



ESSAYS

ERRICO MALATESTA

ESSAYS

ERRICO MALATESTA

translated by

FREE SOCIETY LIBRARY, F. A. B.,
INDUSTRIAL SYNDICALIST EDUCATION LEAGUE,
NORMAN MATSON, AND FREEDOM PRESS



This ebook is the product of many hours of hard work by volunteers for [Standard Ebooks](#), and builds on the hard work of other literature lovers made possible by the public domain.

This particular ebook is based on transcriptions from [various sources](#) and on digital scans from [various sources](#).

The source text and artwork in this ebook are believed to be in the United States public domain; that is, they are believed to be free of copyright restrictions in the United States. They may still be copyrighted in other countries, so users located outside of the United States must check their local laws before using this ebook. The creators of, and contributors to, this ebook dedicate their contributions to the worldwide public domain via the terms in the [CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication](#). For full license information, see the [Uncopyright](#) at the end of this ebook.

Standard Ebooks is a volunteer-driven project that produces ebook editions of public domain literature using modern typography, technology, and editorial standards, and distributes them free of cost. You can download this and other ebooks carefully produced for true book lovers at standardebooks.org.

ANARCHY

Anarchy is a word which comes from the Greek, and signifies, strictly speaking, *without government*: the state of a people without any constituted authority, that is, without government.

Before such an organization had begun to be considered possible and desirable by a whole class of thinkers, so as to be taken as the aim of a party (which party has now become one of the most important factors in modern social warfare), the word Anarchy was taken universally in the sense of disorder and confusion; and it is still adopted in that sense by the ignorant and by adversaries interested in distorting the truth.

We shall not enter into philological discussions; for the question is not philological but historical. The common meaning of the word does not misconceive its true etymological signification, but is derived from this meaning, owing to the prejudice that government must be a necessity of the organization of social life; and that consequently a society without government must be given up to disorder, and oscillate between the unbridled dominion of some and the blind vengeance of others.

The existence of this prejudice, and its influence on the meaning which the public has given the word, is easily explained.

Man, like all living beings, adapts and habituates himself to the conditions in which he lives, and transmits by inheritance his acquired habits. Thus being born and having lived in bondage, being the descendant of a long line of slaves, man, when he began to think, believed that slavery was an essential condition of life; and liberty seemed to him an impossible thing. In like manner, the workman, forced for centuries, and thus habituated, to depend upon the good will of his employer for work, that is, for bread, and accustomed to see his own life at the disposal of those who possess the land and the capital, has ended in believing that it is his master who gives him to eat, and demands ingenuously how it would be possible to live, if there were no master over him?

In the same way, a man who had had his limbs bound from his birth, but had nevertheless found out how to hobble about, might attribute to the very hands that bound him his ability to move, while, on the contrary, they would be diminishing and paralyzing the muscular energy of his limbs.

If, then, we add to the natural effect of habit the education given him by his masters, the parson, teacher, etc., who are all interested in teaching that the employer and the government are necessary; if also we add the judge and the bailiff to force those who think differently—and might try to propagate their opinions—to keep silence, we shall understand how the prejudice as to the utility and necessity of masters and governments has become established. Suppose a doctor brings forward a complete theory, with a thousand ably invented illustrations, to persuade that man with the bound limb whom we were describing, that, if his limb were freed, he could not walk, could not even live. The man would defend his bands furiously, and consider anyone his enemy who tried to tear them off.

Thus, since it is believed that government is necessary, and that without government there must be disorder and confusion, it is natural and logical to suppose that Anarchy, which signifies without government, must also mean absence of order.

Nor is this fact without parallel in the history of words. In those epochs and countries where people have considered government by one man (monarchy) necessary, the word republic (that is, the government of many) has been used precisely like Anarchy, to imply disorder and confusion. Traces of this signification of the word are still to be found in the popular language of almost all countries.

When this opinion is changed, and the public convinced that government is not necessary, but extremely harmful, the word Anarchy, precisely because it signifies without government, will become equal to saying natural order, harmony of the needs and interests of all, complete liberty with complete solidarity.

Therefore, those are wrong who say that Anarchists have chosen their name badly, because it is erroneously understood by the masses and leads to a false interpretation. The error does not come from the word, but from the thing. The difficulty which Anarchists meet with in spreading their views does not depend upon the name they have given themselves, but upon the fact that their conceptions strike at all the inveterate prejudices that people have about the function of government, or the *State*, as it is called.

Before proceeding further, it will be well to explain this last word (the State) which, in our opinion, is the real cause of much misunderstanding.

Anarchists, and we among them, have made use, and still generally make use of the word State, meaning thereby that collection of institutions, political, legislative, judicial, military, financial, etc., by means of which the management of their own affairs, the guidance of their personal conduct and the care of ensuring their own safety are taken from the people and confided to certain individuals. And these, whether by usurpation or delegation, are invested with the right to make laws over and for all, and to constrain the public to respect them, making use of the collective force of the community to this end.

In this case the word State means government, or, if you like, it is the impersonal expression, abstracted from the state of things, of which the government is the personification. Then such expressions as abolition of the State, or society without the State, agree perfectly with the conception which Anarchists wish to express of the destruction of every political institution based on authority, and of the constitution of a free and equal society, based upon harmony of interests, and the voluntary contribution of all to the satisfaction of social needs.

However, the word State has many other significations, and among these some which lend themselves to misconstruction, particularly when used among men whose sad social position has not afforded them leisure to become accustomed to the delicate distinctions of scientific language, or, still worse, when adopted treacherously by adversaries, who are interested in confounding the sense, or do not wish to comprehend. Thus the word State is often used to indicate any given society, or collection of human beings, united on a given territory and constituting what is called a social unit, independently of the way in which the members of the said body are grouped, or of the relations existing between them. State is used also simply as a synonym for society. Owing to these significations of the word, our adversaries believe, or rather profess to believe, that Anarchists wish to abolish every social relation and all collective work, and to reduce man to a condition of isolation, that is, to a state worse than savagery.

By State again is meant only the supreme administration of a country, the central power, distinct from provincial or communal power; and therefore others think that Anarchists wish merely for a territorial decentralization, leaving the principle of government intact, and thus confounding Anarchy with cantonal or communal government.

Finally, state signifies condition, mode of living, the order of social life, etc., and therefore we say, for example, that it is necessary to change the economic state of the working classes, or that the Anarchical state is the only state founded on the principles of solidarity, and other similar phrases. So that if we say also in another sense that we wish to abolish the State, we may at once appear absurd or contradictory.

For these reasons, we believe it would be better to use the expression *abolition of the State* as little as possible, and to substitute for it another clearer and more concrete—*abolition of government*.

In any case, the latter will be the expression used in the course of this little work.

We have said that Anarchy is society without government. But is the suppression of government possible, desirable, or wise? Let us see.

What is the government? There is a disease of the human mind called the metaphysical tendency, causing man, after he has by a logical process abstracted the quality from an object, to be subject to a kind of hallucination which makes him take the abstraction for the real thing. This metaphysical tendency, in spite of the blows of positive science, has still strong root in the minds of the majority of our contemporary fellow men. It has such an influence that many consider government an actual entity, with certain given attributes of reason, justice, equity, independently of the people who compose the government.

For those who think in this way, government, or the State, is the abstract social power, and it represents, always in the abstract, the general interest. It is the expression of the right of all, and considered as limited by the rights of each. This way of understanding government is supported by those interested, to whom it is an urgent necessity that the principle of authority should be maintained, and should always survive the faults and errors of the persons who succeed to the exercise of power.

For us, the government is the aggregate of the governors; and the governors—kings, presidents, ministers, members of parliament, and whatnot—are those who have the power to make laws, to regulate the relations between men, and to force obedience to these laws. They are those who decide upon and claim the taxes, enforce military service, judge and punish transgressions of the laws. They subject men to regulations, and supervise and sanction private contracts. They monopolize certain branches of production and public services, or, if

they wish, all production and public service. They promote or hinder the exchange of goods. They make war or peace with the governments of other countries. They concede or withhold free trade and many things else. In short, the governors are those who have the power, in a greater or less degree, to make use of the collective force of society, that is, of the physical, intellectual, and economic force of all, to oblige each to do the said governor's wish. And this power constitutes, in our opinion, the very principle of government, the principle of authority.

But what reason is there for the existence of government?

Why abdicate one's own liberty, one's own initiative in favor of other individuals? Why give them the power to be the masters, with or contrary to the wish of each, to dispose of the forces of all in their own way? Are the governors such very exceptionally gifted men as to enable them, with some show of reason, to represent the masses, and act in the interest of all men better than all men would be able to do for themselves? Are they so infallible and incorruptible that one can confide to them, with any semblance of prudence, the fate of each and all, trusting to their knowledge and their goodness?

And even if there existed men of infinite goodness and knowledge, even if we assume what has never been verified in history, and what we believe it would be impossible to verify, namely, that the government might devolve upon the ablest and best, would the possession of governmental power add anything to their beneficent influence? Would it not rather paralyze or destroy it? For those who govern find it necessary to occupy themselves with things which they do not understand, and, above all, to waste the greater part of their energy in keeping themselves in power, striving to satisfy their friends, holding the discontented in check, and mastering the rebellious.

Again, be the governors good or bad, wise or ignorant, who is it that appoints them to their office? Do they impose themselves by right of war, conquest, or revolution? Then, what guarantees have the public that their rulers have the general good at heart? In this case it is simply a question of usurpation; and if the subjects are discontented, nothing is left to them but to throw off the yoke, by an appeal to arms. Are the governors chosen from a certain class or party? Then certainly the ideas and interests of that class or party will triumph, and the wishes and interests of the others will be sacrificed. Are they elected by universal suffrage? Now numbers are the sole criterion; and numbers are certainly no proof of reason, justice or capacity. Under universal suffrage, the elected are those who know best how to take in the masses. The

minority, which may happen to be half minus one, is sacrificed. And that without considering that there is another thing to take into account.

Experience has shown it is impossible to hit upon an electoral system which really ensures election by the actual majority.

Many and various are the theories by which men have sought to justify the existence of government. All, however, are founded, confessedly or not, on the assumption that the individuals of a society have contrary interests, and that an external superior power is necessary to oblige some to respect the interests of others, by prescribing and imposing a rule of conduct, according to which the interests at strife may be harmonized as much as possible, and according to which each obtains the maximum of satisfaction with the minimum of sacrifice. If, say the theorists of the authoritarian school, the interests, tendencies, and desires of an individual are in opposition to those of another individual, or mayhap all society, who will have the right and the power to oblige the one to respect the interests of the others? Who will be able to prevent the individual citizen from offending the general will? The liberty of each, say they, has for its limit the liberty of others; but who will establish those limits, and who will cause them to be respected? The natural antagonism of interests and passions creates the necessity for government, and justifies authority. Authority intervenes as moderator of the social strife, and defines the limits of the rights and duties of each.

This is the theory; but the theory, to be sound, ought to be based upon facts, and to explain them. We know well how in social economy theories are too often invented to justify facts, that is, to defend privilege and cause it to be accepted tranquilly by those who are its victims. Let us here look at the facts themselves.

In all the course of history, as at the present epoch, government is either the brutal, violent, arbitrary domination of the few over the many, or it is an instrument ordained to secure domination and privilege to those who, by force, or cunning, or inheritance, have taken to themselves all the means of life, and first and foremost the soil, whereby they hold the people in servitude, making them work for their advantage.

Governments oppress mankind in two ways, either directly, by brute force, that is physical violence, or indirectly, by depriving them of the means of subsistence and thus reducing them to helplessness at discretion. Political power originated in the first method; economic privilege arose from the second. Governments can also oppress man by acting on his emotional nature, and in this way constitute religious authority. But there is no reason for the propagation of religious

superstitions except that they defend and consolidate political and economic privileges.

In primitive society, when the world was not so densely populated as now, and social relations were less complicated, when any circumstance prevented the formation of habits and customs of solidarity, or destroyed those which already existed, and established the domination of man over man, the two powers, the political and the economical, were united in the same hands—and often also in those of one single individual. Those who had by force conquered and impoverished the others, constrained them to become their servants, and perform all things for them according to their caprice. The victors were at once proprietors, legislators, kings, judges, and executioners.

But with the increase of population, with the growth of needs, with the complication of social relationships, the prolonged continuance of such despotism became impossible. For their own security, the rulers, often much against their will, were obliged to depend upon a privileged class, that is, a certain number of co-interested individuals, and were also obliged to let each of these individuals provide for his own sustenance. Nevertheless they reserved to themselves the supreme or ultimate control. In other words, the rulers reserved to themselves the right to exploit all at their own convenience, and so to satisfy their kingly vanity. Thus private wealth was developed under the shadow of the ruling power, for its protection and—often unconsciously—as its accomplice. Thus the class of proprietors rose. And they, concentrating little by little the means of wealth in their own hands, all the means of production, the very fountains of life—agriculture, industry, and exchange—ended by becoming a power in themselves. This power, by the superiority of its means of action, and the great mass of interests it embraces, always ends by more or less openly subjugating the political power, that is, the government, which it makes its policeman.

This phenomenon has been reproduced often in history. Every time that, by invasion or any military enterprise whatever, physical brute force has taken the upper hand in society, the conquerors have shown the tendency to concentrate government and property in their own hands. In every case, however, as the government cannot attend to the production of wealth, and overlook and direct everything, it finds it needful to conciliate a powerful class, and private property is again established. With it comes the division of the two sorts of power, that of the persons who control the collective force of society, and that of the proprietors,

upon whom these governors become essentially independent, because the proprietors command the sources of the said collective force.

But never has this state of things been so accentuated as in modern times. The development of production, the immense extension of commerce, the extensive power that money has acquired, and all the economic results flowing from the discovery of America, the invention of machinery, etc., have secured such supremacy to the capitalist class that it is no longer content to trust to the support of the government, and has come to wish that the government shall emanate from itself; a government composed of members of its own class, continually under its control and especially organized to defend its class against the possible revenge of the disinherited. Hence the origin of the modern parliamentary system.

Today the government is composed of proprietors, or people of their class so entirely under their influence that the richest of them do not find it necessary to take an active part in it themselves. Rothschild, for instance, does not need to be either M.P. or minister, it is enough for him to keep M.P.'s and ministers dependent upon himself.

In many countries, the proletariat participates nominally, more or less, in the election of the government. This is a concession which the bourgeois (i.e., proprietary) class have made, either to avail themselves of popular support in the strife against royal or aristocratic power, or to divert the attention of the people from their own emancipation by giving them an apparent share in political power. However, whether the bourgeoisie foresaw it or not, when first they conceded to the people the right to vote, the fact is that the right has proved in reality a mockery, serving only to consolidate the power of the bourgeois, while giving to the most energetic only of the proletariat the illusory hope of arriving at power.

So also with universal suffrage—we might say, especially with universal suffrage—the government has remained the servant and police of the bourgeois class. How could it be otherwise? If the government should reach the point of becoming hostile, if the hope of democracy should ever be more than a delusion deceiving the people, the proprietary class, menaced in its interests, would at once rebel, and would use all the force and influence which come from the possession of wealth, to reduce the government to the simple function of acting as policeman.

In all times and in all places, whatever may be the name that the government takes, whatever has been its origin, or its organization, its

essential function is always that of oppressing and exploiting the masses, and of defending the oppressors and exploiters. Its principal characteristic and indispensable instruments are the bailiff and the tax collector, the soldier and the prison. And to these are necessarily added the timeserving priest or teacher, as the case may be, supported and protected by the government, to render the spirit of the people servile and make them docile under the yoke.

Certainly, in addition to this primary business, to this essential department of governmental action other departments have been added in the course of time. We even admit that never, or hardly ever, has a government been able to exist in a country that was at all civilized without adding to its oppressing and exploiting functions others useful and indispensable to social life. But this fact makes it none the less true that government is in its nature oppressive and a means of exploitation, and that its origin and position doom it to be the defence and hotbed of a dominant class, thus confirming and increasing the evils of domination.

The government assumes the business of protecting, more or less vigilantly, the life of citizens against direct and brutal attacks; acknowledges and legalizes a certain number of rights and primitive usages and customs, without which it is impossible to live in society. It organizes and directs certain public services, as the post, preservation and construction of roads, care of the public health, benevolent institutions, workhouses and suchlike; and it pleases it to pose as the protector and benefactor of the poor and weak. But it is sufficient to notice how and why it fulfils these functions to prove our point. The fact is that everything the government undertakes it is always inspired with the spirit of domination, and ordained to defend, enlarge, and perpetuate the privileges of property, and those classes of which government is the representative and defender.

A government cannot rule for any length of time without hiding its true nature behind the pretence of general utility. It cannot respect the lives of the privileged without assuming the air of wishing to respect the lives of all. It cannot cause the privileges of some to be tolerated without appearing as the custodian of the rights of everybody. "The law" (and, of course, those that have made the law, that is, the government) "has utilized," says Kropotkin, "the social sentiments of man, working into them those precepts of morality, which man has accepted, together with arrangements useful to the minority—the exploiters—and opposed to the interests of those who might have rebelled, had it not been for this show of a moral ground."

A government cannot wish the destruction of the community, for then it and the dominant class could not claim their exploitation-gained wealth; nor could the government leave the community to manage its own affairs; for then the people would soon discover that it (the government) was necessary for no other end than to defend the proprietary class who impoverish them, and would hasten to rid themselves of both government and proprietary class.

Today in the face of the persistent and menacing demands of the proletariat, governments show a tendency to interfere in the relations between employers and work people. Thus they try to arrest the labor movement, and to impede with delusive reforms the attempts of the poor to take to themselves that which is due to them, namely an equal share of the good things of life which others enjoy.

We must also remember that on the one hand the bourgeois, that is, the proprietary class, make war among themselves, and destroy one another continually, and on the other hand that the government, although composed of the bourgeois and, acting as their servant and protector, is still, like every other servant or protector, continually striving to emancipate itself and to domineer over its charge. Thus this seesaw game, this swaying between conceding and withdrawing, this seeking allies among the people against the classes, and among the classes against the masses, forms the science of the governors, and blinds the ingenuous and phlegmatic, who are always expecting that salvation is coming to them from on high.

With all this, the government does not change its nature. If it acts as regulator or guarantor of the rights and duties of each, it perverts the sentiment of justice. It justifies wrong and punishes every act which offends or menaces the privileges of the governors and proprietors. It declares just, *legal*, the most atrocious exploitation of the miserable, which means a slow and continuous material and moral murder, perpetrated by those who have on those who have not. Again, if it administers public services, it always considers the interests of the governors and proprietors, not occupying itself with the interests of the working masses, except in so far as is necessary to make the masses willing to endure their share of taxation. If it instructs, it fetters and curtails the truth, and tends to prepare the mind and heart of the young to become either implacable tyrants or docile slaves, according to the class to which they belong. In the hands of the government everything becomes a means of exploitation, everything serves as a police measure, useful to hold the people in check. And it must be thus. If the life of

mankind consists in strife between man and man, naturally there must be conquerors and conquered; and the government, which is the prize of the strife, or is a means of securing to the victors the results of their victory, and perpetuating those results, will certainly never fall to those who have lost, whether the battle be on the grounds of physical or intellectual strength, or in the field of economics. And those who have fought to conquer, that is, to secure to themselves better conditions than others can have, to conquer privilege and add dominion to power, and have attained the victory, will certainly not use it to defend the rights of the vanquished, and to place limits to their own power and to that of their friends and partisans.

