

LIBERTY

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LONDON

• A JOURNAL OF •

• ANARCHIST • COMMUNISM •

THE COMMUNE OF PARIS.

By LOUISE MICHEL.

PART II.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE FOURTH OF SEPTEMBER, KNOWN AS
"THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE."

CHAPTER II—(Continued).

THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE.

At the Club La Reine Blanche there were none opposed to immediate action. "There is only bread enough to last till Feb. 4th," it was declared; "the daily ration being 300 grammes; (about 3lb.) but let the people once be delivered from those who desire defeat, and they will soon find some. The places where food is stored are well known, and whether it be to die of hunger, or to bury ourselves beneath the ruins of Paris, there shall be no surrender."

It was agreed that the delegates of the Batignolles should go the next day to their mayoralty, and summon the mayor and his deputies to meet them at the Hotel de Ville, wearing their scarves. Three other delegates were to go to the mayoralty of Montmartre. This was immediately done. In the absence of Clemence, Dereure promised. He did actually go; as also did Malon, mayor of the Batignolles. At La Reine Blanche a general understanding was come to among the delegates of the clubs, of the committees of Vigilance, of the National Guards, and of the people. The meeting concluded with cries of "Vive la Commune!"

The next afternoon, Greffier and Cipriani repaired to the prison of Mazas. Greffier asked to see a warder whom he had known when he was in jail. They were allowed to pass, and they observed that a solitary sentry was posted at the chief entrance. To the right of this large door was a small glass door, at which a warder stood night and day. Through this door the prison was entered. Opposite this second door was the guard-house, where was the dormitory of a detachment of National Guards: (those of "order" of course).

Greffier and Cipriani reached the round point and in course of an easy chat with the warder, Greffier casually asked him where "the old man" was. This was the somewhat premature nickname by which Flourens was known among his friends. "Gallery B, Cell 9," replied the man, naively enough. On entering they had noticed the passage marked B. They conversed about other things, and having taken note of what was necessary, took their leave.

That evening, towards ten o'clock, sixty-five armed men met at the appointed rendezvous in the Rue des Couronnes in Belleville. They fell into rank, and improvised a patrol. Knowing the password they were able to reply to the sentries who might otherwise have checked them in their enterprise. A corporal with two men came and reconnoitred them and, having satisfied themselves, let them pass.

A surprise could only be successful if executed with the utmost swiftness. The first twelve men of the pretended patrol were to disarm the sentry at the prison. Following these, four others were to secure the warder at the small glass door. Thirty more were to rush into the guard-house, and to take up their stand between the rack containing the rifles and the camp beds on which the guards were lying, presenting arms at the latter to prevent their moving. The remaining twenty-five men were to mount the round point and seize the warders to the number of six; make them open the cell of Flourens, lock them up in it instead; and descending rapidly, lock the small glass door, and the guard-house; and closing the entrance door on to the street, get away as quickly as possible.

This plan, was carried out with mathematical exactness. As Cipriani was one of the chief actors in it, I will let him give his own account: "The only man who showed any reluctance," says he, "was the governor of the prison. But with the muzzle of a revolver near his face, he yielded; and Flourens was released. From the Mazas, we wished to go straight to the Hotel de Ville, where a large number of our friends awaited us, and where it might have been possible to arrest the members of the Government, who were holding a nocturnal sitting. But Flourens, who in his prison cell had seen nothing of the momentum of the revolutionary movement, objected, on the ground of our being too few. It would have been as well, however, to have taken the chances of an audacious surprise; for under such circumstances the fewer the men, the better. It is not on numbers but on extreme courage that we must depend. The little troop on reaching the 20th mayoralty, of which Flourens had been nominated a deputy mayor, sounded the 'tocsin,' and proclaimed the Commune. But there was no reply. The following morning a furious placard by General Clement Thomas, who had re-

placed Tamisier as commander of the National Guard, was posted up. This announcement placed us outside the law, and appealed to the men of 'order' to exterminate us. It began as follows: 'Yesterday evening a handful of seditious persons took the prison of Mazas by assault and released their ringleader Flourens,' etc., etc. The taking of Mazas and the release of Flourens had alarmed the men who governed Paris, and who now expected an attack on the Hotel de Ville. Trochu accordingly had the building filled by his half-savage Bretons.'—Amilcare Cipriani, London, Oct., 1894.

On January 22nd, at mid-day, an enormous crowd filled the "Place" of the Hotel de Ville. The populace was un-armed, and even of the National Guards present, some carried merely their rifles and no ammunition. In the midst of the crowd some young men made use of a lamp-post as a platform, up which they climbed in order to shout "Decheance! Decheance!" At this post was visible for some time the blond head of Henri Bauer who recounted the cowardly acts of the provisional Government. From time to time there passed through the crowd a kind of roar, such as I have recognised later in the anger of the ocean. All those who had promised to come were there, and also many who had not promised. Some of our hearts bled on seeing children present; others, reckoning themselves already among the dead, thought that if the rulers should massacre the women and children, popular justice would put an end for ever to tyranny; telling ourselves meanwhile "Though our lives should be sacrificed, freedom will nevertheless arrive."

The windows of the Hotel de Ville had been filled up the evening before with sacks of earth; the building was full of Breton mobiles. We saw their fair heads and pale faces; and the blue eyes gleaming upon us. We fancied we heard snatches of their song from time to time—that little rhyme about Monsieur Charrette and the wolf-hunt. The crowd increased as it had done on Oct. 31st. Young and old, women and children, continued to arrive. Behind the railing in front of the Hotel de Ville were Chaudey, the Governor of the Leger, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Mobiles, and other officers. Delegates were told off to signify to the Government the opposition of Paris to the conclusion of peace, but they requested an audience in vain. The doors remained closed and the windows filled with Bretons. (These windows in the facade of the building had for me a vague resemblance to the port holes of a great ship.)

