

LIBERTY

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GOD AND THE STATE.



EXTRACTS FROM UNEDITED MANUSCRIPTS OF MICHAEL BAKUNIN.

(TRANSLATED FOR "LIBERTY" BY "N")

[Continued from No. 6.]

It is the great merit of Christianity to have proclaimed the humanity of all human beings, women included, the equality of all men before God. But how did Christianity proclaim it? In heaven; in a future life: not in this present and real life, not on earth. And after all, even this future equality is a sham, for the number of the elect is said to be exceedingly small. On this point theologians of the most differing Christian sects are unanimous. Thus the so-called Christian equality results in most bare-faced privilege for a few thousands, who are elected by the grace of God over millions who are damned. And even were this equality of all before God to be realised for everybody, still it would only be the equal nullity and slavery of all before a supreme master. Is not the root-idea of Christianity and the primary condition of salvation, the renunciation of human dignity, and the contempt of this dignity before the greatness of God? A Christian, then, is not a man inasmuch as he is not conscious of humanity; not a man too because not respecting human dignity in himself, he cannot respect it in others; and not respecting it in others he is unable to respect it in himself. A Christian may be a prophet, a saint, a priest, a king, a minister, an official, the representative of some authority, a gendarme, a henchman, an aristocrat, an exploiting bourgeois, or an enslaved proletarian; an oppressor or an oppressed, a torturer or a victim of torture, a master or a wage-worker; but he has not the right to call himself a man, because man only becomes really such when he respects and loves the humanity and freedom of all other men, and when his own freedom and humanity are likewise respected, loved, aroused, and promoted by all other men.

I am really free only when all human beings around me, men and women, are equally free. The freedom of others, far from being the limit or negation of my freedom is on the contrary its necessary condition and its confirmation. I become really free only through the freedom of others, so that the more free men there are around me, and the fuller and stronger their freedom is, the fuller, stronger, and wider does my own freedom become. The slavery of men puts a limit to my freedom. In other words their brutalisation is a negation of my humanity, because—I repeat it once more—I can only call myself really free when my freedom, or what means the same thing, my human dignity, my human right, consisting in obeying no other man and determining my actions in accordance with my own convictions, reflected by the equally free consciousness of all, are confirmed by the assent of everybody. My personal freedom established in this way by the freedom of all has no limits.

It will be seen from this that freedom as understood by materialists, is a very positive, very complex, and above all, an eminently social matter, because it can only be realized in society, and only by means of the strictest equality and solidarity of all. We can distinguish in it three points of development, three elements; the first of which is eminently positive and social. It is the full development and the full use of all human faculties and powers, by everybody, through education, scientific instruction, and material prosperity, each of which can only be given to man by collective labor, material and intellectual, muscular and cerebral, of the whole of society.

The second element of freedom is negative. It is the element of *revolt*—the rebellion of the human individual against authority, divine or human, collective or individual.

It is firstly revolt against the tyranny of the supreme phantom of theology, against God. It is evident that as long as we shall have a master in heaven, we shall be slaves upon earth. As long as we believe that absolute obedience is due to him, and there is no other obedience possible against a God, we must necessarily submit passively and without exercising the slightest criticism, to the sacred authority of his intermediaries and chosen ones; the messiahs, prophets, divinely inspired legislators, emperors, kings and all their officials and ministers, the sacred representatives and servants of the two great institutions which are imposed on us as being established by God himself for the direction of man: of the Church and the State. All temporal or human authority is directly derived from spiritual or divine authority. But authority is the negation of freedom. Hence, God, or rather the fiction of God, is the consecration and the intellectual and moral cause of all slavery upon earth, and human freedom will not be complete, until it shall have completely destroyed the nefarious fiction of a celestial master.

It is secondly, and in consequence of the former, the revolt of every individual against the tyranny of men, against individual and social authority, represented and legalized by the State. It is necessary that no misunderstanding should arise here, and for this reason it is essential to begin by establishing a well defined distinction between the official and consequently tyrannical authority of society organized as the State, and the natural influence and action of non official, but natural society upon each of her members.

The revolt of the individual against this natural influence of society is much more difficult than revolt against officially organized Society, though it is sometimes inevitable as is the latter. Social tyranny, often crushing and disastrous, does not exhibit that character of

imperious violence, of legalized and formal despotism which marks the authority of the State. It is not imposed as a law to which every individual is forced to submit under penalty of legal punishment. Its way of acting is gentler and more insinuating; less perceptible, but for this very reason stronger than the authority of the State. It dominates men by means of customs; by morals; by the mass of sentiments, prejudices, and habits of the material life, as well as of the spirit and the heart, which, together, constitute what is called Public Opinion. It surrounds a man from his birth, it pierces and penetrates him, and forms the very basis of his own individual existence, in such wise that each one becomes its accomplice in some way against his own very self, and for the most part without being at all aware of the fact. It hence results that to revolt against this natural influence of society over him, a man must to some extent revolt against himself; for he is, with all his material, intellectual, and moral tendencies and aspirations, nothing other than a product of Society. Hence the immense power exercised by Society upon individual men.

From the standpoint of absolute morality, that is of respect for man, (and I will presently explain what I mean by these words) this power of Society may be an agent of good as well as of evil. It is beneficial when it tends towards the development of science, material prosperity, freedom, equality, and the fraternal solidarity of men. It is harmful so far as it has the opposite tendency. A man born into a society of brutes remains, with very few exceptions, a brute; born in a society led by priests, he becomes an idiot, a simpleton; born among a band of thieves, he most probably becomes a thief; born a bourgeois he becomes an exploiter of the labor of others; and, if he is unfortunate enough to be born in the society of the demi-gods who govern this world—nobles, princes, heirs of kings—he will, according to the degree of his abilities, his means, and his power, be an enslaver of mankind, a tyrant. In all these cases, to make the individual even human, revolt against that particular society which gave him birth becomes indispensable.

