

FREEDOM

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THE COMMUNE OF PARIS.

"It is only the dead who never return," a French politician once said. He was wrong. When the dead have right on their side, when they are assassinated for their opinions, when they die fighting in the vanguard of progress, they always return. In the body, no, of course; but in the spirit, in the enthusiasm which their memory inspires, in the impetus which their death gives to the principles they hold so dear, undoubtedly, yes. Madly, foolishly blind are all those rulers of men who fancy they can destroy an idea by taking away the life of a man. They are but disseminating what they wish to repress. On the 18th of March this year, eighteen years will have elapsed since the people of Paris declared themselves in favour of liberty and social equality, not merely for themselves but for all the world. And since that time Socialism has progressed by leaps and bounds in every so-called civilised country. In France, in Germany, England, Spain, Italy, Russia, and all the other countries of Europe, Socialism is now known and feared, and is daily adding to the number of its adherents. In the new world, too, almost every important city in North and South America has at least one Socialist organisation or branch of an organisation within its limits; and Australia, although not so advanced, still has its Socialist body, its Socialist paper (which by the way is Anarchist also) and an ever-growing number of believers in Socialist principles. Socialism is permeating the masses just as surely as steam and electricity have revolutionised the methods of industry. And the Paris Commune of 1871 has been largely instrumental in effecting this. Wherever Socialism is understood, there the Commune is annually celebrated as a victory—and it certainly was a victory. The Commune was proclaimed, the people of Paris were free and had commenced to enjoy and exercise their liberty. The revolution itself was bloodless, and great ideas and principles held their sway over the minds of the people of Paris. But ignorance was not conquered and the army of ignorance, captained by the incarnate devils of Capitalism and Landlordism, stayed the onward march of progress and momentarily checked the revolutionary movement. Yet this check itself was a help to the coming universal revolt. It served to spread everywhere the principles which were then more or less confined to one or two countries. And to-day in the centenary year of the taking of the Bastille there are indications from every quarter for those who can read between the lines and estimate rightly the value of events, that the triumph of the thousands who perished in the Socialist Bartholomew is near at hand.

Not merely in Paris alone but everywhere now the workers are beginning to raise their heads and shake their fists at their exploiters, saying to one another, "Come, let us be slaves no longer; let us be free." And the possessing classes, growing timid, reply by threats, misrepresentations and bloody deeds. Here it is wholesale arrest that is going on, there individual assassination. Republican America assassinates those who dare to attack class domination, just as despotic Germany and Russia murders the opponents of their governments. And at every murder, at every imprisonment, the army of freedom is recruited, the gaps in the front ranks immediately filled up. However quietly a government may murder its opponents the news gets about and makes converts to the revolutionary cause. If governments were capable or wise instead of being incapable and absurdly foolish in their actions and ideas, the Revolution would have been delayed much longer than it will be. If, instead of killing those who preached new ideas, they had even slightly ameliorated the lot of the workers and prevented the army of the unemployed from reaching the tremendous proportions it has now attained, peace would have been possible and the complete emancipation of labour would not take place for many years yet. For the workers of all countries are extremely, painfully patient under oppression. They submit like lambs to indignities and outrages, and change of any kind, especially violent change, is repugnant to them. But the ruling classes are not only incapable, monstrous greedy and mendacious, they are—being, as a necessary consequence of their being rulers, of a cowardly nature—ready to commit the most atrocious crimes to preserve their position of domination. And thus the revolt of the people of Paris, the action of the workers of the most intellectual city on the planet in standing upright and proclaiming their freedom to all the world, shaking their "chains to earth like dew," brought about the massacres of May—a river of blood between the people and the plunderers.

It is the fashion for the English capitalist papers even to-day to lie about the Commune, and to apply the terms "murderers," "incendiaries," etc., which rightly should be bestowed upon the victorious army of law and order, to the heroes of the people. It is possible that this

paper may fall into the hands of some of those who have been misled by the hired bravoos of literature, who disgrace what should be one of the noblest callings. We propose, then, to bring forward a few facts about the Commune, although we would refer those who wish to know more to an admirable little pamphlet on the subject published by the Socialist League, and written by comrades Belfort Bax, Victor Dave, and William Morris.

