

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM

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THE LABOR WAR.

Bellamy has, in *Looking Backward*, a prophecy which apparently is going to be realised. Gigantic strikes and labor wars—he wrote—brought about the social revolution, the results of which he described in his utopia. Now, the philosopher follows the utopian. Herbert Spencer, impressed by the greatness and social importance of the last coal strike in America, has written to an American paper predicting that the necessary outcome of the growing conflicts between Capital and Labor will be a terrible social war, a social revolution—unsuccessful, he thinks; but we must not forget that the philosopher is very old and has never seen the labor movement from the inside.

However, there was somebody—the Workingman himself—who, much before the utopian and the philosopher, had foreseen and predicted that the social revolution *would be an outcome of labor conflicts* (not of parliamentary warfare), and for the last thirty years has worked in order that it should be so. More than thirty years ago, in the International Working Men's Association, the Paris sections brought before one of the congresses of the great Association the question of a *General Strike*, as a necessary prelude and an appropriate beginning of the Social Revolution—a revolution which would not merely change the government, but would hand over the land, the factories, the mines and the railways to those who bring them into the service of man: to the laborers themselves.

Accusations of headless utopism met this proposal; but the federalist and revolutionary sections of the International made of it a prominent point of their program, while amongst the workers themselves an unseen and noiseless propaganda of the general strike idea has been going on since, for thirty years, notwithstanding all the opposition of the politicians, and with the excellent results that we see now in Europe and America. This propaganda took all possible names. In America, in 1887, it was the Knights of Labor who worked hard promoting it, and from America the movement spread to Europe, finding an especially favorable ground in Belgium. Later on, when Powderly had disgraced the good name of the Knights by selling himself to the middle classes, the movement took other names; but it was continued and soon honeycombed the labor movement in Belgium and parts of France and Germany, as also, apparently, in Poland and Western Russia. The quite unsuspected unanimity with which the workers all over the world came out for the first First of May Demonstration in 1890, was the result of that unseen preparatory work; and when the May-day movement was invaded by all sorts of politicians who entirely emasculated it, and when the laborers lost interest in it the more active men left the May-day fêtes to speech-makers of all denominations, and found a much better field of work in preparing the minds and solidarity-feelings of the workers for the great strike movements which now break out with such a wonderful unity of action.

At the same time, several attempts at forcing upon the capitalists an Eight-hour Day were made quite independently of the May-day fêtes. The great strike of the London engineers; the numerous, well-prepared, well-planned and enthusiastically supported strikes, by which the Barcelona trades have succeeded in re-introducing the Eight-hour Day which many of them had lost during the terrible Montjuich persecutions; and finally, several great strikes of miners—all these were as many preparatory steps.

Gradually, but surely and steadily, the international alliance within all separate trades (the miners, the dock laborers, the weavers, the railway engineers, etc.) and between all trades is being established. Robert Owen's "International Trades' Union" (union of all trades) is in an excellent way of progress. The recent strikes; their extension and obstinacy; the amount of support, both national and international, which they have found; the facility with which workingmen's unions of different nations correspond; and the degree of sympathy and solidarity which they find with each other, even though the middle classes use all means to excite national hatred—all these facts which the constant readers of the labor press have continually under their eyes, show how steadily that inconspicuous work of consolidation of labor has been going on. But the best of it is that it has been accomplished entirely apart, and independently from, all political parties, whether Radical or Social Democratic.

A striking feature of this movement is its *independence*. The workers jealously watch that their unions should not become the bone of contest between politicians. In the Spanish papers one even sees that while international federations of trades are loudly called for, the reconstitution of an International Working Men's Association is not desired, from fear that the General Council of such an Association might

bring about the same political intrigues as one saw in the Marxist Council of the old International.

The last Labor Congresses are especially interesting on this account. The British Trade Union Congress has absolutely broken with Social Democracy. In proportion as Socialist ideas (Socialist—not Collectivist) spread more and more amongst the British workers, the latter become more and more cautious of not being led astray by Social Democratic politicians, with their unavoidable and most undesirable alliances. They will rather have their own representation in Parliament than trust it to Social Democratic politicians.