But I repeat, the revolt of the individual against society is quite another and more difficult matter than his revolt against the State. The State is a historical, transitory institution, a passing social arrangement, like the Church whose younger brother it is. But it has not the fatal and immutable character of Society, which being anterior to all special human developments, and sharing fully the power of natural laws, actions, and manifestations, constitutes the essential basis of a human existence. Man, though he has made a first step towards humanity, having begun to be a human—that is, a more or less speaking and thinking being—is born into society as an ant is born into an ant's nest, or a bee into a bee-hive. He does not choose it; he is, on the contrary, its product, and is as fatally swayed by all the natural laws determining his necessary development as he is at the mercy of all other natural laws. Society is anterior to each human individual, survives him like nature herself. Society is eternal as nature is eternal; or rather, having had its genesis on this globe, will last as long as this globe will last. A radical revolt against society would, therefore, be as impossible for man as a revolt against nature in totality, human society being after all nothing other than the latest great manifestation or creation of nature upon this planet, and any individual who should question the existence of society, questions the existence of nature in general, and of his own nature in particular; and thus places himself outside the conditions of real existence, throwing himself into nothingness—absolute vacuity—dead abstraction—God.

Hence it is as absurd to inquire whether Society is a good or an evil, as to inquire whether nature at large,—this universal material, real, unique supreme, absolute being—is a good or an evil. It is more than either. It is an immense, positive, and primordial fact; anterior to all intellectual and moral appreciation. It is the basis—the ground—upon which, later on, that which we call good and evil necessarily develops.

This is not the case with the State; and I do not hesitate to say that the State is an evil, though a historically necessary evil; as necessary in the past, as its complete extinction will, sooner or later, be necessary in the future. It has been as necessary as were the primitive barbarism, and the theological wanderings of mankind. The State is not Society, it is only a historical phase of it which is as barbarous as it is abstract. It was originated in all countries by the combination of violence, rape and pillage; in a word, it arose out of war and conquest on one hand, and the gods, created by the theological fancy of different nations, on the other. It was at the beginning, and to this day remains, the divine sanction of brute force and triumphant iniquity. It consists even in the most democratic countries (such as the United States of America or Switzerland) of the regular institution* of privilege for the minority and of enslavement for an immense majority.

To be continued

No Nationality.

The fact is, as individualism suppresses individuality, so nationalism suppresses all that is worth keeping in the special elements which go to make up a real and not an artificial nation. The sham community of the present—the nation—is formed for purposes of rivalry only, and consequently suppresses all minor differences that do not help to supremacy over other nations. The true community of the future will be formed for livelihood and the development of all human capacities, and consequently would avail itself of of the varieties of temperament caused by differences of surroundings which differentiate the races and families of mankind. —William Morris.

* A word of affable in Bakunin's manuscript, and is here merely guessed at. —N.

WHICH ARE THE MURDERERS.



At this time when general abuse is thrown against the continental Anarchists, and the extradition or expulsion of those of them who happen to be in England, are matters proposed and discussed with callous indifference or cynical brutality, it might be well to consider whether these men in their own countries, once they fall into the clutches of their particular governments, are not made to suffer the worst tortures, physical and moral, before and after their trial, at their execution as well as during the long years they linger in prison. We maintain that this is a matter of fact and to prove this even to the most biassed opponents we take our examples from the ordinary bourgeois press, and here again as well from Conservative as from Radical papers.

A Spanish deputy, returning from Catalonia to Madrid, revealed how the Anarchists arrested in Barcelona were brought to make "confessions." It was not deemed advisable to bastinado them as traces of this might remain; so they were fed for days on codfish and bread; no water was given to them. When brought before the magistrate who examines them in private, they saw a jug of fresh water placed on the table as if by accident, and the agonies of thirst being insupportable, some made "confessions" for the sake of a glass of water! This was written to the *Journal des Debats*, of Paris.

The same method is said to have been used by the Belgian magistrates against an Anarchist, Muller, arrested at Liege.

When Vaillant was arrested after the explosion in the the Paris Chamber of Deputies, he was himself suffering heavily from wounds caused by the explosion. The police watched him and did not let him sleep during all the night, but continually worried him with questions, till at last, in the small hours of the morning, he said; "I have done it;" for the sake of a few hours rest! (told by the *Neue Freie Presse*, of Vienna). In the same way it is told of Emile Henry: "Two inspectors of police watch him narrowly and make him talk as much as they possibly can." (*Independence Belge*, Feb. 16.)

Shortly after the arrest of Emile Henry the Paris papers triumphantly told the following *stratagem* of the *carrer* investigating magistrate: Henry was told by this magistrate that Paul Bernard, who had just been arrested, had given information against him, and in the same way Paul Bernard was told the lie that Henry had charged him. When they were confronted with each other, each under the impression of having been betrayed by the other, "there was a very violent scene, which is said to be of importance (*cf. Le Gaulois*, Feb. 17, *Journal de Geneve*, Feb. 18) this fact has been denied later on, but this does not alter the fact that the Paris press recorded this villainy as a splendid achievement of a very clever and learned magistrate. Thus there exists no so-called public opinion which would in any way safeguard a prisoner against this moral torture. And was not the same dirty trick played upon one of our Walsall comrades?"

