

# FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

NEW SERIES NO. 32.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SUNDAY, JUNE 19, 1898.

WHOLE NO. 168.

## "HIMSELF THE CREATURE OF HIS WORSHIPERS."

SPRIT: I was an infant when my mother went  
To see an Atheist burned. She took me there:  
The dark-robed priests were met around the pile.  
The multitude was gazing silently;  
And as the culprit passed with dauntless mien,  
Tempered disdain in his unaltering eye,  
Mixed with a quiet smile, shone calmly forth:  
The thirty fire crept round his manly limbs;  
His resolute eyes were scorched to blindness, soon  
His death pang rent my heart! the insensate mob  
Uttered a cry of triumph, and I wept.  
Weep not, child! cried my mother, for that man  
Has said, There is no God.

FAIRY: There is no God:  
Nature confirms the faith his death groan sealed:  
Let heaven and earth, let man's resolving race,  
His ceaseless generations, tell their tale:  
Let every part depending on the chain  
That links it to the whole, point to the hand  
That grasps its term! Let every seed that falls,  
In silent eloquence unfold its store  
Of argument: Infinitly within,  
Infinitly without, belle creation:  
The exterminable spirit it contains  
Is Nature's only God; but human pride  
Is skillful to invent most serious names  
To hide its ignorance.

The name of God  
Has fenced about all crime with holiness,  
Himself the creature of his worshipers,  
Whose names and attributes and passions change  
Sceva, Buddh, Foh, Jehovah, God or Lord,  
Even with the human dupes who build his shrines  
Still serving o'er the war polluted world  
For desolation's watch-word; whether hosts  
Stain his death-blushing chariot wheels as on  
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins raise  
A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans:  
Or countless partners of his power divide  
His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke  
Of burning towns, the cries of female helplessness  
Unarmed old age, and youth, and infancy,  
Horribly massacred, ascend to heaven  
In honor of his name: or, last, and worst,  
Earth groans beneath religion's iron age,  
And priests dare babble of a God of peace,  
Even while their hands are red with guiltless blood  
Murdering the while, uprooting every germ  
Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,  
Making the earth a slaughter-house!

—From Shelly's "Queen Mab."

## A DEFENSE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.

That every man has a right to his life is no longer disputed. It would seem that such a proposition would be so simple that it never could have been disputed. But whatever power the master may have had over the life of his slave, whatever arbitrary authority aristocratic lords have exercised over their serfs, including the right to slay them at will, it is no longer disputed anywhere that each man has a right to his life.

Now, all property is the creation of labor, and labor involves an expenditure of life's energies. Inasmuch as every man has an inherent right to life, he also has, and by necessity, a right to the products of the expenditure of his life's energies. Thus the right to property becomes as sacred as is the right to life itself. The right to own carries with it the right to produce. Having produced, the right to own one's products must necessarily follow; but if the right to ownership is to be based upon the fact of production, then he who is able-bodied and produces nothing can be entitled to own nothing.

But production is no longer carried on by single handed enterprises. Production is carried on by great organizations with extensive equipments which no individual single handed could own or operate. Association in production is inevitable. The right to the opportunity to produce involves one's right to a place in associated production.

A child begins his life the owner of everything. He appropriates everything within his reach. So far as he is able to make use of all the earth, all the earth is his. He raises no question as to the propriety of his taking anything. He takes everything within his reach. He begins life's struggle with an effort to get possession of his hands and feet. His right to use these no one disputes. If he does not use them no one else can. His individual proprietorship in his own hands and feet no one questions; but when he undertakes to appropriate things beyond himself others may use these as well as he, and the dispute for possession at once arises. If he does not use his own hands they go unused. If he does not use a biscuit for his dinner some one seated on the other side of the table may use the biscuit if he does not. It is the possibility of a common use which results in the struggle for possession. When the thing under consideration is the machinery, the organization, the processes of production, there is not only the possibility that another may use, but there is the absolute necessity that the many must use these things together.

Who ought to own these great plants necessarily involved in associated production? Here it seems to me is the doctrine of collective\* and private property. The core of all ownership is in the right to use. That which one may use separately he may own separately; but that which men use together they ought to own together. Private ownership of that which absolutely pertains to myself, and to myself alone, can harm no other. There is no reason why my clothing should not be my own as absolutely as are my hands and feet. It is as necessary for my comfort, it is really a part of my personality. The old London sweat shops, where the employer owned the clothing which his victims wore while engaged at his tasks, involved a wrong against which Kingsley wrote, and about which Tom Hood sang with a matchless pathos. It involved a wrong that the English speaking race rebelled against. All property which is for my individual, exclusive, personal use I may own alone, I ought to own alone. My right to it is as genuine and as sacred as is my right to my life,—provided always that it is directly or indirectly the product of the expenditure of my life's energies, not the result of the exploitation of the toil of others. But the great plants involved in associated production I cannot use by myself. I cannot use their products by myself. I cannot operate them by myself. Association is necessary, is inevitable. Private ownership of these great industrial plants involves a great wrong. It places the tools necessary for one man's employment in the exclusive possession of another. It places the workman in a

\* The author would have made an excellent plea for Anarchist-Communism had he been clear in regard to the question of property. If private property in the means of production (land, of course, included) is incompatible with freedom, which no intelligent person can dispute, then collective ownership is equally objectionable. Complicated as our mode of production is we can no more determine the exact product of a number of persons than that of the single individual—unless a given number of individuals are able to produce all they desire. Collective ownership, therefore, is as much a form of monopoly as is private ownership, and I cannot see how humanity ever will cease making war upon each other unless the means necessary to sustain life are as free as the air we breathe. Only in a free condition—free production and consumption—will strife cease to exist, and the women and children, and for that matter the men also, be able to live according to their notions and escape domination.

A. I.

position where the only way by which he can produce his livelihood is to obtain the consent of some one else to use the tools of his own industry. It makes him absolutely dependent, not upon himself, but upon another. The toolless workman is helpless. The owner of the tools which I must use or starve is the master of my life.

The right to life is inalienable. If so, the right to earn a livelihood is also inalienable. I not only believe in private property, but I believe that my individual right in the property which my labor creates is inalienable, and that my right to an opportunity to create the property essential to my welfare is also inalienable. I would not have private property less sacred. I would make man's right in his property so sacred that by no bargain, no contract, no law, could the producer ever be alienated from his products to such a degree as to involve the poverty of him who serves. This is the proper basis of ownership. The right to property is grounded in service, and he who serves cannot be made to starve except by the violation of property rights. While contending for private ownership in form, private ownership in fact has practically disappeared.

Private ownership in things inevitably involves public ownership in others. If I am to own the thing which I am to use by myself, I ought also, and by the same reasoning, to own in common with others, the things which in common with others I must use.

The effort has been made to extend private ownership to the things which we use in common, with the result that private ownership in the things which we use privately has become impossible. While contending for the form of private property, how small has the field become covered by my necessities in which it is possible for me to own the working plants necessary to the production of these necessities. I must have clothes. That involves a cotton field, a herd of sheep, a woolen mill, a cotton factory, a tailor shop. How many of us own any of these things which are essential to the production of our commonest comforts? I must have food. It involves a field, a mill, a bakery. How many of us own any of these things? I must have shelter. It involves the forest, the lumber mill, the planing mill, the brick factory, the hardware establishment, the furnace, the mines. How few of us have any ownership in any of these things, on every one of which our very existence depends? I must have the means of transportation. How many of us own railroads? I am a farmer. The most a farmer can hope to own is the land from which he can produce the raw materials from which other hands will manufacture the provisions for his support. Butter, eggs, vegetables and meats for his table he may produce, and for the production of these his private ownership is still possible, however unprofitable it may be as compared with associated effort in the same lines. But all other lines of his food, his fuel, his buildings, his clothing, must come to him through the market, produced and controlled by great plants in which he has no ownership. The farmer does have private property in some of the tools used in creating the articles of his use, but his ownership is so small as compared with the enormous industrial plants upon which he must rely for that share of his living which his own singlehanded industry cannot create that he is really about as dependent for his existence on the tools, shops,

mines owned by others as are wholly unable to any share of the tools of their industry. The farmers are the last to come under the sway of this necessary association in production. Individual enterprise has held on to agriculture long after its impossibility had been established everywhere else. But even there the corporation farm has come at last. The corporation orchard is already the master of the market. Agricultural and horticultural workers must fall in line with the rest. They cannot longer individually own and operate the tools and lands of their own special industry. It has been half a century since they could own and control the tools of both their own industry and the other industries, then so related to their own, that with tools of their own they could provide without association the things used in their own support.

