the army down there wear an ugly and odious and appropriate disguise, of yellow stuff such as quarantine flags are made of, and which are hoisted to warn the healthy away from unclean disease and repulsive death. This cloth is called khaki. We could adopt it.

It is light, comfortable, grotesque, and deceives the enemy, for he cannot conceive of a soldier being concealed in it.

And as for a flag for the Philippine Province, it is easily managed. We can have a special one—our States do it; we can have just our usual flag, with the white stripes painted black and the stars replaced by the skull and cross-bones.

And we do not need that Civil Commission out there. Having no powers, it has to invent them, and that kind of work cannot be effectively done by just anybody; an expert is required. Mr. Croker can be spared. We do not want the United States represented there, but only the Game.

By help of these suggested amendments, Progress and Civilisation in that country can have a boom, and it will take in the Persons who are Sitting in Darkness, and we can resume Business at the old stand.

PARIS CONGRESS REPORTS. ORGANISATION, INITIATIVE, COHERENCE.

Report by J. Grave (condensed owing to its great length).

The report begins by stating:—

As until now it has always been attempted to enroll and discipline individuals in hierarchic and centralising systems, under the name of organisation, we observe that some Anarchists go to the other extreme and declare themselves against organisation and association because they want no more authority, because they recognise their own will or humour as sole guide in their acts. Others, however, knowing the advantage of combined effort, desire to act against such extreme individualism, and defend free agreement and systems of federation, which have but one disadvantage, "that of being copied from centralising and authoritative systems, assuring union of effort at the cost of individual initiative."

The author quotes the report of the International Revolutionary Social Students' Group, as an example of the last-mentioned tendency, saying: The famous project of a bureau of correspondence which is presented to the Congress by the International Revolutionary Social Students has been often proposed, but never could become acclimatised amongst us. Those who now and before proposed it, wish to give no power to this bureau, which shall only serve as intermediary between adhering groups, which, however, must retain their absolute autonomy. This is the theory, but we have still to learn what its value may be in practice.

The complaint is well founded that very often groups and individuals have fought, each in their own way, without attempting to combine their action with that of others fighting for the same cause. It is true that Anarchists are evidently wanting in cohesion, that on more than one occasion they have found themselves embarrassed as to how to obtain the necessary help and comrades. I do not think this, however, such a great evil; it is only natural that Anarchists fighting against authoritarian parties which decree federations, and organisations whose purpose is to secure this union and unity of aim, should begin to fight separately, knowing that unity and agreement can result from a common ideal and action only.

It is among the groups themselves who seek to combine that an Anarchist federation must be born, and not because it was decided that some group should be entrusted with its creation. But relations among Anarchist groups, as well as individuals, exist already, though without any formalities, which latter are, for some people, all important. These relations are lacking in cohesion, continuity and generalisation, and it is for these that we must strive.

But other comrades go still further in this complaint. Because the propaganda and the movement take forms and ways different from those which they would suggest, they imagine Anarchism to be dead! If those comrades looked around they would find everywhere the work of disorganisation accomplishing itself in existing society. Everywhere, in science, art, literature, in all branches of human activity, the Anarchist idea takes root, and hardly any thinking man will be found who does not agree with some of our claims. Without our twenty years' propaganda against militarism, the Dreyfus affair would hardly have assumed such proportions as it did. We must look at the events more at large and not forget that the work of evolution to which we devote our strength is so complex that it is often difficult to appreciate its progress at the right value. With a single glance at the advance of Anarchism in France, it is easy to see that, notwithstanding scattered and undisciplined forces, great work is done; and considering the means which Anarchists have at their disposal, and the poverty of the majority, they have given a totality of effort which other parties, richer in adherents and money, could not realise. We may safely say: Our work was not unfruitful.

If the Anarchist movement had been centralised or federalised at the commencement of the propaganda, it would have lost in initiative and autonomy what was gained in unity. It is true, initiative exists only among a few; but can one expect to improve the position by appointing a bureau of correspondence, which idea is after all no novelty? The creation of a bureau was attempted after the Congress which the Anarchists held in London in 1881. It has never been able to get to work. Afterwards the Italian comrades decided for a centre among themselves. The initiator of the idea was appointed to receive the correspondence, but afterwards confessed to have never received fewer letters than after his official appointment. Such results are only

natural when one begins at the summit instead of at the bottom. Instead of creating a useless institution let us try to persuade all comrades to understand the necessity of knowing each other, to exchange ideas and render mutual help according to their power.

The best way would be to set an example. Let those groups who have recognised the necessity of an understanding, try to enter into relation with each other.

I will say but little about the danger from the side of the police if a central group were established. By persecuting this group, by dispersing its members, the exchange of correspondence would be hindered, whilst 50, 100, 200 or more groups in connection would be much more difficult to trace, and the suppression even of 20, 50 or 100 of them, would not prevent the others from continuing the correspondence.

The complaint is that the groups have not sufficient initiative to enter into relation with each other, and the proposed remedy is to create a central group which shall undertake to do what the groups themselves did not know how to do!

If that group shall have the right to receive, to answer and communicate the correspondence, it will be dangerous; if, however, it will only centralise addresses and communicate with those wanting them, and endeavour to connect the groups, its existence is superfluous because the existing groups begin to do this for themselves.

Concerning an international Anarchist paper, J. Grave says: As a means of support to the central bureau of correspondence, it is proposed to publish an international bulletin of the Anarchist party, which will be open to all shades of Anarchist opinion. But the views of Anarchists on subjects like property, co-operation, trade-unions, strikes, marriage, etc., differ not only as to detail, but also on the fundamental point of those questions, consequently the bulletin will sometimes contain contradictory interpretations. Besides, many of the articles offered would do, if no positive harm, certainly no good to the paper. Who is to decide what copy must be accepted and what refused? The editors must accept all or be entrusted with a selection; if the latter takes place, what will be its test? It is easy to declare a paper an organ for all, but it will be in reality of those who edit it, because one can represent and defend with conviction only one's own ideas and aspirations.