The government—or the State, if you will—as judge, moderator of social strife, impartial administrator of the public interests, is a lie. It is an illusion, a utopia, never realized and never realizable. If in truth, the interests of men must always be contrary to one another; if indeed, the strife between mankind has made laws necessary to human society, and the liberty of the individual must be limited by the liberty of other individuals; then each one would always seek to make his interests triumph over those of others. Each would strive to enlarge his own liberty at the cost of the liberty of others, and there would be government. Not simply because it was more or less useful to the totality of the members of society to have a government, but because the conquerors would wish to secure to themselves the fruits of victory. They would wish effectually to subject the vanquished, and relieve themselves of the trouble of being always on the defensive, and they would appoint men, specially adapted to the business, to act as police. Were this indeed actually the case, then humanity would be destined to perish amidst periodical contests between the tyranny of the dominators and the rebellion of the conquered.

But fortunately the future of humanity is a happier one, because the law which governs it is milder.

This law is the law of *solidarity*.

Man has two necessary fundamental characteristics, *the instinct of his own preservation*, without which no being could exist, and *the instinct of the preservation of his species*, without which no species could have been formed or have continued to exist. He is naturally driven to defend his own existence and well-being and that of his offspring against every danger.

In nature, living beings find two ways of securing their existence, and rendering it pleasanter. The one is in individual strife with the elements, and with other individuals of the same or different species; the other is *mutual support*, or *cooperation*, which might also be described as association for strife against all natural factors, destructive to existence, or to the development and well-being of the associated.

We do not need to investigate in these pages—and we cannot for lack of space—what respective proportions in the evolution of the organic world these two principles of strife and cooperation take.

It will suffice to note how cooperation among men (whether forced or voluntary) has become the sole means of progress, of improvement or of securing safety; and how strife—relic of an earlier stage of existence—has become thoroughly unsuitable as a means of securing the well-being of individuals, and produces instead injury to all, both the conquerors and the conquered.

The accumulated and transmitted experience of successive generations has taught man that by uniting with other men his preservation is better secured and his well-being increased. Thus out of this same strife for existence, carried on against surrounding nature, and against individuals of their own species, the social instinct has been developed among men, and has completely transformed the conditions of their life. Through cooperation man has been enabled to evolve out of animalism, has risen to great power, and elevated himself to such a degree above the other animals, that metaphysical philosophers have believed it necessary to invent for him an immaterial and immortal soul.

Many concurrent causes have contributed to the formation of this social instinct, that starting from the animal basis of the instinct for the preservation of the species, has now become so extended and so intense that it constitutes the essential element of man's moral nature.

Man, however he evolved from inferior animal types, was a physically weak being, unarmed for the fight against carnivorous beasts. But he was possessed of a brain capable of great development, and a vocal organ, able to express the various cerebral vibrations, by means of diverse sounds, and hands adapted to give the desired form to matter. He must

have very soon felt the need and advantages of association with his fellows. Indeed it may even be said that he could only rise out of animalism when he became social, and had acquired the use of language, which is at the same time a consequence and a potent factor of sociability.

The relatively scanty number of the human species rendered the strife for existence between man and man, even beyond the limits of association, less sharp, less continuous, and less necessary. At the same time, it must have greatly favored the development of sympathetic sentiments, and have left time for the discovery and appreciation of the utility of mutual support. In short, social life became the necessary condition of man's existence, in consequence of his capacity to modify his external surroundings and adapt them to his own wants, by the exercise of his primeval power in cooperation with a greater or less number of associates. His desires have multiplied with the means of satisfying them, and have become needs. And division of labor has arisen from man's methodical use of nature for his own advantage. Therefore, as now evolved, man could not live apart from his fellows without falling back into a state of animalism. Through the refinement of sensibility, with the multiplication of social relationships, and through habit impressed on the species by hereditary transmission for thousands of centuries, this need of social life, this interchange of thought and of affection between man and man, has become a mode of being necessary for our organism. It has been transformed into sympathy, friendship and love, and subsists independently of the material advantages that association procures. So much is this the case, that man will often face suffering of every kind, and even death, for the satisfaction of these sentiments.

The fact is that a totally different character has been given to the strife for existence between man and man, and between the inferior animals, by the enormous advantages that association gives to man; by the fact that his physical powers are altogether disproportionate to his intellectual superiority over the beasts, so long as he remains isolated; by his possibility of associating with an ever increasing number of individuals, and entering into more and more intricate and complex relationships, until he reaches association with all humanity; and, finally, perhaps more than all, by his ability to produce, working in cooperation with others, more than he needs to live upon. It is evident that these causes, together with the sentiments of affection derived from them, must give quite a peculiar character to the struggle for existence among human beings.

Although it is now known—and the researches of modern naturalists bring us every day new proofs—that cooperation has played, and still plays, a most important part in the development of the organic world, nevertheless, the difference between the human struggle for existence and that of the inferior animals is enormous. It is in fact proportionate to the distance separating man from the other animals. And this is none the less true because of that Darwinian theory, which the bourgeois class have ridden to death, little suspecting the extent to which mutual cooperation has assisted in the development of the lower animals.

The lower animals fight either individually, or, more often, in little permanent or transitory groups, against all nature, the other individuals of their own species included. Some of the more social animals, such as ants, bees, etc., associate together in the same anthill, or beehive, but are at war with, or indifferent towards, other communities of their own species. Human strife with nature, on the contrary, tends always to broaden association among men, to unite their interests, and to develop each individual's sentiments of affection towards all others, so that united they may conquer and dominate the dangers of external nature by and for humanity.

All strife directed towards obtaining advantages independently of other men, and in opposition to them, contradicts the social nature of modern man, and tends to lead it back to a more animal condition.

Solidarity, that is, harmony of interests and sentiments, the sharing of each in the good of all, and of all in the good of each, is the state in which alone man can be true to his own nature, and attain to the highest development and happiness. It is the aim towards which human development tends. It is the one great principle, capable of reconciling all present antagonisms in society, otherwise irreconcilable. It causes the liberty of each to find not its limits, but its complement, the necessary condition of its continual existence—in the liberty of all.

“No man,” says Michael Bakunin, “can recognize his own human worth, nor in consequence realize his full development, if he does not recognize the worth of his fellow men, and in cooperation with them, realize his own development through them. No man can emancipate himself, unless at the same time he emancipates those around him. My freedom is the freedom of all; for I am not really free—free not only in thought, but in deed—if my freedom and my right do not find their confirmation and sanction in the liberty and right of all men my equals.

“It matters much to me what all other men are, for however independent I may seem, or may believe myself to be, by virtue of my

social position, whether as pope, czar, emperor, or prime minister, I am all the while the product of those who are the least among men. If these are ignorant, miserable, or enslaved, my existence is limited by their ignorance, misery, or slavery. I, though an intelligent and enlightened man, am made stupid by their stupidity; though brave, am enslaved by their slavery; though rich, tremble before their poverty; though privileged, grow pale at the thought of possible justice for them. I, who wish to be free, cannot be so, because around me are men who do not yet desire freedom, and, not desiring it, become, as opposed to me, the instruments of my oppression.”

Solidarity, then, is the condition in which man can attain the highest degree of security and of well-being. Therefore, egoism itself, that is, the exclusive consideration of individual interests, impels man and human society towards solidarity. Or rather egoism and altruism (consideration of the interests of others) are united in this one sentiment, as the interest of the individual is one with the interests of society.

However, man could not pass at once from animalism to humanity; from brutal strife between man and man to the collective strife of all mankind, united in one brotherhood of mutual aid against external nature.

Guided by the advantages that association and the consequent division of labor offer, man evolved towards solidarity, but his evolution encountered an obstacle which led him, and still leads him, away from his aim. He discovered that he could realize the advantages of cooperation, at least up to a certain point, and for the material and primitive wants that then comprised all his needs, by making other men subject to himself, instead of associating on an equality with them. Thus the ferocious and antisocial instincts, inherited from his bestial ancestry, again obtained the upper hand. He forced the weaker to work for him, preferring to domineer over rather than to associate fraternally with his fellows. Perhaps also in most cases it was by exploiting the conquered in war that man learnt for the first time the benefits of association and the help that can be obtained from mutual support.

Thus it has come about that the establishment of the utility of cooperation, which ought to lead to the triumph of solidarity in all human concerns, has turned to the advantage of private property and of government; in other words, to the exploitation of the labor of the many, for the sake of the privileged few.

There has always been association and cooperation, without which human life would be impossible; but it has been cooperation imposed

and regulated by the few in their own particular interest.

From this fact arises a great contradiction with which the history of mankind is filled. On the one hand, we find the tendency to associate and fraternize for the purpose of conquering and adapting the external world to human needs, and for the satisfaction of the human affections; while, on the other hand we see the tendency to divide into as many separate and hostile factions as there are different conditions of life. These factions are determined, for instance, by geographical and ethnological conditions, by differences in economic position, by privileges acquired by some and sought to be secured by others, or by suffering endured, with the ever recurring desire to rebel.

The principle of each for himself, that is, of war of all against all, has come in the course of time to complicate, lead astray, and paralyze the war of all combined against nature, for the common advantage of the human race, which could only be completely successful by acting on the principle of all for each, and each for all.

Great have been the evils which humanity has suffered by this intermingling of domination and exploitation with human association. But in spite of the atrocious oppression to which the masses submit, of the misery, vice, crime, and degradation which oppression and slavery produce, among the slaves and their masters, and in spite of the hatreds, the exterminating wars, and the antagonisms of artificially created interests, the social instinct has survived and even developed. Cooperation, having been always the necessary condition for successful combat against external nature, has therefore been the permanent cause of men's coming together, and consequently of the development of their sympathetic sentiments. Even the oppression of the masses has itself caused the oppressed to fraternize among themselves. Indeed it has been solely owing to this feeling of solidarity, more or less conscious and more or less widespread among the oppressed, that they have been able to endure the oppression, and that man has resisted the causes of death in his midst.

In the present, the immense development of production, the growth of human needs which cannot be satisfied except by the united efforts of a large number of men in all countries, the extended means of communication, habits of travel, science, literature, commerce, even war itself—all these have drawn and are still drawing humanity into a compact body, every section of which, closely knit together, can find its satisfaction and liberty only in the development and health of all other sections composing the whole.

The inhabitant of Naples is as much interested in the amelioration of the hygienic condition of the peoples on the banks of the Ganges, from whence the cholera is brought to him, as in the improvement of the sewerage of his own town. The well-being, liberty, or fortune of the mountaineer, lost among the precipices of the Appenines, does not depend alone on the state of well-being or of misery in which the inhabitants of his own village live, or even on the general condition of the Italian people, but also on the condition of the workers in America, or Australia, on the discovery of a Swedish scientist, on the moral and material conditions of the Chinese, on war or peace in Africa; in short, it depends on all the great and small circumstances which affect the human being in any spot whatever of the world.

In the present condition of society, the vast solidarity which unites all men is in a great degree unconscious, since it arises spontaneously from the friction of particular interests, while men occupy themselves little or not at all with general interests. And this is the most evident proof that solidarity is the natural law of human life, which imposes itself, so to speak, in spite of all obstacles, and even those artificially created by society as at present constituted.

On the other hand, the oppressed masses, never wholly resigned to oppression and misery, who today more than ever show themselves ardent for justice, liberty, and well-being, are beginning to understand that they cannot emancipate themselves except by uniting, through solidarity with all the oppressed and exploited over the whole world. And they understand also that the indispensable condition of their emancipation is the possession of the means of production, of the soil and of the instruments of labor, and further the abolition of private property. Science and the observation of social phenomena show that this abolition would be of immense advantage in the end, even to the privileged classes, if only they could bring themselves to renounce the spirit of domination, and concur with all their fellow men in laboring for the common good.

Now, should the oppressed masses some day refuse to work for their oppressors, should they take possession of the soil and the instruments of labor, and apply them for their own use and advantage, and that of all who work, should they no longer submit to the domination, either of brute force or economic privilege; should the spirit of human fellowship

and the sentiment of human solidarity, strengthened by common interests, grow among the people, and put an end to strife between nations; then what ground would there be for the existence of a government?

Private property abolished, government—which is its defender—must disappear. Should it survive, it would continually tend to reconstruct, under one form or another, a privileged and oppressive class.

And the abolition of government does not, nor cannot, signify the doing away with human association.

Far otherwise, for that cooperation which today is enforced, and directed to the advantage of the few, would be free and voluntary, directed to the advantage of all. Therefore it would become more intense and efficacious.

The social instinct and the sentiment of solidarity would develop to the highest degree; and every individual would do all in his power for the good of others, as much for the satisfaction of his own well understood interests as for the gratification of his sympathetic sentiments.

By the free association of all, a social organization would arise through the spontaneous grouping of men according to their needs and sympathies, from the low to the high, from the simple to the complex, starting from the more immediate to arrive at the more distant and general interests. This organization would have for its aim the greatest good and fullest liberty to all; it would embrace all humanity in one common brotherhood, and would be modified and improved as circumstances were modified and changed, according to the teachings of experience.

This society of *free men*, this society of *friends* would be *Anarchy*.

II

We have hitherto considered government as it is, and as it necessarily must be in a society founded upon privilege, upon the exploitation and oppression of man by man, upon antagonism of interests and social strife, in a word, upon private property.

We have seen how this state of strife, far from being a necessary condition of human life, is contrary to the interests of the individual and

of the species. We have observed how cooperation, solidarity (of interest) is the law of human progress, and we have concluded that, with the abolition of private property and the cessation of all domination of man over man, there would be no reason for government to exist—therefore it ought to be abolished.

But, it may be objected, if the principle on which social organization is now founded were to be changed, and solidarity substituted for strife, common property for private property, the government also would change its nature. Instead of being the protector and representative of the interests of one class, it would become, if there were no longer any classes, representative of all society. Its mission would be to secure and regulate social cooperation in the interests of all, and to fulfil public services of general utility. It would defend society against possible attempts to reestablish privilege, and prevent or repress all attacks, by whomsoever set on foot, against the life, well-being, or liberty of each.

There are in society certain matters too important, requiring too much constant, regular attention, for them to be left to the voluntary management of individuals, without danger of everything getting into disorder.

If there were no government, who would organize the supply and distribution of provisions? Who regulate matters pertaining to public hygiene, the postal, telegraph, and railway services, etc.? Who would direct public instruction? Who undertake those great works of exploration, improvement on a large scale, scientific enterprise, etc., which transform the face of the earth and augment a hundredfold the power of man?

Who would care for the preservation and increase of capital, that it might be transmitted to posterity, enriched and improved?

Who would prevent the destruction of the forests, or the irrational exploitation, and therefore impoverishment of the soil?

Who would there be to prevent and repress crimes, that is, antisocial acts?

What of those who, disregarding the law of solidarity, would not work? Or of those who might spread infectious disease in a country, by refusing to submit to the regulation of hygiene by science? Or what again could be done with those who, whether insane or no, might set fire to the harvest, injure children, or abuse and take advantage of the weak?

To destroy private property and abolish existing government, without reconstituting a government that would organize collective life and secure social solidarity, would not be to abolish privilege, and bring

peace and prosperity upon earth. It would be to destroy every social bond, to leave humanity to fall back into barbarism, to begin again the reign of “each for himself;” which would establish the triumph, firstly, of brute force, and, secondly, of economic privilege.

Such are the objections brought forward by authoritarians, even by those who are Socialists, that is, who wish to abolish private property, and class government founded upon the system of private property.

We reply:

In the first place, it is not true that with a change of social conditions, the nature of the government and its functions would also change. Organs and functions are inseparable terms. Take from an organ its function, and either the organ will die, or the function will reinstate itself. Place an army in a country where there is no reason for or fear of foreign war, and this army will provoke war, or, if it do not succeed in doing that, it will disband. A police force, where there are no crimes to discover, and delinquents to arrest, will provoke or invent crimes, or will cease to exist.

For centuries, there existed in France an institution, now included in the administration of the forests, for the extermination of the wolves and other noxious beasts. No one will be surprised to learn that, just on account of this institution, wolves still exist in France, and that, in rigorous seasons, they do great damage. The public take little heed of the wolves, because there are the appointed officials, whose duty it is to think about them. And the officials do hunt them, but in an *intelligent* manner, sparing their caves, and allowing time for reproduction, that they may not run the risk of entirely destroying such an *interesting* species. The French peasants have indeed little confidence in these official wolf-hunters, and regard them rather as the wolf-preservers. And, of course, what would these officials do if there were no longer any wolves to exterminate?

A government, that is, a number of persons deputed to make the laws, and entitled to use the collective forces of society to make every individual to respect these laws, already constitutes a class privileged and separated from the rest of the community. Such a class, like every elected body, will seek instinctively to enlarge its powers; to place itself above the control of the people; to impose its tendencies, and to make its own interests predominate. Placed in a privileged position, the

government always finds itself in antagonism to the masses, of whose force it disposes.

Furthermore, a government, with the best intention, could never satisfy everybody, even if it succeeded in satisfying some. It must therefore always be defending itself against the discontented, and for that reason must ally itself with the satisfied section of the community for necessary support. And in this manner will arise again the old story of a privileged class, which cannot help but be developed in conjunction with the government. This class, if it could not again acquire possession of the soil, would certainly monopolize the most favored spots, and would not be in the end less oppressive, or less an instrument of exploitation than the capitalist class.

The governors, accustomed to command, would never wish to mix with the common crowd. If they could not retain the power in their own hands, they would at least secure to themselves privileged positions for the time when they would be out of office. They would use all the means they have in their power to get their own friends elected as their successors, who would in their turn be supported and protected by their predecessors. And thus the government would pass and repass into the same hands, and the *democracy*, that is, the government presumably of the whole people, would end, as it always has done, in becoming an *oligarchy*, or the government of a few, the government of a class.

And this all-powerful, oppressive, all-absorbing oligarchy would have always in its care, that is, at its disposition, every bit of social capital, all public services, from the production and distribution of provisions to the manufacture of matches, from the control of the university to that of the music hall.

But let us even suppose that the government did not necessarily constitute a privileged class, and could exist without forming around itself a new privileged class. Let us imagine that it could remain truly representative, the servant—if you will—of all society. What purpose would it then serve? In what particular and in what manner would it augment the power, intelligence, spirit of solidarity, care of the general welfare, present and to come, that at any given moment existed in a given society?

