

Freedom

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1848-1871.

A speech delivered by P. Kropotkin at the Commune Celebration, 1898.

We are here to-night to commemorate two great events: the 50th anniversary of the revolution of 1848 in Europe, and the 27th anniversary of the Commune revolution of 1871 at Paris.

We have so often commemorated the 18th of March, so often spoken of this uprising, that he who will consult our papers for the last ten or eleven years will find in the commemoration articles and speeches nearly all that can be said about that great event. A most instructive booklet could be made of these Commune speeches and papers.

I will say, therefore, a few words on the Revolution of 1848.

To begin with, *no proper history of that movement has ever been written*—not even by Radicals, not even by Socialists.

Up till now all histories of revolutionary movements were written according to the following receipt:—

The misery of the people was great; the people revolted. It was partially successful, but ultimately defeated: there was great bloodshed—quite useless. The people was defeated because it was not organised, was not sufficiently disciplined. They went too far in their demands.

What can be deducted from such books and pamphlets?—Be disciplined! Don't go too far in your demands. Obey your leaders! Make no unsuccessful movement!

Such a view, however, is utterly false in three respects.

False as regards the time *before* the revolution. False as regards the revolution itself. False as regards its consequences.

Before every revolution times are undoubtedly bad. Popular misery is a source of discontent. But every thing is not bad all round during the years which precede a revolution.

Revolutions have never been and *never will be a result of sheer despair*. Sudden misery and crises may prevail in the years which precede a revolution, but these years are also always years of *hope*. It is *hope*—not *despair*—which prepares revolutions.

The down-trodden peasants, workers, or nationalities begin to hope in the possibility of a better future. In the name of that hope, agitation spreads amidst the peasants, the workers, the citizens, the down-trodden nationalities.

It was the *hope* of getting rid of British rule which inspired the Irish a hundred years ago, in 1798. Hope which took hold of the minds in Europe in 1848. Hope which moved the Paris workers in 1871.

Another feature. No revolution falls upon us from the skies. *Each of them has been prepared in two ways.*

The revolution may be purely political in its course and results—as the March revolution in Berlin was to a great extent. But be it purely political or even purely nationalist—it was a *Social*, a *Socialist*, a *Communist* movement of ideas, a movement in the *economical* sphere which in every case has prepared it. *Masses of people have never been nor will be set into motion on merely political grounds.* This is a lesson of history which ought to be impressed upon all those who live under the illusion that the political institutions of a country may be changed, or independence may be won, in the name of political liberty alone. *There must be a distinct economical issue in view for the people if you expect that people to act in a revolutionary way.* The clearer the issue—the better; but it *must* be there.

So it was in France in 1789—the abolition of rural and municipal serfdom and of obligations resulting therefrom. So it was in 1848.

The years 1830-1848 were years of a most extensive Socialist propaganda in Western Europe. The number of Socialist and especially Communist books, papers and pamphlets which were circulated during those years in this country and in France was enormous. These books, papers and pamphlets are forgotten, ignored by our generation; this ignorance is the only reason why we hear so much of “scientific Socialism” as being of recent creation, whilst there is not, in the so-called *scientific Socialism*, one single assertion, general or of detail, which would not have been developed, even more scientifically, and always with more lucidity, in the English and French literature of 1830-1848. Every year we discover in Robert Owen, in Thöarpson, in Proudhon and in a mass of writers unearthed but lately, every one of the ideas which are enunciated now as new discoveries, in a less metaphysic garb but in a more scientific shape.

These were wonderful years, when an immense amount of Socialist and Anarchist thought were thrown out into the world, and circulated in scores of thousands of copies.

And these ideas bore their fruit. Not one single revolution has ever

broken out in the world without having been prepared by scores of partial outbreaks. Revolutions are not military parades. It is the mass of the people which comes on the scene in a revolution; and masses of people have never been moved except by scores of partial, preliminary outbreaks.

Hundreds of partial peasants' outbreaks took place in France before the people of Paris took the Bastille on July 14, 1789.

Scores of small outbreaks and machine wars took place in this country before '48; and even in down-trodden Germany the little fighting which took place at Berlin on the 18th of March 1848 was preceded by several outbreaks of weavers and coal miners, only now brought to the memory of our generation by our friend Hauptman.

In France, the reign of Louis-Philippe was an uninterrupted series of political conspiracies of the Blanquists, and of labourers' outbreaks of which the Lyons insurrection broke out with the watchword:—

To live working,
To die fighting!

As to Italy I hardly need mention the countless attempts of Mazzini and his followers to shake off the Austrian yoke and the hundreds of popular outbreaks which took place in the provinces belonging to the Pope or ruled by the Austrians.

The leading feature of the revolution of 1848 was, first of all, that it was *European*—not merely national. No sooner had it broken out in Rome than it spread to France, to Vienna, to Berlin. It began a new era. It showed that henceforward insurrections may still remain local and national, but that revolutions of any serious moment will henceforward be inter-national. They will spread, like wild fire, to several countries at once. Even insular England was in 1844 on the verge of a revolution, which was only averted by rapid concessions to popular agitation.

Henceforward, revolution will not be kept back by frontiers. In each country, of course, they will take their own character, but they will be European—not local. At the next revolutionary outburst, Germany, which is now in the state that France was fifty years ago, will probably make its revolution of 1848; she will try State Socialism in a unitarian, centralised republic. Russia may make her revolution of 1789; but France, owing to the beacon that was planted by the Commune of Paris in 1871, and to the subsequent growth of Communalist ideas, will already proceed with the dismemberment of the State, and will try something better than State Socialism: her revolution will bear traces of Anarchist ideas; Spain, and also possibly Italy, will follow her more or less in that new phase of human development.

When we now read the French republican literature of the “forties,” we clearly see that for the republican of those times, the republic was not a mere change in the forms of government. People lived then under the illusion that *the moment that France would get rid of Kings, and have a national parliament elected by universal suffrage,—convinced Equality would come out by itself, through legislation, through the ‘Popular Government,’ in the ‘Popular State’—the Volks-Staat as German Social-Democrats say up to the present date.*

The State would put an end to the prevailing misery. The State—that is the National Parliament—would reorganise industry, by aiding the workmen's associations to become the owners of the factories. The State would send “armies” of workers to bring under culture new lands and cultivate them in accordance with science—you know well these fancies, be it only through Marx and Engels' “Communist Manifesto” which remains a sort of bible for the German Social-Democrats. Fifty years ago, these illusions were shared in France by nearly all Socialists, as they are now shared in Germany.

Federalist ideas were then repudiated in France as an incarnation of reaction—just as they are now repudiated in Germany. The worship of the Convention of 1793, and the Jacobite Club, which were represented as having *made* the Great Revolution, while in reality they were obstacles to whatever really had been achieved in the economic field by the French peasants and workers—the worship of what they described as the *dictature of the people* but what was really a dictature of the few against the people, was supreme. Whatever has been done by the people itself in the country or in the revolutionary municipalities (the taking of the land and the destruction of feudal servitude) was either totally ignored, or represented as the work of paid agents of reaction.

In this state of mind Frenchmen nominated their revolutionary Provisionary Government; in this state of mind they elected a National Assembly.

The disappointment was terrible. No revolution in the facts of real life having taken place in the provinces; no revolution whatever in economical relations having taken place even in Paris, the revolutionary

work having been left to a National Representation—this representation became the weapon of the anti-Socialist reaction.

In vain the people of Paris tried to impress more advanced ideas upon that body. Once in power it organised the middle-class volunteers, and while it relegated the two Socialist members of the Provisional Government—Louis Blanc and Albert—to a Ministry or Committee of Reforms in the Luxembourg palace, it lost no time in organising the military power which was to be used to crush a possible outbreak.

Louis Blanc and Albert, supported by a committee of workers, had to face the insoluble problem of organising State production. Isolated as they were from the masses, which alone could have given the inspiration for a revolutionary change in the ways and means of production, they soon were driven to simply organise relief-works. Unemployed from all provinces rushed in scores of thousands to Paris. Revolutionists would have seen in the mass of the best workers of Paris the element for taking possession—*de facto*, irrespective of the sanction of the Chamber—of all that was necessary for living and producing, to *vivre en travaillant* (to live working), as the Lyons weavers said. But the State-Socialist Louis Blanc—a worshipper of order and discipline—gradually dropped into relief-works for unemployed and into State's aid to co-operative societies, while the government adroitly sent its own man (Thomas) to render even these relief-works as unpopular as possible.

The workers of Paris, on the proclamation of the Republic, had sent a deputation to the government "to offer three months of misery to the service of the Republic." They hoped that something would be made for them in the meantime. But when the government felt itself strong enough, it discharged the relief-works' brigades, and ordered part of them to be marched to Algeria....