In conclusion, the writer gives a sketch of an attempt at a practical Anarchist method of federation: I remember in the beginning of the Anarchist movement in France that the Group of Social Study of the V. and VIII. Arrondissements of Paris attempted to realise this project of Anarchist federation. Its members wrote to all comrades and groups whose addresses they could obtain; at the end of six months they had correspondents wherever Anarchists were to be found, with whom they exchanged ideas. To avoid the restriction of the correspondence to the group of the V. and VIII. and its correspondents, the same group arranged to start a bulletin which should be the organ of this federation and contain an account of the work of the groups. To prevent centralisation each of the groups had to publish one number of the bulletin in turn. That compelled them to correspond by interesting them in its common action, by giving them a share in the work and responsibility. The group of the V. and VIII. Arrondissements published the first number. But the events of Montceau, of Lyons, with the arrests that followed, which forced many comrades to change their domicile, put an end to this attempt, as the work had not yet taken such solid root as to outlive the dispersion of the founders. But the little that was realised shows us the idea is practical, and that the only question is one of persistence.

We must not disguise the fact that if but slender connection exists among the groups, it is because there are but few groups, and because the existence of some is short. We must try to find motives strong enough to induce the creation of a group, and to keep the activity of its members alive. At present groups are formed for the purpose of general propaganda, and their activity exists in discussions which cease to be interesting as soon as opposition fails; in publishing a paper, a still more difficult matter, from the want of money; sometimes in organising instructive talks and libraries. But that is not enough. Another mistake is that work which demands years of patient toil is left undone, and only efforts are made which seem to promise immediate success. From the long lists of subjects useful and necessary for propaganda, I mention some examples:—

Many comrades are withheld from propagating Anarchism by fear for their families in case of arrest. It would be good work if a permanent group seriously took it in hand to aid the families of prisoners, instead of leaving it to a paper to open subscriptions.

Then we have the propaganda of a General Strike; that against War and Militarism; of an Eight Hours Day to be obtained by the Workers' direct action, instead of petitioning Parliament; the education of children according to our ideas; refusal of payment of taxes; resistance against certain laws, and other desiderata too many to enumerate.

Every individual must know for himself what branch of the propaganda to choose, and then find others in sympathy with his ideas, so that a group may be formed. And however different the objects of those branches may be, they can be of great use to each other, especially if direct relations without intermediaries are established. That will prepare us for the future society, so that the Revolution, when it comes, will find us ready to substitute a new organisation for the old one.

"OUR OLD NOBILITY," BY HOWARD EVANS. Will any comrade having a perfect copy of the above to part with kindly communicate with *Freedom* office.

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NOTES.

CHEERS FOR THE DOUKHOBORS!

Surely if ever there was a people who deserved the cheers and the applause of honest, liberty-loving persons, it is the Doukhobors. Consider for a moment the sublime struggle they are engaged in. They begin by appealing to men of all countries asking if there is a place in the world where they can settle and live according to their own conscience. Canada is chosen as the Land of Promise. And, indeed, these good people were happy and contented enough with their simple and peaceful life in those far-away regions. But, alas, Canada has a government, and where government is there is no happiness for man. Canadian law says they must pre-empt their land. They refuse absolutely to become the legal owners of land. The law says every birth and death must be registered. They will answer any questions on the subject; but they refuse to register, knowing full well it is only needed for legal purposes. Canadian law requires registration of marriages. "They hold that registering marriage, far from making it lawful, degrades and makes it unlawful. They hold that marriage is lawful when it arises from pure moral attraction between man and woman.....But all these things must be settled by individual conscience." Mr. Mood, who presented their petition, to the Canadian government, suggested they were stubborn. They replied that he talked like the Russian government agents, who began by paying them compliments and ended by calling them rebels and pests. The government secretary informed them the laws must be carried out and that they would find them alright when they got used to them. Only wicked and immoral men were afraid of the law (!) The poor Doukhobors answered: they would like to be allowed to remain until they could find another place where they would be free, or until they find there is no room in the world for men who wish to lead a Christian life. In conclusion, they say "the interference of law in marriage leads to seduction, husband-hunting, adultery, family quarrels, desertion of children, prostitution, and the utter depravation of society." What a noble adherence to principle! And what an influence it will yet have in the world!

THANKS AND GREETINGS TO AMERICA.

It is with the deepest satisfaction that we in England acknowledge the help sent to us by our American comrades as a result of the splendid success of Kropotkin's lectures in Boston, New York and Chicago. The spirit of solidarity is, we are sure, too manifest among us that we need adopt any merely conventional expression of thanks; and the help given to *Freedom* was too sorely needed to leave any doubts of the good results that will come of it. And, after all, the renewed life that has been given to our paper, and the hope of a reviving propaganda when these days of despair are over, will be the most welcome expression of thanks our friends could receive. At the same time, we know this great success was not attained without hard and anxious work on the part of our comrades, and to these known and unknown friends in need we send our most fraternal thanks and greetings.

BARMAIDS HOURS.

Does the great British public ever *think* in these days we wonder? Does it ever pause to inquire what agony is endured, not only to clothe it and feed it, but even to provide it with pleasure? We are not now referring to that upper crust of lords, ladies and plutocrats whose nauseating existences are only possible at the cost of unmeasured blood and tears. No; we speak only of that great mass of well-to-do folk who blunder through life without caring for the why and the wherefore of

anything that happens around them. This great class is a monster without imagination, and the only way to pierce its tough hide is through the pocket.

These reflections are suggested by the speech delivered by Lord Peel to the British Women's Temperance Association on the hours worked by barmaids. That these unfortunate slaves should work 13 and 14 hours a day for seven days a week is bad enough; but that these hours should mostly involve standing and the exertion of beer-drawing, the weariness of talking inanities to empty-headed swells, the degradation of enduring the brutal jests of low characters—all this shows what has to be suffered in order that the great B. P. may get drunk!

Apart from this, everyone knows the injury to women's health through standing hour after hour; and, moreover, the doctors are fully aware of "the peculiar internal strains and maladies brought about by the continual exertion of pulling" the engines. To alleviate these evils legislation has been tried and, of course, found wanting. Will not these women combine and strike? Many others might then follow their example. At any rate that would be the only way of wringing any concessions from their employers, and would have the double advantage of improving their positions, and of keeping the B. P. sober for a time.