Just inside the cemetery of Père la Chaise, where the Communists made their last stand against the Versailles troops, the visitor can see a handsome monument erected to the memory of Generals Lecomte and Thomas, who, we are continually being told were murdered in cold blood by the Communists. What is the truth? M. Thiers, "that monstrous gnome," as he has been appropriately called, wanted to disarm the people of Paris who had been engaged during the siege in defending their city against the Germans, and these two men were sent with a body of troops to capture some cannon which the Parisians, or "National Guard," refused to give up. After Lecomte had four times ordered his men to fire upon an unarmed crowd, including women and children, which they refused to do, this brave general insulted them, maybe after the fashion in which John Burns saw certain members of the police force treated by an inspector in Trafalgar Square on the 13th of November 1887. And his own soldiers shot him instead of carrying out his orders. "General" Thomas was a man with a record—a bad one. At one time he was the paid bully of a Paris newspaper, undertaking the responsibility of any venomous article which might appear, when it meant a duel. On the 18th of March, whilst on this expedition, he was trying his hand as a spy, and being caught, was shot by the soldiery under his command. We do not believe in capital punishment and we object to the killing of any man, but surely if any two men ever deserved death, these two did. And the fact that they were killed by the very men whom they had helped to train up in the practice of scientific murder, euphemistically called war, made their execution all the more just.

If the visitor penetrates further into that same burial ground he will find two or three modest monuments in memory of other men who took part, either directly or indirectly in that struggle, but on the side of the oppressed instead of the oppressors. Amongst them is that of Delescluz, who died on the top of a barricade, proclaiming with his last breath his faith in the future; and that of Blanqui, that martyr of the proletariat, who spent half his life within prison walls for his participation in popular insurrections. Higher up at the extreme end of the cemetery is the Wall of the Federals, where some thousands of Communists were shot by order of the highly civilised supporters of law and order. That wall is now covered with memorial wreaths, seeming to voice the sentiments of the workers of Paris, expressing their determination to realise that happy future for which their brothers in arms laid down their lives.

As a matter of fact, the Communists were foolishly merciful through out the whole of the struggle. All the prisoners taken by the Versailles troops were shot, generally without any form of trial, and often after undergoing revolting outrages. Ernest Picard, one of the ministers of Thiers' government, is even said to have gone about with his hands in his pockets jeering at the prisoners before they were murdered. At last the Commune, on the 7th of April, ordered reprisals, declaring it to be its duty "to protect Paris against the cannibal exploits of the Versailles banditti, and to demand an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." But they were too humane even to carry this out, and as soon as Thiers discovered they did not execute their justifiable threats, he returned to his murderous procedure of shooting the prisoners.

The Communists are said to have destroyed public buildings and to have used petroleum. What are the facts? The law and order people were the first and probably the only party to use this weapon of incendiarism. Houses to which Communists had fled were inundated with oil and set fire to, the charred corpses of the victims being afterwards brought out by the ambulance. But why repeat the horrors of the "Terrible Year." Many of the atrocities committed by the middle-class government will not bear recital, are too horrible even to put into print. A few days ago the writer of this article read a telegram in a daily London journal stating that the British troops in the Soudan had set fire to 5000 huts belonging to the unfortunate natives. Doubtless this is excusable as it was done by brave British soldiers and professedly in the interest of war. But a great deal is made of the statement that the Communists fired and destroyed buildings in Paris. They may have done so. The matter is disputable. Many buildings were destroyed by the enemy's shells and some may possibly have been destroyed for purposes of defence by the people of Paris. And if so, it is the most con-

temptible hypocrisy for the government or ruling-classes of this country, or, indeed, any other, to blame them for so doing. History tells us that the British troops have more than once used incendiarism as a weapon of war.

There was, however, one monument destroyed in Paris which the Communists certainly did destroy, not in the interests of war, but in those of peace. We speak of the Vendôme Column, created to commemorate the victories of, and made from the cannon taken by, Napoleon Bonaparte. Courbet, the artist, was mainly instrumental in bringing this destruction about, and it was carried out amid the enthusiastic applause of the people of Paris, who meant to signify thereby their animosity to war, their wish to live in peace and brotherhood with all mankind. Perhaps it is only the French people, or, indeed, the people of Paris, who would dream of carrying out such an idea as this, and it may be that a great many Englishmen look upon the pulling down of that mighty pillar as an act of Vandalism; but to us Socialists it was a proclamation of peace, a manifestation of the noble heart of Paris, a message to the workers of all lands that it is not the enlightened workers anywhere who desire war, but rather the universal enemy, who lives on human labour, who needs it. The great non-productive armies which are kept up in every country at the expense of the producers will be needless from the moment that the workers obtain their emancipation.

