TO-DAY.

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Communism.

THE moral wealth of man has not only not advanced equally with the increase of material and mental wealth, it has hitherto lagged far in the rear of their progress, and too often gone backward in an inverse ratio to their growth. The childhood of each people has been its period of purest morality. The old brotherliness, the kindly sympathy, and warm fellowship lingered still in the dew of the morning from that prehistoric night of Communism. As they have grown richer and more cultured, all nations have grown poorer in the basic virtues. Industry and trade have become selfish, unscrupulous, fraudulent; classes have separated and been embittered; internal dissensions have multiplied in society; civic pride has declined and political liberties have perished, in the dulling sense of a real commonwealth; government has come to be a feeding of the flock in dry pastures whence their owners have cut all the juicy grass, a leading of the flock through the noisy waters where the shearers stand waiting for their wool, an Egyptian protectorate in the interests of the bondholders, which sends the fellahs, to the music of the lash, to pay the old taxes that ate up all the land. Art has ministered no longer reverently in the temple before the altar, but dissolutely within the palace upon the revel. Religion, the bond of the Eternal Law, felt round man through the early code of purity and honour, has dissolved, and chaos has lapsed upon civilization.

That is the story of the decline and fall of every great civilization the world has known in this historic period of individualism. After every people's death, the inquest develops individualism gone to seed. The more splendid a civilization, the more ethically hollow has been the society. Flamboyant civiliza-

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tion has been decadent life,—its brilliance hectic. Material and mental efflorescence has proven the showy result of draining the moral roots. Many forces, chief among which is the rejuvenescent vitality of Christianity, restrain the corruption that civilization engenders in modern society. But no one need go far below the surface to discover that "there's something rotten in the State of Denmark." Within our civilization, so fair upon the surface, covered over by its thin crust of beautiful culture, there fester wrongs which make progress seem an illusion, morality a sham, and religion a bitter mockery. Of the ethical character of the general economic results Mr. Cairnes confesses that "the solution actually effected of these problems, [the distribution of wealth] under our existing system of industry is not such as entitles us to claim for it . . . the character of satisfying the requirements of moral justice."

Mr. Mill owns that "the hardships and the earnings, instead of being directly proportional, as in any just arrangement of society they would be, are generally in the inverse ratio to one another."

We have come to accept, as a normal order of things, a system which places human beings in relations that eat out the sense of brotherliness and justice, and educate selfishness, in a way I leave economists to describe.

"In any given case, the more the employer receives the less will be left for the employed; or, in other words, the more is taken in the form of profits the less will be given in wages."

"One may be permitted to doubt whether, except among the poor themselves, for whose prejudices on this subject there is no difficulty in accounting, there has ever yet been in any class of society a sincere and earnest desire that wages should be high. There has been plenty of desire to keep down the poor rate; but, that done, people have been very willing that the working-classes should be ill-off. Nearly all who are not labourers themselves are employers of labour, and are not sorry to get the commodity cheap."

"Employers are in a permanent conspiracy to keep wages down."

"Wherever there is great property there is great inequality. For one very rich man there must be at least five hundred poor, and the affluence of the few supposes the indigence of the many."

The economic foundations of our system do not well bear the ethical sunlight. Neither of the two factors of wealth, apart from labour, is free from a suspicion of its rightfulness, however ample is its justification on the lower grounds of expediency, as is fully admitted in the present stage of society.

Capital increases by interest. Interest is certainly a needful spur in an individualistic system of society, indispensable to quicken the energies and ambitions and prudences on which, as on the lower rounds of life's ladder, men begin to mount. While men continue to compete instead of co-operate, it is wholly warrantable and necessary. But it never has succeeded in vindicating itself beyond question before the bar of ethical principles. That it seems to have done so is owing to the blinding force of customary morality. Religion has generally condemned it. The Roman Church still identifies interest with usury. Protestantism's

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sanction is extorted by the evident necessity of it in the present state of society. It is allowed, as Moses permitted divorce of the Indiana kind, for the hardness of men's hearts.

Land is so identified with individual ownership that any question of the justice of such ownership seems to us utter fanaticism. Yet, whenever the case is carried to the supreme tribunal and laid before the enlightened conscience, it grows dubious, to say the least. Land was the one thing men once deemed unquestionably wrong to hold apart from their fellows. Whatever individual proprietorship might be allowed in tools and houses and flocks, all mankind were unanimous in regarding land as common property; Nature's provision for the needs of all; God's gift to the family of man, to be used as brothers use the house table. Whole races so think still. Those who in our most progressive societies yearn after the pattern showed upon the Mount, even though it deny the law of the market, echo this voice of the childhood of the race. They say, Land is like water, air, sunlight, no man's creation, all men's endowment, inalienable for ever from the people at large. The ripest reason of our highest authorities reaffirms this judgment of the conscience. Herbert Spencer says, "Not only have the present land tenures an indefensible origin, but it is impossible to discover any mode in which land can become private property."

John Stuart Mill lays down the sweeping principle, "The land of Ireland, the land of every country, belongs to the people of that country." He amplifies this statement thus: "When the 'sacredness of property' is talked of, it should always be remembered that any such sacredness does not belong in the same degree to landed property. No man made the land. It is the original inheritance of the whole species. Its appropriation is wholly a question of expediency. When private property in land is not expedient, it is unjust."

Rent remains to this day the *pons asinorum* of all tyros in political economy, the problem where even some of the masters involve themselves hopelessly in seeking to justify, ethically, private proprietorship of land.

