

Freedom

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WAR or SUBMISSION—WHICH?

From the beginning of last century, but more especially from the middle (1864), strikes have become a powerful weapon in the struggle between Labor and Capital. Their number is increasing, their sphere widening. There have been strikes of some ten men, there have been strikes of hundreds of thousands of men. Their economic, social and moral influence upon the life of the working classes all over Europe has been immense.

In an economic sense all increase in wages and diminution in hours was obtained by strike only.

Socially, all the so-called labor legislation adopted by different parliaments and governments in this country, as well as on the continent, was always imposed on them by popular agitation, by well organised and vigorously conducted strikes.

Morally, they have raised the energy, courage and dignity of the individual, and created a strong feeling of solidarity among the workers of every nation and country. And great was the significance of the first step in this international solidarity.

With what enthusiasm the French, Belgian and Swiss workmen speak of the first financial help sent by the Trade Unions of this country to Paris during the metal workers' strike in 1867, or of the help from Paris and Brussels received by the Geneva strikers in 1868. From that time down to the present, this international solidarity has been growing and spreading all over the industrial nations of Europe and in the United States. Now every organised trade and each thoughtful individual worker fully understand what a pressing and urgent duty it is for them to be always ready to help their fellow workers in the fight against the tyranny of Capital.

But, on the other hand, the capitalist classes and employers clearly understood at once the growing danger to them of these organised workers with their unions and their international solidarity. At the very beginning, during the above-mentioned strikes, the capitalist press with the *Times* ahead began to urge the governments of Europe to unite against (as was alarmingly expressed) the "social peril" threatening the very foundation of the existence of the governing and capitalist classes. At first governments seemed disinclined to attack, prevent or violently suppress the strikers and their helpers by means of troops.

Why were the State and the Ministers so tolerant? First of all, they still remembered well the lessons which the oppressed proletariat had given them in 1848 all over Europe. They know that popular indignation can be very easily awakened and directed against them, and they had not the slightest disposition to repeat the journeys of Louis Philippe, or of Pope Pius IX., or Prince (afterwards King) Wilhelm of Prussia, and others.

Secondly, the middle classes, the true plutocracy, had not yet gained their full ascendancy, and the aristocracy with the governing families were rather pleased to see the shopkeepers, bankers and employers a little humiliated by united labor. But capitalism procured within these last thirty years—on behalf of general scientific and technical development—an unprecedented progress, and definitely converted to its purposes the State machinery and Government, the Aristocracy and the Church. In our days, all are overpowered by money-grubbers; in their associations, in their companies we now see dukes and bishops, lords and generals, members of parliament and Ministers. Everybody is at the service of Capital, is bought and guided by men like Rhodes, Beit and Chamberlain. All is crushed or assimilated. Only organised Labor, with its continual and international solidarity, stands firmly and courageously against it, defying all efforts of federated employers united in international trusts. Naturally, the capitalists obliged both government and parliament to protect their interests, to fight for their cause. And we see all over Europe as well as in this country and in the United States that in each more or less important case of dispute between Capital and organised Labor, the latter always has to face the State and its whole machinery: army, police, injustice, etc.

Not only does the government of every country side with the employers and by its police and soldiers protect their interests, but in some cases, for instance in Italy, soldiers are employed as blacklegs to replace the strikers. The young workers and peasants are forced to fulfil their compulsory military service in the so-called highly patriotic duty of defending the fatherland against its enemies, against its invaders. So that, by sending them against the strikers, the government proves in fact that for it the enemy is the people; at the same time showing cynically that a soldier is nothing else than a tool for killing everybody who is rising against the capitalists, those true masters of the State with all its means and strength.