The sad news has just reached us that our comrade John Westley has lost his eldest daughter, a beautiful girl of sixteen. Those who know how he has suffered for the cause will realise how heavy his grief must be at the loss of a child just budding into womanhood, and we are sure they will join us in sending him our most heartfelt sympathy.

FREE SPEECH IN DANGER.

Members of the S.D.F. must begin to think the clock has been put back fifteen years, when they find the old tactics of the police in suppressing Socialist meetings being revived. Since 1886 the North Lambeth Branch of the S.D.F. has held meetings at the corner of Belvedere Road, Westminster Bridge Road, without interference or complaint. Now the police are practically prohibiting them, notwithstanding that religious meetings are allowed in the morning at the same place. The S.D.F. at present seems to have shown no fight in the matter.

In Birmingham also, we hear, a person named Rafter, calling himself the chief constable, has decided that the institution of Monarchy shall not be criticised in the open air—the pure air!—of that great city. What does the N.D.L., whose meetings have been threatened, propose to do? At present there are only signs of making a legal fight. But W. M. Thompson knows very well, in spite of his profession—or rather, we should say, because of it—that legal contests between the people and the government over popular rights are mere humbug, and only result in paying expensive legal fees. If free speech is in danger, the battle has to be fought out as it was fought sixteen years ago—by defiance of the law. Of course it is regrettable that the energy and money of advanced movements should be used in fighting again a battle that was thought to be won; but in this matter the Social Democrats and the Radicals have largely themselves to thank for the present state of things. All through they had nothing but blame for the Anarchists, who were always going too far; they even sided with the law against us; and preferring to potter with politics rather than educate the masses in their social and economic rights, they played into the hands of the reactionaries who are now showing their teeth in this attack on popular liberties.

APING OUR MASTERS.

Charles Dickens once wrote a very amusing sketch in which he described a vestry meeting with all the details of its asinine ludicrousness. Its quarrellings, its callings to order, and all the vagaries of the swollen-headed nonentities therein assembled were, he said, quite after the pattern of the Great Original—the House of Commons. In other words, these vestrymen were playing at Parliament. We are reminded of this little farce by the announcement that "Messrs. Hubert Brampton and Tom Norris, the Labour members of the Ealing District Council, who lost their seats at the last election, are to be entertained at a supper at the Green Man Hotel, Ealing." The pleasure of supping with these gentlemen can be had for the sum of 2/6. It is probably less than the cost per head of Chamberlain's lunch to Milner, but to us it appears to be just about as stupid. For why all this fuss? Are Messrs. Brampton and Norris to be consoled for the loss of their seats by roast beef and plum pudding.

The real truth is, that of late years this complimentary dinner business has become too prevalent in the Socialist and

labour movement. Its a stupid middle-class function largely due to the flunkey spirit, whether inspired by self-seeking, or by the mere grovelling at the feet of an individual. Surely working men don't need to adopt the methods of a City Alderman in showing their respect for a person. Besides, if they are to give dinners to all the Social Democratic candidates who lost, or failed to win, seats at the last election they will be very soon ruined both in pocket and digestion.

BRONZE-WORKERS TRADE-UNION OF PARIS TO THE WORKERS OF ENGLAND.

At the dawn of the twentieth Century, at the hour when every progressive element strives to propagate humanitarian ideas, to bring into being a new society, more harmonious and more in accordance with our aspirations, we, workers in bronze, join our voices to those of all French workers, mutually proclaiming our ardent love for the oppressed of the entire world. A declaration which we firmly believe will find an echo in the hearts of the down-trodden and enslaved masses, because they begin to understand that the times are past when the deluded and deceived workers threw themselves against each other under the fallacious pretext of defending some point of national honour.

We also hope that this declaration will be followed by similar ones in all countries, so that the ruling classes may clearly understand that the sophisms masked under the veil of patriotism have lost their power.

Not only do we solemnly proclaim our love for peace, but also our hatred against war.

Against war, which causes the workers to transform themselves into professional murderers directly they are clothed in the debasing livery of a soldier!

Against war, which uses the children of the people as food for cannon, as happens at present in China, in the Transvaal, and wherever speculating capitalism asserts itself!

It is time that this ends.

After nineteen centuries of progress endowing humanity with scientific conquests of incomparable richness, the workers' class united by its trade-unions claims its right to well-being and existence. It is thirsting for justice, peace, opportunity, and all its efforts tend towards making the Utopias of to-day the triumphant reality of to-morrow.

But to win to a successful issue, it is necessary to unmask the criminal artifices of those who to promote some commercial enterprise would provoke a new war.

It lies with us workers to prevent so fatal an attempt. There is no need to call for governmental arbitration or to solicit the application of certain conventions of the Hague, these being only meant to deceive the nations.

What is needed is, that at the first cry of war uttered by the rulers, the workers in mines, fields and workshops, answer by the cry which unites us: *Down with war! Long live fraternity among the nations!*

It is necessary that from this hour we organise and educate ourselves in such manner, that when our masters desire to renew the slaughter among proletarians, we answer immediately by a general strike, a strike of arms, at the same time commencing the economic revolution.

That is the solution, and we shall then see no further scenes of carnage dishonouring humanity.

May the heroic sacrifice and contagious example of the Dukhobors and of all rebels be an example for us!

There is only one logical war, to participate in which we call upon the suppressed in every country, and that is the war of the exploited against their exploiters—that of Labour against Capital. From so fruitful and noble a war, from these fraternal aspirations which awaken feelings of unity and solidarity in the hearts of the suppressed, may there arise at last the great ideal city of our dreams, realising our final and complete emancipation.

To this task the Bronze-Workers' Union pledges itself, and in this call to the exploited of all and every nation for similar action, we acclaim Universal Peace, based on harmony among the peoples.

April, 1901.