No doubt whatever remained as to the manner in which the Government intended to receive those who did not desire the surrender of Paris.

Chaudey suddenly re-entered the Hotel de Ville to encourage by his presence the Bretons sheltered within the walls, and to whom he was about to give the cold blooded command to fire upon the people—a crime he afterwards expiated by his death.

The people then tried to scale the iron railings. The officers opposed them. "You little know what you are doing in opposing the will of the whole populace," said old father Mabile to one of them. (Mabile was one of Flourens' old riflemen, and a member of the International) "Je m'en f—! (I don't care a d—!) replied the officer—a captain—pointing his revolver at the breast of a comrade of Mabile's who was pressing nearer to him. At that moment a blow from a sabre-hilt was struck behind one of the doors of the Hotel de Ville; a single shot was fired; and almost at the same instant a compact volley swept the Place. The sound was like the sound of hailstones in a great summer storm.

Those individuals in the crowd who were armed responded energetically, but their bullets scarcely marked the hard stone wall, while those of the Bretons entered the living flesh of women and children and inoffensive passers by.

As Cipriani was slowly retiring with his friends, Dassoli and Sapia, toward the Avenue Victoria, where under the fire from the Hotel de Ville a barricade was at once attempted by means of an overturned omnibus, it occurred to him to stop the clock of the Hotel de Ville at that accursed hour. He fired at the dial plate and broke it. It was five minutes past four. When he returned to Sapia, the latter had received four bullets in his chest. Henri Place, (Verlet, of the journal *Patrie en Danger*), who with other Blanquists had taken part in the release of Flourens and of other prisoners confined at Mazas for the rising on Oct. 31st, had an arm broken in front of the railing. Two aged men, Louis Moreau and Pierre Malzieux, replied to the fusillade with the calmness of statues.

Close beside me, a woman dressed in black was killed. She was of my height and rather like me. We never discovered her name. And I, left standing, unhurt, before those wicked windows! I could not take my eyes from those mobiles who fired upon us as they would have shot at wolves. We should have them with us instead of against us one day. They acted as they believed; they did not sell themselves.

WHY VOTE?

Electors—Why do you vote for this man or that to sit in Parliament? Probably because the men of one party or another have succeeded in making you believe that if *they* get into power *your* interests will be looked after. Conservatives, Liberals, or Radicals, or the spokesmen of the S. D. F., or the I. L. P., have pretty nearly convinced you that if *they* get power it will be the same for you as if you got it.—They make out that if you were represented everthing would be all right for everybody; which means that you would get just what you were most particular about, and everyone else would get what you considered they deserved!

All politicians are alike in wanting your vote; and that is about all they do want, so far as you are concerned. To get it, they take care to let you believe that voting for a parliamentary candidate is your safest and surest way of making the conditions of your life, as a British subject, easier for yourself. And the next thing you have to believe is that the men whom you stop outside Parliament and vote for, will reward you by voting your way inside the House, and that all sorts of benefit will result.

Each party promises its electors much the same things. The very best shall be done to secure the worker good wages, short hours, the best education for his children, the greatest possible liberty of contract, cheap supplies, low taxes, and so on; yet you only believe in one party, and laugh at all the others! Why do you believe in that one party? Is it because you read its papers, and find your own views in them? Or perhaps because you think its men cleverer or more honest than the men of other parties? You forget that all politicians are bound to be clever; and it has perhaps never struck you that no politician can afford to be honest. Meanwhile your neighbour, Smith or Brown, has just the same high opinion of his party, and for the same reason,—because he, like you, mostly listens to what he is told like a good lamb, and does not stop to think for himself.

What we Anarchist-Communists now ask you to do is to stop and think a bit, before deciding to vote for anyone at all. Where are we today? Government succeeds Government. So-called "Majority-rule" has been in fashion a hundred years or so. And whoever's in or whoever's out, the rich go on getting richer and stronger; and the poor go on getting poorer and more helpless. Labour is a worse and worse drug in the market; food gets more and more adulterated; Army and Navy (serving no purpose except to assist the rich in fighting for markets) are still supported by taxes forced out of the people at large; laws get more and more complicated; "honorable members" ceremoniously twaddle and quibble inside the House; and enjoy themselves very much outside it. "Commissions" are got up with a view to procrastination, under the pretence of great caution and accuracy; they investigate the causes of this or that abuse, or pose as if intent on solving this or that "problem." Bogies are trotted out, and false excitements are got up about side issues; such as Home Rule, Disestablishment, Local Veto, or abolition of the House of Lords; and by keeping these noisily to the front, public attention is purposely kept as much as possible away from the more vital questions of our day—questions which it is highly inconvenient for Government to have to recognize at all.

Election-days come again and again. Crowds hiss, and groan, and applaud this and that artful spouter. And the old game goes quietly on.

What game? Why, the scramble for markets at home and abroad, the speculations of governments and private millionaires; every precaution being taken by all in power to keep the homicidal wage-system what it is, and to protect the rights of "property," out of which arise the wrongs of men.

Governments are not to blame. Government can never, in the nature of the case, alter the economic basis of society. It can never set to work to abolish the wage-system, since it must always take care of the statutory claims of any class already in power; and no other class can anyhow "capture Government" and reverse the economic system by Act of Parliament. Every time a different class has really got into power, and has made any real change, it has been done by revolutionary action, and never once by constitutional methods. No one knows this better than the different Socialist candidates for election, but they want place and power for themselves, and they know how little time or chance most electors have had to think out the truth for themselves.

