The Castle of Polenta."

The Castle of Polenta. — Dante, Inferno, xxviii.
O wondrouous, whose feet in desert ways
Seen never to flag
To that rude mountain top thy glances raise—
Look on you crag!
Once, on its crest, a darksome castle loomed
Over crystal lake’s smooth breast— its black tower’s
Its lord his peasant folk (for no cape ceased shod)
To death had led.
"Vengeance," cried out the blood— thus foully spilt;
God answered, "Yes!"
The castle fell; while monk did o’er its ruin
A chapel gray.
Yet cursed the place by a jealous fate;
Peace from it flies.
Since for the villages dire wo doth wait
In strange flagons.
No more a baron vile with gone estates;
Those rocks and glades;
But there a lonely priest priest new roges
Our wise and mails.

* Translated for the Conservator from the Italian by William Strickland.

Church and State.
For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the earth is ascent.
— John Hay.

When a number of individuals assemble and by majority vote decide that all the other members of the community shall act in a particular way, or suffer some punishment, or assault, this assembly of individuals is called the government. When a number of individuals assemble together and by majority vote decide that all the other members of the community shall believe certain doctrines or suffer eternal punishment, that assembly of individuals is called the Church. Once the Church possessed a very effective method of stifling liberty. The "secular arm" with its band of steel and fingers of fire was at its disposal, but its secular power is now reduced to the employment of baillifs and police for the execution of taxes, royalties, rent, and interest; and, as I have said, its chief power now lies in threat of a hypothetical hell in the next world, and social ostracism in this.

But there are no real, tangible things corresponding to the words Church and State. Neither Church nor State has identity, or locality, or dimensions—length, breadth, or thickness; they are not things that you can see, hear, smell, taste, or touch; you cannot talk to them, feed them, put them in prison, or cut off their heads; you cannot say of either: "See, there it goes; it is green, it is white, it is black, it is long, it is short." The Church is not a thing; it is an idea. The State is not a thing; it is also an idea. Both exist only in the imagination. It would be well if everyone clearly understood this, for it would then be quite plain that Church and State are merely convenient expressions used for the purpose of shifting responsibility from persons to an alleged something that does not exist.

For example: A vaccination officer examines my child and either poisons it or compels me to go to jail or pay a fine to prevent my child from being poisoned. The vaccination officer is really nothing more nor less than a common poisoner; but he satisfies his conscience by telling me that he is an officer of the government. But when you clearly understand that there is no such thing as the government; when you clearly understand that the vaccination officer is simply a common poisoner employed by other individuals to poison babies, then you can understand that the vaccination officer is simply a common poisoner. Now apply the same reasoning to a custom house officer, and you will see that he is just a common every-day thief employed by other thieves to rob travelers.

In Italy there are bandits. They have no common title by which they are known to the public. In England we have bandits also, with their captains, lieutenants, and privates; but we call our bandits archists, that is, upholders of government by physical force; we call their captains members of Parliament, their lieutenants government officials, and their privates police men, bailliffs, hangmen, soldiers, and custom house officers. We appeal to the superstitions of the people by throwing over our bandits the garb of the nation's government; their attacks and robberies are sanctified as protection and the collection of revenue; so that what is a crime in Italy becomes a virtue in England. But to the clear thinker the only difference between the two systems is that in Italy the bandits are weak, while in England they are many and strong.

What is true of the State is true of the Church. Just as a police officer, who in his own proper person and acting on his own responsibility, would not hurt a fly, will, in the name of the State break open his neighbor's head; just as a hangman or soldier, who if left to himself would not kill a spar-row, will, in the name of the State murder his neighbor—a so a person who, as an individual, would not lie or treat anyone unkindly, will, in the name of the Church, submarine to statements that he does not believe and cruelly cut the acquaintance of his best friend. Where is there on earth a creed that expresses the individual opinions of the men therein called for by authority? There is not one; and this means that a hundred or a thousand clergymen will get together and, in the sacred name of the Church, declare that they believe what no single one of them believes.

All organized Churches and political parties are the enemies of progress, because they are trying to save the world. The Church forbids her adherents to question her authorized creed, notwithstanding that no thinking person believes the creed in its absolute integrity. The moment a clergyman or politician begins to honestly proclaim his doubts, that moment he begins to be treated like a criminal. Promotion is impossible to him. His name is left off all committees. He begins to receive the cold shoulder. He is made to feel that he is out of doors wherever the Church, or the party, comes together. He is regarded with suspicion. He is treated as a disturber, a traitor. Who shall number the honest thinkers that have been killed in this way without even having been shot, or stricken, or stabbed—killed by customly, coldness, and ostracism.

What is the result of this? That only the overbearing and cunning natures take the lead. The frank, the generous, the sensitive, hardly dare to think aloud. Many of these do think, but they keep their thoughts to themselves. Should they remain in the body, the party, they come time-servers, hypocrites; and they quiet their consciences by persuading themselves that it is wiser for them to go slow, that if they break with the Church or the party it will destroy their influence for good; as if a man could preserve his influence for good by telling lies or withholding the truth; and destroy that influence by being a simple, honest, manly man. Consequently priests and politicians, as such, never help the world along in its religious thinking or social doing. They content themselves with singing the praises of the brave and good after they are dead and gone. The ministers of today glory in Garrison, but those of Garrison's day were ready to hang him.
A poor drunkard cannot hold a position in Church or State, but a rich drunkard can. A poor libertine cannot belong to the Church or the Senate, but a rich libertine can. A common prostitute, cannot belong to the Church or the Senate, but a girl who sells herself in legal prostitution to a rich old man can belong to the Church, and many a man who has "married for money" is in the Senate today. A common murderer cannot belong to the Church, but a hangman can. The hand that adjusted the noose and drew the bolt on Friday can take the communion bread on Sunday. A poor man who habitually tortures and kills his fellow beings cannot belong to the Church or Senate, but a rich vivisectionist and vaccinator can. An ordinary thief cannot belong to the Church or the Senate, but a land and money monopolist is eagerly welcomed. A poor person who lives without working cannot belong to the Church or the Senate, but a rich person who lives without working is received within its arms.