"The alarm-bell began to ring on the tower of St. Sulpice, calling the proletarians to arms," as Herzen wrote. Barricades grew up; General Cavaignac reconnoitred the position. The fight began. The proletarians fought with the energy of despair; but the troops, gorged with brandy, excited against the "robbers," fought this time and, after a bloody fight which lasted for three days, the proletarians were defeated.

Massacres and transportations by the thousand began. Men, women and children were shot by the hundred. A dark, gloomy night set over Europe. A wild, black reaction began. Even Socialist ideas were wiped out of the minds of the next generation. We began re-building that glorious building like men who come to the buried site of an old city and begin to build a new one, almost unconscious of the treasures of architecture buried under the loam and rubbish accumulated above them.

—Another unsuccessful revolution! the wise-acres say....

But there is no such thing as an unsuccessful revolution! We were told all sort of nonsense about that revolution. But here we are now, several hundred thousand in Europe and America, commemorating to-day that revolution, inspiring us with its ideals, with its heroism, and how many hundreds of young ones amongst us will take to-night the silent oath to live for it, and to die for it.

And then, how many men fell in the street battle in Berlin?—Not a hundred. Much less than the Russian youth lost within the last twenty years. And what was the result?—Serfdom was done away with in Germany. After 1848, it could be withheld no longer. Personal servitude was abolished and, by the way, a blow was given to absolute rule.

In Italy, where pre-revolutionary movements were far more important, the result was infinitely greater. The rule of the Pope and Church over large populations was done away with. But do you know what the rule of the priests meant? Read Lily's article in the last number of the *Nineteenth Century*. Inquisition reigned in full, up to the revolution in the Pope's States. For a blasphemous word the tortures of the church, strapado and fire, were applied. Why! even in Switzerland, in the German cantons which had not been touched by the Great French Revolution of the last century, physical torture—the thumb-screw—was officially recognised as a necessary part of the preliminary inquest. And I will ask the Russians who may be in this hall—how many more years serfdom would have lasted in Russia, if our best men—Herzen and Bakunin—had not lived through the revolution of 1848 and taken in it a lively part? if a whole generation—"the men of the forties"—had not grown up out of that revolution from which our next generation—the Tshomyshyevskis, the Mikhaileffs, the Dotrolutoffs—drew their inspiration?

That revolution has changed the very face of Europe—the way of thinking itself on the Continent. And they—the formalists—talk of unsuccessful revolutions!

But new ideas had to germinate in order to make Communism realisable. Before 1848, Communism too much appealed to sentiment, to brotherly feelings, to moral principles. It required a Proudhon to come forward and to say: I don't ask you to love your brothers—you won't: you hate those whom you exploit. I ask you to count. I speak to you in the name of arithmetic, and prove to you by arithmetic that your system is wrong—an idea still fuller developed, as you know, by Marx.

And it required again a Proudhon to come forward with his *General Idea of the Revolution of the XIX Century* and his *Federative Principle*, and analysing that revolution of 1848, to prove that it must have failed because it undertook the impossible—to make the social revolution through a governing body.

The social revolution is an economic revolution, and not a political one; he proved it must attack the system of property, not the system of elections. And when the self-government question came under dis-

cussion, he exclaimed and proved: "The Commune will be *all* or she will be *nothing*."

This was what the Commune of Paris of 1871 attempted to realise.

At a time when the Jacobinist centralisation ideas were revived and made a fearful havoc even within the International Workingmen's Association—everyone paying a tribute to them, the Paris workers made a new step and planted a new banner in the revolutionary movement: the Commune!

The commune, supreme in its entire economical and political life. The commune becoming *all*, after having so long been *nothing*, nothing but a parcel of the State.

"Let every other part of France do as they like: call in a king if they believe still in his divine powers. Let them support any Church and all Churches they like—we, Paris, don't want to be governed by them nor do we pretend to govern them!"

This principle was so new that even in the advanced camp of the Socialists it was not understood. And yet, it was the principle of the revolution of the communes in the twelfth century which was now proclaimed by the workers of Paris, and was to become henceforward the watchword of the Social revolution.

Why should Paris, Lyons, St. Etienne be kept back in their progress towards Communism by the backward stay of the populations of Brittany and Western France altogether. Why should it be dragged backwards, obey a king whom you believe in, give up our children to the priest, and never make a move in the Communist direction, only for the sake of belonging to the same State as you!

To exchange with you our produce; to federate with you for building a railway or a canal; or for repulsing a common enemy—well and good! But why should we obey the rulers whom you choose still to impose upon yourselves? We are strong enough to live by ourselves!

This was the new principle which proclaimed the people of Paris on the 18th of March in 1871. A principle so little understood at that time that for years after the Commune we, Anarchists, had to sustain the most bitter polemics—and have partly still—against the leaders of Social-Democracy who treated us as fools for expressing such ideas. Even now, how many will not see that this was the fundamental idea of the March uprising of Paris—so admirably well worded in the proclamation of the Committee of the National Guard.

The conditions in which the Commune was proclaimed—with German armies at its door, after a crushing national defeat—and with the mistake of a centralised power for Paris which was made at the outset, the Commune could not live long enough to pass from the principle it had proclaimed to its application. *Quite a forest of State prejudices had to be cleared in Paris itself*; they had to be weeded out of the hearts of the very best men who gave themselves heart and soul to the movement, before the principle could produce what it was worth.

The Commune lived but seventeen days, and a fortnight after its proclamation the Versailles government already began to massacre all prisoners whom its soldiers could occasionally lay hands on, in the battle or by treachery.

A desperate fight against the "Prussians of Versailles" absorbing all the thoughts of the population, it necessarily brought into prominence men of a military turn of mind in preference to those who saw the salvation of the Commune in sweeping Communist measures for the masses.

Some such measures were taken, nevertheless, and the general approval they met with on behalf of the toilers of Paris only proved how much more popular the Commune would have been had she resorted to measures of that sort from the outset. But the Socialist movement was so young yet! It only began to revive within the last three or four years to '71.

But that wild beast Gallifet who has on his own conscience—if he has any, which I doubt—the massacre of at least some ten thousand men, women and children, this "sword" of France which is still alive, understood perfectly well the filiation between 1848 and 1871. When he ordered the massacre of columns of prisoners—of workers, of course—he always ordered the "grey beards" to be shot first. "They have seen June '48" he said.

I will not speak of these massacres. You must read them yourselves.

And now, looking upon the 27 years which we have lived since, I see two things: a revolution which would try to establish State Socialism in France, by means of a central government, as it was done in '48, is no more possible. No such attempt will be made. The next revolution in France, whose date no one can foresee, will break out in many centres at once. It will start with the proclamation of Communes, each of which will try to find its own solution for the Social Question. The same in Spain, and very much the same in Italy.

As to the growth of Socialist and Anarchist ideas, you know it. They spread everywhere, penetrate in all classes of society, pervade European thought. And more and more the idea which we are preaching becomes generally accepted. The Social Revolution must begin with organising *Consumption*, not *Production*. Well-being must be secured for every inhabitant of the territory, and production must be regulated in accordance with the needs of consumption, not *vice-versa*.

These are the conquests which we owe to our fathers of 1848, to our predecessors of 1871.

A WOMAN'S MOTTO.

Down in the South of France stands an old fortress where a woman was imprisoned for 40 years, and in her prison cell is seen to this day, carved deeply into the stone wall, the single word—"Resist."

AMERICAN NOTES.

"There be wars and rumors of wars"; the American public is considerably like a great bullying school boy with too much body for his brains, going constantly about saying, "I can lick you," but who when it comes to bracing up to the combat puts his fist in his eye and bawls, "my mother won't let me." At least that is its present gallant attitude, an attitude which has been increasing in absurdity ever since the disaster of the Maine aggravated our already lacerated feelings on the score of the Spanish minister's designation of McKinley as a "low politician." Verily it was almost worth while to have been a Spanish official for the sake of seeing the great American blunderbuss wipe its face so pacifically and assume an air of Christian dignity nearly equal to presenting the other cheek. Not that similar epithets mightn't have been used by half the voting community prior to McKinley's election; but the American theory is that you may say all things about a man before he is invested with the holy halo of constitutional power; after that the sacred alchemy is wrought whereby "low politicians" become "highminded statesmen." All true patriots see that their neighbors act up to this theory, and any observations to the contrary are for private circulation only, the art of the consummate politician being to circulate the same widely without being caught. In the case of Minister De Lome, however, it was a three-handed game and the Cuban had the "Joker." He must have felt infinitely disgusted with the results of his labors, however, when nothing came of it but the Minister's resignation. No doubt he felt that he would enjoy being a man without a government for awhile for the privilege of repeating what De Lome said. But alas! He, too, must be patriotic; he too, must cringe and suffer the freedom of personal opinion to be tamed and tied and made to dance on its hind legs, in the long-deferred hope of winning recognition from the "great republic,"—under the imperative necessity of standing all insults to win the vague favor of indifference towards the government of Cuba that is in the throes of birth. For pity 'tis, 'tis not to give birth to a free society but something of the same old sort that Cuba is burned, harried, and desolated.