It is not a question whether association ought to come. It has already come, and is already in possession. The corporation is in the saddle and it is not going to get out. All workers will become or remain, for most of us are there already,—all workers will become either part owners in great corporate enterprises, or they will be left, not only without common ownership in the things of common use, but they will also be entirely unable to establish any sufficient ownership even in the articles of their daily need for their individual private use. Individuals come and go, but the great properties destined for the common use go on forever. The corporation outlives the individual, and with the corporation possession is perpetual. The corporation is a device whereby the ownership of properties devoted to associated use may continue to render service regardless of the fate of any single member of the corporate body. The corporation composed of a small portion of us all is the master in every field. The corporate body will stand though every other body falls. It is associated effort. And association is the law of our life. There is no use in making war on corporation. The corporation is invincible. It needs conversion, enlargement and perfection. For every one of us under the natural law of our life is becoming its servant, as it is. As it ought to be we may be the members and the masters of the great final corporate body in which all the race shall share alike in its benefits, if we will. We must possess it, or be possessed by it. Private property in a field where it does not belong must be succeeded by public, common, mutual ownership there in order that private property may exist at all in the field where it does belong. We have contended for our right to own nothing. We have asserted our right to buy everything until we are able to buy nothing at all. If we would claim the right to own less in public utilities we would soon be able to own more in private necessities.

The coal, oil, gas, lumber, flour, transportation, money—are all controlled by associated owners. I make no complaint at the association. I simply ask for a place for myself and all my fellows on the "ground floor." I must have a part ownership in the great properties of common use in order that I may secure my right, given with my life, to private properties for my private use. If it be said by the corporator who wants to stay in himself and keep the rest of us out that we propose to confiscate his property, the answer is that our corporation will be so big that his property will be so small. His property would be worthless without the public's business. If the public will take the business which belongs to the public he may keep his worthless property.\*

We are the defenders, not the foes, of private property. The multitudes are propertyless. There is no reason why any one of them should individ-

\* The fact is if he keeps "his property," i.e. his "own product" there would in most instances be nothing left—not even clothes and shelter, because most rich men simply usurp what others have produced.

dually own a railroad. There is every reason why every one of them should own his dinner. I am not contending that he should have his dinner at the expense of any other. I am contending that he has a right to life, and that the right to life means a right to an opportunity to earn a livelihood.

Whoever destroys life is a murderer. Whatever law, institution, document, contract or usage involves the destruction of life bears on itself the blood spots of a murderer. But there are other ways to murder apart from strangling or knifing the victim. The infamy of Weyler's rule in Cuba was not so much in the men directly killed by his villainies as the forcible separation of planters from the soil and the consequent starvation of men, women and children which followed that atrocious act. It was a great agricultural lockout enforced by the strength of the Spanish army, and the multitudes no longer permitted access to the soil were left to starve.

But the current commercial and industrial system as pitilessly separates the toilers from the opportunity to provide their livelihood in our country as the rule of Weyler accomplished the same thing in Cuba. American industrial life is the policy of Weyler applied to shops, factories, and stores, not enforced by a Spanish army, but enforced through the operation of outworn laws, of usages and customs which belong to a generation forever past and to conditions of society which can never return.

The desperate work of the Spanish officer, separating the Cuban farmer from the soil, was undertaken as a measure of necessity in war, in order to compel the further submission of the Cuban farmers to Spanish rule. But our shops and factories are closed against all comers not as a measure of necessity in war, but a matter of necessity in business, in order to compel a further submission to private rule in public affairs. Weylerism in Cuba was an effort to continue a form of government, outworn and impossible, though the subjects of that government, for whose sake alone it has a right to be, should starve in consequence. Weylerism in America was, and is, an effort to continue a form of business, outworn and impossible, though the people, for whose sake alone has any business a right to be, shall starve in consequence. Weylerism found Cuba fruitful, it left her in desolation; it found her with green fields and bountiful harvests, it left her barren and empty and deserted; it found her teeming with populations, covered with farms and homes and villages, it has left her one vast charnal house, with her unbred dead, her deserted farms, her broken homes and her smoking villages. But Weylerism in the United States found here a half a century ago a country, a people, cities, villages, schools, farms, firesides unequaled anywhere or at any time. But Weylerism, the policy of separating the worker from the opportunity to create his own living, has gone heartlessly forward. It has not been done by cannon or bayonets or bullets. Great factories, department stores, bonanza farms, corporation orchards,—these have been the tools of this heartless industrial warfare. The masses of our people have been separated from any opportunity to toil except on terms which these great forces name and with tools which these great forces shall supply. They are toolless, penniless, helpless, and they die. The smoking fields of outraged Cuba are a garden compared with the desolation, the crusts and the rags and the anguish of the garret and the cellar and the back alley. Even Spain has repudiated Weylerism in Cuba. Spanish rule cannot be supported longer on a programme which contemplates the starvation of the people. Weylerism in the United States must cease. Private capitalism in control of public utilities cannot any longer stand on a programme which separates a workman from his tools and turns him out to tramp and starve.

All mankind must have a common right and a common interest in the great industrial equipments

on which all must alike depend for their existence; then only will the right of private ownership and the possibility of private ownership in the things of private use be realized.—Walter Thomas Mills, A. M., in The New Time.

### WHY THEY WENT TO CHURCH.

Jim, a prisoner, speaking to his fellow prisoner Fred: "You have been in church yesterday, haven't you?"

Fred: "Yes, did you see me?"

Jim: "I saw you coming in. what struck you?"

Fred: "You know, 'Dago Joe' goes to church every Sunday; last week he told me the chaplain had preached about 'Abraham entertaining three angels,' and the next Sunday he would preach about Lot and his two daughters. I thought we would have some fun in church, so I went."

Jim: "And the chaplain disappointed you, eh?"

Fred: "Yes, when I found that he did not speak about Lot and his daughters, I felt sorry that I had come. But if he wants to explain the Bible to us, why does he not explain one chapter after the other as they follow in the Bible?"

Jim: "He probably knows that there are a good many convicts like you, who just go to church for the fun of it."

Fred: "Oh, you are not a better church goer than I am."

Jim, laughing, holding out his hand: "Come, let us shake hands, I like a man who speaks the truth."

H. BAUER.

### POTPOURRI.

The state, county and city elections in Oregon are just over. The results—to the candidates—are yet unknown. To the average person the results are always very much the same, varying in degree only, not in kind.

"Grafters" were "thick as flies in August," and men who a few years ago were "real estate dealers," etc., could be seen trying to sell their services to the politicians. But the funniest and most instructive sight of that kind was a big, full bellied priest. He went from headquarters to headquarters, and from candidate to candidate, as openly and shamelessly as any "hobo" or "stiff."

Another thing developed by the election was that all parties are "tarred with the same stick." I told a member of the populist campaign committee that I saw a young fellow from their headquarters leading a gang of young repeaters, and he admitted that they were in with the others "to the extent of the cash on hand."

I thought I would get through this campaign without any newspaper accusations, but on the morning of the election the Oregonian devoted over half a column to accusing me of trying to get a candidate to "come down." I had pointed out to him that he was being "used" for mercenary purposes and given him some Anarchist literature.

One good feature of election day was that it was a free day. People crowded on the street corners and talked loud and laughed at their will, undisturbed, and numerous persons were stretched on the grass in the shade on the Plaza, a thing unseen since the "Coxey" excitement and the continued revolutionary propaganda that followed. The city swarmed with noisy but good humored crowds, and in a number of instances when a policeman undertook to make an arrest the crowd intervened, allowing the man to escape and hooting the officer.

Those who think our propaganda would flourish better if the freedom of the press and of speech was still more restricted, and a reign of terror instituted in this country against all reformers, as in some of the countries of Europe had better go where liberty is restricted and try their hand at propagandising.

For my part I prefer the place where liberty is already the greatest. I prefer the easy going west to the Sunday observing east, and the bigoted, "honor" loving south.

In order to live close to our ideal it is not necessary to unnecessarily antagonize the opposition. I re-



member an old complot that ran: "He cast at each a stick and a stone, saying to them, let me alone, let me alone." That seems to be the attitude of a number of our reformers and even some Anarchists. They are not content to do as they desire, but pelt the other fellow, "crying I want to be let alone." Now, dear comrade, if you wish to be let alone you must let the other fellow alone.