The most ignoble criminals in England today are the men who humbug the people at election times, who rob them wholesale by means of corporate monopolies, who start them by driving them off market by virtual legislation and by controlling the issue of money; and these men all belong to the Church, and many of them hold high offices in the State. Be it known to the world, we want "God" and the Constitution, but they do not clamor for justice in society. They want the Bible in our public schools, but they do not ask for the Golden Rule in business. They say we must not break the Sabbath, but they do not say to the monopolist: "You must not break that poor woman's back over a sewing machine." They call on you to worship Jesus, but if you try to follow his precepts they will call you a madman. They tell the poor to be contented and obedient, instead of telling the rich to be just. The Church tells the rich to be charitable, instead of telling them to stop robbing the poor. It preaches the innocence of poverty, while it reaps in the luxury of wealth. It points the eye of faith to another world, but encourages the hand of business to lay up storehouse of accumulated wealth in this. Both Church and State love respectability more than righteousness, and hate social obscurity more than sin. Both are intrinsically and necessarily bad. They cannot be reformed; they must go. O. W. in Liberty, London, November, 1895.

Russia.

Russia,—what thoughts and recollections it brings to one's mind! How strange that a child of Russia, no matter how short the period of his stay there, will forever take a keen interest in that land of suffering. In me, who spent my childhood in this land of human woe and sorrow,—sorrow, as Nekrasov says, which overflows this land more than the waters of the Volga,—in me, a child of well-to-do parents and a bourgeois rearing, in me there yet slumber thoughts and desires which even an American schooling and spirit, which influence the yearnings of a heart, can not stifle. When that slumbering mass of human woe and sorrow begins to stir,—to raise its arm as if to awaken from its slumber, and then again sink its form and fall into a still faster sleep,—an endless list of events, martyrs and tyrants who have fallen; the visions of the fortress St. Paul and St. Peter and Siberian tortures; the names of Bakunin, Herzen, Pvozkavka, Rysakoff, Tikhonrjhsky, Stepanov, Teherbakhff, Kaprpatrick, who are a cluster of stars of the thousands which light up the firmament of Russian revolutionary life, suggest themselves to every enlightened mind.

Each of these events and names mark the milestones of the long march of Russia towards emancipation; each name and event is a manifestation of the spirit of the people and the times; and, by such manifestations, are they either a bomb, a pistol, or a dagger, used in slaying some tyrant, are the visions of the mangled and tragic form of the blind Samson flung on the curtain of history, and which has the world for an audience.

In Russia, where the greatest precautions are used in order to prevent news from reaching the outside world, where censors are stationed along the border line, in every city and across the immense area where the bear rests his paws; where foreign correspondents are cautioned, may, imprisoned and executed; where, in fact, for the first time in its history, the procurator of the Holy Synod, Pobiedonostsev, in order to offset foreign criticism, answered P. Kropotkin's attack on the Russian educational system—Kropotkin, the communist and radical, who, should, according to Russian law, be ignored by officials, we come to the conclusion that Russia is passing thru a protracted epoch, and when the message reports which are published with the consent of the Russian government reach us, we are still unable to judge the immensity and nature of the people's discontent.

Judging from past events, Russia is not lacking Titanic individuals who awaken and signal to the Russians and the outside world that the struggle is on once more, and that it is taking a most serious turn.

The killing of Judge Matveev, that of M. Sipigunov by Balashunoff, the wounding of the governor of Vilna by a shoemaker, Hirsch Leckert, and the numerous unsuccessful attempts to take the lives of officials, high or low, are the strongest manifestations of the state of affairs.

By a study of the character and occupation of the heroic assassins, something of a deep nature and meaning will be revealed. While the assassins of the past sixty years came from the student's ranks, today we find among them the sons of toil. While the demonstrations in the past were held by the university students, we find today that the workers form a large part of the participants. We see the intelligent of Russia protesting against the absolutism of the czar; we see them protesting against deportation, against the military law for disobedient students, and against the whipping of their children. We see the peasants burning and pillaging the estates of the rich nobility, and even the whipping of their male children does not daunt them. Here is an excerpt from a report after a whipping:

Shortly after the peasants held a "Deus Ex Machina service on the place of torture; the authorities had supposed it was a sign of submission, but too late discovered their mistake, as they might never forget the spot on which their blood had fallen. They revolted again and drove out the soldiers from their villages, Voroesch.

What a prize the Russian students had to pay to bring about the release of the union of the intelligent youth with the ignorant toiler! Whole generations were wiped out; thousands of students were deported to Siberia; and it took no less than forty years of persecution to drive the people out of the Russian educational propaganda, interwoven now and then with revolutionary uprisings. The flower of the Russian youth was sacrificed for this end!

