ANARCHISM: Its Philosophy and Ideal

BY PETER KROPOTKIN

"Anarchism:its philosophy and ideal." San Francisco: Free Society, 1898.

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IT is not without a certain hesitation that I have decided to take the philosophy and ideal of Anarchy as the subject of this lecture.

Those who are persuaded that Anarchy is a collection of visions relating to the future, and an unconscious striving toward the destruction of all present civilization, are still very numerous; and to clear the ground of such prejudices of our education as maintain this view we should have, perhaps, to enter into many details which it would be difficult to embody in a single lecture. Did not the Parisian press, only two or three years ago, maintain that the whole philosophy of Anarchy consisted in destruction, and that its only argument was violence?

Nevertheless Anarchists have been spoken of so much lately, that part of the public has at last taken to reading and discussing our doctrines. Sometimes men have even given themselves trouble to reflect, and at the present moment we have at least gained a point: it is willingly admitted that Anarchists have an ideal. Their ideal is even found too beautiful, too lofty for a society not composed of superior beings.

But is it not pretentious on my part to speak of a philosophy, when, according to our critics, our ideas are but dim visions of a distant future? Can Anarchy pretend to possess a philosophy, when it is denied that Socialism has one?

This is what I am about to answer with all possible precision and clearness, only asking you to excuse me beforehand if I repeat an example or two which I have already given at a London lecture, and which seem to be best fitted to explain what is meant by the philosophy of Anarchism.

You will not bear me any ill-will if I begin by taking a few elementary illustrations borrowed from natural sciences. Not for the purpose of deducing our social ideas from them-far from it; but simply the better to set off certain relations, which are easier grasped in phenomena verified by the exact sciences than in examples only taken from the complex facts of human societies.

Well, then, what especially strikes us at present in exact sciences, is the profound modification which they are undergoing now, in the whole of their conceptions and interpretations of the facts of the universe.

There was a time, you know, when man imagined the earth placed in the center of the universe. Sun, moon, planets and stars seemed to roll round our globe; and this globe, inhabited by man, represented for him the center of creation. He himself-the superior being on his planet-was the elected of his Creator. The sun, the moon, the stars were but made for him; toward him was directed all the attention of a God, who watched the least of his actions, arrested the sun's course for him, wafted in the clouds, launching his showers or his thunder-bolts on fields and cities, to recompense the virtue or punish the crimes of mankind. For thousands of years man thus conceived the universe.

You know also what an immense change was produced in the sixteenth century in all conceptions of the civilized part of mankind, when it was demonstrated that, far from being the centre of the universe, the earth was only a grain of sand in the solar system-a ball, much smaller even than the other planets; that the sun itself-though immense in comparison to our little earth, was but a star among many other countless stars which we see shining in the skies and swarming in the milky-way. How small man appeared in comparison to this immensity without limits, how ridiculous his pretensions! All the philosophy of that epoch, all social and religious conceptions, felt the effects of this transformation in cosmogony. Natural science, whose present development we are so proud of, only dates from that time.

But a change, much more profound, and with far wider reaching results, is being effected at the present time in the whole of the sciences, and Anarchy, you will see, is but one of the many manifestations of this evolution.

Take any work on astronomy of the last century, or the beginning of ours. You will no longer find in it, it goes without saying, our tiny planet placed in the center of the universe. But you will meet at every step the idea of a central luminary-the sun-which by its powerful attraction governs our planetary world. From this central body radiates a force guiding the course of the planets, and maintaining the harmony of the system. Issued from a central agglomeration, planets have, so to say, budded from it; they owe their birth to this agglomeration; they owe everything to the radiant star that represents it still: the rhythm of their movements, their orbits set at wisely regulated distances, the life that animates them and adorns their surfaces. And when any perturbation disturbs their course and makes them deviate from their orbits, the central body re-establishes order in the system; it assures and perpetuates its existence.

This conception, however, is also disappearing as the other one did. After having fixed all their attention on the sun and the large planets, astronomers are beginning to study now the infinitely small ones that people the universe. And they discover that the interplanetary and

interstellar spaces are peopled and crossed in all imaginable directions by little swarms of matter, invisible, infinitely small when taken separately, but all-powerful in their numbers. Among those masses, some, like the bolide that fell in Spain some time ago, are still rather big; others weigh but a few ounces or grains, while around them is wafted dust, almost microscopic, filling up the spaces.

It is to this dust, to these infinitely tiny bodies that dash through space in all directions with giddy swiftness, that clash with one another, agglomerate, disintegrate, everywhere and always, it is to them that today astronomers look for an explanation of the origin of our solar system, the movements that animate its parts, and the harmony of their whole. Yet another step, and soon universal gravitation itself will be but the result of all the disordered and incoherent movements of these infinitely small bodies-of oscillations of atoms that manifest themselves in all possible directions. Thus the center, the origin of force, formerly transfered from the earth to the sun, now turns out to be scattered and disseminated: it is everywhere and nowhere. With the astronomer, we perceive that solar systems are the work of infinitely small bodies; that the power which was supposed to govern the system is itself but the result of the collisions among those infinitely tiny clusters of matter, that the harmony of stellar systems is harmony only because it is an adaptation, a resultant of all these numberless movements uniting, completing, equilibrating one another.

The whole aspect of the universe changes with this new conception. The idea of force governing the world, of pre- established law, preconceived harmony, disappears to make room for the harmony that Fourier had caught a glimpse of: the one which results from the disorderly and incoherent movements of numberless hosts of matter, each of which goes its own way and all of which hold each other in equilibrium.

If it were only astronomy that were undergoing this change! But no; the same modification takes place in the philosophy of all sciences without exception; those which study nature as well as those which study human relations.

In physical sciences, the entities of heat, magnetism, and electricity disappear. When a physicist speaks today of a heated or electrified body, he no longer sees an inanimate mass, to which an unknown force should be added. He strives to recognize in this body and in the surrounding space, the course, the vibrations of infinitely small atoms which dash in all directions, vibrate, move, live, and by their vibrations, their shocks, their life, produce the phenomena of heat, light, magnetism or electricity.

In sciences that treat of organic life, the notion of species and its variations is being substituted by a notion of the variations of the individual. The botanist and zoologist study the individual-his life, his adaptations to his surroundings. Changes produced in him by the action of drought or damp, heat or cold, abundance or poverty of nourishment, of his more or less sensitiveness to the action of exterior surroundings will originate species; and the variations of species are now for the biologist but resultants-a given sum of variations that have been produced in each individual separately. A species will be what the individuals are, each

undergoing numberless influences from the surroundings in which they live, and to which they correspond each in his own way.

And when a physiologist speaks now of the life of a plant or of an animal, he sees rather an agglomeration, a colony of millions of separate individuals than a personality one and indivisible. He speaks of a federation of digestive, sensual, nervous organs, all very intimately connected with one another, each feeling the consequence of the well-being or indisposition of each, but each living its own life. Each organ, each part of an organ in its turn is composed of independent cellules which associate to struggle against conditions unfavorable to their existence. The individual is quite a world of federations, a whole universe in himself.

And in this world of aggregated beings the physiologist sees the autonomous cells of blood, of the tissues, of the nerve-centers; he recognizes the millions of white corpuscles-the phagocytes-who wend their way to the parts of the body infected by microbes in order to give battle to the invaders. More than that: in each microscopic cell he discovers today a world of autonomous organisms, each of which lives its own life, looks for well-being for itself and attains it by grouping and associating itself with others. In short, each individual is a cosmos of organs, each organ is a cosmos of cells, each cell is a cosmos of infinitely small ones; and in this complex world, the well-being of the whole depends entirely on the sum of well-being enjoyed by each of the least microscopic particles of organized matter. A whole revolution is thus produced in the philosophy of life.

But it is especially in psychology that this revolution leads to consequences of great importance.

