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Freedom

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1898.

The history of 1898 will contain many pages of darkness and disgrace; for it is stained from beginning to end with the anti-social crimes of unscrupulous, implacable capitalism; of a base and mercenary militarism subserving commercial ends; of the mad vagaries of idiotic "crowned heads," and of a reactionary and Jesuitical priestcraft rearing its head once more and breathing its baneful breath into all the circles of social life that are open to its poisonous influences.

A perusal of the monthly *International Notes* of *Freedom* will have kept our readers fairly well posted in the most important features of the economic and political struggles of the year, and we need do no more now than briefly summarise the work of the year so far as the Anarchist movement is concerned.

From a revolutionary point of view nothing is more important than what are truly called the "famine riots" of Milan in May last. It is a chapter that gives us again a picture of the heroic attitude of the people when stirred by a great impulse; a chapter which gives us also an insight into the "humanitarianism" of the ruling classes. After the ferocity displayed by the Italian government and the well-to-do classes—the classes, mind you, of "education and refinement"—in the "suppression" of these natural and inevitable struggles of a starving people, we may truly say it is not the apathy and the ignorance of the workers about which one need despair, but rather for the tiger-like ferocity, the thoughtlessness, the inhuman selfishness of those who would rather have the world bathed in blood—the blood of the workers—than relinquish one of their unjust and pernicious privileges Crushed as they for the moment are, be assured the Italian people will yet gain those social and economic conditions which the workers of all nations need to ensure themselves a life that is worth living.

Germany with its powerful Social Democratic Party shows very little sign of the progress of libertarian ideas. Is it not ludicrous—those millions of votes and the tame submission to a despotism second only to that of Russia? Truly the vote is a powerful factor—in maintaining the *status quo*; and for we Anarchists there is far more interest in a new play by Suderman or Hauptman than in the Social Democratic speeches in the Reichstag.

In the United States propaganda has been going quietly on, though there, as here, a revival of the Jingo spirit may have done something to distract people's attention from social questions. At any rate we have to regret the short life of *Solidarity* in its latest revival. We must hope for its reappearance at a more propitious moment. Meanwhile we are glad to see the revolutionary spirit displayed by the Illinois miners, fully described in our columns of the past two months.

In Spain one hardly knows what may happen. News is scarce and unreliable, and all we can be sure of is that the events of the past year can only have loaded her suffering people with heavier burdens. The present moment is certainly a "difficult" one; but if a strong Anarchist or Revolutionary Socialist propaganda could be started it would surely meet with every success. And in Spain, notwithstanding her corrupt political administration and unspeakable priestly domination, are still to be found in the revolutionary movement men and women faithful to the great cause for which so many of her sons have faced torture and death.

So far, the record of 1898 gives us little to place to the credit of those movements more or less advanced—movements distinctly Anarchist and movements of Anarchist tendencies. Indeed, a merely superficial survey of what has happened during the past twelvemonths with its more than usually repulsive exposure of the lives of the ruling classes, who are so altruistic as to take the trouble to formulate our morality for us; with its mean and sordid revelations in the Hooley case, showing us what *noblesse oblige* has come to mean to the "nobility" of these latter days; of our butcherings in the Soudan with their typical modern "hero" and the usual nauseating admixture of "christian" cant; of the Dreyfus scandal and the cancerous spirit of Militarism, the Frankenstein that would if unchecked kill everything human—to look around on all this, we say, one might almost ask in despair: is this the be-all and end-all of our boasted civilisation, is all this to be "the long result of time?"

In France, at least, an answer to such a question can be heard clearly enough: an answer firm in its negation of the ways and means of the corrupt and baneful military system under which she, although a republic, has been groaning for years. The future is not to be for the cutthroat and the spy; for the Dreyfus case with all its horrors has at last opened the eyes of all the world to the true meaning of militarism. It means in reality *death to humanity*, death to Justice, to Truth, to Liberty, to all, in short, which we need to make social life endurable or even possible. It is an immense benefit to mankind that the Dreyfus case should have been brought to its present stage; and our interest in this fact is still more keenly felt when we remember the part which has been played in this agitation by the Anarchists of France.

We print in another column some translations from the French press which show the estimation in which our French comrades, who have struggled so bravely for Justice for one who after all is a defender of the present order, are held. It is indeed the most inspiring fact of the past year, and one with which we may fitly conclude. To Bernard Lazare, who was the first to probe this iniquity, to Zola, who threw himself heart and soul into the agitation, and the Anarchists of France helped by the "intellectuals" we owe the present awakening of the people to a sense of Justice. It gives us hope that in the coming years France may yet lead the world to the Social Revolution.

BOURGEOIS REVENGE ON THE COMMUNARDS, 1871.

The following extracts from Lissagaray's work on the Commune are printed for two reasons: in the first place because those who fight against the reaction will know what to expect should it prove successful. Secondly, because here we can see how insignificant are the occasional "outrages" sometimes committed by wretched and discontented workers in comparison with the revenge taken by the ruling classes when their privileges are in danger.

"The prisoners were sent on to Versailles. Gallifet awaited them at La Muette. In the town he escorted the chains, halting under the windows of the aristocratic clubs in order to earn plaudits and hurrahs. At the gates of Paris he levied his tithe, walked past the ranks, and, with his look of a famished wolf, 'You seem intelligent,' said he to some one; 'step out of the ranks.' 'You have a watch,' said he to another; 'you must have been a functionary of the Commune,' and he placed him apart. On the 26th, in one single convoy, he chose eighty-three men and three women, made them draw up along the talus of the fortifications and had them shot.* Then he said to their comrades, 'My name is Gallifet. Your journals in Paris had sullied me enough. I take my revenge.' On Sunday, the 28th, he said, 'Let those who have white hairs step out from the ranks.' One hundred and eleven captives advanced. 'You,' continued Gallifet, 'you have seen June, 1848; you are more culpable than the others,' and he had their corpses thrown over into the fortifications."

* This fact and the following one are not only attested by the prisoners, but by the journals of order and the correspondents of the conservative foreign newspapers speaking as eyewitnesses. Appendix XXXV.

"Varlin, alas! was not to escape. On Sunday, the 28th May, he was recognised in the Rue Lafayette, and led, or rather dragged, to the foot of the Buttes Montmartre before the commanding general. The Versaillese sent him to be shot in the Rue des Rosiers. For an hour, a mortal hour, Varlin was dragged through the streets of Montmartre, his hands tied behind his back, under a shower of blows and insults. His young, thoughtful head, that had never harboured other thoughts than of fraternity, slashed open by the sabres, was soon but one mass of blood, of mangled flesh, the eye protruding from the orbit. On reaching the Rue des Rosiers, he no longer walked; he was carried. They set

him down to shoot him. The wretches dismembered his corpse with blows of the butt-ends of their muskets."

"The transport ship was a moving pontoon. Large cages built on the gun deck shut in the prisoners. In the night these became centres of infection. In the daytime, the uncaged people had but one half-hour to come up on the deck and breathe a little fresh air. Around the cages the jailers stood grumbling, punishing with the blackhole the slightest infringement of the rules. Some unhappy beings made the whole voyage at the bottom of the hold, sometimes almost naked, for having refused to comply with a caprice. The women, like the men, were sent to the blackhole; the nuns who watched them were worse than the jailers. For five months they had to live in this promiscuous fashion in the cage, in the filth of their neighbours, fed upon biscuits often mouldy, on bacon, on almost salt water; now burnt by the tropics, now frozen by the cold of the South, or by the spray dashing over the gun-deck. And what spectres arrived! When the *Orne* dropped anchor off Melbourne there were 360 sick of scurvy out of 588 prisoners.† They inspired even the rough colonials with pity. The inhabitants of Melbourne came to succour them, collecting in a few hours over 40,000 francs. The commander of the *Orne* refused to transmit the sum to the prisoners, even in the shape of clothes, tools, and simple necessaries."