"Fuss and feathers" is one thing, effective work is another.

The adoption of Anarchist ideas is a matter of mental growth, therefore "conversion" to Anarchy, as conversion to religion, is an absurdity. The true work of the propagandist is to sow the seed, and then let the ideas grow. Help on the growth as best you can, but above all things sow the seed.

Comrade A. J. Pope was released from jail at 4 p. m. yesterday, June 8. H. A.

### AN ANARCHIST SCHOOL.

Our French comrades are never idle. One part of their work is at the present time the founding of a Libertarian school for children; the initiative in this enterprise belongs to "Les Temps Nouveaux," one of the three Parisian Anarchist Communist weeklies. The fund necessary for the work has so far reached something over 1,300 francs, 500 francs of which have been subscribed by Zola, Mirabeau, Lazare, and other known men of letters.

As Jeanne Grave points out in one of the last issues of "Les Temps Nouveaux," this is to be a school free from any State or Church interference. The purpose of the school will not be to instill into the minds of the pupils any ready-made doctrines, but the youngsters will be given an opportunity to develop their free individuality and originality. A good many facts will be taught which are not found in school books, which it would be a sheer impossibility to be memorized by the scholars, some books will be retained and their contents imparted to the pupils. All facts with which the children are to be made familiar without any comments, and the young ones are to draw their own conclusions according to their capability of perception and impression.

In short, it is to be an attempt to realize a really free school with all that the word implies. It will not be an easy matter to find the proper men to conduct the institution. Nevertheless the moment that called for the venture will supply the men.

The full sum necessary to the launching of the plan is from 10,000 to 15,000 francs, certainly a hard piece of work to be completed. But our friends don't despair and are sure to have it.

A call for the founding of the school is published and put for sale for the benefit of the institution by "Les Temps Nouveaux." Sharers in the idea of the necessity of new methods in the education of children which are to be free men and not state automatons, are invited to express their views and lay their plans before a committee which is in time to take matters in hand. The best of these plans are to appear as a collection in one or several books devoted to the subject. Good luck!—Solidarity.

### THE ALLIANCE OF SOCIALIST PARTIES.

The "combination of forces" preached to us, is impossible—and even injurious to the Socialist propaganda, which has nothing to gain by it, since it could only be carried on upon condition that each shade of opinion held back the variation of idea constituting its own special force in propaganda, and since, taking all things into account, this combination would only be strong and durable on condition of its consenting not to do anything.

No, good people, all the Socialists not only have not the same means, but differ above all on the end to be attained, the divergence of means being only the outcome of the divergence of aim. Certainly, all wish for the alteration of the existing order of things—but there the resemblance stops; whilst some wish for the complete destruction of all its workings, the others tend to reconstitute them under other names; it is this divergence of ideas which places us at once in antagonism to each other.

In fact, what community of purpose can there be between the authoritarians who want to substitute

themselves for the existing government and gain power in order to impose their views, and the Anarchists, who wish to destroy it to the last vestiges, leaving no modicum in the hands of anyone at all, and claim for all the liberty to comfort themselves as they think fit, and the means of using this liberty? What community of action can there be between the partisans of universal suffrage, who look for their emancipation to a parliamentary majority striving to obtain reforms, and those who demonstrate that there can be no real reform while the causes of evil remain undestroyed, and that parliamentarism is only a snare to deceive the workers as to the oppression that it makes them suffer, and universal suffrage a means of binding them to the yoke by leading them to ratify this power by a choice of masters? Called to combat each other at every moment of the propaganda, there can be no union or combination of forces between these two fractions of the Socialist party.

A grouping cannot give all the results expected but on condition that those who compose it are absolutely in accord on all the points of action for which it is formed. If it is made up of incongruous elements each idea submitted to it will be buried in discussion and the group will be condemned to perpetually discuss and never act.

Who that is sincerely convinced of the excellence of his ideas would wish to hold back his way of thinking in order to temporise with those he considers behind him? And admitting that we might arrive at this impossible result (union of the sects), whenever it sought to take serious action each school would be arrayed against the others and seeking to bring about the adoption of the means which seemed to it the best for assuring victory. It would be necessary to resort to a majority vote to decide on the adoption of such or such means, and lacking a force to compel the recalcitrants to bend to the yoke of the majority, they would not be long in resuming their liberty of action; your famous "combination of forces" would soon be decomposed, leaving as the only result, the groups a little more of enemies than before, after having made them lose time in useless discussions, and teaching them, to their cost, that the best force is still that of acting as each thinks fit.—Abridged from *La Revolte*.

### HOW ANARCHY SHOULD SECURE FRIENDS.

It is popularly believed that every Anarchist is a bomb-thrower, a revolutionist and a villain of desperate dye. Anarchists themselves are largely responsible for this belief. When bombs, riots and blood have been threatened in the past in the name of Anarchy, Anarchists have taken little or no pains to make a correction. It appears that the majority of Anarchists are opposed to force and believe in reasoning with and persuading the world at large. This peaceful method the world should know of that it may discontinue its disposition to turn down at a glance everything bearing the term Anarchy. I have, myself, been one of those very opponents of Anarchy, but am now friendly toward it and know from the mere accident which brought me into sympathy with it how essential it is that the world at large should be presented with a correct conception of it.

The Socialists some years ago were almost as repugnant in their way to the public as the Anarchists. Now Debs' Social Democrat, of Chicago, comes out with the motto, "Peace on earth, good will to men," and everywhere he goes the papers that formerly devoted an inch of condemnation of him can now give whole columns of his addresses and reasonably good editorials in connection with the same. If a soft answer turns away wrath, let the Anarchists try it. Things gained by force have to be maintained by force. The Anarchists look for freedom from constraint and they are above all others the last to seek force in the carrying out of their reform. As soon as it is known that Anarchism has been grossly misunderstood and that it stands for peaceful methods, so soon will people take heart in investigating it; halls will be more readily secured and the Anarchists of a vicinity will not be afraid to grace the stage where Emma Goldman lectures, as Free Society, of May 29, says was the case at Los Angeles recently.

Force is entirely superfluous to conduct a reform. Reformers can get branded as lunatics, get jailed and get hung merely for their words—even when of the most peaceful character. Animosity against change is sufficient to give reformers all they want of force without exercising it themselves, and in such cases "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," and no

mistake. The fact that Ingersoll wanted Emma Goldman in a lunatic asylum and that Henry James wanted her hung were among those that conspired to cause a change to come or the spirit of my own detestation of her, and I now further see cause for admiring her in the descriptive article of S. D.'s in Free Society of May 29. By the by, I would say that the article should have been entitled "Descriptive of Emma Goldman." Anarchists are not practical enough. "Truth only asks a hearing," and reformers who have it on their side should feel no hesitation in dropping any idiosyncrasy, to say nothing of any real contradiction, that debars it from the public ear.

Let us look at examples. Some years ago the Single Taxers tried to capture Delaware. They never urged or attempted force; yet some of them were thrown into Delaware jails. No one man did more to offset the Single Taxers in Delaware than I, yet after I saw this jailing business persisted in I dropped out. No one man did more to offset the work of the Mormons in the East than I, yet after the Mormon Desert Weekly pointed out in a bitter editorial that I was inciting Mormon persecutions, I dropped out. No sensible reformer in this age should want to see his theories advanced by force—"a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still," and a large body of men convinced after this fashion would need those very legal and military processes for their restraint which Anarchy seeks the gradual obliteration of. I say gradual, because that it must be. Even were force admissible, it should not be broached until numbers promised it that success which makes right by might. Murderer, rioter, rebel and patriot constitute the gradations by which the taking of life becomes respectable. Anarchists have never yet been more than a handful of rioters—let them desist.

As it is now, half the Anarchists are afraid to be known as such, either in their own localities or abroad. They know that they are a branded set and that their life, liberty and pursuit of happiness would one or all be sacrificed were they known. Even in their own papers we see how few of them give their names and addresses; but with the bomb and blood propaganda dismissed in their calculations they have nothing to be ashamed of and much to be proud of in this professedly liberty-loving country. I have lately seen long articles from Anarchists republished in leading religious and literary papers, and, with Socialists, Single Taxers, Fame Reformers and others, they are entitled to be heard. My own experience in various reform lines has convinced me that this country can be won to anything through the press. It has been said that the war with Spain has been instigated by the New York Journal; but be that as it may, a set of writers watching up opportunities in small local papers to present the "half loaves which are better than no bread," can work monstrosities on the public mind. With a newspaper directory before him an adept writer and reformer can lie abed and change the current of thought in any remote corner of the country.

