

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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Social Democracy and the General Strike.

The Social Democratic Congress at Mannheim, it must be said without prejudice, would have had no interest whatever for the Socialist world had it not been for the consideration of a question forced upon it by the progress and development of trade unions and their new tactics—the General Strike. The history of Social Democratic Congresses will not make a very inspiring study for future generations. Not because of the quarrels and personalities which are more or less inevitable in all active organisations, but because of the *causes* of these quarrels, the motives that underlie the trickery and the wire-pulling which absorbs three-fourths of their time. That is why the Mannheim Congress was for the most part a dull repetition of those that have gone before.

At last, after years of hostility and aloofness, and sometimes of calumny and bitter attacks, the Marxists are discovering that labour unions are a growing force to be reckoned with; and they begin to recognise that the time has arrived for them to reconsider their attitude towards them, since if they can be harnessed to the car of the Social Democratic party it may help it out of the rut of political sterility where this cumbrous anomaly has been sticking fast for years. On the other hand, should they escape from the leading strings of the politicians, should they be left free to develop their own methods of direct attack on the economic side rather than the political, taking the initiative in these struggles instead of consulting the leaders—then they see clearly that the days of Social Democracy as at present organised will be few in the land.

Clearly the force of the General Strike is now fully recognised, except by the most hopeless of Socialist reactionaries. But it is equally clear from Bebel's resolution that it is to be employed solely in the interests of the political party of which he is the head, and that never may the exploited and downtrodden worker adopt this means of combatting the robbers without first asking the consent of the political bosses. Some compromise, however, was necessary to secure the goodwill of the trade unions, and to this end the resolution of Dr. Braun (Nuremberg) urging the General Strike as indispensable "not only for the political but also for the trade union aims of the Labour movement" was allowed discussion. Finally, the adoption by the Congress, by 386 to 65 of the second part of the resolution declaring trade unions to be "indispensably necessary organisations for the improvement of the social condition of the workers, and to be as essential as the Social Democratic party itself," gives a pretty clear idea of the immense influence the labour organisations are gaining in Germany. And the fear that the Social Democrats have lest they should slip from their grasp may be gathered from the further declaration that "it is absolutely necessary the trade union movement should be imbued with the spirit of Social Democracy," and that every member of the party should work for this end.

All this forebodes the struggle that has to be fought out not only in Germany but in all countries where the two parties exist—between those who "fight" by the ballot and those who fight by direct action. In a word, between those who would hold to the State through "the conquest of political power" and those who are for expropriation and the free federation of the workers. In France this struggle has commenced; in Italy, as we explain in our "International Notes," it is developing in its own way; in England it is a question of the immediate future; in America we fear that the workers will wait until Gompers and his party are head and ears in the mud of American politics.

The situation, however, so far as Germany is concerned has its own peculiar interest. Here we have the spectacle of a nation where revolution is overdue. Perhaps the most pitiable

exhibition in the whole course of the Congress was the abject plea of Bebel that "the Germans had much for which the people of Russia were still struggling." But the people of Russia are also struggling for much that the German Social Democrats dare not breathe of in the Reichstag. No wonder their sterile political tactics are a byword even among their own supporters, and are the laughing-stock of the ruling classes. It is for this reason that men like Dr. Barth can gibe at them for having no power whatever in administrative affairs, for being excluded, as he says, from the humble post of a night-watchman, and being denied any share in the work of elementary education, "a condition of things that is not met with in any other country in the world."

The truth is, where the spirit of revolt has been crushed—and Social Democracy has done this for Germany—their three million votes have little terror for the powers that be. That is why "free speech" and "free assembly" are such a mockery in the best educated nation in the world! That is why rampant militarism has the privilege of killing inoffensive citizens. Yes, in Germany a revolution is overdue, and this happens because Social Democracy bars the way. And now arises the question whether the one great hope of Germany, as for the civilised world—a revolutionary labour movement—shall achieve its real aim, its complete emancipation by its own efforts and through its unions, or whether it shall allow that "old man of the sea," political action, to destroy its force.