The very same was distinctly brought to light at the French Syndical (Trade Union) Congress, from which the political agitation carried on by Socialist politicians was absolutely excluded, while the general strike was the subject of full discussion and sympathetic votes. And the same again was apparent at the Miners' Congress at Commentry, where the miners stood for an immediate strike, while the politician leaders preached "calm, calm and calm," from fear to compromise their parliamentary position in a strike which may end no one knows how. And it was still more evident at the Labor Congress in Germany. The German workers, too, notwithstanding the efforts of the politicians, are also going to join the great international wave of labor revolt. Nay, even in dull Geneva, we have lately seen a general strike breaking out, merely for the support of a few striking comrades.

Of course, all the strikes which have lately disturbed the digestion of the capitalist serf-owners—notwithstanding the admirable and often touching features of working men's solidarity which were displayed during them—are not yet "The Labor War." The workers themselves look upon them as upon preliminary skirmishes which consolidate the growth of workingmen's solidarity irrespective of trade and national distinctions. Mere trials of his force by the slumbering giant. Mere warnings and merely a foretaste of the war that is coming. Moreover, the workers are still seeking their way as to the future. They don't know yet *how to pass from the present private ownership to the use of the necessities for production by the workers themselves*. The way, and the most appropriate ideal, too, have yet to be found, and to be fully discussed. But as this will not be done by the Social Democrats, who are too absorbed by elections and don't care at all for a revolution, the duty of doing it consequently falls upon us.

Everyone knows that the most active men in the labor movement in Spain have always been Anarchists, and that the two labor papers, *Tierra y Libertad* and *Revista Blanca*, are Anarchistic. It is the same now in France, both in those syndicates which show real signs of life and in the chief labor papers (*Voix du Peuple*, *Pot à Colle*, etc.). And the same is also in Geneva (paper: *L'Emancipation*), where all the fault of the last strike was thrown by the local politicians—not upon the greedy capitalists, but upon the Anarchists. That much has been done, and so far it has been found that those of our comrades who directed their efforts to work amongst the trade unions were right. But now, a further step is required. Taking advantage of the intellectual movement which goes on in the labor unions, we must try to formulate the ideas which develop inside the unions as regards the best ways of abolishing private ownership and of organising production by the workers themselves without the interference of the State. This task is incumbent upon us.

The old philosopher, Spencer, is right. Yes, the Labor War will go on growing. Yes, it will bring about a Social war. Yes, it will bring about the Social Revolution. Our duty is, then, to strain all our activities towards one result: that the coming revolution should be a real, substantial step towards the abolition of State and Capital. Not only that it should be *successful*—all revolutions are successful, each of them abolishes some evils of old; but that the success should be as great, as wide, and as durable as possible: that it should go to the root of the evils.

THOUGHTS OF GREAT THINKERS.

"He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision."
—J. S. Mill: *On Liberty*.

"The State must go. That will be a revolution which will find me on its side. Undermine the idea of the State, set up in its place spontaneous action, and the idea that spiritual relationship is the only thing that makes for unity, and you will start the elements of a liberty that will be something worth possessing."
—IBSEN.

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ZOLA.

In the person of Zola, French literature and humanity at large have lost not only a powerful novelist, but a great defender of the humblest and poorest victims of our modern State capitalist organisation. He was an advocate of the good, healthy enjoyment of life by everyone; of enlightenment and truly scientific instruction for the people. He hated with his whole powerful soul oppression in any form: political, religious or national. From the beginning of his famous series, Rougon-Macquart, we see him attacking the Bonapartist regime and in "Le ventre de Paris," "La Curée," "La Conquête de Plaisance," "Son Excellence Rougon-Macquart," he shows the repulsive aspect of the spoil of France under clerical and military reaction. The same in his series of bourgeois life, "Nana," "Pot Bouille," "Au Bonheur des Dames," "L'argent" he shows the bestiality and degradation of the middle classes with their sensuality and lust for gold to which they sacrifice their honour, their wives and their daughters. No other has described the power of Mammon like Zola in "L'argent," in which the people of all classes and conditions are pursuing money and when the successful financier, round whom titled ladies, ministers and politicians are crowding, has reached his ruin we see the scene covered with the dead victims of this chase after gold, pleasure and power.