The Communists of 1871 are not only regarded by the prejudiced and uninformed as the vilest of the vile, the lowest of the low, but also as having been ignorant and worthless individuals. In reality amongst those who took part in the revolt were not only the purest and the most noble-minded of the sons of France, as well as many brave men born in other countries, but also some of the cleverest and most intellectual of mankind. Felix Pyat, if he had devoted himself entirely to literature, might perhaps have attained nearly to Victor Hugo's popularity. As it is, he has written some remarkable works. His "Rag-picker of Paris" is especially worthy of notice. Lissagary, Cluseret, and many others that we could name would have made their mark in almost any field of activity. Just recently the Municipal Council of Paris has adopted for use in the municipal schools a new grammar written in a most original manner. It is by Gaston da Costa, one of the condemned of the Commune, who was sentenced to death, then to penal servitude for life, and actually spent eight years in prison. He is a revolutionary Communist and an Anarchist. Elisée Reclus, whom many of us know as a fellow Communist, was a member of the Paris Commune and is also eminent as a geographer. His brother Elie Reclus, the Anthropologist, also assisted in the revolt. We mention these names as they occur to our memory, simply as fair representatives of the kind of men who took part in the ever-to-be-remembered rising of '71. But, on the other hand, who were the men of law and order. The most notorious of those who still pollute the earth with their presence is Jules Ferry, the man of Tonquin, to mention whose name in Paris is to invite a storm of hooting and hissing; the mere suggestion of whom for the presidency of the Republic nearly caused a sanguinary battle in the streets of Paris the other day. Jules Ferry before the siege of Paris was a penniless barrister although mayor of Paris. He is now rich, and rich, as it is said, by trading on the hunger of the people during the siege. He is an Opportunist, what we should call a Liberal, and a very fair specimen he is of Liberals all the world over. Law and order is welcome to him.

No, the Commune of Paris is not dead. It lives in the hearts of the people, the oppressed and long-suffering masses. It has taught us a lesson which we shall never forget and pointed out to us which way progress lies. It had its faults which it will be necessary for the workers to avoid when they next revolt. But above and beyond all, it was a glorious effort on the part of the workers to secure their emancipation, and we honour all those who took part in it. To have died as they died is not given to every one, but we can all try our utmost to profit by their sacrifice, and endeavour to realise the happy state of society which they sought to establish. Let us do so.

HENRY GEORGE AND THE CHICAGO ANARCHISTS.

IN view of the coming George Lecture Campaign in this country, we reprint the following article written by Mr. George on the great Chicago case, in his paper the *New York Standard* :—

"The Anarchist cases have proved that while organised working men are as a class in favour of due administration of law, the society-saving class is at heart a lawless class. Spies and his associates were convicted by a jury chosen in a manner so shamelessly illegal that it would be charity to suspect the judge of incompetency. The accusation was murder by an explosive thrown by an unknown person between whom and the defendants no connection was shown. The meeting at which it was thrown was peaceable and lawful. The Mayor so declared it; and although the chief of police agreed with him, hardly was the mayor out of sight when the chief, at the head of a squad of policemen, ordered it to disperse. Then the explosive was thrown. The only evidence against the defendants in connection with this meeting was that they were present and that some of them spoke. Yet the jury, many of whom confessed to fixed opinions against the accused, found a verdict of murder. Upon this the labour organisations, although opposed in opinion to the defendants, raised a fund to vindicate the law. How different the position of the 'better classes.' No well informed lawyer can defend the conviction upon legal grounds. Laymen may think the proceedings lawful, because outward forms of law were observed, but the lawyers who defend it do so solely on the ground that 'anarchy,' and 'communism,' and 'socialism,' must be stamped out.

They concede that it was a mere subterfuge to punish men for opinions's sake, but urge that the opinions are dangerous to society; and when a layman is confronted with the truth that this trial was a legal farce, he falls back upon the same plea. An opinion more dangerous to society than that men who teach unpopular doctrines may be silenced by illegal convictions of infamous crimes could hardly be conceived. Which then is the law and order class?—the class that demands lawful trial for victims of popular hate and fear, and out of its slender means contributes to that end, or the class that uses the machinery of the law to mangle the law itself in an endeavour to silence doctrinal adversaries?"