Delegate ALBERT HENRI.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

FRANCE.—One by one those who participated in the stirring times of the Paris Commune pass to their rest. Mme. Paule Mink, who died on April 28th, was then and remained until her death one of France's best known figures both on and off the revolutionary platform. A small woman, daughter of a Polish exile, she had what many small women have, lionlike courage, and in addition what it is given to few women to have, the silver tongue of a born orator. Her life might have been as ordinarily placid as that of most of her sex, but intelligent, spirited and well-educated, even in her opening years she could not forget she was the daughter of a rebel. Coming under public notice a few years before the Franco-German war, she first attracted attention by an anti-clerical speech, and won favour from that hour as a freethinker, bold in her eloquent denunciation of the clergy and as a woman of strong republican and Socialist instincts. Her special 'isms

were those of Anti-clericalism and Socialism; but in her later years she was impelled more towards Revolutionary Socialism and Anarchism. Prolific with her pen as playwright and journalist (latterly as one of the staff of *l'Aurore*), active-minded and diligent as her friend Louise Michel, for over thirty years she worked for the cause she had at heart. Not a meeting, a demonstration or a strike at which she did not, if possible, appear. "We met," says her old-time fellow-laborer, L. Michel, "some years before the fall of Napoleon III., and speaking in various halls, together with our friends the Blanquists, waged vigorous war against the Empire. Paule Mink was a member of that first admirable International we remember with so much affection. During the war of 1870 she was at Auxerre, and when its Municipal Council hesitated on the question of resistance, Paule Mink, as spokesman for the murmuring workers, entered the Mairie and lectured the timid officials to such purpose that they instantly took steps for the defence of the town. Not content with words only, she is said to have used a rifle against the invaders and to have been wounded. During the Commune, in spite of terrible difficulties, she carried on the campaign in the provinces, where, wandering from place to place as a pedlar, she explained the aim of the Communards, and sold her wares wrapped up in Commune proclamations. When Paris fell before the Versailles she escaped into Switzerland, and thus was spared the fate of deportation allotted to so many of her friends. At the general amnesty she returned to Paris and made it the citadel of her labours. What was finest in the life of Paule Mink, however," concludes Comrade Michel, "was her active devotion to the cause and her affection for her children, whom she educated and reared under the most trying and often terrible circumstances, yet with a courage that never faltered." At her cremation in Père-Lachaise, on May 2nd, there was on the part of the Republican Government the usual theatrical display of police and troops. At the last moment Police Prefect Lépine compelled the funeral procession to take the longest route to the cemetery and lined the entire way with his battalions. In spite of, or rather because of this, the crowd following the red-draped coffin rapidly increased, much to the disgust of the Prefect and his assistants; when, with a shout of *Vive la Commune! Vive la Sociale!* the cortege entered Père Lachaise it was to find it filled with troops. The funeral orations were spoken by Vaillant, Vaughan, Alix, Mme. Renaud, and other noted Socialists; but the singing of *l'Internationale* was too much for Prefect Lépine, and he choked it by threatening arrests. Paule Mink's ashes laid at rest, many of the sympathisers turned towards the Mur des Fédérées, where a posse of police created disorder by barring the way and endeavouring to tear *l'Aurore's* handsome wreath to pieces. Several arrests were made; but Lépine had then the sense to permit approach to the wall, on condition that no one dared to sing or give a Socialist cry. Finally, orders were given to clear the cemetery, which was done as roughly as possible, while at various points on the route back those who had followed brave Paule Mink to her grave, were hustled or charged by the police, as a gentle reminder that Socialism unarmed must fall in line with Police and Government whims.

GERMANY.—The German Federation of Revolutionary Workingmen, composed of German Anarchists and revolutionary Socialists, has held a meeting for the first time at Bietigheim, a pretty little town in the Black Forest. Notwithstanding the 300,000 marks annually spent in Germany, chiefly against Anarchists, the police were in darkness as to the danger which threatened innocent little Bietigheim, in the shape of a meeting of the most prominent and active of the German Anarchists. The meeting, well attended by comrades from various towns, took place on Easter Sunday, and was opened by W. Klink, who gave an account of the movement, the efforts to create a federation, and the result—"an organisation over all Germany, a new paper (*Freiheit*), and the present meeting." Among the subjects discussed were organisation, the attitude of Anarchists towards existing central labour organisations, the women's question, the publication of a manifesto, aid to prisoners, etc. As to organisation it was, among other things, decided to appoint some comrades whose duty it will be to create new connections, to collect money for agitation and assistance, etc.; while in different towns one or more comrades will keep in correspondence with the former and work for local organisation. But the principle of the federation in everything will be, "Freedom for the individual and a united combination in the struggle against capitalism." After an interesting discussion as to whether Anarchists should remain in the central trade-unions or create new local organisations, the following was unanimously adopted:—In principle the federation is in favor of local branch organisations; that they should be established wherever there was a possibility of their existence; that urgent attention should be given to the trade-union question; that in every trade a comrade should try to enter into relation with the workers of the same profession with a view of creating local trade-unions. At this point the discussions were interrupted by the police, who suddenly arrived and expressed a wish to attend the meeting, refusing to leave the hall. The comrades therefore adjourned for their afternoon coffee, in which suspicious business they were sharply supervised by the defenders of order. After a walk the neighbouring little town was reached, where the second part of the meeting was held in peace. The meeting was a great success, because, notwithstanding the numerous difficulties which had to be overcome, the German comrades were able to meet and reach an understanding as to the method by which individually free, but united by the federation, each can work for the common ideal. We from our side wish them a hearty *Glück auf!*

ITALY.—If the execution of Humbert resounded through the world without appreciable result anywhere, the death, on May 21st, of