This union of the plutocracy and the government is not a new phenomenon. In former times also, those who possessed the land and capital were the real masters of the State; but the present shameless

and brutal coalition is a thing of modern date. When capitalism and aristocracy became convinced that any employers' federation or the most powerful trust might be unable to resist the workers' federated unions, it was decided that in future the strikers must be dealt with by the authorities, police and army, that any energetic claim from the workers' side should be suppressed by lead and steel. So we see, especially for the last eight or ten years, the strikers shot in France, in Germany, in Italy, in Spain, Belgium and the United States. It is very important that the people should understand this new phase in the social struggle. They must realise that in every strike they may be obliged to face death at the hands of the army; whether under the different names of militia, gendarmes, Pinkertons, mounted police or regular troops—the fact remains the same, the strikers must be prepared to fight or to submit to the will of their masters. The recent events at Trieste and Barcelona, Chalons, Pittsburg, Martinique and Petersburg have once again taught this lesson.

JOTTINGS.

Mr. Dillon, addressing a true epithet to Chamberlain during the debate on patriotism of March 20th, gives an opportunity to remember the low state of morality into which Parliament, our politicians and Ministry have fallen.

Traitors to their nationality, a few burghers whom Milner with his money-grubbers of the Rand could buy and turn into spies upon their fellow countrymen, are qualified by the Speaker of the House of Commons as English soldiers and His Majesty's loyal subjects. Until now humanity called traitors and spies by their proper name. But Chamberlain, who has a close affinity with such, was glorifying them, boasting even that there are many who are fighting against their own countrymen.

In the darkest time of the Polish revolution, 1863, when Muravieff the Hangman, so justly pilloried by humanity for his atrocities, was in command, never a Pole, soldier or officer, was employed on active service in Poland. All such were sent to Central, North or other parts of Russia.

But now, here in England, this "devil's advocate," as Gladstone once named him, the man of Kynoch's, of a Birmingham Small Arms Co., dares to boast of an incident which even Russian despotism recoiled from. What is the most deplorable and degrading fact in the matter is, that England makes a national hero of Dillon's "d—— liar."

We are accustomed to be prosecuted by our friends the Social Democrats. But to be treated as *agents provocateurs* of a government has not before occurred. When our comrades were executed in France or elsewhere, the late Liebknecht could say: "Anarchists are petted by bourgeois and governments." Yet even he never went so far as to contend that Anarchists in Spain were acting in agreement with the Spanish government which tortured them in Montjuich, strangled them at Xeres, and keeps them at hard labor at Ceuta and elsewhere. But now the Spanish Social Democrats openly declare that the Barcelona General Strike and the bloodshed which followed peaceable efforts to obtain a nine-hour day, was organised by Anarchists together with the government!! Already at the beginning of the strike, Iglesias—the same who during the police persecution of 1893, together with Lafargue, published in the Brussels journal *La Liberté* a list of the names of members of a revolutionary Anarchist committee—instead of supporting the strike condemned it in his journal, *El Socialista*, saying that it was provoked by Anarchists. Now his friend Joyer, leader of the Barcelona Social Democrats, in an interview given the liberal bourgeois paper *Heraldo de Madrid*, accuses the Anarchists of having a secret understanding with the government in order to give the latter an opportunity through street fighting to suppress liberty and institute martial law so as to force the workers to lose their cause.

So monstrous a slander is even unequalled by a professor of the art like Chamberlain, and the *Heraldo's* reporter finds it necessary to make his excuses for reproducing so damnable and base an accusation, while the editor of the paper, an honest bourgeois and naturally a political enemy of Anarchism, expresses in a footnote his deep indignation, regretting that any self-respecting man could advance so unparalleled a calumny.

There is a rumour, which we do not yet confirm, that the Emperor William, irritated by the successive revolts of the workers in all parts of the world and alarmed by the intense and growing feeling of unity and fraternity among them, is about to form an army of international bourgeois and capitalists, with which to take the field the instant the workers seem likely to profit by their solidarity and assume the direction of any State. He will command this army in person; and, it is said, will offer the post of military secretary to Chamberlain, for whose "slimness" of mind and vindictive nature he has a great admiration.

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NOTES.

FOR THEM, THE BRITISH WORKER IS TOO LEARNED.

Our noble Lords and Legislators are deeply engaged in the problem of popular instruction. They have found out that the working classes begin to read too much, and, as the high-minded Arthur Chamberlain explained, reading workers are not so easily dealt with. In view of this threatening prospect, Catholics and High Church clergy, brewers and landlords, the sharks of the Stock Exchange and Primrose League ladies are uniting their forces to destroy our already wretchedly inadequate education.