It matters not whether it is in Moscow, St. Petersburg, in Kieff, in Vilna, or in Kharkoff; it matters not with what certainty or regularity these events come, they are signs of the bursting of the volcano slumbering for so long.

Is that all which embarrasses the Russian government? No; not at all. Troubles never come single-handed. Russia has by no means rid herself of her troubles, which are carried on both in Russia and in Germany, and which are in times of internal unrest more dangerous than they would be otherwise. Finland and the Poms are to be dealt with. Russia has broken her compact (that Finland should have local autonomy), and is now carrying on the Russification of Finland. She is taking the Finnish regiment out of Finland, and replacing them by Russian soldiers; the schools and universities are being put under Russian tutors, who are much the inferiors of the Poms; the Finnish men of letters and newspapers are being censored, imprisoned, and suppressed. All this leads to enormous departures of the Poms for other lands. Russia is determined to level Finland to the same dependence as the other provinces of hers. This, too, has brought about a revolutionary protest by the people.

The selection of ministers by Nicholas proves that, contrary to expectations, he selects only those who are conservative, and who will not use any liberal methods in the times of crises. The selection of Zenger as minister of education, and Plehve as minister of internal affairs, corroborate this view.

The discontent is of a double nature, political and economic. Altogether the political scene is by far the greater, yet the uprisings of the workers cannot by any means be brushed aside. Russia has to pass thru her "French Revolution," with possibly the same results. The long dream of the Russian people is about to be realized; the rising sun is about to cast her warm and piercing rays upon the land of Suffering and Darkness.

May destiny hasten the realization.

New York, Oct. 19th.

MINTZ.

For Chicago and Milwaukee.

The comrades of Milwaukee have arranged a picnic for Sunday, Aug. 17th, and Chicago comrades are officially invited to take part in the pleasant outing at Bay View, near St. Francis. The place can be reached by taking the Bay View or Racine & Kenosha train. Get off at the City limits and Pow-er's Hotel, where a red flag will be visible near the woods.
Who are the Trustworthy?

I am not certain whether I am an anarchist or not. The government is bad, but are not (the people) still worse? It seems to me they are always bawling out for peace and order, but now they are the police protecting Cogolosa from mob violence.

The above is a private letter. The writer still holds the ancient delusion that the people are better and must be trusted or the governed. Now let us see upon what grounds this idea rests. In those countries where men are elected by votes instead of being elected to rule their fellows, a certain number of individuals are selected from among “the people, who are always bawling out for some hanged or burned.” These individuals who are armed with power to enact laws or to administer them, according to their respective functions. Then these individuals, who but a few days before their election to the exalted position of rulers were “the people,” mere “bawlers” for the blood of their fellow men, what are they now? They are now “bawlers” having the authority to exercise certain privileges, and aside from losing any of that innate cussedness supposed to belong exclusively to those not having the privilege of authority, we see only too plainly that the very position they occupy increases their power for evil. They are few; the people are many. They can easily combine. A police office is a private trust ran in the interest of the gang in power.

The people are torn into warring factions, each worshipping a political idol, who is their god, the only savior, the one who may be a whiskey tub like U.S. Grant, an oil knave like McKinley, or a bully like Roosevelt, he is yet an idol, and our correspondent, who is “not certain that he is an anarchist,” yet has the nerve to think this “people,” which groans in political darkness, like a blind mole in the earth, can raise up governors far better than they are themselves. What an absurdity, since in our governors we see the very tendencies of the mob, so feared by one of his friends, to act. Under that power these tendencies expand till we find those who in their native state of mobhood could only kill when fired by a mad sympathy for the victim of a real or imaginary wrong, now committing the most cruel and unspeakable acts, seemingly with no realization of their direct responsibility in the matter. Take for instance that western judge, after admitting his conviction of the defendant’s innocence, yet fined the victim $100—because the law required him to “impose a penalty.” And this Wabashbrook of Kansas, who is for the mental depravity that judges exhibit. How can it be otherwise, since the law is their supreme arbiter of right and wrong? Indeed we plainly see that the judge sustains the same relation to the law that the priest sustains to the pope; and in the Home case we see the judge obeying his “pope,” the law, while openly admitting the innocence of the prisoner.

This law is founded upon the law; and what protection can we expect from a class who will murder and rob because the law requires them to, when they do not happen to be inspired by their own chivalry, avarice, or brutality? History teaches us that we have the least amount of freedom when he is not in a position to lay the responsibility of his act upon the law or the law, but must himself take the consequences of his act. As necessity or poverty is the cause of the major part of the real crimes committed by the unprivileged class of criminals, and as poverty is the result of the privileges granted the governors, we must acquire enough courage to appeal to the people before looking to support in idleness and corruption a horde of worthless parasites and all the mean hangers-on which their class creates. Then poverty will no longer blind this earth. But we can never do this by looking up to our governors as superior beings. Let us learn to look upon them as they are—dangerous men; and when we yield allegiance to the authoritarian idea, we arm them and disarm ourselves.

As for that form of protection extended Cogolosa by the police, the less said the better. The mob would have taken his life as an insane expression of sympathy for the man whom they mistook for a victim. The officials saved Cogolosa from a speedy death, in order that the beasts of authority might subject him to every species of mental anguish which their depravity could imagine, and then led him forth and gave him the stroke of death. It is not a humane instinct that inspires the police to defeat the aim of the mob by specially treating the case of a regicide. The law must do the bloody deed to vindicate its awful majesty. The authorities not only prevent the mob from getting their lawful prey, but they also guard the prisoners condemned to death with great care, lest the poor wretches take their own lives.