Sykesville, Md.

FRANCIS B. LIVESEY.

### COMMENT.

It is not in the least the fault of the Anarchists that the unthinking mass looks upon them as a set of rioters and desperate villains. They have taken all possible pains to correct the idea—through their papers, pamphlets, books and leaflets, but they had neither the means to reach everybody in the country, nor would the bulk of the people take pains to investigate the theories of Anarchism, being prejudiced by the daily and weekly press. Every Anarchist is a revolutionist though. No change can take place, however, without a mental revolution, and the fact is that when individuals revolutionize their minds and attempt to carry out their ideal, they come in conflict with prevailing superstitions, prejudices and it is always those in power who employ force, a fact which Friend Livesey admits.

I have never heard of an Anarchist yet who contemplated the advancement of his theories by force as that would be an impossible proposition. Such is the case though with all those that propose legislative reforms, and it is an utterly false statement when Friend Livesey says that "Anarchists have never yet been more than a handful of rioters." The government has always been the rioter, and I assert that no bomb or violence would ever have been used if the "powers that be" had not interfered with the peaceful method of propagating our ideal, and it would be quite interesting if Livesey could point out when Anarchists ever pursued a "bomb and blood propaganda."

A. I.

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**Anarchy.**—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal: absolute individual liberty.—Century Dictionary

## NOTE AND COMMENT.

Two weeks ago we intimated that we probably would be compelled to suspend Free Society Library on account of being short of funds. But the donation from the comrades of Philadelphia has helped us considerably to pay bills in arrears, and so we will try again to keep the Library going in order not to lose the second class postal rates, although the bill of No. 6 is not paid yet. No. 7 of the Library will consist of two pamphlets combined in one, namely: "Revolutionary Government" and "The Wage System," both by Peter Kropotkin and are excellent for propaganda work.

If the accounts that reach us from Cuba and the Philippines are true, the intelligent people of these islands have come to the conclusion that the transfer of sovereignty from Spain to the United States would be nothing else but a change of masters, and that the American parasite would be as disagreeable as the Spanish. They are right, of course, but I am inclined to think it will be just as hard a task for them to get rid of the American blood-sucker as of the Spanish. The American parasite is as persistent and pitiless as a bed-bug.

It was said that the war with Spain was to relieve the starving Cubans. Any reasonable being would suppose then that the first thing to do would be to supply the poor Cubans with food, but the all-wise government knows better; it blockades the ports of the island and thereby cuts off all food supply. Yet the fools sing on the streets, in theatres and halls: "We will free the Cubans far away," etc.—"O what fools we mortals be!" ought to be the chorus.

"The great leading principle of legal penalties is to insure protection to the community; to regulate the conduct of men, but only so far as it effects and concerns the well-being of others," says the governmentalist. The "leading principle" of any and all governments has never been anything else but to protect the strong in the robbery of the weak. But the governmentalist is never at a loss for an argument to prove that a "standard of conduct" must exist and be enforced. In a public meeting of this city a man, who labels himself a Socialist, mounted the platform last week and refuted Anarchism with great indignation thus: "I saw an Anarchist woman kissing three-four men during one evening; that's Anarchism. She ought to be ashamed of herself!" He was asked if her conduct had injured him or the "well-being of others," or if it concerned the community in any way whether she had kissed one or a hundred men, and the poor fellow could not answer a single question, but rather felt ashamed of himself.

In a private letter a man makes "friendly" suggestions from which I will quote some:

"That you send copies of paper to volunteer soldiers at Tampa, Key West, etc., also to sailors aboard naval ships. If sent make no noise about it, or authority will destroy papers and not deliver."

But our friend forgot to tell us how to obtain the names of those volunteers. Besides I do not believe that those papers would be delivered without passing the hands of the censorship which is now reigning at Tampa and other camps.

"You should boom the war spirit, for before long you people may have to fight for your lives. Civil war is coming and woe unto the side that can't fight."

Never mind, my friend; the "war spirit" for freedom is "boomed" in Free Society every week. The present war, however, is instigated by commercial interests in which workers or slaves will butcher each other in the interest of a few schemers, and we feel no desire to boom such a war spirit. People who will fight for freedom will know how to fight.

"Issue a secret journal once a month and put in it the most naked and outspoken thoughts. Circulate it free by post and by dropping into letter boxes and by mailing in daily newspapers and in envelopes."

Free Society is as outspoken as we deem it necessary, and we would only be too glad to be enabled to "circulate it free," if our friend will only tell us how to obtain the necessary means, which he seemingly forgot to take into consideration—an important question nevertheless.

"Instead of discussing mere abstractions why not get down to business and urge boldness of action—revolt, open resistance to authority."

While resistance and the boldness of action are the prime factors in human advancement, the discussion of "mere abstractions" are necessary to arouse a desire for a change or freedom. People must first realize that they are enslaved and that their individuality is hampered by authority before they will resist. By changing our views we change our feelings, and the stronger characters also their actions which means resisting authority and prevailing public opinion.

Several obituaries on Gladstone have been received. As, however, there is in all likelihood not one reader of the paper who has not correctly gaged the actions of this "greatest trimmer" of the age, none were printed.

"The first man killed in the war was a naval lieutenant from Carolina," writes one of our readers. "His bowels were torn out and trailed all over the deck by a Spanish shell at Cardenas. His body was embalmed and brought home to be buried, but the 'common seamen' were flung into a sand-trench at Key West. The Chicago Tribune used the name and photo of the lieutenant a few days after his death as a pictorial advertisement for a special brand of whiskey."

Comrade A. Levin, 555 Stone Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., requests Harry Green, Boston, Mass., who ordered some pamphlets from him, to re-order same and give his full address in a readable shape. He also sent pamphlets to Comrade Levin, Boston, which were returned by the Post Office, and he would like to know the reason.

It is highly amusing to see the Socialists ignoring their theory of the "materialistic conception of history" regarding the cause of the present war with Spain. According to that theory all phenomena in society are the direct and exclusive result of the form of production. Instead of pointing out to us now that the war is an inevitable result of our present mode of production, they insist that the war has been arbitrarily instigated by a few bondholders and politicians.

A comrade who is on the road at present, riding beneath Pullman's cars, writes:

"I have seen some beautiful examples of the beneficiaries of government lately. At Chico, Calif., a man who worked one day for Bidwell, the millionaire, picking cherries, was sent to jail for two hundred days for eating too many cherries.

"In the beautiful town of Red Bluff a man who committed the heinous crime of stealing a chicken to appease his hunger was sent to San Quentin (penitentiary) for seven years.

"In Cottonwood a man by the name of Sherman was tarred and feathered for saying that all men engaged in the present war were murderers."

Comment unnecessary!

The authorities have taken good care to quench the enthusiasm and patriotism of the volunteers who rushed to the front when McKinley made his first call. "Poor food, bad clothing and miserable shelter" is the bitter cry of the camps, on the Atlantic as well as on the Pacific Coast. In this city even the dailies were forced to publish columns in protest. The "boys in blue" have found out by this time that we are not all equal in this free country, for the officers have no reason to complain as they have fine quarters, fine clothes and many other privileges, simply because they are sons of ambitious politicians and not in the least on account of their superior ability or knowledge. Even the patriotic Boston Post finds "it an outrage upon the patriotic American volunteers."

Vaccination is forced upon the volunteers and many young and healthy men will be poisoned for life says the Boston Post: "Some men take it philosophically,

while others remonstrate. One man taken today appeared to be really frightened, and twice broke and ran, but, with the assistance of three men, was finally vaccinated. He had to go through the ordeal twice before he would let the vaccine remain, and then a guard was placed over him."

"Americans are slow to accept any more government than is necessary," says an exchange, "but once resolved upon no people are more obedient to it." That the Americans submit to almost everything that is called "lawful" I admit, but that they are "slow to accept any more government" has not been true of late years. More government has been on such rapid increase as almost unknown in history. In Europe, and especially in Russia laws are usually hated by the common people and defied on every possible occasion, while in this country the term law is uttered with as much reverence as the term God by the most sincere christian, and herein lies the danger for the future of the American people.