Quite recently the psychologist spoke of man as an entire being, one and indivisible. Remaining faithful to religious tradition, he used to class men as good and bad, intelligent and stupid, egotists and altruists. Even with materialists of the eighteenth century, the idea of a soul, of an indivisible entity, was still upheld.

But what would we think today of a psychologist who would still speak like this! The modern psychologist sees in man a multitude of separate faculties, autonomous tendencies, equal among themselves, performing their functions independently, balancing, opposing one another continually. Taken as a whole, man is nothing but a resultant, always changeable, of all his divers faculties, of all his autonomous tendencies, of brain cells and nerve centers. All are related so closely to one another that they each react on all the others, but they lead their own life without being subordinated to a central organ-the soul.

Without entering into further details you thus see that a profound modification is being produced at this moment in the whole of natural sciences. Not that this analysis is extended to details formerly neglected. No! the facts are not new, but the way of looking at them is in course of evolution; and if we had to characterize this tendency in a few words, we might say that if

formerly science strove to study the results and the great sums (integrals, as mathematicians say), today it strives to study the infinitely small ones-the individuals of which those sums are composed and in which it now recognizes independence and individuality at the same time as this intimate aggregation.

As to the harmony that the human mind discovers in Nature, and which harmony is, on the whole, but the verification of a certain stability of phenomena, the modern man of science no doubt recognizes it more than ever. But he no longer tries to explain it by the action of laws conceived according to a certain plan preestablished by an intelligent will.

What used to be called "natural law" is nothing but a certain relation among phenomena which we dimly see, and each "law" takes a temporary character of causality; that is to say: If such a phenomenon is produced under such conditions, such another phenomenon will follow. No law placed outside the phenomena: each phenomenon governs that which follows it-not law.

Nothing preconceived in what we call harmony in Nature. The chance of collisions and encounters has sufficed to establish it. Such a phenomenon will last for centuries because the adaption, the equilibrium it represents has taken centuries to be established; while such another will last but an instant if that form of momentary equilibrium was born in an instant. If the planets of our solar system do not collide with one another and do not destroy one another every day, if they last millions of years, it is because they represent an equilibrium that has taken millions of centuries to establish as a resultant of millions of blind forces. If continents are not continually destroyed by volcanic shocks, it is because they have taken thousands and thousands of centuries to build up, molecule by molecule, and to take their present shape. But lightning will only last an instant; because it represents a momentary rupture of the equilibrium, a sudden redistribution of force.

Harmony thus appears as a temporary adjustment, established among all forces acting upon a given spot-a provisory adaptation; and that adjustment will only last under one condition: that of being continually modified; of representing every moment the resultant of all conflicting actions. Let but one of those forces be hampered in its action for some time and harmony disappears. Force will accumulate its effect; it must come to light, it must exercise its action, and if other forces hinder its manifestation it will not be annihilated by that, but will end by upsetting the present adjustment, by destroying harmony, in order to find a new form of equilibrium and to work to form a new adaptation. Such is the eruption of a volcano, whose imprisoned force ends by breaking the petrified lavas which hindered them to pour forth the gases, the molten lavas, and the incandescent ashes. Such, also, are the revolutions of mankind.

An analogous transformation is being produced at the same time in the sciences that treat of man. Thus we see that history, after having been the history of kingdoms, tends to become the history of nations and then the study of individuals. The historian wants to know how the members, of which such a nation was composed, lived at such a time, what their beliefs were, their means of existence, what ideal of society was visible to them, and what means they

possessed to march toward this ideal. And by the action of all those forces, formerly neglected, he interprets the great historical phenomena.

So the man of science who studies jurisprudence is no longer content with such or such a code. Like the ethnologist he wants to know the genesis of the institution that succeed one another; he follows their evolution through ages, and in this study he applies himself far less to written law than to local customs-to the "customary law" in which the constructive genius of the unknown masses has found expression in all times. A wholly new science is being elaborated in this direction and promises to upset established conceptions we learned at school, succeeding in interpreting history in the same manner as natural sciences interpret the phenomena of Nature.

And, finally, political economy, which was at the beginning a study of the wealth of nations, becomes today a study of the wealth of individuals. It cares less to know if such a nation has or has not a large foreign trade; it wants to be assured that bread is not wanting in the peasant's or worker's cottage. It knocks at all doors-at that of the palace as well as that of the hovel-and asks the rich as well as the poor: Up to what point are your needs satisfied both for necessaries and luxuries?

And as it discovers that the most pressing needs of nine-tenths of each nation are not satisfied, it asks itself the question that a physiologist would ask himself about a plant or an animal:-" Which are the means to satisfy the needs of all with the least lose of power? How can a society guarantee to each, and consequently to all, the greatest sum of satisfaction?" It is in this direction that economic science is being transformed; and after having been so long a simple statement of phenomena interpreted in the interest of a rich minority, it tends to become (or rather it elaborates the elements to become) a science in the true sense of the word--a physiology of human societies.

While a new philosophy-a new view of knowledge taken as a whole-is thus being worked out, we may observe that a different conception of society, very different from that which now prevails, is in process of formation. Under the name of Anarchy, a new interpretation of the past and present life of society arises, giving at the same time a forecast as regards its future, both conceived in the same spirit as the above-mentioned interpretation in natural sciences. Anarchy, therefore, appears as a constituent part of the new philosophy, and that is why Anarchists come in contact, on so many points, with the greatest thinkers and poets of the present day.

In fact, it is certain that in proportion as the human mind frees itself from ideas inculcated by minorities of priests, military chiefs and judges, all striving to establish their domination, and of scientists paid to perpetuate it, a conception of society arises, in which conception there is no longer room for those dominating minorities. A society entering into possession of the social capital accumulated by the labor of preceding generations, organizing itself so as to make use of this capital in the interests of all, and constituting itself without reconstituting the power of the ruling minorities. It comprises in its midst an infinite variety of capacities, temperaments and individual energies: it excludes none. It even calls for struggles and contentions; because we know that periods of contests, so long as they were freely fought out, without the weight of

constituted authority being thrown on the one side of the balance, were periods when human genius took its mightiest flight and achieved the greatest aims. Acknowledging, as a fact, the equal rights of all its members to the treasures accumulated in the past, it no longer recognizes a division between exploited and exploiters, governed and governors, dominated and dominators, and it seeks to establish a certain harmonious compatibility in its midst-not by subjecting all its members to an -authority that is fictitiously supposed to represent society, not by trying to establish uniformity, but by urging all men to develop free initiative, free action, free association.

It seeks the most complete development of individuality combined with the highest development of voluntary association in all its aspects, in all possible degrees, for all imaginable aims; ever changing, ever modified associations which carry in themselves the elements of their durability and constantly assume new forms, which answer best to the multiple aspirations of all.

A society to which preestablished forms, crytalized by law, are repugnant; which looks for harmony in an ever-changing and fugitive equilibrium between a multitude of varied forces and influences of every kind, following their own course,-these forces promoting themselves the energies which are favorable to their march toward progress, toward the liberty of developing in broad daylight and counter-balancing one another.

This conception and ideal of society is certainly not new. On the contrary, when we analyze the history of popular institutions-the clan, the village community, the guild and even the urban commune of the Middle Ages in their first stages,-we find the same popular tendency to constitute a society according to this idea; a tendency, however, always trammelled by domineering minorities. All popular movements bore this stamp more or less, and with the Anabaptists and their forerunners in the ninth century we already find the same ideas clearly expressed in the religious language which was in use at that time. Unfortunately, till the end of the last century, this ideal was always tainted by a theocratic spirit; and it is only nowadays that the conception of society deduced from the observation of social phenomena is rid of its swaddling-clothes.