Now let us consider the Voting System. The Vote won't bear much looking at. It is an impudent trick for securing places of distinction and worldly advantage to a few common-place men, under pretence of ruling in accordance with "the will of the nation"; that is, ruling merely according to the vote of a majority out of such enfranchised tax-payers as care to vote at all. But enfranchised tax-payers are a minority to begin with among intelligent British citizens; then the men who vote for *any particular party* are again a minority when put beside those who vote for *all the other parties*. Besides, only a minority of those nominated get elected. And when this minority chosen by a minority gets to Westminster, what happens? Sometimes your man is again in the minority when they count votes on one of their hum-drum little red-herring measures or amendments; sometimes he is at lunch or dinner, or ill, or horse-racing, or enjoying forty winks.

And this is Power! This is that saw-dust bogey called "Government," which we silly creatures of habit suppose to be so necessary to

the lives and liberties of the tens of millions of people outside. Whose lives then are bettered? Whose anxieties are relieved? Whose deaths are prevented or postponed by reason of the power the electors have given to that parcel of formal chatterers to concoct Acts of Parliament on petty questions, and to get them forced on us all by lawyers and police? Why, only the lives of the rich and strong are protected, whatever happens. Whoever you vote for, you may be quite sure you are either voting for Rothschild, or else for someone Rothschild is bound to beat so long as Government is Government.

Well, you still think you'll vote. Election day comes, and you pop your paper into the ballot-box.

In voting you think you are voting for something you want. But you want a measure: you vote for a *man*. You yourself are not one of the few score whose voices will be counted in the House to see whether the measure shall become law. You vote, and then you wait for what the fates send you. You know nothing of parliamentary intrigues or of the hundred other more pressing affairs that influence statesmen while they keep up the farce of serving the public. Your M.P. wants name and fame, as well as ease and freedom; and in Parliament as well as out, popularity and success are got easiest by pulling the same way as those who have got it already. If your member can get benefits for you along with himself, he doesn't mind; but of course it is quite natural he should put himself first.

If you were in Parliament, you would soon discover that there were shorter and funnier ways to your own interests than you had supposed while you were outside. Then if you were honest you would get disgusted at the remembrance of the promises you had made, and which the nature of Government, mind you, does not enable you to fulfil; and you would throw up the sponge and come out of it, like honest Dr. MacGregor did the other day. But if the personal temptations were too great, you'd stop in and get corrupted, as Edmund Burke did a hundred years ago, and as many a popular M.P. has done since.

Workers! you are never "a power in the State." You *are* a power outside, and don't they know it too! They don't want you to find that out. Their political business is to sit feeling your strong pulse, in a precious funk all the while lest you should wake up and discover that strength of yours, and send the whole crew of them about their business. You've got all the machinery, land, mines, and railways in your own industrious capable hands already; they are afraid you are going to find out that glaring fact too, and have a laugh at yourselves for thinking you've got to wait about, voting for Lord Tom Noddy or young Jack Shoddy to make a law for you to use what you've made; and saying what you are to do with your own time, and the products your own toil has yielded. Their hope is that by talking and talking, and chucking lots of dust in your eyes they may get you to think the Unemployed Question is a "problem" after all! Their real problem is how to keep you off the plain answer to that very simple Question. So they appoint Commissions, and the talk is of "discovering some palliative for the troubles of the unemployed workers." "Some palliative!" and such a lot of trouble about finding any constitutional way of silencing that awful question which has come to the front at last, despite them all, to bring shame and confusion and ruin to the horrible Capitalist system out of which it has emerged as naturally as matter comes from a canker. There's no constitutional, capitalist, parliamentary way out of that problem. To the simple question—"What shall be done for the unemployed?" there is this one plain true answer. "Let the worker employ himself." Since he must starve and suffer without food, let him in the name of all that is fair and human, make his own food. Remove whatever is forcing him to loaf and starve while he is able and willing to produce, and as producer to consume and produce again. Away with the red-tape fences between a man and his bread, and between the worker and his freedom!

Let no one who respects honesty, common-sense, and himself, vote for the politician of any party whatever. In Italy, at the recent general election, half the electors abstained from voting at all.

Politics are doomed; but no one except the Anarchists are willing to let the people get hold of the reasons why. Anarchists repudiate politics, and do not want your vote, because they neither want power over you nor to make laws so as to exploit you. While the cry heard all over the kingdom at election times from every political spouter of every party alike, is "Vote for Me!" the Anarchist exhorts you instead to "Think for Yourself!"

And when you have thought for yourselves you have taken the first and most important step towards acting for yourselves. When you act for yourselves the land will be free, and the Unemployed "Problem" will have solved itself.

Away with Politics! Down with Government and Exploitation, Make Way for Anarchy, Order, and Honesty!

"They never fail who die
In a great cause. The block may soak their gore;
Their heads may sadden in the sun, their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
E lapse, and others share as dark a doom
They but augment the deep and swelling thoughts
Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom."

BYRON.



"LIBERTY" is a journal of Anarchist-Communism; but articles on all phases of the Revolutionary movement will be freely admitted, provided they are worded in suitable language. No contributions should exceed one column in length. The writer over whose signature the article appears is alone responsible for the opinions expressed, and the Editor in all matters reserves to himself the fullest right to reject any article.

We would ask our contributors, to write plainly and on one side of the paper only. All Communications should be addressed, — The Editor, Liberty, 7 Beadon Road, Hammer-smith, W.