Since the disaster of the Maine, however, though McKinley is not called a low politician there are plenty of observations to the effect that if Andrew Jackson was in power he wouldn't stand it. Of course these would-be warriors never seem to consider that they are not bound to stand it if they don't want to; they look anxiously at mother McKinley, but seeing no sign stick their fists in their eyes and mourn about Andrew Jackson, Saint of the American militants.

Some idea of the masterly "statesmanship" which is meanwhile evolving in the Government's brain (?) is hinted in the persistent rumor that the U. S. will eventually recognize Cuban independence with the proviso that Spain is to receive 10,000,000 dol. indemnity, to be collected from the desperate dearth of the desolated island by United States officials! This statement has the postscript: "The money will not be advanced by a syndicate." O no; perish the thought! It will be furnished by philanthropic gentlemen interested in—republican principles! anxious to furnish a "sound money system" to the people of Cuba! who calmly look on while men are cut to pieces, starved to death, tortured, maimed, blinded, bruised, broken, by thousands, quietly calculating what every thousand more deaths means 1,000,000 dol. less! And the unborn generations of wretched Cubans will be able to turn over the interests to the unborn successors of the philanthropists, and reflect that this is what their fathers "fought, and bled, and died for." O war, war! what a fine game you are for politicians, "low" and high!

The trial of the deputy-sheriff for the shooting at Hazelton, pursues the usual course of trials of officials by officials. Notwithstanding the indisputable evidence that the men were murdered, not one deputy has so far admitted that he fired. Nobody expects anything from the trial but a public whitewashing of the crime.

The government has found Emil Ruedebush guilty of violating the obscenity law and sentenced him to pay 1,200 dol. fine and spend a day in jail. Evidently, the judge was of a practical turn of mind, seeing more profit in a big fine than a long imprisonment. Ruedebush declines to appeal, being "disgusted with the courts."

The Commune celebration will be observed in New York with John Most as speaker, in Philadelphia with Lucy Parsons, and in Pittsburg with Emma Goldman. I am not informed as to the other cities, but undoubtedly the day will be kept in Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco. It will also be made the occasion of the reawakening of *Solidarity* from its cataleptic sleep, with Jno. Edelman as editor and Mr. Cooper assistant, both of New York. *Solidarity* has not, heretofore, been a successful production, owing to various combined causes. The child of Merlino's hurried visit to America some five years ago, brought out without any sufficient guarantee for its continuance, left to the labor of a few who were unable to sustain the entire burden, it kept up just long enough to speak its mind on the Homestead matter and then fell asleep; revived a second time during the period of Mowbray's most active efforts, it again succumbed, and the East was again left without a periodical. Then appeared the *Rebel*, the most attractive journal ever issued by American anarchists in point of get-up and fair in contents. Yet it went the way of *Solidarity* and its predecessor the *Alarm*. This is a

discouraging history. Yet a paper in the East is certainly needed, and "hope springs eternal in the human breast." Personally I have little faith in papers dependent upon groups of contributors; for either the policy of the paper is too much modified by the groups (which is moral suicide), or the groups refuse their support if the policy is steadfast, original, and uncompromising enough to disregard them. The former is the fate of most of the reform papers I see, the latter that of the few exceptions—notably the *Alarm* of D. D. Lum. It would be well if some one could suggest a clear passage between this Scylla and Charybdis.

One of the sad events of our season is the suicide of Wm. Hanson, an Anarchist individualist and Christian of the Arch. Gorrie type. Years ago we here in Philadelphia had an economic reading class of about twenty members, and Wm. Hanson was our reader. Those who heard him were ever impressed by his clear, deliberate, effective rendering of every sentence. Since that time three, and three of the best, that met in that circle have committed suicide, all by poison. One a Russian, Moses Dropkin, one an American, Dyer Lum, one an Englishman, Wm. Hanson. You see America affects all national temperaments alike, with its proud isolated pessimism.

It seems a pity, though, that anarchists should voluntarily choose to die alone, like defeated stock-brokers.

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE.

SOME WISE WORDS.

Humane Science Lectures ("Humanitarian League": published by George Bell.)

The name of Edward Carpenter on the opening essay of this brief series is enough to secure the book a welcome among Anarchists. The object of all the four writers is to introduce some principle of humanity into subjects from which it has hitherto been excluded as unscientific or sentimental. Carpenter treats of science as a whole, showing how narrow and one-sided the present methods of study are. In any true investigation, even where definite knowledge is the only aim, it is impossible to isolate any part of nature entirely from the rest, so close are the bonds which hold things together. The effect even of inharmonious and hurtful forces has to be considered before we can really obtain true knowledge of any living thing. Nor is it right that the objects of science, such as the stars or the eye or the heart's action, should be studied merely as abstract questions to be expressed in terms of number, weight, or force. The human elements—the elements of emotion or morals, must be taken into account. For as Carpenter says of the eye,

Beyond the focussing and photographing of rays it has faculties even more far-reaching and wonderful. In a hundred ways it manages somehow to convey intelligence of Command, Control, Power, of Pity, Love, Sympathy, and all those myriad emotions which glit through the human mind. Highly specialised though it is, it is obvious that to call it a machine for focussing rays of light is monstrously and ludicrously inadequate—even as it would be to call the Heart (the very centre of emotion and life, and the symbol of human love and courage) a common pump.

Arthur Thomson follows the same lines in his essay on the humane study of Natural History, and next Douglas Morrison discusses the treatment of prisoners. He shows that European opinion is distinctly against the present method, and that one Commission after another has condemned it. Prisons do immense harm to the criminal instead of good. We have already quoted from Oscar Wilde's "Ballad of Reading Gaol" to show how true that is. Nor do prisons repress crimes by frightening people from committing it. From first to last they are failures, only increasing the misery and degrading the nature of the human race. The reforms which Morrison asks for are certainly moderate enough. They are mainly a First Offenders' Act, which would in itself save something like a third of the 160,000 men and women imprisoned in England during a year from ever coming under the degradation of a gaol at all. For ordinary cases he urges an extension of the Scotch system of mixed fines and imprisonment. And for habitual criminals he would like to see Industrial Settlements founded in the country. If the law directed that all who lived on the labor of others should inhabit these settlements, their population would be varied and interesting.

As a more humane system of medicine, Dr. Milrie Bramwell gives a most interesting sketch of the growth of Suggestion and Hypnotism in their relation to health and the cure of disease. He seems to incline to the view that the power of suggestion is "normal" (not produced by any "morbid" or unwholesome state) and that it really lies with the patient himself, and is not due to any hidden "force" or "current" passing from the operator. Many very remarkable instances of cure under the treatment are given. One experiment may be quoted in brief:

Delboeuf, the man of science, explained to one of his servants what he wished to do, and obtained her consent to the experiment. With a red-hot bar he made a burn on both of her arms, both burns being of the same size. At the same time he suggested that she should feel pain in the left arm alone. During the night the woman felt pain in the left arm, but none in the right. Next morning the scar on the right showed no inflammation or redness. The wound on the left was inflamed and blistered. Next day it was worse. Delboeuf hypnotised her again, and removed the pain by suggestion. The wound dried and inflammation disappeared.

And yet when first a Scotch doctor practised this method in India, and reported on it to the Medical Society in London, it was proposed that no account be taken of his paper, "for pain was a wise provision of Nature with which it was impious to interfere, and patients ought to suffer pain as it did them good and enabled them to recover better."

We think we have heard that sort of thing about Poverty as well as about Pain. "Poverty is a wise provision of Nature. Impious to interfere. Does the people good." Yes, thank you. We know all about that. But let the preachers commence!

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IRELAND'S COMMEMORATION.

It has been the fashion lately to commemorate the hundredth or even the fiftieth anniversary of any event of importance. The telegraph has so brought the world together that congratulations are exchanged by peoples most remote from one another. Days of victory bring kindly messages from the uttermost parts of the earth to the representatives of the fortunate nations. Even birthday compliments fly along the wires to mark the time that gave mankind the greater poets, statesmen and savants. This year Ireland, too, is busy rescuing from dusty oblivion names and days of past greatness, but unlike the rest of the world she should receive condolences instead of congratulation for her memories of the dead are memories of defeat. Ireland's flood-time came to her in the last century, but instead of bearing her to fortune, it rolled on leaving her a wreck still pounding on the rocks of English ignorance and prejudice. It is true her flotsam and jetsam have been gathered up by thrifty hands and turned to good account, yet hoards in banks and warships built for the world's navies in Belfast do not altogether counterbalance her periodic insurrections and famines, or the rifts in what ought to be her national life.