But, as a true friend of humanity, Zola showed us the real people, coarse in its expression, perhaps, but healthy to the core. His "Germinal" is undoubtedly one of the best creations of the literature of the 19th century.

In the series "Rome," "Lourdes," "Paris," he shows us how from one side misery and oppression provoked revolt (*Paris*) and how from the other side political intrigue and moral depravity awakens individual and collective resistance (*Paris*); how the noblest thinkers and political enthusiasts (Count Orlando in *Rome*, the great chemist in *Paris*) are turning to the eternal problem of social emancipation, of happiness and justice for mankind. In one of his latest novels (*Travail*) Zola attempted to show the people what a healthy, attractive life may be realised on the basis of solidarity and of free production in an autonomous collectivity.

Powerful worker as Zola was, so noble and humane in his books, he appears, if possible, higher and nobler as a citizen, when, supported by a few courageous men such as Clemenceau and Pressencé and others, he flung his famous "J'accuse" in the face of all the reactionary elements led by the Jesuits in a united and supreme effort to crush science and the liberties conquered by the great Revolution. This fight, known by everybody as the Dreyfus case, agitated the whole civilised world.

We are sure every true friend of progress and emancipation of human conscience will deplore with us the untimely death of Emile Zola.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

ITALY.—Since July there have been several minor strikes in as many industrial departments, with here and there the usual savage suppression if popular effervescence broke bounds. In some agricultural districts the peasants influenced by the now widely-spread belief in the power of combination, have followed the example of their factory brothers and formed themselves into unions. During a strike lately of field laborers at Candela, two women, who tried to coax some men into line, were arrested. A crowd of 400 workers instantly surrounded the gendarmes determined on a rescue. One of the latter receiving a blow on the head, instantly the police inspector called on the military (present, as usual) to fire. The order was as instantly obeyed, and after the volley six peasants were picked up dead, while such as lay on the ground wounded were pounced upon by the police and conveyed to prison. To the honor of the infantry present it is said they fired in the air; but the mounted men—the carabinieri—who police the rural districts in Italy, poured their lead unhesitatingly into the heart of the crowd. Italy is still undergoing a process of fusion, and the government knows well what it is about when a body of troops recruited in one district is quartered on another inimical to it in speech, spirit and racial tradition. So Paris is overrun with Corsican police, who have a racial antipathy to the Gallic workers; so the constabulary from the north of Ireland is poured into the south and west whenever a spirit of activity arouses Celtic blood in the wilds of Connaught or Munster. The aforementioned agricultural laborers had struck for an increase of wages,

which average 8d. for a long day's work. Generally throughout Italy on the slightest provocation, and provocation often means the mere gathering together in a wine-shop for a friendly chat, Anarchists are at once dispersed or arrested. This injustice must in time provoke reprisals. Yet, for once, the explosion of a bomb, as reported from Leghorn, is not laid to our charge, but to that of an *agent-provocateur* or some anti-clerical enthusiast. Unhappily, as too often happens, the innocent have suffered for the guilty and a child is dead. We do not envy the feelings of the reactionary and bigoted bishop whose political intrigues brought about the disaster. The man who laid the bomb will never forget that he killed a child, and that is punishment enough.

FRANCE.—The miners' strike continues "amid satisfactory calm," to quote M. Combes, President of the Council, who is acting as government mediator between the Miners' Committee and the companies. The latter in some places are trying to intimidate the strikers, but most of the owners have not unnaturally agreed to government arbitration; for what government is ever too hard on a property owner? The strike is not yet a month old and so far the men on the whole have held out quietly and hopefully, awaiting an answer to their just claims for impartial investigation and adjustment in the matters of salary, organisation, and regulation of work. Much depends upon the spirit with which the French Cabinet will consider the men's demands. As a rule ministers have acquired a happy knack in strangling while appearing to deliberate over the rights of the worker. French miners have not the comparatively easy time of their English brothers. They work from 10 to 13 hours a day and do not know the bliss of short shifts. Considering that over 100,000 men are out, their attitude has been above reproach. Some damage to machinery occurred at one or two collieries; but the police, on the principle that a machine is worth more than a man, quickly revenged one of the mine-owners by shooting two strikers dead. The threat to march in a body on Paris did not realise. The government hurriedly made a show of interest in the mining industry and the strike leaders became aware of a rapid disposition of troops. Not so pacific has been the Dockers' strike, which broke out at some ports conjointly with the above, the men refusing to handle cargoes of foreign coal shipped by the masters. At Dunkirk there was considerable rioting, goods lying on the wharves were fired, and there was evidence of strong ill-feeling between the strikers and townspeople. General André, Minister of War, is credited with sending a telegram authorising the troops to fire. But such a telegram in France, as elsewhere, seems superfluous; a police inspector or beardless *sous-lieutenant* seldom fears to shoulder the responsibility. This strike has now ended, work being resumed by desire of the Miners' Committee.