Let our correspondent ponder on these matters, and consider if the actions of our governors are a matter for self congratulation by any intelligent man.

Caplinger Mills, MO.  KATE AUSTIN

Literature


This book is a valuable and interesting contribution to agricultural development of each region in the United States. The contents of the book is, however, “to bring socialism to the farmer, and the farmer to socialism,” in which respect it will probably prove a failure. For neither the language nor the application of “socialist philosophy” will appeal to the American farmer. Nor will the application of “economic determinism”—fatalism—bear scientific analysis. Referring to early American settlers for instance, he tells us that the holding of land in common was not an attempt to revive the customs of the earlier days in Europe, but was due to “the same economic conditions that in the time of Tacitus caused the Roman communities to be established; and, in the case of the American communities to the hostile Indians against whom the colonists had to protect themselves.” But the author takes no pains to explain why the early settlers communities were estabished in Europe when the peasants were not threatened by hostile tribes, or why such communities were formed and maintained for hundreds of years in Russia, and many of which still exist. The charge of concentration in agriculture seems to cause the author considerable worry. Altogether reluctantly, he admits that concentration in agriculture has not taken place, as was “scientifically” predicted 20 years ago by Socialistic writers, and he resorts to sophistry and generalizations. Upon occasion he indulges in such untimely slippancy in a book on a serious subject, as “that it is the definition of a capitalist.” He also charges Kropotkin with badly digesting his subject and quoting from others as “ignorant as himself,” and yet relies almost exclusively on Kropotkin for his reference to intensive agriculture. This reminds one of a maxim widely known among anthropomorphists: “When you have a weak case abuse the other fellow.” Kropotkin. Tcherkesoff, Berenson, and others who have explored the theory of concentration, prove by facts and figures that “the persons profiting from industry” is not “diminishing,” while Mr. Simons indulges in mere sophistry by generalizing without coming to any definite conclusions. In short, Kropotkin’s “Field, Factory and Workshop,” and Tcherkesoff’s “Pages of Socialist History” will easily bear comparison on the subject of concentration of industry with “The American Farmer.”

A. L.

Here and There

Comrade John Dwyer reports from Australia that great industrial depression exists there. The committee have been active in initiating unemployed demonstrations. The premier and leaders of other political parties have had a conference on the situation, but the workers are still waiting the result.

“The immigration officials could not find the three anarchists who, according to information were to come on the steamer Breitnau,” remarks the New York Herald sarcastically. “It is not at all nice, the notice of these anarchists that they did not immediately make themselves known! Besides there is thought for reflection as regards our anti-anarchist law-making: You may attempt to ban prostitution and lasagnes of every kind—but ideas, feelings, thoughts—it is laughable!”

Comrade Kropotkin’s books “Field, Factory and Workshop,” and “Memoirs of a Revolutionist” have been translated and published in the Dutch language. Of the latter book two translations have been made, one, according to De Vrij Socialist, far superior to the other, because the translator of the inferior one does not seem to be familiar with the different principles of the revolutionary labor movement in Europe, as described by Kropotkin.

In an article of Le Peuple, signed by August de Winne, appears the following: “... since we have been policemen at work, so-called Socialists, who over their appointment to the mediation of Social Democratic among, and who in a frenzy rage when cutting and gnawing among the people. They were more blood-thirsty than their fellow officers. Only a few years ago members of the party joining the police force were expelled from the party.”
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ANARCHY—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of men by men as the political ideal. Absolute individual liberty. T. C. Dictionary.

CHICAGO, SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 1902.

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If these figures correspond with the number printed on your wrapper of FREE SOCIETY, your subscription expires with this number.

Notes.

To anyone sending us $2 we will send FREE SOCIETY one year and Dr. Green's "A Physician in a House.” Also to anyone sending us one new subscriber and we will send the same. This applies to renewals as well as new subscriptions.

On a Sunday in the latter part of June, there appeared in the Chicago American an editorial article purporting to be from Tolstoy. Among other things it appealed to the worker to “vote for Socialism,” praised the courts, and contained other statements contrary to Tolstoy’s well-known views. Its authenticity being at once suspected, Tolstoy’s literary representative in England was communicated with. The reply is appended below. Comrade Kropotkin once stated to a group of reporters that news about Russia coming from Warsaw was unreliable, and to be accepted with caution. The moral to be drawn seems to be that, as a reporter on a radical paper, remarked the masters appearing in the American “come from Warsaw.”


Mr. I. J. A. A.

Dear Sir,—To avoid the delay incident to a personal reply, Mr. V. Teherboff desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and cutting. He wishes to say that you are quite correct in your surmise regarding the cutting you have sent. Tolstoy never wrote that article. Some of the passages are purloined from the Slavery of Our Times, and, much, and especially what you have underlined, is quite foreign to Tolstoy and contradicts his views. V. Tchert koff is, with your kind permission, sending the cutting to Tolstoy to obtain an authoritative denial of the authenticity of the article from him.

Your faithfully,

V. PRO. V. TCHERTKOFF.

W. J.

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W. O. KOEHN.

W. O. KOEHN is dead. There were no costly funeral rites, no lengthy procession of black-robed mourners, no splendid vault ready to receive his remains. For he was of those called the poor.—all of them people are poor, and the great unhinging world takes no heed of either births or deaths unless they be of those set apart by wealth and station.