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LIBERTY, -
LONDON, AUGUST, 1895.

Between Ourselves

Our comrade Elisee Reclus' lecture on "Anarchy", at South Place Institute, on Monday (July 29th), was in every sense a great success. His exposition of the principles of Anarchism was forcible and lucid, many persons present congratulating the Anarchists on their possessing so able an advocate. Anarchist papers and pamphlets were in great demand; several hundreds of the pamphlets written by Elisee Reclus and Kropotkin were easily sold. The questions and answers after the lecture were very interesting, and the reply of Reclus as to bomb throwing was "that when society was in such a state as it now is, and a poor starving wretch walked among the theatres and gaiety of the town without the hope of relief, he could well understand how that man would, in his despair, say he would 'blow it up'." This sentiment was received with loud applause, and it must not be forgotten that the bulk of the audience were not Anarchists. The request to define the difference between government and organisation was complied with by both Reclus and Kropotkin, and was received with loud applause. A question relating to representative government was neatly put by Comrade Leggatt, who asked "Was it not true that for the last three months the government had not sat for a single week?" The answer was obvious: That we were not governed by our so-called representatives, but by permanent officials, in the interest of capitalism and landlordism.

The only London morning paper that found room for a notice of Reclus' lecture was the *Daily Graphic*. This journal is Conservative in principle, and has less space for news than any of its contemporaries. Of course our contemporary is entitled to the credit of doing what other papers neglected, purposely or otherwise, to do, and we consequently forgive most freely its feeble attempt to ridicule our principles and our work.

The "Plaistow Horror," according to the Paris correspondence of the London dailies, is causing a sensation in French judicial circles, and the comments upon the psychic phases of the crime are very numerous. The Nancy School of Criminologists have taken up the case as exemplifying its theories, whilst Dr. Bourneville, the physician who attends the youthful department of the Bicetre Criminal Asylum, compares the

inhuman murder of their mother by two English lads with some of the hideous and unexplained crimes committed in France, and admits that this crime is likely to baffle modern criminologists.

To us it appears that this statement is simply a confession that French criminologists are wilfully blind to the facts of the case, namely that the parents in this instance much have shirked their responsibilities and relied on Church and State to give their children both mental and moral education. The School teacher, to whom had been entrusted the education of the boys, declares on oath that they had regularly attended the scripture lessons, and most certainly knew right from wrong. We fail to see how attendance at scripture lessons would teach them the difference between right and wrong. What the boys evidently lacked was home training, and education of the feelings as well as the intellect. Education must be adapted to the needs of children, which are various. Teachers should be selected who are able to teach in the real sense of the word. All the faculties of the children should be brought into exercise, and school teaching made interesting. This education should be continued at home with all the force of precept and example.

The fact that society as it at present exists breeds criminals, does not seem to have been thought of by the French critics of the Plaistow murder, and the effect of environments on the formation of character seems to have been utterly lost sight of. It is time they changed their point of view, and brought their science more into line with the facts of nature.

The jury in returning their verdict of "wilful murder" added the following as a rider: "We consider that the Legislature should take some steps to put a stop to the inflammable and shocking literature that is sold, which we are of the opinion leads to many a dreadful crime being carried out." Again people are being taught to look to the Legislature. How often has this been done before and with what result? No other than increased taxation.

As Anarchists we know the folly of looking to the Legislature to perform any useful function for society. No one detests pernicious literature more than we do — the literature on which Fleet Street publishers fatten and grow rich. Unfortunately the continual demand for this trash is so great that the commercialism cannot resist the temptation to meet it, and profit thereby. The intelligent parent should, however, need no state aid in keeping his children free from the contamination of such literature. We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that every parent must accept the responsibility pertaining to the education of his offspring. When this responsibility is fully understood and willingly accepted, we shall be nearer the goal towards which Anarchists are advancing. When a natural order of society is established, such a crime as that above mentioned will be impossible.

Socialists and Socialism are abused or complimented (whichever you please) most heartily by some of the scribblers in the daily papers, who are anxious to account for the results of the recent elections. Says the *Daily News*: "If the Liberal party is to recover its lost ground with speed and success it must give Socialism a wide berth." Says a Newcastle journal: "The political war will be in our country as it already is in more than one continental state — between Socialists on the one hand, and all the other parties united on the other." We thank these scribblers, very much. We scarcely credited them with the knowledge they display

in the above quotations. Of course, when they speak of Socialists they include Anarchists. Again we say "Thanks."

Can anyone tell us if the Geoffrey Drage who has been elected M.P. for Derby, in the Conservative interest, is the same person who is honoured with an elaborate notice in the "Labour Annual"? And if he is, why the notice? Will Mr. Joseph Edwards reply?

THE ANARCHIST AND THE RAILWAY COMPANY.

By THOMAS BOLAS.

Few realise the many devices by which railway shareholders secure payment in advance for services which they in no way wish or intend to render. For example, six or seven extra persons—each one of whom has paid for a seat—are made to stand in an already full compartment, even when there are vacant seats in other parts of the train; and this day after day as a regular system. E. Leggatt, indignant with the class of worthless idlers who live by thus over-reaching the most poor and helpless, took a seat in a carriage of superior class, instead of standing in a third. After all had been explained to Mr. Haden Corser, the magistrate at Thames Street (July 6, 1895), this luminary told Leggatt that we cannot "correct one offence by committing another," forgetting that doing this is the whole aim and practice of the criminal law. He then sentenced Leggatt to fine or imprisonment.