Mrs. Etta Semple, President of the Kansas Free-thought Association, has sent us an appeal inviting all radicals to unite in fighting for the separation of Church and State. While I do not doubt the sincerity of the Association I, for one, cannot unite with them on the proposition for the simple reason that it is a futile task to undertake. Church and State are twin sisters and will stand and fall together. A. I.

## LABOR'S MARTYRS.

In the February issue of the New Time Eugene V. Debs contributes an article captioned "The Martyred Apostles of Labor," which is reproduced in full for our readers as follows:

The century now closing is luminous with great achievements. In every department of human endeavor marvelous progress has been made. By the magic of the machine which sprang from the inventive genius of man, wealth has been created in fabulous abundance, but alas, this wealth, instead of blessing the race, has been the means of enslaving it. The few have come in possession of all, and the many have been reduced to the extremity of living by permission.

A few have had the courage to protest. To silence these so that the dead-level of slavery could be maintained has been the demand and command of capital-blown power. Press and pulpit have responded with alacrity. All the forces of society have been directed against these pioneers of industrial liberty, these brave defenders of oppressed humanity—and against them the crime of the century has been committed.

Albert R. Parsons, August Spies, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Louis Lingg, Samuel Fielden, Michael Schwab and Oscar Neebe paid the cruel penalty in prison cell and on the gallows.

They were the first martyrs in the cause of industrial freedom, and one of the supreme duties of our civilization, if indeed we may boast of having been redeemed from savagery, is to rescue their names from calumny and do justice to their noble memory.

The crime with which these men were charged was never proven against them. The trial which resulted in their conviction was not only a disgrace to all judicial proceedings, but a foul, black indelible and damning stigma upon the nation.

It was a trial organized and conducted to convict—a conspiracy to murder innocent men, and hence had not one redeeming feature.

It was a plot, satanic in all its conception, to wreak vengeance upon defenseless men, who, not being found guilty of the crime charged in the indictment, were found guilty of exercising the inalienable right of free speech in the interest of the toiling and groaning masses, and thus they became the first martyrs to a cause which, fertilized by their blood, has grown in strength and sweep and influence from the day they yielded up their lives and liberty in its defense.

As the years go by and the history of that infamous trial is read and considered by men of thought and who are capable of wrenching themselves from the grasp of prejudice and giving reason its rightful supremacy, the stronger the conviction becomes that the present generation of workmen should erect an enduring memorial to the men who had the courage to denounce and oppose wage-slavery and seek for methods of emancipation.

The vision of the judicially murdered men was prescient. They saw the dark and hideous shadows of



coming events. They spoke words of warning, not too soon, not too emphatic, not too trumpet-toned—for even in 1886, when the Haymarket meetings were held, the capitalistic grasp was upon the throats of workingmen and its fetters upon their limbs.

There was even then idleness, poverty, squalor, the rattling of skeleton bones, the sunken eye, the pallor, the living death of famine, the crushing and the grinding of the relentless mills of the plutocracy, which more rapidly than the mills of the gods grind their victims to dust.

These heroes, who went to their death upon the verdict of a jury, I have said, were judicially murdered—not only because the jury was packed for the express purpose of finding them guilty, not only because the crime for which they suffered was never proven against them, not only because the judge before whom they were arraigned was unjust and bloodthirsty, but because they had, in the exercise of free speech, declared that men who subjected their fellow-men to conditions often worse than death were unfit to live.

In all lands and in all ages where the victims of injustice have bowed their bodies to the earth, bearing grievous burdens laid upon them by cruel taskmasters, and have lifted their eyes stward in the hope of finding some orb whose light inspired hope, ten million times the anathema has been uttered and will be uttered until a day shall dawn upon the world when the emancipation of those who toil is achieved by the brave, self-sacrificing few who, like the Chicago martyrs have the courage of crusaders and the spirit of iconoclasts and dare champion the cause of the oppressed and demand in the name of an avenging God and of an outraged humanity that infernalism shall be eliminated from our civilization. And as the struggle for justice proceeds and the battlefields are covered with the slain, as mother earth drinks their blood, the stones are given tongues with which to denounce man's inhumanity to man—aye, to women and children, whose moanings from hovel and sweat-shop, garret and cellar, arraign our civilization, our religion and our judiciary—whose wailings and lamentations, hushing to silence every sound the Creator designed to make the world a paradise of harmonies, transform it into an inferno where the demons of greed plot and scheme to consign their victims to lower depths of degradation and despair.

The men who were judicially slain in Chicago in 1887, in the name of the great state of Illinois, were the avant couriers of a better day. They were called Anarchists, but on their trial it was not proven that they had committed any crime or violated any law. They had protested against unjust laws and their brutal administration. They stood between oppressor and oppressed and they dared, in a free (?) country, to exercise the divine right of free speech, and the records of their trial, as if written with an "iron pen and lead in the rock forever," proclaim the truth of the declaration.

I would rescue their names from slander. The slanderers of the dead are the oppressors of the living.

I would, if I could, restore them to their rightful positions as evangelists, the proclaimers of good news to their fellow-men—crusaders, to rescue the sacred shrines of justice from the profanations of capitalistic defilers who have made them more repulsive than Augean stables. Aye, I would take them, if I could, from peaceful slumber in their martyr graves—I would place joint to joint in their dislocated necks—I would make the halter the symbol of redemption—I would restore the flesh to their skeleton bones—their eyes should again flash defiance to the enemies of humanity, and their tongues again more eloquent than all the heroes of oratory, should speak the truth to a gainsaying world.

Alas, this cannot be done—but something can be done. The stigma fixed upon their names by an outrageous trial can be forever obliterated and their fame be made to shine with resplendent glory on the pages of history.

Until the time shall come, as come it will, when the parks of Chicago shall be adorned with their statues, and with holy acclaim, men, woman and children, pointing to these monuments as testimonials of gratitude, shall honor the men who dared to be true to humanity and paid the penalty of their heroism with their lives, the preliminary work of setting forth their virtues devolves upon those who are capable of gratitude to men who suffered death that they might live.

They were the men who, like Al Hassen, the minstrel of the king, went forth to find themselves

mirth and joy with which to gladden the ears of his master, but returned disappointed, and, instead of themes to awaken joyous echoes, found scenes which dried up all the fountains of joy. Touching his golden harp, Al Hassen sang to the king, as Parsons, Spies, Engel, Fielden, Fischer, Lingg, Schwab and Neebe proclaimed to the people:

"O King, at thy Command I went into the world of men; I sought full earnestly the thing which I Might weave into the gay and lightsome song. I found it, king: 'twas there. Had I the art To look but on the fair outside I nothing Else had found. That art not mine, I saw what Lay beneath. And seeing thus I could not sing: For there, in dens more vile than wolf or jackal Ever sought, were herded, stifling, foul, the Writhing, crawling masses of mankind. Man! Ground down beneath oppression's iron heel Till God in him was crushed and driven back, And only that which with the brute he shares Finds room to upward grow."

Such pictures of horror our martyrs saw in Chicago, as others have seen them in all the great centers of population in the country. But, like the noble minstrel, they proceeded to recite their discoveries and with him moaned:

"And in this world I saw how womanhood's fair flower had Never space its petals to unfold. How Childhood's tender bud was crushed and trampled down in mire and filth too evil, foul, for beasts To be partakers in. For gold I saw The virgin sold, and motherhood was made A mock and scorn. I saw the fruit of labor Torn away from him who toiled, to further Swell the bursting coffers of the rich, while Babes and mothers pined and died of want. I saw dishonor and injustice thrive. I saw The wicked, ignorant, greedy and unclean, By means of bribes and baseness, raised to seats Of power, from whence with lash, and pitiless And keen, they scourged the hungry, naked throng Whom first they robbed and then enslaved."

Such were the scenes that our Chicago martyrs had witnessed and which may still be seen, and for reciting them and protesting against them they were judicially put to death.

It was not strange that the hearts of the martyrs "grew into one with the great moaning, throbbing heart" of the oppressed; not strange that their nerves grew "tense and quivering with the throes of mortal pain;" not strange that they should pity and plead and protest. The strange part of it is that in our high noon of civilization a damnable judicial conspiracy should have been concocted to murder them under the forms of law.

That such is the truth of history no honest man will attempt to deny, and hence the demands, growing more pronounced every day, to snatch the names of these martyred evangelists of labor emancipation from dishonor and add them to the roll of the most illustrious dead of the nation.