It is only today that the ideal of a society where each governs himself according to his own will (which is evidently a result of the social influences borne by each) is affirmed in its economic, political and moral aspects at one and the same time, and that this ideal presents itself based on the necessity of Communism, imposed on our modern societies by the eminently social character of our present production.

In fact, we know full well today that it is futile to speak of liberty as long as economic slavery exists.

"Speak not of liberty-poverty is slavery!" is not a vain formula; it has penetrated into the ideas of the great working-class masses; it filters through all the present literature; it even carries those along who live on the poverty of others, and takes from them the arrogance with which they formerly asserted their rights to exploitation.

Millions of Socialists of both hemispheres already agree that the present form of capitalistic appropriation cannot last much longer. Capitalists themselves feel that it must go and dare not

defend it with their former assurance. Their only argument is reduced to saying to us: "You have invented nothing better!" But as to denying the fatal consequences of the present forms of property, as to justifying their right to property, they cannot do it. They will practice this right as long as freedom of action is left to them, but without trying to base it on an idea. This is easily understood.

For instance, take the town of Paris-a creation of so many centuries, a product of the genius of a whole nation, a result of the labor of twenty or thirty generations. How could one maintain to an inhabitant of that town who works every day to embellish it, to purify it, to nourish it, to make it a centre of thought and art-how could one assert before one who produces this wealth that the palaces adorning the streets of Paris belong in all justice to those who are the legal proprietors today, when we are all creating their value, which would be nil without us?

Such a fiction can be kept up for some time by the skill of the people's educators. The great battalions Of workers may not even reflect about it; but from the moment a minority of thinking men agitate the question and submit it to all, there can be no doubt of the result. Popular opinion answers: "It is by spoliation that they hold these riches!"

Likewise, how can the peasant be made to believe that the bourgeois or manorial land belongs to the proprietor who has a legal claim, when a peasant can tell us the history of each bit of land for ten leagues around? Above all, how make him believe that it is useful for the nation that Mr. So-and-So keeps a piece of land for his park when so many neighboring peasants would be only too glad to cultivate it ?

And, lastly, how make the worker in a factory, or the miner in a mine, believe that factory and mine equitably belong to their present masters, when worker and even miner are beginning to see clearly through Panama scandals, bribery, French, Turkish or other railways, pillage of the State and legal theft, from which great commercial and industrial property are derived ?

In fact the masses have never believed in sophisms taught by economists, uttered more to confirm exploiters in their rights than to convert exploited! Peasants and workers, crushed by misery and finding no support in the well-to-do classes, have let things go, save from time to time when they have affirmed their rights by insurrection. And if workers ever thought that the day would come when personal appropriation of capital would profit all by turning it into a stock of wealth to be shared by all, this illusion is vanishing like so many others. The worker perceives that he has been disinherited, and that disinherited he will remain, unless he has recourse to strikes or revolts to tear from his masters the smallest part of riches built up by his own efforts; that is to say, in order to get that little, he already must impose on himself the pangs of hunger and face imprisonment, if not exposure to Imperial, Royal, or Republican fusillades.

But a greater evil of the present system becomes more and more marked; namely, that in a system based on private appropriation, all that is necessary to life and to production-land, housing, food and tools-having once passed into the hands of a few, the production of necessities that would give well-being to all is continually hampered. The worker feels vaguely that our

present technical power could give abundance to all, but he also perceives how the capitalistic system and the State hinder the conquest of this well-being in every way.

Far from producing more than is needed to assure material riches, we do not produce enough. When a peasant covets the parks and gardens of industrial filibusters and Panamists, round which judges and police mount guard-when he dreams of covering them with crops which, he knows, would carry abundance to the villages whose inhabitants feed on bread hardly washed down with sloe wine-he understands this.

The miner, forced to be idle three days a week, thinks of the tons of coal he might extract, and which are sorely Deeded in poor households.

The worker whose factory is closed, and who tramps the streets in search of work, sees bricklayers out of work like himself, while one-fifth of the population of Paris live in insanitary hovels; he hears shoe-makers complain of want of work, while so many people need shoes-and so on.

In short, if certain economists delight in writing treatises on over-production, and in explaining each industrial crisis by this cause, they would be much at a loss if called upon to name a single article produced by France in greater quantities than are necessary to satisfy the needs of the whole population. It is certainly not corn: the country is obliged to import it. It is not wine either: peasants drink but little wine, and substitute sloe wine in its stead, and the inhabitants of towns have to be content with adulterated stuff. It is evidently not houses: millions still live in cottages of the most wretched description, with one or two apertures. It is not even good or bad books, for they are still objects of luxury in the villages. Only one thing is produced in quantities greater than needed,-it is the budget-devouring individual; but such merchandise is not mentioned in lectures by political economists, although those individuals possess all the attributes of merchandise, being ever ready to sell themselves to the highest bidder.

What economists call over-production is but a production that is above the purchasing power of the worker, who is reduced to poverty by Capital and State. Now, this sort of over-production remains fatally characteristic of the present capitalist production, because-Proudhon has already shown it-workers cannot buy with their salaries what they have produced and at the same time copiously nourish the swarm of idlers who live upon their work.

The very essence of the present economic system is, that the worker can never enjoy the well-being he has produced, and that the number of those who live at his expense will always augment. The more a country is advanced in industry, the more this number grows. Inevitably, industry is directed, and will have to be directed, not towards what is needed to satisfy the needs of all, but towards that which, at a given moment, brings in the greatest temporary profit to a few. Of necessity, the abundance of some will be based on the poverty of others, and the straitened circumstances of the greater number will have to be maintained at all costs, that there may be hands to sell themselves for a part only of that which they are capable of producing; without which, private accumulation of capital is impossible!

These characteristics of our economical system are its very essence. Without them, it cannot exist; for, who would sell his labor power for less than it is capable of bringing in, if he were not forced thereto by the threat of hunger?

And those essential traits of the system are also its most crushing condemnation.

As long as England and France were pioneers of industry, in the midst of nations backward in their technical development, and as long as neighbors purchased their wools, their cotton goods, their silks, their iron and machines, as well as a whole range of articles of luxury, at a price that allowed them to enrich themselves at the expense of their clients,- the worker could be buoyed up by hope that he, too, would be called upon to appropriate an ever and ever larger share of the booty to himself. But these conditions are disappearing. In their turn, the backward nations of thirty years ago have become great producers of cotton goods, wools, silks, machines and articles of luxury. In certain branches of industry they have even taken the lead, and not only do they struggle with the pioneers of industry and commerce in distant lands, but they even compete with those pioneers in their own countries. In a few years Germany, Switzerland, Italy, the United States, Russia and Japan have become great industrial countries. Mexico, the Indies, even Servia, are on the march-and what will it be when China begins to imitate Japan in manufacturing for the world's market?

The result is, that industrial crises, the frequency and duration of which are always augmenting, have passed into a chronic state in many industries. Likewise, wars for Oriental and African markets have become the order of the day since several years; it is now twenty-five years that the sword of war has been suspended over European states. And if war has not burst forth, it is especially due to influential financiers who find it advantageous that States should become more and more indebted. But the day on which Money will find its interest in fomenting war, human flocks will be driven against other human flocks, and will butcher one another to settle the affairs of the world's master-financiers.

All is linked, all holds together under the present economic system, and all tends to make the fall of the industrial and mercantile system under which we live inevitable. Its duration is but a question of time that may already be counted by years and no longer by centuries. A question of time-and energetic attack on our part! Idlers do not make history: they suffer it!

That is why such powerful minorities constitute themselves in the midst of civilized nations, and loudly ask for the return to the community of all riches accumulated by the work of preceding generations. The holding in common of land, mines, factories, inhabited houses, and means of transport is already the watch-word of these imposing fractions, and repression-the favorite weapon of the rich and powerful-can no longer do anything to arrest the triumphal march of the spirit of revolt. And if millions of workers do not rise to seize the land and factories from the monopolists by force, be sure it is not for want of desire. They but wait for a favorable opportunity-a chance, such as presented itself in 1848, when they will be able to start the

destruction of the present economic system, with the hope of being supported by an International movement.