For ourselves, we believe that the German workers have learned their lesson; that the future is for the General Strike and Direct Action. We are assured that many members of the unions are working for this end. And if the comrades who are sharing in this struggle hold firm to the arduous yet inspiring work that is needed to ensure success, the results will bring Germany the freedom that should have been hers in the past, and must be hers in the future.

CONGRESS OF DUTCH FREE COMMUNISTS.

On Sunday September 23rd the above Federation held their Congress at Utrecht, and a brief report of the proceedings will perhaps be of interest to English comrades. Eight groups were represented, and many comrades from various places were present. There was much enthusiasm throughout the meetings.

A number of letters of sympathy were read, among others one from the German Anarchist Federation, and one from the Belgian Free Communist Federation.

The financial reports were approved, showing a small cash balance in hand. The existence of the monthly, *Grond en Vrijheid*, is now assured.

The suggestion of the Belgian Federation to found an International Federation was next considered, and it was agreed that until the International Congress of 1907 all should work together, when the question should be finally decided. At the same time it was agreed to use the International Bulletin which will shortly be issued by the Belgian Federation.

Our Federation will prepare for the organisation of the International Free Socialist and Communist Congress to be held at Amsterdam in 1907. An appeal in regard to it was drawn up and approved. This will be translated into seven languages and sent to all parts of the world after it has been endorsed by the existing Federations in Belgium, Germany, Bohemia, and England.

A group was chosen to gather the best pamphlets and help their publication, and also to inquire into the possibility of starting a monthly review.

Our Federation will also commence at once a systematic propaganda of our principles taking each province separately.

Letters of sympathy were sent to the Paris committee working for the defence of Comrade Ferrer, Director of the Modern School of Barcelona, and to the imprisoned anti-militarists in France.

The next conference will be held during Easter, 1907.

We ask all comrades interested to communicate with—

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79, Corn. Anthonizstraat, Amsterdam.

Freedom

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NOTES.

THE "EXPRESS" AS A MORALIST.

It must be assumed that there is a section of the public that takes the *Daily Express* seriously, since it finds it pays to pose in the interest of public morality. Its attempted exposure of the "fraud of Socialism," as it chooses to term the exposure of its own ignorance, can hardly have produced the impression it hoped for, judging by many of the letters it has had to print on the subject. But to make up for this it has played one triumphant trump card that has brought "down the house" so to speak, and, as Dickens would say with his "honourable friend" the Member for Verbosity, has "preserved the bulwarks of the nation." Mr. Wells had the temerity to imagine, in his picture of an ideal society, that the relation of the sexes might have changed in character from that which obtains in the present system. He sketched a condition of things wherein neither the priest nor the lawyer had the power (on payment of the required fee) to chain together ostensibly for life two individuals who possibly time might prove to be as antagonistic as fire and water. This was rank blasphemy, and the *Express* did not forget to say so. What horrors might not follow on such a state of things! You would have young people loving—simply loving—one another without the consent of the law! And what would become of the "family" and property? Besides the marriage market would then be abolished; there would be no more commissions for the Lady Fawcetts of the future, and the *Express* would be cheated of all the choice scandals it loves to report. Probably now Mr. Wells realises that in this "England of ours" you may talk Socialism (without revolution), or even Anarchism (without meaning it), but even to hint that marriage is a failure is to call forth the wrath of the most hypocritical nation on the earth.

HALDANE AND MILITARISM.

A very few words should be sufficient to dispose of those Socialists who think they can reconcile the spirit of Internationalism with the advocacy of a citizen army. It partakes very much of the spirit of those self-sacrificing souls—mostly devout Christians—who denounce usury but look upon 5 per cent. on their investments as a reasonable return on their capital; or like those other "advanced thinkers" who admit Christianity to be a mixture of fable and superstition, but advocate it as a means of keeping the people in proper bounds.