## AN APPEAL.

We inform all those that are anxious to see Comrade Berkman released that his case will be brought before the Board of Pardons next July, and will come this time to a definite decision.

But there are not yet sufficient means on hand to defray the necessary expenses, and we therefore appeal to all friends and comrades to send in their mite immediately. Let us do all we can at present. We hope that our efforts will be rewarded with the liberation of our young comrade.

HARRY GORDON, Treasurer.

P. HERBERT, Secretaries.

H. BAUER, Secretaries.

73 Springgarden Ave. Allegheny, Pa.

## CLIPPINGS.

The famous historian Guizot has the following to say concerning the foundation of governments:

Certain powers become established in consequence of certain social expediences, of certain relations with the state of society, with its customs or opinions. But it is impossible to close our eyes to the fact that violence has sullied the birth of all the authorities in the world, whatever may have been their nature or their form. This origin, however, no one will acknowledge. All authorities, whatever their nature, disclaim it. None of them will allow themselves to be considered as the offspring of force. Governments are warned by an invincible instinct that force is no

title—that might is right—and that, while they rest upon no other foundation than violence, they are entirely destitute of right. Hence, if we go back to some distant period, in which the various systems, the various powers, are found struggling one against the other, we shall hear them each exclaiming: "I existed before you; my claim is the oldest; my claim rests upon other grounds than force; society belonged to me before this state of violence, before this strife in which you now find me. I was legitimate; I have been opposed, and my rights have been torn from me." . . . . . This disavowal of violence made by every system, proclaims, as plainly as facts can speak, that there is another legitimacy, the true foundation of all the others, the legitimacy of reason, of justice, of right. It is to this origin that they seek to link themselves. As they feel scandalized at the very idea of being the offspring of force, they pretend to be invested, by virtue of their antiquity with a different title.

♦ ♦ ♦

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces; and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day; he is unable to discriminate colors, or to recognize faces. But the remedy is not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and the will soon be able to bear it.—Macaulay's Essay on Milton.

♦ ♦ ♦

That noble patriot, Phil Armour, of Chicago, made a strong plea for Cuban independence and American intervention, and on the day war was declared raised the price of meat two cents per pound. That's modern patriotism.—Rochester Socialist.

♦ ♦ ♦

If the American people had only one-half as much sense as they have patriotism, they would soon enjoy as great freedom for themselves as they are now demanding for the Cubans.—Living Issues.

♦ ♦ ♦

A Danville, Ky., woman has advertised her desire to sell herself into slavery for life for money enough to purchase a comfortable home for her children, adding: "Will serve faithfully, and endeavor to make myself invaluable, always striving to please."

♦ ♦ ♦

All that is required with respect to property is to obtain it honestly and not employ it criminally.—Paine.

♦ ♦ ♦

In reply to a question: "Is it wise for a man to deny himself and get along with a few hours' sleep a day, in order to do more work?" Tesla, the great electrician, is said to have replied: "That is a great mistake, I am convinced. A man has just so many hours to be awake, and the fewer of these he uses up each day, the more days they will last; that is, the longer he will live. I believe that a man might live two hundred years if he would sleep most of the time. This is why negroes often live to an advanced old age—they sleep so much. It is said that Gladstone sleeps seventeen hours every day; that is why his faculties are still unimpaired in spite of his great age. The proper way to economize life is to sleep every moment that is not necessary or desirable that you should be awake."

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## "Physician in the House."

As a special premium to any one who will send us five dollars and the names of ten yearly subscribers to Free Society or Free Society Library we will send the large volume entitled "A Physician in the House," price \$2.75, written by Dr. Joseph H. Greer, a well-known Chicago physician of the reform school, and who has been an earnest friend and generous helper of The Firebrand and Free Society.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## FOR BUFFALO.

Comrade G. Lang has volunteered to collect subscriptions for Free Society, and we hope the readers in arrears will make the task as easy as possible for him.

# REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT.

—BY—  
PETER KROPOTKIN.

## PART I.

That the Governments at present existing ought to be abolished, so that Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity should no longer be empty words but become living realities, and that all forms of government as yet tried have only been so many forms of oppression, and ought to be replaced by a new form of grouping, so far all who have a brain and temperament ever so little revolutionary unanimously agree. In truth one does not need to be much of an innovator in order to arrive at this conclusion; the vices of the governments of to-day, and the impossibility of reforming them, are too evident to be hidden from the eyes of any reasonable observer. And as regards overturning governments it is well-known that at certain epochs that can be done without much difficulty; there are times when governments crumble to pieces almost of themselves, like houses of cards, before the breath of the people in revolt. That has been seen, clearly seen, in 1848 and in 1870; and will soon be seen again.

To overturn a government—this for a revolutionary middle class man is everything, for us it is only the beginning of the Social Revolution. The machine of the State once out of gear, the hierarchy of functionaries disorganized and not knowing in what direction to take a step, the soldiers having lost confidence in their officers—in a word the whole army of defenders of capital once routed—then it is that the grand work of destruction of all the institutions which serve to perpetuate economic and political slavery will become ours. The possibility of acting freely being attained, what will revolutionists do next?

To this question the Anarchists alone give the proper answer, "No Government, Anarchy." All the others say "A Revolutionary Government!" and they only differ as to the form to be given to that government. Some decide for a government elected by universal suffrage in the State or in the Commune; others decide on a Revolutionary Dictature.

A Revolutionary Government! These are two words which sound very strange in the ears of those who really understand what the Social Revolution means, and what a government means. The words contradict each other, destroy each other. We have seen of course many despotic governments—it is the essence of all government to take the side of the reaction against the Revolution, and to have a tendency toward despotism—but such a thing as a revolutionary government has never been seen, and the reason is that the Revolution—synonym of "disorder," of upsetting and overthrowing of venerated institutions in a few days, meaning the demolition by violence of the established forms of property, the destruction of castes, the rapid transformation of received ideas about morality, or rather about the hypocrisy which takes the place of it, individual liberty and freedom of action—is precisely the opposite, the very negation of government, this being the synonym of "established order," of conservatism, of the maintenance of existing institutions, the negation of free initiative and individual action. And yet we continually hear this white blackbird spoken of, as if a "revolutionary government" were the simplest thing in the world, as common and as well-known to all as Royalty, the Empire and the Papacy!

That the so-called revolutionists of the middle-class should preach this idea is nothing strange. We know well what they understand by Revolution. They understand by it a bolstering up of their republic, the taking possession by the so-called republicans of the lucrative employments reserved today for the Bonapartists or Royalists. It means at the most the divorce of Church and State, replaced by the concubinage of the two, the sequestration of the goods of the clergy for benefit of the State, and above all for that of the future administrators of these goods; perhaps it may mean the referendum, or some other political machinery of the same kind. But that Revolutionary Socialists should make themselves the apostles of such an idea—we can only explain by supposing one of two things. Either they are imbued with prejudices which they have imbibed without knowing it from literature and above all from history, written to suit middle-class ideas; and still possessed with the spirit of servility, product of ages of slavery, they cannot even imagine themselves free. Or else they do not really desire this Revolution which they have always on their lips; they would be content with a simple plastering up of present institutions, provided that they would secure power for themselves, leaving to the future to decide what they should do to satisfy "the beast" called the People. They only go against the Governors of the present time in order to take their places. With these people we care not to argue. We will then only speak to those who honestly deceive themselves.

Let us begin with the first of the two forms of "Revolutionary Government" which is advocated—the elected government.

The power of the Royalty or some other we will suppose has just been overturned, the army of the defenders of capital is routed; everywhere there is fermentation, discussion of public affairs, everywhere a desire to march onward—new ideas arise, the necessity of important changes is perceived—it is necessary to act, it is necessary to begin without pity the work of demolition, in order to prepare the ground for the new life. But what do they propose to us to do? To convoke the people to elections, to elect at once a government and confide to it the work which we all of us, and each of us, should undertake of our own initiative.

This is what Paris did after the 18th of March 1871. "I will never forget," said a friend to us, "those delightful moments of deliverance. I came down from my upper chamber in the Latin Quarter to join that immense open air club which filled the Boulevards from one end of Paris to the other. Everyone talked about public affairs; all mere personal preoccupations were forgotten; no more was thought of buying or selling; all felt ready body and soul to advance toward the future. Men of the middle-class even, carried away by the general enthusiasm saw with joy a new world opened up. 'If it is necessary to make a Social Revolution,' they said, 'make it then. Put all things in common; we are ready for it.' All the elements of the Revolution were there, it was only necessary to set them to work. When I returned to my lodging at night I said to myself, 'How fine is humanity after all, but no one knew it; it has always been calumiated.' Then

came the elections, the members of the Commune were named—and then little by little the ardor of devotion, and the desire for action were extinguished. Everyone returned to his usual task saying to himself, 'Now we have an honest government, let it act for us.'—What followed everyone knows.