Since writing the above manly article, Mr. George has become a politician, and has rapidly lost the respect, which he once enjoyed, of the advanced party in all countries. He has definitely joined one of the old corrupt political parties in the United States, and is now taken up and pushed, on the red herring principle, by the capitalist Socialist-fearing class. Needless to say his ideas of justice and fair play are very different to what they were. Before our Chicago comrades were murdered he had turned completely around from his former honest standpoint and he did not scruple to attack them at the very moment when he should at least have maintained the attitude he held in the article we have quoted. In thus treacherously denouncing them he became an accessory in the crime of Bonfield, Gary & Co. When questioned about this matter in the Lambeth Baths on Nov. 27th last, he said he had not condemned our comrades, but a jury of the State of Illinois, and the High Court of America, had condemned them. He would not demand their release because he did not sympathise with men who used dynamite. His appeal was to thought, to the minds of the people. Compare this with his article above quoted. If any comrades think of questioning him again on this matter—and we hope they will take an opportunity to do so—we request them to have a copy of this article in their pocket when they go to his meeting.

NOTES.

We feel that some apology is due to the supporters of *FREEDOM* for the irregular appearance of the last few issues, and the long delay of this number. The cause has been the ill health of the editor. Fresh arrangements have, however, now been made. The editorial staff has been reinforced and a committee of workmen formed to manage the publication and sale of the paper, and we believe that the changes made will ensure punctuality in future. The small size of the paper has in the past necessitated the exclusion of much interesting matter, and the Committee are anxious to enlarge it. In order to do this, however, the circulation must be considerably increased. We therefore call upon all those who agree with the principles advocated by this journal, or feel that their full discussion is a benefit to the Socialist Cause, or the cause of liberty and progress in general, to aid us to the best of their ability. Every new subscriber is an additional strength. Some of those who read this can furnish funds towards our expenses. We hope that they will help us in this way. Donations will be acknowledged in the paper. All payments and business communications to be sent, until further notice, to J. Blackwell, 7 Canel Street, Merrow Street, Walworth, London, S.E.

Up to recently we have looked upon the Parnell Commission as an extremely dull affair, but Le Caron and Pigott have changed all that. The former has shown the general public what despicable and cowardly meannesses both Liberal and Conservative governments have been, and are, capable of, to serve their ends. If the receiver is as bad as the thief, the middle-class cliques who employed Le Carron during twenty years to act as a spy, are certainly a disgrace to humanity. We do not consider that Pigott had reached anything like the same depth of degradation. If he had had a chance to make an honest living he would probably not have fallen a victim to the temptations of the *Times*. As for the *Times* itself, the exposure of its contemptible doings is a gain to the revolutionary cause as it is eminently calculated to shake the public confidence in the mercenary press generally. Not alone will the cause of Ireland gain by the recent disclosures; the cause of Freedom everywhere will benefit by the light which has been thrown upon dark places.

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN ITALY.

(From an Italian correspondent.)

TWENTY years ago when the last flashes of patriotism were yet inspiring the youth of Italy with the hope of liberal and beneficent government, the man who prated of a social question would have been taken for a fool. To-day no illusion as to the situation of the masses is possible, and the workingmen of the whole peninsula have taken upon themselves to enlighten statesmen and economists thereon. A social problem—or to speak plainly a problem of the stomach—exists in Italy as elsewhere, and nowhere does it press more instantly for solution.

The hunger agitation is general throughout the country, though in Rome it has been manifested with more violence. Everywhere resounds one cry: We are hungry!

At Argenta and Granarolo there have been demonstrations of the unemployed against the Government. At Lugo, in Romagna, they invaded the Municipality. At Ravenna they plundered the bakers' shops and the little children were seen eagerly munching the bread in the

streets, crying: We are so hungry! At Carpi, near Medina, the people have also broken into the shops. At Castiglione 3000 peasants from the country marched through the streets of the village robbing the bakeries. They were only dispersed by the soldiery.

At Livorno 700 rag-collectors and the women employed in the coral and wool manufactures have struck for an increase of wages; they marched upon the factories where some scabs were still working and were charged by the police with batons; a riot ensued and several arrests were made.

At Naples the unemployed workers in the building trade have been holding a mass demonstration in the Place San Gaetano, carrying red flags with the motto "Communism and Anarchy." Several of our comrades have been arrested and of course the people were driven away by the police. But the authorities were so much alarmed that they have started relief works. At Cesina also the Municipality has been forced to begin works costing 35,000 francs.