Yet it is given to some to recognize true worth; to be able to cust with the “glamor of gold” or “pomp of power” and come in loving touch with hearts at one with humanity’s vast needs. Such a man was W. O. Koehn. Born about thirty-five years ago, a child of poor parents, who knew what it was to work every hour and yet be poor, be, too, worked and was poor.

Like thousands of others he strove to reconcile the teachings received in the public schools with life as it is. He has been a “real historian.” He has written “all are equal” and he wondered at the inequalities. Why should the workers be poor and the drones be rich? He read that under monarchical people were also poor, and he could not see the benefit of the “free country.”

When nineteen years of age, he learned that “greenbackers” would talk on Lake Front. He listened and the arguments appealed to him. He asked a lyrist, an old man, whether “greenbackers” were not right. “I am mistaken, lad, was the reply. "The greenbackers speak over yonder. This is an Anarchist talking.”

After that he listened to “greenbackers,” Socialists, and Single Taxers, but he was one of those “bad boys” who cherish freedom and rebel even against father’s whip, and he remained true to his principles.

Before the legal murder of 1887, he faced the angry police and the infuriated mob gathering signatures for the pardon of the condemned Anarchists, and he was beaten and clubbed, but he fretted not in his self appointed task. He was not arrested. The police did not want American born Anarchists.

He remained with the poor and oppressed, and to enlighten them he had made his life work. “I have to help my own mother, but I will send FREE SOCIETY ten cents every week. If all do this our propaganda will not suffer,” he said. This he di until he died.

“Even Anarchists don’t know what killed McKinley” he used to say. "The public school did. There we are taught this is a free country,—shame for the oppressed. When we enter life we see the lie, and are disappointed. I know how Capital grows when he thought of the slavery of his country and the oppression and cruelly perpetuated upon the races. It was not in accord with the teachings in the school where we learned to worship our flag which floats, as they say, for freedom.

Thus the woes of the dumb trodden masses become his own, and his sympathies were always awake, his thoughts alive, and his heart arable for liberty.

July 26, he visited his friend "Interloper.” August 5 he died of typhoid fever. Nobody was at the grave but his mother, his sister, his brother-in-law, Geo. Schilling and "Interloper.”

In the noble fight he has acted his part. A man of a brave and a generous heart. Memorial robins will come to us still. Of his ways and his deeds, his loving good will.

M. P.

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By the Wayside.

"Shoot and investigate afterwards," said General Gobin, who is supposed to feed the strikers in Pennsylvania with bullets. The Boston Traveler adds: "Of course every man must have a fair trial, but hang him first. This is civilization in Pennsylvania."

"The worst that can happen is not the external violence of tyranny under which he suffer, but the internal lack of the power of resistance, the submission to tyranny, and the belief that he lived uncertain and dangerous; neither good nor bad but 'in a condition of neither and of both.'" says a German writer very aptly. "Tyranny celebrates its highest triumph when it succeeds in robbing the illusion in the slave who that their rights and liberties are safely guaranteed.

It cannot be too often repeated that "government protects the weak against the strong," according to the advocates of "law and order." But somehow the governments ever imagine that the rich are weak and ought to be protected. In Pennsylvania the poor miners are shot, prosecuted, and imprisoned. In Galicia, Austria, when the poor became the bearers of estrangement and attack against the "weak" landlords, troops are trying to restore "order" by shooting, men, women, and children.

I have no hesitancy in saying that there never was a greater upheaval, either industrial, political, or social, in which there was so little real lawlessness and so little real law. The rank and file of the workers are organized into the "weak" labor, and the police are trying to restore peace by shooting, men, women, and children.

There is no doubt that President Mitchell is correct; and it is for this law-abiding attitude that the results of the strike will be all. It is law and property which are placed in the miner's miserable condition. They are in; and only to the extent that these laws uphold slavery and property in nature resources are violated, can their miserable condition be improved. People seem to forget that all changes in society have been achieved by violating the prevailing laws. The republics of France and the United States are institutions which resulted from outright lawlessness. Had Washington been defeated, he would have been hung as an outlaw and traitor. And thus it will be in the future. The law-breakers are the forerunners of a better society. Interloper.

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The bread tax in England has been collected from the poor, and the great and glorious man who sits on the throne and sends out armed emissaries to tetch the pennies from the workers, has generously given a dinner to the submerged tenth, many of whom, so say the newspapers, never in their lives enjoyed a square meal before. A dinner to half a million paupers. Nearly as many as all the people of San Francisco! And in the papers which seek with headlines in regard to it, never a word of the eternal disgrace, never a word of anything but praise for such a system whereby that is called generosity, which is highway robbery, nothing else, nothing less. Of course everyone is glad the miserable, stunted, lean and hungry beggars had a meal and plenty to eat; but why do the papers speak of it as an unbroken, when in reality it is a disgrace such and fearful that it should only be told in whispers and on necessary occasions, that Edward VII gave a dinner to half a million paupers in England, in 1902.—Labor Clarion.
Queries and Answers.

A reader of FREE SOCIETY asks the following question: 

Anarchists declare for absolute individual liberty, the question arise, "Who is an Anarchist?"

The man who will neither rule nor be ruled, is an Anarchist. The fact that he is often forced to submit to law and custom does not alter the case.

Who is your favorite author? Someone who is not consistent? Why not call ourselves "Free Socialists"?

If he deliberately acts contrary to his principles, it shows that he is not yet strongly imbued with the ideas of freedom. But once we come to love the ideas of freedom, each of us, I think, does the best he can.