So with the army. They know the evils of it, the uses it is put to, they know this Haldane to be one of the slimy band who make our laws, they know him to be hand and glove with Asquith of Featherstone fame, but they have a better word for him with his reactionary proposals than for Keir Hardie with his straightforward and courageous denunciation of the whole brutal business of soldier-making, antagonistic as it is to the fundamental principles of true Socialism. And have they forgotten the brave men on the Continent who are suffering long terms of imprisonment through their efforts to counteract this degrading and brutalising spirit of militarism.

THE TRIAL OF FERRERS AND NAKENS.

The trial of Comrades Ferrers and Nakens in Spain shows with what malignant cruelty these two innocent and worthy men are being hounded to prison by the Spanish reactionaries. No efforts must be spared to arouse protests in all quarters against the ferocious persecution that may involve them in a long sentence. *Justice*, for September 29th, gives a most clear and unbiassed account of the whole matter by Guy Bowman, who appeals to all "international Socialists of this country to protest energetically against such monstrosities, and to hold meetings of protest." He concludes that if the condemnation of Ferrer should occur, the days of the Spanish monarchy are numbered. We echo that belief.

McQUEEN AND AMERICAN "JUSTICE."

In the *Tribune* for September 5th Mr. H. G. Wells gives a deeply interesting account of his interview with Comrade McQueen in Trenton Jail. The riot in Paterson, the arrest of McQueen, and the trial must still be fresh in the minds of many, and we need not repeat them now. But the methods of the American police, the tone of the press, and the attitude of the parasites of American society are so trenchantly exposed in the course of his survey of the whole case, that from this may be obtained a good insight into the administration of justice in the "land of the free," and some idea may be formed as to the struggle that will be necessary to save Haywood, Pettibone and Moyer from the vengeance of the legalised brigands of Colorado.

Mr. Wells speaks of McQueen as looking pale and delicate. He pays a tribute to the work he has done in the movement, and alludes sympathetically to the ideal of society which he cherishes. Incidentally he does a great injustice to Emma Goldman, against which we protest. She is a revolutionist beyond all question, and does not disguise it, but we may reasonably expect a thinker of Mr. Wells's calibre to understand that the insults showered upon her by the press he so much despises should be taken as a tribute to her sincerity and single mindedness.

However, to come to the exposure of the press campaign against McQueen. After his arrest, the writer says, his fate was in the hands of a number of people who wanted to make an example of the Paterson strikers. "The press took up McQueen. They began to clothe the bare bones of this simple little history I have told in fluent, unmitigated lying. They blackened him, one might think, out of sheer artistic pleasure in the operation. They called this rather nervous, educated, nobly-meaning if ill-advised young man a 'notorious Anarchist,' his headline title became 'Anarchist McQueen,' they wrote his 'story' in a vein of imaginative fervour, they invented 'an unsavoury police record' for him in England, and enlarged upon the secret organisation for crime of which he was representative and leader. In a little while McQueen had ceased to be a credible human being; he might have been invented by Mr. William le Queux."

This conspiracy of lies and calumnies led to the arrest of McQueen, and his subsequent conviction was brought about by press liars and police perjurers working on the lines above indicated. The shameful treatment of Mrs. McQueen is also referred to by Mr. Wells.

In the same paper for September 7th the case of McQueen is further dealt with, and the following extract will give a fair summary of Mr. Wells's conclusions in relation to it. "There has been a serious miscarriage of justice," he says, "such as (unhappily) might happen in any country. That is nothing distinctive of America. But what does impress me as remarkable and perplexing is the immense difficulty—the perhaps insurmountable difficulty—of getting this man released. The Governor of the State of New Jersey knows he is innocent. The Judges of the Court of Pardons know he is innocent. Three of them I was able to buttonhole at Trenton and hear their point of view. Two were of the minority and for release, one was doubtful in attitude but hostile in spirit. They hold, he thinks, the man on the score of public policy. They put it that Paterson is a 'hotbed' of crime and violence, that once McQueen is released every Anarchist in the country will be emboldened to crime, and so on, and so on. I admit Paterson festers, but if we are to punish anybody instead of reforming the system, its the masters who ought to be in jail for that."