That time cannot be long in coming; for since the International was crushed by governments in 1872-especially since then-it has made immense progress of which its most ardent partisans are hardly aware. It is, in fact, constituted-in ideas, in sentiments, in the establishment of constant intercommunication. It is true the French, English, Italian and German plutocrats are so many rivals, and at any moment can even cause nations to war with one another. Nevertheless, be sure when the Communist and Social Revolution does take place in France, France will find the same sympathies as formerly among the nations of the world, including Germans, Italians and English. And when Germany, which, by the way, is nearer a revolution than is thought, will plant the flag-unfortunately a Jacobin one-of this revolution, when it will throw itself into the revolution with all the ardor of youth in an ascendant period, such as it is traversing today, it will find on this side of the Rhine all the sympathies and all the support of a nation that loves the audacity of revolutionists and hates the arrogance of plutocracy.

Divers causes have up till now delayed the bursting forth of this inevitable revolution. The possibility of a great European war is no doubt partly answerable for it. But there is, it seems to me, another cause, a deeper-rooted one, to which I would call your attention. There is going on just now among the Socialists-many tokens lead us to believe it-a great transformation in ideas, like the one I sketched at the beginning of this lecture in speaking of general sciences. And the uncertainty of Socialists themselves concerning the organization of the society they are wishing for, paralyses their energy up to a certain point.

At the beginning, in the forties, Socialism presented itself as Communism, as a republic one and indivisible, as a governmental and Jacobin dictatorship, in its application to economics. Such was the ideal of that time. Religious and freethinking Socialists were equally ready to submit to any strong government, even an imperial one, if that government would only remodel economic relations to the worker's advantage.

A profound revolution has since been accomplished, especially among Latin and English peoples. Governmental Communism, like theocratic Communism, is repugnant to the worker. And this repugnance gave rise to a new conception or doctrine-that of Collectivism-in the International. This doctrine at first signified the collective possession of the instruments of production (not including what is necessary to live), and the right of each group to accept such method of remuneration, whether communistic or individualistic, as pleased its members. Little by little, however, this system was transformed into a sort of compromise between communistic and individualistic wage remuneration. Today the Collectivist wants all that belongs to production to become common property, but that each should be individually remunerated by labor checks, according to the number of hours he has spent in production. These checks would serve to buy all merchandise in the Socialist stores at cost price, which price would also be estimated in hours of labor.

But if you analyze this idea you will own that its essence, as summed up by one of our friends, is reduced to this:

Partial Communism in the possession of instruments of production and education. Competition among individuals and groups for bread, housing and clothing. Individualism for works of art and thought. The Socialistic State's aid for children, invalids and old people.

In a word-a struggle for the means of existence mitigated by charity. Always the Christian maxim: "Wound to heal afterwards!" And always the door open to inquisition, in order to know if you are a man who must be left to struggle, or a man the State must succor.

The idea of labor checks, you know, is old. It dates from Robert Owen; Proudhon commended it in 1848; Marxists have made "Scientific Socialism" of it today.

We must say, however, that this system seems to have little hold on the minds of the masses; it would seem they foresaw its drawbacks, not to say its impossibility. Firstly, the duration of time given to any work does not give the measure of social utility of the work accomplished, and the theories of value that economists have endeavored to base, from Adam Smith to Marx, only on the cost of production, valued in labor time, have not solved the question of value. As soon as there is exchange, the value of an article becomes a complex quantity, and depends also on the degree of satisfaction which it brings to the needs-not of the individual, as certain economists stated formerly, but of the whole of society, taken in its entirety. Value is a social fact. Being the result of an exchange, it has a double aspect: that of labor, and that of satisfaction of needs, both evidently conceived in their social and not individual aspect.

On the other hand, when we analyze the evils of the present economic system, we see-and the worker knows it full well-that their essence lies in the forced necessity of the worker to sell his labor power. Not having the wherewithal to live for the next fortnight, and being prevented by the State from using his labor power without selling it to someone, the worker sells himself to the one who undertakes to give him work; he renounces the benefits his labor might bring him in; he abandons the lion's share of what he produces to his employer; he even abdicates his liberty; he renounces his right to make his opinion heard on the utility of what he is about to produce and on the way of producing it.

Thus results the accumulation of capital, not in its faculty of absorbing surplus-value but in the forced position the worker is placed to sell his labor power: -the seller being sure in advance that he will not receive all that his strength can produce, of being wounded in his interests, and of becoming the inferior of the buyer. Without this the capitalist would never have tried to buy him; which proves that to change the system it must be attacked in its essence: in its cause-sale and purchase,-not in its effect-Capitalism.

Workers themselves have a vague intuition of this, and we hear them say oftener and oftener that nothing will be done if the Social Revolution does not begin with the distribution of products, if it does not guarantee the necessities of life to all-that is to say, housing, food and clothing. And we know that to do this is quite impossible, with the powerful means of production at our disposal.

If the worker continues to be paid in wages, lie necessarily will remain the slave or the subordinate of the one to whom he is forced to sell his labor force-be the buyer a private individual or the State. In the popular mind-in that sum total of thousands of opinions crossing the human brain-it is felt that if the State were to be substituted for the employer, in his role of buyer and overseer of labor, it would still be an odious tyranny. A man of the people does not reason about abstractions, he thinks in concrete terms, and that is why he feels that the abstraction, the State, would for him assume the form of numberless functionaries, taken from among his factory and workshop comrades, and he knows what importance he can attach to their virtues: excellent comrades today, they become unbearable foremen tomorrow. And he looks for a social constitution that will eliminate the present evils without creating new ones.

That is why Collectivism has never taken hold of the masses, who always come back to Communism-but a Communism more and more stripped of the Jacobin theocracy and authoritarianism of the forties - to Free Communism - Anarchy.

Nay more: in calling to mind all we have seen during this quarter of a century in the European Socialist movement, I cannot help believing that modern Socialism is forced to make a step towards Free Communism; and that so long as that step is not taken, the incertitude in the popular mind that I have just pointed out will paralyze the efforts of Socialist propaganda.

Socialists seem to me to be brought, by force of circumstances, to recognize that the material guarantee of existence of all the members of the community shall be the first act of the Social Revolution.

But they are also driven to take another step. They are obliged to recognize that this guarantee must come, not from the State, but independently of the State, and without its intervention.

We have already obtained the unanimous assent of those who have studied the subject, that a society, having recovered the possession of all riches accumulated in its midst, can liberally assure abundance to all in return for four or five hours effective and manual work a day, as far as regards production. If everybody, from childhood, learned whence came the bread he eats, the house he dwells in, the book he studies, and so on; and if each one accustomed himself to complete mental work by manual labor in some branch of manufacture,-society could easily perform this task, to say nothing of the further simplification of production which a more or less near future has in store for us.

In fact, it suffices to recall for a moment the present terrible waste, to conceive what a civilized society can produce with but a small quantity of labor if all share in it, and what grand works might be undertaken that are out of the question today. Unfortunately, the metaphysics called political economy has never troubled about that which should have been its essence-economy of labor.

There is no longer any doubt as regards the possibility of wealth in a Communist society, armed with our present machinery and tools. Doubts only arise when the question at issue is, whether a society can exist in which man's actions are not subject to State control; whether, to reach well-being, it is not necessary for European communities to sacrifice the little personal

liberty they have reconquered at the cost of so many sacrifices during this century? A section of Socialists believe that it is impossible to attain such a result without sacrificing personal liberty on the altar of the State. Another section, to which we belong, believes, on the contrary, that it is only by the abolition of the State, by the conquest of perfect liberty by the individual, by free agreement, association, and absolute free federation that we can reach Communism-the possession in common of our social inheritance, and the production in common of all riches.