It is always the old story of the man with bound limbs, who, having managed to live in spite of his bands, believes that he lives by means of

them. We are accustomed to live under a government, which makes use of all that energy, that intelligence, and that will which it can direct to its own ends; but which hinders, paralyzes and suppresses those that are useless or hostile to it. And we imagine that all that is done in society is done by virtue of the government, and that without the government there would be neither energy, intelligence, nor good will in society. So it happens (as we have already said) that the proprietor who has possessed himself of the soil, has it cultivated for his own particular profit, leaving the laborer the barest necessities of life for which he can and will continue to labor. While the enslaved laborer thinks that he could not live without his master, as though it were *he* who created the earth and the forces of nature.

What can government of itself add to the moral and material forces which exist in a society? Unless it be like the God of the Bible, who created the universe out of nothing?

As nothing is created in the so-called material world, so in this more complicated form of the material world, which is the social world, nothing can be created. And therefore governors can dispose of no other force than that which is already in society. And indeed not by any means of all of that, as much force is necessarily paralyzed and destroyed by governmental methods of action, while more again is wasted in the friction with rebellious elements, inevitably great in such an artificial mechanism. Whenever governors originate anything of themselves, it is as men and not as governors, that they do so. And of that amount of force, both material and moral, which does remain at the disposition of the government, only an infinitesimally small part achieves an end really useful to society. The remainder is either consumed in actively repressing rebellious opposition, or is otherwise diverted from the aim of general utility, and turned to the profit of the few, and to the injury of the majority of men.

So much has been made of the part that individual initiative and social action play respectively in the life and progress of human society; and such is the confusion of metaphysical language, that those who affirm that individual initiative is the source and agency of all action seem to be asserting something quite preposterous. In reality, it is a truism, which becomes apparent directly we begin to explain the actual facts represented by these words.

The real being is the man, the individual; society or the collectivity, and the State or government which professes to represent it, if not hollow abstractions, can be nothing else than aggregates of individuals. And it is

within the individual organism that all thoughts and all human action necessarily have their origin. Originally individual, they become collective thoughts and actions, when shared in common by many individuals. Social action, then, is not the negation, nor the complement of individual initiative, but it is the sum total of the initiatives, thoughts and actions of all the individuals composing society: a result which, other things equal, is more or less great according as the individual forces tend toward the same aim, or are divergent and opposed. If, on the other hand, as the authoritarians make out, by social action is meant governmental action, then it is again the result of individual forces, but only of those individuals who either form part of the government, or by virtue of their position are enabled to influence the conduct of the government.

Thus, in the contest of centuries between liberty and authority, or, in other words, between social equality and social castes, the question at issue has not really been the relations between society and the individual, nor the increase of individual independence at the cost of social control, or vice versa. Rather it has had to do with preventing any one individual from oppressing the others; with giving to everyone the same rights and the same means of action. It has had to do with substituting the initiative of all, which must naturally result in the advantage of all, for the initiative of the few, which necessarily results in the suppression of all the others. It is always, in short, the question of putting an end to the domination and exploitation of man by man in such a way that all are interested in the common welfare; and that the individual force of each, instead of oppressing, combating or suppressing others, will find the possibility of complete development, and everyone will seek to associate with others for the greater advantage of all.

From what we have said, it follows that the existence of a government, even upon the hypothesis that the ideal government of authoritarian Socialists were possible, far from producing an increase of productive force, would immensely diminish it; because the government would restrict initiative to the few. It would give these few the right to do all things, without being able, of course, to endow them with the knowledge or understanding of all things.

In fact, if you divest legislation and all the operations of government of what is intended to protect the privileged, and what represents the wishes of the privileged classes alone, nothing remains but the aggregate of individual governors. "The State," says Sismondi, "is always a conservative power that authorizes, regulates and organizes the

conquests of progress (and history testifies that it applies them to the profit of its own and the other privileged classes) but never does inaugurate them. New ideas always originate from beneath, are conceived in the foundations of society, and then, when divulged, they become opinion and grow. But they must always meet on their path, and combat the constituted powers of tradition, custom, privilege and error.”

In order to understand how society could exist without a government, it is sufficient to turn our attention for a short space to what actually goes on in our present society. We shall see that in reality the most important social functions are fulfilled even nowadays outside the intervention of government. Also that government only interferes to exploit the masses, or defend the privileged class, or, lastly, to sanction, most unnecessarily, all that has been done without its aid, often in spite of and in opposition to it. Men work, exchange, study, travel, follow as they choose the current rules of morality, or hygiene; they profit by the progress of science and art, have numberless mutual interests without ever feeling the need of anyone to direct them how to conduct themselves in regard to these matters. On the contrary, it is just those things in which there is no governmental interference that prosper best, and that give rise to the least contention, being unconsciously adapted to the wish of all in the way found most useful and agreeable.

Nor is government more necessary in the case of large undertakings, or for those public services which require the constant cooperation of many people of different conditions and countries. Thousands of these undertakings are even now the work of voluntarily formed associations. And these are, by the acknowledgment of everyone, the undertakings which succeed the best. Nor do we refer to the association of capitalists, organized by means of exploitation, although even they show capabilities and powers of free association, which may extend *ad libitum* until it embraces all the peoples of all lands, and includes the widest and most varying interests. But we speak rather of those associations inspired by the love of humanity, or by the passion for knowledge, or even simply by the desire for amusement and love of applause, as these better represent such grouping as will exist in a society where, private property and internal strife between men being abolished, each will find his interests synonymous with the interests of everyone else, and his greatest satisfaction in doing good and pleasing others. Scientific societies and

congresses, international lifeboat and Red Cross associations, etc., laborers' unions, peace societies, volunteers who hasten to the rescue at times of great public calamity are all examples, among thousands, of that power of the spirit of association, which always shows itself when a need arises, or an enthusiasm takes hold, and the means do not fail. That voluntary associations do not cover the world, and do not embrace every branch of material and moral activity, is the fault of the obstacles placed in their way by governments, of the antagonisms created by the possession of private property, and of the impotence and degradation to which the monopolizing of wealth on the part of the few reduces the majority of mankind.

The government takes charge, for instance, of the postal and telegraphic services. But in what way does it really assist them? When the people are in such a condition as to be able to enjoy, and feel the need of such services, they will think about organizing them; and the man with the necessary technical knowledge will not require a certificate from the government to enable him to set to work. The more general and urgent the need, the more volunteers will offer to satisfy it. Would the people have the ability necessary to provide and distribute provisions? Oh! never fear, they will not die of hunger, waiting for a government to pass laws on the subject. Wherever a government exists, it must wait until the people have first organized everything, and then come with its laws to sanction and exploit that which has been already done. It is evident that private interest is the great motive for all activity. That being so, when the interest of everyone becomes the interest of each (and it necessarily will become so as soon as private property is abolished) then all will be active. And if now they work in the interest of the few, so much the more and so much the better will they work to satisfy the interests of all. It is hard to understand how anyone can believe that public services indispensable to social life can be better secured by order of a government than through the workers themselves, who by their own choice or by agreement made with others, carry them out under the immediate control of all interested.

Certainly in every collective undertaking on a large scale, there is need for division of labor, for technical direction, administration, etc. But the authoritarians are merely playing with words, when they deduce a reason for the existence of government, from the very real necessity for organization of labor. The government, we must repeat, is the aggregate of the individuals who have had given them, or have taken the right or the means to make laws, and force the people to obey them. The

administrators, engineers, etc., on the other hand, are men who receive or assume the charge of doing a certain work, and who do it. Government signifies delegation of power, that is, abdication of the initiative and sovereignty of everyone into the hands of the few. Administration signifies delegation of work, that is, a charge given and accepted, the free exchange of services founded on free agreement.

A governor is a privileged person, because he has the right to command others, and to avail himself of the force of others, to make his own ideas and desires triumph. An administrator or technical director is a worker like others, in a society, of course, where all have equal opportunities of development, and all are, or can be, at the same time intellectual and manual workers; when there are no other differences between men than those derived from diversity of talents, and all work and all social functions give an equal right to the enjoyment of social advantages. The functions of government are, in short, not to be confounded with administrative functions, as they are essentially different. That they are today so often confused is entirely on account of the existence of economic and political privilege.

But let us hasten to pass on to those functions for which government is thought indispensable by all who are not Anarchists. These are the internal and external defence of society, that is, War, Police and Justice.

Government being abolished, and social wealth at the disposal of everyone, all antagonism between various nations would soon cease; and there would consequently be no more cause for war. Moreover, in the present state of the world, in any country where the spirit of rebellion is growing, even if it do not find an echo throughout the land, it will be certain of so much sympathy that the government will not dare to send all its troops to a foreign war, for fear the revolution should break out at home. But even supposing that the rulers of countries not yet emancipated would wish and could attempt to reduce a free people to servitude, would these require a government to enable them to defend themselves? To make war, we need men who have the necessary geographical and technical knowledge, and, above all, people willing to fight. A government has no means of augmenting the ability of the former, or the willingness or courage of the latter. And the experience of history teaches that a people really desirous of defending their own country are invincible. In Italy everyone knows how thrones tremble, and

regular armies of hired soldiers vanish before troops of volunteers, that is, armies Anarchically formed.

And as to the police and justice, many imagine that if it were not for the police and the judges, everybody would be free to kill, violate or injure others as the humor took him; that Anarchists, if they are true to their principles, would like to see this strange kind of liberty respected; “liberty” that violates or destroys the life and freedom of others unrestrained. Such people believe that we, having overthrown the government and private property, shall then tranquilly allow the reestablishment of both, out of respect for the “liberty” of those who may feel the need of having a government and private property. A strange mode indeed of construing our ideas! In truth, one may better answer such notions with a shrug of the shoulders than by taking the trouble to confute them.

The liberty we wish for, for ourselves and others, is not an absolute, abstract, metaphysical liberty, which in practice can only amount to the oppression of the weak. But we wish for a tangible liberty, the possible liberty, which is the conscious communion of interests, that is, voluntary solidarity. We proclaim the maxim: *Do as you will*; and in this our program is almost entirely contained, because, as may be easily understood, we hold that in a society without government or property, each one *will wish that which he should*.

But if, in consequence of a false education, received in the present society, or of physical disease, or whatever other cause, an individual should wish to injure others, you may be sure we should adopt all the means in our power to prevent him. As we know that a man’s character is the consequence of his physical organism, and of the cosmic and social influences surrounding him, we certainly shall not confound the sacred right of self-defence, with the absurdly assumed right to punish. Also, we shall not regard the delinquent, that is, the man who commits antisocial acts, as the rebel he seems in the eyes of the judges nowadays. We shall regard him as a sick brother in need of cure. We therefore shall not act towards him in the spirit of hatred, when repressing him, but shall confine ourselves solely to self-protection. We shall not seek to revenge ourselves, but rather to rescue the unfortunate one by every means that science suggests. In theory, Anarchists may go astray like others, losing sight of the reality under a semblance of logic; but it is quite certain that

the emancipated people will not let their dearly bought liberty and welfare be attacked with impunity. If the necessity arose, they would provide for their own defence against the antisocial tendencies of certain amongst them. But how do those whose business it now is to make the laws, protect society? Or those others who live by seeking for and inventing new infringements of law? Even now, when the masses of the people really disapprove of anything and think it injurious, they always find a way to prevent it very much more effectually than all the professional legislators, constables or judges. During insurrections, the people, though very mistakenly, have enforced the respect for private property; and they have secured this respect far better than an army of policemen could have done.

Customs always follow the needs and sentiments of the majority; and they are always the more respected, the less they are subject to the sanction of law. This is because everyone sees and comprehends their utility, and because the interested parties, not deluding themselves with the idea that government will protect them, are themselves concerned in seeing the custom respected. The economical use of water is of very great importance to a caravan crossing the deserts of Africa. Under these circumstances, water is a sacred thing; and no sane man dreams of wasting it. Conspirators are obliged to act secretly; so secrecy is preserved among them, and obloquy rests on whosoever violates it. Gambling debts are not guaranteed by law; but among gamblers it is considered dishonorable not to pay them, and the delinquent feels himself dishonored by not fulfilling his obligations.

Is it on account of the police that more people are not murdered? The greater part of the Italian people never see the police except at long intervals. Millions of men go over the mountains and through the country, far from the protecting eye of authority, where they might be attacked without the slightest fear of their assailants being traced; but they run no greater risk than those who live in the best guarded spots. Statistics show that the number of crimes rise in proportion to the increase of repressive measures; while they vary rapidly with the fluctuations of economic conditions and with the state of public opinion.

Preventive laws, however, only concern unusual, exceptional acts. Everyday life goes on beyond the limits of the criminal code, and is regulated almost unconsciously by the tacit and voluntary assent of all, by means of a number of usages and customs much more important to social life than the dictates of law. And they are also much better observed, although completely divested of any sanction beyond the

natural odium which falls upon those who violate them, and such injury as this odium brings with it.

When disputes arise, would not voluntarily accepted arbitration or the pressure of public opinion be far more likely to bring about a just settlement of the difficulties in question than an irresponsible magistrate, who has the right to pass judgment upon everybody and everything, and who is necessarily incompetent and therefore unjust?

As every form of government only serves to protect the privileged classes, so do police and judges only aim at repressing those crimes, often not considered criminal by the masses, which offend only the privileges of the rulers or property-owners. For the real defence of society, the defence of the welfare and liberty of all, there can be nothing more pernicious than the formation of this class of functionaries, who exist on the pretence of defending all, and therefore habitually regard every man as game to be hunted down, often striking at the command of a superior officer, without themselves even knowing why, like hired assassins and mercenaries.

All that you have said may be true, say some; Anarchy may be a perfect form of social life; but we have no desire to take a leap in the dark. Therefore, tell us how your society will be organized. Then follows a long string of questions, which would be very interesting if it were our business to study the problems that might arise in an emancipated society, but of which it is useless and absurd to imagine that we could now offer a definite solution. According to what method will children be taught? How will production and distribution be organized? Will there still be large cities, or will people spread equally over all the surface of the earth? Will all the inhabitants of Siberia winter at Nice? Will everyone dine on partridges and drink champagne? Who will be the miners and sailors? Who will clear the drains? Will the sick be nursed at home or in hospitals? Who will arrange the railway timetable? What will happen if the engine-driver falls ill while the train is on its way? And so on, without end, as though we could prophesy all the knowledge and experience of the future time, or could, in the name of Anarchy, prescribe for the coming man what time he should go to bed, and on what days he should cut his nails!

Indeed if our readers expect from us an answer to these questions, or even to those among them really serious and important, which cannot be

anything more than our own private opinion at this present hour, we must have succeeded badly in our endeavor to explain what Anarchy is.

We are no more prophets than other men; and should we pretend to give an official solution to all the problems that will arise in the life of the future society, we should have indeed a curious idea of the abolition of government. We should then be describing a government, dictating, like the clergy, a universal code for the present and all future time. Seeing that we have neither police nor prisons to enforce our doctrine, humanity might laugh with impunity at us and our pretensions.

Nevertheless, we consider seriously all the problems of social life which now suggest themselves, on account of their scientific interest, and because, hoping to see Anarchy realized, we wish to help towards the organization of the new society. We have therefore our own ideas on these subjects, ideas which are to our minds likely to be permanent or transitory, according to the respective cases. And did space permit, we might add somewhat more on these points. But the fact that we today think in a certain way on a given question is no proof that such will be the mode of procedure in the future. Who can foresee the activities which may develop in humanity when it is emancipated from misery and oppression? When all have the means of instruction and self-development? When the strife between men, with the hatred and rancour it breeds, will be no longer a necessary condition of existence? Who can foresee the progress of science, the new sources of production, means of communication, etc.?

The one essential is that a society be constituted in which the exploitation and domination of man by man are impossible. That the society, in other words, be such that the means of existence and development of labor be free and open to everyone, and all be able to cooperate, according to their wishes and their knowledge, in the organization of social life. Under such conditions, everything will necessarily be performed in compliance with the needs of all, according to the knowledge and possibilities of the moment. And everything will improve with the increase of knowledge and power.

In fact, a program which would touch the basis of the new social constitution could not do more, after all, than indicate a method. And method, more than anything else, defines parties and determines their importance in history. Method apart, everyone says he wishes for the good of mankind; and many do truly wish for it. As parties disappear, every organized action directed to a definite end disappears likewise. It is therefore necessary to consider Anarchy as, above all, a method.

There are two methods by which the different parties, not Anarchistic, expect, or say they expect, to bring about the greatest good of each and all. These are the authoritarian or State Socialist and the individualist methods. The former entrusts the direction of social life to a few; and it would result in the exploitation and oppression of the masses by that few. The second party trusts to the free initiative of individuals, and proclaims, if not the abolition, the reduction of government. However, as it respects private property, and is founded on the principle of each for himself, and therefore on competition, its liberty is only the liberty of the strong, the license of those who have, to oppress and exploit the weak who have nothing. Far from producing harmony, it would tend always to augment the distance between the rich and the poor, and end also through exploitation and domination in authority. This second method, Individualism, is in theory a kind of Anarchy without Socialism. It is therefore no better than a lie, because liberty is not possible without equality, and true Anarchy cannot be without Solidarity, without Socialism. The criticism which Individualists pass on government is merely the wish to deprive it of certain functions, to virtually hand them over to the capitalist. But it cannot attack those repressive functions which form the essence of government; for without an armed force the proprietary system could not be upheld. Nay, even more, under Individualism, the repressive power of government must always increase, in proportion to the increase, by means of free competition, of the want of equality and harmony.

Anarchists present a new method; the free initiative of all and free agreement; then, after the revolutionary abolition of private property, everyone will have equal power to dispose of social wealth. This method, not admitting the reestablishment of private property, must lead, by means of free association, to the complete triumph of the principles of solidarity.

Thus we see that all the problems put forward to combat the Anarchistic idea are on the contrary arguments in favor of Anarchy; because it alone indicates the way in which, by experience, those solutions which correspond to the dicta of science, and to the needs and wishes of all, can best be found.

How will children be educated? We do not know. What then? The parents, teachers and all who are interested in the progress of the rising generation, will meet, discuss, agree and differ, and then divide according to their various opinions, putting into practice the methods

which they respectively hold to be best. That method which, when tried, produces the best results, will triumph in the end.

And so for all the problems that may arise.

According to what we have so far said, it is evident that Anarchy, as the Anarchists conceive it, and as alone it can be comprehended, is based on Socialism. Furthermore, were it not for that school of Socialists who artificially divide the natural unity of the social question, considering only some detached points, and were it not also for the equivocations with which they strive to hinder the social revolution, we might say right away that Anarchy is synonymous with Socialism. Because both signify the abolition of exploitation and of the domination of man over man, whether maintained by the force of arms or by the monopolization of the means of life.