Leggatt brought about a useful public demonstration that the function of the law is to uphold wholesale plunderers and to punish those who resist. The law enables the railway companies to systematically cheat third class passengers by ordinarily allotting them less than the just proportion of seats in the trains; this just proportion being easily determinable from existing statistics, and obviously no excess fare should be recoverable when there is a deficient proportion of third class seats. Although the Board of Trade has legal power, to insist on a proper proportion of third class accommodation, it neither does so nor does it prosecute, even when third class accommodation is so limited as to compel the use of empty "superiors," which now become mere traps for extorting excess fares.

Rightly understood, and made known widely, Leggatt's timely protest may materially help to awaken workers to the need of punishing shareholders on the one hand, and of confiscating (either progressively or immediately) all railway property on the other hand. Confiscation of the railway property may be taken as the first or leading step on the financial side of the pending social revolution, as the existing insurance system—based largely on systematic repudiation of liability to those who cannot afford to fight in the law courts—would come to an immediate end; the insurance companies holding one-fourth of the British railway stock, and existing partly on the ten millions sterling which they receive annually from the railway receipts. The banking and other financial bubbles would burst in sympathy; while the present automatic repudiation of the national debt—as evidenced by the constant rise in nominal market price of consols—would be hastened.

Therefore let all social reformers constantly place and hold in prominence such abuses, frauds, and extortions as fully justify the policy of CONFISCATION of railway property.

All that the financial papers can urge against confiscation, (e.g. the BULLIONIST of June 22, 1895, in reviewing my Railway Reform Leaflets) is that injustice would be done to that exceptional personage, the hard worker who has invested his savings in railways. Such a person in no sense lives upon his savings, but he uses them as a means of diverting to himself the earnings of others; he is one who knowing the struggles and trials of the workers, does not hesitate to rob them—and this by the meanest and most cowardly of devices. He is like one who "invests" his earnings in burglars tools and revolvers: but being too pusillanimous to use them himself, delegates this function to others, on condition of receiving half the plunder, and running no risk himself. Of all Shareholders he is the basest, and most criminal.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

The Italian comrades of the United States of America have started a new Communist-anarchist paper "La Question Sociale." (Address: 325, Straight Street, Paterson N. Y., U. S. A.) They declare themselves enemies of private property, authority, religion and patriotism; they propose to give special attention to labor movements. They invite all workers and comrades to free discussion on debatable points. We send our best wishes to our new companion in arms.

The parliamentary socialists of France have just received a severe defeat at the election of general councillors. This is generally considered as a forecast of the probable result of the next general election. We have nothing to rejoice about when the people go toward reaction; but we think that it is high time for the parliamentary socialists to profit by the lesson and reconsider their position.

The people in France are getting every day more interested in the proposition for gratuitous distribution of bread; and we think the matter would be a good point for agitation in the hands of Anarchists.

Certainly the capitalistic society will never yield on a question so important, because it would be tantamount to the giving up of the possibility of the present system of production and distribution. As comrade Reclus has recently said, with the gratuitous distribution of bread the strike would become an all-powerful arm; and that cannot be endured by the capitalist.

But if the people, who do not seek an interest in integral communism, because it is believed as too remote and too difficult, can take hold of the idea that at least the bread ought to be free for everybody, as is sometimes the case with water, then the social revolution would be much nearer than it is now. In our opinion, our action with regard to this and other "practical" proposals must be as follows: to insist on the propaganda of the principles and on the necessity of entire transformation of present society; but, as the people cannot catch at all our program, we must give our practical support to every demand for less authority and more communism. Only we must continually repeat to the people: "whether you want much or you are satisfied with little, you never will get by submissive means. To have much or little you must take it."

THE WHEREABOUTS OF COMMUNIST LOGIC.

To the Editor of LIBERTY.

Failing a superfluity of copy, I send you a line or two in conclusion upon L. S. B.'s extraordinary effusion in the June number, such as I have gathered the patience to pen, for I am in no mood to follow her unprofitable pastime of splitting hairs.

I defined the word "right" for the purpose of this discussion, as an individual limitation to appropriation, such limitation being set by an equality of opportunity. I furthermore held that this constituted the sole case for Anarchism, in its economic aspect. To which L. S. B. ironically rejoins: "A right to appropriation then is a limitation to appropriation"! Is there anything so inconsistent in this as L. S. B. would inferentially make out? If she happened to be the sole inhabitant of the earth, her capacity for monopolizing anything upon the earth would properly be only limited to her power to do so: she could injure no second person thereby. But given a community of persons, and the idea of right comes into existence. In order to possess a guarantee of security of their persons and possessions, they instinctively set limitations to individual action. Whatever limit they set as necessary to the end in view under certain conditions, is regarded as the "right"—the proper recognition of which, the individual owes to society. This idea of course varies and enlarges with increased conceptions and activity. My doctrine of Anarchism is that it is the ultimate conception of such right, inasmuch as it is an expression of the most absolute reciprocity attainable.

Now, let us see what L. S. B.'s doctrine of Anarchism amounts to. To her, Anarchism is concomitant with "Natural Order"! Natural order is the wolf devouring the lamb! the monopolist crushing out the life of his victim! Animals of prey (man's ancestors) who are naturally constituted that they can only exist by devouring other animals—these pursue the natural order! L. S. B. says, "Nature knows nothing of Equality." An odd admission for a Communist to make, surely.

She says that I believe "that the ethic of the future will increasingly discountenance whatever impulse to communism now exists." Certainly I do. This belief is logically forced upon me by hard facts—not dreams—by an array of historic data which incontrovertibly reveals that Communism has always been a synonym for barbarism; that liberty and progress have consisted in the gradual extinguishing of communism; that all primitive societies have been communistic theoretically and practically, and have been poverty-stricken and demoralized proportionately; that property (I do not here confound property with monopoly as L. S. B. does in her inability to discriminate) was the first watchword of civilization; and that the extension of civilization and liberty has been contemporaneous with the development of the recognition of the property regime. All of which warrants the deduction that those who clamor to return to Communism—to the "herd-of-cattle" conception of social life—are in contradiction with the evolution of society.