What is most disheartening is that the workers give no sign of protest. Will you submit again and so condemn your children to ignorance, degradation and slavery, when they might win to better instruction, dignity and liberty?

HISTOIRE DES BOURSES DU TRAVAIL.

In the last years of his life Fernand Pelloutier (he died March 13, 1901) conceived the project to let his comrades profit from his vast experience by writing the history of Labor Exchanges in France. No one else could have commenced that work with such hope or success, or achieved it with such skill as Fernand Pelloutier. As one of the founders of the Labor Exchanges and as secretary of their Federation in France and the colonies, he had been their soul and leading spirit, and the rapid success of these bodies is in great part due to his untiring labor. In this history he shows the workers what their organisations can do "if they are thoroughly penetrated by the grandeur of their true mission;" he tries to convince them that they can easily find men among them capable of managing their institutions as soon as they cease to be hypnotised by parliamentary comedies. "To teach the proletariat to use its will, to instruct it by action and to reveal to it its own capacity—that is the secret of social education of the people."

This book can teach them much in that respect by giving the history of their organisations, solidarity and attendant success.

To those who study the workers' movement, the book will be a valuable help.

HYPOCRISY, OUR NATIONAL SENTIMENT.

At the very moment that the Ministers were playing their rôle of afflicted patriots in Parliament (over the capture of Lord Methuen), their confidential agents, instructed by them 70 hours previously, were transacting certain business with South African shares at the Stock Exchange.

For whose profit? Certainly not for that of the noble, patriotic Ministers who are so perfectly disinterested in the Chartered Company, Kynochs, Small Arms or any other financial Corporation.

BARRACKS FOR THE YOUNG, WORKHOUSE FOR THE OLD.

Military slavery steadily approaches, and compulsory military service will soon be imposed on the English nation. Our existing family government of Cecils and Chamberlains is cunning, not to say clever, in its method of pushing on towards its aim. At home they dare not openly propose their schemes, so they make their voice heard through the colonies. The other day, their political tools in the Natal Parliament almost unanimously and very enthusiastically claimed the necessity of obligatory military service. But why do our governors act in such a roundabout way? They can impose this armed slavery even tomorrow on the English people; for who will oppose, who will resist?

AN EFFECTIVE LESSON.

For the second time the king of Italy insisted in his speech from the throne on abolishing the taxes which weigh especially on the working class and peasantry. At the same time the Ministers of His Majesty are promising so liberal an administration that even the Socialists of the Marxian school are supporting them.

So that what for twenty years no legal demonstration and no parliamentary action could remedy, the tragedy of Monza has been able to achieve. We do not give much significance to all the promises made, but to those who believe and admire all governmental and parliamentary assurances the question must sometimes arise: "Which is the best way to effect a change from a tyrannous to a liberal government?"

PROUDHON'S MUTUALISM and ANARCHISM.

(Concluded from No. 166.)

Before quoting Proudhon's own opinions, I will remind the reader that the tendency to abolish the political and authoritarian State was a common feature of all Socialist schools. From Saint Simon, who first of all insisted strongly on industrial organisation, to V. Considerant and the Fourierist school, all agreed on the abolition of the political State in a Communist or phalansterian society. The most brilliant pupil of Saint Simon, Auguste Comte, in his *Opuscules* (1819-1825) explains briefly but very clearly the philosophical and general basis of human progress in history. These ideas, developed by him later on in his *Cours de philosophie positive*, inspired the great English historian-philosopher H. T. Buckle. They were reflected in the works of the Socialists of that period as well as in Proudhon's, and later on in Marx who wanted even to appropriate them under the ridiculous term of materialist explanation of history. According to A. Comte, "social organisation depends always on the condition of civilisation, and the progress of civilisation itself is subject to a certain law." The aim of human activity, individual or collective, says he, is "to act upon natural forces..... in order to modify them for the advantage of humanity..... to develop collectively this natural tendency, to regulate and harmonise it in order that useful action be as great as possible..." In a barbarous society, "industry being in its childhood, society was compelled to make war the aim of its activity..... And all modifications obtained in civilisation have been the results of the always growing progress of science and industry."