The *Daily Graphic* of Jan. 22 reproduces a photograph of Salvador Franch in the prison of Zaragoza, chained by the leg to the ceiling of his cell. "Although unable to move in consequence of the severity of the wounds he inflicted upon himself when he was arrested, Franch is secured by a chain which attaches his leg to the ceiling of his cell. Otherwise every arrangement is made for his comfort." When he was removed from there to Barcelona, "still looking pale, and emaciated, he was carried on a chair to the third floor of the prison, and placed in a separate cell in the infirmary. His feet

were placed in irons, fastened to a chain rivetted to the wall. When the handcuffs were removed he complained that his wrists had been bruised." (*Standard*, Feb. 3.)

When our comrades have gone through all these tortures it might be expected they would on their way to the scaffold at any rate meet no further tortures; but this is not the case.

It has been revealed, and the details are too atrocious to be reproduced, in what way Ravachol was fettered before being led to the guillotine. Every pace must have caused him the most stringent pains, increasing the more he was hurried on by the public executioner. This was done to make him look afraid of death, by complaining of his pains. But in this they did not succeed.

In a similar way Vaillant was treated, who simply said: "Why do you fetter me so tightly? I am not going to run away." When his body was laid into the coffin at the Ivry cemetery, a paper said: "They tried to undo the fetters which compressed his wrists; but M. Deibler had compressed them with so much force that it was very difficult to insert the blade of a knife underneath the cords" (*Gil Blas*, Feb. 7). Emile Henry also said: "It is impossible to walk." The more we must render homage to their courage when we see how diabolical means are thus used to make them look feeble in the last moments of their life.

Luigi Molinari was sentenced for an address he gave to the workmen of Carrara at Christmas, some weeks before the Carrara insurrection, to twenty-three years' imprisonment, including three years' solitary confinement. "Solitary confinement" writes Ouida to *Truth* (*Truth*, May 29) "is a sentence passed with light heart and callous indifference by judges as brutal as they are venal and impure, in the tribunals of two thirds of Italy from Monte Cimone to Mount Etna." L. Molinari as well as Paolo Schicchi and eighty other comrades, is in the prison of Onglia. "Molinari is lying in a most miserable cell to endure the period of solitary confinement to which he was sentenced, the cell is not only low and damp; but so cramped that if the unhappy young man remains there he will inevitably lose his health. This is indeed infamous, for even the worst malefactors are not treated so barbarously. He is absolutely forbidden any speech with any human creature, and he is not even allowed to walk in the courtyard in the day. Meantime the food given to him is of the very worst kind and in insufficient quantity to satisfy hunger." (*Secolo*, Milan, April 28.)

Here we will end. The prisons of Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, and Germany are crowded with our comrades. Who knows the horrors going on there? Who knows *e.g.* what is going on on board of that Spanish vessel, filled with hundreds of Anarchists, that is moored on the coast of the South of Spain? We remember to have seen bourgeois papers discussing what will be their fate; would they be sent away to Africa in a rotten vessel to perish at sea, or would they be provoked to revolt and shot in large masses?

This is the state of things on the continent at the present moment.

There was a French author, who, when asked his opinion on the abolition of the penalty of death, said: "Que messieurs les assassins commencent!" (Let the murderers begin!) This we might reply to those who are so loud in their denunciations of Anarchists. *Which are the murderers?* Those who uphold and profit by a system of society, which, in addition to the slow murder of the millions of the toiling masses who pass their lives in misery and sufferings, perpetrates these coldblooded, *legal* atrocities, or those who revolt against this rotten society at the peril not only of their life but of unutterable sufferings which are worse than death. The above is a contribution to a reply to this question.

June 5, 1894



HAVE YOU NOT HEARD HOW IT HAS GONE WITH MANY A CAUSE BEFORE NOW; FIRST, FEW MEN HEED IT; NEXT, MOST MEN CONTEMN IT; LASTLY, ALL MEN ACCEPT IT—AND THE CAUSE IS WON!

ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM IS THE UNION OF THE TWO FUNDAMENTAL TENDENCIES OF OUR SOCIETY, A TENDENCY TOWARDS ECONOMIC EQUALITY AND A TENDENCY TOWARDS POLITICAL LIBERTY. —KROPOTKIN.

"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.

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To Correspondents.

L. S. BEVINGTON, Willesden.—We tender our sincere thanks for your generous assistance.

T. SAMPSON, Brighton.—Pleased to hear of your steady work, and hope to be able to come down and help you.

J. BLAIR SMITH, Glasgow.—We received M.S., and shall be delighted to see you "when sampling our village."

J. J. BLACK, SUNDERLAND.—We regret your illness and trust you will quickly recover, for yourself and the Cause.

S. MAINWARING, Swansea.—We send you best wishes and hope to hear from you soon.

LIBERTY,

LONDON, JULY, 1894.

Between Ourselves.

Last Monday Europe was thrown into a state of excitement by the assassination of President Carnot by the Anarchist, Caserio Santo. The *Daily Chronicle* (the organ of the Nonconformist conscience) went into mourning. Column after column was devoted to the death of one man: comparatively little attention being given to the most appalling disaster of recent years; where nearly 300 lives are lost, murdered by the callous indifference of the Albion Colliery Co., and the wives and families of the breadwinners are left destitute.

Morris Ashton, a fireman in the colliery, told his brother Edward, who is now alive, that he was often afraid to go down the pit, and this only on Friday night, a few hours before the catastrophe. Why is there no notice taken of what old miners' say who have spent their whole life in the mines. Why are the men allowed to go down in the mine when there is danger? simply because the capitalists are indifferent to the lives of the miners.

We are told by a miner friend that if many mines were thoroughly ventilated and made safe to work in they would never pay. Precisely so; while mines are worked to pay a dividend, these accidents must happen. In a free Society, when the Commune owns the mines, without capitalist and government, then and not till then will these heartrending losses of life cease.