A LOST CAUSE.

But there are some lost causes which are more glorious than those that have been won, and there are many of us who say with William O'Brien, "Better to have failed upon the slopes of Vinegar Hill than have been among those who triumphed on the field of Waterloo." For after all Waterloo was but a struggle between one despot and many, a battle of kites and crows, while at Vinegar Hill the Irish peasants, unarmed except for pikes and scythes, fell fighting for home and life and liberty against hired troops trained in years of European warfare. But even so, if it had not been that the Irish leaders, unused to sights of carnage, shrank humanly from the horrors of bloodshed, the Wexford peasants might have been able to defy the English forces as the peasants in Wicklow did under Joseph Holt and Irish history might have had a page or two less of humiliation.

A VALIANT REBEL.

Holt's part in the Irish rebellion was a remarkable one although his name is less known than those of many others among the men of '98. He was not a United Irishman, but he was suspected of sympathy with them, and so his house was burned down (a favorite method of stilling disaffection in those days and) he took to the Wicklow Hills where he soon gathered round him a formidable band of insurgents. For six months he defied the united efforts of the British army to crush or capture him; so that there is hardly a glen in Wicklow that was not made memorable by his gallant exploits. Often he and his men chased the British troops into the very suburbs of Dublin, until at last the government were forced to make terms with him, by which he and his family were permitted to depart for New South Wales. He was allowed to return to Ireland in 1809, where he died in 1826. All honor to his memory!

THE UNITED IRISHMEN.

It is often asked in England who were the United Irishmen and what were their aims. They were originally a body of patriotic men, who hoped, by drawing all classes of Irishmen into a close bond of national brotherhood to extort from the English government a recognition of their country's rights. Their oath, which to take or administer was decreed to be a capital offence, ran as follows:

I, A. B., in the presence of God do pledge myself to my country, that I will use all my abilities and influence in the attainment of an impartial and adequate representation of the Irish nation in parliament; and as a means of absolute and immediate necessity in the establishment of this chief good of Ireland, I will endeavour, as much as lies in my abilities, to forward a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, a communion of rights and an union of power among Irishmen of all religious persuasions, without which every reform in Parliament must be partial, not national, and inadequate to the wants, delusive to the wishes, and insufficient for the freedom and happiness of this country.

A HANGING MATTER.

It is almost impossible to believe that men were hanged, drawn and quartered merely a hundred years ago in Ireland, for being even suspected of having administered an oath such as this. But it was so. Wolfe Tone, who may be called the founder of the United Irishmen, was the first to see that the only point on which men of diverse classes and religious opinions could unite was that of good citizenship: the point for which the various parties of progress are to-day still aiming. In our next month's issue we propose to give a sketch of Wolfe Tone's work in the cause of Irish nationality. Meanwhile we beg all comrades' patient

sympathy with those Irishmen of to-day who are not afraid to honor the men who died for it a hundred years ago.

OTHER TIMES, OTHER MORALS.

The Irish patriots are not hanged now—they are only baited and sneered at. There are, however, a good many among them who have been exiled, or have seen the inside of English gaols and felt the handcuffs on their wrists, as Mr. Curzon reminded Michael Davitt, in the opening days of the present parliamentary session. Davitt and his fellows, strangely enough, feel it an honor to have worn fetters in such a cause. At the commemorative meeting held by Irish men and women in St. James's Hall, Feb. 16th, the chairman J. J. O'Kelly was elected to that honor chiefly because he had been sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered for the part he had taken in the rising in the middle of this century (1867). His sentence of course was commuted, for now-a-days Liverpool is not a ten days' sail from Dublin, and English governments cannot punish rebels without running the gauntlet of a swift and wholesome criticism of their doings, which even the most pachydermatous of governments, as we have seen in the cases of Germany, Russia and Spain, shrink from enduring. The pain and wrong that Ireland suffered a hundred years ago has borne this fruit; there are now in England and Scotland many firm and true friends who will back her in her struggle to win the nationality of which England has defrauded her these many centuries. Until she wins this, Ireland cannot take her real place in the world's fight for progress.

THE STATE: ITS HISTORIC ROLE.

By PETER KROPOTKIN.

VIII.

To annihilate the independence of cities; to plunder merchants' and artisans' rich guilds; to centralise the foreign trade of cities into its hands and ruin it; to seize the internal administration of guilds, and subject home trade, as well as all manufactures, even in the slightest detail, to a swarm of functionaries; and by these means kill both industry and arts; to seize upon local militias and all municipal administration, to crush the weak by taxation for the benefit of the strong and to ruin countries by war,—such was the nascent State's behaviour towards urban agglomerations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The same tactics were evidently employed towards villages and peasants. As soon as the State felt itself strong enough, it destroyed the village commune, ruined the peasants committed to its mercy and plundered the common lands.

Historians and economists paid by the State have no doubt taught us that the village commune, having become an obsolete form of land-ownership obstructing agricultural progress, was bound to disappear by the action of natural economic forces. Politicians and bourgeois economists do not tire of repeating this even nowadays, and there are revolutionists and socialists (those who pretend to be scientific) who recite this fable learned in school.

Yet a more odious falsehood has never been affirmed by science. A deliberate falsehood, for history swarms with documents amply proving to those who wish to know—for France it would almost suffice to read Dalloz—that the village commune was first of all deprived of its privileges by the State, of its independence, of its juridical and legislative powers; and that later on its lands were, either simply stolen by the rich under State protection, or else confiscated by the State itself.

Plundering began as early as the sixteenth century in France, and grew apace in the following century. As early as 1659 the State took the communes under its superior protection and we need only read Louis XIV's edict of 1667 to learn what plundering of communal lands took place at that period.—"Men have taken possession of lands when it suited them... lands have been divided,... in order to plunder the communes fictitious debts have been devised,"—said the "Sun-King" in this edict... and two years later he confiscated for his own benefit all the revenues of the communes.—This is what is called a "natural death" in so-called scientific language.

In the following century it is estimated that at least half the communal lands were simply appropriated by the aristocracy and the clergy under State patronage. And yet communes continued to exist till 1787. The village council met under the elm, granted lands, appointed taxes—the documents relating to this are to be found in Babeau (*Le village sous l'ancien régime*). Turgot, in the province of which he was governor, found however the village councils "too noisy" and abolished them during his governorship, substituting for them assemblies elected among the well-to-do of the village. In 1787, on the eve of the Revolution, the State made this measure general in its application. The *mir* was abolished and thus communal affairs fell into the hands of a few syndics, elected by the richest bourgeois and peasants. The "Constituante" sanctioned this law in December 1789, and the bourgeois, substituting themselves for the nobles, plundered what remained of communal lands. Many a peasant revolt was necessary to force the "Convention" in 1792 to sanction what the rebellious peasants had accomplished in the Eastern part of France. That is to say, the Convention ordered the restitution of communal lands to the peasants. This only took place *there, when the land had already been retaken by revolutionary means*. It is the fate of all revolutionary laws to be put into action when they are already an accomplished fact.

Nevertheless the Convention tainted this law with bourgeois gall. It decreed that lands retaken from nobles should be divided into equal

parts among "active citizens" only—that is to say among the village bourgeois. By one stroke of the pen it thus dispossessed "passive citizens," that is to say the mass of impoverished peasants, who had most need of these communal lands. Upon which, fortunately, the peasants again revolted and in 1793 the Convention passed a new law decreeing the division of communal lands among *all* inhabitants. This was never put into practice and only served as an excuse for new thefts of communal lands.

Would not such measures suffice to bring about what these gentlemen call "the natural death" of communes? Yet communes still existed. On August 24th 1794, the reaction, being in power, struck the final blow. The State confiscated all communal lands and made of them a guarantee fund for the public debt, putting them up to auction and selling them to its creatures the "Thermidorians."

This law was happily repealed on Prairial 2nd, in the year V, after being in force for three years. But at the same time, communes were abolished, and replaced by cantonal councils in order that the State might the more easily fill them with its creatures. This lasted till 1801 when village communes were revived; but then the government took it upon itself to appoint mayors and syndics in each of the 36,000 communes! And this absurdity lasted till the revolution of July 1830, after which the law of 1789 was again put into force. And in the interval communal lands were again wholly confiscated by the State in 1813 and plundered anew during three years. What remained of them was only returned to the communes in 1816.

This was by no means the end. Every new régime saw in communal lands a source of reward for its supporters. Therefore at three different intervals since 1830—the first time in 1837 and the last under Napoleon III—laws were promulgated to *force* peasants to divide what they possessed of forests and common pasture-lands, and three times the government was compelled to abrogate this law on account of the peasants' resistance. All the same Napoleon the third was able to profit by it and bag several large estates for his favorites.