But the distress shows no signs of diminishing. On the fair Italian soil which could support in comfort at least double the present population, men are pinched and starved day by day. The same sad story reaches us from Mantua, from Caltagirone, from Milan; and in beautiful Sicily 200,000 men are in a state of destitution, in the province of Puglie on the south-east of Italy, 20,000.

With such conditions existing all over the country it is not surprising that the unhappy workers crowd to any spot which offers them a chance of work and bread. Three years ago, about, some speculative companies were formed to "renovate Rome" and to drain the poisonous marshes in its neighbourhood. The promoters, many of whom were Jews, cared very little about the beauty of the city or its health and a very great deal about their own pockets. They wanted the shareholders' money and to steal that they stole labour too. The government and municipality favoured and assisted them, and they started their works and advertised far and wide for navvies, labourers, masons, etc. Some 10,000 to 12,000 luckless workers put faith in the swindle and migrated to Rome. After about a month the bubble burst, the works were stopped and the workers were left workless and penniless. The government has made some attempts to send them back whence they came, but without much success. They have come to Rome again, or persisted in remaining there, for distress and starvation stared them in the face elsewhere, and they always clung to the hope that the works might go on again. Their suffering, indignation and despair has been growing month by month for the last two years. In February 1888 they made some demonstrations which alarmed the authorities, but this year the pent-up agitation burst forth in a formidable riot. On the 8th of February the scene in the streets of Rome was like a bit of the great French Revolution, says *Le Capitale*; and yet it was but a momentary outburst. The starving unemployed had for the hundredth time sent a deputation to represent their misery to the Minister of the Interior. His secretary, Signor Forlis, insulted them by offering them the most meagre alms. The unhappy workers of Lugo and Ferrara had been reduced to such misery as to be grateful for a dole of 2½d. each generously bestowed on them by the municipality, and Mr. Forlis thought those of Rome equally broken-spirited. But they were of braver stuff, and for all answer shouted: "On, on, to Rome, to Rome!" and marched into the city, where they satisfied their immediate hunger from the bakers' shops. A paralysis of terror seized upon the bourgeois world. They did not dare to send the soldiers against the people, but kept them in barracks. Consequently no deeds of violence occurred, and in the evening the crowd dispersed. Not, however, before they had stopped in front of the House of Parliament and shouted again and again: "Down with the chatterers!" The said chatterers were too frightened to meet on the 8th until 2 o'clock. Then they came together and demanded why the government did not do something, and why it had not prevented the disturbances, and called for more police, more soldiers to deal with future mobs! The government was more intelligent than people in their ridiculous position generally are. They left the people alone, except for a little police play, and immediately took measures to send as many of the starving workers as possible to their old homes in the country, paying their travelling expenses. These moderate measures have smoothed things down for the moment, but the men who have left Rome have carried with them to every part of Italy the seeds of Socialism, and a sense of the power of the masses to overawe the ruling classes, where they unite to vindicate their right, even to the slight extent attempted by these Roman out-works. And the universal distress, the hunger-problem still remains. The "chatterers" cannot solve with words or with almsgiving.

ANARCHISM AND ORGANISATION.

"ANARCHISM," we are told by those who not understand our position, "is opposed to organisation." But this depends upon the sense in which the word "organisation" is used. No doubt Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour would deny that they are opposed to Liberty, meaning of course the liberty which they deem sufficient for common folk. This qualification, however, makes all the difference. So with the word "organisation." When applied, as it usually is to-day—as, for instance, to the Police, the Military, our Railway systems and large industries—we say it implies something so pernicious, so opposed to human dignity and progress, something so incompatible with the new economic life towards which we are striving and tending, that it is inevitably doomed to disappear. Free organisation, however, uncoerced, unauthoritative, without slaves and masters, offers a basis for a new departure providing full scope for the free development of man's social nature. This sort of organisation is in accord with the Anarchist theory of liberty, preserving

as it does, the individual from the domination of State, party or clique. So far our position is clear. Yet this is not all, since we are convinced that the economic revolution will demand the fullest political liberty and the abolition of all authority as necessary conditions for the practical realisation of the ideal which even to-day inspires our comrades who are sincere revolutionary socialists. Timid souls will shiver at the very thought of humanity being free to organise under the new conditions without the whip and scourge in some shape or form. Perhaps they sincerely believe that liberty is compatible with compulsion. At any rate fear will not let them stop to consider the absolute impracticability of continuing old-world follies and superstitions side by side with the fresh ideas and aspirations which the revolution will bring.