Instead of acting for themselves, instead of marching forward, instead of advancing in the direction of a new order of things, the people, confiding in their governors, entrusted to them the charge of taking the initiative—this was the first consequence of the inevitable result of elections. Let us see now what these governors did who were invested with the confidence of all.

Never were elections more free than those of March, 1871. The opponents of the Commune admit it themselves. Never was the great mass of electors more influenced with the desire to place in power the best men, men of the future, true Revolutionists. And so they did. All well-known Revolutionists were elected by immense majorities; Jacobins, Blanquists, Internationalists, all the three revolutionary divisions were represented in the Council of the Commune. No election could give a better government.

But what was the result of it? Shut up in the City Mansion, charged to proceed after the forms established by preceding governments, these ardent revolutionists, these reformers found themselves smitten with incapacity and sterility. With all their good will and their courage they did not even know how to organize the defense of Paris. Of course people now blame the men, the individuals for this; but it was not the men who were the cause of this failure—it was the system carried out.

In fact universal suffrage, when it is quite free, can only produce, at best, an assembly which represents the average of the opinions which at the time are held by the mass of the people; and this average at the outbreak of the Revolution, has only a vague idea of the work to be accomplished, without understanding at all how they ought to undertake it. Ah, if the bulk of the nation, of the Commune, could only understand before the movement what was necessary to be done as soon as the government should be overturned! If this dream of the utopians of the chair could be realized we never would have had bloody revolutions; the will of the bulk of the nation once expressed the rest would submit to it with a good grace. But this is not how things are done. The Revolution bursts out long before a general understanding has been come to, and those who have a clear idea of what should be done the next day are only a very small minority. The great mass of the people have as yet only a general idea of the end which they wish realized, without knowing much how to advance toward that end, nor much confidence in the direction to follow. The practical solution will not be found, will not be made clear until the change will have already begun; it will be the product of the Revolution itself, of the people in action—or else it will be nothing, the brain of a few individuals being absolutely incapable of finding solutions which can only spring from the life of the people.

This is the situation which is reflected in the body elected by universal suffrage, even if it had not all the vices inherent in representative governments in general. The few men who represent the revolutionary idea of the epoch find themselves swamped among the representatives of the revolutionary schools of the past, and of the existing order of things. These men who would be so necessary among the people, particularly in the days of the Revolution, to sow broadcast their ideas, to put the mass in movement, to demolish the institutions of the past—find themselves shut up in a Hall, vainly discussing how to wrest concessions from the moderates, and how to convert their enemies, while there is really only one way of inducing them to accept the new idea—namely to put it in execution. The government becomes a parliament with all the vices of a middle-class parliament. Far from being a "revolutionary" government it becomes the greatest obstacle to the Revolution, and at last the people finds itself compelled to put it out of the way, to dismiss those that but yesterday it acclaimed as its chosen. But it is not so easy to do so. The new government which has hastened to organize a new administration in order to extend its domination and make itself obeyed, does not understand giving up so easily. Jealous of maintaining its power it clings to it with all the energy of an institution which has not yet had time to fall into senile decay. It decides to oppose force with force, and there is only one means then to dislodge it, namely, to take up arms, to make another revolution in order to dismiss those in whom the people had placed all their hopes.

There you see the Revolution divided against itself! After losing precious time in delays, it now loses its strength in intestine divisions between the friends of the new government, and those who see the necessity of dissolving it. And all this happens because it has not been understood that a new life requires new forms; that it is not by clinging to ancient forms that a revolution can be carried out! All this for not having understood the incompatibility of revolution and government, for not having seen that the one is, under whatever form it presents itself, the negation of the other, and that outside of Anarchy there is no such thing as revolution.

It is just the same with regard to that other form of "revolutionary government" so often extolled—a Revolutionary Dictature.

## PART II.

The dangers to which the Revolution is exposed when it allows itself to be controlled by an elected government, are so evident that a whole school of Revolutionists renounce entirely the idea of it. They understand that it is impossible for a people in insurrection to give themselves, by means of elections, any government but one that represents the past, and which must be like leaden shoes on the feet of the people, above all when it is necessary to accomplish that immense regeneration, economic, political and moral which we understand by the Social Revolution. They renounce then the idea of a "legal" government at least during that period which is a revolt against legality, and they advocate a "revolutionary dictature."

"The party," say they, "which will have overturned the government will take place of it of course. It will seize upon power and proceed in a revolutionary manner. It will take the measures necessary to secure the success of the insurrection; it will demolish the old institutions; it will organize the defense of the country. As for those who will not recognize its authority, why the guillotine will settle them, whether they belong to the people or the middle-class, if they refuse



to obey the orders necessary for the advance of the Revolution." The guillotine still in action! See how these budding Robespierres argue, who know nothing of the grand epic of the century but its period of decline, men who have never learned anything about it except from speeches of the hangers-on of the republic.

For us Anarchists the dictatorship of an individual or of a party (at bottom the very same thing) has been finally condemned. We know that Revolution and Government are incompatible; one must destroy the other, no matter what name is given to government, whether dictatorship, royalty, or parliament. We know that what makes the strength and the truth of our party is contained in this formula—"Nothing good or durable can be done except by the free initiative of the people, and every government tends to destroy it;" and so the very best among us, if their ideas had not to pass through the crucible of the popular mind, before being put into execution, and if they should become masters of that formidable machine—the government—and could thus act as they chose, would become in a week fit only for the gallows. We know whither every dictatorship leads, even the best intentioned, namely, to the death of all revolutionary movement. We know also in fine, that this idea of dictatorship is never anything more than a sickly product of governmental fetish-worship, which like religious fetish-worship has always served to perpetrate slavery.

But we do not now address ourselves to Anarchists. We speak to those governmental Revolutionists, who, led astray by the prejudices of their education, honestly deceive themselves, and ask nothing better than to discuss the question. We therefore speak to them from their own point of view.

And to begin with one general observation; those who preach dictatorship do not in general perceive that in sustaining this prejudice they only prepare the way for those who later on will cut their throats. There is however one word of Robespierre's which his admirers would do well to remember. He did not deny the dictatorship in principle; but "have good care about it," he answered abruptly to Mandar when he spoke to him of it, "Brissot would be the Dictator!" Yes, Brissot, the crafty girondin, deadly enemy of the leveling tendencies of the people, furious defender of property (though he once called it theft), Brissot, who would coolly have consigned to the Abbaye Prison Hebert, Marat, and all the moderate Jacobins!

Now this was said in 1792! At this time France had already been three years in Revolution! In fact Royalty no longer existed; it only awaited its death stroke; the feudal regime was actually abolished. And yet even at this time, when the Revolution rolled its waves untrammelled, it was still the counter-revolutionist Brissot who had the best chance to be made dictator! And who would it have been previously, in 1789? Mirabeau is the man who would have been acknowledged as the head of the government! The man who made a bargain with the king to sell him his eloquence—this is the man who would have been thrust into power at this time, if the insurgent people had not imposed its sovereignty sustained by its pikes, and if it had not proceeded by the accomplished facts of the *Jacquerie*, in making illusory every government constituted at Paris or in the departments.

But governmental prejudice blinds so thoroughly those who speak of dictatorship, that they prefer the dictatorship of a new Brissot or a Napoleon to abandoning the idea of giving another master to men who are breaking the chains of their slavery!

The secret societies of the time of the Restoration and of Louis-Philippe contributed powerfully to maintain this prejudice of dictatorship. The middle-class Republicans of the time aided by the workers made a long series of conspiracies, with the object of overturning Royalty and proclaiming the Republic. Not understanding the profound change that would have to be effected in France before even a republican regime could be established, they imagined that by means of a vast conspiracy, they would some day overturn Royalty, take possession of power and proclaim the Republic. For more than thirty years these secret societies never ceased to work with a devotion unlimited, and a heroic courage and perseverance. If the Republic resulted from the insurrection of 1848, it was thanks to these societies, and thanks to the propaganda by deed made by them for thirty years. Without their noble efforts the Republic would, up to the present, have been impossible.