Mr. Wells concludes by doubting if the efforts made for McQueen's release will succeed, owing, as he suggests, to the lack of "moral indignation" in the American public. Perhaps he is right, although we hope McQueen will be saved the five years of torture that capitalist fear and cowardice have apportioned him. In any case we must acknowledge the good service done McQueen by Mr. Wells in the *Tribune*, and in spite of some inaccuracies, easily excused under the circumstances, we could wish that other prominent literary men might be imbued by the courageous example of Mr. Wells.

* * Any books on Anarchism, Socialism, or kindred subjects forwarded (if obtainable) on receipt of order and cash. Inquiries answered on receipt of stamped envelope.

CRIME IN THE MAKING.*

Just as evidence is accumulating on all hands to prove the failure of the State in securing the well-being of its children, so also are its methods in dealing with the consequences of its own follies and brutalities arousing a growing storm of indignation from thoughtful students of criminology. One of the latest and best publications on the subject is the above collection of essays by Edward Carpenter. This volume is admirable in its clearness of style, in its avoidance of all discussion of abstract theories, and the in convincing use made of facts derived from actual experiment.

At the outset a brief history of our penal system is given, with all its hideous cruelty and utter failures. Following this is a chapter on "Law and Punishment," which proves that whatever reforms have been introduced, our ignorance and obstinacy in many respects is still worthy of the dark ages. The chapter on "The Sources of Crime" is a most interesting study of the social conditions that breed and develop our so-called "criminal classes,"—a term, by the way, that future sociologists will probably apply with more justice to our judges and police. The author here points out the fact, well known to all Socialists, that the institution of private property is alone answerable for four-fifths of the "crime" that is punishable by law. So the abolition of the landlord and capitalist means the abolition of all our prisons as such; for the remaining fifth, guilty possibly of crimes of violence, will obviously be treated, in the majority of cases, as weak-minded or unbalanced characters, for whom special conditions, scientific perhaps, but humane and kindly, will be substituted with a view to their return to normal citizenship. To this end some occupation congenial to the individual is most essential, and as soon as possible some feeling of responsibility must be awakened. The advantage of this treatment is shown in many instances, as for example in the George Junior Republic in New York State, which we are told is "practically a reformatory institution for boys between twelve and nineteen, and which is mainly managed by the *boys themselves*," with excellent results. Or take the following quotation given by Carpenter from the Prison Report for 1903-4:—"Special attention has been given to the development of female industry at Holloway Prison. A workroom has been recently provided for 100 women as a further means of developing associated labour, the advantages of which for a female population are, in the opinion of the Governor, quite beyond question. Reports for misconduct are rare, the privilege is appreciated, the prisoners work well and cheerfully, reports for idleness are almost unknown, and more work is turned out than is strictly required under the prescribed task." Proof is also given of the "widespread *willingness to learn*" shown by the prisoners, although, as Carpenter sadly reminds us, the majority of them are physically and mentally inferior to the average man,—an anemic army, in fact, starved and stunted by society. For it must never be forgotten, not even by the President of the Local Government Board, that unemployment is the forcing bed, so to speak, of the mass of our "criminals." "This weary mass of the unemployed," to quote once more from the author, "pinned between the closed door of the factory on one side and the spiked railings of the workhouse on the other, is the great source from whence our criminals proceed. For it there are only three possible alternatives: the hideous, emaciated, parasitic life of the slums, supported by the mere scraps of food and employment left over by the richer classes; the life of the tramp, which is practically treated as criminal, and the life of open defiance of the law. There is absolutely nothing else." Starved, hunted, driven to crime, these unfortunates find themselves in prison; and yet after such conditions, such injustice, we learn that for 1903-4, out of 10,026 prisoners "eligible for school instruction" in local prisons, 7,591—over 75 per cent.—"made substantial educational progress," passing one, two, three, and even four standards during that time.

We might continue to quote facts of this description all telling the same tale of the wonderful substratum of human hope and human feeling found amongst these victims of a vicious system; and on the other hand, of how the law, the real criminal, blunders in its blind stupidity in punishing those who need only a fraction of the care and attention we bestow on the trees and the shrubs in the park, with light and air and nourishment.