These are facts, and this is what, in scientific language, these gentlemen call the "natural death" of the communal landed property under the influence of economic laws? As well call the massacre of a hundred thousand soldiers on a battlefield "natural death."

What happened in France happened also in Belgium, England, Germany, Austria; in fact everywhere in Europe, Slav countries excepted.

Strange that the periods of plundering communes should correspond in all Western Europe. The methods alone vary. Thus in England they did not dare to enact sweeping measures; they preferred passing several thousands of separate *enclosure acts* by which, in each special case, parliament sanctioned the confiscation of land—it does so still—and gave to the squire the right of keeping common lands he had fenced in. And notwithstanding that nature has up till now respected the narrow furrows by which communal fields were temporarily divided among families in the villages of England, and that we have clear descriptions of this form of landed property at the beginning of the century in the books of a certain Marshall, scientific men (such as Seeböhm, worthy emulator of Fustel de Coulanges) are not wanting to maintain and teach that communes have never existed in England save in the form of serfdom!

We find the same thing going on in Belgium, Germany, Italy and Spain. And in one way or another personal appropriation of lands formerly communal was almost brought to completion towards the fifties in this century. Peasants have only kept scraps of their common lands. This is the way in which the mutual assurance of lord, priest, soldier and judge—the State—has behaved towards peasants in order to despoil them of their last guarantee against misery and economic servitude.

But while organising and sanctioning this plunder, could the State respect the institution of the commune as an organ of local life?

—Evidently not.

To allow citizens to constitute a federation among themselves in order to appropriate some functions of the State would have been a contradiction of principle. The State demands personal and direct submission of its subjects without intermediate agents; it requires equality in servitude; it cannot allow the State within the State.

Therefore as soon as the State began to constitute itself in the sixteenth century it set to work to destroy all bonds of union that existed among citizens, both in towns and villages. If under the name of municipal institutions it tolerated any vestiges of autonomy—never of independence,—it was only with a fiscal aim, to lighten the central budget as far as possible; or else to allow the provincial well-to-do to enrich themselves at the people's expense, as was the case in England up till now, and is so still in institutions and in customs.

This is easily understood. Customary law is naturally pertaining to local life and Roman law to centralisation of power. The two cannot live side by side and the one must kill the other.

That is why under French rule in Algeria, when a Kabyle *djemmah*—a village commune—wants to plead for its lands, every inhabitant of the commune must bring his isolated action before the judge, who will hear fifty or two hundred isolated actions sooner than hear the collective suit of the *djemmah*. The Jacobin code of the Convention (known under the name of Code Napoleon) does not recognize customary law, it only recognizes Roman law, or rather Byzantine law.

That is why in France when the wind blows down a tree on the National highway, or a peasant prefers giving a stonebreaker two or three

francs to the unpleasant task of repairing the communal road himself, it is necessary for twelve or fifteen employees of the home office and treasury to be put in motion, and for more than fifty documents to be exchanged between these austere functionaries, before the tree can be sold, or the peasant receives permission to deposit two or three francs into the communal treasury.

Should you have any doubts about it you will find these fifty documents recapitulated and duly numbered by M. Tricoche in the *Journal des Economistes*.

This under the third Republic, be it understood, for I do not speak of the barbarous methods of the ancient régime that limited itself to five or six documents. No doubt scientists will tell you that at that barbarous period State control was only fictitious.

And if it were only this. After all it would be but twenty thousand functionaries too many, and a thousand million francs more added to the budget. A detail for the lovers of "order" and levelling!

But there is worse at the bottom of all this. The *principle* kills everything.

The peasants of a village have a thousand interests in common: interests of economy, neighbourhood and constant intercourse. They are perforce compelled to unite for a thousand divers things. But the State cannot allow them to unite! It gives them school and priest, police and judge; that must suffice them, and should other interests arise, they must apply in the regular way to Church and State.

Thus till 1883 it was severely forbidden to the villagers of France to unite, were it only to buy chemical manure or to irrigate their fields. It was only in 1883-1886 that the Republic granted this right to peasants when it voted the law on unions, hampered by many a precaution and obstacle.

And we with our faculties blunted by State education rejoice at the sudden progress accomplished by agricultural syndicates, without blushing at the idea that this right of union of which peasants were deprived for centuries belonged to them without contention in the Middle Ages. Belonged to every man—free or serf. Slaves that we are, we believe it to be a "conquest of democracy."

This is the pitch of stupidity we have reached by our own warped and vitiated State education, and by our own State prejudices.

PAGES OF SOCIALIST HISTORY.

X.

SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC CLAIMS.

The centralised and all-powerful State; the rights and needs of individuals subjected to discipline, subordinated to the orders of State functionaries; production organised by the State; citizens enrolled in the *labour army*, especially in that of agriculture (Communist Manifesto)... such is the queer ideal of the repulsive Socialism that is being imposed on workmen as scientific Socialism. We already know the metaphysical or reactionary philosophy of such a school. Let us now examine its Socialist conceptions, its present claims. Perhaps nowadays, under the influence of general progress in sciences and intellectual culture, Social-Democracy modifies the martial conception of the manifesto dated 1848. Let us take the work containing the official program of scientific Social-Democracy, by Kautsky: *Basis of Social-Democracy*.

What does the party profess as regards Socialist production and individual rights in a future society?

In chapter X, on "Socialism and Liberty," we read: "Socialist production is not compatible with liberty of work, that is to say with the worker's freedom to work when or how he likes... It is true, under the rule of capitalism a worker still enjoys liberty up to a certain degree. If he does not quite like a factory, he can find work elsewhere, in a Socialist society (Social-Democratic), all the means of production will be concentrated by the State and the latter will be the only employer; there will be no choice. The workman of to-day enjoys more liberty than he will possess in a Socialist society (Social-Democratic)."

"It is not Social-Democracy that eliminates the right of choosing work and time, but the development (?) of production itself."

Production but not violence, created all iniquities and oppression in the past, said Engels, and the official work assures us that the same production will create slavery in a Social-Democratic society. If it be so, why did the same production in the past create two categories of men: one preaching discipline, subordination, submission and slavery; the other, liberty, emancipation, rebellion and solidarity? Why does Social-Democracy always preach the doctrines of the first category that history stigmatizes by the name of reaction, obscurantism and oppression? Although these two categories resulted from the mode of production, nevertheless humanity accomplished its progressive evolution in always combating both men and institutions of the first category and in welcoming both men and institutions of the second. I do not insist on the completely erroneous conception of the exclusive influence of the form of production in history. But even admitting its truth, I do not see why Social Democracy should preach to the oppressed, to the exploited, doctrines of subordination and obscurantism, and strive to ridicule the ideas of emancipation and solidarity preached by R. Owen and other friends and benefactors of mankind. Do theorists and party leaders find men insufficiently brutalised by Church, State, exploitation, magistrature, militarism, etc.?

You must not think that the above mentioned passages merely express Kautzky's personal ideas: this ideal of a society subjugated by the State is the fundamental basis of Social-Democracy in all countries. Another Social-Democrat, S. Webb, an Englishman, and far superior to the preceding one, in his pamphlet *Socialism True and False*, assures his readers that "to dream of an autonomous factory in the future, of a production without rules or discipline... is not Socialism."¹ A third, a Russian this time, Plekhanoff, highly estimated by Democrats, is so scandalised by the Anarchist assertion that humanity will be able to live in a solidary society, having no other leader than free agreement, that he finds nothing better than to ridicule our principles of solidarity by saying: "In a future society of Anarchists they will guillotine by free agreement." Poor man! Your brain is so encumbered by notions on discipline, order, subordination, executions and other beauties of a slavish military society, that you cannot even imagine capital punishment abolished by an enlightened humanity.

In the name of what well-being do these dreamers of barracks, army of labour, discipline and subordination want to deprive Social-Democratic humanity of liberty, initiative and solidarity? Perhaps they think of realising a communistic system so perfect, that the individual would willingly submit to all orders and commandments of the State's functionaries. Let us see how Social-Democratic legislators pretend to organise the distribution of labour thus disciplined.