Anarchy, like Socialism, has for its basis and necessary point of departure *equality of conditions*. Its aim is *solidarity*, and its method *liberty*. It is not perfection, nor is it the absolute ideal, which, like the horizon, always recedes as we advance towards it. But it is the open road to all progress and to all improvement, made in the interest of all humanity.

There are authoritarians who grant that Anarchy is the mode of social life which alone opens the way to the attainment of the highest possible good for mankind, because it alone can put an end to every class interested in keeping the masses oppressed and miserable. They also grant that Anarchy is possible, because it does nothing more than release humanity from an obstacle—government—against which it has always had to fight its painful way towards progress. Nevertheless, these authoritarians, reinforced by many warm lovers of liberty and justice in theory, retire into their last entrenchments, because they are afraid of liberty, and cannot be persuaded that mankind could live and prosper without teachers and pastors; still, hard pressed by the truth, they pitifully demand to have the reign of liberty put off for a while, indeed for as long as possible.

Such is the substance of the arguments that meet us at this stage.

A society without a government, which would act by free, voluntary cooperation, trusting entirely to the spontaneous action of those

interested, and founded altogether on solidarity and sympathy, is certainly, they say, a very beautiful ideal, but, like all ideals, it is a castle in the air. We find ourselves placed in a human society, which has always been divided into oppressors and oppressed; and if the former are full of the spirit of domination, and have all the vices of tyrants, the latter are corrupted by servility, and have those still worse vices, which are the result of enslavement. The sentiment of solidarity is far from being dominant in man at the present day; and if it is true that the different classes of men are becoming more and more unanimous among themselves, it is none the less true that that which is most conspicuous and impresses itself most on human character today is the struggle for existence. It is a fact that each fights daily against everyone else, and competition presses upon all, workmen and masters, causing every man to become a wolf towards every other man. How can these men, educated in a society based upon antagonism between individuals as well as classes, be transformed in a moment and become capable of living in a society in which each shall do as he likes, and as he should, without external coercion, caring for the good of others, simply by the impulse of their own nature? And with what heart or what common sense can you trust to a revolution on the part of an ignorant, turbulent mass, weakened by misery, stupefied by priestcraft, who are today blindly sanguinary and tomorrow will let themselves be humbugged by any knave, who dares to call himself their master? Would it not be more prudent to advance gradually towards the Anarchistic ideal, passing through Republican, Democratic and Socialistic stages? Will not an educative government, composed of the best men, be necessary to prepare the advancing generations for their future destiny?

These objections also ought not to appear valid if we have succeeded in making our readers understand what we have already said, and in convincing them of it. But in any case, even at the risk of repetition, it may be as well to answer them.

We find ourselves continually met by the false notion that government is in itself a new force, sprung up one knows not whence, which of itself adds something to the sum of the force and capability of those whom it is composed and of those who obey it. While, on the contrary, all that is done is done by individual men. The government, as a government, adds nothing save the tendency to monopolize for the advantage of certain parties or classes, and to repress all initiative from beyond its own circle.

To abolish authority or government does not mean to destroy the individual or collective forces, which are at work in society, nor the

influence men exert over one another. That would be to reduce humanity to an aggregate of inert and separate atoms; an impossibility which, if it could be performed, would be the destruction of any society, the death blow to mankind. To abolish authority, means to abolish the monopoly of force and of influence. It means to abolish that state of things by which social force, that is, the collective force of all in a society, is made the instrument of the thought, will and interests of a small number of individuals. These, by means of the collective force, suppress the liberty of everyone else, to the advantage of their own ideas. In other words, it means to destroy a mode of organization by means of which the future is exploited, between one revolution and another, to the profit of those who have been the victors of the moment.

Michael Bakunin, in an article published in 1872, asserts that the great means of action of the International were the propagating of their ideas, and the organization of the spontaneous action of its members in regard to the masses. He then adds:

“To whoever might pretend that action so organized would be an outrage on the liberty of the masses, or an attempt to create a new authoritative power, we would reply that he is a sophist and a fool. So much the worse for those who ignore the natural, social law of human solidarity, to the extent of imagining that an absolute mutual independence of individuals and of masses is a possible or even desirable thing. To desire it, would be to wish for the destruction of society; for all social life is nothing else than this mutual and incessant interdependence among individuals and masses. All individuals, even the most gifted and strongest, indeed most of all the most gifted and strongest, are at every moment of their lives, at the same time, producers and products. Equal liberty for every individual is only the resultant, continually reproduced, of this mass of material, intellectual and moral influence exercised on him by all the individuals around him, belonging to the society in which he was born, has developed and dies. To wish to escape this influence in the name of a transcendental liberty, divine, absolutely egoistic and sufficient to itself, is the tendency to annihilation. To refrain from influencing others, would mean to refrain from all social action, indeed to abstain from all expression of one’s thoughts and sentiments, and simply to become nonexistent. This independence, so much extolled by idealists and metaphysicians, individual liberty conceived in this sense would amount to self-annihilation.

“In nature, as in human society, which is also a part of this same nature, all that exists lives only by complying with the supreme

conditions of interaction, which is more or less positive and potent with regard to the lives of other beings, according to the nature of the individual. And when we vindicate the liberty of the masses, we do not pretend to abolish anything of the natural influences that individuals or groups of individuals exert upon one another. What we wish for is the abolition of artificial influences, which are privileged, legal and official.”

Certainly, in the present state of mankind, oppressed by misery, stupefied by superstition and sunk in degradation, the human lot depends upon a relatively small number of individuals. Of course, all men will not be able to rise in a moment to the height of perceiving their duty, or even the enjoyment of so regulating their own action that others also will derive the greatest possible benefit from it. But because nowadays the thoughtful and guiding forces at work in society are few, that is no reason for paralyzing them still more, and for the subjection of many individuals to the direction of a few. It is no reason for constituting society in such a manner that the most active forces, the highest capacities are, in the end, found outside the government, and almost deprived of influence on social life. All this now happens owing to the inertia that secured positions foster, to heredity, to protectionism, to party spirit and to all the mechanism of government. For those in government office, taken out of their former social position, primarily concerned in retaining power, lose all power to act spontaneously, and become only an obstacle to the free action of others.

With the abolition of this negative potency constituting government, society will become that which it can be, with the given forces and capabilities of the moment. If there are educated men desirous of spreading education, they will organize the schools, and will be constrained to make the use and enjoyment to be derived from education felt. And if there are no such men, or only a few of them, a government cannot create them. All it can do, as in fact it does nowadays, is to take these few away from practical, fruitful work in the sphere of education, and put them to direct from above what has to be imposed by the help of a police system. So they make out of intelligent and impassionate teachers mere politicians, who become useless parasites, entirely absorbed in imposing their own hobbies, and in maintaining themselves in power.

If there are doctors and teachers of hygiene, they will organize themselves for the service of health. And if there are none, a government cannot create them; all that it can do is to discredit them in the eyes of

the people, who are inclined to entertain suspicions, sometimes only too well founded, with regard to everything which is imposed upon them.

If there are engineers and mechanics, they will organize the railways, etc; and if there are none, a government cannot create them.

The revolution, by abolishing government and private property, will not create force which does not exist; but it will leave a free field for the exercise of all available force and of all existent capacity. While it will destroy every class interested in keeping the masses degraded, it will act in such a way that everyone will be free to work and make his influence felt, in proportion to his own capacity, and in conformity with his sentiments and interests. And it is only thus that the elevation of the masses is possible; for it is only with liberty that one can learn to be free, as it is only by working that one can learn to work. A government, even had it no other advantages, must always have that of habituating the governed to subjection, and must also tend to become more oppressive and more necessary, in proportion as its subjects are more obedient and docile.

But suppose government were the direction of affairs by the best people. Who are the best? And how shall we recognize their superiority? The majority are generally attached to old prejudices, and have ideas and instincts already outgrown by the more favored minority. But of the various minorities, who all believe themselves in the right, as no doubt many of them are in part, which shall be chosen to rule? And by whom? And by what criterion? Seeing that the future alone can prove which among them is the most superior. If you choose a hundred partisans of dictatorship, you will discover that each one of the hundred believes himself capable of being, if not sole dictator, at least of assisting very materially in the dictatorial government. The dictators would be those who, by one means or another, succeeded in imposing themselves on society. And, in course of time, all their energy would inevitably be employed in defending themselves against the attacks of their adversaries, totally oblivious of their desire, if ever they had had it, to be merely an educative power.

Should government be, on the other hand, elected by universal suffrage, and so be the emanation, more or less sincere, of the wish of the majority? But if you consider these worthy electors as incapable of providing for their own interests, how can they ever be capable of themselves choosing directors to guide them wisely? How solve this problem of social alchemy: To elect a government of geniuses by the

votes of a mass of fools? And what will be the lot of the minority, who are the most intelligent, most active and most advanced in society?

To solve the social problem to the advantage of all, there is only one way. To expel the government by revolutionary means, to expropriate the holders of social wealth, putting everything at the disposition of all, and to leave all existing force, capacity and goodwill among men free to provide for the needs of all.

We fight for Anarchy and for Socialism; because we believe that Anarchy and Socialism ought to be brought into operation as soon as possible. Which means that the revolution must drive away the government, abolish private property, and entrust all public service, which will then embrace all social life, to the spontaneous, free, unofficial and unauthorized operation of all those interested and all those willing volunteers.

There will certainly be difficulties and inconveniences; but the people will be resolute; and they alone can solve all difficulties Anarchically, that is, by direct action of those interested and by free agreement.

We cannot say whether Anarchy and Socialism will triumph after the next revolutionary attempt; but this is certain, that if any of the so-called transition programs triumph, it will be because we have been temporarily beaten, and never because we have thought it wise to leave in existence any one part of that evil system under which humanity groans.

Whatever happens, we shall have some influence on events, by our numbers, our energy, our intelligence and our steadfastness. Also, even if we are now conquered, our work will not have been in vain; for the more decided we shall have been in aiming at the realization of all our demands, the less there will be of government and of private property in the new society. And we shall have done a great work; for human progress is measured by the degree in which government and private property are administered.

If today we fall without lowering our colors, our cause is certain of victory tomorrow.

A BIT OF THEORY

Rebellion is rumbling on all sides. Here, it is the expression of an idea; there, the result of need; more often it is the consequence of a network of needs and ideas which reciprocally give rise to and reinforce one another. It devotes its attention to the causes of social ills or it follows a side issue, it is conscious or instinctive, it is humane or brutal, generous or narrow and selfish, but it is steadily growing and spreading.

This is history in the making, and it is useless to waste one's time complaining of the course it takes, because this course has been laid out by all the evolution that went before.

But history is made by men, and since we do not wish to be mere passive and indifferent spectators of the historic tragedy, since we wish to cooperate with all our strength in bringing about the circumstances which seem to us the most favourable to our cause, we must have some standard to guide us in judging the events that occur, and especially in choosing the position that we will occupy in the struggle.

The end justifies the means. This maxim has been greatly slandered. As a matter of fact, it is the universal guide to conduct.

One might better express it thus: each end carries with it its own means. The morality or immorality lies in the end sought; there is no option as to the means.

Once one has decided upon the end in view, whether by choice or by necessity, the great problem of life is to find the means which, according to the circumstances, will lead most surely and economically to the desired end. The way in which this problem is solved determines, as far as human will can determine, whether a man or a party reaches the goal or not, is useful to the cause or—without meaning to—serves the opposite side. To have found the right means is the whole secret of the great men and great parties that have left their mark in history.

The object of the Jesuits is, for the mystics, the glory of God, and for the others the power of the Company of Jesus. They must, therefore, endeavour to degrade the masses, terrorise them, and keep them in

submission. The object of the Jacobins and all authoritarian parties, who believe themselves to be in possession of absolute truth, is to force their ideas upon the common herd and to bind humanity upon the Procrustean bed of their beliefs.

With us it is otherwise; entirely different is our goal and very different, therefore, must be our means.

We are not fighting to put ourselves in the place of the exploiters and oppressors of today, nor are we fighting for the triumph of an abstract idea. We are not like that Italian patriot who said, "What matters it if all the Italians die of hunger, provided Italy be great and glorious." Neither do we resemble that comrade who admitted that he would not care if three-fourths of the human beings were massacred, provided Humanity was free and happy.

We wish men to be happy—all men, without exception. We wish every human being to be free to develop and live as happily as possible. And we believe that this freedom, this happiness, cannot be given to men by any man or any party; but that all men must, by their own efforts, discover the conditions of happiness and win them. We believe that only the most thorough application of the principle of solidarity can put an end to struggle, oppression, and exploitation; and that solidarity can come only as a result of a voluntary agreement, an intentional and spontaneous harmonizing of interests.

For us, therefore, everything that aims to destroy economic or political oppression, everything that helps to raise the moral and intellectual level of humanity, to make men conscious of their rights and their power and to get them to look after their interests themselves, everything that arouses hatred of oppression and promotes human brotherhood, brings us nearer to our goal and, therefore, is desirable—subject only to a quantitative calculation as to how to secure, with the resources available, the maximum useful result.

And, per contra, anything is undesirable, because opposed to our aim, which seeks to preserve the present state of things, or to sacrifice a man, against his will, to the triumph of a principle.

What we desire is the triumph of love and freedom. But does that mean that we refrain from using violent means? Not at all. The means we employ are those that circumstances make possible or necessary. It is true that we would prefer not to hurt a hair of anybody's head; we would like to wipe away all tears and not to cause any to be shed. But the fact is that we have to make our fight in the world as it is, or else be condemned to be nothing but fruitless dreamers.

The day will come, we firmly believe, when it will be possible to work for men's happiness without doing any harm either to oneself or to others. Today this is not possible. Even the purest and gentlest of martyrs, one who, for the triumph of the right, would let himself be dragged to the scaffold without resistance, blessing his persecutors like the Christ of the legend, even such a one would still be doing much harm. Apart from the harm that he would be doing to himself—which, after all, counts for something—he would cause all those who love him to shed bitter tears.

The main problem always, therefore, in all the acts of our life, is to choose the lesser evil, to try to accomplish the largest possible total of good with the least possible harm.

Humanity drags painfully along under the weight of political and economic oppression. It is stupefied, degraded, killed—and not always slowly—by poverty, slavery, ignorance, and their consequences. For the maintenance of this state of things there exist powerful military and police organisations which meet any serious attempt at a change with prison, hanging, and massacre. There is no peaceful, legal way of getting out of this situation—and that is perfectly natural because the laws are made by the privileged class in order to protect their privileges. Against the physical force that blocks our way there is no appeal except to physical force—there can be no revolution except a violent one.

There is no doubt that the revolution will cause much misfortune, much suffering. But it might cause a hundred times more and it would still be a blessing compared to what we endure today.

It is a well-known fact that in a single battle more people are killed than in the bloodiest of revolutions. It is a well-known fact that millions of children of tender age die every year for lack of care, that millions of workers die prematurely of the disease of poverty, that the immense majority of people lead stunted, joyless, and hopeless lives, that even the richest and most powerful are much less happy than they might be in a society of equals, and that this state of things has lasted from time immemorial. Without a revolution it would last indefinitely, whereas one single revolution which went right to the causes of the evil could put humanity for all time on the road to happiness.

So let the revolution come! Every day that it delays means an enormous mass of suffering inflicted on mankind. Let us work so that it shall come quickly and shall be the kind of revolution we must have in order to put an end to all oppression and exploitation.

It is through love of mankind that we are revolutionists; it is not our fault if history drives us to this painful necessity.

Therefore, for us and for all those who look at things as we do, each piece of propaganda or of direct action, whether by word or deed, whether done by a group or by an individual, is good when it helps to bring the revolution nearer and make it easier, when it helps to gain for the revolution the conscious cooperation of the masses and to give it that character of universal liberation without which we might, indeed, have a revolution, but not the revolution that we desire. And it is specially in connection with a revolution that we must keep in mind the principle of using the most economical means, because here the cost is figured up in human lives.

We know too well the terrible material and moral conditions in which the working class lives not to be able to understand the acts of hatred, vengeance, and even ferocity which may occur. We understand how there can be some of the oppressed who, having always been treated by the bourgeoisie with the most shameful cruelty, having always seen that anything is permitted to those who have the power, may say to themselves some fine day when they have the power, "Now we will do what the bourgeois used to do." We understand how it can happen in the fever of battle that some people, naturally kindhearted but not prepared by long moral training—very difficult under present conditions—may lose sight of the goal to be reached and may regard violence as an end in itself and let themselves be swept along to savage excesses.

But it is one thing to understand and excuse, and another thing to recommend. Those are not the kind of deeds that we can accept, encourage, and imitate. We must, indeed, be resolute and energetic, but we must try never to go beyond what is absolutely necessary. We must be like the surgeon, who cuts when he must but avoids causing needless suffering. In a word, we should be guided by love for mankind, for all mankind.

We consider this love for mankind as the moral basis, the very seed of our social programme; we believe that only by conceiving of the revolution as the great human jubilee, as the liberation and fraternizing of all men, to whatever class or party they may have belonged—only in this way can our ideal be made real.

Brutal revolt will undoubtedly occur, and it may, indeed, help to give the last great blow which shall overthrow the present system; but if it is not steadied by revolutionists acting for an ideal, it will devour itself.

Hate does not create love: with hatred one cannot rebuild the world. And a revolution inspired by hate either would fail completely or else would lead to fresh oppression, which might, indeed, be called “anarchist,” as the present Governments are called “liberal,” but which would nonetheless be oppression and would not fail to bring about all the conditions that oppression inevitably produces.

THE DUTIES OF THE PRESENT HOUR

Reaction is let loose upon us from all sides. The bourgeoisie, infuriated by the fear of losing her privileges, will use all means of repression to suppress not only the Anarchist and Socialist, but every progressive movement.

It is quite certain that they will not be able to prevent these outrages which served as the pretext of this present reaction; on the contrary, the measures which bar all other outlets to the active temper of some seem expressly calculated to provoke and multiply them.

But, unfortunately, it is not quite certain that they may not succeed in hampering our propaganda by rendering the circulation of our press very difficult, by imprisoning a great number of our comrades, and by leaving no other means of revolutionary activity open to us than secret meetings, which may be very useful for the actual execution of actions determined on, but which cannot make an idea enter into the mass of the proletariat.

We would be wrong to console ourselves with the old illusion that persecutions are *always* useful to the development of the ideas which are persecuted. This is wrong, as almost all generalizations are. Persecutions may help or hinder the triumph of a cause, according to the relation existing between the power of persecution and the power of resistance of the persecuted; and past history contains examples of persecutions which stopped and destroyed a movement as well as of others which brought about a revolution.

Hence we must face, without weakness or illusion, the situation into which the bourgeoisie has placed us today and study the means to resist the storm and to derive from it the greatest possible profit for our cause.