We hope all our readers will try to find means to possess themselves of this volume. Besides what we have referred to there is so much of interest to all. Its exposure of police methods, its beautiful chapter on "Non-Governmental Society," we have not been able to quote from. But the latter alone is worth the cost of the whole volume.

LITERARY NOTES.

Comrade Myasaki Tamizo of Tokio, Japan, sends us copies of three Socialist pamphlets just issued by The Land Restoration Society of that city. They are entitled, "The Programme of the Land Restoration Society," "An Appeal to the Comrades of all Nations," "The Equal Right to the Use of Land, the Greatest Right of Mankind." As these publications are issued, we are told, in the face of many financial and other difficulties, it speaks volumes for the energy and determination of our Japanese friends that they should achieve so much. We send them heartiest greetings and best wishes for their propaganda.

We have received "Marriage and Race-Death." By Morrison I. Swift. This volume will be dealt with at length in our next issue.

*Prisons, Police and Punishment. By Edward Carpenter. A. C. Fifield, 44, Fleet Street, E.C. 2s. net.

THE INQUISITION REVIVED.

At the moment of going to press the following letter reaches us:—

Espana Nueva, a prominent Madrid "daily," publishes (Sept. 18, 20, 21, and 24) four powerful articles from the pen of a lawyer, proclaiming Ferrer's innocence.

Permission to re-open the "Modern School" at Barcelona has been granted, but the embargo upon Ferrer's fortune still operates, and though arrested on June 4th, it is highly improbable that the trial will take place before January next. The re-opening of the Modern School is probably the outcome of a desire to stifle agitation abroad. A Barcelona lawyer, recently in England, believes that the embargo upon Ferrer's fortune—the endowment of these schools—may be taken away for a time, but that the trial will result in a verdict of penal servitude for a term of years, and will contain a clause for an indemnity for the families of the victims of Morral's act, thus effectually disposing of the endowments. This, he says, will be followed by a free pardon in a few months' time—but the money will be gone.

I have followed the case from day to day, and the more I read, the more certain I feel of the man's entire innocence, and of the vile methods adopted—not only with Ferrer—by the clerical Spanish reactionaries.

Some day the light of truth and liberty will shine upon Spain and its rulers. I thank you heartily for your assistance. Let us still hope and work.

G. H. B. WARD.

390, Cricket Road, Sheffield

Secretary, Ferrer Committee.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Italy.

Italy is at the present day one of the countries most advanced in the development of Labour solidarity,—that is, if solidarity is to be measured by the action it inspires. Gauging it, as many do, by the number of sheep who seek the folds of Labour organisations, this country would appear to be half a century behind England. And so it is in many respects, but not in recognising that Necessity is a better master than Profit, not in acknowledging the solidarity of Labour.

It is two years since this was made plain to all observers. The General Strike of that year showed also what a few vigorous individuals can do in a country, not acting on their orders, not even knowing their names, but educated and alive to the possibilities of spontaneous common action. These few men in Milan started it, and in two days, by the undisciplined, unorganised influence of solidarity, practically the whole country was out on strike. After a day or two the masses looked to their Socialist political leaders, who did not dare to join in the popular movement for political party reasons. Instead they drew up a Bill which was to abolish that abuse of the military in Labour disputes against which the strike was directed. The strike faded and was forgotten by the Government in plenty of time for it to regain a shaken confidence in its hold on the country and politely wave aside the famous Socialist Bill. As if to emphasise their impotence, the Socialist Deputies resigned, and on seeking immediate re-election lost four seats. The General Strike was, as far as it went, an astonishing success; the political action was from first to last a foregone failure.

Since this there has scarcely been a single strike in which spontaneous solidarity has not played some part. This year Turin and Prato have been notable examples. First the city, then many cities, came out in solidarity with the Turin cotton workers. In July at Prato the whole town rose in the interest of the employees of a single factory. Anyone can see that such action is invincible, and it has proved so in every case except where the attempt has been made to divert the energy thus generated into the political machine.