It is reported in legal circles in Paris that of the 3,000 Anarchists now under arrest 37 only will be prosecuted, including, Sebastien Faure, Ortiz, Matha, and Feneon. When Governments are seized with panic everyone innocent and guilty are made to feel its cruel despotism. When Vaillant's wife and child, Sidonie, pleaded for a respite, and would gladly have followed him to New Caledonia, President Carnot obstinately refused, and that in face of the fact that Vaillant killed no one, was he full o' the milk of human kindness then? How could Carnot then, hope for mercy, rendering none?

As Anarchists we look with horror upon every imprisonment and execution, and the economic slavery and oppression of men, women, and children by monopoly and government; and desperate deeds like the assassination of Carnot are the outcome of the economic condition which only those who have lived with the people can realize.

Louise Michel, according to the *Matin*, has expressed herself thus to an interviewer in London:—"This execution is more than a simple act of justice. In Carnot a whole class, the whole *bourgeois* world, has been struck at. Carnot embodies the execrable capitalist Republic. It is not merely Deibler's President but also the Panamists' President who has fallen under Cesario's dagger. Anarchy will once more have deserved well of mankind, for love of mankind is the sole object of Anarchy. Individual revolt is the prelude of the grand plebeian revolution whence social harmony will emerge."

Here in England we have little or no idea of the intense hatred that exists in France between the workers and the *bourgeoisie* and from what we know of this class who are brutally indifferent to the claims of the worker, we do not wonder at it. There, as here, the press is in the hands of the capitalist class but now and then, we get a glimpse of the real state of affairs. The following case has just been tried before the tribunal of the Seine. A gardener had consented to the transfusion of some of his blood and thus save his employers life. The gardener, however, fell ill, later on, and rapidly sank into a decline. He attributed his condition to operation, and naturally expected his master to make some provision for his wife, whom he foresaw would shortly become a widow this his master refused to do. The tribunal ordered a medical experts, report, and in the meantime the poor fellow died. His widow took up the suit, but lost her case. One would have thought that common humanity seeing the nature of the service rendered, would have caused the master to have come generously to her aid, but no, his instincts are brutalized by the race for wealth, and the law is on his side.

The *Echo*, June 27, writes:—"It is a pity that the House of Commons cannot clothe its manners in crape, and temper its humours to the moment of grief. The Chamber reached the address of condolence with the French nation in a spirit of distinct frivolity, it bubbled with laughter, the persons distilling humour, being, curiously to relate, two members of the Government in particular, Mr. Asquith and the Attorney-General."

When Kier Hardie suggested that the Government, in moving the vote of condolence on the death of President Carnot, might "include an expression of the feeling of the House towards the relations of those who had been killed by the explosion," Sir William Harcourt briefly explained its sympathy, and the affair ended. Keir Hardie did well in forcing the attention of the House on the deplorable condition of the miners' families. Ben Tillet came off no better with the London County Council.

WHY I AM A SOCIALIST AND A THEIST.

By JOHN GLEN.

Socialism, as I understand it, has to do primarily with the solution of the problems of poverty and the evils which inevitably flow from it. Religion, too, *i.e.*, orthodox religion, professes to solve these problems, but its solution is not only different from, but entirely opposed to, that of Socialism, and it is round this question of poverty, its causes, results and cure that the fight between them centres. The record of how I became a Socialist is therefore the record of my changing thought respecting the origin of wealth and poverty and the consequent realisation of the injustice, which has brought about our present social conditions.

But before my thoughts could change on these matters it was necessary that there should be freedom to think, and this freedom was denied me by the theology in which I was brought up. I was taught to believe that poverty and wealth were Divine ordinations, that suffering and misery were necessary in order to evoke the virtues of sympathy and gratitude, that rich men were "stewards of God's bounty," and that the duty of poor men was "to be content in that state of life unto which it had pleased God to call them." I had learnt how we were all partakers of a fallen and degraded nature through the disobedience of our "first parents," that this world was a "cursed world," and that our highest wisdom was to have as little as possible to do with it, but to keep our eyes and hearts fixed on that other "house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." To doubt all this was a sin, for did not the Church teach it, and were not the texts on which the Church relied drawn from the Bible, and was not the Bible the very Word of God? Hence to doubt was to "make God a liar," and condemn oneself to post-mortem penalties too horrible to mention. What then was it that first broke these ecclesiastical fetters and set the thinking machine free? Well, to recount this fully would take too long, besides being somewhat foreign to my subject, so suffice it to say that one day I saw in print a declaration by a clergyman that both the Bible and the Church had been presented unto us under false pretences, that really, the Bible was a human compilation and the authority of the Church a huge assumption. Strange to say this startling declaration exactly fitted in with certain fugitive thoughts of my own, which *would* occasionally intrude themselves in spite of my conviction as to their sinfulness, so finding there was a man actually preaching and daring to print what I scarcely dared to think, I ventured to examine, first a little, then a little more, until I finally saw that my friend was right and that there was actually no foundation for the claims of the Church respecting herself and the Bible, save assumption.

Charles Darwin completed the enfranchisement which my clerical friend began, and now with a mind free to think and freed from all fears of the ecclesiastical bogies which hitherto kept one quiescent, I endeavoured to understand why it was that in a world of such enormous capacities for material happiness there should yet be so much poverty and misery. On one hand I found a number of men and women possessing far more wealth than they could possibly use, on the other a much greater number who had either much less than they needed or none at all, the most singular phenomenon being that those who held most of the possessions did least or none of the work, while those who held little or none were working all the time. To say that this was a Divine ordination was only to say in other words that the Divine Being had made a muddle of things generally and was devoid of any sense of fairness or justice, so I had to seek elsewhere for a solution and I found—thanks to such men as Henry

George, Bernard Shaw, and others whom I need not mention—that poverty was an effect of certain economic conditions, that as long as those conditions remained unaltered the result was natural and inevitable, and that if we really wanted to make possible a fuller and richer life for all God's creatures then the remedy was in our own hands and not in those of any supernatural being. This seemed to me to imbue religion with a grander meaning, and enabled me to think of the Divine Being with some degree of respect—which in my orthodox days I had never been able to do—for it appeared to me a nobler thing to leave us to work out our own salvation from ignorance, vice, fear, and misery on the basis of unchanging law rather than for him to be always meddling and interfering with his work whenever one of his creatures chose to importune him to do so.