It is impossible to exaggerate the absurdities to which we should be reduced by the interference of ambitious busy-bodies could they have their way. A hundred cut and dried schemes would be produced to be forced upon us; and during the disputes which would inevitably arise, our immediate wants would compel us to take action on our own account. There would be no time for voting wrong persons into wrong places; and voluntary offers would be freely made for the performance of difficult and dangerous tasks as is always the case in popular movements. Such examples would undeniably become contagious, and the result would be a population of men and women anxious only to work for and satisfy their common needs. And, indeed why should they do otherwise? Wealth, and the means of creating wealth surround them in abundance. They have produced hitherto for their masters; when they are free they will produce for themselves, improving their methods and enlarging their aims as suggestions come from one or another. Such organisation as is here implied differs so vitally from that proposed by our critics that they erroneously imagine we are opposed to all organisation, when as a matter of fact we only contend that it must be free. It is of no moment to tell us there are depraved persons who will never act in a spirit of unselfishness. At least we must give them every opportunity of so acting. If then they fail, surely to treat these unfortunate victims of a vicious system in a fraternal spirit would be more just and more likely to encourage their better nature than to further degrade them by punishments. In any case we must never consent to have our liberties curtailed because a few persons may not understand that their claims on society are only limited by the equal claims of others.

A THOUGHTFUL FRENCHMAN ON THE BOULANGER MOVEMENT.

BOULANGER is no longer unknown in England. The rapid growth or apparent growth of his popularity has been such as to bring him into notoriety even here. The cartoonists devote their pencils to caricaturing him. He is laughed at in every possible manner. One English paper represents him as Napoleon crossing the Alps, another as the Blondin Donkey, a third as the Eiffel Tower, and so on. We have leading articles in the daily papers in which the writers distinguish themselves chiefly by a flow of words which serve to blind their readers to the fact that they know little about their subject, and the Paris correspondents first belittle and then belaud the man whose past contains nothing very creditable to him and whose future no one now ventures to prognosticate. On one point, however, all would seem to agree—that his success will be a danger to the peace of Europe. And his success is now beginning to be looked upon as certain. But nothing is so likely to happen as the unexpected. France to-day is not the France of the Prince President; Europe has had some lessons in the past from which it will know how to profit; and we, at any rate, cannot believe that Paris is ready to submit to a dictatorship. The eyes of the people of France have been opened lately to a great deal of the corruption of their republican government, event after event has dealt blow upon blow at the existing régime; and the voters have voted for Boulanger, as we believe, time after time, merely to show their disgust with their present rulers, not meaning to express their willingness that he should reign in their stead. To upset the incapable parliamentarians is one thing, to establish an uncrowned or crowned king is another.

M. Octave Mirbeau, a middle-class literary man, writing the other day in the *Paris Figaro*, one of the most unscrupulous of Capitalist journals, gives his views on the matter in a very interesting fashion, and we reproduce them for the benefit of our readers. Such an article in such a paper is a sign of the times. M. Mirbeau first of all calls attention to the point of unanimity amongst French journalists, politicians, etc., when dealing with the Boulanger question. It is always the same, whether you take up a serious journal or a comic print. "Boulanger," we are told, "is the result of the general discontent." Every eminent personage who is interviewed will tell you "Boulanger is the result of the general discontent." Sometimes the words are varied a little, although the meaning is identical, and we are told that "all the discontented rally themselves around the plume of Boulanger." But if you ask, What is this discontent of which Boulanger is the result, you only get some explanations that explain nothing. M. Mirbeau proceeds: "Certainly we have never been further removed from that universal happiness to which the eternal dreamer, humanity, has looked forward. Notwithstanding the ever-increasing development of the general well-being, in spite of the industrial conquests, the discoveries of all kinds which ought to render life more easy and more agreeable, nobody is content with his lot and everybody seeks something which he does not possess. Every man to-day, even though he may be at the highest point of the present civilisation, is attacked with a vague inquietness

an undefinable uneasiness, an incurable melancholy, that manifests itself in fits of despondency, in enervating weariness, in disgust with the present state of things. He attributes this to different causes, some physiological, others metaphysical, and yet others, governmental, but all imaginary and absolutely wrong. 'Anywhere, anywhere, out of the world,' once cried a sublime poet. This cry is no longer the cry of an isolated individual; where is the man of this century who has never uttered it? Literature, and even the plastic arts, which are still the most direct and most faithful expression of the mental aspirations of a period, reflect admirably this condition of the contemporary mind. Amongst those of limited and coarse intelligence, whose ideals are indistinct and militant, the moral fermentation is also in a dormant condition, it is true, and only manifests itself externally by a brutal discontent, often by a sanguinary revolt against things as they are.