And yet it is thought probable that the Right or Conservative wing of the Socialist party will increase its power at the National Congress this month, and in spite of the active propaganda of the "Sindacalisti" or anti-State group. This active force of men who believe in the possibility of an immediate reform in the party have sometimes wrongly been described as anti-parliamentarians. As a matter of fact, they have their parliamentary doctrine like any good Social Democrat, though it is mainly a negative one, namely, that the object of the Socialist group in Parliament is to weaken the State and strengthen the Unions by limiting their action to the abolition of all old laws and the construction of all new ones,—except such as have been ratified by the Unions.

However, as has been already pointed out, organised Labour in Italy is not "strong," and all notable signs of solidarity have been due, not to a rigid organisation and military discipline backed by the accumulated capital of patiently paid levies, but to the ready activity of the educated many and the decisive action of the confident few. So whichever of the many wings of the Socialist party predominates at the Congress, it will not mean that those who make the active strength of the movement are bound to any particular form of action.

K. W.

France.

There seems a growing possibility that the French miners intend to step out from the isolation which they have until recently considered imperative for their interests, and that they may at no remote period join the Confederation of Labour. This is news of the highest importance, for the miners are strong in point of numbers and more or less well organised. If they throw in their lot with the other trade organisations, standing man to man by them in times of strike and stress, the power of Labour will become trebled in France, and a general strike carry more than terror into the hearts of the capitalists. It is not too much to say that a general strike throughout Europe at this moment could be turned into an effectual weapon to force Nicholas to give a liberal constitution to his people, and could paralyse a projected war in its very inception. But Labour, much like that willing slave, the horse, does not yet know its own strength. However, the various miners' unions seem more ready

to amalgamate, and, as stated, even to become one with the Labour Federation. Certain among them actually seceded in 1902 from the main body, but though they affiliated themselves to the General Confederation of Labour it was as single units. Now a new spirit seems pervading their ranks and may carry their organisations far on the road to unity and increased power.

The shopkeepers, as was to be expected, are trying with no little success to wriggle out of the new law compelling them to give their assistants one day's rest per week. Thus the young people who hitherto did the window-dressing, etc., on Sundays are now in many cases forced to do it after Saturday work hours, sometimes not getting home till well on in Sunday morning. Then Paris cannot do without fresh bread on Sundays, and still gets it though the bakeries are shuttered. A too open defiance of the law, however, meets with its reward. A grocer's shop opened only a Sunday ago, the news was carried swiftly to the Grocers' Union, and a band of two hundred of its members made a demonstration before the shop that compelled the police to order its closing. A writer in the *Temps Nouveau* comments with much truth on the situation:—Whenever the State is anxious to change anything in the social organisation, it always augments the friction in the economic régime; on the other hand, is anything done by law to really improve the condition of the workers it is the result of action by the unions. Moreover, every time the State occupies itself with the workers it is at their expense. Not only will this new law, as passed by Parliament, mean to us a lowering of wages, but it will breed other functionalities, and again the people will have to pay. And now that the moment arrives for rigidly applying this law, the State shows its absolute incapacity. It has been forced to draft so many exceptions owing to party strife and the employers, that the law is absolutely a dead letter, while supervision remains impossible. All the same, this experience will be useful. The workers will learn that the State and its officials are only capable of taking their money, not of bettering their condition. The weakness of the State and Parliamentaryism is forced deeper on the worker's attention after every new law in aid of so-called "social reform."

Spain.

It is reported that the Council of Ministers has been discussing the question of reopening Ferrer's Modern School at Barcelona, which was forcibly closed on his arrest after the May bomb fell. It is not unlikely that the authorities will have the wisdom to allow the school to continue its work, though probably under supervision. The young queen has made a gift of her wedding gown, covered with priceless lace and jewels and valued at several hundred pounds—not to the starving poor of her adopted country, but to ornament the wooden Madonna in the church nearest to the scene of her escape.