† The Australian and English journals having revealed these sufferings, the Versaillese Government answered in its journal: "The news of the convict ship, the *Orne*, transmitted through the English press, is inexact in all points. Far from counting 420 cases of scurvy, this vessel had hardly 360 cases."

"The picket of the troop had stopped and almost leant against the closed door. Millière was led between the two columns of the centre. Arrived at the spot where he was to die, and after having ascended the last step of the stairs, he exchanged a few words with the officer. Searching in the pocket of his overcoat, which he had just unbuttoned, he took out an object, which I believed to be a letter, and handed it over to him, as also a watch and a locket. The officer took them, then seized hold of Millière and placed him in such a manner that he should be shot from behind. The latter turned round with a brusque movement, and, his arms crossed, faced the troop. This is the only movement of indignation or of anger that I saw him make.

"Some more words were exchanged; Millière seemed to be refusing to obey an order. The officer came down. The instant after, a soldier seized him who was to be shot by the shoulder and forced him to bend his knee upon the flagstone.

"Half the rifles of the platoon only were levelled at him; the others remained in the arms of the soldiers. During this time, believing his last moment come, Millière three times uttered the cry, 'Vive la République!'

"The officer approaching the picket of the troop, ordered the rifles, which had been too hurriedly lowered, to be raised again, and then he pointed out with his sword how the order to fire would be given.

"'Vive le peuple! Vive l'humanité!' cried Milliére.

"The soldier on sentry, whose elbow touched my arm, answered the last words by these: 'On va t'en foutre de l'humanité!' I had hardly heard them when Millière fell as if thunder-stricken.

"A military man, whom I believe to have been a non-commissioned officer, went up the steps, approached the corpse, lowered his rifle, and fired point-blank near the left temple. The explosion was so violent that the head of Millère bounded, and appeared as if twisted back. The rain for three-quarters of an hour had beaten against his face; the cloud of powder fixed itself there.

"Lying on his side, his hands joined, his clothes open and thrown into disorder by the fall, his head blackened as if burst open, seeming to look at the frontispiece of the monument, his corpse was something terrible....."—*The death of Millière, recounted by M. Louis Mie, Conseiller-Général of the Dordogne, Municipal Councillor of Perigeux, deputy of Bordeaux to the Chamber.*

"Near the Ecole Militaire the scene is at this moment very affecting; prisoners are continually being led there, and their trial is *terminated* beforehand. It consists only in detonations."—*Siècle*, 28th May.

"The courts-martial functioned in Paris with unheard-of activity at several special points. At the Lobau Barracks, at the Ecole Militaire, the fusillade is permanently heard. It is the settling of accounts with those wretches who openly took part in the struggle."—*Liberté*, May 30.

"Since morning (Sunday, 28th May) a strong cordon is being formed round the theatre (Châtelet) where a court-martial is permanently established. From time to time one sees a band of fifteen to twenty individuals coming out, composed of National Guards, civilians, *women and children fifteen to sixteen years old.*

"These individuals are condemned to death. They march two and two, escorted by a platoon of chasseurs, who lead and bring up the procession. This cortège goes up the Quai de Gèvres and enters the Republican Barracks in the Place Lobau. A minute after, one hears from within the fire of platoons and successive musketry discharges; it is the sentence of the court-martial which has just been executed.

"The detachment of chasseurs returns to the Châtelet to fetch other prisoners. The crowd seems deeply impressed on hearing the noise of the fusillades."—*Journal des Débats*, 30th May, 1871.

A journal of the Belgian bourgeoisie, the *Etoile*, one of the most violent against the Commune, allowed this avowal to escape it:

"The majority have met death like the Arabs after battle, with indifference, with contempt, without hatred, without anger, without insult to their executioners.

"All the soldiers who took part in these executions, and whom I have quesioned, have been unanimous in their accounts.

"One of them said to me, 'We shot about forty of these *canailles* at Passy. They all died like soldiers. Some crossed their arms and stood head erect. Others opened their tunics and cried to us, 'Fire! we are not afraid of death.

"Not one of those whom we have shot trembled. I especially remember an artillerist, who by himself did us more harm than a whole battalion. He was alone serving a piece of cannon. During three-quarters of an hour he peppered us with grape shot, and he killed and wounded not a few of my comrades. At last he was overwhelmed. We had turned his barricade.

"I still see him. He was a strongly built man. He was bathed in perspiration from the service he had done during three-quarters of an hour. 'Your turn now,' said he to us. 'I have merited shooting, but I shall die game.'

"Another soldier of General Clinchant's corps told me how his company had led to the ramparts eighty-four insurgents taken bearing arms:

"They all placed themselves in line," he said to me, "as if they were going to exercise. Not one faltered. One of them who had a handsome face, wore trousers in fine cloth tucked into his boots, and a Zouave's belt round his waist, said to us calmly, 'Try to aim at my chest; be careful not to touch my head.' We all fired, but the poor fellow had half of his head carried away."

A functionary of Versailles made me the following recital:

"During the day, Sunday, I made an excursion to Paris. I went by the Théâtre du Châtelet towards the smoking ruins of the Hôtel de Ville, when I was surrounded and carried along by the stream of a crowd which was following a convoy of prisoners.

"I found among them the same men whom I had seen in the battalions of the siege of Paris. Almost all seemed to me to be workingmen.

"Their faces betrayed neither despair nor despondency nor emotion. They walked on with a firm, resolute step, and they seemed to me so indifferent to their fate that I thought they expected to be released. I was entirely mistaken. These men had been taken in the morning at Menilmontant, and knew whither they were being led. Arrived at the Lobau Barracks, the cavalry officers who preceded the escort had a semicircle formed, and prevented the curious from advancing."

"One man, a swarthy, burly fellow, with a shock head of black hair, sat down at the corner of the Rue de la Paix and declined to go any further, shaking his fist at the people and grinding his teeth. After several attempts at coercive measures, one of the soldiers lost all patience, and drove his bayonet twice into his body, telling him to get up and walk on like the rest. As might have been expected, this method was not successful, so he was seized and placed on a horse, from which he speedily threw himself, and was then tied to its tail, and dragged along the ground after the manner of Brunhilda. He soon became faint from loss of blood, and having thus been reduced to a quiescent state, was bundled into an ambulance waggon and carried off amidst the shouts and execrations of the populace."—*Times*, May 31st.

"Another prisoner, who had also refused to march, was dragged by the hands and the hair of the head along the road."—*Times*, May 30th.

"Near the Parc Monceaux a husband and wife were seized and ordered to march forward towards the Place Vendôme, a distance of a mile and a half. They were both invalids and unable to walk so far. The woman sat down on the kerbstone, and declined to move a step in spite of her husband's entreaties that she would try. She persisted in her refusal, and they both knelt down together, begging the gendarmes who accompanied them to shoot them at once if shot they were to be. Twenty revolvers were fired, but they still breathed, and it was only at the second discharge that they finally sank down dead. The gendarmes then rode away, leaving the bodies as they had fallen."—*Times*, May 29th.

"Twenty-five thousand men, women and children killed during the battle or after; three thousand at least dead in the prisons, the pontoons' the forts, or in consequence of maladies contracted during their captivity; thirteen thousand seven hundred condemned, most of them for life; seventy thousand women, children and old men deprived of their natural supporters or thrown out of France; one hundred and eleven thousand victims at least;—that is the balance-sheet of the bourgeois vengeance for the solitary insurrection of the 18th March.

"What a lesson of revolutionary vigour given to the workingmen! The governing classes shoot in the lump without taking the trouble to select the hostages. Their vengeance lasts not an hour; neither years nor victims appease it; they make of it an administrative function, methodical and continuous."

THE INTERNATIONAL,

ITS PRECURSORS, AND ANARCHISM.

III.

Early Socialist Formulas.