With this enlarged conception of religion I was enabled to see that righteousness was the one thing which alone could produce lasting happiness among men. What then was it that hindered the reign of righteousness? Nothing in the world except the fact that instead of men working with and helping each other in the production and distribution of what all alike needed, they were actually fighting each other in a mad struggle to obtain the most of what was produced! I found that exactly in proportion as one gained more than another so was his power increased to obtain still more from his weaker brethren, until at length that depth was reached at which it was impossible to extract more without extracting the life of the unfortunate ones. Fighting for profit among those who had, fighting for the very privilege of toiling among those who had not. A constant fight, open and unblushing, dignified with the name of business and only partially relaxed one day out of seven, when for an hour or so confession was made that we were "miserable sinners," and paid preachers discoursed on brotherly love, heaven, hell, reprobation, the efficacy of bread and wine, etc., after which the fight recommenced with the taking down of the Monday shutters and "brotherly love" became again the impossible thing it is while competition reigns supreme.

As a true religion *must* embrace the brotherhood of man, *i.e.*, the recognition of the solidarity of the race—that no one member of the human family can be injured without the whole body suffering loss, and as the system of competition for private wealth renders such brotherhood impossible, then it was borne in on me that I must take sides: either keep quiet and get all I could out of the present arrangement, or come out and denounce what I now plainly saw to be the cause of so much vice, unhappiness, poverty and destitution. I chose the latter, as I believe all men must do when once their eyes have been opened to the economic laws which under a competitive system govern the production and distribution of wealth. Thus I became a Socialist—*i.e.*, one who seeks to help to the best of his ability to so regulate economic laws as to produce the greatest possible happiness for all—because I was a Theist. Believing that the will of God is that man shall be happy by and through his own efforts, and righteous from the native love of righteousness, and knowing that that happiness and righteousness are largely dependent upon the social arrangements which exist in any community, then I became a Socialist because the economic aims of Socialism appeared to me to be the very first steps towards the realisation of that national righteousness.

Opponents of Socialism may talk—as they do—about the beauties of competition for profit and of the difficulties which lie in the way of any organised national or communal production and distribution of wealth, but the all-sufficient answer is our social condition at the present day under competition. The thousands of willing

would be workers with their hungry families on the one hand, the ignorance, drunkenness, misery and vice which their poverty directly instigates and fosters, and on the other the ever increasing luxury and idleness of those who do no productive work at all, go to produce a spectacle which ought to make every thinking man blush. Fortunately there is no necessity for a continuance of the horrible system: human agency has produced it, human agency can remove it, all that is needed are earnest men and women moved by a spirit of human love. It is among the Socialists that I find this spirit most prominent, men and women who, whatever their failings, have realised the economic causes of poverty and elected to fight against them until they are removed, and it is because I believe this removal of poverty and the necessity of moderate work for all to be the elementary steps towards anything worthy of being called religion, that I am proud of the name of Socialist.

If, on the other hand, it be said that the orthodox religion is of itself sufficient to produce human happiness by changing the nature of man, the reply is obvious: any religion which makes a man happy while leaving the causes of human misery untouched must be bad. The happiness which it brings is only the joy experienced at being saved from a mythical "hell." It first produces that unhappiness which alone it cures. That it is absolutely powerless to influence economic conditions is shown by the fact that after nearly one thousand nine hundred years it leaves us—as a people—socially, if not morally, worse than ever, and to be happy under such conditions seems to me almost a crime. Doctrinal Christianity stands confessed a wretched failure; the numbers who are influenced by it become yearly less. It has nothing to say about this world—except that it is a cursed world—but mumbles it promises and threats about another. Healthy men are sick of it and are becoming more and more convinced that the best preparation for any possible future life is a good and useful life here. It is not Christian dogma that has taught them this, but Science and common-sense. Hence the need for a new religious cult and in my opinion the advent of Socialism to supply the need, and hence the inclusion of your humble servant in its ranks.

THE EIGHT HOURS WORKING DAY.

By P. KROPOTKIN.

(First published in 1885.)

Let us always remain ourselves. Let us say, always and everywhere where an opportunity presents itself, our opinion, our *whole and full* opinion, without keeping back *anything*, without concealing *anything* from the workers. Let us destroy the Spanish castles with which the legalitarian socialists try to captivate and to cheat the masses and let us repeat forever that whatever the masses *want* to get and *shall* get, they *must* conquer themselves outside of legislation. Wherever we speak on the eight hours day, in private conversation or at small or large meetings, let us always say our full opinion and act all up to it.

Eight hours work for a master—is eight hours to much. Not only because four of these eight hours are employed to enrich a master and to help to forge weapons by which we ourselves are kept down—but also because these eight hours are not employed to produce what is useful and necessary for society but to produce what brings the largest profit to the exploiter.

In large industries an eight hours working day is nothing extraordinary. In most of the large factories of England now (in 1890) only from 50 to 53 hours are worked per week, and just where the hours of labor are shortest, the largest profits are reaped by the owners. Even the bourgeois economists understand this very well and lead public opinion this way. They quote continuously the works of Stenograph, the man who studied very accurately the question of wages in Europe, and who demonstrated that in America, where wages are highest, the engine of flesh and blood—the worker—produces most. He proves that in all kinds of work—cottonmills, foundries, railways, etc.—England, with smaller wages and longer hours, is left behind by America, and that America produces *cheaper*.