Several Italian comrades have been expelled by the authorities at Tunis solely on account of their opinions. The one crime laid to their charge was the circulation of Anarchist literature. They had only been settled in the city a short time when the chief of the detective police invited them to his office, and there told them he had been informed they were Anarchists and as such would not be allowed to stay in French Africa. They did not forswear their faith—they left.

UNITED STATES.—After a fight of four months the great coal strike in Pennsylvania has ended; 150,000 men resuming work under promise of President Roosevelt, Mitchell, their courageous leader, and the coal companies, to arrange a committee of investigation and arbitration. It has been a bitter fight, stained with much bloodshed, as are nowadays all American strikes; for there are few men in the States who cannot handle rifle and revolver to some purpose. When sheriffs and militia become aggressive they usually get as good as they give.

The militia were quartered in as many as 7 out of the 10 anthracite counties and the press, which throughout the strike sympathised mostly with the capitalists and fanned public sentiment against the strikers, bewailed the fact that the disorders were always worse where the troops were stationed. That the fault might lie with the troops never seemed to strike the editorial mind—not that it would have admitted the fact had it done so. The plan of campaign of the huge coal combine was apparent from the moment it saw the men meant to steadfastly stand by their demands. Its one effort was to lash the miners into open revolt and so compel State interference. If the Trust could not shelve the just claims of the men, at least it could smudge them out under cover of broken heads or broken machinery. So long as a band of workers remains on the defensive, Trusts dare not openly crush it, are powerless to be wholly oblivious to questions of wages and work; but once rouse that band or one weak member of it to a "felonious" act, and the State brings down its mailed fist mercilessly. Mitchell seems to have understood the tactics of the Coal Trust, and Roosevelt, whatever he is not, is as courageous a president as the States has yet seen. He could order the militia to pour lead into rioters maddened by the hopelessness of conflict with Trusts and the Federal forces, or he could talk it out with Mitchell and other level-headed men. He chose the second alternative and the strike ended. A committee has been formed its members are to investigate the coal region and conditions of labor on the spot, and an adjustment of the men's grievances seems within sight. Their chief contention has been for the recognition of their union and a minimum wage, and the institution of a checkweighman on their behalf. St. Louis and New Orleans have each had a fierce tramway strike; but at present peace reigns, though for how long who shall tell? In the States the trail of the capitalist is over all and men would as lief die fighting as submit to its pitiless pressure. Yet in spite of so much labor trouble, the general conditions are more than prosperous. "I wonder," writes a New Yorker, "how it is all going to end."

Everything about the city speaks of wealth; it is getting richer and richer—and yet starvation keeps apace with it. How will it all end? Who can say.

LITERARY NOTES.