What L. S. B. is deficient in is the faculty to perceive that, in the laws of social dynamics, the Communistic principle is essentially a re-action of the monopoly principle, and has no direct relation to the property principle at all. Property, or the essential social limitation to individual appropriation, is indeed the SYNTHESIS of Monopoly and Communism.

In conclusion, every experiment in Communism under civilization has miserably failed, except in such instances where the most abject servility and self-sacrifice have obtained. Out of hundreds of experiments in America since Owen's time—the majority of which were established under the most favorable circumstances—only those of the Shaker type have survived. John Humphrey Noyes, the historian of the American experiments, and interested partizan of the Communist idea, is painfully compelled to conclude that Communism will inevitably fail where the religious idea is not the *primum mobile*.

HENRY SHYMOUR.

We have to acknowledge receiving "Women, Love, and Life," by William Platt, and a number of pamphlets and periodicals, notices of which are reserved for our next issue.

NOTICE.—On Thursday, August 8, at 8.30 p.m., a Conference will be held at Grafton Hall, Grafton Street, W.C., to consider arrangements for next year's Labour Congress.

HOW AND WHY I BECAME A SOCIALIST.

By J. SKETCHLEY.

By the request of many friends I write the following, showing my advance to Socialism, which has ever been a long and straight line.

Early in 1839 Chartism began to take deep root in the midland counties and in April of that year I was appointed Secretary for the South Leicestershire Society. I held that post up to the close of the movement in 1849. In Jan. 1848, I was appointed one of a committee of three for the County. Of course the Chartist movement was a political one, but the cry was already heard, "The Charter and something more"—a mere political change was held by many not to be worth fighting for. In 1850, a Republican movement was started with a more advanced program, which included adult suffrage, the organization of labor on the land, organization of labor through credit, education, free administration of justice, local government, etc. In the *English Republic*, which was ably edited by W. J. Linton, were discussed—the sovereignty of the people, direct government by the people, Socialism, Communism, etc. Associations were formed in many towns.

At this time I carefully studied the manifesto and program drawn up at the Congress of Berlin which embraced, among other points, 1st, the soil is the collective property of mankind, 2nd, that property is not an individual but a social right, etc.

The land, mines, means of transit, etc., were all to be declared national property; private banks were to be replaced by state banks, with a national currency. Functionaries were to be paid according to their needs, not according to their grades, education and justice were to be gratuitous, and all were to be compelled to labor. The standing army was to be abolished, labor to be organized, and work guaranteed to all.

There was no comparison between a program like the above and a mere political change. And believing that thought and action ever ought to be one, I ceased to be a mere Chartist and became a Social Democrat. I soon became convinced, too, that with Social Democracy, or true Republicanism, government by representation was impossible. This I endeavored to make clear in a long series of articles in the *International Herald* of 1873. In my article of Feb. 22nd, I placed "the direct sovereignty of the people; or the government of the people by themselves," as of the very first importance. To me the essential feature of usurpation, of Despotism, was a government external to and above the people, and that is the leading characteristic of government by representation.

Towards the end of 1874 with a few friends we formed the "Birmingham Republican Association," and on the 1st of Jan. 1875, issued our first monthly, "Appeal to the People". Our program embraced the abolition of royalty, the House of Lords, the state church, the standing army, with the usual social program of the period.

In Dec. 1877 we changed the name of the society to the "Social Democratic Association," and in our first "Address to the People," Jan 11st, 1878, at the end of our program we added a clause for International Revolutionary Socialism.

Early in 1879, I agreed with the German friends in London to revise the old program of 1847, and to write a pamphlet in defence of the principles and action of the Social Democrats of Germany. The new program contained the definition of the Free Social State, adult suffrage, direct legislation by the people, the abolition of the standing army, of all state interference in matters of religion, the full freedom of speech, the press, of public meeting, of free association, the free administration of justice, of education, the nationalization of the

land, mines, railways, etc., the nationalization of the instruments of production and the means of employment, "that all industrial production, including agriculture, be based on the principle of association or co-operation to be organized by the state under the democratic control of the working classes," etc.; that, in fact, "all the operations of society should be under the supreme direction and control of the wealth-producing classes, in opposition to which all the other classes of society are but a reactionary mass."

I am aware that with some people to-day anything or everything may be termed Socialism, and anybody may be called a socialist, or that any "ism," however paltry it may be, or however apart from principle, it may nevertheless be dubbed socialism, or that a man who is nothing more than a mere social reformer may be termed a socialist. To me Socialism is something higher, something grander than the mere opinions of individuals; based on the principle of eternal right, it is universal in its application, it is the principle of equal liberty, of equal justice between each and all in all the relations of life and through all the ramifications of society.

Socialism is essentially revolutionary in relation to all the existing conditions of society. Based on principle it admits of no compromise. The unity of thought and action—the oneness of purpose—excludes all expediency in relation to principle. Socialism has nothing to do with the ever varying opinions of individuals. These may change from day to day with the ever changing conditions around us; not so the principle of freedom, of right, of justice.

The basic principle of Socialism is the sovereignty of the people, but that sovereignty rests upon, and is inseparable from, the sovereignty of the individual. The individual can never be absorbed in the state any more than in the church. A Socialist state will be a Free state, will be a Socialist society freely organised, and where the sovereignty of the people, based on sovereignty of the individual is the foundation of all its institutions.