At present the country in the agricultural districts is at starvation ebb owing to storms and the long summer drought, and there are likely to be many strikes and much misery this winter. So far Alfonso has not shown any deep sympathy for the brave and long-suffering people over whom he rules. Military parades and motor drives fill the mind of himself and wife, apparently to the exclusion of the mere people and their needs and rights.

China.

Anarchism in China! The phrase sounds comic—yet it is an absolute fact. An air of mystery still surrounds this vast empire with its strange religion, its picturesque art, and immense population. Western potentates, hungry for its rich soil, its great rivers and magnificent possibilities, not the least being its millions of wage-slave well drilled to industry and obedience under centuries of oppression—declare optimistically that the country is a worn-out civilisation, doomed to crumble through age and a passionate clinging to ancient customs, and each gapes ready to swallow the precious plum when it falls. But we think that in China, as once in Japan, appearances are deceitful. This people is brimful of vitality, in spite of an outward garb of apathy and sluggishness. It is a people as likely to spring surprises upon Western civilisation as was Japan, and to those who probe a little beneath the surface it is not perhaps so astonishing that Anarchism should find a home even in such a so-called "heathen" and dying nation. Rather, the surprise would be if it did not. For Socialism and Anarchism both breathe of *Hope*. They appeal to the individuality of each man and woman. Throw off this outer strait-waistcoat of prejudice and habit, they cry; *be yourselves*, not what other men would have you be; be independent, live the life that the true and good instincts within you say you are fit for, and crawl no longer as a worm before Confucius and the priests. And there are listeners. Eyes have been opened, not only in this or that rank—but throughout the living mass of the population. They note the gross cruelty, incapability and injustice of those who rule them—the system is at fault, then why submit to it? And so in this time of questioning a few convinced thinkers are doing their best to flood the country with the literature that has awakened the white slaves of the West. The movement is especially strong in the southern provinces, where as many as seventeen newspapers are not afraid to quote Anarchist writers. Secret presses are busy, and pamphlets and leaflets translated and circulated in large quantities, the greater demand being for those of a revolutionary Socialist, if not purely Anarchist character. Numerous groups are forming, and a stand is constantly made against the orders or demands of such mandarins as are noted for their injustice. Every class has its recruits, and secret meetings take place directly a group is formed, but the majority are held by the toiling peasants. Needless to say that the Government is fully awake to the vitality of the newborn movement, and is crushing it. Not a few Chinese Anarchists have already given their life for their creed. The soldiers especially are bitten with the new doctrine, and unrest in the army is causing great alarm to the authorities. Were this luscious plum to fall into the mouth of one of our gaping European monarchs, it is not improbable its stone might choke him.

Russia.

On September 13th Mlle. Konoplunikoff was hung in the fortress of St. Peter and Paul for shooting General Min, on August 27th, at the Peterhof railway station, so that not three weeks passed between the deed and her death. Min was chief of the Semenowski regiment, and distinguished himself by his atrocities during the Moscow rebellion last December. She was a young, well-born girl who loved Russia and the happiness of her fellow countrymen better than her life. Her attitude before the military tribunal which tried her appears to have been one of extreme courage and nobility, and the simple words of her vindication before her judges were spoken with much natural eloquence and spirit. "Government such as you understand it," she said, "is synonymous with crime, incendiarism, and butchery. These alone are the mainstay of the existence of the autocratic and bureaucratic edifice. The long annals of Russian history are written in blood, but the revolutionary spirit grows under persecution, and to-day neither butchery nor manifestoes can stay the national movement. You are about to condemn me to death by rope or bullet. But one thought fills my heart: it is that my fellow citizens may pardon me for having done so little; I could only give them my life, but I die in the full belief that the day draws near when this throne must fall and when the radiant sun of liberty shall light the vast plains of Russia from end to end." With a refinement of cruelty habitual to all governments, the condemned girl was permitted to see one relative only—her sister. No last touch of lips or hand was allowed for fear the gallows might be cheated. Again, her last words were, "I give my life for my country, it is all I have to give." So she died. But "my fellow-citizens"—and others—will not forget her.

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