Our American comrades have brought out in book form the articles by our friend Tcherkesov which appeared partly in *Freedom* and partly in *Les Temps Nouveaux*, under the title: *Pages of Socialist History: Teachings and Acts of Social Democracy*. (Price 25 cents; copies to be had from *Free Society* or *Freedom* office at 1/3.) Most of these papers are known to our readers; but some are new and all are most interesting. With a full knowledge of the Socialist literature, our friend deals with the various aspects of the campaign that was led by Engels, Marx and their followers for representing themselves as the founders of scientific Socialism, while in reality whatever they claimed to be theirs was already promoted—mostly in a more elegant form and with a greater depth of philosophical conception—by the real founders of modern Socialism: Fourier, Saint-Simon and Robert Owen. The chapters on the so-called “Materialist Exposition of History” and on the origin of the *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels will be found especially interesting. With regard to the latter, Tcherkesov proves by numerous parallel quotations that the *Communist Manifesto* not only was written by Marx under the inspiration of, but was a free exposition for the use of the Germans of the ideas expressed with admirable lucidity in France by the Fourierist, Victor Considérant, in his famous pamphlet: *Principles of Socialism: Manifesto of the Democracy of the Nineteenth Century*. This last manifesto was published in a second edition in 1847, and was widely known at that time among the Socialists of all nations, especially as the Fourierists had been prosecuted in court. Marx evidently did a good work by bringing the ideas of the French Socialist before the Germans—maybe in a form that better appealed to them—and in issuing a “Manifesto” he surely was not bound to indicate in how far he had borrowed his arguments from V. Considérant’s appeal—a manifesto is not a scientific paper; but only sheer ignorance of the literature of 1848 by our generation has permitted the Marxists to establish the legend of Marx having made a “discovery” of Scientific Socialism or having laid down the basis of it in his *Communist Manifesto*. This legend is exploded by Tcherkesov.

We have the greatest pleasure in learning that Dr. Clemencia Jacquinet has published the second part of her excellent little Spanish text book of history: *Compendio de historia universal. Barcelona, publicaciones de la “Escuela Moderna.”*—The first part treated of pre-historic times, and also the Antique Eastern monarchies and Greece. It is a little book of 220 small pages, very well written for youths from the free thinker’s and the free man’s point of view. It ought to be translated at once into English, French, etc.

To note: A good little book, *Frédéric Nietzsche*, by Eugène de Roberty. It is a volume of the philosophical library of F. Alcan at Paris (price 2 francs).

Kropotkin’s book, *Mutual Aid: a Factor of Evolution* (Heinemann), is now out. Our readers know the general trend of the separate chapters of this, as they were analysed in *Freedom* when they appeared in the *Nineteenth Century*, in 1890-96. An introduction and an appendix are added to the book, as well as some additional matter especially relative to Darwinism. (Price 7/6; may be obtained of T. Cantwell at this office.)

The American comrades have translated Kropotkin’s Russian pamphlet, *Modern Science and Anarchy*, and intend soon to publish it.

Jean Grave, at Paris, has brought out a very interesting book, *War and Militarism (Guerre-Militarisme)*; 2fr. 50 the propaganda edition, and 7fr. 50 the illustrated edition. This pretty thick book is made entirely out of well chosen abstracts from the writings of all the best well-known authors, directed against war and militarism, which for years appeared in the Literary Supplement to the *Temps Nouveaux*.

At last we have received the concluding chapters of the remarkable *History of Socialism (Geschiedenis van het Socialisme)*, published by S. J. van Looy at Amsterdam by the well known initiator of the Socialist movement in Holland, F. Domela Nieuwenhuis. The work is unique as a complete history of Socialism written by a Socialist. From the earliest social legislation, through Greece and Rome, through the middle ages to the present time, the author tells us the progressive development of the social ideal of mankind.

The three large volumes contain a clear exposition of all important Socialist schools and independent thinkers. The text is illustrated by 80 portraits of social reformers—from Moses and Plato to Henry George and Elisée Reclus.

In a future number we hope to give an analysis of the book, but we take this opportunity to express our warm desire to see the book translated into the French, English and other languages.

THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA.

In less than two years—two ministers killed, two governors wounded, one general, a director of the State railways and a chief of police shot, attempts against the life of two chiefs of police.

Then, you will say, a terrorist propaganda must exist in Russia.

Not at all.

During these last ten years, since the former revolutionary-terrorist party with its famous Executive Committee has been exterminated by the efforts of the colossal empire of the Tsar, no noteworthy terrorist publication has been circulating. On the contrary, in the name of scientific Marxian Socialism, the Russian Social Democrats have been leading a campaign against the terrorists in the legal press as well as in their own publications in foreign countries.