In a Socialist state or society, there would be no room for despotism in any of its forms, hence government by representation would cease to exist. What are the elected but gods of the people's creation, to whom the electors humbly pray and promise ever to pray for some paltry favour. Socially and economically, Socialism (if not a sham) is adequate to the removal of all existing evils. Socialism to me recognises no political tinkering, no mere social patchwork. It is in the name of Justice—of Justice through all the ramifications of society—that we can alone hope to rouse the millions; it is there only that hope can spring, and it is under the banner of International Revolutionary Socialism only that the peoples can conquer.

Is it not a truism that without divergence from that which exists, whether it be in politics, religion, manners, or anything else, there can be no progress? And is it not an obvious corollary that the temporary ills accompanying the divergence, are out balanced by the eventual good?—HERBERT SPENCER.

It is all very well so long as you can delude men with your artificial land laws; but to investigate them scientifically you must drag out the skeleton and confront the truth that land is public property and landlordism is robbery.—BLACKSTONE.

Party politics are to a people, what change is to the hod-carrier, as he shifts his hod from one shoulder to the other, a temporary but not a genuine relief.—Dr. MAX NORDAU.

Oh, why was the Earth so beautiful! becrimsoned with dawn and twilight, if man's dealings with man were to make it a vale of scarcity and tears?—CARLYLE.

What can be more fatal than to destroy as enemies men whose only crime is independence of thought?—SPINOZA.

ON THE DEFINITION OF CRIME.

By A. HAMON.

[Reprinted from "Les Archives d'Anthropologie Criminelle,"
edited by Lacanagne, Lyons, 1893.]
Continued from July No.

According to Corre*: "Crimes and misdemeanours are outrages on the rights of others: the rights consisting of the liberty of being and acting according to certain conventional forms practised by individuals and collectivities." By further explanations this scientific man enlarges his definition, as in the end he calls crime "all injury done to the collectivity and to the individual," and, as a synonym for crime he uses the expression anti-social act, or act characterized by anti-solidarity. Since then, this criminologist is not satisfied with his definition, he has looked for another and found this one: crime is an action that is at the same time anti-altruistic and anti-social. These definitions, although preferable to those of Garofalo and Tarde, are not worth much. In fact acts against oneself are not included in the class of crimes thus defined. Moreover if the anti-altruistic character is easy to define, if all men understand the same actions by that word, it is otherwise with the term "anti-social". We need no longer give proofs of the evolution of social customs, they change continually. The result of these ceaseless modifications is that an "anti-social" act of yesterday is "social" to-day, or will be "social" to-morrow. Thus the acts of the early Christians were considered *anti-solidaritous* and *anti-social* by any chief under the Roman Emperors, and from the time of Constantine they became *social*. An objection can be made that these acts were *anti-social* and not *anti-altruistic*, and that Corre, to define crime, uses both expressions. The objection does not hold good because in history it would be easy to find actions, at the same time anti-altruistic and anti-social or social in their character, according to each man's appreciation. Thus the murder of Julius Cæsar was an anti-altruistic act, *anti-social* for the partisans of Cæsar; *social* for his enemies. Thus of recent date, the attempt of Vera Sassoulitch to kill General Trepow was an anti-altruistic, *anti-social* act for all the partisans of autocracy; *social* for all its adversaries. Here are acts which, in accepting Corre's definition, are for some, crimes, for others, not. Defining crime as an anti-altruistic and anti-social act, is giving a definition liable to change and insufficient for the structure of the science of criminology.

We must look for another explanation not influenced by the variability of sentiments, rights, duties, and social customs. A definition of *crime* that takes into consideration these sentiments, rights, and social forms, implies the idea of a necessary reprimand and the approval of this censure, by the infliction of some penalty. It is this preconceived idea, inborn, that is to say acquired by heredity and educational atmosphere, that all *crime* implies blame and punishment, that has led our criminologists into giving these variable definitions, that are so unsatisfactory as regards time and place.

To be the basis of a science of criminology, *crime* "in itself" must be defined in a way that will stand proof in any place, at any time, as gaseous, liquid, solid, dense states are defined in physics. This definition must neither imply blame nor praise for the *crime*, because blame and praise of an action varies according to individuals, countries, times, circumstances, causes or effects of the action. Does such a definition exist? We believe so, and we think that the definition we are about to give is satisfactory; nevertheless we shall be happy to receive the criticisms that may arise; we even ask for them, persuaded as we are that they will

confirm our definition, or will demonstrate its weakness, thus stimulating us to find a better one.

To begin with, crime is, and can only be a thing which is being done or has been done, that manifests itself or is manifested; we cannot conceive it a virtual thing not to be examined or studied. Therefore, *crime* is an act.

But what sort of act? What class of act? The divers acts which united in a class, species, or kind, are fit to be designated as *crime* must present a common character; just as everything, every being, classed in a family, a genus, or a species presents at least one common characteristic with other things, other beings of that family, that genus, or that species. We will admit on principle that the common characteristic is injury or noxiousness. We have then this beginning of a definition: *An act that injures is a crime.*

Injures whom? Injures what? The answer is easy if we wish to look for it, not in metaphysical ideas such as right and duty, not in human conceptions such as sentiments or social forms, but in nature itself, that is to say, in what is perceptible to our senses. What exists is said to be organized or not; that is, lives or not. We eliminate, to begin with, everything that does not live and are thus restricted to this definition: *An act that injures an organism which has an independent existence is a crime.*

In zoology and botany we mean by individual every organized being that has, or has had, an existence of its own. We can therefore write in more concise terms: *Crime means an act that injures an individual.* By means of this definition, acts harmful to vegetables would be considered *crimes*. Hacking a tree, exclusive of the harm done to the owner, would be an injury done to that tree, a *crime*. The human mind is not so refined that we may consider such acts as injuries, as crimes. This definition is therefore too general, and necessitates a more precise meaning of the term *individual*.