The term "Free Socialist" would not mitigate our inconsistencies: for to be a Free Socialist we must be Anarchists.

As a路灯nevist advocate of common ownership, which requires management, one we call him an Anarchist?

By Communism is meant a society in which natural resources are not monopolized. People may produce things collectively or individually. They may live singly in self-sufficient units, or in many in one household, when congenial.

In short, every individual will be in a position to please himself, which is certainly not incompatible with Anarchism. On the contrary, once the necessities of life are free, social and economical freedom is secured for all.

Most not, even in voluntary groups, when agreements are made, surrender a certain amount of liberty?

Association naturally requires courtesies, which are rendered spontaneously. Only the degenerate sophist can call this a surrender of liberty. There is no surrender as long as I am free to act according to my own desire. Metaphysicians may say that we "surrender a certain amount of liberty" when we try to avoid a collision on a railroad, but such sophistry will not stand analysis.

We might as well say that people surrender their liberty when they escape from a burning house.

Maltzers do not advocate compulsory organization. His translators frequently confound "organization" with "association.

Does not James F. Morton, Jr., doubt the possibility of freedom, when he wants things which he can get now, even if they fall short of freedom?

I am not aware that Comrade Morton is for compromise or palliatives. But if so, must he therefore doubt the possibility of freedom?

A general strike is a right, but in order to be successful there must be an organization behind the movement.

Has there ever been a successful revolution led by an organization?

Revolutions have sprung up spontaneously after extensive agitation had been carried on and conditions came to a climax; as soon as the revolutionists had organized, the organization struggled the revolution.

I agree with Rosa Winix—there is a class struggle.

Which are the classes? Comrade Winn claims the struggle is between the possessing and non-possessing classes. But look at the spectacle in the Pennsylvania mining regions. While the mine owners enjoy a trip in Europe, the working classes—sweating and union men—live in the cold and dirt.

Or let us look at Russia, where the rich and middle classes die and endure imprisonment in fighting despotism and exploitation, while the poor and down-trodden are the tools of tyrants and now in a struggle between the old and the new ideas, but there is no class struggle.

S. R. O

Ingenious of Economic Argument.

... A German writer, Dr. Friedrich Kleinwaechter, discussing "das Einkommen," has recently vindicated profits very neatly by showing that they arise "from the ability to foresee and avoid dangers and risks which the average man has not the courage to face nor the skill to avoid." To such a statement an exclamation point is perhaps an underestimate of his.

With the division of labor carried to such an extreme that a man may spend his life in incessant repetition of some detail in mechanism, ability has little opportunity to develop. The conditions likewise have been unfavorable to the promotion of resourcefulness and administrative skill. The monotony, the dullness, the joylessness of his task have converted the human instrument into a machine. Nevertheless, the ability and the creative power lie latent in the atomist, hiding their time. It is a common subterfuge, as Maxims has pointed out, for the exploiters to seek justification by appealing to a facet of his own creation. Yet, despite all the disadvantages suffered by the toiler, the pitcruiser has yet to establish his claim to superlative. Some of us who hold so brief a profit for the system have watched in silent marvel the dexterity, the delicacy of manipulation, the promptness and precision, the acuteness of calculation, the concentration, manifested in their work by many among the sons of toil, and the comparison with the sons of wealth—enjoyers of which they are incapable of producing—has risen involuntarily to our lips.

The last is entirely out of place, not the least, not mentioning external policy and acquisitions, seems superior and exalted in proportion, and the former the true potentates.

The artisan, the navvy, the sailor, place themselves unhappily in positions that call for daily exhibitions of courage, and men of such sterling type may well regard with contempt the empty titles and assumptions of kid glove braves. Age after age witnesses potential Chrisites bearing crosses to crucifixions to which man will one day turn with quicker sympathies and purer will.

Many earnest progressive people stumble over the "rights" of capital. They contend that as the risks are assumed exclusively by the capitalist he is entitled to the exorbitant remuneration which he exacts.

Those who take this standpoint are not aware of the daily risks of the wage earner. It would seem that in some directions the education of the "poor rich" has been badly neglected. Let us compare these risks. The employer is dependent on the weather, upon the market, upon his wisdom in the choice of superintendents, his reputation, shrewdness, etc., and when he is unfortunate in these respects he risks the reduction of his share of the profits from, say, sixteen times that of his employees to six times (the figures are unimportant for the present purpose). The worst that can befall him is insolvency. The employer runs the risk of being discharged at any moment on various pretexts: fluctuations in the demand for labor, change of methods or machinery, the caprice of a foreman, and more rarely, his own incompetency or intractability.

In view of these considerations and others that might he cited, it is therefore not difficult to prove that the average employee is in more frequent danger of being out of employment than is the average employer of being insolvent. Furthermore, when such calamity falls to either the power of recompense is considerably greater in the one case than in the other.

The capitalist usually has wealth and influential connections who can help him financially or with "influence" either to regain his position or to enter another field in which technical knowledge is not required. If he has sprung from the moneyed classes he has probably had the benefit of a better education than his near relative in the laboring culture, which are valuable equipments in making a fresh start; tho it is but fair to admit that he may suffer acutely from false pride and an ingenuous desire to keep up appearances. The capitalist is, however, his friends as helpless as himself. He may have devoted his life to the acquirement of facility in production in one branch of his trade, with little or no knowledge of other. He might put as much pressure for the development of his brain, has perhaps been ill-born, ill-paid, and ill-nourished mentally and physically. Among the anxieties of the wage earner, sickness is one of the most appalling. To him this means the cessation of his wages and destitution for those dependent upon him. The income of the capitalist, on the other hand, is often times unaffected to any great degree by his absence from business.