"In that, in their wild work, they show themselves more logical, and are more encouraging, than the grumbling do-nothing middle-class. In short, the entire social organism, from the belly to the brain, suffers from unknown evils, displays symptoms of severe injuries that threaten its existence. Every one suffers more or less according to his degree of intellectual culture, for the more a man thinks, the more he suffers. Everyone complains and groans; and as it is necessary to go to some one or to something with an illness of which you do not know the cause, they go to the government. It is more easy to do this than to think, and it consoles them sometimes. The agriculturist who cannot sell his corn or sells it without profit, the worker who sees his salary reduced, the manufacturer before his extinguished furnace, the little landlord whose rents are behind and who is crushed by taxes, the great landowner obliged to reduce his expenses and diminish his luxury, the idle high liver who contemplates suicide as the end of his wearying debaucheries, the ever-present pauper whose belly cries out, do not resign themselves to think that the conditions of social and economic life must necessarily be renewed and changed. They prefer to blame the statesmen, the ministers, the capitalists, the governing classes, for an evil that bad politics may be able to aggravate I admit, but that the so-called good politics would be powerless to alleviate, much less to cure.

"I do not defend governments, they have always acted towards mankind as agents of obstruction and destruction; nor do I defend the privileged classes—territorial and financial aristocrats—whose bland egotism and unrepenting greed, have rendered the most bloody revolutions necessary to restore the equilibrium of society. Still we must not attribute to them more evil-doing than they have really done. Their account is heavy enough, and they pay it sometimes dearly enough, without our adding anything to it. This evil exceeds their power of evil; it is beyond the optimistic good intention of a Carnot or a Floquet, so ridiculously useless as is the first, and so despotically ignorant the second. And then it is not to be attributed to any particular régime or country. In spite of the formidable forts that protect her sides, notwithstanding the gallows that settle the boundaries of her colonies, slave-making England has not been able to preserve herself from it. Germany covered with iron armour which daily grows more heavy, feels beneath it the cancer gnawing at her entrails. The intoxication of destruction, a mystical madness of martyrdom, that calls into play the knout of eastern despotism, have taken possession of Russia. And the evil spreads everywhere at an increasing rate. It conveys its formidable poison into social strata previously untouched. It spreads amongst all nations, through literature, art, philosophy and science. All suffer from it; many die.

"This is because we live in a strangely abnormal time. Philosophy, aided by the marvellous discoveries of science, having re-opened all the problems of the human understanding, has destroyed the beliefs of the past, on which the present social institutions rest, and which impress us no more than old theatrical scenery, appearing delusive and rotten. In demonstrating the absurdity and the falsehood of it, not by mere metaphysical speculations, but by implacable scientific truths—such as the doctrines of evolution and natural selection—philosophy has opened to man's activity, to his desire for moral conquests, to his ideal of progress, an infinite field. To the worm-eaten systems of the arbitrary hierarchs and the dominations of divine right, it opposes a rational and rejuvenated conception of the world that renders odious to us all the forms imposed upon the individual, social, economical and intellectual existence. But the past remains.

"The Code stands immovable, with its traditional laws against which the aspirations of the modern sentiment are broken. An absolute want of balance results from this contrast between our desires and the impossibility of our being able to satisfy them. Everything wounds us, stops us and maddens us, because we know that at every step we take we are met by a lie, and that there is still nothing more respectable than a lie. That which Science tells us is truth and justice, the Code demonstrates to us is a crime. In the direction in which Science tells us to go the Code stops us and punishes us for attempting. Our life—whatever form we give to it—is a perpetual sad discord between our actions which we know to be stupid, and our convictions that we feel are just. Ought we to go back? No, since the law of the world is movement. But if we march forward, we are overpowered by some strangely-clothed gentry who carry the Code in their hands.