In accordance with the philosophy of his time, Proudhon states that: "The laws of social economy are independent of the will of man and of legislation: it is our privilege to recognise them, our dignity to obey them (p. 255). Above the governmental machinery, under the shadow of political institutions, far from the attention of statesmen and priests, society slowly and silently produced its own organisation; it created a new order, the expression of its vitality and autonomy.....

"This organisation has as principles:

"1st. The indefinite perfectibility of the individual and of the race;

"6th. Universality of well-being.

"Its forms of action are:

"(a) Division of labor (classification by industries);

"(b) Collectivity, organised workers replacing the army;

"(c) Commerce, a concrete form of contract which replaces law..."

In order to define contract, Proudhon quotes again from Rousseau: "To find a form of association which defends and protects with all its strength the community, the individual and the welfare of each associated member, and by which each individual uniting himself with all, obeys only himself, and remains as free as before." (p. 129)

For a man who had such general ideas it was but natural to deny State and Authority, not only in the past but present society. Progress and development of humanity being considered as the result of the mode of production and of exchange, and these latter as consequences of "the always growing progress of science and industry" (A. Comte), it became absolute logic to attack, not such or such forms of government, but really the principle of authority in general. That is what he has done whilst attacking even the most advanced Socialists, which is much to be regretted, evidently, as it did much wrong to Socialist parties as well as to Proudhon himself. But if one considers the ideas themselves and not the Socialist struggle, it must be recognised that he was then the most consistent of all, especially when saying:

"Dissolve, immerse and absorb the political or governmental system into the economic system by reducing, simplifying, decentralising and suppressing one after the other all the wheels of that great machine called government or State" (p. 196).

The same principles of mutualism in individual transactions, of collectivism in production, of individual and social liberty, of free and spontaneous organisation in national life, Proudhon applied to international relations. From then dates his ardent propaganda of the federalist principle.

"Truth is everywhere; science is the unity of the human race. If thus science, but no religion or authority, is accepted in each country as rule for the society as highest arbitrator of interests, government being reduced to nothing, all legislators of the universe will agree. No more will there be nationality or fatherland in the political sense of the word, only birth-places. Man, of whatever race or colour he may be, will be really native of the universe; city rights are for him acquired everywhere" (p. 329).

Reading these admirable passages which under the influence of French delegates who were nearly all Proudhonists and mutualists, became the basis of the sublime statutes of the International, it is natural to ask oneself for what reason this thinker, to whom we are indebted for so many humanitarian ideas, was so much calumniated? The answer is simple. Proudhon is calumniated by the defenders of oppression and of privilege, by reactionists who want to keep the people in ignorance. Formerly reactionists acted in the name of God and Church. In our days they do their work in the name of the Communist State and of metaphysical dialectics. Especially the aspirants for power in a future slavish society where everyone will be incorporated in the "labor army, especially for agriculture," the apostles of metaphysical ignorance felt and still feel animosity and rage against Proudhon; they it is who having set themselves the task, calumniate him as they calumniate all who, sharing his ideas, call themselves like Proudhon: Anarchists.

The Voice of England and the Voice of Brum.

Two voices echo in the murky air:

The voice of reason and the voice of wrath,
Calling our efforts to the foul or fair,
The steps ascending or the downward path.

The reasoning call is England's ancient tone
From "little body with the mighty heart,"
Waking the hopes of man in every zone,
Taking for truth and freedom foremost part.

'Tis Mercia's swine must squeal for other ways,
Her perky prophets setting fools agog
With thievish cant and bully's braggart phrase,
The cult besotted of the bloated frog.

O England waken from thy sleep at last!
And hurl these swine into oblivion's sea!
Recall the glories of thy struggles past,
And be once more the beacon for the free!

LOTHROP WITHERINGTON.