Gaetano Bresci in his prison cell at Santo Stefano, has done far more—it has roused an echo of unconscious resentment and pity in every heart, not excepting the hardest, that of dictators of capitalist newspapers. Leaving humanity out of the question, is it right, these ask—is it just that in these days any man, even an Anarchist, should be tortured to death by inches—should be kept "in a stone bag until he perishes of mental suffocation"—that "spreading out impotent hands in a space too close to give madness the relief of movement, or even to allow free gesture to despair, he should be condemned to intolerable silence—to a fate that may best be described as pressing reason to death under the accumulating weight of remorseless monotony?" Six months ago Bresci's sentence of penal servitude for life with seven years of solitary confinement, was passed by his judges. The first days of his sentence were spent in a penitentiary near Florence, from there he was removed to Porto Longone in the Island of Elba, and finally to Santo Stefano, one of the Pontine rocks off the Bay of Naples—a prison island, almost inaccessible. Here the prisoner could be effectually guarded, here the boldest could not plan an escape, here a man could be slowly tortured to madness or death and none would know. As to what occurred immediately prior to our comrade's death we can only tell from meagre press reports. He was immured in a narrow cell, "lighted from the top so that no casemate to which he could reach would give the faintest hint of sea and sunshine. The prisoner was forbidden to speak. All occupation was denied him, and even the full stretching of his limbs was prevented in this blank sepulchre." Yet here he contrived to end the life that by the orders of his government had been made one drawn-out agony. Bresci was a reticent, quiet man, he had not the southern loquacity of Luccheni; but let the most silent of us think what it would mean to be forcibly debarred for seven years from uttering a single sound, a single plaint, a single prayer for a momentary relaxation of the stern discipline that meant the slow creeping on of mental stagnation and death. He tried to speak and was punished for it. We are not told how. He is said to have grappled with one of his guards. For this he was put in the strait-waistcoat, as used in French, Italian and Spanish prisons an instrument of torture. Then he gave in. Did he want relief from his tortures death alone would give it, and he must find his own way to death, for even that mercy was denied him by government and prison officials. During the night of May 21st, he was left for less than half an hour without supervision, and it is said he contrived to strangle himself with a towel. Still breathing when cut down, fate was kinder than man, and Gaetano Bresci won to his rest.

If, as the priests assert, there is a God, we know on whose side the balance stood when the hour struck that brought Humbert the King and Bresci the worker face to face again. If there is such a thing as a divine, articulate Justice, then we know the judgment *Guilty!* was thundered forth not against the uneducated, simple-minded worker whose sensitive heart was too quickly touched by the wrongs of his fellows, but against the callous, vindictive king, who with the power of mercy in his hands, showed none to Passanante, Acciarito, to any rebel, or to the suffering, starving population fate called on him to rule.

"To-day you martyrise me, to-morrow the revolution will sweep you away," cried Bresci to his Santo Stefano guards, true to the last to the vision that animates every fighter in the ranks of enlightened workers. But it is the blood-stained word his dying fingers scrawled upon the wall of his cell, it is the dying message of a wronged and cruelly tortured man that sweeping through space with the swiftness of the electric spark will touch every heart and awaken those till now slumbering in sloth and indifference; will lead them to endorse the condemnation of the fearless writer in a Californian paper (*Stockton Evening Mail*) who lately wrote: "One man only has the power to say this torture shall cease. That man is the reigning King of Italy. He alone is responsible for the black spot of barbarism which mars the fair face of twentieth century humanity. He negatively approves the horror by omitting to order it to cease.....In Italy they are wreaking studied and prolonged vengeance upon a murderer because it was their king he killed. The people are not doing it, it is the government.....The judgment of Christendom must be that the King of Italy in permitting unspeakable tortures to be inflicted upon Bresci, who slew the king's father, himself is guilty, before God and man, of a more heinous offence." And not the king alone. Besides the king, there are the judges who passed the sentence and the officials who put it into execution. *Revenge!* wrote Bresci, and died. And the message is travelling round the world.

LITERATURE.—*Le Pot à Colle* (26 Rue Titon, Paris), which, owing to adverse circumstances, ceased publication some time ago, has now reappeared, apparently in excellent spirits, in spite of its enforced retirement. No. 1, series 3, with the motto, *No God, No Master, Education and Revolution!* lies before us. Its purpose, as set forth in its declaration, is to educate "those simple ones who produce all and live on nothing; and the better to reach them the paper will be distributed gratis in the workshops and on street corners by comrades. "As soon as our day's labor ends, we shall recommence it by working on this paper," runs the cheerful editorial comment. The staff is composed of delegates from all the groups connected with the furniture trade, and expenses will be met by permanent subscriptions. The aim of our courageous contemporary is not only to teach resistance, but to show up every abuse in the furniture and allied trades, and especially the exploiting of (what we should call workhouse) orphans and reformatory children. Long life to *The Glue Pot!*

La Vita Nuova, by Dr. Ciri Alvi, of Todi, Italy, is a good and well-written revolutionary story, which can be recommended to those

who read Italian. With a tragic ending at street barricades, it follows the life of a man who, led away by ambition, strays from his higher ideals (as men and women worth anything mostly do), to find them again in sorrow and tears, or sometimes, as here, with the sword of death gleaming before their eyes.

Der Zeitgeist, No. 1 of new illustrated German monthly, revolutionary Socialist in tone, edited by R. Groszmann, and published at 60, Gold Street, New York. Price 10 cents.

L'Allemagne en 1848. Karl Marx devant les jures de Cologne. Translated into French by Léon Remy, 1 vol. 5 frs. Edited by Schleicher Frères. 15 Rue des Saints-Peres, Paris.

The first part of this volume consists of a daily record of the political events that shook Germany in 1848. The second recounts the active part taken by the Committee of Democratic Associations of the Rhine Provinces, which event ended in the indictment of the Committee before a jury at Cologne. We notice that the publishers call this the first international workingmen's movement. This is hardly correct. Between 1830-45 the Fourierists were busy and the St. Simonists for the organisation of a committee in Menilmontant had to stand their trial, which had an immense influence upon Socialist propaganda in general. In reality before 1848 there was no Socialist movement in Germany. The Communist League which delegated Engels and Marx to produce the famous Communist manifesto may be considered as the pioneer of German Socialism. The defense made by Marx at the trial of the Committee was an act of great courage and greatly influenced the development of the movement in Germany, but it was not the outcome of "the first international workingmen's movement."

COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

Anarchists are often asked: "But do you object to good laws? What about the Education Acts?" And it is expected that we shall be floored by this "poser." I have often seen accounts of these charitable and philanthropic laws, written from the point of view of prosperous people and professional teachers. To these as a workman I would like to add a few comments, not so pretty perhaps, but quite as true from the standpoint of the poor. For it is indeed necessary to voice the "dumb, inarticulate cry" of the very poorest against the education laws.

All laws are based on inequality and class domination. They are caused clearly by the social condition of the people. The school-attendance officer does not prowl round the manor, the villa, or the vicarage; he knows he is not required for his "betters" but must seek his victims amongst the poor.

It will be remembered, perhaps, that the editor of the *Clarion*, when in conflict with the educational authorities had to complain of the impertinence of this official. Now, if a man in "Nunquam's" position has to complain of this, we can imagine the arrogance of officialdom amongst the poor and ignorant. Next to the landlord the "School Board man" is the most dreaded visitor to a poor district; because, like all officials, he enforces not the spirit but the letter of the law. Take the case of a workman with children: If he falls out of work he must be out and about seeking a new job. Perhaps (as in thousands of cases) the wife goes out to a bit of work "just to keep the home together,"—who is to take care of the children? The law doesn't say. It only says the elder children must attend school. If the parents are afraid of accidents with fire, lamp explosions, scalds and the thousand-and-one dangers to which even carefully nurtured children are liable, then the mother must leave her work and let them starve; or the father to let her work must stay at home and be called a loafer, or they must both become criminals by keeping the elder child at home to tend the younger and allow both parents opportunities of tiding over a difficulty. People in this position are fined, and the alternative is imprisonment; how can they pay fines when they cannot buy bread—thus being made criminals by the very law which was designed to prevent crime. Of course, members of School Boards have discretionary powers, but they seldom use them. Being mostly prosperous tradesmen or parsons they have no sympathy with and often no knowledge of the troubles of the poor. One can understand them applying for the rigour of the law. But it does fill one with dismay to find sincere, and no doubt warmhearted, educationalists like Dr. Macnamara complaining of the "leniency" of magistrates, and clamoring for more convictions. I can think of no parallel but the brutal cry for the extension of flogging. One seems to me to be just as reasonable and humane as the other.

The above remarks apply to the whole country, but how much more are they true of London with its thousands of families living in one-roomed tenements. The children may be ill, weak, hungry or naked, but they must attend school and be crammed.

After all, is it an unmixed blessing to teach these children to read? Is this School Board education such "shakes"? If we judge by the "comics" and "ha'penny bloods" young England reads, or the type of theatre and variety show they enjoy, the answer seems obvious. And in spite of what our advocates of compulsory education may say, I am strongly of opinion that the greatly exaggerated outbreak of "Hooliganism" was directly due to our methods of limited education.

Contrast the homes of the workers and the public-houses; the accommodation for "living" with that carousing. The children of the poor in our large cities are robbed of all the refining influences of home life. Their natures have much the same elements of romance and adventure as those of a richer class; but, just as their physical appetite becomes deprived till "fish and titurs" is an ideal meal, so their mental appetite craves for the "blugg, blugg, blugg" of the vicious boy

literature and low class music hall. Much of the rowdyism of London streets arises from the "horseplay" of these persons; and, naturally, as they reach adult age their only idea of the responsibility of citizenship is to shout for an enlarged music hall type of gaudy Imperialism. Hence "mafficking."

Who can forget the young "Hooligan" who was arrested in Clerkenwell three years ago, when the scare was on, and who, on police testimony that he was a hardened villain (he was sixteen years of age) was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment. In Pentonville prison this desperado *cried for his mother*, a widow, and when told he could not see her, hung himself on a gas jet. "The pity of it." And the revolting attitude of mind which can regard these babies as desperate criminals! I am aware that they have many characteristics which are not lovable; but other methods must be used than mere brutal tyranny. Truly the educationalists need educating.

TREB.

To Perdita.

In hell are many fair ones; for its fires

Burn not alone for souls of hideous seeming;
And many a siren face, the sought of all desires,
Peers from the murky depths in ghastly gleaming.

And yet those falsely fair ones oft, in earthly honor,
Scornfully decried the helot frail of passion,
Heaping oppression's chains ferociously upon her,
Making of love a crime, of virtue but a fashion!

There's but in human ken one deadly sin committed;
All other faults are shriven by time, the grand confessor.
That sin is pilfer'd wealth from simple truth outwitted,
The seeming virtuous mask of vice the vile oppressor.

See! o'er thy downy cheek the bashful tint appearing!
From out thy liquid orbs such innocence blushing!
Yet, through that fleshly mask thy hideous skull is leering!
And from thy pearly teeth red human gore is gushing!

For thee, vile hag of power, and strumpet queen of riches,
To keep thy stinking shrine is earth embroil'd and wasted:
To thief fair freedom's vine thy pander's palm still itches
When once the plundering lust his lying lips have tasted!

For thee are nations stabb'd, and peoples lash'd and strangled!
In peace, which is but war, and war unmask'd and blatant!
For thee the whit'ning bones, for thee the victims mangled!
For thee rous'd all the brute in coward man still latent!

To whom shall then belong eternal time's damnation?
To thee, and all like thee, who revel on the spoils
From wretched slaves of toil who groan 'neath thy oblations
From icy arctic's zone to fiercest tropic's broilings!

'Tis thou, the consort purchas'd by Mammon's vulgar gabbling,
The profitress of robbery, the benefress of cheating,
With thy pious maxims mouthful, in thy pious mock'ries dabbling.
Whom the Vengeance of the future with relentless front is greeting.

LOTHROP WITHINGTON.

THE LIBERTARIAN MOVEMENT IN SPAIN & FRANCE.

(Substance of an Address given in April, 1901, before the Freedom Discussion Group. London: by T. del Marmol.)