That is the question outweighing all others at present, and Socialism must solve it, on pain of seeing all its efforts endangered and all its ulterior development paralysed.

Let us, therefore, analyse it with all the attention it deserves.

If every Socialist will carry his thoughts back to an earlier date, he will no doubt remember the host of prejudices aroused in him when, for the first time, he came to the idea that abolishing the capitalist system and private appropriation of land and capital had become an historical necessity.

The same feelings are today produced in the man who for the first time hears that the abolition of the State, its laws, its entire system of management, governmentalism and centralization, also becomes an historical necessity: that the abolition of the one without the abolition of the other is materially impossible. Our whole education-made, be it noted, by Church and State, in the interests of both-revolts at this conception.

Is it lass true for that? And shall we allow our belief in the State to survive the host of prejudices we have already sacrificed for our emancipation?

It is not my intention to criticise tonight the State. That has been done and redone so often, and I am obliged to put off to another lecture the analysis of the historical part played by the State. A few general remarks will suffice.

To begin with, if man, since his origin, has always lived in societies, the State is but one of the forms of social life, quite recent as far as regards European societies. Men lived thousands of years before the first States were constituted; Greece and Rome existed for centuries before the Macedonian and Roman Empires were built up, and for us modern Europeans the centralized States date but from the sixteenth century. It was only then, after the defeat of the free mediæval Communes had been completed that the mutual insurance company between military, judicial, landlord, and capitalist authority which we call "State," could be fully established.

It was only in the sixteenth century that a mortal blow was dealt to ideas of local independence, to free union and organization, to federation of all degrees among sovereign groups, possessing all functions now seized upon by the State. It was only then that the alliance between Church and the nascent power of Royalty put an end to an organization, based on the principle of federation, which had existed from the ninth to the fifteenth century, and which had produced in Europe the great period of free cities of the middle ages, whose character has been

so well understood in France by Sismondi and Augustin Thierry-two historians unfortunately too little read now-a-days.

We know well the means by which this association of the lord, priest, merchant, judge, soldier, and king founded its domination. It was by the annihilation of all free unions: of village communities, guilds, trades unions, fraternities, and mediæval cities. It was by confiscating the land of the communes and the riches of the guilds; it was by the absolute and ferocious prohibition of all kinds of free agreement between men; it was by massacre, the wheel, the gibbet, the sword, and the fire that Church and State established their domination, and that they succeeded henceforth to reign over an incoherent agglomeration of subjects, who had no direct union more among themselves.

It is now hardly thirty or forty years ago that we began to reconquer, by struggle, by revolt, the first steps of the right of association, that was freely practised by the artisans and the tillers of the soil through the whole of the middle ages.

And, already now, Europe is covered by thousands of voluntary associations for study and teaching, for industry, commerce, science, art, literature, exploitation, resistance to exploitation, amusement, serious work, gratification and self-denial, for all that makes up the life of an active and thinking being. We see

these societies rising in all nooks and corners of all domains: political, economic, artistic, intellectual. Some are as shortlived as roses, some hold their own since several decades, and all strive-while maintaining the independence of each group, circle, branch, or section-to federate, to unite, across frontiers as well as among each nation; to cover all the life of civilized men with a net, meshes of which are intersected and interwoven. Their numbers can already be reckoned by tens of thousands, they comprise millions of adherents-although less than fifty years have elapsed since Church and State began to tolerate a few of them-very few, indeed.

These societies already begin to encroach everywhere on the functions of the State, and strive to substitute free action of volunteers for that of a centralized State. In England we see arise insurance companies against theft; societies for coast defense, volunteer societies for land defense, which the State endeavors to got under its thumb, thereby making them instruments of domination, although their original aim was to do without the State. Were it not for Church and State, free societies would have already conquered the whole of the immense domain of education. And, in spite of all difficulties, they begin to invade this domain as well, and make their influence already felt.

And when we mark the progress already accomplished in that direction, in spite of and against the State, which tries by all means to maintain its supremacy of recent origin; when we see how voluntary societies invade everything and are only impeded in their development by the State, we are forced to recognize a powerful tendency, a latent force in modern society. And we ask ourselves this question: If, five, ten, or twenty years hence-it matters little-the workers succeed by revolt in destroying the said mutual insurance society of landlords, bankers, priests,

judges, and soldiers; if the people become masters of their destiny for a few months, and lay hands on the riches they have created, and which belong to them by right-will they really begin to reconstitute that blood-sucker, the State? Or will they not rather try to organize from the simple to the complex, according to mutual agreement and to the infinitely varied, ever-changing needs of each locality, in order to secure the possession of those riches for themselves, to mutually guarantee one another's life, and to produce what will be found necessary for life?

Will they follow the dominant tendency of the century, towards decentralization, home rule and free agreement; or will they march contrary to this tendency and strive to reconstitute demolished authority?

Educated men-"civilized," as Fourier used to say with disdain-tremble at the idea that society might some day be without judges, police, or gaolers.

But, frankly, do you need them as much as you have been told in musty books ? Books written, be it noted, by scientists who generally know well what has been written before them, but, for the most part, absolutely ignore the people and their every-day life.

If we can wander, without fear, not only in the streets of Paris, which bristle with police, but especially in rustic walks where you rarely meet passers by, is it to the police that we owe this security? or rather to the absence of people who care to rob or murder us? I am evidently not speaking of the one who carries millions about him. That one-a recent trial tells us-is soon robbed, by preference in places where there are as many policemen as lamp posts. No, I speak of the man who fears for his life and not for his purse filled with ill-gotten sovereigns. Are his fears real?

Besides, has not experience demonstrated quite recently that Jack the Ripper performed hie exploits under the eye of the London police-a most active force-and that he only left off killing when the population of Whitechapel itself began to give chase to him?

And in our every-day relations with our fellow-citizens, do you think that it is really judges, gaolers, and police that hinder anti-social acts from multiplying? The judge, ever ferocious, because he is a maniac of law, the accuser, the informer, the police spy, all those interlopers that live from hand to mouth around the Law Courts, do they not scatter demoralization far and wide into society? Read the trials, glance behind the scenes, push your analysis further than the exterior facade of law courts, and you will come out sickened.

Have not prisons-which kill all will and force of character in man, which enclose within their walls more vices than are met with on any other spot of the globe-always been universities of crime? Is not the court of a tribunal a school of ferocity? And so on.

When we ask for the abolition of the State and its organs we are always told that we dream of a society composed of men better than they are in reality. But no; a thousand times, no. All we ask is that men should not be made worse than they are, by such institutions!

Once a German jurist of great renown, Ihering, wanted to sum up the scientific work of his life and write a treatise, in which he proposed to analyze the factors that preserve social life in society. "Purpose in Law" (Der Zweck im Rechte), such is the title of that book, which enjoys a well-deserved reputation.

He made an elaborate plan of his treatise, and, with much erudition, discussed both coercive factors which are used to maintain society: wagedom and the different forms of coercion which are sanctioned by law. At the end of his work he reserved two paragraphs only to mention the two non-coercive factors-the feeling of duty and the feeling of mutual sympathy-to which lie attached little importance, as might be expected from a writer in law.

But what happened? As he went on analyzing the coercive factors he realized their insufficiency. He consecrated a whole volume to their analysis, and the result was to lessen their importance! When he began the last two paragraphs, when he began to reflect upon the non-coercive factors of society, he perceived, on the contrary, their immense, outweighing importance; and instead of two paragraphs, he found himself obliged to write a second volume, twice as large as the first, on these two factors: voluntary restraint and mutual help; and yet, he analyzed but an infinitesimal part of these latter-those which result from personal sympathy-and hardly touched free agreement, which results from social institutions.