"Here are two recent examples of this antagonism between Science and the Code. I take pleasure in citing them for they appear to me particularly irritating. M. Rieffel, a writer of fine talent, and of vast knowledge, published a superb study in which he considers the future of Humanity in accordance with the scientific discoveries and the principles of modern philosophy. It is contrary to the articles of the Code, which do not admit that the laws may be changed. He has been condemned to eight months imprisonment. A learned man of great merit

Dr. Cesaro Lombroso, whose whole life has been passed in the study of criminal anthropology, has declared, after innumerable convincing experiments, that there exists a regular type of criminal, the born criminal. This criminal is no more responsible for his crimes than a consumptive person for his tubercles, a gouty person for his gout or a humpback for his hump. Nevertheless we continue to guillotine with a luxury of ignominious and sordid cruelty, borrowed from the most hideous customs of the middle ages. And an academician, a liberal gentleman, M. d'Haussonville, writes in reply to the anthropological discoveries of Dr. Lombroso: 'It is a grave question that we must not agitate too much, for it would cause the Law to be disarmed and compromise the social safety.'

"Ah, well! has General Boulanger, towards whom the discontented go in crowds, asked himself what is this discontent which he represents with so much assurance? Permit me to doubt it, for I do not find the slightest trace of this philosophic preoccupation in his programmes, speeches, bills, conversations, numerous and varied as they have been. This discontent from which we suffer, and which translates itself into so many strange and fearful manifestations of society as against the individual, is due to the Code and nothing else, to the Code which corresponds no longer to our needs of progress and justice, but stifles them. And, unlike the discontented, who see the hope of a golden age bloom again in the little red flowers with which they surround the impatient sword of this soldier, I am mistrustful. Has General Boulanger a new Code in his mind? That is the great question."

OBJECTIONS TO ANARCHISM.

"SOCIALISM teaches that the machines the means of transportation and communication are the result of the combined efforts of society, past and present, and that they are therefore rightfully the indivisible property of society, just the same as the soil and the mines and all natural gifts should be. This declaration implies that those who have appropriated this wealth wrongfully, though lawfully, shall be expropriated by society. The expropriation of the masses by the monopolists has reached such a degree that the expropriation of the expropriators has become an imperative necessity, an act of social self-preservation. Society will reclaim its own, even though you erect a gibbet on every street corner. And Anarchism! this terrible 'ism,' deduces that under a co-operative organisation of society, under economic equality and individual independence, the 'State'—the political State—will pass into barbaric antiquity. In a society where all are free, where there are no longer masters and servants, where intellect stands for brute force, there will no longer be any use for the policeman or militia to preserve the so-called 'peace and order'—the order that the Russian General speaks of when he telegraphed to the Czar after he had massacred half of Warsaw, 'Order reigns in Warsaw.' Anarchism does not mean bloodshed; does not mean robbery, arson, etc. These monstrosities are, on the contrary, the characteristic features of capitalism. Anarchism means peace and happiness to all. Anarchism, or Socialism, means the re-organisation of society upon scientific principles, and the abolition of causes which produce vice and crime. Capitalism first produces these social diseases, and then seeks to cure them by punishment."

The above are the words of August Spies, who proved his sincerity by giving up his life for the cause of the people. They occur in his speech before Judge Gary. In brief they explain the position taken up by this journal among Socialists. We are Revolutionary Socialists and Anarchists. We believe no more in Governments than we do in Capitalists and Landlords. There are, however, a great many workers who have got rid of the superstition regarding the employer, who still retain the government superstition; and it is to these that the series of articles which we intend to give under this heading is especially addressed. We desire to meet every and all objections that can be brought against Anarchism and in favour of Governments, and to thrash them out in these columns. We feel sure of our own ground—so sure that we shall burk no honest criticism. If any one can convince us that we are wrong in our views we are anxious to be convinced, our faith being entirely and wholly in truth, and our desire its dissemination. On the other hand we ask all who wish to realise a happy future for humanity, to attend to our reasoning and allow us to try and convince them. "Nothing is so stupid as to vanquish, the real glory is to convince"—these words of Victor Hugo we take as our motto. We invite objections to be sent direct to the Editor, and they will be dealt with as nearly as possible in the order received. We shall consider no argument or criticism offered in the spirit of honest enquiry unworthy of attention, and we shall endeavour to use the clearest language in explaining our meaning.

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