It would be exaggerating to attribute the International's colossal success exclusively to the general state of public opinion at that time. We cannot deny that Internationalism manifested itself in many ways from 1860 to 1870. The Geneva Convention and the organisation of the Red Cross Society, the founding of the "League of peace and liberty," of the "International League for the abolition of prostitution," and especially the leap for progress taken by scientific congresses at that time are undeniable proofs of it. Nevertheless, no society, no

undertaking had either the fame or the influence acquired by the International during its short existence of three years, from 1866 to 1869.

Its success and influence must be attributed to the admirable statement, in the preamble to its statutes, of the principles and aims of all Socialist schools previously known, and of popular and revolutionary claims formulated during the Reformation, the great Revolution and the Revolution of 1848.

The people have ever looked upon the production of things useful to humanity, and the realisation of a justice more or less perfect in life as the supreme aim of human activity. Every time the masses have risen against oppressors and exploiters they have expressed their secular aspirations in about the same terms: liberty for all, equity in the enjoyment of well-being. Be it ignorant Galilean fishermen, be it Thaborist-Hussites, or revolted peasants under the leadership of Thomas Muntzer in Germany or Stephen Razin in Russia, their demands ever remained the same.

The earth and its riches to all, abolition of man's exploitation by man, individual liberty in a free commune. "The bird of the sky, the game of the forest, the fish in the river are free *for all*," said German peasants; "land and liberty *for all*," added Russians. By the expression, "for all," they meant communism.

Anabaptists and Thomas Muntzer who expressed the real popular aspirations during the peasants' war in Germany have left us their "*profession of faith.*" Socialist claims are far better expressed in it than in the electoral manifestoes of "scientific" Socialists of our times. If we set aside the religious element of this profession of faith, we find Anabaptists, denying all privilege, all authority, preached social equality—libertarian communism.

"There are no priests," we read in the first paragraph, "neither as tribe nor sect. Everybody can be regenerated by God's inspiration and hold office as priest in preaching by example.

"4. Men regenerated by spiritual influence must live together, holding their property in common.

"6. No ceremonial cult.....Man must earn his livelihood by the work of his hands.....

"8. No Anabaptist can govern nor let himself be governed by force. His reign is the Word of God. Sooner die than submit to slavery or impose it."[1]

As we see, this profession of faith is frankly Communist or even Anarchist. Identical claims have been formulated in England by revolutionary reformers. English Anabaptists are known by the nickname of "Levellers" and "Diggers," given to them on account of their negation of the "basis" of a barbarous, enslaved society. They declared that the possessors of the soil "are thieves and assassins," that the producer must not work as a wage-earner, "that private property must be abolished," that "land must be recognised as common property;" and the men that followed them in great numbers repeated, as an argument, the ancient saying of rebellious peasants(1381): "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?"

Popular aspirations towards social equity, so clearly put forth during the wars of the Reformation and Revolution in England, were drowned in rebels' blood. During more than a century and a half, till the great French Revolution, no such manifestation took place in Europe. A thing of interest to note, is that writers, even of renown, who, after Thomas More, occupied themselves with social questions before the Revolution, could not conceive the society longed for by Anabaptists, "Levellers," Thomas Muntzer and others. Neither Mably nor Rousseau reached so concrete or precise a conception of a free and Communist society in which "No man can govern nor let himself be governed by force," was the basis of social equity. It was necessary for the people to rise anew against slavery and oppression and to demolish the ancient régime, for honest men to state the social problem again.

All our readers no doubt know what an important part popular initiative played before and during the great Revolution. The people wrecked custom-houses, drove away tax-collectors, burned castles belonging to the nobility. Before Montmorency, A. Lameth and others renounced their lordly privileges during the night of August 4, the "sovereign" people, as they were wont to be called, had burnt their castles and abolished their privileges. Neither had the people any regard for bourgeois grabbers, whom they hung on lamp-posts, as they did the merchants' provost, Flesselles, in Paris for instance. Destroying the throne, demolishing the Bastille, expropriating the nobility and the Church, the people hailed the Republic, the Marianne who was to realise their dreams of social equity and civic liberty. Liberty, equality, fraternity! became the Republic's watchword, and in the declaration of the rights of man the Republic recognised the sacred right of rebellion. But all these beautiful formulas remained empty words and hardly gave anything to the people from a political point of view, and absolutely nothing from an economic and social point of view. The lands of both Church and nobility, sequestered in the name of the "sovereign" people, were sold by auction, and it was certainly not the poor, the great revolutionary mass that bought the land conquered by themselves. So it was from a national and communal point of view. Instead of creating the nucleus of a communal independent and national life, instead of calling forth a spirit of association and popular initiative, the Convention, dominated by Jacobins, prohibited all private association, guillotined every federalist and, proclaiming the Republic "one and indivisible," inaugurated the abominable system of centralisation that paralyzes public and intellectual life in the provinces even nowadays. Paris concentrated everything: administration, science, literature. While in Germany, in Switzerland, in England and elsewhere, communal and municipal life develops itself more and more to the detriment of central power and and bureaucracy, in France, ministerial offices and prefectures concentrate all the country's business in the hands of a stupid, rapacious, all-powerful bureaucracy. While thirty-two universities flourish in Germany, and every provincial town possesses a powerful press, the provincial faculties in France vegetate, and large rich towns like Marseilles, Bordeaux and Lyons do not possess a newspaper to be compared, not only with English, Swiss and German provincial papers, but even with the Russian papers of Kiev, Kharkov and Odessa. Yes, Paris has concentrated intellectual life. Its ministerial office killed provincial initiative and social life.

Owing to this cancer paralyzing the political, social and intellectual life of the country, any political bandit, any criminal gaining access to central power could accomplish a *coup d'etat* in Paris and become absolute master of the whole of France with the greatest ease. That is why the first scamp that came upon the scene, Consul Bonaparte, had but few efforts to make to seize the Jacobin inheritance. Less capacity and courage were needed by the depraved scoundrels of December 2nd. And, in our days, France is making for a third *coup d'etat*. It seems, for want of a Boulanger, that Esterhazy, Rochefort, Drumont and Co. would like to impose on France the dictatorship of the Staff that distinguished itself by the sale, with Esterhazy's authorization, of secrets respecting the defence of France to her enemies. Even the brigands of December 2nd had not been guilty of such abominable action, although they began by shooting women and children, by dooming masses to destruction, and finished up with Metz and Sedan.

To what dishonor will they bring France, all these document sellers? It is difficult to foresee. But there is no doubt that they will, because centralisation with all its abominations flourishes and becomes more and more perfect.

The more revolutionary government organised itself, the more the most devoted and sincere defenders of the Republic were forced to recognise that the heroic people suffered from the same misery as before the revolution. The people, also, soon learned to understand that they had only conquered the liberty of starvation, the equality of the disinherited, the fraternity of military convicts. This is why they did not answer to the call of the last Jacobins against reaction. The people of Paris who had behaved so heroically when they believed that the Republic, the beloved Marianne was about to realise their aspirations of social equality, refused to move. Republicans like Hébert and his friends, who worked in the people's interests, had been guillotined by the very men who now called for help to defend the Republic. It was too late.

It is just at that time and under the influence of the complete crumbling away of hopes as to economic reforms, that Babeuf, Darthé, Buonarotti and others conceived the necessity of another popular revolution, based on real popular claims. No sooner had they inquired into the causes of the people's poverty under the Republic, in spite of its watchword: Liberty, equality, fraternity, than they arrived at the same conclusion as Anabaptists and Levellers formerly, and the International later on.

Buonarotti tells us[2] the history of the conspiracy, its origin, aim and suppression, with touching simplicity. In speaking of the economic condition of the people, from 1791 to 1797, he makes the revolutionary government responsible for the misery and suffering endured.