"It is from Spain that the Social Revolution will reach us," said one day our dear and far-seeing comrade Kropotkin, who, having travelled in that country thoroughly understands the conditions that surround the Spanish proletariat. The *Petit Sou*, a Social Democratic paper of Paris, in a similar tone continues: "And it will be Barcelona, that progressive, generous and heroic town whose pavements at the present hour are red with the blood of martyrs for the cause, it is Barcelona which will become the Paris of the great Iberian revolution. Yes, the day is near when the battalions of the revolted of Catalonia will march to the assault of that Spanish Bastille, the infamous Montjuich, demolish the fortress of the Holy Inquisition, and finally plant upon the ruins of that tragic citadel of present-day torture the scarlet banner of the revolutionary crusade."

The reason why is very simple. Since the creation of the International, the workers in Spain have always been strongly organised and federated in free unions of resistance without anything in the shape of political agitation. The Anarchists, numerous and intelligent, have ever considered it their duty to become at one with these unions. They spread abroad a good report of them, and by the sole strength of reasoning, have always prevented the entrance of a destroying authoritarian element. That is why the "Workingmen's Party," under the leadership of M. Iglesias, has always remained at a microscopic stage. For twenty-five years he has concentrated all his energies in an attempt to elect a deputy for parliament, and has not yet succeeded. His fawning has won him the good graces of the government during electoral periods, but not the goodwill of the public, so that the number of the party is so ridiculously small that even with government support he is unable to carry an election. This time Sagasta has promised to get two or three deputies into the Chamber, amongst them

Iglesias, who will contest twelve electoral districts. I doubt if he will succeed, since the election of persons for whom barely any will vote means a resort to scandalous measures. We know well that electioneering operations in Spain are a comedy, but they are so within certain limits, and all points to the belief that once again the hunters of parliamentary seats will be shamefully beaten.*

On the other hand the libertarians continue their propaganda with success throughout the country. Their object is very simple—to pave the way to a social revolution, either by influencing a republican movement which they will at once transform into a social movement, or by organising a general strike of peasants and workers as a means to arrest labour in all the country, and thus induce the revolution.

The first plan failed to succeed last March, but only in consequence of a trick of Sagasta's Cabinet, which, seeing disaster imminent, spontaneously agreed to all the concessions demanded by the republican element: power to fight the religious congregations, recognition of workingmen's unions, unlimited liberty of the press and of meetings. Until the 1st of May, in fact, Spain enjoyed such liberty as it had never known. The Minister of War, the butcher Weyler, expelled the army chaplains and the Catholic nuns of the military hospitals; the Minister of Public Instruction entered upon reforms in an anti-clerical sense, and sent away the monks of the Escorial; the Minister of Justice published a decree prohibiting religious bodies of either sex from carrying on industries, and the Minister of the Interior gave the governing officials of Catalonia instructions to compel employers of labour to accept the demands of their workmen in the district of Ter, where the strikers had retaliated by burning factories that had proclaimed a lock-out or refused to employ union men.

These concessions satisfied the republican element, and arrested the movement that had been prepared in conjunction with the workers. The last, knowing that government concessions are always temporary, then turned towards the organisation of the general strike. They might have triumphed had there been sufficient time to prepare it. But events were too rapid for them. A local strike, that of the tramway-men, set a spark to the powder. Impelled by a spirit of solidarity all the workers of Barcelona decreed a general stoppage; the government intercepted every postal and telegraphic communication, and when the Andalusians commenced their movement, that in Barcelona had already been crushed, after the workers, as usual, had met armed force with heroic resistance. But the battle is simply postponed. It will soon recommence, for the Spanish comrades are not of those who submit to either opposition or persecution.

In France where the Anarchist movement seemed condemned to general paralysis, our comrades have ended by adopting the Spanish method with remarkable success. The politicians, until now masters of the situation, have lost control of the workers' movement. It has been enough, under the vigorous impulse of our regretted comrade F. Pelloutier, for the libertarian element once it penetrated the unions, to have rendered it possible to form the admirable federation of the Labor Exchange, whose delegates will visit us in June, and to have banished old parliamentary procedure from its midst. The *desideratum* of all these federated unions is the same as in Spain: the struggle of labor against capital without political action, and the organisation of a general strike as a means to win the social revolution.

The Montceau and Marseilles strikers have proved that a strong wave of revolt has passed across the hearts of the French proletarians. The vote on Referendum among the miners upon the question of the general strike has been a revelation. The deputies of the Socialist Group understand, and have confessed, that they have lost the control of the workers' movement in France. In regard to politicians our French comrades now have the same opinion as that so well expressed in his will by our much deplored Gustave Lefrançais, who has just gone from us: "I die," says Lefrançais, "professing the most profound contempt for all political parties, even if Socialist, having always considered these parties nothing more than groups of foolish simpletons ruled by men of shameless ambition, without scruples or a sense of decency."

Let us hope that the reign of the Baslys, of the Guesdes, Millerands, Jaurés and Lafargues, has for ever ended in France.

NOTE.—We much wish that we could see the "southern method" which has given such brilliant results in Italy, Spain, Portugal and the South-American republics, adopted by the English comrades. This method consists, in addition to the always useful and indispensable literary propaganda of the Anarchist ideal, of lectures upon different subjects in workingmen's centres, and especially among the unions. While it may be uncertain whether the method would ensure similar results in England, at least it is worth trying. It is with pleasure therefore we learn that comrades Marmol and A. St. John, with this end in view, intend visiting Dowlais, Wales, early next August, where Marmol has been invited by a group of Spanish miners to hold some association meetings. Besides talks upon Anarchy and labor struggles, St. John will speak upon the situation in India. Will this example be followed? We trust it will.

The International Working Men's Union of London, composed of workers belonging to different nationalities, passed the following Order of the Day at their Meeting on May 12th, 1901;—

The Members of the International Working Men's Union of London, learning that despotic acts have lately been committed by the authorities of Barcelona, and that, further, the said authori-

* Recent events have fully confirmed this anticipation.

ties are prepared to renew such acts against the workers, who, from a spirit of proletarian solidarity in favour of the strikers belonging to the Barcelona Trade Union of Tramwaymen, helped to extend the General Strike,

RESOLVE:

1. To protest energetically against such arbitrary acts as have already been committed or that may in future be committed.
2. To denounce in the Press of every country all governmental acts committed contrary to the spirit of true civilisation and the rights of men.
3. To send a copy of this Resolution to the Minister of the Interior of the Cabinet of Madrid.