Whence, then, this energetic eruption of terrorism? Not from the propaganda of a party. It is provoked by the general state of affairs, by the oppression of an all-powerful bureaucracy, by the complete ruin of the peasants, who constitute 80 per cent of the whole population, by the general suffering and despair.

“My most active accomplice,” said the young and heroic Balmasheff to his judges, “is this oppressive and despotic government.” And he spoke the truth, the whole truth. It is the government which has ruined the country,* which has crushed science, popular instruction, humanitarian ideas and the independent men of the last two generations; it is the government which paralyses all local social life† and suppresses even the most elementary justice.‡

Is it astonishing that a great nation weary of so much misery, atrocity and injustice, begins to revolt? Rather is it astonishing that these millions of human beings could patiently bear degradation so long.

It is true that a heroic minority of students and workers has been incessantly in revolt against despotism. From 1861-3 until the present moment Socialist and revolutionary propaganda has been developing more and more; sometimes, as in 1873-78, the movement became very active and full of the spirit of self-sacrifice; or, as in 1879-84, the struggle took a titanic character, with mines exploding under the imperial palace, bombs thrown in full daylight, the chiefs of oppression attacked, the Tsar killed, also in full daylight in the very middle of his capital. But all this was accomplished by some hundreds of heroes aided by some thousands of sympathisers. The great mass, even enlightened persons remained inert, and not only did not act, but carefully concealed their opinions, their sympathies. To conspire, to conspire not only for definite action but also in order to hide one’s opinions and convictions, had become a Russian virtue. In that immense empire, among those 130 millions of inhabitants nobody but the revolutionists—and those only before the tribunals—dared to state openly what he thought. All Russia was silent.

Now, as one man, everybody proclaims loudly that it is impossible to live under such humiliating conditions, under an absolutism which ruins the country and enslaves the people. “Down with absolutism!” is heard in trams, in cafés, in the streets and public places. Individually as among the masses during the numerous and often sanguinary demonstrations held in every large town and industrial centre, however isolated, men and women acclaim loudly: “We want liberty; down with despotism!”

The government tried to intimidate the first manifestants by merciless suppressions; in the two capitals and the university towns especially the suppression was atrocious. But this time it failed—the manifestations increased, enthusiasm led the noblest and most courageous to avenge the people on the chiefs of oppression and their assistants—the governors pay with their lives.

It is this spirit of revolt which we all joyfully recognise. Our highest aspiration, formulated in 1868, approaches its realisation: to mass in the streets in order to proclaim revolution.

True, it is not a social revolution which is proclaimed. But, nevertheless, we are hopeful because this time it is the *people* who enter in the revolt.

And do you know what revolt among the Russian peasants means? Those “ignorant” peasants living in rural communities are convinced that the whole soil ought to belong to the community of producers; that the goods and possessions of nobles and capitalists ought to be given the community.

The peasants who were in revolt in the provinces of Poltava and Kharkov have shown by their actions they hold this conception of Communal and revolutionary equality.

W. TCHERKESOV.

* Since the abolition of serfdom the corn-growing has diminished by 42 per cent; the number of horses decreased from 30 to 40 per cent; the arrears of taxes have risen 60, 80 and, in some provinces, 200 per cent! And the State budget, which at the time of the abolition of serfdom (1861) was less than 400 million roubles, has now reached 2 milliards a year! This is the cause of chronic famines, of the ruin of the people, of the bankruptcy of the empire.

† The elective provincial councils, organised in the time of Alexander II., have been nearly abolished by Alexander III. and the present Tsar; the same is the case with the municipalities and guilds.

‡ Except in large towns, the justices of the peace, formerly elective, are now replaced by the chiefs of the rural police who couple magisterial with their other duties. Even in Turkey the police and the administration are separate bodies.

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN.

[A sketch of the French Penal Colony of New Caledonia, condensed from *In an unknown Prison Land*, by G. Griffiths. Concluded.]

The little settlement of Kuto is exquisitely situated on a promontory. Long ago it was the home of "politicals"—now that of the *relégués*—a silent place of prisons, barracks and workshops, inhabited by a few soldiers and officials, and many blue-clad figures all stamped with the seal of stolid despair.