The same Kautzky, in chapter IX of the same work, "Distribution of products in the future State," answering the objections of adversaries of Socialism, declares: "Our adversaries should demonstrate that equal remuneration is an inevitable consequence of Socialism." I think that the adversaries can easily demonstrate to this author and to German Democrats that, outside economic equality or equivalence, there is no Socialism and that Communism, under the flag of which Engels' pupils pretend to place themselves, accepts as fundamental principle: "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs." But Kautzky continues in the name of German Democracy to teach workmen that in their Social-Democratic State:

"All forms of present wages: remuneration by the hour or the piece, special bonuses for extra-valuable work, different salaries for different kinds of work... all the forms of contemporary wages, a little modified, are perfectly practicable in a Socialist society." Here it is necessary to bring back to truth this philosopher of scientific Socialism. The wage system will be able to flourish in their Social-Democratic State, as it works in the present exploiting capitalistic State, but *never* in a Socialist society. The author and his friends are completely mistaken in thinking that their Democratic State, organised in military fashion with the wage system as remuneration, even if called wage of *qualification*, has anything in common with Socialism. The latter, according to the conception of its first expounders, asserts the right of individuals to liberty without restriction, to a complete and harmonious development. It disowns the exploitation of man by man, by society, by the State; it disowns in fact the wage system—so dear to German Democrats. The wage system is the basis of capitalism. In admitting it for your State you confirm, gentlemen, what good men have long since said of you. You have disfigured the fundamental idea of Socialism; you have substituted for emancipation, discipline and subordination; for solidarity, barrack, order and obligations; for economic equality, privilege, and in that you have betrayed the cause of the people, the claims of suffering humanity. It was not without reason that our friend Domela Nieuwenhuis cried out when speaking of you: "Socialism is in danger!" It is for this that you have deserved the praise of an enlightened bourgeoisie.

To speak honestly a Radical bourgeoisie could not only adopt such a profession of faith of Socialist pretensions with its system of wage-qualification, but even observe that the claims of the Social-Democratic party, formulated by its chief and founder Liebknecht, are pretty moderate. In his article: "The program of Socialism in Germany" (*The Program of German Socialism*, Forum Library, New York, April 1895, page 28), Liebknecht puts this question, "What do we ask for?" Then he declares: "Absolute liberty of the press, absolute liberty of religion, universal suffrage for all representative bodies and public offices in the State and in the Commune; national education, all schools open to all, the same opportunities of learning and education for all, abolition of standing armies and creation of national militia, so that every citizen is a soldier and every soldier a citizen; an international court of arbitration between different States, equal rights for men and women, measures for the protection of the working classes (limitation of hours of work, sanitary regulations, etc." That there should be no doubt, Liebknecht adds: "They are reforms already accomplished or being realised in advanced countries, and they are in full agreement with Democracy." With Democracy, yes, but not with Socialism. And then, Democracy and Liberals of *advanced countries* have already realised, or are disposed to realise immediately, federalism, the referendum, direct legislation, communal autonomy,—institutions disowned and fought by Social-Democrats. We already know that Marx and Engels with Maltman Barry (the agent of English Conservatives) excluded Federalists from the International, that Liebknecht declared himself in 1872 (when he was still a revolutionary, which he is no longer to-day), adversary of any federalist republic; that English Social-Democrats—happily their number is insignificant and, save Hyndman, they are all mediocrities—have combated the referendum and voted for the Conservatives at the last election, against the Gladstonian ministry, which at least

had introduced an 8 hours' day in all government factories and establishments, had obtained communal autonomy and was struggling for home-rule and for the abolition of the House of Lords.

Even in France, where the Commune tradition is so strong, Social-Democrats, without suspecting that they are playing the reactionary game of Hegel's school, avoid using the words Federalism, Federation. They do not dare to preach the organisation of the "army of labour specially for agriculture." Neither do they dare, in spite of their dearest aspirations, abolish local federations; but they avoid the word detested by Hegel, Bismark, Engels, Liebknecht and others, and call their federations "agglomerations." These *scientists* of "scientific" Socialism ignore that the geological term "agglomeration" signifies accumulation, a heap of divers minerals, and that men and solidary societies, unite, make covenants, ally, federate, but do not agglomerate. In speaking of their parliamentary group, they can say that this group and its doctrines form a strange agglomeration of reactionary ideas, that allows Millerand to declare himself in favor of the sacred right of private property, Guesde, for German Collectivism, that we have just analysed; G. Deville against revolution, and that all of them together constitute an archaic agglomeration, equally fit for a mineralogical museum and for a parliament of Panamists.

W. TCHERKESOFF

COMRADESHIP.

(Concluded from No. 124.)

Undoubtedly there are some who would not aid their fellows in this way; this simply shows that commercialism has brutalised and degraded them; it has developed a selfishness of the worst type. In modern societies the love of gain, not the mere satisfaction of one's common needs, but the selfish desire to accumulate wealth, is part of our so-called morality. We see creatures in the form of man living a life of ease and luxury, which is maintained by the slavery and misery of men and women, nay, and immature children. What do these care about the sufferings of their fellow creatures? their chief idea is to make a fortune; their rents, profits or dividends are of the most importance to them. And they are not at all particular what amount of suffering they bring upon their fellow creatures. "Look after yourself, do not trouble about others, they can do the same," says the moralist of to-day, and it is this false teaching which the minds of our children are inculcated with. Therefore selfishness predominates because it is part of our teachings, and our environment is also conducive to its existence and growth.

In short, it is civilisation, which is the antithesis of social well-being and comradeship. We believe that men will only become true friends when property is held in common, when it will be impossible for a man to fetter another as a slave. This will place men and women economically on a level, and advance their development, and it will render jealousy and hatred, as we know them to-day, utterly impossible. We know this to be so, not merely because it appeals to our sense of justice, but because we find that history tells us plainly enough that it is Communism that develops the nobler sentiments of man and makes him truly happy. Even the savage with his vague and clumsy communal life is happier by far than many civilised men, because in many cases he lives under conditions of solidarity with his fellows, and because it is only the satisfaction of his immediate needs that troubles him; he does not wish to hoard property that belongs to the community. This communal life inspires him with a fraternal and hospitable feeling towards others of the same clan or tribe. "In Arabia an Arab is never seen to beg, it would be a disgrace to his tribe. If a Bedouin becomes utterly destitute, he goes and makes it known to the chief who immediately calls together the richest persons of the tribe and says to them: 'one of our brethren is in want. If you wish him to die, suffer me to kill him instead of hunger. If not go; you know your duty.' Everyone then gives according to his means, camels, sheep, corn, etc."¹ How different does the European treat his less fortunate brother, the product of cruel and unjust conditions. Even if he can lay claim to being hospitable, his seemingly kindly acts are often prompted by selfish motives. The rich man contributed to some charitable institution not in the spirit of brotherhood, but because it will make him appear generous in the eyes of others, people will remark. "What a kind man," never reflecting who created this man's riches, and that he is merely returning a meagre portion of the wealth which he has taken from the workers; and also if labour received its just reward there would be no reason for the existence of the rich man or his charity. We cannot expect to see the spirit of comradeship between rich and poor, any more than we should expect to see it between two hostile armies, it would be irony to dream of such a thing. There can be no mutual bond of friendship between these two opposing sides of mankind their interests are diametrically opposed to each other. For instance, what workman is there who can look upon his master in a truly fraternal spirit? This fraternal feeling cannot exist between slaves and masters. We cannot expect two opposing forces to make a harmonious whole, that would be the reverse of reason. True comradeship can only exist under a condition where social inequality between men is unknown. Social inequality is the direct result of the private ownership of wealth. This has been the cause of human strife in the past, and it

¹ Webb says it is Anarchy. I am very grateful for this avowal from the author of *History of Trade-unionism*. Yet, it is we who preach autonomy and solidarity.

¹ *Property, its origin*, by C. Letourneau, p. 199.

is the same to-day, and will be as long as wealth remains in the hands of the idle few.

We believe true comradeship will only be possible when government and private property have ceased to exist, because it will end all hatred, jealousy and envy which these institutions are directly responsible for. Thus we are Anarchists because we know that Anarchy must be the basis of the new life; because it will place mankind in a position of equality. It will not countenance lawmakers or rulers of any kind, who, no matter what name or disguise they may adopt, are always a class apart from the people. A privileged class of parasites and office seekers who pretend that they are needful to society, but who, being vested with power and having privileges at their command, always use it for their own advantage and to the detriment of those under their subjection. Rulers are a class whose existence makes equality and true comradeship impossible, a class who engender a large amount of harmful and unnecessary friction in society. Because as rulers they are always endeavouring to assert their supremacy and to impose their ideas on others, and those who have to suffer at their hands are always trying to defend themselves in one way or another. Thus we see that where men are placed in power they are perpetually fighting and quarrelling, and how can it be otherwise? Man is not fit to be placed in a position above his fellows, for as I have before observed, he always uses his power for his own advantage.