The fault of those who figured in the revolutionary scene, was to limit their efforts in making one system of government prevail over another without troubling about the fate of those in whose favor all legitimate government should exist." "Never have the masses reached the degree of learning and independence necessary for the exercise of political rights." (Page 48)

"As to the cause.....it was found in the inequality of fortunes and conditions, and, last of all, in private property." (Page 49) The disciples of equality did not hesitate to point out that "private property was the principal source of all the evil that weighed down society." (Page 47)

Here, as in the preambles of the International's statutes, the disciples of equality concluded that the principal aim for action should be the economic emancipation of producers. Thus their conception of a social revolution is very different to that of parliamentary Social Democrats, who teach the people to upset the political government, but to touch the existing economic order would be a sacrilege committed against their "scientific" creed. Babeuf, Buonarotti and their friends decided that "the insurrectionary committee should publish, during the insurrection, two resolutions, by virtue of which the poor should BE IMMEDIATELY *clothed at the Republic's expense and lodged the same day* in the houses of the rich, who should only be allowed to retain strictly necessary room." (Pages 130–131)

This is already complete Anarchy; for it is we Anarchists who preach that the people, of their own initiative, must take over all existing riches as common property, without waiting for the authorisation of pretentious, scientifically ignorant windbags.

We know the end of the conspiracy. Arrested and dragged before the tribunal, Babeuf and his friends with sublime courage blamed the government of the rich for the rich, and defended Communist principles. Babeuf, like a Roman of the best days of the Republic, stabbed himself before the tribunal. Buonarotti, after long years of imprisonment, was banished from France, published his memoirs in London (1828), and then established himself in Brussels, where he preached Socialism to the young. Belgians, with good cause, look upon him as the first pioneer of Socialism in their comntry.

[1] Alexandre Weil, *L'Histoire de la guerre des Anabaptistes*, Paris, 1874, pages 92-4.

[2] A. Buonarotti, *La Conspiration des Egaut*, dite de Babeuf.

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☞ The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles.

NOTES.

PEACE ON EARTH.

This is the time of year when a multitude of people indulge in the repetition of high sounding maxims which, if practised, would bring about a revolution in everyday life. We have, as a rule, no quarrel with the maxims themselves; but for the hypocrites who mumble them over as fashion dictates, and yet would hang or imprison those who are trying to form a society based largely on the ideas therein expressed—for these, we say, we have the utmost contempt.

The Tsar and his peace rescript are an example of this nauseating hypocrisy; for certain it is that war preparations have been going on faster since he in his vanity gave this message (not quite original, by the way) to the world, than even before.

Peace on Earth! forsooth, when nations are re-arming with quick-firing guns, and governments and "royal" folk are as mercenary as the Sirdar in the Soudan! "Goodwill toward men," indeed, when competition is keener than ever, and the "struggle for existence" for every third man or woman ends in the workhouse!

Society which prates thus is in a state of "moral inversion" and the truth is best expressed in Tennyson's lines:

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;
Peace in her vineyard—yes!—but a company forges the wine.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of childrens' bones,
Is it peace or war? better war! loud war by land and by sea,
War with a thousand battles and shaking a hundred thrones.

HEROISM, TRUE AND FALSE.

It is sometimes said that if it were not for war and strife and such like evils in society, human nature would have no opportunity of showing that heroism and "self-sacrifice" which philosophers tell us are so essential in developing character in mankind. In other words, if we had a commonsense social system we should all be so comfortable and well-fed that we should be in danger of perishing from sheer inanition. A few days ago, a gunner in the British army who chanced to be walking down a London street instead, as might have happened, of being in the Soudan killing Dervishes by machinery, was called upon by a woman to rescue her husband and children who were lying unconscious in a room filled with poisonous gases. He went in and rescued four human beings while a gaping crowd looked on, utterly astonished, no doubt, at the sight of a soldier so far forgetting his duty as to save life instead of destroying it. We congratulate this soldier, who has proved to be a man. More than that, we protest against his name being mentioned in conjunction with the butchers of the Soudan, as has been done in some papers. Not but what there were plenty of men in the Soudan who would have done the same as Gunner Hall; but they had sold themselves and *had* to kill. Hall, too, had sold himself, and might, as we said before, have had to kill, but having no orders from his "superiors" he was for the moment *free to act*, and how well he acted all the world knows. It is only too clear that for centuries to come life will afford opportunities in the mine, on the sea and in the many dangers and difficulties that surround our existence for such acts of solidarity and devotion as that of Gunner Hall. Let our philosophers be comforted: we can do without their wars—especially if in that case the "survival of the fittest" means the survival of the Sirdar.

A JUDGE AND THE CAT.

The wise and humane position taken by Justice Mathew on the question of flogging deserves and has our full recognition. Of course, a judge is a paid administrator of the law and cannot be much other than we usually find him. Still we prefer the legal mind with one solitary ray of light to the darkness and brutality of a mind say like Justice Day's.

In his remarks to the Birmingham Grand Jury (whose grandeur must consist in ignorance and stupidity) Justice Mathew, deprecating the use of the "cat" in cases of assaults on women, said; "I believe that if a man has any good in him, and is punished with the 'cat' he is either for the rest of his days a broken-hearted man, or becomes a reckless criminal." This is about as near the truth as anything that has been said on the question, and it bears us out when we affirm that society itself is the criminal when it inflicts such tortures on a fellow-creature. But we must remind Justice Mathew that our prisons have from beginning to end the same tendency to break a man's heart or render him reckless and that it is a far deeper change than the abolition of the "cat" that is needed in our dealings with so-called criminals.

W. G. PEARSON.

The terrible and untimely death of W. G. Pearson of the S.D.F. robs that organisation of one of its most promising members. He strove hard for the cause of Social Democracy and he had more than ordinary intelligence and tact in the advocacy of his views. He was an honest and fearless though bitter opponent of Anarchism, and in all his encounters with Anarchists in meetings and debates he always gained respect for his ability and sincerity. He did more work for the dockers than many of those who have gained more praise. The study he invariably gave to social questions might perhaps in time have led him to broader views of social and industrial organisation; but, however that might have been, he succeeded in making an impression in all the work he did that will be sadly missed in the circles where he was best known. Our sympathies are with all his relations, friends and comrades who will most keenly feel his loss.

OUR PRISONERS.

We learn from comrades in America that the case of Berkman has been postponed till January, when a new Pardon Board will be appointed. Financially the Berkman Defence Committee is in a good condition. Henry Bauer, who was in prison with Berkman for four years, has lately succeeded in collecting from the Unions of New York over £80 for the Berkman Defence Fund.

The above news reminds us that our Walsall comrades are to be released this year. We are strongly of the opinion that Socialists of all schools should come together and prepare a fitting reception for them on their release, and assist them to start life's battle anew after their long years of imprisonment.

"HUMANITY."

Apropos of prison affairs we notice that that excellent little journal, *Humanity*, publishes with its January number *The Prison Record*, an eight page brochure which is to be issued as an "occasional supplement." In this latter is printed a letter from Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson who from official report is is able to give some contradiction to the account of Luccheni's treatment as published in the *Neue Wiener Tagblatt*. We must say candidly after reading the this report we are still of opinion that the *Neue Wiener Tagblatt* is not far wrong. If, indeed, it shows a few degrees less hardship than the condition described, we have to remember that it is an *official* report and no doubt contains the usual amount of glossing of official doings. But the cloven hoof is shown in the following admission which appears also in an official letter. "The six months 'au secret,' that is to say without any contact with the other prisoners, has been adopted only in the case of Anarchists." This sounds ominous enough, and leaves little room to doubt the truth of the more terrible picture that has been painted.

THE *Free Commune*, with a cover and with many typographical improvements is now being published by the Leeds comrades as a quarterly magazine. It contains articles by MacQueen, Barton, E. Kelly, and an excellent poem by W. F. Barnard on the crumbling and neglected statue erected in memory of the police who were killed in the Haymarket "riots" in Chicago, 1886. We hope to see still further improvements in its next issue, but meanwhile we wish our Leeds comrades every success in their propaganda.