There is nothing at all in the English system that corresponds to the French legal term *relégation*. The *relégués* are the lowest class of the many kinds and ranks of criminals.....In France there is no nonsense about a criminal "having paid his debt to society" when he has served his sentence.....When a man or woman has committed a certain number of crimes of the minor sort, or has been convicted of hopeless immorality or alcoholism, in other words is believed to be unfit to possess the rights of citizenship, such person may be, in the last resort, sentenced as in England to so many months hard labor as punishment for that particular crime—but in France he may hear the fatal words added: "At the expiration of your sentence you will be placed in *relégation*." Of this the meaning is: "You are banished! You will be fed and clothed and attended when you are sick. You will have work found for you, and you will be paid for it. But if you won't work there will be the prison and the cell for you. Now go and make the best of it."

The banishment is for life. There are circumstances under which a *relégué* can win his release, but there are two things he can never do: he can never gain a concession and marry and settle down, and he can never gain restoration of the full rights of citizenship—both of which the simple *forçat* can do. I found little difference between the treatment of the *relégués* and the best class of convicts, save that they were rather better fed and lived in open camps. They slept in hammocks in common dormitories and were permitted any little luxuries they could buy with their slender earnings. They might have been ordinary industrial settlers, save for the blue cotton livery, the straw hats, and the hopeless faces which looked out under the brims. If they refuse to work or are insubordinate, there is the black cell or the *quartier disciplinaire* for them. The miles of matting upon which millions of careless feet trod at the Paris Exhibition of 1900, was the work of the despairing *relégués* of the Isle of Pines. From what I saw and heard I doubt not that many a bitter thought was woven into it.....

There were 176 women *relégués* in the Convent just then...I was the first man—not an official—that they had seen for many years. A little before dinner I was sitting under the trees in front of the canteen when I heard a voice with a suspicion of tears in it, asking whether I would speak for a minute with an unhappy woman.

I turned and saw the gaunt figure of the *reléguée* housemaid of the canteen. She was in great trouble, she told me, and as I was a friend of the Administration I could help her if I would. She had been released from the Convent to take service at the canteen, but though she had a good master and mistress her heart was pining for her husband, who was working in Bourail. They had been parted for a mere trifle, and she was sure that if I interceded for her with the Director she would be restored to him.

However, as I understood her's to be a case of infanticide, I did not think the reunion desirable, and so her petition was not presented.....

Pam is the port and headquarters of an immensely rich mining district, the property of an Anglo-Australian company, but the mines are at Pilou, seven miles up a river swarming with a deadly black mosquito. The air was black with them, clothing was no protection; I visited the mines and camps and then fled. The unhappy convicts who work the mines were the most miserable lot I had seen in all the islands. Neither by day nor night have they any protection from the swarming pests, which make their lives one long misery.

[So ends this writer's description of the penal settlements in New Caledonia. He has no word of blame for the French convict system, writing merely from the point of view of a well fed, prosperous, cold-blooded journalist, one who would gladly see the French prison system adopted in England, looking upon "convicts" not as human flesh and blood, but, like Sir Robert Anderson (late Assistant Commissioner of Police and head of the "political department" at Scotland Yard, now replaced by Mr. Edward R. Henry), as refuse that must be got rid of by either life-sentences or deportation, with celibacy enforced so as to stamp out any possibility of a revengeful progeny. His refusal to carry a hapless woman's request to the prison authorities, shows surely little less heartlessness than the action of that "animal" the *mouchard* to which he refers in his pages. Only once does a ring of real regret tinge his words and that is when he deprecates so lovely a spot as New Caledonia being turned into a convict establishment: "If the French Government would give me a hundred years' lease of it," I said to the Director when I got back to Noumea, "I would find capital enough in England and Australia to make it the Monte Carlo of the South Pacific. I'd have everything there that there is at Monte Carlo, and a couple of fast boats to bring the people over from Sydney in two days. I'd have all the wealth and fashion of Australia and a good many people from Europe there every year. In fact, your paradise should pay you a million francs a year and me twenty millions."]

"Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigour, and moral courage which it contained. That so few dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time."—J. S. Mill: *On Liberty*.

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