For the International Working Men's Union of London,
London, May 12th, 1901. G. LOTZ, Secretary.

PROGRESS.

Now that the old century has passed away, with eagerness and hope we welcome the birth of the new one; which, we hope, will bring a further advance in knowledge and the realisation of those aspirations for freedom which have been engendered in the past century.

We cannot look back on the past hundred years without acknowledging the remarkable growth of science, the new truths which have been revealed especially as regards the theory of evolution. Also the growth of new social and economic ideas, which will have such a powerful influence in the destiny of humanity.

But, since the prevailing apathy and ignorance, the result of social environment is responsible for the lack of inquiry and investigation in those departments of knowledge which are of infinite importance to mankind, and the consequent misconceptions which have become customary in respect of what really constitutes progress, it would be profitable to analyse this factor which had played such an important part in nature, and more so because in the domain of social and economical affairs, in the struggle which is becoming more acute between the workers and the privileged class, those compromises in the shape of political reforms are regarded as progressive, whereas they have no title to the name.

Of course, as I have previously stated, the past century has been a marvellous one in the discovery and elaboration of new scientific ideas, in the development of our industrial system, and the invention and application of steam power, machinery and electricity.

Now, by many these facts are claimed as examples of general progress, but the hypothesis is a false one, as all these improvements have been the exclusive property of the few, who have used them to further enslave the greater portion of mankind. Thus on the one side we have seen an unparalleled growth of wealth, and on the other increased poverty and misery. Therefore, since these improvements in our productive powers have only fostered class privilege, we do not recognise them as examples of progress in its true sense—that of the general betterment of humanity.

Then the perplexed reader will ask: "What do you regard as progress?" We say that progress is the gradual development, not merely of our system of production, but of those ideas and customs which would make for the betterment not of a portion, but the whole of humanity.

In the domain of nature we find the conditions of life are favourable to development, to the ceaseless striving to attain higher planes of perfection. The gradual development of the higher organisms from simple and primordial types under the influence of the principles of adaptation and inheritance. When we compare mammals, birds, amphibians and fishes with one of the simplest forms of life known to naturalists—the simple celled moneron—we can see the great progress which has been achieved in the development of organisms. The researches of such naturalists as Lamarck, Oken, Goethe, Darwin, and Haeckel have conclusively proved that all forms are the result of the influence of environment and inheritance. That all organisms morphologically are the result of the influences of climate, soil, nutrition, and other organisms; and we observe this development not only in the phylogenetic sense (the development of the tribe), but also in the domain of Embryology (the development of the individual). We see that the simple egg cell after fertilisation becomes an aggregation of cells, which by natural processes become another individual.

Nature, when correctly interpreted, offers mankind every opportunity for attaining those planes of perfection. But while science has made manifest the principles of natural progress, modern societies ignore these teachings. Man, through the influence of social environment, has become artificial and conventional in his mode of life. Society, instead of giving him every facility for development, the free access to the bounteous gifts of nature, obstructs him by the application of man-made laws and fossilised customs, which only impede his progress and development. Laws, we are told, are expected to remedy the evils which are the result of law itself.

By the aid of science we have learnt the difference between cause and effect in natural phenomena, and so it is obvious that in dealing with evils of any kind, instead of regarding them from a mere superficial standpoint, we must remove the tattered veil, which cunning and ignorance have utilised to obstruct the progress of truth. Then having subjected to a thorough analysis all those institutions which have grown up around us, we shall be able to discern those causes which create poverty and social strife.

The scientist is not content with the knowledge of the anatomical or physiological features of an organism, he searches for the causes which

have made life possible. This is not so with law; causes are out of its province altogether, and it is not likely that its representatives will expose (even if they were capable of doing so) the futility and absurdity of the show, which protects their principles and yields them salaries and fees. Therefore we know that the idea which has permeated the minds of many, that laws foster the progress of mankind, we regard as a chimera. Investigation proves that they do not aid progress, but, on the contrary, retard and paralyze it. Of course, if progress is to be understood as merely marking time, and nothing more, one cannot object. But that is not so. By progress we mean that gradual change and development to higher planes of perfection, which is such a predominant feature in nature. In societies we see that it is the outcome of individual effort, the ceaseless struggle to gain for the benefit of mankind all that nature offers. What is gained is gained by labour alone.

In the domain of nature, through the operation of the principle of adaptation, organisms have been free to select that environment best suited to them, thus their survival has been possible. But through the operation of laws in society, the individual is unable to select those conditions of life which he considers best suited to him. Laws entirely ignore the fact, that differentiation is a most important feature in nature. That individual temperaments and desires are not uniform. Therefore laws are in opposition to this principle, because they compel every individual to fit into the same groove. In nature uniformity has not been the rule, on the contrary, a gradual deviation from primary forms is constantly observed, and it is this principle which has been one of the factors in the production of species of plants and animals.

Now what we wish to point out is, that where uniformity exists progress must be reduced to a minimum. That in a community it is the result of the varied and innumerable efforts of individuals, each advancing on to untrodden paths, often independently, striving to bring to life new truths and ideas. But law in itself is opposed to independent effort. It stereotypes and congeals everything, therefore it does not voluntarily legalise any new ideas the community may give expression to. It is opposed to changes, and more especially if they interfere with the privileges of those in power.

Therefore, it must be apparent that all progress takes place in opposition to law. That it only admits and legalises any desired compromise when agitation and discontent are rife, and then an enactment becomes so mutilated by cunning politicians, that when it becomes legalised what little virtue it had has vanished.

Obedience to natural laws we believe to be essential, because disobedience means disease, degeneration and death; but this cannot be advanced as a justification for our subordination to legal enactments. We are opposed to these because they are in opposition to natural laws. They prevent us from living in accordance with those natural laws, which are the basis of progress and development. There is no analogy between the two, subordination to natural laws means well being and development, and to artificial laws, slavery, oppression, and poverty.

R. M.

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