ANARCHISM IN FRANCE.

A remarkable evolution is taking place at this moment in the scientific and literary world of France: in spite of the threats of a *coup d'etat* on the part of the Jesuits, the Anti Semites and the stupid brutal gen-

erals who are selling their country to foreigners and themselves turn by turn to every monarchical pretender, in spite of such threats, I say, the honest men of the scientific and literary world are drawing more closely into touch with the working classes, with the revolutionists. From the outset they have been struck by the energetic attitude and noble and humane propaganda of our Anarchist friends. *L'Aurore*, the courageous journal of Clemenceau, Zola, Urbain Gohier, and other defenders of Justice and Liberty, states that:

"The Anarchists occupy a position in the Dreyfus camp and a very visible position; they have formed it for themselves by their own initiative and by right of their courage, devotion and intense attachment to the cause of Justice and Truth. They were the first to contend with the Anti-Semites in the street—who forgets that day after the *J'accuse!* Sebastien Faure and and some of his friends (they numbered less than a hundred!) ejected six thousand patriots from the Tivoli-Vauxhall, who returned home no little astonished at the unexpected incident. They were the first, when hooted in the streets, to raise their voices to drown those of the bawlers from Catholic circles; during the Zola trial, Paul Delsalle, the editorial secretary of the *Temps Nouveaux*, together with his comrades lent us every assistance at the risk of being thrown into the Seine by the madmen who terrorised the jury under the protecting eye of the police. They were the first to start in Paris and the provinces a campaign of revisionist meetings; the first also to denounce the infamous attitude of a foul press towards Zola; one of the most cordial and sympathetic of the letters addressed to the outraged Master on this matter, bore the signature of Jean Grave. Nor, throughout the year have they relinquished the struggle for a moment, nor that of the streets nor that of public meetings, such as that of a week since, when Sébastian Faure had the honor to demolish Déroulède the Grotesque in his happiest manner. So many services rendered by the Anarchists to the cause of Justice have destroyed many prejudices and cleared up many misunderstandings. Whilst other parties deceived or temporised, they sprang to the front and proclaimed to the crowd their courageous propaganda. Thousands of peaceful citizens have applauded their speakers. To-day all France is familiar with their names and personalities."

A man of considerable note, Maurice Vernes, Director of a High School, wrote the other day:

"Several speakers of Anarchist opinions have propounded, with a warmth that was contagious, this argument: that the people should interest themselves in the fate of Captain Dreyfus and Colonel Picquart, albeit "bourgeois and aristocrats," because in these persons the principles of integrity and liberty had been violated, and that to permit these violations among the privileged was to authorise or excuse them when they should reach the unprivileged. Is there anything finer, anything nobler, anything more moving than such language? It recalled to me the following beautiful reflections with which deep study of the social and moral rôle of the Jewish Prophets, of a Jeremiah and Isaiah, inspired Renan:

"'Isaiah was the first to give form to the cry of the people, to the complaint of the poor, to the obstinate claims of those who thirst for justice. Isaiah so loved justice that not finding the world just, he condemned it to an end. Like the Anarchists of our days, to those who say to him: The world as constructed has injustices which are necessary,—he replies: Good, then! it is badly constructed—it must be demolished.'"

Happy omens! Science is awakening. Honest men, astonished at the noble propaganda of our principles, ask: Is there anything nobler? We answer—Yes, there is something nobler; it is to work with the people and with us Anarchists for the social emancipation of the people, for the abolition of every semblance of Power, for the triumph of universal Justice and Equity. W. TCHERKESOV.

LIBERTARIAN OR ANARCHIST?

The term "Libertarian" in place of "Anarchist" seems to be used with increasing frequency. The newer term pleases me better because, while it emphatically denotes our cardinal principle, it admits of no misconstruction nor misunderstanding. We who have long fought under the device of "Anarchy" have naturally acquired a regard for the name and frankly accepted it with whatever stigma might attach thereto, still we must admit that the very word in itself is liable to be taken, quite honestly, in a wrong sense, while our many *dishonest* opponents take care to recognise no other. Anarchy is most frequently taken to mean disorder, confusion, chaos—quite the contrary of that true harmony which we affirm to spring from Freedom alone.

In face of the reaction which has now set in and which daily pretends to improve the world by the imposition of new restrictions upon every branch of the activity of the human will, and upon every tendency of the human mind to transcend the limits of the commonplace and *respectable*, we alone among all parties remain unaltered in our devotion to Freedom, and oppose to all laws and regulations our one demand —Liberty for each and for all; Liberty unbounded.

And this is not because we believe that each man possessed of freedom will necessarily do what we conceive to be right; on the contrary, it is because we admit human imperfection that we refuse to acquiesce in subjection to a government either representing a minority intent on maintaining its privileges, or swayed by a majority imbued with prejudice and bent on crushing the individual will into submission to its own mediocrity.

Our motto: "An-Archy—No Government," is synonymous with Libertism, but I think the latter name is more expressive and better calculated to win the sympathies of those whose generous instincts we seek to enlist for our Cause and whose noble but wandering aspirations we seek to direct to the true path—Freedom. HENRY GLASSE.

"JUSTICE" IN HOLLAND.

COMRADES,—It is a proof of courage, or rather of audacity, to address you—not because I am a foreigner; for, being Socialist, I hate the narrow-minded frontiers made by politics, but because I am too little conversant with your language to use it properly. But there is a language of the heart, and I hope you will understand with the heart what I have not said grammatically. All men of conviction are audacious. And are they not obliged to be so? Venturing is half the deed, and "nothing venture, nothing have"; faint heart never won fair lady.

So I made so bold as to comply with the wishes of my Dutch friends to treat the case of the brothers Hogerhuis—our Dreyfus case—not only in Dutch but also in English; and I thank all the comrades, who support me, and hope that they will help me in my undertaking. I am convinced of the innocence of those three young men, victims of a legal error if not a legal crime, and I hope to succeed in pouring into you so much of my conviction as suffices to unite you in protesting with us against this injustice.

And should I knock in vain?

I don't think so. I should be inclined to say: England's past warrants for it. For was it not England, again and again, that protested against the horrid acts committed here and there and everywhere by order of the governments or with their knowledge? As well with regard to the abominable cruelties to which the Russian exiles in Siberia were subjected, as with regard to the murder of the Armenian Christians by the Sultan of Turkey, the Emperor William the Second's friend, who was nicknamed the "great assassin" by the "grand old man"; as well with regard to the torture of the Republicans and Anarchists in the fortress of Montjuich, in Spain, as to those of the poor Cubans, who were made away with by thousands by the civilising(?) hand of General Weyler; as well with regard to the way in which the Italian government treated all those in Sicily, in Milan and a great many other places, who, forced by misery, rose in insurrection against a misgovernment dooming a whole nation to starvation, as with regard to the oppression and expulsion of the poor Russian Jews. Again and again England readily organised meetings of protest and indignation in order to urge by its powerful voice to liberality and humanity. And the press of England, mightier than any other, assisted in this work and succeeded in driving public opinion in a direction which doubtless contributed to a mitigation of the horrors committed.

The affair of the French captain, Dreyfus, and the bold deed of Zola, who pointed out publicly, by mentioning their names, the high-placed officers whose joint efforts had caused the fall of Dreyfus; the affair of the French colonel, Picquart, and his noble attitude, they are known all over the world, nay, in other countries that affair is as much the topic of the day as in France. I've come here to speak to you of such another affair, which is much less known, but where there are *three* victims instead of one. And our demand is the same: *we wish the revisal of a sentence.* Not that we require you to be directly convinced of the innocence of the victims the same as we are. That would not do; for to be able to judge, it is necessary to sift a matter through and through, and that's not easy. No, we simply ask if a revisal is not necessary where doubts exist, and these doubts exist in the hearts of thousands and thousands.