Well, then, leave off repeating the formulæ which you have learned at school; meditate on this subject; and the same thing that happened to Ihering will happen to you: you will recognize the infinitesimal importance of coersion, as compared to the voluntary assent, in society.

On the other hand, if by following the very old advice given by Bentham yon begin to think of the fatal consequences-direct, and especially indirect-of legal coersion, like Tolstoy, like us, you will begin to hate use of coersion, and you will begin to say that society possesses a thousand other means for preventing antisocial acts. If it neglects those means today, it is because, being educated by Church and State, our cowardice and apathy of spirit hinder us seeing clearly on this point. When a child has committed a fault, it is so easy to hang a man-especially when there is an executioner who is paid so much for each execution-and it dispenses us from thinking of the cause of crimes.

It is often said that Anarchists live in a world of dreams to come, and do not see the things which happen today. We do see them only too well, and in their true colors, and that is what makes us carry the hatchet into the forest of prejudice that besets us.

Far from living in a world of visions and imagining men better than they are, we see them as they are; and that is why we affirm that the best of men is made essentially bad by the exercise of authority, and that the theory of the "balancing of powers" and "control of authorities" is a hypocritical formula, invented by those who have seized power, to make the "sovereign people," whom they despise, believe that the people themselves are governing. It is because we know men that we say to those who imagine that men would devour one another without those governors:

"You reason like the king, who, being sent across the frontier, called out, 'What will become of my poor subjects without me?'"

Ah, if men were those superior beings that the utopians of authority like to speak to us of, if we could close our eyes to reality, and live, like them, in a world of dreams and illusions as to the superiority of those who think themselves called to power, perhaps we also should do like them; perhaps we also should believe in the virtues of those who govern.

With virtuous masters, what dangers could slavery offer? Do you remember the Slave-owner of whom we heard so often, hardly thirty years ago? Was he not supposed to take paternal care of his slaves? "He alone," we were told, "could hinder these lazy, indolent, improvident children dying of hunger. How could he crush his slaves through hard labor, or mutilate them by blows, when his own interest lay in feeding them well, in taking care of them as much as of his own children! And then, did not 'the law' see to it that the least swerving of a slave-owner from the path of duty was punished?" How many times have we not been told so! But the reality was such that, having returned from a voyage to Brazil, Darwin was haunted all his life by the cries of agony of mutilated slaves, by the sobs of moaning women whose fingers were crushed in thumbserews!

If the gentlemen in power were really so intelligent and so devoted to the public cause, as panegyrists of authority love to represent, what a pretty government and paternal utopia we should be able to construct! The employer would never be the tyrant of the worker; he would be the father! The factory would be a palace of delight, and never would masses of workers be doomed to physical deterioration. The State would not poison its workers by making matches with white phosphorus, for which it is so easy to substitute red phosphorus.* A judge would not have the ferocity to condemn the wife and children of the one whom he sends to prison to suffer years of hunger and misery and to die some day of anemia; never would a public prosecutor ask for the head of the accused for the unique pleasure of showing off his oratorical talent; and nowhere would we find a gaoler or an executioner to do the bidding of judges, who have not the courage to carry out their sentences themselves. What do I say! We should never have enough Plutarchs to praise the virtues of Members of Parliament who would all hold Panama checks in horror! Biribi** would become an austere nursery of virtue, and permanent armies would be the joy of citizens, as soldiers would only take up arms to parade before nursemaids, and to carry nosegays on the point of their bayonets!

Oh, the beautiful utopia, the lovely Christmas dream we can make as soon as we admit that those who govern represent a superior caste, and have hardly any or no knowledge of simple mortals' weaknesses! It would then suffice to make them control one another in hierarchical fashion, to let them exchange fifty papers, at most, among different administrators, when the wind blows down a tree on the national road. Or, if need be, they would have only to be valued at their proper worth, during elections, by those same masses of mortals which are supposed to be endowed with all stupidity in their mutual relations but become wisdom itself when they have to elect their masters.

All the science of government, imagined by those who govern, is imbibed with these utopias. But we know men too well to dream such dreams. We have not two measures for the virtues of

the governed and those of the governors; we know that we ourselves are not without faults and that the best of us would soon be corrupted by the exercise of power. We take men for what they are worth-and that is why we hate the government of man by man, and that we work with all our might-perhaps not strong enough-to put an end to it.

But it is not enough to destroy. We must also know how to build, and it is owing to not having thought about it that the masses have always been led astray in all their revolutions. After having demolished they abandoned the care of reconstruction to the middle class people, who possessed a more or less precise conception of what they wished to realize, and who consequently reconstituted authority to their own advantage.

That is why Anarchy, when it works to destroy authority in all its aspects, when it demands the abrogation of laws and the abolition of the mechanism that serves to impose them, when it refuses all hierarchical organization and preaches free agreement-at the same time strives to maintain and enlarge the precious kernel of social customs without which no human or animal society can exist. Only, instead of demanding that those social customs should be maintained through the authority of a few, it demands it from the continued action of all.

Communist customs and institutions are of absolute necessity for society, not only to solve economic difficulties, but also to maintain and develop social customs that bring men in contact with one another; they must be looked to for establishing such relations between men that the interest of each should be the interest of all; and this alone can unite men instead of dividing them.

In fact, when we ask ourselves by what means a certain moral level can be maintained in a human or animal society, we find only three such means: the repression of anti-social acts; moral teaching; and the practice of mutual help itself. And as all three have already been put to the test of practice, we can judge them by their effects.

As to the impotence of repression-it is sufficiently demonstrated by the disorder of present society and by the necessity of a revolution that we all desire or feel inevitable. In the domain of economy, coercion has led us to industrial servitude; in the domain of politics-to the State, that is to say, to the destruction of all ties that formerly existed among citizens, and to the nation becoming nothing but an incoherent mass of obedient subjects of a central authority.

Not only has a coercive system contributed and powerfully aided to create all the present economical, political and social evils, but it has given proof of its absolute impotence to raise the moral level of societies; it has not been even able to maintain it at the level it had already reached. If a benevolent fairy could only reveal to our eyes all the crimes that are committed every day, every minute, in a civilized society under cover of the unknown, or the protection of law itself,-society would shudder at that terrible state of affairs. The authors of the greatest political crimes, like those of Napoleon III. coup d'etat, or the bloody week in May after the fall of the Commune of 1871, never are arraigned ; and as a poet said; "the small miscreants are

punished for the satisfaction of the great ones." More than that, when authority takes the moralization of society in hand, by "punishing criminals" it only heaps up now crimes!

Practised for centuries, repression has so badly succeeded that it has but led us into a blind alley from which we can only issue by carrying torch and hatchet into the institutions of our authoritarian past.

Far be it from us not to recognize the importance of the second factor, moral teaching-especially that which is unconsciously transmitted in society and results from the whole of the ideas and comments emitted by each of us on facts and events of every-day life. But this force can only act on society under one condition, that of not being crossed by a mass of contradictory immoral teachings resulting from the practice of insitutions.

In that case its influence is nil or baneful. Take Christian morality: what other teaching could have had more hold on minds than that spoken in the name of a crucified God, and could have acted with all its mystical force, all its poetry of martyrdom, its grandeur in forgiving executioners? And yet the institution was more powerful than the religion: soon Christianity-a revolt against imperial Rome-was conquered by that same Rome; it accepted its maxims, customs, and language. The Chriatian church accepted the Roman law as its own, and as such-allied to the State-it became in history the most furious enemy of all semi-communist institutions, to which Christianity appealed at Its origin.

Can we for a moment believe that moral teaching, patronized by circulars from ministers of public instruction, would have the creative force that Christianity has not had? And what could the verbal teaching of truly social men do, if it were counteracted by the whole teaching derived from institutions based, as our present institutions of property and State are, upon unsocial principles?