"High wages—increased production," becomes a common saying in the industrial world.

Then the eight hours day with ten hours pay in no way should cause more trouble to the English manufacturer. On the first serious efforts made by the worker for the eight hours day they will grant the

demand. Only the workers themselves have not yet made up their minds on the question.

But this clearly shows how wrong the Socialists are by saying to the people that the number of the unemployed shall decrease if an eight hours day is introduced. When ignorants try to entrap the workers by saying that wherever eighty men work a ten hours day, one hundred shall be required to work an eight hours day, to produce the same quantity of goods, the foolishness of this talk must be shown up.

Every day's experience makes the workers understand that this way of reasoning is perfectly wrong.

They also understand that to employ twenty men more, it is not necessary to buy new machinery, or in other words, that where more machinery is required this does not imply that more men are required to. For in place of twenty machines of an old pattern the master will buy thirty machines of a new pattern which will enable him to do the same work with seventy instead of eighty workers, as before.

The improvement of machinery continues to go on and the field for new improvements is still immense.

The newest and most perfect machinery existing is by no means in use everywhere now, but when circumstances such as the shorter hours of work, will force the masters to introduce them, they are sure to be soon introduced. The inevitable consequence will be the *increase* in place of the *decrease* of the number of unemployed.

The eight hours day then will mean:

Momentary improvement for seventy workers who remain in employment and loss of work for ten others. These ten go to increase the so called reserve army which enables the capitalist to lower the wages of those who are employed.

The state of the seventy employed is thus bettered, as far as they work shorter hours, but by the increased number of the unemployed their situation has become more precarious. To-day a little more tolerable but to-morrow perhaps no work, no bread! To this the shortening of the hours of labor inevitably leads.

Each improvement in the condition of a section of the workers is followed by an increase of misery in the large masses of the people.

And this great and ever growing mass of the unemployed crowds together in the large towns, capitals, centres of industry and commerce, where they become the prey of sweaters.

For, contrary to the assertions of the Marxist theorists, the great majority of the small industries survive in all industrial countries. They are kept up by starvation wages. Only they have been transplanted from the villages, where the workers once found a support in agriculture, to the suburbs of the large centres where the starved workers are helplessly at the mercy of the small exploiters.

The whole history of England—this type of an industrial country, may be resumed thus:

Improved condition of the workers of the large industries, but less security than before; only by continuous crises the system works on, and these crises are driving it to its end.

Each improvement of machinery diminishes the number of privileged workers, diminishing the number of those employed in the large industries and those thrown out of work go on swelling the numbers of the unemployed.

The latter form the reserve army for capitalists to draw from: they are appealed to, they are their support in cases of strikes. This explains why the number of the unemployed is so gigantic in the most developed industrial countries.

In direst misery, the unemployed try to live by the small industries which we see creeping up by thousands in large cities. Thus the sweating system of which we hear so much now, the system of small trades exploited by hosts of middlemen, *becomes the inevitable consequence of improvement of the state of the workers in the large industries*. For this price these improvements are bought.

Small industries, mercilessly exploited by sweaters, are the necessary counterpoise of large industries with higher wages. And another equally inevitable consequence is the replacement of adult men by women and above all by girls and boys.

Must we keep this knowledge for us? To make our meetings more bright? To give a scientific touch to our arguments?

Must we follow the steps of the bourgeois who keep their science and their knowledge for learned congresses, reviews and books without imparting it to those who require it most?

In such a case we would disgrace the name of Anarchist, for Anarchy means before all: to be with the people, to live with the people, to work with the people.

FIRST YEAR. Laborers (humbly): "Please, Mr. Capitalist, give us better wages; our homes are little better than dog-kennels, our families are starving, our—" Capitalist (sterily): "Oh, get out! You people are always whining! Do you want the earth?"

SECOND YEAR. Laborers (respectfully): "We cannot work longer for such small wages; we must live and have decent houses for our families." Capitalist (ironically): "You needn't work for me if the wages don't suit you. This is a free country, and you are at perfect liberty to leave and go somewhere else."

THIRD YEAR. Laborers (angrily): "We cannot and will not stand this oppression any longer. We produce the wealth and we propose to have it." Capitalist (terrified): "What is this? Police! Socialists! Anarchists! Communists!"

FOURTH YEAR. Laborers: "Boom!!!" No capitalists heard of or heard from. *Labor Enquirer*, Denver.

THE SMITH AND THE KING.

By EDWARD CARPENTER.

A Smith upon a summer's day
Did call upon a King;
The King exclaimed, "The Queen's away,
Can I do anything?"

"I pray you can," the Smith replied;
"I want a bit of bread."

"Why?" cried the King. The fellow sighed:
"I'm hungry, sire," he said.

"Dear me! I'll call my Chancellor,
He understands such things;
Your claims I cannot cancel, or
Deem them fit themes for kings."

"Sir Chancellor, why here's a wretch
Starving—like rats or mice!"
The Chancellor replied, "I'll fetch
The First Lord in a trice."

The First Lord came, and by his look
You might have guessed he'd shirk;
Said he, "Your Majesty's mistook,
This is the Chief Clerk's work."

The Chief Clerk said the case was bad,
But quite beyond his power,
Seeing it was the Steward had
The keys of cake and flour.

The Steward sobbed: "The keys I've lost,
Alas! but in a span
I'll call the Smith. Why, Holy Ghost!
Here is the very man."

"Hurrah! hurrah!" they loudly cried,
"How cleverly we've done it!
We've solved this question, deep and wide,
Well-nigh ere we'd begun it."