There are comrades who expect the triumph of our ideas from the multiplication of acts of individual violence. Well, we may differ in our opinions on the moral value and the practical effect of individual acts in general, and of each act in particular, and there are in fact on this subject among Anarchists various divergent and even directly opposed currents of opinion; but one thing is certain, namely, that with a number of bombs

and a number of blows of the knife, a society like bourgeois society cannot be overthrown, being based, as it is, on an enormous mass of private interests and prejudices, and sustained, more than it is by the force of arms, by the inertia of the masses and their habits of submission.

Other things are necessary to bring about a revolution, and specially the Anarchist revolution. It is necessary that the people be conscious of their rights and their strength; it is necessary that they be ready to fight and ready to take the conduct of their affairs into their own hands. It must be the constant preoccupation of the revolutionists, the point towards which all their activity must aim, to bring about this state of mind among the masses. The brilliant acts of a few individuals may help in this work, but cannot replace it; and in reality, they are only useful if they are the result of a collective movement of spirit of the masses and if being accomplished under such circumstances that the masses understand them, sympathise with, and profit by them.

Woe to us, woe to our cause if we remain in inactivity, waiting from time to time for men like Caserio and Vaillant, Pallas and Berkman to sacrifice their lives for the cause and be admired for their bravery! Who expects the emancipation of mankind to come, not from the persistent and harmonious cooperation of all men of progress, but from the accidental or providential happening of some acts of heroism, is not better advised than one who expects it from the intervention of an ingenious legislator or of a victorious general.

After all, in any case, but a very limited number of individuals do really commit acts of this kind. And the others? What are we doing, we, the great majority of Anarchists, who throw no bombs and kill no tyrants? Must we content ourselves with praising the dead and wait with equanimity of conscience for others to come forward to get killed? It is important that we should agree as to the line of conduct fitted for the bulk of Anarchists: which would not prevent individuals of exceptional energy and devotion bringing to the struggle their personal audacity and sacrifice.

What have we to do in the present situation?

Before all, in my opinion, we must as much as possible resist the laws; I might almost say we must ignore them.

The degree of freedom, as well as the degree of exploitation under which we live, is not at all, or only in a small measure, dependent upon the letter of the law: it depends before all upon the resistance offered to the laws. One can be relatively free, notwithstanding the existence of draconian laws, provided custom is opposed to the government making

use of them; while, on the other side, in spite of all guarantees granted by laws, one may be at the mercy of all the violence of the police, if they feel, that they can, without being punished, make short work of the liberty of the citizens.

In Italy, the government used to dissolve, from time to time, such associations as they considered dangerous to the monarchical institutions. Protests, and cries of indignation were raised and, what is most important, the dissolved societies were forthwith reconstituted: and the government could not but let this pass, and its aims to suppress the right of association of its opponents were continually frustrated. After having several times used this method against the International Workingmen's Association (which, in Italy, was from the beginning Anarchist) and not succeeding in making it disappear, the government hit upon prosecuting its members as persons affiliated to an association of criminals. But it was impossible to prosecute all. From time to time arrests were made, sentences passed; the accused openly vindicated their ideas and the right to associate for their propagation; the sections of the International continued their work, and in the end, whilst a number of individuals suffered personally—and those who fight against the existing order of things must expect to suffer—the aims of the government were frustrated and the propaganda profited by it ever so much. But then Anarchists began to say that to form associations meant giving an opportunity for prosecution of associations of criminals to the government; they caused the dissolution of the existing association, combated all efforts to reorganize it... and, in this way, voluntarily renounced the right of association. This did not, of course, prevent a single condemnation; on the contrary, at present Anarchists are accused of forming criminal associations if perchance they meet each other in a café—they may even not know one another—simply because they are Anarchists.

The results of the new laws which are being forged against us will depend to a large degree, upon our own attitude. If we offer energetic resistance, they will at once appear to public opinion as a shameless violation of all human right and will be condemned to speedy extinction or to remain a dead letter. If, on the contrary, we accommodate ourselves to them, they will rank with contemporary political customs, which will, later on, have the disastrous result of giving fresh importance to the struggle for political liberties (of speaking, writing, meeting, combining, and associating) and be the cause more or less of losing sight of the social question.

We are to be prevented from expressing our ideas: let us do so nonetheless and that more than ever. They want to proscribe the very name of Anarchist: let us shout aloud that we are Anarchists. The right of association is to be denied us: let us associate as we can, and proclaim that we are associated, and mean to be. This kind of action, I am quite aware, is not without difficulty in the state things are in at present, and can only be pursued within the limits and in the way which common sense will dictate to everybody according to the different circumstances they live under. But let us always remember that the oppression of governments has no other limits than the resistance offered to it.

Those Socialists who imagine to escape the reaction by severing their cause from that of the Anarchists, not only give proof of a narrowness of view which is incompatible with aims of radical reorganisation of the social system, but they betray stupidly their proper interest. If we should be crushed, their turn would come very soon.

But before all we must go among the people: this is the way of salvation for our cause.

Whilst our ideas oblige us to put all our hopes in the masses, because we do not believe in the possibility of imposing the good by force and we do not want to be commanded, we have despised and neglected all manifestations of popular life; we contented ourselves with simply preaching abstract theories or with acts of individual revolt, and we have become isolated. Hence the want of success of what I will call, the first period of the Anarchist movement. After more than twenty years of propaganda and struggle, after so much devotion and so many martyrs, we are today nearly strangers to the great popular commotions which agitate Europe and America, and we find ourselves in a situation which permits the governments to foster, without plainly appearing absurd, hopes to suppress us by some police measures.

Let us reconsider our position.

Today, that which always ought to have been our duty, which was the logical outcome of our ideas, the condition which our conception of the revolution and reorganization of society imposes on us, namely, to live among the people and to win them over to our ideas by actively taking part in their struggles and sufferings, today this has become an absolute necessity imposed upon us by the situation which we have to live under. Our ordinary means of propaganda—the press, meetings, groups of more or less convinced adherents of our ideas—at any rate for a certain time, will become more and more difficult to be used. It is only in workingmen's associations, strikes, collective revolt where we can find a

waste field for exercising our influence and propagating our ideas. But if we want to succeed, let us remember that people do not become Anarchists in a single day, by hearing some violent speeches, and let us above all avoid falling into the error common to many comrades, who refuse to associate with working men who are not already perfect Anarchists, whilst it is absolutely necessary to associate with them in order to make them become Anarchists.

ANARCHY AND VIOLENCE

From their first manifestations Anarchists have been nearly unanimous as to the necessity of recourse to physical force in order to transform existing society; and while the other self-styled revolutionary parties have gone floundering into the parliamentary slough, the anarchist idea has in some sort identified itself with that of armed insurrection and violent revolution.

But, perhaps, there has been no sufficient explanation as to the kind and the degree of violence to be employed; and here as in many other questions very dissimilar ideas and sentiments lurk under our common name.

As a fact, the numerous outrages which have lately been perpetrated by Anarchists and in the name of Anarchy, have brought to the light of day profound differences which had formerly been ignored, or scarcely foreseen.

Some comrades, disgusted at the atrocity and uselessness of certain of these acts, have declared themselves opposed to all violence whatever, except in cases of personal defence against direct and immediate attack. Which, in my opinion, would mean the renunciation of all revolutionary initiative, and the reserving of our blows for the petty, and often involuntary agents of the government, while leaving in peace the organizers of, and those chiefly benefited by, government and capitalist exploitation.

Other comrades, on the contrary, carried away by the excitement of the struggle, embittered by the infamies of the ruling classes, and assuredly influenced by what has remained of the old Jacobin ideas permeating the political education of the present generation, have hastily accepted any and every kind of violence, provided only that it be committed in the name of Anarchy; and they have claimed hardly less than the right of life and death over those who are not Anarchists, or who are not Anarchists exactly according to their pattern.

And the mass of the public, ignoring these polemics, and deceived by the capitalist press, see in Anarchy nothing but bombs and daggers, and habitually regard Anarchists as wild beasts thirsting for blood and ruin.

It is therefore needful that we explain ourselves very clearly as regards this question of violence, and that each one of us should take a position accordingly: needful both in the interests of the relations of practical cooperation which may exist among all those who profess Anarchism, as well as in the interests of the general propaganda, and of our relations with the public.

In my opinion, there can be no doubt that the Anarchist Idea, denying government, is by its very nature opposed to violence, which is the essence of every authoritarian system—the mode of action of every government.

Anarchy is freedom in solidarity. It is only through the harmonizing of interests, through voluntary cooperation, through love, respect, and reciprocal tolerance, by persuasion, by example, and by the contagion of benevolence, that it can and ought to triumph.

We are Anarchists, because we believe that we can never achieve the combined well-being of all—which is the aim of all our efforts—except through a free understanding among men, and without forcibly imposing the will of any upon any others.

In other parties there are certainly men who are as sincere and as devoted to the interests of the people as the best of us may be. But that which characterizes us Anarchists and distinguishes us from all others is that we do not believe ourselves in possession of absolute truth; we do not believe ourselves either infallible, or omniscient—which is the implicit pretension of all legislators and political candidates whatever; and consequently we do not believe ourselves called for the direction and tutelage of the people.

We are, *par excellence*, the party of freedom, the party of free development, the party of social experimentation.

But against this very freedom which we claim for all, against the possibility of this experimental search after better forms of society, there are erected barriers of iron. Legions of soldiers and police are ready to massacre and imprison anyone who will not meekly submit to the laws which a handful of privileged persons have made in their own interests. And even if soldiers and police did not exist, yet so long as the economic constitution of society remains what it is, freedom would still be impossible; because, since all the means of life are under the control of a

minority, the great mass of mankind is obliged to labour for the others, and themselves wallow in poverty and degradation.

The first thing to do, therefore, is to get rid of the armed force which defends existing institutions, and by means of the expropriation of the present holders, to place the land and the other means of production at the disposal of everybody. And this cannot possibly be done—in our opinion—without the employment of physical force. Moreover, the natural development of economic antagonisms, the waking consciousness of an important fraction of the proletariat, the constantly increasing number of unemployed, the blind resistance of the ruling classes, in short contemporary evolution as a whole, is conducting us inevitably towards the outbreak of a great revolution, which will overthrow everything by its violence, and the forerunning signs of which are already visible. This revolution will happen, with us or without us; and the existence of a revolutionary party, conscious of the end to be attained, will serve to give a useful direction to the violence, and to moderate its excesses by the influence of a lofty ideal.

Thus it is that we are revolutionists. In this sense, and within these limits, violence is not in contradiction with Anarchist principles, since it is not the result of our free choice, but is imposed upon us by necessity in the defence of unrecognized human rights which are thwarted by brute force.

I repeat here: as Anarchists, we cannot and we do not desire to employ violence, except in the defence of ourselves and others against oppression. But we claim this right of defence—entire, real, and efficacious. That is, we wish to be able to go behind the material instrument which wounds us, and to attack the hand which wields the instrument, and the head which directs it. And we wish to choose our own hour and field of battle, so as to attack the enemy under conditions as favourable as possible: whether it be when he is actually provoking and attacking us, or at times when he slumbers, and relaxes his hand, counting on popular submission. For as a fact, the bourgeoisie is in a permanent state of war against the proletariat, since it never for one moment ceases to exploit the latter, and grind it down.

Unfortunately, among the acts which have been committed in the name of Anarchy, there have been some, which, though wholly lacking in Anarchist characteristics, have been wrongly confounded with other acts of obviously Anarchist inspiration.

For my part, I protest against this confusion between acts wholly different in moral value, as well as in practical effects.

Despite the excommunication and insults of certain people, I consider it an essential point to discriminate between the heroic act of a man who consciously sacrifices his life for that which he believes will do good, and the almost involuntary act of some unhappy man whom society has reduced to despair, or the savage act of a man who has been driven astray by suffering, and has caught the contagion of this civilised savagery which surrounds us all; between the intelligent act of the man who, before acting, weighs the probable good or evil that may result for his cause, and the thoughtless act of the man who strikes at random; between the generous act of one who exposes himself to danger in order to spare suffering to his fellows, and the bourgeois act of one who brings suffering upon others for his own advantage; between the anarchist act of one who desires to destroy the obstacles that stand in the way of the reconstitution of society on a basis of free agreement of all, and the authoritarian act of the man who intends to punish the crowd for its stupidity, to terrorise it (which makes it still more stupid) and to impose his own ideas upon it.

Most assuredly the bourgeoisie has no right to complain of the violence of its foes, since its whole history, as a class, is a history of bloodshed, and since the system of exploitation, which is the law of its life, daily produces hecatombs of innocents. Assuredly, too, it is not political parties who should complain of violence, for these are, one and all, red-handed with blood spilt unnecessarily, and wholly in their own interest; these, who have brought up the young generation after generation, in the cult of force triumphant; these, who when they are not actual apologists of the Inquisition, are yet enthusiastic admirers of that Red Terror, which checked the splendid revolutionary impulse at the end of the last century, and prepared the way for the Empire, for the Restoration, and the White Terror.

The fit of mildness which has come over certain of the bourgeois, now that their lives and their purses are menaced, is, in our opinion, extremely untrustworthy. But it is not for us to regulate our conduct by the amount of pleasure or vexation which it may occasion the bourgeois. We have to conduct ourselves according to our principles; and the interest of our cause, which in our view is the cause of all humanity.

Since historical antecedents have driven us to the necessity of violence, let us employ violence; but let us never forget that it is a case of hard necessity, and in its essence contrary to our aspirations. Let us not forget that all history witnesses to this distressing fact—whenever resistance to oppression has been victorious it has always engendered

new oppression, and it warns us that it must ever be so until the bloody tradition of the past be forever broken with, and violence be limited to the strictest necessity.

Violence begets violence; and authoritarianism begets oppression and slavery. The good intentions of individuals can in no way affect this sequence. The fanatic who tells himself that he will save people by force, and in his own manner, is always a sincere man, but a terrible agent of oppression and reaction. Robespierre, with horrible good faith and his conscience pure and cruel, was just as fatal for the Revolution as the personal ambition of Bonaparte. The ardent zeal of Torquemada for the salvation of souls did much more harm to freedom of thought and to the progress of the human mind than the scepticism and corruption of Leo X and his court.

Theories, declarations of principle, or magnanimous words can do nothing against the natural filiation of facts. Many martyrs have died for freedom, many battles have been fought and won in the name of the welfare of all mankind, and yet the freedom has turned out after all to mean nothing but the unlimited oppression and exploitation of the poor by the rich.

The Anarchist idea is no more secured from corruption than the Liberal idea has proved to be, yet the beginnings of corruption may be already observed if we note the contempt for the masses which is exhibited by certain Anarchists, their intolerance, and their desire to spread terror around them.

Anarchists! let us save Anarchy! Our doctrine is a doctrine of love. We cannot, and we ought not to be either avengers, nor dispensers of justice. Our task, our ambition, our ideal is to be deliverers.

SHOULD ANARCHISTS BE ADMITTED TO THE COMING INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS?

Why not? Perhaps because, as they have said, we are not Socialists. Well, if there are any persons who delight in calling themselves Anarchists, and who are not Socialists, certainly they have nothing to do with a Socialist Congress, and they ought to have no desire to take part in it. But we Anarchist-Communists or Collectivists desire the abolition of monopolies of all kinds; we demand the complete abolition of classes and all domination and exploitation of man by man; we wish that the land and all the instruments of production and distribution, as well as the wealth accumulated by the labour of past generations, should become by the expropriation of its present holders the common property of all mankind, so that all that work shall be able to enjoy the full produce of their work, either in full Communism or by each man receiving according to his efforts, according to the will and agreement of those interested. We wish to substitute for competition and war among men fraternity and solidarity in work for the good of all. And we have spread this ideal, and have struggled and suffered for its realisation for long years, and in some countries—Italy and Spain—long before the birth of parliamentary Socialism. What honest and well-informed man will affirm that we are not Socialists?

Perhaps we are not Socialists because we wish the workers should conquer their rights by their organised efforts, and not to trust to the hope which we think vain and chimerical—that they will obtain them by concessions from any Government? Or because we believe that Parliament is not only a useless weapon for the workers, but that even without the resistance of the middle classes it will never, by the law of its nature, represent the interests and the will of all, and will always remain the instrument of the domination of a class or party? Or because we believe that the new society ought to be organised by the direct agreement of all concerned, from the circumference to the centre, freely, spontaneously, under the inspiration of the sentiment of solidarity and

under the pressure of natural and social necessities, and because that if this organisation was made by means of decrees from a central body, either elected or a directorship, it will begin by being an artificial organisation, forcing and dissatisfying everybody, and it would end in the creation of a new class of professional politicians, who would seize for themselves all sorts of privileges and monopolies? It might easily be maintained with more justice that we are, if not the only Socialists, certainly the most thorough and logical, because we claim for every man, not only his entire portion of social wealth, but also his part in social power—that is to say, the real faculty of making his influence felt equally with that of others in the management of public affairs.

If we are Socialists then it is clear that a congress from which we are excluded cannot honestly call itself “The Socialist Workers’ Congress,” and that it ought to take the particular title of the party or parties admitted to its deliberations. For example, none of us would think of mixing with a congress which would be called a “Social Democratic Congress” or a “Congress of Parliamentary Socialists.”

But let us leave alone this question of nomenclature, and neglect also the discussion of the question, if the London Committee has properly interpreted the resolutions of Zurich. Let us go to the root of the matter. It is to the interest of all the enemies of our capitalist society that the workmen should be united and solid in the struggle against capitalism, and that they should be conscious that this struggle is of necessity of an economic character. It is not because we ignore the importance of political questions. We believe not only that government—the state—is an evil in itself, but that it is the armed defence of capitalism, and that the people cannot take possession of their own property without passing over the bodies of its armed police—really or figuratively, according to circumstances. Thus we ought necessarily to occupy ourselves in the political struggle against government. But it may be owing to the difference of conditions and of temperaments of the peoples of various countries, or the fact that the relations between the political constitution and the conditions of the masses are very complicated, hard to adapt and less capable of being treated in a way that seems good to everybody, that politics are in effect a great source of division, and the fact is that the conscious workers in the different countries whom it would be easy to solidly unite in the economic struggle, are by politics broken up into many fractions. Consequently an understanding between all the workers who fight for their emancipation is not possible, save on economic ground—and it is this that is of most consequence, because political

action of the proletariat, parliamentary or revolutionary, is equally futile so long as it does not form a conscious organised economic force. Every attempt to enforce a single political opinion upon the labour movement tends to its disintegration and stops the progress of its economic organisation.