Everywhere it has become a sort of dogma that the judge is next to infallible, and woe to the man who does not leave this infallibility as it is. Yet it is proved by numerous cases that serious faults and errors are committed, and we don't quite understand the reason why the judges should be always provided with a halo of sublimity. To err is human, and instead of throwing dishonor upon a person, nobody will take it amiss in him if he but acknowledges it. So long as we have to do with a judicial error there may be extenuating circumstances; but woe! when that error becomes a judicial *crime!*

What is the cause of the sympathy of the bourgeoisie for Dreyfus in other countries but France? In the first place, in all countries people like to play the part of the pharisee in the well-known parable of the Pharisee and the Publican; and they will soon say: We are thankful that we are not so bad as the French, who ill-treat Dreyfus we are much better and more virtuous than they, and *our* judges will not do such things. But the same people are ready to slander those who, in their own country, take up the gauntlet for people who are also victims to such an error. And then they will exclaim instantly: "That's quite a different case."

When Zola flung his famous accusation into the world, he received proofs of sympathy from every side. I will not be inferior to anybody in paying homage to Zola for his noble action, but yet I was vexed at seeing a great number of persons setting up for champions of the cause of justice and humanity, now that it concerned a foreign affair, while they were deaf and blind to the injustice committed by their own judges quite close to them. I called to Zola, that if he knew who assured him of their sympathy he would, doubtless, fling these proofs back in the faces of those who had sent them. Or is it not striking that thousands of persons were excited to a roaring enthusiasm for Zola, while they didn't utter a sound in the affair which took place near Leeuwarden, in

the province of Friesland? For, notwithstanding the difference between the two cases, there is also an undeniable resemblance; in both cases lives have been destroyed on motives that could not be sufficient proofs for any one. I protested and protest against that hypocrisy. It is easy to be praised abroad by pretending to be an advocate of justice and equity, but it would be much better to prevent or to restrain injustice in one's own surroundings.

In criminality truth should take the first place. The truth should be sought for as much as possible and, if it cannot wholly be brought to light, no condemnation should follow, but an honest acknowledgment: "We do not know the truth; so we cannot judge, much less condemn."

While in France we have to deal with a political lawsuit, where they are continually talking such idle words as "patriotism," "the honor of the army" and such like shams, here we have a social lawsuit in which the phrases heard are: "Property," which "must be protected"; "Law and order," which "must be maintained." In this way the judges become prepossessed and, looking through political or social spectacles, blinded by class prejudices, they will not be able to judge without respect of persons, but their sentences will bear the stamp of their class point of view.

I am going to tell you the case in all its details; but first I ask your indulgence in listening to me. Let me now begin to tell you the facts.

In a village, situate about four miles from the capital of the province of Friesland, stands a farmhouse which, as is the custom there, has only a couple of small windows in the frontage, the entrance being at the back.

In that farmhouse lived a husbandman, Gatse Haitsma, with a young housekeeper, Jemkje Yansma. In the night, between the 5th and 6th December, 1895, a burglary was committed there by three men who wore masks and had put on long white clothes. Though the perpetrators could not be found out in the beginning, on the 31st of December the three brothers Hogerhuis were taken into custody on suspicion. It was not before the 3rd of June, 1896, that they appeared before the tribunal at Leeuwarden, with the result that the first, Weibren, was committed to jail for 12 years, the second, Marten, for 11 years, and the third, Keimpe, for 6 years. The condemned appealed to a higher court, but the verdict was approved.

It was said that the three brothers were of bad repute in the village; but I can say that this is absolutely untrue. All the three had a very good reputation although they were Socialists; in proof of which the employers for whom they have worked gave good testimonies before the tribunal, and when the mayor of the village heard that Wiebren Hogerhuis was suspected and arrested, he said: they might as well have taken him as Wiebren Hogerhuis. All the three had good faces only they gave the impression of energetic men who were bold and enterprising. They were condemned for attempted manslaughter, attempted theft by night from an inhabited house by breaking into it, climbing in and committing violence, termed by the Public Prosecutor *one of the heaviest offences against the right of property.*

This lawsuit shows our administration of justice in a peculiar light and for this reason such a case matters to us all. Let me tell you that according to our jurisprudence two things are necessary to condemn a person: in the first place the *legal* proof, and in the second place the *convincing* proof; and a condemnatory sentence may not be pronounced before these two proofs have been furnished together.

The legal proof has been furnished; for three witnesses—Gatse Haitsma, the husbandman, Jemkje Yansma, his housekeeper and her brother, Sieds Yansma, who had slept that night at Haitsma's in the same bed with the latter, swore to their having recognised the defendants. So long as this sworn evidence of three persons exists, so long we may say that the legal proof has been furnished. But this is not sufficient; the convincing proof should also have been furnished, and that has not been done. For this very reason a condemnation ought not to have followed, according to the excellent old maxim "Abstain in doubt"; so that in doubt it is always in favor of the accused person. Here follow the proofs given in the sentence as convincing ones:

1. *For each of the accused* the recognition was acknowledged to be right at a distance of 75 metres in rainy weather and, what is more, from behind. Now this is positively impossible, even when the moon shines clearly. Trials have been made of it, and even at a distance of 30 metres it is not possible with acutest vision to discern different persons from each other. The principal witness himself hesitated to confirm this, as is proved by the following examination by the president of the tribunal.

President.—Were you able to recognise the three men when they withdrew on the road by moonlight?

Haitsma.—Why, it would be rather difficult to be quite sure of it; of course, I saw them from behind.

President.—But if you know a person well for a long time already, as you do the brothers Hogerhuis, then you will generally be able to recognise him also from behind.

Haitsma.—Well, then they were the brothers Hogerhuis, and then Wiebren, the white man, was walking in the middle.

We ask: has not this confirming evidence been forced by the president out of the witness?

He declares that it would be rather difficult to be quite sure of a recognition, but as soon as he perceives that he will oblige the president by the acknowledgment, he says: well, if you wish it by any means, I will do you the good turn to tell you that I did recognise them.

We ask: has this trial been conducted fairly? Would it not have been necessary to have proved by experiment the possibility of a recognition at such a distance, to know whether this evidence is not subject to improbability?

In consequence of so improbable an evidence three men were punished so severely, so barbarously!

2. *For Wiebren. Recognition by the manner in which he jumped through a window of 47 centimetres by 57 centimetres* (not 19 inches high and less than 22 inches wide).

Haitsma declared: "immediately when I saw him jumping in, I thought—that is Wiebren. That idea struck me when I saw his movements."

Here you see an imitation of the window (frame produced), and now I ask you: is it possible to jump into a house through this window? It would be very difficult to do so even for an athlete or a clown, the more so for a journeyman painter who is rather stout built and thick set. Take the proof when you will; and if you take the circumstances into consideration, you will be convinced of the case. According to the same witness, he had filled up his clothes and was disguised in a long white garment, reaching below the knees. Such a costume renders jumping or leaping much more difficult, if not quite impossible. We repeat, why did not they make a trial of it? The worshipful judges wear also such long clothes, and if they ventured to jump through such a small window I think they would fall head over heels before reaching the window-pane and that would be a pity.

When the advocate, who had also such a window at the session of the court, asked to be allowed to draw it over Wiebren's head and body in order to prove the impossibility of leaping through it; *this request was declined.* The conclusion drawn from the refusal was that it seemed as if they feared to lose their prey by granting the request! What the bordereau is in the case of Dreyfus, the window is in the case of Hogerhuis. And in consequence of such an uncertain argument a man is committed to prison for twelve years!