The third element alone remains-the institution itself, acting in such a way as to make social acts a state of habit and instinct. This element-history proves it-has never missed its aim, never has it acted as a double-bladed sword; and its influence has only been weakened when custom strove to become immovable, crystallized, to become in its turn a religion not to be questioned when it endeavored to absorb the individual, taking all freedom of action from him and compelling him to revolt against that which had become, through its crystallization, an enemy to progress.

In fact, all that was an element of progress in the past or an instrument of moral and intellectual improvement of the human race is due to the practice of mutual aid, to the customs that recognized the equality of men and brought them to ally, to unite, to associate for the purpose of producing and consuming, to unite for purpose of defence to federate and to recognize no other judges in fighting out their differences than the arbitrators they took from their own midst.

Each time these institutions, issued from popular genius, when it had reconquered its liberty for a moment,-each time these institutions developed in a new direction, the moral level of society, its material well-being, its liberty, its intellectual progress, and the affirmation of individual originality made a step in advance. And, on the contrary, each time that in the course of history, whether following upon a foreign conquest, or whether by developing authoritarian prejudices men become more and more divided into governors and governed, exploiters and exploited, the moral level fell, the well-being of the masses decreased in order to insure riches to a few, and the spirit of the age declined.

History teaches us this, and from this lesson we have learned to have confidence in free Communist institutions to raise the moral level of societies, debased by the practice of authority.

Today we live side by side without knowing one another. We come together at meetings on an election day: we listen to the lying or fanciful professions of faith of a candidate, and we return home. The State has the care of all questions of public interest; the State alone has the function of seeing that we do not harm the interests of our neighbor, and, if it fails in this, of punishing us in order to repair the evil.

Our neighbor may die of bringer or murder his children,-it is no business of ours; it is the business of the policeman. You hardly know one another, nothing unites you, everything tends to alienate you from one another, and finding no better way, you ask the Almighty (formerly it was a God, now it is the State) to do all that lies within his power to stop anti-social passions from reaching their highest climax.

In a Communist society such estrangement, such confidence in an outside force could not exist. Communist organization cannot be left to be constructed by legislative bodies called parliaments, municipal or communal council. It must be the work of all, a natural growth, a product of the constructive genius of the great mass. Communism cannot be imposed from above; it could not live even for a few months if the constant and daily co-operation of all did not uphold it. It must be free.

It cannot exist without creating a continual contact between all for the thousands and thousands of common transactions; it cannot exist without creating local life, independent in the smallest unities-the block of houses, the street, the district, the commune. It would not answer its purpose if it did not cover society with a network of thousands of associations to satisfy its thousand needs: the necessaries of life, articles of luxury, of study, enjoyment, amusements. And such associations cannot remain narrow and local; they must necessarily tend (as is already the case with learned societies, cyclist clubs, humanitarian societies and the like) to become international.

And the sociable customs that Communism-were it only partial at its origin-must inevitably engender in life, would already be a force incomparably more powerful to maintain and develop the kernel of sociable customs than all repressive machinery.

This, then, is the form-sociable institution-of which we ask the development of the spirit of harmony that Church and State had undertaken to impose on us-with the sad result we know only too well. And these remarks contain our answer to those who affirm that Communism and Anarchy cannot go together. They are, you see, a necessary complement to one another. The most powerful development of individuality, or individual originality-as one of our comrades has so well said,- can only be produced when the first needs of food and shelter are satisfied; when the struggle for existence against the forces of nature has been simplified; when man's time is no longer taken up entirely by the meaner side of daily subsistence,-then only, his intelligence, his artistic taste, his inventive spirit, his genius, can develop freely and ever strive to greater achievements.

Communism is the best basis for individual development and freedom; not that individualism which drives man to the war of each against all-this is the only one known up till now,-but that which represents the full expansion of man's faculties, the superior development of what is original in him, the greatest fruitfulness of intelligence, feeling and will.

Such being our ideal, what does it matter to us that it cannot be realized at once!

Our first duty is to find out, by an analysis of society, its characteristic tendencies at a given moment of evolution and to state them clearly. Then, to act according to those tendencies in our relations with all those who think as we do. And, finally, from to-day and especially daring a revolutionary period, work for the destruction of the institutions, as, weII as the prejudices, that impede the development of such tendencies.

That is all we can do by peaceable or revolutionary methods, and we know that by favoring those tendencies we contribute to progress, while who resist them impede the march of progress.

Nevertheless, men often speak of stages to be travelled through, and they propose to work to reach what they consider to be the nearest station and only then to take the high road leading to what they recognize to be a still higher ideal.

But reasoning like this seems to me to misunderstand the true character of human progress and to make use of a badly chosen military comparison. Humanity is not a rolling ball, nor even a marching column. It is a whole that evolves simultaneously in the mulitude of millions of which it Is composed; and if you wish for a comparison, you must rather take it in the laws of organic evolution than In those of an inorganic moving body.

The fact is that each phase of development of a society is a resultant of all the activities of the Intellects which compose that society; it bears the imprint of all those millions of wills. Consequently, whatever may be the stage of development that the twentieth century is preparing for us, this future state of society will show the effects of the awakening of libertarian ideas which is now taking place. And the depth with which this movement will be impressed upon the coming twentieth century institutions will depend upon the number of men who will have broken to-day with authoritarian prejudices, on the energy they will have used in attacking old

institutions, on the impression they will make on the masses, on the clearness with which the ideal of a free society will have been impressed on the minds of the masses. But, to-day, we can say in full confidence, that in France the awakening of libertarian ideas had already put its stamp on society; and that the next revolution will not be the Jacobin revolution which it would have been had it buret out twenty years ago.

And as these ideas are neither the invention of a man nor a group, but result from the whole of the movement of ideas of the time, we can be sure that, whatever comes out of the next revolution, it will not be the dictatorial and centralized Communism which was so much in vogue forty years ago, nor the authoritarian Collectivism to which we were quite recently invited to ally ourselves, and which its advocates dare only defend very feebly at present.

The "first stage," it is certain, will then be quite different from what was described under that name hardly twenty years ago. The latest developments of the libertarian ideas have already modified it beforehand in an Anarchist sense.

I have already mentioned that the great all-dominating question now is for the Socialist party, taken as a whole, to harmonize its ideal of society with the libertarian movement that germinates, in the spirit of the masses, in literature, in science, in philosophy. It is also, it is especially so, to rouse the spirit of popular initiative.

Now, it is precisely the workers' and peasants' initiative that all parties-the Socialist authoritarian party included-have always stifled, wittingly or not, by party discipline. Committees, centers, ordering everything; local organs having but to obey, "so as not to put the unity of the organization in danger." A whole teaching, in a word; a whole false history, written to serve that purpose, a whole incomprehensible pseudo-science of economics, elaborated to this end.

Well, then, those who will work to break up these superannuated tactics, those who will know how to rouse the spirit of initiative in individuals and in groups, those who will be able to create in their mutual relations a movement and a life based on the principles of free understanding-those that will understand that variety, conflict even, is life, and that uniformity is death,-they will work, not for future centuries, but in good earnest for the next revolution, for our own times.

We need not fear the dangers and "abuses" of liberty. It is only those who do nothing who make no mistakes. As to those who only know how to obey, they make just as many, and more, mistakes than those who strike out their own path in trying to act in the direction their intelligence and their social education suggest to them. The ideal of liberty of the individual-if it is incorrectly understood owing to surroundings where the notion of solidarity is insufficiently accentuated by institutions-can certainly lead isolated men to acts that are repugnant to the social sentiments of humanity. Let us admit that it does happen: is it, however, a reason for throwing the principle of liberty overboard? Is it a reason for accepting the teaching of those masters who, in order to prevent "digressions," reestablish the censure of an enfranchised press and guillotine

advanced parties to maintain uniformity and discipline-that which, when all is said, was in 1793 the best means of insuring the triumph of reaction?