The end they had in view was to get possession of power themselves, and to install a republican dictatorship. But of course they never succeeded. As ever, from the very nature of things, a conspiracy could not overturn Royalty. The conspirators had indeed prepared the way for its fall. They had spread widely the republican idea; their martyrs had made it the ideal of the people. But the final effort which definitely overturned the king of the bourgeoisie was much greater and stronger than any that could come from a secret society; it came from the mass of the people.

The result is known. The party which had prepared the way for the fall of royalty found itself thrust aside from the steps of the Government House. Others, too prudent to run the risks of conspiracy, but better known, more moderate also, lying in wait for the opportunity of grasping power, took the place which the conspirators hoped to conquer at the point of the bayonet. Journalists, lawyers, good talkers who worked hard to make a name for themselves while the true republicans forged weapons or expired in jail, took possession of power. Some of them, already well-known were acclaimed by the people; others pushed themselves forward and were accepted because their name represented nothing more than a programme of agreement with everybody.

It is useless to tell us that this happened because of a want of practical spirit in the party of action, and that others will be able to do better in future.—No, a thousand times no! It is a law as immutable as that which governs the movement of the stars, that the party of action must be thrown aside, and the intriguers and talkers seize upon power. They are always better known to the great mass that makes the final effort. They get more votes, because with or without voting papers, by acclamation or by the ballot-box, at the bottom it is always a kind of tacit election which is made in such cases by acclamation. They are acclaimed by everybody and above all by the enemies of the Revolution, who prefer to put forward nobodies, and thus by acclamation those men are accepted as rulers who are really their enemies of the movement or indifferent toward it.

The man who more than any other was the incarnation of this system of conspiracy, the man who by a life spent in prison paid for his devotion to this system, on the eve of his death uttered these words, which of themselves make an entire programme—"Neither God nor Master!"

### PART III.

To imagine that a government can be overturned by a secret society, and that secret society can take its place, is an error into which have fallen all the revolutionary organizations which sprang to life in the bosom of the republican middle-class since 1820. And yet facts abound which prove what an error it is. What devotion, what abnegation, what perseverance was not displayed by the republican secret societies of the Young Italy Party! And yet all this immense work, all these sacrifices made by the youth of Italy, before which even those of

the Russian Revolutionary youth pale, all the corpses piled up in the casemates of Austrian fortresses, and under the knife and bullets of the executioner—all this only brought into power the crafty, robbing middle-class and royalty!

It was the same in Russia. It is difficult to find in history a secret organization which has obtained, with such limited means, results so immense as those attained by the Russian youth, or which has shown such energy or such powerful activity as their executive committee. It has shaken a colossus which appeared invulnerable—Czarism; and it has rendered autocratic government henceforth impossible in Russia. And still it is only simple fools who imagine that the Executive Committee will get into power when the crown of Alexander III. is dragged in the mire. Other men—the prudent ones, who strove to make a name for themselves while the revolutionists laid and sprung mines or perished in Siberia, these others—the intriguers, the talkers, the lawyers, the journalists who now and again shed a few tears very soon dried up, on the tomb of the heroes, and make believe they are friends of the people—these are the men who will come and take the place left vacant by the Government, and will shout "stand back" to those "unknown persons" who will have prepared the way for the Revolution.

It is inevitable, it cannot be otherwise. For it is not secret societies nor even Revolutionary organizations that can give the finishing blow to governments. Their function, their historic mission is to prepare men's minds for the Revolution and then when men's minds are prepared and external circumstances are favorable, the final rush is made, not by the group that initiated the movement, but by the mass of the people altogether outside of the society. On the 31st of August Paris was deaf to the appeals of Blanqui. Four days later he proclaimed the fall of the government; but then the Blanquists were no longer the initiators of the movement; it was the people, the millions who dethroned the man of December, and proclaimed the humbugs whose names for two years had resounded in their ears. When a Revolution is ready to burst out, when the movement is felt in the air, when its success is already certain, then a thousand new men, on whom the organization has never exercised any direct influence, come and join the movement, like birds of prey coming to the field of battle to feed on the victims. These help to make the final effort, but it is not in the ranks of the sincere and irreconcilable conspirators, it is among the men on the fence that they look for their leaders. The conspirators who still are possessed with the prejudice of a dictatorship work then unconsciously to put into power their own enemies.

But if all this that we have just said is true with regard to political revolutions or rather outbreaks, it is much more true with regard to the Revolution we desire—the Social Revolution. To allow any government to be established, a strong and recognized power, is to paralyse the work of the Revolution at once. The good that this government could do is nil, and the evil immense.

For what is it we have on hand? what do we understand by Revolution? It is not a simple change of governors. It is the taking possession by the people of all social wealth. It is the abolition of all the forces which have so long hampered the development of Humanity. But is it by decrees emanating from a government that this immense economic revolution can be accomplished? We have seen in the past century the Polish revolutionary dictator Kosciusko decree the abolition of personal servitude, yet the servitude continued to exist for eighty years after this decree. We have seen the Convention, the omnipotent Convention, the terrible Convention as its admirers call it, decree the equal division per head of all the Communal lands taken back from the nobles. Like so many others this decree remained a dead letter because in order to carry it out it was necessary that the proletarians of the rural districts should make an entirely new Revolution, and Revolutions are not made by the force of decrees. In order that the taking possession of social wealth should become an accomplished fact it is necessary that the people should have their hands free, that they would shake off the slavery to which they are too much habituated, that they act according to their own will, and march forward without waiting for orders from anyone. And it is this very thing which a dictatorship would prevent however well intentioned it might be, while it would be incapable of advancing in the slightest degree the march of the Revolution.

But if government, were it even an ideal Revolutionary government, creates no new force and is of no use whatever in the work of demolition which we have to accomplish, still less can we count on it for the work of reorganization which must follow that of demolition. The economic change which will result from the Social Revolution will be so immense and so profound, it must so change all the relations based today on property and exchange, that it is impossible for one or any individual to elaborate the different social forms, which must spring up in the society of the future. This elaboration of new social forms can only be made by the collective work of the masses. To satisfy the immense variety of conditions and needs which will spring up as soon as private property shall be abolished, it is necessary to have the collective suppleness of mind of the whole people. Any authority external to it will only be an obstacle, only a trammel on the organic labor which must be accomplished, and beside that a source of discord and hatred.

But it is full time to give up this illusion so often proved false and so often dearly paid for, of a Revolutionary Government. It is time to admit, once for all, this political axiom that a government cannot be revolutionary. People talk of the convention, but let us not forget that the few measures taken by the Convention, little revolutionary though they were, were only the sanction of action accomplished by the people who at the time trampled under foot all governments. As Victor Hugo has said, Danton pushed forward Robespierre, Marat watched and pushed on Danton, and Marat himself was pushed on by Cimourdain—this personification of the clubs of wild enthusiasts and rebels. Like all the governments that preceded it and followed it, the Convention was only a drag on the action of the people.

The facts which history teach us are so conclusive in this respect, the impossibility of a Revolutionary Government and the injurious effect of that which is called by the name are so evident, that it would seem difficult to explain the determination with which a certain school calling itself Socialist maintains the idea of a government. But the explanation is very simple. It is that Socialists though they say they are the followers of this school, have an entirely different conception from ours of the Revolution which we have to accomplish. For them, as for all the middle-class Radicals, the Social Revolution is rather an affair of the future about which we have not to think much at present. What they dream of in their inmost thoughts, though they don't dare to confess it, is something entirely different. It is the installation of a government like that of Switzerland or the United States, making some attempts at appropriation in favor of the State of what they call "public services." It is something after the ideal of Bismarck. It is a compromise made in advance between the Socialistic aspirations of the masses and the desires of the middle class. They would indeed wish the appropriation to be complete, but they have not the courage to attempt it; so they put it off to the next century, and before the battle they enter into negotiation with the enemy.

For us who understand that the moment is near for giving a mortal blow to the middle-class, that the time is not far off when the people will be able to lay their hands on all social wealth and reduce the class of exploiters to a state of impotence, for us I say there can be no hesitation in the matter. We fling ourselves body and soul into the Social Revolution, and as on the road we follow, a government, whatever may be its device, is an obstacle, we will sweep from our path all ambitious men, however they shall come to thrust themselves upon us as governors of our destinies.

Away with Governments; make room for the People, and Anarchy!

\* This was written before the death of Alexander III.

## 168

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