3. *Recognition by the voice.*

The three witnesses declared to have recognised Wiebren by his voice. But where the first declared that voice "to be quite different from Wiebren's ordinary voice"—how was it possible to recognise him by his voice in that case? Sieds Yansma said, that the voice was "as familiar to him as his own father's." We see, therefore, that one witness declared the voice to have been changed, and the other that it was his ordinary voice. So that the evidence of the former neutralises that of the latter.

Notwithstanding all this, it is an argument to commit a man to prison for twelve years.

4. *Recognition by the movements.*

A struggle took place in the room. On the table were a bread-knife, a lantern and the tea things. Haitsma was going to seize this bread-knife to make use of it in the fight, but, he declared, "the white man seemed to have guessed my intention; for he immediately struck the lantern together with the tea things from the table. This movement made me think: it is Wiebren."

So Haitsma recognised Wiebren by the movement in striking the tea things from the table. Is that probable? Was it, perhaps, a daily repeated movement to strike tea things from tables? And yet a person can be recognised by his movements only in the case of their being repeated daily. Properly speaking, such an argument is ridiculous; but it is a sad thing to know that in consequence of it a man has been committed to prison for twelve years?

5. *Recognition by the eyes.*

Jemkje Yansma declared that she looked at his eyes and was sure of having recognised him. But how is this possible? They all declared that the man in white was masked, so that only his eyes were visible. But it is generally known that a masked person, of whom nothing is visible but his eyes, cannot be recognised. The masked balls prove this clearly enough. If a person has masked himself well, neither his wife nor his most intimate friends are able to recognise him. Yet this argument was found strong enough to commit a man to prison for twelve years!

Something peculiar happened with the garment which the man in white had put on. By a perquisition in the house of the mother Hogerhuis, a table-cloth was discovered in her linen-closet which was darned in two places. Hurrah? now they had found the convicting proof, and triumphantly they took it to Leeuwarden. They were carefully unsewn; but, when the trial was made, it appeared that if the cloth had been used as the white garment with two holes for the eyes, one of the eyes must have been at the back, so great was the distance between the holes. They have, therefore, been wise enough to leave out this convincing proof at the session.

These are the proofs of guilt, which, taken separately or all together, are so weak that no one can call them decisive, unless one is beforehand convinced of the guilt, as was the case with the judges.

And now with regard to the two others:

Recognition of Marten.

1. At a distance of 75 metres, the same as Wiebren,

2. *By his thick wrists.*—Sieds Yansma declared before the tribunal that he recognised Marten by his thick wrists. But, luckily, Marten had his wrists about him and was able to convince their worships that his wrists were not thick. This proof proved to be so weak that it was not taken down in the sentence.

3. *By shrugging his shoulders.*—This was said to have grown into a habit with Marten. But, unfortunately, none of his relations or friends had ever perceived it; and it was only Sieds Yansma, who was moreover but little acquainted with him, who knew that habit. Again, they might have observed him in his cell (if they had earnestly wished to

examine everything) to know if such a shrugging of the shoulders was really a habit with Marten; for, if this was the case, he would do it also when he was alone in his cell. And in consequence of such weak, miserable proofs a man is committed to prison for eleven years!

It is also very peculiar that Marten fired at Sieds Yansma. "The first time the revolver missed fire. Instantly, he drew the trigger again and, when I jumped to my feet and was rushing on Marten, he fired and hit me in the back of the neck." How can this be? How can a man be hit in the back of the neck when he is running towards the man who is firing? That must have been a crooked-barrelled revolver! And it is also peculiar that the cartridge which was found in the house of Haitsma does not fit the barrel of the revolver which belongs to Wiebren.

F. Domela Nieuwenhuis.

(To be continued)

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

By virtue of his royal clemency, let us say, and not as a sop cast to that Cerberus, Public Opinion, at the dawn of the new year Humbert throws open his prison doors and frees 2,700 of the innocent men, women and children he flung behind them last May. Cerberus unfortunately has three heads and is not at any time a pleasant animal to trifle with; therefore, with the flagrant brutality and injustice of the sentences still before him, each throat will demand its sop as the price of silence; the freeing of 2,700 is not enough—Justice demands and will have a general amnesty for all political offenders. Anna Kulisciev, the courageous and talented Russian Socialist who has spent most of her time in the prison infirmary, is one of the fortunate ones; but the editor of the *Secolo* remains behind the bars as well as many another brave heart, for the amnesty so far is not retrospective. Politicals sentenced before the May riots receive no amelioration of their punishment, and Malatesta will pass the next four years in exile on the lonely, unhealthy island to which he was recently deported. For him, an Anarchist, no mercy. Yet, after all, that is a commodity no Anarchist of repute has or ever will ask for. As we live, so we suffer and die—eyes to the front, heads up in the consciousness of integrity of purpose, looking not at the tormentor or executioner but through and beyond him into the calm, steadfast eyes of Justice and Truth.

The release of 2,700 unjustly convicted persons is, however, scarcely going to pacify Italy. No amount of olive oil is likely to heal a wound kept raw by friction, any more than the internal fires of Vesuvius can be smothered by pouring the ashes of Naples down its throat. An ardent admirer of representative government as "the only form under which a people can develop itself in a wholesome direction," writes from Rome: "The great men who made United Italy have left very unworthy successors....There are a number of more or less self-seeking or absolutely dishonest politicians, whose abilities are only second-rate; they cannot see that taxation has reached a point at which it defeats its own object....that corruption is paralysing political life. But Italy must save herself and work out her own salvation. Honest and sensible journalists, mostly now in prison, have preached the necessity of considering the capacity of the people and their needs, and of colonising Italy before Africa; but these doctrines are called subversive, and it is considered absolute madness to suggest that the necessaries of life ought not to be taxed. It will be terrible if the folly of the Government drives the people into serious revolt. It is a great people—there is not the unnatural, nameless corruption here which is eating out the heart of France. And what life there is in them—what a fertile race, physically and mentally!" Is it likely that a people physically and mentally so strong will lie quiescent under the heel of a monarch as little loved as Humbert? No, Ireland is the only nation which is content to sit still under a mailed hand and suck at the sugarplums doled out by mocking ministers. We expect Italy to bite into the hand that would sweeten the bitter pill of oppression, that overburdens with taxes, mows down with bullets, thrusts into jail at the whisper of revolt, and then holds out confetti in the shape of liberty under police surveillance.

Over the decisions of the Anti-Anarchist Conference the veil of secrecy remains decently drawn, but the Conference is over and the delegates have left Rome, and as the first-fruits of their united counsels certain foreign officials are being escorted about London to take the portraits of its mad, bad Anarchists. As E. Reclus wrote to a would-be reviewer: "I know beforehand that it is not ideas that will be discussed at the Anti-Anarchist Conference, but merely a question of police. We can ignore things of that kind; they are not history." No, not history, but it is things of this kind that help to make history. All Anarchists have not won to the noble patience of a Kropotkin, a Reclus, a Tcherkesov. There are sensitive souls who remain silent but feel the sting of unmerited police brutality and espionage like the lash; the day comes when they are driven to retaliate or die—sometimes both—and then there is history.

A newspaper from a far-off Colony lies before us, and its Special London Correspondent writes: "The Anarchist kills for notoriety's sake alone, and plans deeds for which there is no reason except their hideous wickedness." Where does that breed come from if not from the writer's own inner consciousness? He continues: "Hanging is far too merciful a method for killing such creatures....they ought to be subjected the most exquisite tortures known to the inquisitors of old. It is high time that all civilised nations joined in a campaign against them. It might be begun and carried to a satisfactory end in a few weeks....the campaign would have to be conducted in a merciless spirit; it would have to be a war of extermination." Now nothing comes easier to the bourgeois Special Correspondent than to sit down and pile up adjectives when he has a determination of Anarchism to his pen. He puts on red spectacles and wallows in gore. He knows all about the movement from beginning to end, though he has never opened an Anarchist pamphlet nor spoken with a bona fide Anarchist in his life. Such men make one tired; they cannot even lie gracefully, and they need go no farther than the nearest police station to learn the art.