Thus we declare ourselves in favor of true comradeship, that is a condition of life which has Anarchy for its basis, when every human creature will be assured real freedom, and whilst enjoying it himself he shall not deny it to others; when all will be able to satisfy their needs in every way. True love, true friendship is only possible under these conditions. This is why we are Anarchists-Communists. R. C. M.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

February and March brought the anniversaries of the continental revolutions of 1848. There is no party, and there are very few men who can say that they remained true to the principles that were fought for in those memorable days when, excepting for England, Russia and Turkey, all Europe was upside down for one or two years, and better times seemed to have arrived, yet were soon removed, apparently, farther than ever. P. Kropotkin said at the last Commune meeting that misery may lead to isolated outbreaks and revolts, but revolutions are born of hope. So once Paris had risen, and after days of real and hard fighting on the barricades, the republic was proclaimed and a number of men whom the people trusted still at that time were made a provisional government, no large city in Europe, very few provincial towns or villages indeed, remained longer quiet; everywhere the time had come when the people went into the streets, boldly faced the armed struggle with the army and police, and everywhere carried the day. The large victories in Vienna (March 13) and Berlin (March 18) would not have been so efficient had they not been soon followed by so many smaller local struggles.

Many things that were realised then no subsequent reaction could destroy, before all the emancipation of the peasants from serfdom and the idea, however funest, of replacing historical and territorial by national States. But the main hopes of the people were never fulfilled and here the lessons of these days may be found. Nearly twenty years of the most varied forms of Socialist propaganda preceded 48 and the people were fully aware of the urgent need of economic changes. But what they had not been taught was the impossibility of carrying these changes by governmental and parliamentary means and so all they achieved was to replace their old rulers by new ones, taken sometimes out of the best and most sincere, but without exception either becoming powerless and soon prisoners or proscriptions themselves, or corrupted by the use of authority and a few months after massacring the very people who put them into power. The history of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, of Blanqui and others, the prisoners of the 15th of May and before all, the days of June '48, will prove this as far as Paris is concerned and we may refer another time to the parliamentary experience of Proudhon as described by himself in his *Confessions of a Revolutionist*. From this we conclude that if the working classes continue to be similarly misled by the parliamentary and State-Socialist propaganda that—Anarchism excepted—replaced nearly everywhere the Socialist agitation of former years, another '48, new victories would not bring them nearer towards their aspirations and the moment they saw this, they would have to begin fighting again against the men and institutions they created themselves, as the Parisians had to do in June '48, the people of Vienna in Oct. '48, those of Dresden and Southern Germany in May '49, etc.—all ending with disastrous defeats of the people.

This shows the futility of purely political propaganda (Social-Democracy) and the insufficiency of purely economic action (Trade-unionism, Co-operation); the latter are powerless if not fully aware of the evils of authority and putting freedom far above convenience or even momentary success. And to make them all see this is one of the tasks of Anarchists to whom the days of 48 and those of the Commune of '71 are not only days of remembrance but also of instruction and experience.

In Vienna on Sunday March 13, almost a hundred thousand workingmen and women—as on the first of May—marched the long way to the cemetery where the combatants of fifty years ago are now buried; amongst the first to come were the Anarchists with a wreath draped in black. In Berlin no such street processions are allowed and the 18th of March was celebrated by many deputations from workers and advanced societies placing wreaths on the tombs in the cemetery and by many meetings held in the evening. This right of procession was never given to the Vienna workers—they took it themselves on the 1st May, 1890, the first May-Day demonstration, and have never since given it up. In Berlin the May-Day was never much in vogue and the workers seem only wanted at the elections, every five or six years, and are never seen in masses except at regular indoor meetings.

The two States whose ruling classes are most indebted to the people who fought for them in '48, are Italy and Hungary and both celebrate the anniversary by a recrudescence of infamy against the people. The misery in Italy is appalling, bread-riots are being put down by the military in many places, the measures adopted as remedies are ridiculously inadequate—only one thing succeeded recently: the final whitewashing of Crispi, the prime

author of the Anarchist persecutions and the Abyssinian slaughter, from the charges of swindling in connection with the Banca Romana.

In Hungary for two or three years the peasants and labourers in the agricultural districts have tried to organise themselves, and vague Socialist aspirations have made themselves heard, clearer defined here and there by agrarian outrages. These last months the government—never slow to repress these movements by annual massacres, trials and other means of coercion—proposed and carried a law which will enable the gendarmes to bring strikers by force before their employers, and if they refuse to work they will be tried and imprisoned on the spot, no appeal being allowed. This promises hot work for the harvest season. Meanwhile papers are suppressed, all those in the movement are compulsorily photographed and their money confiscated whether belonging to an organisation or being private property. This created some astonishment even in Hungary, and further developments are expected.

Cyvot has returned to France after fifteen years transportation in New Caledonia, all passed in gaol. He seems, unfortunately, possessed by the idea to stand as candidate for the French chamber, for the purpose of urging on there an amnesty for all political prisoners—a hopeless task, and he is properly asked by the *Libertaire* why he should want to enter another gaol after his many years just passed in prison.

It gives some satisfaction to turn from Europe's growing misery, ever increasing anguish and competition to a little utopia that is said to have been realised for some years on the Bonin Islands, in the Pacific, a considerable distance to the East of Japan. The *Temps*, a reactionary Paris paper, relates that these islands nominally belonging to Japan, were not interfered with by the Japanese government for years, and when lately some officials were sent there to inspect them, it was discovered that side by side and on peaceful terms with the Malay natives, a number of Asiatics, Europeans and Americans were living there, "without any law or constraint, independent, enjoying absolute freedom, each one settling with his family on the land he had selected and dependent on nobody." The natives, living in their caves, were left alone, no one thinking of subduing them any more than of becoming their servant. Many of the newcomers were fugitives from justice. In this fertile country, under a fine climate, without taxes, with no authority, they lived quite at peace among themselves, desiring only to be left alone and therefore concealing for all this time the existence of their happy islands.

This will now be changed; "the Japanese administration," the *Temps* says, "will no longer tolerate this contempt of the benefits of civilisation and the independent Bonins will be submitted to its laws and customs."

A hundred years ago the natives of Tahiti lived in a similar way, free and happy on their islands in the Pacific, until discovered by the Europeans, when civilisation (read missionaries, drink, syphilis and general misery) was introduced and the happy race debased and ruined. It reads like a sort of vengeance when to-day a few Europeans, trying to live a happy life on such islands, are forced back under the sway of civilisation by a people considered but a few years ago almost savage themselves, but now, as the Japanese are, eager to ruin themselves as quickly as possible by overdoses of civilisation! Where at present civilisation treads it cannot but crush and ruin.

The King of Greece was shot at, and not only escaped unhurt, but also found time to go through a series of heroic poses, protecting his daughters' life with his own body, raising his stick against the assassin at a distance which made him tremble and loose his aim—exactly as Frederick II of Prussia did with the Croatian soldier more than a century ago. Besides, I read in the *Times* of March 3: "It is stated to have been the express desire of the King that no undue compulsion should be employed to extract information" (from Karditzis, the alleged assassin). Be this a desire really expressed by the King or a remark of the *Times'* correspondent, very characteristic it is, leaving but one conclusion open: that otherwise or usually such means would have been adopted, and what can they be but torture? The King ought to have been satisfied with the general advertisement he got all round in the European press (whether also with the Greek people, I do not know) and ought not also to desire to pass as an extraordinary specimen of human kindness because he rejected torture in this particular case!

A number of Anarchist groups in South America are organising a competition for essays on 13 Anarchist subjects proposed by different groups who also give the prizes. Two similar contests were held in Spain, at Reus and Barcelona, in the eighties, and large volumes contain the collected essays.

At Torino comrades Pasquale Pensa and D. Zavattero were sentenced to six months each for reprinting the former's *Vittimi e Pregiudizi*, a pamphlet first issued in 1887 and not interfered with at that time.

After the *Cage*, also the *Weavers* of G. Hauptmann has been forbidden, by the Paris censor, to be acted in public. Even in Berlin, after a successful action against the chief of the police, the *Weavers* (describing the Silesian weavers riots in 1844) were acted scores of times and are still often performed.

The *Libertaire* is now published at Marseille. *Le Naturien* (Paris, March 1) represents libertarian naturalism, a movement for returning to the healthy and natural country life which the town-bred masses can hardly realise now-a-days; "The future," the introductory article says: "it will be freedom for all, pleasure and love for all; it will be force and beauty coupled with health, security with abundance, cordiality, the delight to fully live our lives."

New pamphlets are *L'Immoralite du Mariage*, by E. Chaughy (Bruxelles, Bibl. des Temps Nouveaux), reprinted from the *Libertaire*; *La Liberte de l'Enseignement* (Paris), by the group of the libertarian school.

At Patras, Greece, J. Manganas restarted *Epi ta prosa* (Forward) the Greek anarchist paper.