Usually such reasoning as I have quoted above is so insistently intertwined with truths or half-truths that, when presented with benevolent intent, it obtains credence of the most profound. The capitalist is only a man, of course, whose experience it transcends and who, like its originator, wishes to believe it. It is a result of looking at the world, not as an harmonious whole, but as a chaotic conglomeration of opposing factions with diverse interests and destinies. Nothing demonstrates more forcibly how far we are at present from the apprehension of equality.

The complacency with which we accept the blessings of our heaven of limited dimensions is only equalled by our indifference to the curse which it entails on all in the vast hell without. The old lyric, 

"Not more than what I deserve,
Yet God has given me more,
" summarizes the common conception of divine justice. The trend of public opinion, the complaint of the doleful, has, of course, utterly confused the general intelligence in regard to the distinction between the classless society of the non-productive capitalist for the use of his capital, and the systematic use of the rich man's money for the various services rendered by them. Yet it would seem that no amount of legal or solstitial support could perpetuate the social chaos which are diligently with the
name of civilization, and the serfdom which weconsequent under the banner of freedom. If our eyes were not dazzled by the glitter of gold, and our ears deadened by the cries of false prophets, we should surely discern the shallow underlying unity of life and should cooperate with nature toward the fruition.

When the ship is riddled with holes, it was wiser to take to the boats than to cast at straws—From "Whitman's Ideal Democracy," by Henry James.

The Lust for Power of the Slave.

The lust for power of the slave—perhaps many of the readers, who are poor devils themselves, will possibly shake their heads with astonishment at such a heading—they may consider themselves fortunate; they have been spared many bitter experiences; if they had them—thay would surmise what I mean.

One who has become acquainted with the poor slaves, who has not only sympathized with them in their sufferings, but has stood with them in their battles for their ideals,—he will have experienced many disappointments. Often did I see them content to suffer silence, but bulging over with enthusiasm, and a smarting energy drove them on to look for a place from which they could catch the spokes of the wheel of the times. Not only "students" but the workers is a spirit born with a comprehension of social contradictions. But what disillusion awaits their daring youth. Where the eye, clouded with hot-bloodedness, expected to see a storming multitude with sparkling weapons, there razi and indolently moves a great army of slaves, dull and worn out, turning in circles never to be disentangled. And courage, temerity, heroism—all this is drowned in a flood of stupider and—suspicion. There is in no social strata more suspicion than in the ranks of misery; suspicion against energy and brave actions.

When some yearning and radical yound blood lashed the immediate dawn of the revolution—before a mass meeting of the unemployed loudly defined his conception of government—short and conclusive, brutal and uncompromising—the guard whistle, the reiteration of government held his friends on him, and the threatened youth tenderly tried to defend himself—smearing voices could be heard from the multitude: "Paid job!"—then these poorest of the poor held this hot-blooded defender of their rights for a police spy. They could not comprehend the things they witnessed. Was this experience the reason for the following collapse of the "Anarchism of the Nineteen"? I believe so.

But the most dreadful  last in the ranks of the disillusioned is the lust for power. It makes the multitude of the oppressed a reactionary mass, which with tenacious injustice, that lifts itself above stupid mediocrity. The dependence in which the social 'order' chains the proletarian, seems to develop an ardent longing to keep itself in the saddle at any peril, which he reviles as a sufferer, becomes very often delightful to him. It is a well known fact among the workers that an upstart becomes the worst master. And when brutalities are committed in the army, in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred it is the sergeant, taken from the immediate ranks of the soldiers, who perpetrates them.

The reason why democracy is such a dangerous disease in the worker's movement, is because it lifts the lust for power up to an ideal. It is for this reason that it has gained such significance among the "class-conscious" workers, producing a red-tapism much worse than that of a government, because, being the product of a developing and historically, gives itself unasked for what it really is: a rigid form of civilization based on violence and force; but democratic red-tapism enshrouds the lawful form in the red flag and labels itself freedom. . . . We can hate—destroy a tyrant. The tyranny of the slave can arouse resentment and despair, but heroism breaks down.

It is necessary to realize the magnitude of the danger of democracy, it is necessary to discuss it—we must swim against the current, even at the danger of being decried as the enemy of the people. Would only—like fifteen years ago the socialist party looked over with our "intellectuals" and carry them to the people? Then it meant to proclaim the right of the oppressed to light and life and today we must show them what life and light is—Albert Weidler, in Der neue Trauk, Berlin, Germany.

From "Berthold Mryan.

Cornelia Hygges, the wife of a prominent Socialist in Holland, has written an interesting novel under the above name, which presents the liberal German press in this country. The novel deals with the socialist and anarchist movements. The main characters are the Socialist and Anarchist agitators, a rich merchant and his second son Berthold. The latter becomes imbued with the views of the teachings and accompanies a Socialist speaker on a little propaganda tour, listening with great interest to the discussions between anarchists and Socialists.

On their way home, the Socialist agitator, a well educated man, endeavors to refute the arguments of the anarchists, which had made quite an impression on the young and rich student.

Berthold listened attentively (the story runs). Much of what Martals said he endorsed, but not everything. He found him too positive, too dogmatic in his views, not giving enough room for the unanswerable, the incomprehensible, not apprehensible enough of the mysterious relations and effects between the higher motives in man and the social influences.