The Social Democrats evidently desire to force upon the workers their special programme. It might almost be said that they want to prevent those who do not accept the decisions of their party from fighting for human emancipation! They have had in this direction more or less success—perhaps they will have more—but that can only take place at the expense of a general understanding among the workers, and certainly without desiring it, serving the interests of the middle classes. If Socialists would only remember the history of the old International, which certainly the old among them know better than it is generally related. There were plenty of insults between Marxists and Bakunists. The truth is that both sections wished to make its special programme triumphant in the International, and in the struggle between Centralism and Federalism, between Statism and Anarchism, we neglected the class struggle and economic solidarity, and the International perished through it. Today the Anarchists, though we owe to them in many countries the first Socialist trade unions, by a series of circumstances and errors which there is no need at present to examine, have not much influence—save in Spain—in the Labour movement. But this will not last long, and the Social Democrats would do wrong to reckon upon it.

Certainly the Anarchists will soon be brought by the logic of their programme and by the necessities of the struggle to put their strength and their hope in the international organisation of the masses of the workers. Already eloquent signs of this can be seen. What will happen then? Will there be again two Internationals, wasting in internal quarrels the strength which ought to be employed against the capitalist middle classes, and will they again end in killing each other?

We have no intention of demanding—far from that—that the different parties and schools should renounce their programme and their tactics. We hold to our own ideas, and we understand that the others will do the same. We only ask that division shall not be carried where it ought not to be; we demand the right for every worker to fight against capitalism hand in hand with his brothers, without distinction of political ideas; we ask that all shall fight as they think best, with those that believe as they believe, but that all shall be united in the economic struggle.

Then, if the Social Democrats persist in their attempt at military despotism, and thus sow dissension among the workers, may the latter be able to understand and bring to a glorious triumph the noble words of Marx: “Workers of the world, unite!”

ANARCHISM AND SYNDICALISM

The question of the position to be taken in relation to the Labour movement is certainly one of the greatest importance to Anarchists.

In spite of lengthy discussions and of varied experiences, a complete accord has not yet been reached—perhaps because the question does not admit of a complete and permanent solution, owing to the different conditions and changing circumstances in which we carry on the struggle.

I believe, however, that our aim may suggest to us a criterion of conduct applicable to the different contingencies.

We desire the moral and material elevation of all men; we wish to achieve a revolution which will give to all liberty and well-being, and we are convinced that this cannot be done from above by force of law and decrees, but must be done by the conscious will and the direct action of those who desire it.

We need, then, more than any the conscious and voluntary cooperation of those who, suffering the most by the present social organisation, have the greatest interest in the Revolution.

It does not suffice for us—though it is certainly useful and necessary—to elaborate an ideal as perfect as possible, and to form groups for propaganda and for revolutionary action. We must convert as far as possible the mass of the workers, because without them we can neither overthrow the existing society nor reconstitute a new one. And since to rise from the submissive state in which the great majority of the proletarians now vegetate, to a conception of Anarchism and a desire for its realisation, is required an evolution which generally is not passed through under the sole influence of the propaganda; since the lessons derived from the facts of daily life are more efficacious than all doctrinaire preaching, it is for us to take an active part in the life of the masses, and to use all the means which circumstances permit to gradually awaken the spirit of revolt, and to show by these facts the path which leads to emancipation.

Amongst these means the Labour movement stands first, and we should be wrong to neglect it. In this movement we find numbers of workers who struggle for the amelioration of their conditions. They may be mistaken as to the aim they have in view and as to the means of attaining it, and in our view they generally are. But at least they no longer resign themselves to oppression nor regard it as just—they hope and they struggle. We can more easily arouse in them that feeling of solidarity towards their exploited fellow-workers and of hatred against exploitation which must lead to a definitive struggle for the abolition of all domination of man over man. We can induce them to claim more and more, and by means more and more energetic; and so we can train ourselves and others to the struggle, profiting by victories in order to exalt the power of union and of direct action, and bring forward greater claims, and profiting also by reverses in order to learn the necessity for more powerful means and for more radical solutions.

Again—and this is not its least advantage—the Labour movement can prepare those groups of technical workers who in the revolution will take upon themselves the organisation of production and exchange for the advantage of all, beyond and against all governmental power.

But with all these advantages the Labour movement has its drawbacks and its dangers, of which we ought to take account when it is a question of the position that we as Anarchists should take in it.

Constant experience in all countries shows that Labour movements, which always commence as movements of protest and revolt, and are animated at the beginning by a broad spirit of progress and human fraternity, tend very soon to degenerate; and in proportion as they acquire strength, they become egoistic, conservative, occupied exclusively with interests immediate and restricted, and develop within themselves a bureaucracy which, as in all such cases, has no other object than to strengthen and aggrandise itself.

It is this condition of things that has induced many comrades to withdraw from the Trade Union movement, and even to combat it as something reactionary and injurious. But the result has been that our influence diminished accordingly, and the field was left free to those who wished to exploit the movement for personal or party interests that had nothing in common with the cause of the workers' emancipation. Very soon there were only organisations with a narrow spirit and

fundamentally conservative, of which the English Trade Unions are a type; or else Syndicates which, under the influence of politicians, most often “Socialist,” were only electoral machines for the elevation into power of particular individuals.

Happily, other comrades thought that the Labour movement always held in itself a sound principle, and that rather than abandon it to the politicians, it would be well to undertake the task of bringing them once more to the work of achieving their original aims, and of gaining from them all the advantages they offer to the Anarchist cause. And they have succeeded in creating, chiefly in France, a new movement which, under the name of “Revolutionary Syndicalism,” seeks to organise the workers, independently of all bourgeois and political influence, to win their emancipation by the direct action of the wage-slaves against the masters.

That is a great step in advance; but we must not exaggerate its reach and imagine, as some comrades seem to do, that we shall realise Anarchism, as a matter of course, by the progressive development of Syndicalism.

Every institution has a tendency to extend its functions, to perpetuate itself, and to become an end in itself. It is not surprising then, if those who have initiated the movement, and take the most prominent part therein, fall into the habit of regarding Syndicalism as the equivalent of Anarchism, or at least as the supreme means, that in itself replaces all other means, for its realisation. But that makes it the more necessary to avoid the danger and to define well our position.

Syndicalism, in spite of all the declarations of its most ardent supporters, contains in itself, by the very nature of its function, all the elements of degeneration which have corrupted Labour movements in the past. In effect, being a movement which proposes to defend the present interests of the workers, it must necessarily adapt itself to existing conditions, and take into consideration interests which come to the fore in society as it exists today.

Now, in so far as the interests of a section of the workers coincide with the interests of the whole class, Syndicalism is in itself a good school of solidarity; in so far as the interests of the workers of one country are the same as those of the workers in other countries, Syndicalism is a good means of furthering international brotherhood; in so far as the interests of the moment are not in contradiction with the interests of the future, Syndicalism is in itself a good preparation for the Revolution. But unfortunately this is not always so.

Harmony of interests, solidarity amongst all men, is the ideal to which we aspire, is the aim for which we struggle; but that is not the actual condition, no more between men of the same class than between those of different classes. The role today is the antagonism and the interdependence of interests at the same time: the struggle of each against all and of all against each. And there can be no other condition in a society where, in consequence of the capitalist system of production—that is to say, production founded on monopoly of the means of production and organised internationally for the profit of individual employers—there are, as a rule, more hands than work to be done, and more mouths than bread to fill them.

It is impossible to isolate oneself, whether as an individual, as a class, or as a nation, since the condition of each one depends more or less directly on the general conditions of the whole of humanity; and it is impossible to live in a true state of peace, because it is necessary to defend oneself, often even to attack, or perish.

The interest of each one is to secure employment, and as a consequence one finds himself in antagonism—i.e., in competition—with the unemployed of one's country and the immigrants from other countries. Each one desires to keep or to secure the best place against workers in the same trade; it is the interest of each one to sell dear and buy cheap, and consequently as a producer he finds himself in conflict with all consumers, and again as consumer finds himself in conflict with all producers.

Union, agreement, the solidary struggle against the exploiters—these things can only obtain today in so far as the workers, animated by the conception of a superior ideal, learn to sacrifice exclusive and personal interests to the common interest of all, the interests of the moment to the interests of the future; and this ideal of a society of solidarity, of justice, of brotherhood, can only be realised by the destruction, done in defiance of all legality, of existing institutions.

To offer to the workers this ideal; to put the broader interests of the future before those narrower and immediate; to render the adaptation to present conditions impossible; to work always for the propaganda and for action that will lead to and will accomplish the Revolution—these are the objects we as Anarchists should strive for both in and out of the Unions.

Trade Unionism cannot do this, or can do but little of it; it has to reckon with present interests, and these interests are not always, alas! those of the Revolution. It must not too far exceed legal bounds, and it

must at given moments treat with the masters and the authorities. It must concern itself with the interests of sections of the workers rather than the interests of the public, the interests of the Unions rather than the interests of the mass of the workers and the unemployed. If it does not do this, it has no specific reason for existence; it would then only include the Anarchists, or at most the Socialists, and would so lose its principal utility, which is to educate and habituate to the struggle the masses that lag behind.

Besides, since the Unions must remain open to all those who desire to win from the masters better conditions of life, whatever their opinions may be on the general constitution of society, they are naturally led to moderate their aspirations, first so that they should not frighten away those they wish to have with them, and next because, in proportion as numbers increase, those with ideas who have initiated the movement remain buried in a majority that is only occupied with the petty interests of the moment.

Thus one can see developing in all Unions, that have reached a certain position of influence, a tendency to assure, in accord with rather than against the masters, a privileged situation for themselves, and so create difficulties of entrance for new members, and for the admission of apprentices in the factories; a tendency to amass large funds that afterwards they are afraid of compromising; to seek the favour of public powers; to be absorbed, above all, in cooperation and mutual benefit schemes; and to become at last conservative elements in society.

After having stated this, it seems clear to me that the Syndicalist movement cannot replace the Anarchist movement, and that it can serve as a means of education and of revolutionary preparation only if it is acted on by the Anarchistic impulse, action, and criticism.

Anarchists, then, ought to abstain from identifying themselves with the Syndicalist movement, and to consider as an aim that which is but one of the means of propaganda and of action that they can utilise. They should remain in the Syndicates as elements giving an onward impulse, and strive to make of them as much as possible instruments of combat in view of the Social Revolution. They should work to develop in the Syndicates all that which can augment its educative influence and its combativeness—the propaganda of ideas, the forcible strike, the spirit of proselytism, the distrust and hatred of the authorities and of the politicians, the practice of solidarity towards individuals and groups in conflict with the masters. They should combat all that which tends to render them egoistic, pacific, conservative—professional pride and the

narrow spirit of the corporate body, heavy contributions and the accumulation of invested capital, the service of benefits and of assurance, confidence in the good offices of the State, good relationships with masters, the appointment of bureaucratic officials, paid and permanent.

On these conditions the participation of Anarchists in the Labour movement will have good results, but only on these conditions.

These tactics will sometimes appear to be, and even may really be, hurtful to the immediate interests of some groups; but that does not matter when it is a question of the Anarchist cause—that is to say, of the general and permanent interests of humanity. We certainly wish, while waiting for the Revolution, to wrest from Governments and from employers as much liberty and well-being as possible; but we would not compromise the future for some momentary advantages, which besides are often illusory or gained at the expense of other workers.

Let us beware of ourselves. The error of having abandoned the Labour movement has done an immense injury to Anarchism, but at least it leaves unaltered the distinctive character.

The error of confounding the Anarchist movement with Trade Unionism would be still more grave. That will happen to us which happened to the Social Democrats as soon as they went into the Parliamentary struggle. They gained in numerical force, but by becoming each day less Socialistic. We also would become more numerous, but we should cease to be Anarchist.

ANARCHISTS AND THE SITUATION

The First of May having become a sort of annual review of the Labour forces, it is well on such an occasion for Anarchists to ask themselves what their action should be in view of the constantly changing position of the movement.

This year also the First of May has passed very quietly, without anything exciting (in a revolutionary sense) happening. And yet never before has the situation been so full of promise and encouragement as in this year.

It is especially France which, retaining the vantage conquered during the revolutions of the past century, gives a revolutionary character to the situation.

The workers show clearly that they have at length lost all confidence in Governmental parties, even when these call themselves Socialist. They begin to understand that for emancipation they can count only on themselves, on direct action against Capitalism and against the State. Labour resistance becomes daily more intense, solidarity develops, strikes follow each other with increasing energy and combativeness. Already for the politicians—so-called Labour or Socialist, who go forth to preach peace and arbitration, to promise beneficent laws, profiting by the occasion to climb into some place as Deputy or Municipal Councillor—already for such there is no longer room on the field of strikes. Now, if “Socialists” wish to be elected, they must seek the support of some section of the bourgeoisie.

Conscious workers act—and already we begin to see blazing factories and fleeing masters. These are the first scenes of the great Revolution which will put towns and countryside in flames and produce a radical transformation in every social relation.

The peasants also emerge from their passivity and begin to throw off that prejudice against town-workers which has for so long been a power for reaction.

Again, the State employees who until recently boasted of their position as public functionaries, and held themselves aloof from the industrial proletariat—these commence to understand their true interests and to test their capacity for paralysing the State by disorganising its services. The postmen's strike and the meeting in the Paris Hippodrome, where thousands of State employees fraternised with workmen in private industries in the name of the Social Revolution to be accomplished, marked a decisive step forward along the road to emancipation. And whatever may be the immediate result (still uncertain at the moment I am writing) of the second postmen's strike, it is indisputable henceforth that the revolt has penetrated amongst the employees of the State, and is bound to grow.

On the other hand, the patriotic prejudice has been breached with success, and anti-militarism filtering through the ranks of the Army saps at the base a society which only maintains itself by the brutal strength of soldiers and police.

And as in France, so more or less everywhere the spirit of revolt grows; direct action takes the place of a blind confidence in the elected and the protection of the law.

The Revolution is advancing.

Such are the Anarchistic ideas which force themselves even upon those who resist them. Anarchists, by their position as vanguard and their high ideals, have ever been unable to be more than a numerically small minority; they have been decried, calumniated, and persecuted in every way—and yet the new outlook of the whole contemporaneous social movement is due to the infiltration of their ideas.

Revolutionary Trade Unionism (Syndicalism), which sums up the new tendencies, is certainly not Anarchism; but the spirit that animates it is Anarchist, and all that it has of good is Anarchist.

But this is matter of history. What is important at present is to see what should now be our actual conduct when rendering to the revolutionary cause the services we are prepared to render.

It is evident that the dominant class will not permit the revolutionary tide to submerge them without making every possible effort to arrest it.

The methods which the Governments and the bourgeoisie can employ in order to check the revolutionary movement may be summed up under four heads—(1) persecutions, to smother the movement in the germ; (2)

war, to evade the storm by provoking an outbreak of the atavistic savageness which still manifests itself in race and national hatreds; (3) corruption, in order to turn the movement aside from its emancipatory aims; (4) ferocious repression, the bloodshed which drains the best forces of a people and postpones the struggle for another fifty years.

The ordinary persecutions of police and magistracy have failed; and although Governments, owing to the anti-freedom instinct which forms the basis of their nature, do not renounce these, it is evident that they now only serve to render the conflict more bitter and violent.

War has become a little too dangerous, and could well precipitate rather than prevent the Revolution. War will not take place. In any case, we should simply have to intensify our antipatriotic and anti-militarist propaganda to render war less probable and ever more dangerous to the Government which had recourse to it.

There remain, therefore, two principal dangers for us to guard against—corruption and repression.

Corruption has already completely succeeded with the Parliamentary Socialists, in such wise that in every country where Socialism was somewhat of a real menace to the existing system there has arisen an aristocracy formed of Socialist Deputies or would-be Deputies, which has become one of the best forces at the disposition of the bourgeoisie to divert or strangle the popular movement.

The same course will be tried with Revolutionary Trade Unionism.

Revolutionary Trade Unionism is not safe from corruption and degeneration. Apart from the question of individuals, who are always subject to mistakes and weaknesses, Trade Unionism by its very nature is a movement which cannot remain stationary. It must advance, develop; and its development either will approach more and more to Anarchism and make the Revolution, or modify itself, assume a bureaucratic character, adapt itself to the claims of capitalism, and become a factor in social conservation. To endeavour to lead Trade Unionism in the latter direction is at present the effort of every intelligent Conservative.

Old-age pensions, arbitration, the official recognition of Trade Union delegates, collective contracts, profit-sharing, cooperative societies, the recognised right of Trade Unions to hold property and to appear in a law court, are some of the methods employed by the bourgeoisie to arrest revolutionary impulse, and to stifle the growing desire for full emancipation and liberty by the ephemeral and illusory concession of some immediate ameliorations, and especially by the formation of a self-

satisfied bureaucracy which will absorb the most intelligent and active elements among the proletariat.

It is, in the first place, against this danger that we must direct our forces. We must take a more and more active part in the Trade Union movement, strenuously oppose the formation in its midst of a bureaucracy of paid and permanent officials, propagate our tactics, fight against every idea of conciliation and compromise with the enemy, as well as against every tendency towards the pride and selfishness of individual Trade Unions. We must especially prevent the “workers secretaries” taking the place of Members of Parliament, and see that Direct Action does not in its turn become a lie like the so-called sovereignty of the people.

In this way we can enable Syndicalism to retain its revolutionary character and become an increasingly powerful instrument of emancipation.

But then we will be faced with a final crisis. Of itself, and driven by the alarmed bourgeoisie, the Government will wish to put an end to the movement. Repression will commence seriously, and the Army, not as yet sufficiently permeated with the anti-militarist propaganda to be inoffensive, will be called upon to play its murderous role.

Will the revolutionists be in a position to successfully face military repression? This is the question upon which all depends: according to which way it is answered, it will be triumphant revolution and the inauguration of a new civilisation or rampant reaction for twenty years and more.

We must, then, prepare ourselves for a struggle in arms.

How is it to be done?

It cannot be done in Trade Unions, nor in public groups open more or less to everybody. Neither can it be discussed in the newspapers. And yet it must be done.

Let Anarchists, and all who foresee the coming Revolution and would have it triumphant, ponder over the matter.

The above, having been written for Englishmen, may strike some as fantastic. England has not reached this point yet; but she will reach it, and sooner than is expected.

Today, even if it would, a civilised country cannot remain separated from other civilised countries; and the French and Continental movement

will not be without influence on the proletariat of this side of the Channel.

Besides, English workers have the solid qualities of perseverance, the spirit of organisation, and personal independence, which will soon enable them to regain the time lost, once they escape from the noxious influence of politicians.

CAPITALISTS AND THIEVES

*Regarding the tragedies in Houndsditch
and Sidney Street*

In a back alley of the City, an attempt was made to rob a jewelry shop, and the thieves, surprised by the police, escaped by clearing themselves a passage with revolver shots. Later, two of the thieves, discovered in a house in the East End, defended themselves again with revolvers and died in battle.

At base, there is nothing extraordinary about this in the present society, unless it is the exceptional energy with which the thieves defended themselves.