"Thanks!" said the Smith; "O fools and vile,
Go rot upon the shelf!
The next time I am starving I'll
Take care to help myself."

MY UNCLE BENJAMIN.

CHAPTER II.

My uncle would sooner have passed by a tavern without stopping than by this man. Halting on the side of the road, he said:

"Comrades, that's a bad breakfast you have there."

"I have eaten many a worse one, but Fontenoy and I have good appetites."

"Who is Fontenoy?"

"My dog, that poodle that you see there."

"The devil! but that is a fine name for a dog. But then, glory is a good thing for kings; why shouldn't it be for poodle dogs?"

"That's his fighting name," continued the sergeant; "his family name is Azor."

"Well, why do you call him Fontenoy?"

"Because at the battle of Fontenoy he made an English captain prisoner."

"Hey, how is that?" exclaimed my uncle, greatly astonished.

"In a very simple way, by hanging to one of the skirts of his coat until I could lay my hand on his shoulder. Fontenoy, just as he is, has been made a member of the order of the army, and has had the honor to be presented to Louis XV. who condescended to say to me: 'Sergeant Duranton, you have a fine dog there.'"

"Well, that was a king who was very sociable with quadrupeds. I am astonished that he did not issue a patent of nobility to your poodle. How does it happen that you have abandoned the service of so good a king?"

"Because they have done me a wrong," said the sergeant, his eyes glaring and his nostrils swelling with anger; "I have had these golden rags on my arms for ten years; I have been through all the campaigns of Maurice de Saxe, and I have more scars on my body than would be required for two periods of service. They had promised me the epaulette; but to make a weaver's son an officer would have been a scandal calculated to horrify all the pigeon wings of France and of Navarre. They promoted over my body a sort of little knight just hatched from his page's shell. He will find a way to get himself killed, of course; for they are brave, there is no denying that. But he does not know how to say: 'Eyes, . . . right!'"

At this drill command, strongly accented by the sergeant, the poodle turned his eyes to the right in a truly military fashion.

"Very fine, Fontenoy," said his master, "you forget that we have retired from the service." And he continued: "I could not forgive the very Christian king for that: I have been out with him ever since, and I asked him for my furlough, which he graciously granted."

"You have done well, brave man," cried Benjamin, slapping the old soldier on the shoulder, an imprudent gesture that came very near causing the poodle to devour him. "If my approval is of any value to you, I give it to you without reserve; the nobles have never stood in the way of my advancement, but that does not prevent me from hating them with all my heart."

"In that case it is a purely platonic hatred," interrupted my grandfather.

"Say rather a purely philosophical hatred, Machecourt. Nobility is the most absurd of all things. It is a flagrant revolt of despotism against the Creator. Did God make the grasses of the prairie higher one than the other? Did he engrave escutcheons upon the wings of birds and the skins of wild beasts? What signify these superior men which a king makes by letters patent, as he makes an exciseman or a huckster? Dating from to-day, you will recognize Mr. So-and-so as a superior man. Signed Louis XVI. and lower down Choiseul. Oh, that's a fine way to establish superiority."

"A villain is made a count by Henri IV., because he has served that majesty with a nice goose; if he had served a capon with the goose, he would have been made a marquis; it would have taken no more ink or parchment. Now the descendants of these men have the privilege of beating us, whose ancestors never had an opportunity of offering a fowl's wing to a king."

"And see on what a little thing greatness depends in this world! If the goose had been cooked a little more or a little less, if they had put on it one more pinch of salt or one less pinch of pepper, if a little soot had fallen into the dripping-pan or a little cinder upon the slices of bread, or if the bird had been served a little sooner or a later, there would have been one less noble family in France. And the people bow their heads before such greatness! Oh! I could wish, as Caligula wished of the Roman people, that France had but a single pair of cheeks that I might slap its face."

"But tell me, imbecile people, what value do you find them in the two letters that these people place before their names? Do they add an inch to their stature? Have they more iron than you in their blood, more cerebral marrow in the bony box of their heads? Could they handle a sword heavier than yours? Does this marvellous *de* cure scrofula? Does it preserve its possessor from the colic when he has dined too heavily, or from intoxication when he has drunk too much? Do you not see that all these counts, these barons, these marquises, are capital letters which, in spite of the place that they occupy in the line, are never of more importance than the small letters? If a duke and a peer and a woodcutter were together on an American prairie or in the middle of the great desert of Sahara, I should like to know which of the two would be the nobler."

"Their great-great-grandfather wielded the shield, and your father made cotton caps; what does that prove for them or against you? Do they come into the world with their ancestor's shield at their side? Have they his scars marked on their skin? What is this greatness that is transmitted from father to son, like a new candle which we light from a candle that is going out? Are the footstools which arise from the ruins of a dead oak, oaks on that account?"

"When I learn that the king has created a noble family, it seems to me that I see a farmer planting in his field a big booby of a poppy, which will infect twenty furrows with its seed and yield every year only four big red leaves. Nevertheless, as long as there shall be kings, there will be nobles."

"The kings make counts, marquises, dukes, that admiration may rise to them by degrees. Nobles, relatively to them, are the bagatelles of the game, the parade that gives the idlers a foretaste of the magnificence of the spectacle. A king without nobility would be a *salon* without an ante-chamber; but this dainty pride will cost them dear. It is impossible that twenty millions of men should consent forever to be nothing in the State that a few thousand courtiers may be something; who sows privileges will reap revolutions."

"The time is not far off perhaps when all these brilliant escutcheons will be dragged in the gutter, and when those who now adorn themselves with them will need the protection of their *valets*."

"What!" you say to me, "your uncle Benjamin said all that?"

"Why not?"

"All in one breath?"

"To be sure. What is there in that that is astonishing? My grandfather had a jug that held a pint and a half, and my uncle emptied it at one draught; he called that making tirades."