London, January 1, 1902.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

The winter has passed and the Tsar is still alive—so are the Russian students. At Moscow lately they held a mass meeting and passed the following resolution: "Whereas the troubles in our universities are due to the anomalous social system of the country, and that the claims formulated by the students, even if accepted, would fail to remedy the want of equilibrium of which the nation is dying; *Resolved*, to omit further claims of a purely academic order, and to demand:

1. Full liberty of speech and opinion for all. 2. The right for all to combine and organise. 3. The admission of all citizens to the High Schools without distinction of class, nationality, religion or sex. *Also*, being in agreement with, and on behalf of the workers, we demand: An eight-hour day and liberty to strike. *Lastly*, convinced of the incapacity of our government to give satisfaction to our legitimate claims: *Resolved* to address ourselves directly to the people; it is for them to take up the reins of power—for them to reorganise the economic and political systems of the country."

This is plain talk. We should like to have seen old Pobiedonostzev's face when he read those resolutions. For though, like all supreme officials, he may scoff at what these dub the "frothy effervescence" of youth, in Russia at least that effervescence is contagious and the breeder of considerable official discomfort. St. Petersburg responded to the call—if it did not initiate it. There the anti-governmental movement becomes daily stronger and less open than before. Less open because the modest demands of the students when broached publicly are met with Cossack whips and police cells, by expulsion and exile. If a newspaper vents their grievances or disparages a member of the Romanoffs, it is permanently suppressed and its editor and printer likewise. What wonder, then, if the agitation becomes "less open"—if political unrest is secretly spreading in every direction, so that even Siberia—once only a penal settlement, now a province teeming with a rapidly increasing population and townships—should be thrilling under the seductive influence of revolutionary thought. In Petersburg the police call upon those savoring of "sedition" in the early morning hours and make searches and arrests as in old Nihilist days. But they fail to arrest the *Idea*. While if they want to find it, it slaps them in the face, as it were, in the very street, where the early workman glancing over his shoulder and knowing well what the knot of officials outside a sleeping house betokens, mutters: "Never mind, brother; *we*, the awakened workers, stand behind you." Never was revolutionary literature so prolific or more fruitful; the very peasants begin to interest themselves in its dissemination; no censorship can stamp out the leaflets and pamphlets that mysteriously reach all classes from garrison officer to shoeblack; it is raining leaflets in the towns, and the earnestness and courage of the distributors has even been shown by house-to-house visitation. Even as we write, Young Russia has flung itself again into the streets to demand justice and fair play. It will get neither. It will get sword-thrusts, bullets and exile. It will be beaten back by the mailed fist of Authority. The Dowager Empress and her cohort of Ministers, Russia's real rulers, will return to their coffee and cigarettes—"it is over," they will say. Over for today—yes. But there is a *Tomorrow* for those who choose to be unjust—a day of retribution for all who trample upon truth and mercy and are deaf to the cry of the people. Here in phlegmatic England, all agog for coronation tinsel, lost in supineness and the gluttony of wealth, every revolutionary heart glows at the tidings from Russia, for the bravely fought struggle taking place there is not a fight for a mere change in university regulations but a fight for political and social freedom. Finland also is resisting coercion in its own quiet way. The Finns do not mass in the streets, but they too are busy with pamphlets. Zobrikoff, the Governor General, is politely sent a copy of each new one. It gives him a tired feeling,

for his Russian spies cannot locate the prohibited writings. He offers a reward to every postoffice official who can seize an envelope containing forbidden literature—in other words, openly permits the violation of private correspondence. That, however, in every country is now a mere matter of detail when a breath of rebellion is in the air. The General is also anxious to obtain imperial authority to exile Finlanders by administrative order, that is, without trial. He will, no doubt, succeed, and in time a muzzled and crushed people will rise out of passive resistance into fighting despotism with something sharper than pen and ink.