But these thieves were Russians, perhaps Russian refugees, and maybe they also went to an Anarchist club on days of public meetings, when they were open to everybody. And naturally the capitalist Press avails itself to declare war upon the Anarchists. If one were to believe the bourgeois papers one would think that anarchy, that dream of justice and love amongst men, is nothing but theft and assassination; and with these lies and calumnies they certainly succeed in turning away from us many people who would be with us if they only knew what we want.

Thus it will not be useless to state once more the position of Anarchists respecting the theory and practice of theft.

One of the fundamental points of Anarchism is the abolition of the monopoly of the land, raw material, and the instruments of production, and thereby the abolition of the exploitation of other people's labour by those who hold the means of production. Any appropriation of other people's labour, everything that serves to enable a man to live without giving to society his quota of production is, from the Anarchist and Socialist point of view, a theft.

The landlords, the capitalists have stolen from the people, by violence or by fraud, the land and all the means of production, and in consequence of this initial theft they are enabled, day by day, to take away from the workers the products of labour. But they were happy thieves, for they became strong; they made laws in order that they might justify their situation, and they have organised a whole system of repression to defend themselves against the claims of the workers as well as against those who would like to replace them by doing as they did themselves. And today their theft is called property, commerce, industry, etc., the name of “thief” being reserved, in common language, for those who would like to follow the example of the capitalists, but, because they arrived too late and in adverse circumstances, cannot do it without putting themselves in conflict with the law.

However, the difference of names currently used does not suffice to hide the moral and social character of the two situations. The capitalist is a thief who has succeeded either by his merits or by those of his ancestors; the thief is an aspiring capitalist who is but waiting to succeed to become a capitalist, in fact, and live without working on the product of his theft, that is to say, on other people’s labour.

As enemies of the capitalists, we cannot sympathise for the thief who aspires at becoming a capitalist, and being in favour of their expropriation by the people for the profit of all, we cannot, as Anarchists, have anything in common with an operation whose object is to get some wealth to pass from the hands of one owner into those of another.

Naturally, I mean to speak of the professional thief, of the one who does not want to work and seeks to means to live as a parasite on the labour of others. It is quite another thing when it is a question of a man to whom society has denied the means of labouring, who steals in order not to die of hunger or let his children starve. In that case the theft (if one can call it that) is a revolt against social injustice, and can become the most sacred of rights and even the most imperious of duties. But the capitalist press avoids speaking of these cases, because then it would have to put on trial the social order that it is its mission to defend!

Certainly the professional thief is also, in large part, a victim of the social environment. The example that comes from above, the education received and the disgusting conditions in which they are often forced to work easily explain how men, who are not morally superior to their contemporaries, given the alternative of being exploited or exploiters, choose to be exploiters and try to become such by the means within their

reach. But these extenuating circumstances can also apply to capitalists and the substantial identity of the professions remains that much better demonstrated.

Thus Anarchist ideas cannot drive people to become thieves any more than to become capitalists. On the contrary, by giving to the discontented an ideal of superior life, and a hope of collective emancipation, they turn away, as far as possible in the present midst, from all these legal or illegal doings which are but an adaptation to the capitalist system and tend towards perpetuating it.

Notwithstanding all this, the social midst being so strong and personal temperaments so different, there might possibly be amongst the Anarchists a few who go in for thieving as there are some who go in for commerce or industry; but in that case both are acting, not because of their Anarchist ideas, but in spite of these.

THE GENERAL STRIKE AND THE INSURRECTION IN ITALY

The events which have taken place recently in Italy are of the greatest importance, not so much in themselves, but as an indication of the disposition of the Italian people and of what we can anticipate in the near future.

The immediate cause of the outbreak was a massacre of unarmed demonstrators by the gendarmes of the town of Ancona.

For over a year the revolutionary and Labour organisations of all political shades had been carrying on an agitation in favour of several victims of military despotism and for the abolition of *disciplinary battalions*, to which are sent all young soldiers known to hold anti-monarchical and anti-bourgeois opinions. The treatment is barbarous, and the unhappy young men are submitted to all kinds of moral and physical tortures.

As the meetings and demonstrations were held all over Italy, but on different dates, they seemed to make but little impression on the Government; and the Trades Council of Ancona proposed, therefore, to organise manifestations in the whole country on the same day, that day to be the date of the official celebration of the establishment of Italian unity and the Monarchy. As on these occasions great military reviews are always held, the comrades thought that the Government would be obliged to postpone the review in order to hold the troops ready to preserve "order," and the attention of the whole public would be drawn to the object of the demonstration.

The idea put forward by the Ancona comrades was everywhere received with enthusiasm by all the opposition parties. The Minister ordered the police to prevent any public demonstrations. Of course, that did not deter us. In fact, we had counted on the police prohibition to give more publicity to the demonstration and to instigate the masses to resistance.

To stop the people who were leaving a meeting-hall from going to the central square to demonstrate, the gendarmes fired on the unarmed crowd, killing three workers, and wounding twenty more. After this massacre, the gendarmes, frightened, rushed to the barracks for shelter, and the people were left masters of the town. Without anybody even mentioning the word, a general strike was soon complete, and the workers collected at the Trades Council to hold a meeting.

The Government tried to prevent the events of Ancona from being telegraphed to other parts of the country; but nevertheless by-and-by the news became known, and strikes broke out in all the towns of Italy. The two Federal Labour organisations of Italy, the General Confederation of Labour, which is reformist, and the Labour Union, with revolutionary tendencies, proclaimed a general strike, and the same was done by the Railwaymen's Union.

These strikes and demonstrations in several towns provoked new conflicts with the police, and new massacres. At once, without any common understanding, one place ignorant of what the other was doing, as communications were broken off, the movement assumed everywhere an insurrectional character, and in many places the Republic, which meant for the people the autonomous Commune, was proclaimed.

All was going splendidly; the movement was developing, and the railway strike, spreading on all lines, paralysed the Government; the workers were beginning to take measures of practical Communism in view of reorganising social life on a new basis; when suddenly the Confederation of Labour, by an act which has been qualified as treachery, ordered the strike off, thereby throwing the workers into confusion and discouraging them.

The Government was not slow to profit by this condition, and began to restore "order."

If it had not been for the betrayal of the Confederation, though we could not yet have made the revolution for lack of necessary preparation and understanding, the movement would certainly have assumed larger proportions and a much greater importance.

In every way these events have proved that the mass of the people hate the present order; that the workers are disposed to make use of all opportunities to overthrow the Government; and that when the fight is directed against the common enemy—that is to say, the Government and the bourgeoisie—all are brothers, though the names of Socialist, Anarchist, Syndicalist, or Republican may seem to divide them.

Now it is up to revolutionaries to profit by these good dispositions.

ANARCHISTS HAVE FORGOTTEN THEIR PRINCIPLES

At the risk of passing as a simpleton, I confess that I would never have believed it possible that Socialists—even Social Democrats—would applaud and voluntarily take part, either on the side of the Germans or on the Allies, in a war like the one that is at present devastating Europe. But what is there to say when the same is done by Anarchists—not numerous, it is true, but having amongst them comrades whom we love and respect most?

It is said that the present situation shows the bankruptcy of “our formulas”—i.e., of our principles—and that it will be necessary to revise them.

Generally speaking, every formula must be revised whenever it shows itself insufficient when coming into contact with fact; but it is not the case today, when the bankruptcy is not derived from the shortcoming of our formulas, but from the fact that these have been forgotten and betrayed.

Let us return to our principles.

I am not a “pacifist.” I fight, as we all do, for the triumph of peace and of fraternity amongst all human beings; but I know that a desire not to fight can only be fulfilled when neither side wants to, and that so long as men will be found who want to violate the liberties of others, it is incumbent on these others to defend themselves if they do not wish to be eternally beaten; and I also know that to attack is often the best, or the only, effective means of defending oneself. Besides, I think that the oppressed are always in a state of legitimate self-defense, and have always the right to attack the oppressors. I admit, therefore, that there are wars that are necessary, holy wars: and these are wars of liberation, such as are generally “civil wars”—i.e., revolutions.

But what has the present war in common with human emancipation, which is our cause?

Today we hear Socialists peak, just like any bourgeois, of “France,” or “Germany,” and of other political and national agglomerations—results

of historical struggles—as of homogenous ethnographic units, each having its proper interests, aspirations, and mission, in opposition to the interests, aspirations and a mission of rival units. This may be true relatively, so long as the oppressed, and chiefly the workers, have no self-consciousness, fail to recognize the injustice of their oppressors. There is, then, the dominating class only that counts; and this class, owing to its desire to conserve and to enlarge its power, even its prejudices and its own ideas, may find it convenient to excite racial ambitions and hatred, and send its nation, its flock, against “foreign” countries, with a view to releasing them from their present oppressors, and submitting them to its own political and economical domination.

But the mission of those who, like us, wish the end of all oppression and of all exploitation of man by man, is to awaken a consciousness of the antagonism of interests between dominators and dominated, between exploiters and workers, and to develop the class struggle inside each country, and the solidarity among all workers across the frontiers, as against any prejudice and any passion of either race or nationality.

And this we have always done. We have always preached that the workers of all countries are brothers, and that the enemy—the “foreigner”—is the exploiter, whether born near us or in a far-off country, whether speaking the same language or any other. We have always chosen our friends, our companions-in-arms, as well as our enemies, because of the ideas they profess and of the position they occupy in the social struggle, and never for reasons of race or nationality. We have always fought against patriotism, which is a survival of the past, and serves well the interest of the oppressors; and we were proud of being internationalists, not only in words, but by the deep feelings of our souls.

And now that the most atrocious consequences of capitalist and State domination should indicate, even to the blind, that we were in the right, most of the Socialists and many Anarchists in the belligerent countries associate themselves with the Governments and the bourgeoisie of their respective countries, forgetting Socialism, the class struggle, international fraternity, and the rest.

What a downfall!

It is possible that the present events may have shown that national feelings are more alive, while feelings of international brotherhood are less rooted, than we thought; but this should be one more reason for intensifying, not abandoning, our antipatriotic propaganda. These events also show that in France, for example, religious sentiment is stronger,

and the priests have a greater influence than we imagined. Is this a reason for our conversion to Roman Catholicism?

I understand that circumstances may arise owing to which the help of all is necessary for the general well-being: such as an epidemic, an earthquake, an invasion of barbarians, who kill and destroy all that comes under their hands. In such a case the class struggle, the differences of social standing must be forgotten, and common cause must be made against the common danger; but on the condition that these differences are forgotten on both sides. If anyone is in prison during an earthquake, and there is a danger of his being crushed to death, it is our duty to save everybody, even the gaolers—on condition that the gaolers begin by opening the prison doors. But if the gaolers take all precautions for the safe custody of the prisoners during and after the catastrophe, it is then the duty of the prisoners towards themselves as well as towards their comrades in captivity to leave the gaolers to their troubles, and profit by the occasion to save themselves.

If, when foreign soldiers invade the *sacred soil of the Fatherland*, the privileged class were to renounce their privileges, and would act so that the “Fatherland” really became the common property of all the inhabitants, it would then be right that all should fight against the invaders. But if kings wish to remain kings, and the landlords wish to take care of *their* lands and of *their* houses, and the merchants wish to take care of *their* goods, and even sell them at a higher price, then the workers, the Socialists and Anarchists, should leave them to their own devices, while being themselves on the lookout for an opportunity to get rid of the oppressors inside the country, as well as of those coming from outside.

In all circumstances, it is the duty of the Socialists, and especially of the Anarchists, to do everything that can weaken the State and the capitalist class, and to take as the only guide to their conduct the interest of Socialism; or, if they are materially powerless to act efficaciously for their own cause, at least to refuse any voluntary help to the cause of the enemy, and stand aside to save at least their principles—which means to save the future.

All I have just said is theory, and perhaps it is accepted, in theory, by most of those who, in practice, do just the reverse. How, then, could it be

applied to the present situation? What should we do, what should we wish, in the interests of our cause?

It is said, on this side of the Rhine, that the victory of the Allies would be the end of militarism, the triumph of civilization, international justice, etc. The same is said on the other side of the frontier about a German victory.

Personally, judging at their true value the “mad dog” of Berlin and the “old hangman” of Vienna, I have no greater confidence in the bloody Tsar, nor in the English diplomatists who oppress India, who betrayed Persia, who crushed the Boer Republics; nor in the French bourgeoisie, who massacred the natives of Morocco; nor in those of Belgium, who have allowed the Congo atrocities and have largely profited by them—and I only recall some of their misdeeds, taken at random, not to mention what all Governments and all capitalist classes do against the workers and the rebels in their own countries.

In my opinion, the victory of Germany would certainly mean the triumph of militarism and of reaction; but the triumph of the Allies would mean a Russo-English (i.e., a knouto-capitalist) domination in Europe and in Asia, conscription and the development of the militarist spirit in England, and a Clerical and perhaps Monarchist reaction in France.

Besides, in my opinion, it is most probable that there will be no definite victory on either side. After a long war, an enormous loss of life and wealth, both sides being exhausted, some kind of peace will be patched up, leaving all questions open, thus preparing for a new war more murderous than the present.

The only hope is revolution; and as I think that it is from vanquished Germany that in all probability, owing to the present state of things, the revolution would break out, it is for this reason—and for this reason only—that I wish the defeat of Germany.

I may, of course, be mistaken in appreciating the true position. But what seems to be elementary and fundamental for all Socialists (Anarchists, or others) is that it is necessary to keep outside every kind of compromise with the Governments and the governing classes, so as to be able to profit by any opportunity that may present itself, and, in any case, to be able to restart and continue our revolutionary preparations and propaganda.

ANTI-MILITARISM

WAS IT PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD?

(To the Editor of Freedom.)

DEAR COMRADE—Allow me to say a few words on Kropotkin's article on Anti-militarism, published in your last issue. In my opinion, anti-militarism is the doctrine which affirms that military service is an abominable and murderous trade, and that a man ought never to consent to take up arms at the command of the masters, and never fight except for the Social Revolution.

Is this to misunderstand anti-militarism?

Kropotkin seems to have forgotten the antagonism of the classes, the necessity of economic emancipation, and all the Anarchist teachings; and says that an anti-militarist ought always to be ready, in case a war breaks out, to take arms in support of the "country that will be invaded"; which considering the impossibility, at least for the ordinary workman, of verifying in time who is the real aggressor, practically means that Kropotkin's "anti-militarist" ought always to obey the orders of his government. What remains after that of anti-militarism, and, indeed, of Anarchism too?

As a matter of fact, Kropotkin renounces anti-militarism because he thinks that the national questions must be solved before the social question. For us, national rivalries and hatreds are among the best means the masters have for perpetuating the slavery of the workers, and we must oppose them with all our strength. And so to the right of the small nationalities to preserve, if you like, their language and their customs, that is simply a question of liberty, and will have a real and final solution only when, the States being destroyed, every human group, nay, every individual, will have the right to associate with, and separate from, every other group.

It is very painful for me to oppose a beloved friend like Kropotkin, who has done so much for the cause of Anarchism. But for the very

reason that Kropotkin is so much esteemed and loved by us all, it is necessary to make known that we do not follow him in his utterances on the war.

I know that this attitude of Kropotkin is not quite new, and that for more than ten years he has been preaching against the “German danger”; and I confess that we were in the wrong in not giving importance to his Franco-Russian patriotism, and in not foreseeing where his anti-German prejudices would land him. It was because we understood that he meant to invite the French workers to answer a possible German invasion by making a Social Revolution—that is, by taking possession of the French soil, and trying to induce the German workers to fraternise with them in the struggle against French and German oppressors. Certainly we should never have dreamt that Kropotkin could invite the workers to make common cause with Governments and masters.

I hope he will see his error, and be again on the side of the workers against all the Governments and all the bourgeois: German, English, French, Russian, Belgian, etc.

Yours fraternally,
E. MALATESTA

ITALY ALSO!

We had hoped that the Italian workers would be able to resist the governing classes and affirm to the last their brotherhood with the workers of all countries, and their resolution to persevere in the struggle against the exploiters and oppressors, for the real emancipation of mankind. The fact that the great majority of Socialists and Syndicalists, and all the Anarchists (except a very few) were solid against war, added to the evident general disposition of the masses, gave us this hope that Italy would escape the massacre and keep all her forces for the works of peace and civilization.

But, alas! no. Italy, too, has been dragged into the slaughter. The same Italians who were oppressed and famished in the country of their birth, and were compelled very often to go and earn their bread in far-off lands; the same Italians who tomorrow will be famished and compelled to emigrate again, are now killing and being killed in defence of the interests and ambitions of those who deny them the right to work and live a decent Life.

It is astonishing and humiliating to see how easily the masses can be deceived by the coarsest lies!

All these dreary months the Italian capitalists have been enriching themselves by selling at enhanced prices to Germany and Austria an immense quantity of things useful for the war. The Italian Government has been trying to sell to the Central Empires Italian neutrality in exchange for more additions to the dominions of the Savoyan King. And now, because they could not obtain all they wanted, and have found it more advantageous to cast in their lot with the Allies, they speak, with brazen face, as if they were disinterested knights-errant, of the defence of civilization and the vindication of "poor Belgium." Yet their mask is very transparent. They say that they go to war for the liberation of the peoples from foreign domination, and they try to inflame the young men with the glories of the Italian struggle against the Austrian tyranny; but they try to crush into submission the Arabs of Tripoli, they want to keep

the Greek islands “provisionally” occupied at the time of the war with Turkey, they ask for territories and privileges in Asia Minor, they occupy a part of Albania, which certainly is not Italian in any sense of the word, and pretend to annex Dalmatia, where the Italians are only a small percentage of the population. Really, they pretend to have a claim on every country which they have, or think they have, the power to take and keep. One place ought to belong to Italy because it was once conquered by the Romans of yore, another because there was a Venetian countinghouse there, another because it is inhabited by many Italian immigrants, another because it is necessary for military security; and every other place in the world because it may be useful to the development of Italian commerce.

But there is nothing astonishing in this: Governments and the dominating classes in every country have always invoked international justice when they were weak; but as soon as they are, or think they are, strong enough, they begin to dream of universal domination. They protest now against the domineering spirit of the Germans, but as a matter of fact they are all “Germans.”

What seems less natural, and is more disheartening, in Italy is the conduct of the Republicans. They affected to put above all the question of the form of government; for them the first, the all-important question was the abolition of the Monarchy. But it has been sufficient to appeal to their national passions, and all their desire of liberty, all their hatred against the House of Savoy, has disappeared. They have done their utmost to resuscitate in the masses the old ideal of patriotism, which was developed in the time when national independence seemed to be the means for attaining emancipation from poverty and bondage, and which had decayed in consequence of the experience that a national government is as bad as a foreign one. They have raised the cry “War or Revolution” and when the King, perhaps to save himself from the revolution, has declared war, they have put themselves in the mass at the service of the King. What, then, about the Republic? Many of them still say that they want war in order to facilitate the revolution; but what nonsense! If Italy is victorious, certainly it will be to the exclusive advantage of the Monarchy; and, on the other hand, we cannot conceive that the Republicans would be capable of the infamy of pushing the people into war with the secret hope that they would be beaten and their country invaded and devastated.