"I only call a devotion to one of my scruples," he said with a deep sigh. "I realize that I can decide for no party; in this respect, too, I lack one necessary thing: an unshakable conviction, the peculiar purity of a genuine politician. I mean the conviction that the party to which he belongs is the only true party and all others are wrong. In both tendencies of our work, the movement is directed more against me, there is much truth. It will startle you perhaps, when I confess that the arguments of your opponents are very often found a fertile soil in me, although it is only two weeks ago that I still believed in the infallibility of the teachings of political action. Even the speech of Ruskin (The Anarchist), which was revolting to me on account of the vulgar and false insinuations against you, convinced me that he is moved by a sincere conviction, and you and your friends render yourselves guilty of disrespect and calumny when you contribute his revolutionary tactics to your vanity and love of power."

Martals did not reply, but from the expression of his face, I could clearly see that the attempt to mitigate his opinion of his opponent would be in vain. The strongest impression was made upon me in the very instructive debate of last night." Berthold continued, noticing that his partner was not inclined to argue about Ruskin. "There was nothing personal, no oratorial polish, but an honest utterance of personal sense. I still see this sincere, honest toiler before me—a type which reminded me of the chairman in Scholzovem. You remember what he said?"

"Never in the history of the world has a fighting man fought for shorter hours, higher wages, old-age pensions, etc., and all other reforms necessary. But the great power of liberation must emanate from the workers themselves. If we believe that the flesh will fall in our laps as soon as we have Socialists in parliament, we are barking up the wrong tree, and in this—depend on others—lies great danger. Laws do not precede conditions, and give us no power over our inner self. While we organize, educate, and elevate ourselves, we must try to change the dominating spirit in society. Furthermore, we must make ourselves felt, keep our heads erect, and, like a dog which is driven to madness by continued abuse, show our teeth. Instead of frequenting the saloons and blowing our last penny, we must strengthen ourselves morally and mentally; and our Socialists, with their higher development, could help us in that matter. Then, inside parliament. In this way we will, or at least our children or children's children, be victorius at last,—be it thus a violent revolution, if it must be, or peaceful, if it be possible."

"I still hear these words," added Berthold. "I believe that men like yourself could do much more in the interest of the workers if they would add them in education than when they make speeches in parliament—to which the adherents of the prevailing social system are determined not to listen—and to introduce bills which will not be passed, if they could make the oppressed classes more valiant."

Martals said nothing. His work, striving and agitation during the last years as party business has been able to lead them exclusively in one direction, for those arguments advanced by Berthold to have the slightest effect; and indeed his strength as an agitator lay especially in his one-sidedness. Translated from the German.
A Boer Woman.

I met some women out of the camps last week (April 29, 1902) and had some conversations with them. They only spoke Dutch and had little acquaintance with the newspapers.

These women were country people, and they looked upon me with great suspicion when we first entered in line with their language, and expressions of sympathy for the suffering of the women in the camps, soon gained their confidence. The principal speaker was a very tall, finely built woman, with eyes that were capable of a great variety of expression; generally, they were half-closed; while the speaker's soul veiled itself under an appearance of calm indifference. I inquired as to whether there was an improvement in the general condition of things in the camp she had just come from. Most assuredly there was—food was better; the aged and infirm and delicate were dead. She attributed the terribly high death rate of the past to the way in which the peasantry had been dragged from their homes and exposed without food or shelter to the inclemency of the weather. On arriving at the camp, all they had was a bit of old food, and the continued exposure and exhaustion led to severe outbreaks of sickness, with the result that numbers died.

"Are the women losing heart—are they willing that their husbands surrender?" I asked.

A light spread over her face, and she replied: "There are some African women who are willing to die with their husbands; but there are numbers of women in our camp that will never give in; that will never bid their husbands give in. I say my husband must fight to the last; if only two men are left he must fight on; if he is left alone while he can hold a gun he must fight on. It is a sore thing to part with your husband—to know that he is fighting; but I would rather be dead on the battlefield than to be a widow!"

"And what about the women themselves—about their sufferings?" I asked.

She threw back her fine head and said: "I have been a wife long enough to know how hard it is to get it; the stronger I seem to get—strength comes as you need it. It is true I have seen whole families die out in camp; but there are others together who have lost none, who are still all together. But if I die—I die it matters not; never, never, will I give in. It is my light," she continued, "that everyone must do what they can for their own land. I cannot do otherwise. I cannot understand those who do not give in. I do not hate the British. I have no hate in my heart; but I can never forget nor forgive what we have gone thru. We have had it too bitter. We have seen our dear ones die—too many tears have been shed. I can't cry any more—there are no more tears left in me. I have to laugh sometimes. There is no use to keep on crying; we have to keep the other's spirit up. But the poor Tommies," she went on, "I will always do all I can for a Tommy. They get it too bitter—they get it as we do. It was awful to see bread cooking in a cold town. They were starving. They crowded round our ovens when the bread came out to get a morsel. They ate all the green fruit off the trees. One poor 'Tommy' was found dead at his post. His body was opened; he had been bayoneted to the death."

I asked whether the negotiations which had been going on would lead to peace. She replied: "There will be no peace unless we get what we want—unless we get what is right. Right from the same strange, beautiful light spread over her face, and filled her eyes, as she said: "We may get it still more bitter, still more hard; I may be without a peice of food at last, but if everything is gone—that day that we get our independence—I will dance and play like a little child."—The New Age.
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