"And his words? How were they preserved?"

"My grandfather wrote them down."

"Then he had there, in the open air, all the necessary writing materials?"

"How stupid! Wasn't he a summons-server?"

"And the sergeant? Did he have anything more to say?"

"Certainly; it was very necessary that he should speak in order that my uncle might reply."

Now then, the sergeant said:

"I have been on the road for three months: I go from farm to farm, and I stay as long as they are willing to keep me. I play with the children, I tell the story of our campaigns to the men, and Fontenoy amuses the women with his frolics. I am in no hurry, for I don't exactly know where I am going. They send me back to my fireside, and I have no fireside. My father's stove was long ago staved in, and my arms are hollow and rustier than two old gun barrels. Nevertheless I think that I shall return to my village. Not that I expect to be better off there than any were else. The ground is as hard there as elsewhere, and they do not drink brandy in the roads. But what

difference does it make? I shall go there just the same. It is a sort of sick man's whim. I shall be the garrison of the neighborhood. If they do not wish to support the old soldier, they will have at least to bury him, and," he added, "they will certainly be kind enough to place upon my grave a little soup for Fontenoy, until he shall die of sorrow; for Fontenoy will not let me go away alone. When we are alone and he looks at me, he promises me that, this good Fontenoy."

"So that is the fate that they have made for you?" answered Benjamin. "Truly, kings are the most selfish of all beings. If the serpents, of which our poets speak so ill, had a literature, they would make kings the symbol of ingratitude. I have read somewhere that, when God had made the heart of kings, a dog ran off with it, and that, not wishing to begin his work again, he put a stone in its place. That seems to me very likely. As for the Capets, perhaps they have a lily-root in place of a heart: I defy anyone to prove the contrary."

"Because these people had a cross made on their foreheads with oil, their persons are august, they are majesties, they are WE instead of I: they can do no wrong: if their *valet de chambre* should scratch them in putting on their shirt, it would be a sacrilege. Their little ones are highnesses, these brats, which a woman carries in her hand, and whose cradle could be held in a hen-coop: they are very lofty heights, most serene mountains. We would willingly gild their nurses' nipples. If such is the effect of a little oil, how much we ought to respect the anchovies that are pickled in oil till we eat them!"

"In the caste of sires, pride goes to the point of madness. They are compared to Jupiter holding a thunderbolt, and they do not consider themselves too highly honored by the comparison. Leave out the thunderbolt, and they would be offended. Nevertheless, Jupiter has the gout, and it takes two *valets* to lead him to his table or to bed. The rhymester Boileau has, by his private authority, ordered the winds to be silent, inasmuch as he was about to speak of Louis XIV.:

' Et vous, vents, faites silence,
Je vais parler de Louis.'

"And Louis XIV. looked on this as very natural; only it has never occurred to him to order the commanders of his vessels to speak of Louis in order to still the tempests."

"All these poor madmen believe that the space of earth over which they reign is theirs; that God has given it to them, soil and sub-soil, to be enjoyed, without disturbance or hindrance, by them and their descendants. Let a courtier tell them that God made the Seine expressly to supply the the great basin of the Tuileries, and they will look on him as a man of wit. They regard these millions of men around them as their property, the title to whom cannot be disputed on the penalty of hanging; some have come into the world to supply them with money; others to die in their quarrels; some, who have the clearest and reddest blood, to beget mistresses for them. All this evidently results from the cross which an old archbishop, with his withered hand, has laid upon their brows."

"They take a man in the strength of his youth, they put a gun in his hands and a knapsack on his back, they adorn his head with a cockade, and they say to him: 'My brother of Prussia has wronged me; you are to attack all his subjects. I have warned them by my process-server, whom I call a herald, that on the first of April next you will have the honor to present yourself at the frontier to strangle them, and that they should be ready to give you a warm welcome. Between monarchs these are considerations which we owe each other. You will think perhaps at first sight that our enemies are men; I warn you to the contrary; they are Prussians; you will distinguish them from the human race by the color of their uniform. Try to do your duty well, for I shall be there sitting on my throne to watch you. If you bring victory with you when you return to France, you will be led beneath the windows of my palace; I shall appear in full uniform, and say to you: "Soldiers, I am content with you." If you are one hundred thousand men, you will have for your share a hundred-thousandth of these six words. In case you should remain on the battle-field which may very easily happen, I will send your death certificate to your family, that they may weep for you and that your brothers may inherit your property. If you lose an arm or a leg, I will pay you what they are worth, but if you have the good or ill fortune, whichever you may think it, to escape the bullet, when you have no longer strength enough to carry your knapsack, I will give you your furlough, and you can go to die where you like; that will no longer concern me.'"

"That's just the way it is," said the sergeant; "when they have extracted from our blood the phosphorus of which they make their glory, they throw us aside as the wine-grower throws on the muck-heap the skin of the grape after squeezing out the liquor, or as a child throws into the gutter the stone of the fruit which he has just eaten."

"That is very wrong of them," said Machecourt, whose mind was at Corvol, and who longed to see his brother-in-law there.

"Machecourt," said Benjamin, looking at him askance, "be more careful of your expressions; this is no laughing matter. Yes, when I see these proud soldiers, who have made the glory of their country with their blood, obliged, like that poor old Cicero, to spend the rest of their life on a cobbler's bench, while a multitude of gilded puppets monopolize the public revenues, and prostitutes have cashmires for their morning wrappers, a single thread of which is worth the entire wardrobe of a poor house-wife, I am exasperated against kings; if I were God, I would put a leaden uniform on their bodies, and condemn them to a thousand years of military service in the moon, with all their iniquities in their knapsacks. The emperors should be corporals."

To be continued

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