The only thing to be done when we see anti-social acts committed in the name of liberty of the individual, is to repudiate the principle of "each for himself and God for all," and to have the courage to say aloud in any one's presence what we think of such acts. This can perhaps bring about a conflict; but conflict is life itself. And from the conflict will arise an appreciation of those acts far more just than all those appreciations which could have been produced under the influence of old-established ideas.

When the moral level of a society descends to the point it has reached today we must expect beforehand that a revolt against such a society will sometimes assume forms that will make us shudder. No doubt, heads paraded on pikes disgust us; but the high and low gibbets of the old regime in France, and the iron cages Victor Hugo has told us of, were they not the origin of this bloody exhibition? Let us hope that the coldblooded massacre of thirty-five thousand Parisians in May, 1871, after the fall of the Commune, and the bombardment of, Paris by Thiers will have passed over the French nation without leaving too great a fund of ferocity. Let us hope that. Let us also hope that the corruption of the swell mob, which is continually brought to light in recent trials, will not yet have ruined the heart of the nation. Lot us hope it! Let us help that it be so! But if our hopes are not fulfilled-you, young Socialists, will you then turn your backs on the people in revolt, because the ferocity of the rulers of today will have left its furrow in the people's minds; because the mud from above has splashed far and wide?

It is evident that so profound a revolution producing itself in people's minds cannot be confined to the domain of ideas without expanding to the sphere of action. As was so well expressed by the sympathetic young philosopher, too early snatched by death from our midst, Mark Guyau,*** in one of the most beautiful books published for thirty years, there is no abyss between thought and action, at least for those who are not used to modern sophistry. Conception is already a beginning of action.

Consequently, the new ideas have provoked a multitude of acts of revolt in all countries, under all possible conditions: first, individual revolt against Capital and State; then collective revolt-strikes and working class insurrections-both preparing, in men's minds as in actions, a revolt of the masses, a revolution. In this, Socialism and Anarchism have only followed the course of evolution, which is always accomplished by force-ideas at the approach of great popular risings.

That is why it would be wrong to attribute the monopoly of acts of revolt to Anarchism. And, in fact, when we pass in review the acts of revolt of the last quarter of a century, we see them proceeding from all parties.

In all Europe we see a multitude of risings of working masses and peasants. Strikes, which were once "a war of folded arms," today easily turning to revolt, and sometimes taking-in the

United States, in Belgium, in Andalusia-the proportions of vast insurrections. In the new and old worlds it is by the dozen that we count the risings of strikers having turned to revolts.

On the other hand, the individual act of revolt takes all possible characters, and all advanced parties contribute to it. We pass before us the rebel young woman Vera Zassulitch shooting a satrap of Alexander II.; the Social Democrat Hœdel and the Republican Nobiling shooting at the Emperor of Germany; the cooper Otero shooting at the King of Spain, and the religious Mazzmian, Passanante, striking at the King of Italy. We see agrarian murders in Ireland and explosions in London, organized by Irish Nationalists who have a horror of Socialism and Anarchism. We see a whole generation of young Russians-Socialists, Constitutionalists and Jacobins- declare war to the knife against Alexander II., and pay for that revolt against autocracy by thirty-five executions and swarms of exiles. Numerous acts of personal revenge take place among Belgian, English and American miners; and it is only at the end of this long series that we see the Anarchists appear with their acts of revolt in Spain and France.

And, during this same period, massacres, wholesale and retail, organized by governments, follow their regular course. To the applause of the European bourgeoisie, the Versailles Assembly causes thirty-five thousand Parisian workmen to be butchered-for the most part prisoners of the vanquished Commune. "Pinkerton thugs"-that private army of the rich American capitalists-massacre strikers according to the rules of that art. Priests incite an idiot to shoot at Louise Michel, who-as a true Anarchist-snatches her would-be murderer from his judges by pleading for him. Outside Europe the Indians of Canada are massacred and Riel is strangled, the Matabele are exterminated, Alexandria is bombarded, without saying more of the butcheries in Madagascar, in Tonkin , in Turkoman's land everywhere, to which is given the name of war. And, finally, each year hundreds and even thousands of years of imprisonment are distributed among the rebellious workers of the two continents, and the wives and children, who are thus condemned to expiate the so-called crimes of their fathers, are doomed to the darkest misery.- The rebels are transported to Siberia, to Biribi, to Noumea and to Guiana; and in those places of exile the convicts are shot down like dogs for the least act of insubordination. What a terrible indictment the balance sheet of the sufferings endured by workers and their friends, during this last quarter of a century, would be! What a multitude of horrible details that are unknown to the public at large and that would haunt you like a nightmare if I ventured to tell you them tonight! What a fit of passion each page would provoke if the martyrology of the modern forerunners of the great Social Revolution were written!-Well, then, we have lived through such a history, and each one of us has read whole pages from that book of blood and misery.

And, in the face of those sufferings, those executions, those Guianas, Siberias, Noumeas and Biribis, they have the insolence to reproach the rebel worker with want of respect for human life!!!

But the whole of our present life extinguishes the respect for human life! The judge who sentences to death, and his lieutenant, the executioner, who garrots in broad daylight in Madrid, or guillotines in the mists of Paris amid the jeers of the degraded members of high and low society; the general who massacres at Bac-leh, and the newspaper correspondent who strives to cover the assassins with glory; the employer who poisons his workmen with white lead, because-he answers-"it would cost so much more to substitute oxide of zinc for it;" the so-called English

geographer who kills an old women lest she should awake a hostile village by her sobs, and the German geographer who causes the girl he had taken as a mistress to be hanged with her lover, the court-martial that is content with fifteen days arrest for the Biribi gaoler convicted of murder....all, all, all in the present society teaches absolute contempt for human life-for that flesh that costs so little in the market! And those who garrot, assassinate, who kill depreciated human merchandise, they who have made a religion of the maxim that for the safety of the public you must garrot, shoot and kill, they complain that human life is not sufficiently respected!!!

No, citizens, as long as society accepts the law of retaliation, as long as religion and law, the barrack and the law-courts, the prison and industrial penal servitude, the press and the school continue to teach supreme contempt for the life of the individual,-do not ask the rebels against that society to respect it. It would be exacting a degree of gentleness and magnanimity from them, infinitely superior to that of the whole society.

If you wish, like us, that the entire liberty of the individual and, consequently, his life be respected, you are necessarily brought to repudiate the government of man by man, whatever shape it assumes; you are forced to accept the principles of Anarchy that you have spurned so long. You must then search with us the forms of society that can best realize that ideal and put an end to all the violence that rouses your indignation.

* The making of matches is a State's monopoly in France.

** Biribi is the name given in France to the punishment battalions in Algeria. Every young man who has been in prison before he begins his military service, is sent to such a battalion. Many soldiers, for want of discipline, undergo the same punishment. The treatment in these places is so horrid that no Englishman would believe it possible. A very few years ago, the pear shaped hole in the ground, where men were left for weeks, and some were actually devoured by vermin, was an habitual punishment. At the present time, it is quite habitual to let a man, handcuffed and chained, lay for a fortnight on the ground, covered by a bit of cloth, under the scorching sun of Algeria and through the bitterly cold nights, compelled to eat his food and to lap his water like a dog. Scores of the most terrible facts became known lately, since Georges Darien published his book "Biribi" (Paris, 1890, Savine publisher) based on actual experience, and full of the most horrible revelations. One of my Clairvaux companions had to spend two years of military service in such a battalion-his condemnation at Lyons, as the editor of an Anarchist paper, being already a reason to be transported to Algeria. He fully confirmed, on his release. all that was written by Darien.

*** La morale sans obligation ni sanction, par M. Guyau.