We do not know, for want of reliable information, the present situation in Italy, and what are the true factors that have determined so quick a

change in her attitude. But one redeeming feature is revealed by the news received in London.

The Italian Government has felt that it was not safe to make war without suppressing every liberty, and putting in prison a great number of Anarchists.

This means that the Anarchists remain loyal to their flag to the last, and, what is more important, that the Government fears their influence on the masses. This gives us the assurance that as soon as the war fever has calmed down we will be able to begin again our own war—the war for human liberty, equality, and brotherhood—and in better conditions than before, because the people will have had another experience, and what a terrible one! That from the Government can be expected only injustice, misery, and oppression, and then, as a change, slaughterings on a colossal scale; that patriotism, nationalism, racial rivalry are only means for enslaving the workers, and that their salvation lies in the abolition of Government and Capitalism.

PRO-GOVERNMENT ANARCHISTS

A manifesto has just appeared, signed by Kropotkin, Grave, Malato, and a dozen other old comrades, in which, echoing the supporters of the Entente Governments who are demanding a fight to a finish and the crushing of Germany, they take their stand against any idea of “premature peace.”

The capitalist Press publishes, with natural satisfaction, extracts from the manifesto, and announces it as the work of “leaders of the International Anarchist Movement.”

Anarchists, almost all of whom have remained faithful to their convictions, owe it to themselves to protest against this attempt to implicate Anarchism in the continuance of a ferocious slaughter that has never held promise of any benefit to the cause of Justice and Liberty, and which now shows itself to be absolutely barren and resultless even from the standpoint of the rulers on either side.

The good faith and good intentions of those who have signed the manifesto are beyond all question. But, however painful it may be to disagree with old friends who have rendered so many services to that which in the past was our common cause, one cannot—having regard to sincerity, and in the interest of our movement for emancipation—fail to dissociate oneself from comrades who consider themselves able to reconcile Anarchist ideas and cooperation with the Governments and capitalist classes of certain countries in their strife against the capitalists and Governments of certain other countries.

During the present war we have seen Republicans placing themselves at the service of kings, Socialists making common the cause with the ruling class, Labourists serving the interests of capitalists; but in reality all these people are, in varying degrees, Conservatives—believers in the mission of the State, and their hesitation can be understood when the only remedy lay in the destruction of every Governmental chain and the unloosing of the Social Revolution. But such hesitation is incomprehensible in the case of Anarchists.

We hold that the State is incapable of good. In the field of international as well as of individual relations it can only combat aggression by making itself the aggressor; it can only hinder crime by organising and committing still greater crime.

Even on the supposition—which is far from being the truth—that Germany alone was responsible for the present war, it is proved that, as long as governmental methods are adhered to, Germany can only be resisted by suppressing all liberty and reviving the power of all the forces of reaction. Except the popular Revolution, there is no other way of resisting the menace of a disciplined Army but to try and have a stronger and more disciplined Army; so that the sternest anti-militarists, if they are not Anarchists, and if they are afraid of the destruction of the State, are inevitably led to become ardent militarists.

In fact, in the problematical hope of crushing Prussian Militarism, they have renounced all the spirit and all the traditions of Liberty; they have Prussianised England and France; they have submitted themselves to Tsarism; they have restored the prestige of the tottering throne of Italy.

Can Anarchists accept this state of things for a single moment without renouncing all right to call themselves Anarchists? To me, even foreign domination suffered by force and leading to revolt, is preferable to domestic oppression meekly, almost gratefully, accepted, in the belief that by this means we are preserved from a greater evil.

It is useless to say that this is a question of an exceptional time, and that after having contributed to the victory of the Entente in “this war,” we shall return, each into his own camp, to the struggle for his own ideal.

If it is necessary today to work in harmony with the Government and the capitalist to defend ourselves against “the German menace,” it will be necessary afterwards, as well as during the war.

However great may be the defeat of the German Army—if it is true that it will be defeated—it will never be possible to prevent the German patriots thinking of, and preparing for, revenge; and the patriots of the other countries, very reasonably from their own point of view, will want to hold themselves in readiness so that they may not again be taken unaware. This means that Prussian Militarism will become a permanent and regular institution in all countries.

What will then be said by the self-styled Anarchists who today desire the victory of one of the warring alliances? Will they go on calling themselves anti-militarists and preaching disarmament, refusal to do military service, and sabotage against National Defense, only to become,

at the first threat of war, recruiting-sergeants for those Governments that they have attempted to disarm and paralyse?

It will be said that these things will come to an end when the German people have rid themselves of their tyrants and ceased to be a menace to Europe by destroying militarism in their own country. But, if that is the case, the Germans who think, and rightfully so, that English and French domination (to say nothing of Tsarist Russia) would be so more delightful to the Germans than German domination to the French and English, will desire first to wait for the Russians and the others to destroy their own militarism, and will meanwhile continue to increase their own country's Army.

And then, how long will the Revolution be delayed? How long Anarchy? Must we always wait for the others to begin?

The line of conduct for Anarchists is clearly marked out by the very logic of their aspirations.

The war ought to have been prevented by bringing about the Revolution, or at least by making the Government afraid of the Revolution. Either the strength or the skill necessary for this has been lacking.

Peace ought to be imposed by bringing about the Revolution, or at least by threatening to do so. To the present time, the strength or the skill is wanting.

Well! There is only one remedy: to do better in future. More than ever we must avoid compromise; deepen the chasm between capitalists and wage slaves, between rulers and ruled; preach expropriation of private property and the destruction of States as the only means of guaranteeing fraternity between the peoples and Justice and Liberty for all; and we must prepare to accomplish these things.

Meanwhile it seems to me that it is criminal to do anything that tends to prolong the war, that slaughters men, destroys wealth, and hinders all resumption of the struggle for emancipation. It appears to me that preaching "war to the end" is really playing the game of the German rulers, who are deceiving their subjects and inflaming their ardor for fighting by persuading them that their opponents desire to crush and enslave the German people.

Today, as ever, let this be our slogan: Down with Capitalists and Governments, all Capitalists and Governments!

Long live the peoples, all the peoples!

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND ANARCHY

CARISSIMO FABBRI:

Upon the question that so occupies your mind, that of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, it seems to me that we are fundamentally in accord.

Upon this question it seems to me that there can be no doubt among anarchists, and in fact there was none prior to the Bolshevik revolution. Anarchy signifies “non-government,” and therefore for a greater reason “non-dictatorship,” which is an absolute government without control and without constitutional limitations.

But when the Bolshevik revolution broke several of our friends confused that which was the revolution against the preexistent government and that which was the new government came to superimpose itself upon the revolution so as to split it and direct it to the particular ends of a party ... and little by little they themselves became Bolsheviks.

Now, the Bolsheviks are simply Marxists, having a difference with their masters and models—the Guesdes, the Plekanoffs, the Hyndmans, the Scheidemanns, the Noskes, who finished as you know. We respect their sincerity, we admire their energy, but as we have not been in accord with them on the terrene of theory, we cannot affiliate with them when from theory they pass to action.

But perhaps the truth is simply this, that our Bolshevized friends intend with the expression dictatorship of the proletariat merely the revolutionary act of the workers in taking possession of the land and of the instruments of labor and trying to constitute a society for organizing a mode of life in which there would be no place for a class that exploited and oppressed the producers.

Understood so the dictatorship of the proletariat would be the effective power of all the workers intent on breaking down capitalist society, and which would become “*l’anarchia*” immediately upon the cessation of

reactionary resistance, and no one would attempt by force to make the masses obey him and work for him.

And then our dissent would have to do only with words. . . .
“Dictatorship of the Proletariat” should signify dictatorship of all which certainly does not mean dictatorship, as a government of all is no longer a government, in the authoritative, historic, practical sense of the word.

But the true partisans of the dictatorship of the proletariat do not understand the words so, as they have clearly shown in Russia. The “proletariat” naturally enters as the “*popolo*” enters into democratic regimes, that is to say, simply for the purpose of concealing the true essence of things. In reality one sees a dictatorship of a party, or rather of the heads of a party; and it is a true dictatorship, with its decrees, its penal laws, its executive agents and above all with its armed force that serves today “also” to defend the revolution for its external enemies, but that will serve tomorrow to impose upon the workers the will of the dictators, to arrest the revolution, consolidate the new interests and finally defend a new privileged class against the masses.

Bonaparte also served to defend the French revolution against the European reaction, but in defending it he killed it. Lenin, Trotsky and their companions are certainly sincere revolutionaries—as they understand the revolution, and they will not betray it; but they prepare governmental methods¹ that will serve those that will come, who will profit from the revolution and kill it. They will be the first victims of their method, and with them, I fear, will fall the revolution. And history will repeat itself; *mutatis mutandis*, it was the dictatorship of Robespierre that brought Robespierre to the guillotine and prepared the way for Napoleon.

These are my general ideas upon things in Russia. Inasmuch as the news we get from Russia is too contradictory to base upon it a judgment, it is probable that many things that seem bad are the fruit of the situation, and that in the peculiar circumstances in Russia it was impossible to do otherwise than was done. It is better to wait, much more so in that whatever we might say would have no influence upon the developments in Russia, and to seem to echo the interested calumnies of the reaction would be illy interpreted.

The important thing is what we must do. I am far away, and it is impossible for me to do my part.

ERRICO MALATESTA.

THE TWO ROADS

... The blindness of the ruling class and the natural evolution of the capitalist system, accelerated by the war, led to this, that any reform whatever which would be acceptable to the owners of property is powerless to solve the crisis under which the country labours.

Hence the revolution is imposing itself, the revolution is coming.

But how must this revolution be effected, and what development must it take?

It is, of course, necessary to begin by that insurrectional action which will sweep away the material obstacle, the armed forces of the Government, which opposes every social change.

For this insurrection, since here² we live in a monarchy, the union of all the anti-monarchist forces is desirable. It is necessary to be prepared, morally and materially, in the best possible way, and it is before all necessary to profit by all spontaneous popular movements and to endeavour to make them general and to transform them into decisive movements, in order that, whilst the parties are preparing themselves, the popular forces shall not be exhausted by isolated outbreaks.

But after the victory of the insurrection, after the fall of the Government, what must be done then?

We, the Anarchists, wish that in each locality the workers, or, more properly, that part of the workers which has the clearest insight of their position and the readiest spirit of initiative, should take possession of all the instruments of labour, all wealth, land, raw materials, houses, machinery, foodstuffs, etc., and should sketch out as far as possible the new form of social life. We wish that the agricultural labourers who now toil for their masters should no longer recognise the rights of any landlords, and should continue and intensify their work on their own account, entering into direct relations with the industrial and transport workers for the exchange of products; that the industrial workers, leading engineers and the technical staff included, should take possession of the factories, and should continue and intensify their work on their own

account and that of the community, transforming rapidly all those factories which produce useless or harmful things into establishments for the production of articles which the people most urgently need; that the railway workers should continue to run the railways, but for the use of the community; that communities of voluntary workers, locally elected, should, under the direct control of the masses, take possession of all available habitations, to shelter as best the hour will permit all the most indigent; that other committees, always under the direct control of the masses, should provide for the food supply and the distribution of articles of daily use; that all real bourgeois be placed under the necessity of merging with the mass of the former proletarians and of working like them in order to enjoy the same benefit as they. And all this must be effected quickly, on the same day as the victorious insurrection or the day after, without waiting for orders from central committees or any other authority whatever.

This is what the Anarchists want and this also would naturally happen if the revolution is really to be a Social Revolution and not limited to a simple political change which, after some convulsions, would lead everything back to the starting-point.

For either the bourgeois class is rapidly stripped of its economic power or it will soon take back also the political power of which the insurrection deprived it. And to strip the bourgeois class of its economic power it is necessary to organise immediately a new economic order founded upon justice and equality. The economic services, at least the most important ones, admit of no interruption and must be satisfied quickly. "Central committees" either do nothing or begin to act when their work is no longer needed.

In opposition to Anarchists, many revolutionists have no confidence in the constructive power of the masses; they believe themselves to be in possession of infallible recipes for universal happiness; they fear a possible reaction; they fear perhaps more the competition of other parties and other schools of social reformers, and they want, therefore, to possess themselves of all power and to replace the "democratic" government of today by a dictatorial government.

Dictatorship they mean; but who would be the dictators? Of course, so they think, the chiefs of their party. They still use the words "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," either from habit or from a conscious desire to evade plain explanations; but this is today an exploded farce.

... So we will leave this wrong term of proletarian dictatorship, which leads to so many misunderstandings, and speak of dictatorship as it really is—that is, of the absolute domination of one or several individuals who, by the support of a party or of an army, become the masters of the social body and impose their will “with violence and with terror.”³

What their will may be depends upon the quality of those who in any particular case get hold of the power. In our case it is supposed to be the will of the Communists, hence a will inspired with the desire of the common good.

This is rather doubtful already, because as a rule those who are best qualified to seize the reins of power are not the most sincere and the most devoted friends of the public cause, and when submission to a new Government is preached to the masses, this means but paving the way for intriguers and ambitious persons.

But let us suppose that the new rulers, the dictators who will put into practice the aims of the revolution, are true Communists, full of zeal, convinced that upon their work and their energy the happiness of mankind depends. They may be men of the Torquemada and Robespierre type, who, for a good purpose, in the name of private or public salvation, would strangle every discordant voice, destroy every breath of free and spontaneous life—and yet, powerless to solve the practical problems which they withdraw from competent handling by the interested parties themselves, they must willingly or unwillingly give way to those who will restore the past.

The principal justifications of dictatorship are the alleged incapacity of the masses and the necessity of defending the revolution against reactionary attempts.

If the masses were really a dumb flock unable to live without the staff of the shepherd, if a sufficiently numerous and conscious minority able to carry away the masses by persuasion and example did not already exist, then we would be able to understand the standpoint of the reformers who are afraid of a popular upheaval and fancy that they can, bit by bit, by small reforms, small improvements, undermine the bourgeois State and prepare the road to Socialism; we would be able to understand the educationists who, underrating the influence of surroundings, hope to change society by previously changing all individuals; but we really cannot understand the partisans of dictatorship who want to educate and raise the masses “by violence and terror,” and so must use gendarmes and censors as prime factors of education.

In reality, nobody could be in the position to establish a revolutionary dictatorship if the people had not previously made the revolution, thus showing effectively that it is able to make it; and in this case dictatorship would only step on the neck of the revolution, divert, strangle, and kill it.

In a political revolution proposing only to overthrow the Government and leaving intact the existing social organisation, a dictatorship may seize power, place its men in the posts of the deposed functionaries, and organise a new regime from above.

But in a social revolution where all the foundations of social life are overthrown, where production must be quickly reestablished for the benefit of those who work, where distribution must be immediately regulated according to justice, a dictatorship could do nothing. Either the people will provide for themselves in the various communities and industries or the revolution will be a failure.

... That fear of reaction, used to justify the dictatorial system, springs from the fact that it pretends to make the revolution whilst a privileged class, able to take hold again of power, is still permitted to exist.

If, on the contrary, the beginning is made by complete expropriation, then a bourgeois class will no longer exist, and all the living forces of the proletariat, all existing capacities, will be employed on social reconstruction.

After all, in a country like Italy (to apply these remarks to the country in which we work), where the masses are penetrated by libertarian and rebel instincts, where Anarchists represent a considerable force by the influence which they can exercise quite apart from their organisations, an attempt at dictatorship could not be made without provoking civil war between workers and workers, and could not succeed unless it were by means of the most ferocious tyranny.

In that case, goodbye to Communism!

There is only one possible way of salvation: Liberty.

ENDNOTES

1. *Quadri governativi*—governmental pictures, literally. ↵
2. In Italy. ↵
3. Phrase used in the Socialist paper *Avanti*. ↵



Essays

was compiled from essays written between 1891 and 1920 by

[ERRICO MALATESTA](#).

Some essays were translated from Italian and French by
the FREE SOCIETY LIBRARY, F. A. B., [INDUSTRIAL SYNDICALIST EDUCATION](#)
[LEAGUE](#), NORMAN MATSON, and [FREEDOM PRESS](#).

This ebook was produced for

[STANDARD EBOOKS](#)

by

[WEIJIA CHENG](#),

and is based on transcriptions from

[VARIOUS SOURCES](#)

and on digital scans from

[VARIOUS SOURCES](#).

The cover page is adapted from

Strike,

a painting completed in 1910 by

[STANISŁAW LENTZ](#).

The cover and title pages feature the
LEAGUE SPARTAN and SORTS MILL GOUDY
typefaces created in 2014 and 2009 by

[THE LEAGUE OF MOVEABLE TYPE](#).

This edition was released on

JUNE 30, 2026, 2:48 A.M.

and is based on

REVISION 308406A.

The first edition of this ebook was released on

FEBRUARY 7, 2024, 5:41 P.M.

You can check for updates to this ebook, view its revision history, or download it for different ereading systems at

[STANDARDEBOOKS.ORG/EBOOKS/ERRICO-MALATESTA/ESSAYS/VARIOUS-TRANSLATORS.](https://standardebooks.org/ebooks/errico-malatesta/essays/various-translators)

The volunteer-driven Standard Ebooks project relies on readers like you to submit typos, corrections, and other improvements. Anyone can contribute at [STANDARDEBOOKS.ORG.](https://standardebooks.org)

UNCOPYRIGHT

May you do good and not evil.

May you find forgiveness for yourself and forgive others.

May you share freely, never taking more than you give.

Copyright pages exist to tell you that you *can't* do something. Unlike them, this Uncopyright page exists to tell you that the writing and artwork in this ebook are believed to be in the United States public domain; that is, they are believed to be free of copyright restrictions in the United States. The United States public domain represents our collective cultural heritage, and items in it are free for anyone in the United States to do almost anything at all with, without having to get permission.

Copyright laws are different all over the world, and the source text or artwork in this ebook may still be copyrighted in other countries. If you're not located in the United States, you must check your local laws before using this ebook. Standard Ebooks makes no representations regarding the copyright status of the source text or artwork in this ebook in any country other than the United States.

Non-authorship activities performed on items that are in the public domain—so-called “sweat of the brow” work—don't create a new copyright. That means that nobody can claim a new copyright on an item that is in the public domain for, among other things, work like digitization, markup, or typography. Regardless, the contributors to this ebook release their contributions under the terms in the [CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication](#), thus dedicating to the worldwide public domain all of the work they've done on this ebook, including but not limited to metadata, the titlepage, imprint, colophon, this Uncopyright, and any changes or enhancements to, or markup on, the original text and artwork. This dedication doesn't change the copyright

status of the source text or artwork. We make this dedication in the interest of enriching our global cultural heritage, to promote free and libre culture around the world, and to give back to the unrestricted culture that has given all of us so much.