A supposition forces itself upon us that by individual is only meant a being belonging to the animal series, to animality. We thus restrict the definition of crime to an act that injures the animal-individual or simply the individual*.

Granted the preceding definition, respecting individuals of the animal species only, we are led to search for the characteristic, common to all individuals, that can be injured, whose injury is noxious to the individual. We must find an indisputable characteristic, as otherwise the want of precision that existed in the definition of crime, would still exist, as each would lead us to discuss its noxiousness or harmlessness to the individual. In analyzing the animal-individual we see that this common and indisputable character is *liberty*. It is necessary to give the precise meaning of this word as applied to the individual. Absolute *liberty*, independent of all things and of all influences, does not exist, and in consequence cannot be the point in question.

Subjected to all influences that divers phenomena of nature exercise on his somatic and psychic organism, the individual is formed, he is what he was made to be, what he could not help but be, given the natural mesological conditions that have surrounded him and his ancestry.—If he lives with others, to these physical influences are added the influences of social phenomena and those of other members of society. From which results the necessary and precise form of the somatic

* It may be objected that according to this definition, killing ants, worms, moths, etc., is a *crime*, and that this is ridiculous. In fact, this act is a *crime*, which does not mean that it is blameworthy, praiseworthy or indifferent. It signifies merely that this act injures the individual-ant, the individual-worm and no one can deny that it does injure them. For the case in point we can restrict animality to what we call superior animals; that simplifies the question.

* ("Crime et suicide." Paris, 1891.)

and psychical individual. The growth of the receptive, perceptive, and conceptive faculties is the function of these natural and social influences, that is to say the function of heredity that has determined the general behavior of the individual, the function of climatic, alimentary, educational, social conditions that have determined the particular behavior of the individual. From this we infer that the individual is not free either in the registering of his receipts and percepts, nor in the production of his concepts. They are bound to be such, given all the conditions of pre-existing surroundings, and of existing ones at the time of the growth of these faculties. The individual does not enjoy the liberty of thought, of perception, but he enjoys the liberty of action, that is to say he has the power of putting his volition into action. Herzen has said: "The individual is not free to will what he wills, but he is free to do what he wills, if no obstacle impedes the execution of his volition." This liberty of action exists in all individuals without regard to the species, genera, or family to which they belong; it is inbred in the individual and is common to all. All obstacles to this liberty*, all injury to this characteristic is noxious to the individual, and, in analyzing, we see that all injuries to the individual are in truth the suppression or the restriction of this liberty of action.

We have therefore determined the characteristic, common to all animal-individuals, whose injury is noxious to these individuals. This common characteristic is the liberty of putting volition into action, or in short, the liberty of action of the individual, or shorter still individual liberty. Therefore, in the end we are led to define crime thus: CRIME MEANS AN ACT THAT INJURES INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY.

This definition is precise and clear; let us see if it is sufficient, that is to say, if it comprises all acts commonly called felonious crimes.

Murder, assassination, rape, wounds, blows, mutilations, abduction, and imprisonment suppress or restrain the individual's liberty in a permanent or momentary way, therefore they injure it; according to definition they are crimes. To call them crimes, we have no need to prejudge whether they are good or bad acts, social or anti-social contrary to a sentiment, admitted or not by a custom. They exist, and by this existence

The destruction of things by any means—fire, explosion, etc.; theft (with or without breach of trust, with or without trespassing, with or without burglary); embezzlement, extortion, bankruptcy, forgery, plagiarism: all acts called crimes or misdemeanours by law and criminologists are comprised in the definition we have just given. In fact, these acts suppress the liberty of the owner of the objects destroyed, stolen, embezzled, extorted, forged or plagiarised, for the time being or for all time. The individual, dispossessed, has no longer the possibility of turning his desire to enjoy, into enjoyment of those things. His liberty is therefore indeed suppressed and restricted by these acts. They injure it, and according to definition they are crimes, without necessarily prejudging whether they offend such or such a sentiment, whether they violate such or such a right, such or such a duty, such or such a social contract. They are in fact crimes.

This rapid analysis proves that all facts commonly called crimes are really comprised in the definition of crime given by us. But the acts mentioned above are not, for the philosopher, the only criminal acts. "The

* Liberty can be impeded by physical causes, external or internal. Thus an individual has the desire to go from one place to another, paralysis hinders him putting his desire into action: his liberty is obstructed. An individual wants to eat and he finds no food, because there is none in the place where he finds himself. He cannot put his wish into action: his liberty is injured. This injury is noxious, but we do not include it in our definition of crime because the causes are physical phenomena beyond the power of individuals.

list is a long one" (writes Manouvrier*) "of all crimes not forbidden, that are allowed or tolerated by the code, and of a gravity at least equal to the minimum crime according to law." Let us see whether these acts allowed by the code, but forbidden by a more refined morality come within the category that our definition calls crime.

* Archives de l'Anthropologie Criminelle, 1892, p. 567.

Liberty Bookshelf.

The following can be obtained from the Editor, or will be forwarded on receipt of stamps.

AN APPEAL TO THE YOUNG. By P. KROPOTKIN. Translated from the French. 1d.

ANARCHIST MORALITY. By P. KROPOTKIN. 1d.

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