France outwardly remains in *statu quo*. Felix Faure fraternises with the army and the soldiers spend most of their time in barracks, as though the authorities feared they might grow too friendly with the people destined later on to become their targets. Dreyfus is not on his way home, and there are some who say it is not likely that he will ever reach France alive, because that would mean the beginning of street fighting and street fighting in Paris, well—what with Louis and Victor Napoleon, Orleans, the Dreyfusards, anti-Semites, not to mention the Anarchists, who always have something to say on these occasions—fighting when it next breaks out in France is going to be an ugly business. How it will end is not difficult to foresee. The Napoleons have not much chance; the army officers are Royalist to a man and will hand the plum to Henry V., and when the troops have butchered citizens and Anarchists enough, they will wipe their bayonets, toss down a glass of absinthe with a *Vive le Roi!* and compare notes as to which took the most killing—the Anarchist at the barricade or the little bourgeois who fought for his business and the Republic at his shop-front. But be the end as it may, we should assuredly lose many a noble-hearted comrade whose hand we clasp to-day. Men, aye, and women, whose voices and pens have long been raised in the cause of Liberty, will at her call as rendily lay their lives before her altar. Such forebodings sadden and depress, yet, if all our heartburnings and heartbreaks, our efforts to raise a ripple on the awful sea of apathy and indifference in which England lies steeped, seem futile, let us remember that to set something going is the utmost we can hope to do in this world; where it will go to no one can say; that Anarchism lives though Anarchists die; that the dawn of a new century is at hand; that the more we suffer the greater the need to stand closely together the world over—hand to hand, shoulder to shoulder, eyes steady, confronting all, fearing none!

D.

THE PROPAGANDA.

THE LIBERTARIAN LECTURE SOCIETY.

Practical Communism.—Comrade Tchaykovsky, in his lecture, was clearly of the opinion that practical Communism was incompatible with the social and economic conditions of the day. Failure, so far, had been the fate of every experiment in this direction. The only communities that had been able in a sense to prosper and live, were religious sects of the Shaker and like types, whose fundamental creed was asceticism, the mutilation of human nature and the elimination of all that went to make a full and perfect life. The aim of practical Communism must be to develop every side of the human creature, and not merely to provide him with shelter and food. Officialism and government kill communal life; no commune can breathe in their midst. They killed the early Christian movement, the Anabaptist, and still effectually throttle by taxes or otherwise the free expansion of an established commune. Life in present day communes thus becomes unbearable. Men are cramped up within the small space of their immediate moral and physical surrounding, friction and waste of energy result, and the colony ceases to exist. For a colony to succeed, the creative power in every sphere of life must have full play; land must be procurable (which it now is not) near towns, so that the colony may not be cut off from the outside world and become what it usually is—little better than a hothouse or a prison where aspirations and sympathies are limited to the few people one lives amongst.

Sydney Olivier's sketch of the Dreyfus affair embraced its history from the beginning, and his own and our only regret was that there were no lantern slides by which he could have illustrated the types of men who built it up, from General de Boisdeffre with his goose-like countenance, to Esterhazy the scoundrel and adventurer. The skeleton in the cupboard, as all know, is the fierce, silent struggle for supremacy that always exists between Militarism and the Civil Power where the former, as in France with Alsace-Loraine to reconquer, becomes the petted child of the nation. Another great factor in the drama is, that almost to a man the army officers are members of the old Catholic families of France, who from boyhood up are educated in Jesuit seminaries and imbued with devotion to the Pope, and its corollary—detestation of the Republican form of government, of Jews, Protestants, infidels and suchlike *canaille*. Rome and its Church, like the proverbial woman, has and always will have its finger in every pie, and will continue to create dissension in the human family whenever it sees its way by so doing to material and political aggrandisement. The Republic expelled the Jesuits, but they soon slipped back, and all the military training colleges are to day ruled by that order. This explains the bitterness with which Dreyfus was hunted down by his own comrades. A man of integrity and simple habits, an intelligent and keen soldier, he succeeded by virtue of his own character where his Catholic comrades failed; official jealousies and rivalries are rife in every naval and military circle, and when unpleasant questions began to be put to the heads of the Secret Intelligence Department a scapegoat was easily found in

the successful, industrious Jew. No Jew could be a patriot, ergo Dreyfus was guilty of selling his country's secrets. Europe, if not France, has long recognised in Dreyfus an innocent and deeply wronged man. Zola, in his admirable portraits of the men to which the Second Empire gave birth, unconsciously or not betrays the progressive degradation of the French nation. France, indeed, lies in a piteous condition, and the meaning of *L'Affaire Dreyfus* is not far to seek: the Army and the Church against the people—Imperial expansion before Democracy.

Mrs. Carver in her excellent paper explained the benefits to be derived from Co-operative Banking. Mr. Carver some years since, when travelling abroad, was struck by the ease with which the peasants and workingmen were able to raise small loans when in need from popular banks worked on the co-operative system. About 1848, a German Burgomaster noting the misery of the peasants about him, farm and tools being continually mortgaged to the Jews, started a bank for their relief; this was the first of its kind, and now in Germany alone there are some 2,000, while hardly a province in France or Italy is without its co-operative credit banks. A few years since, Mr. Carver founded a bank near Finsbury Park, another has been started off Tottenham Court Road, and a third is being organised in Goodge Street for the benefit of the costers. The system is to form a committee, the chief part of whom are workers. When a man wants a loan to buy a donkey, to start a small business or to get his furniture out of pawn he has but to apply at the bank, the only securities required being a bona-fide statement as to use to which the money is to be put, and two sureties: one is usually his comrade the other often volunteers from the committee. Cash is advanced for purchases or any other purpose from 5/-, for which the interest asked is at the rate of 2d. in the pound, this being reduced at every part payment. Shares are £1 each, payable in instalments of 6d. per week or more. The integrity of the British workman is shown by the fact that there are no bad debts at either bank, and the success of the scheme proves how greatly some such institution is needed. Governments have more than once attempted to run credit banks for the people, but they have always failed through the curse of officialism, etc. In a popular bank such as those now inaugurated in London, the bank is run by the people for the people, and the dividends do not fill the pockets of directors but return to those of the depositors. Some of the comrades in question-time pointed out that as these banks were run on business principles—and business to the Anarchist smelt of exploitation and deceit—there might be danger of the germ of commercialism waking into activity and finally extinguishing the spirit of mutual aid that had prompted their conception. Also that while of evident benefit to the lower middle-class, there was an ever-increasing class below even that of the coster, which the Co-operative Banking system was powerless to reach. As a panacea towards the aid of one section of the community, it was good—the removal of the causes that led to need at all, might be better worth striving for.

So ended our first series of lectures, and with all expenses paid and a small surplus to carry forward to the next series (to begin, we hope, on January 15 or sooner) we may congratulate ourselves on the outcome of a venture that was commenced with no little misgivings as to its possible results.

THE WORKER'S FRIEND GROUP commemorated the death of the Chicago Martyrs on the 11th of November, at Christchurch Hall, Spitalfields. The hall was crowded and much enthusiasm was manifested by the audience. The speakers were W. Tcherkesov in Russian, R. Rocker in German, Kelly in English, and Caplan and Eigers in Yiddish. Jenny Atkinson, in her splendid contralto, rendered "Annie Laurie" in a touching manner, bringing back to her listeners' recollections the last night of Albert Parsons and his comrades. All present were very grateful to her and trust they may hear her again soon. A. Bonoff and others contributed to the success of the meeting, which closed with every prospect of a better propaganda for the coming year.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

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THE LIBERTARIAN LECTURE SOCIETY,

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[*Will comrades in the London and provincial Groups make a point of furnishing us with reports of their meetings and progress by not later than the 20th of each month.*—ED.]

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