The situation in Spain is still breezy. The Barcelona tornado has been pent up—its outer cyclonic fringe in prison. Pent-up tornados are likely to become very nasty things when they elect to try another burst. Even Charles V. and Alva might scoot before their thunderous blast. "Old Moore" prophesies ructions for Spain in November. Though his political vision is somewhat blunted by age and quackery, and his predictions, like those of the Cabinet upon the conclusion of the Boer war, are unpunctual, it is not impossible (barring the date) that he may be right. For the Catalans are not people who sit down quietly under a wrong. Descended from a nation whom history names dimly as once in the long ago having peopled a zone of Europe from the Black Sea to the Spanish coast, with offshoots reaching to ancient Britain and Ireland—owning a strain of that blood the Catalans will never become disciples of Tolstoy. Catalonia, moreover, is Spain's one industrial province. Its manufacturing centres teem with a courageous, intelligent and alert population, with a passion for education and progress in every form. The metal workers wanted a nine-hour day and went on strike several weeks ago when the masters refused their demand—they are still out on strike though many of the trades that joined in sympathy are slowly resuming work under pressure of martial law. The street fighting which at one time was continuous, was brutally suppressed by the police and *Guardia Civil*—the latter a body of men detested on account of their readiness to shoot. Of course, all the so-called "rioting" was officially stated to be due to the Anarchists and not to police and military brutality. Therefore every comrade known or merely imagined to have revolutionary instincts was seized, when not killed on the street, and thrown into prison; some, it is rumoured into the fortress of Montjuich, where they were court-martialed and shot. Terrified by the determined attitude of the workers, not a few of the employers in Barcelona and elsewhere have since yielded to the demands for shorter hours, etc. Just now there is a lull in Spain; but, as we have said, it is the silence of a pent-up tornado. The whole country is simmering with rebellion. With the exception of the priesthood and the shopkeepers of Madrid we question whether the whole of Spain is not nauseated with monarchism and militarism. As in Ireland the rich and educated never mingle or are at one with the people; but there is this difference—where the Irish peasant for some inscrutable reason bows to "the quality," the Spanish peasant faces that class boldly. The essence of true courtesy, like his Milesian brother, he yet has twice his pride and independence of character—and he is not afraid of Mausers. At present the movement in Spain is a workers' movement, but when the revolutionary tornado leaps again into life it will quite possibly sweep across the cornfields and bring out the farmer and his man in answer to its lusty roar—and the people shall be one. The courageous attitude of the Spanish workers in face of the opposition of the masters to their modest demands has deeply impressed the trade unionists of Europe, their cause being heartily endorsed by those of England. Many bitter things are said of the Spanish Socialists who, true to their political traditions, stood aloof and took no part in the struggle of their fellow workers—to fight in the streets is not respectable when you can put a deputy with a silk hat on his head into parliament. Meantime there is still much distress among the strikers and funds are urgently needed for the women, children and imprisoned men. Contributions can be sent to *Freedom* office.

But it is in Austria that the vindictive hand of despotism revels most in blood; where to rebel means more or less instant death; where a struggle in the streets is stilled as quickly as it breaks out. Lloyd's stokers at Trieste struck recently when their just demands were refused by the company, and the railwaymen and compositors with other trades joined in a general strike. Trieste was ceded by the Italian government not so many years ago to Austria. The population of the city and district is Italian. They detest the Austrian yoke; but, naturally, a government when it sells or cedes a province does not ask its people how it likes the transaction. There is still intense devotion to the mother country in spite of or perhaps stronger for the large German speaking garrison and police force, which, composed of brutal Styrians and Croats, detest the Italian language and people. The police officials in Austria rank high in confidential positions and have absolute authority over street demonstrations. Their men are quick to irritate a crowd into a bad temper. As soon as a chance stone is thrown, a forbidden song sung, they become what they wish: masters of the situation. Cavalry and infantry are hurried up, the crowds forced along impossible directions, and at the mere word of military or police official the slaughter begins. This is what happened at Trieste. The strikers as they paraded a street were brutally hustled into a fighting demeanour, troops hurried to the spot and fired three volleys on an unarmed throng. Twenty-two workers were wounded and twelve killed. The next day the exasperated citizens draped their houses in crape as a sign of mourning, and again the streets were crowded by thousands. The same police tactics ensued, again volleys were fired, and seven dead and thirty more wounded was the result. That very day the Court of Arbitration decided in favor of the stokers; at midnight the nineteen dead were buried. So they crush out strikes and strikers in Austria. Does Francis Joseph