J. H. Mackay has just published the first biography of Max Stirner, the early German Individualist-Anarchist, and a collection of his minor writings (*Max Stirner. Sein Leben und sein Werk*, Berlin, 1898, X, 260 pp., 6s., and *Max Stirners's Kleinere Schriften*, 1 vol., 3s.), his chief work *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*, being already easy of access through a widely spread popular edition.

The Anarchist Literature Bureau.—Manchester.

A Voluntary Association of Workers, formed for the purpose of propagating the principles of Anarchist-Communism by means of the distribution of pamphlets, leaflets, etc., also for the sale of Socialist, Revolutionary, and advanced literature.

French and American Anarchist journals, books, and pamphlets sold: *Le Libertaire*, *L'Humanite Nouvelle*, *Les Temps Nouveaux*, *Free Society*, *Lucifer*, *The Age of Thought*, *Armstrong's Autonomist*, etc. Terms cash. Apply to John Bacon, Brick Row, Marple.

THE COMMUNE CELEBRATION.

A crowded and enthusiastic meeting was held on Friday, March 18th, to celebrate the declaration of the Commune of Paris in 1871. For lack of space we can give but the briefest notice of speeches made, but they were all excellently received, the meeting indeed being the most successful held for several years.

H. STOCKTON said: This was the 27th anniversary of the Paris Commune. Looking round the whole civilised world we could see that now as 27 years ago, those who were called "spoliators and robbers" were the only party of peace. Christians and "peacemakers" were perfecting the most infamous weapons for use in Africa, China, Cuba, etc., all in the interests of "law and order." We were the only party who really wished to abolish war because we wished to strike at the causes of war. John Ruskin said that respectable and law-abiding theft was the cause of war. That the real war in Europe was between the capitalists and the workers. "He had been kept poor, ignorant and simple, that they might without his knowledge gather the produce of his toil." It was for us to do all in our power to enlighten this "poor, ignorant and simple" workman, and then the solution of the problem might safely be left to him.

PAUL CAMPBELL (I. L. P.) expressed his sincere pleasure at being there and assist in the effort to keep ever green the memory of the heroic men and women of the Paris Commune. They had been told they were commemorating a failure, but that was not so. The Communards of Paris had triumphed, for their noble example had inspired countless thousands who had followed them to still greater and more determined efforts to realise their ideals. The old falsehoods about the Paris Commune were not now heard. It was accepted on all sides that Paris never knew what peace and order were until the Commune, whilst it was established life and property had never been so absolutely secure. France had long congratulated itself in "escaping" from the Commune. Yes, it has "escaped" to become the ally of one of the most brutal and despotic governments in the world, that of Russia—and its ministers the servile tools of another equally cruel and corrupt government, that of Spain. It had lost Delescluze, but it had Esterhazy! But the Revolutionary movement in France and other lands was more alive than ever and the forces of right and justice and fellowships would triumphantly assert themselves on no far off day.

LOTHROP WITHINGTON. Most people think of the rising of 1871 as nothing beyond the destruction of certain buildings. He had been in Paris soon after the Commune and it was true that a few great buildings were in ruins. He had also seen last year the slime of commercialism doing a thousand times more to destroy the beauty of Paris than ever the communards dreamt of. The communards were people who, after standing the trial of the Prussian siege, only revolted because the grasping landlords of Paris refused to abate the current rent term which it was absolutely unable to pay. We never will know the true story as regards the destruction of buildings. It might have been done by the emissaries of Thiers and the briefless individuals who with no mandate at all had proclaimed themselves the government of France, while the Commune represented the voice of Paris determined to govern its own affairs. It did try to destroy property, the institution of property, which is only a right to rob. All the buildings in the world are of no moment without a society founded upon truth and justice. The only houses worth considering are those not built with hands, the temples of social equity and universal happiness.

Comrade KELLY said: Although there were comparatively few Communists in America, still they would celebrate the 18th of March as they had done for many years past. While the Communism of the martyrs of 1871 was rather crude, it was after all a milestone in the path of progress and we owe a debt of gratitude to those who participated in the Commune of Paris. He and others had learned the lesson that, no matter what were the demands of the Communards, when we strike again we must strike to win, and to win as Anarchist-Communists.

MARMOL (Spain) was pleased to speak on this occasion. It was really an international event, the celebration of the Commune of Paris. The struggles of the Commune reminded us of the struggles going on to-day. He thought it was beside the mark to speak of peaceful Anarchism. Look at Cuba who for years had struggled with heroism and desperation for her freedom. Home rule had been offered her but she would gain her freedom. Where would she have been to-day if she had relied on peaceful means? He sent his greetings to all who fought for liberty and paid a tribute to the memories of the martyrs of Spain.

LOUISE MICHEL said: 27 years had elapsed since the days of the Commune and many changes had taken place, but we could see in Paris again to-day a miserable government dying of its own corruption. We could see the nations slowly but surely joining hands, whilst the despots called them to arms. The Commune wished to make life a joy for all, governments tried to perpetuate misery. Let us have hope for the future. The Commune was drowned in a sea of blood, but the bodies of the 35,000 who were murdered were sown as grain, and that grain would germinate.

A. WEISHEIT (in German) evoked the struggles of 1848, dwelling specially on the events which took place on the 18th of March. Up till now, the demands of the people of '48 had not been realised, for those who are buried in Frederichs Heiu's cemetery in Berlin certainly did not shed their blood to bring about the tyranny now reigning in Germany. Our rulers will make us believe that we enjoy freedom of speech and press, but the propagandists of the labour movement who dared to speak freely are pining in dungeons or have had to leave their country. This shows that the battle against all authority must be carried on with more energy than ever, and that it is time to shake off the apathy which prevails with so many: *He who does not struggle for liberty does not deserve it!*

JOHN TURNER. I am asked to close the meeting, and as it is already past 11 o'clock and we don't believe in overtime, I will do so. There is really little to be said after the splendid speeches that have preceded me. No! the Commune was not a failure. Crushed it was for the time by brute force and overwhelming numbers. But the ideas that it feebly tried to express and inaugurate—the independent city as against the State—that property was subservient to the people—that to preserve these it was necessary to be armed—these ideas have continued to grow in the minds of the workpeople of the civilized world. Our friend L. Withington has well put it in answer to those who charge the communards with destroying property. "Who better had a right if they felt it did not conduce to their happiness. And to those who say—the days of revolutions are over—progress in the future will be made by compromise. I would answer human nature has not changed very much, and should similar circumstances arise, other communes would again appear, but this time to begin where it left off in Paris in 1871—instead of largely nationalist—internationalist, not merely military and political, but social and industrial.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

In future we must request that all orders for pamphlets be accompanied with cash. We are compelled to adhere to this as we need funds for reprinting.

THE PROPAGANDA.

EDMONTON.

On Saturday March 5th, the first annual concert of the group was held at Beech Hall, Lower Edmonton, kindly lent for the occasion by the Edmonton Spiritualist Society.

The programme consisting of vocal and instrumental solos and duets, not omitting trio on flute, zither and violin, and the "Comrades Song of Hope," sung as a quartet, was much appreciated. Tom Hood's "Song of the Shirt" was given as a recitation, while a comrade sat on the stage, attired in a ragged dress, stitching a shirt by candle light. Refreshments consisting of lemonade, cocoa, tea and home-made pastry were provided by the group. Altogether a very happy evening was spent, and the object we had in view, namely that of bringing the advanced people of Edmonton together for social enjoyment and good fellowship seemed to be obtained.

Most of the lecturing has been done by Tom Dale, since last report. He has lectured for the Tottenham Socialist Church on "An Anarchist on Anarchy," which was also delivered at the Friday Evening Debating Society, and also on "Why I am an Anarchist" and "The Wage System and Communism" at the same institution.

THE EDMONTON GROUP.

LEICESTER.

After some months of comparative inactivity we have a fair prospect of a very active revival of Anarchist-Communist propaganda. In addition to the few faithful members of the old Guard, who have seen the rise and progress of Socialism in Leicester from the beginning, we have a large influx of young men, many of whom formerly belonged to the I. L. P., and who number amongst them several good speakers. Our immediate programme includes two outdoor meetings on Sunday; occasional weekday meetings in the town and neighbouring country villages; publication of two or three leaflets, one in particular dealing with our military system and soldiering generally; and an attempt to make our usual Commemoration of Labour Day, May 1st, in co-operation with the Trades Council and the I. L. P., a much more important and effective demonstration for Socialism than hitherto. On this occasion our local speakers, Barclay, Warner and others will be re-inforced by H. Stockton of London, and we expect at least one or two others from Sheffield and elsewhere.

We ask all comrades everywhere to believe that if the Anarchist-Communist propaganda has lately been less active than usual, the fault has been in our own lack of energy, and not in our principles or the unwillingness of the world to accept them when reasonably, fairly and intelligently presented. A. G.

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