If ethically unsound, it is no wonder, need I say it here, that our civilisation has naturally tended to decay. And this is what we are at last beginning reluctantly to learn. The more thoroughly preventive philanthropy diagnoses the disorders of society, the more clearly does it become apparent that back of all symptomatic ailments there is a constitutional malady, that the very life forces of a competitive civilisation are feeding the cancerous tissue which spreads starvation, sickness, and sin.

The proletariat is the waste thrown down by our industrial mechanism. The tramp, who developed a half-decade ago into such huge proportions, over whom the Social Science Associations were so perplexed, whom Legislatures sought to exorcise by laws recalling the Elizabethan statutes of blood and iron, proved after all a product of the industrial stagnation, and not of the total depravity of the working man's heart, and has disappeared as a serious problem with the reopening of employment. The pauper was probably unknown in the early Communism, as he is cer-

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tainly unknown now in our little American Communisms and in the Communes of Russia. Even the lazy learn to work there without stocks or stone-breaking.

I had occasion to study the facts of the social evil, some years ago, in aiding to found a midnight mission; and I learned, that which all who have looked into the matter probably know,—that insufficient wages, unsteady employment, enforced idleness, too early commencement of labour in childhood, and consequent defectiveness of education, the withdrawal of motherly influence from the home under the necessity of woman's work to eke out the support of the family,—direct results all of our industrial system,—have more to do with prostitution than has lust.

Who that has looked below the surface of the problem of intemperance does not know that it is not so much a crime to be repressed by statutory prohibition as a disease to be cured by better homes, purer air, more wholesome food, less wearing work, less carking cares, and greater interest and pleasure in the daily labour,—conditions withheld in our individualistic system from the great mass of labourers.

We may deplore the existing morals of trade, and try all the alleviations Mr. Spencer suggests in his admirable essay; but the demoralization will continue as long as the homely description given by Tregarva remains true to facts: "Go where you will, in town or country, you'll find half a dozen shops struggling for a custom that would only keep up one; and so they're forced to undersell one another. And, when they've got down prices all they can, by fair means, they're forced to get them down lower by foul,—to sand the sugar and sloe-leave the tea and put Satan only that prompts them knows what into the bread; and then they don't thrive, they can't thrive. God's curse must be on them. They begin by trying to oust each other and eat each other up; and, while they're eating up their neighbours, their neighbours eat up them; and so they all come to ruin together."

All these social evils strike down their tap-roots beneath the very groundwork of our civilization. They are the *sequelæ* of the fever of individualism firing the social system. The tremendous force of selfishness, once freed from the strong box in which Communism shut it up, threw off the venerable bonds of fellowship, broke through the sacred laws of morality, and developed a fierceness of greed which became a root of all evil, socially. Selfishness has proven itself the nullification of true order in a general "ooze and thaw of wrong."

What a terrific indictment of our economical system is presented in the simplest statement of the results of ages of competitive civilization! A few living in idle luxury, the great mass toiling slavishly from ten to eighteen hours a day; the producers of all wealth receiving just enough to keep above the hunger level; women taking the place of men in the weary work of the factory, consuming the mothering powers of body, mind, and soul, wherein lie the hopes of humanity; children, who should be accumulating in wise play the capital for life, discounting it in advance in prolonged and unwholesome tasks; mechanism competing with manhood in the "labour market," crowding man out from the cunning

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crafts in which he once won his best education, sinking him to the cheap mechanical attendant upon the costly intelligent automaton; the greed of gain stimulating a cut-throat competition, which undersells men where it used to sell them, schools the business world in the arts of fraud, prostitutes government to the money-lust of the wealthy, converts trade into what a Parliamentary report frankly called "war," lays waste nations in the strategic campaigns of this most desolating of struggles, and periodically collapses wealth in bankruptcy; the inspiration of selfishness giving to the world a revelation of natural law which formulates over this disorder the *Codex Satanis*, sets up against the authority of the Mount the authority of the market, rules out ethical law from the basic sphere of life, sustains all appeals of avarice from the court of equity, narcotizes conscience with the statutes of irresponsibility, and leaves to the blind working of demand and supply the equation of the conditions of life for the great mass of human beings; society vainly striving to correct with the left hand of charity the wrongs which the right hand of injustice is creating; our very progress whirling us along at a rate that strains all bands of fellowship, exhausts the endurance of the feeble, and flinging off their relaxing grasp hurls them out into the débris of soul dust that strews the pathway of our world through time.

Well might John Stuart Mill confess that such facts "make out against the case either against the existing order of society, or against the position of man himself in this world." We are tempted to call the science of such a society "the philosophy of despair resting on an arithmetic of ruin."

Is society, then, hopelessly retrograding? By no means. Dark as is this picture, it is the shadow-depth cast by the strong white light of our high noon of civilization, which tells of a new phase of social revolution opening beyond the meridian. With our eyes upon the long, slow pendulum swing of the historic movement of society, we recognise the significance of the disorders of our civilisation, and discern the secret of their correction. Between individualism and Communism, society has oscillated in rhythmic alternations, whose sweeps have been counted by ages, each movement carrying humanity into conditions fatal to its continuance, and then being drawn slowly back by polar forces only to swing out into the antipodal extreme; civilisation mounting higher through these successive reactions, and centring towards the golden mean, the happy equipoise of these two essential forces. Feeling only the sweep of this force of individualism, we might imagine civilisation rushing into certain destruction, as many prophesy; but below the surface currents there pulse, even now, to our perception, the forces of an opposite movement, long gathering head and at last checking the centrifugal rush of society; and, out in the aphelion of its pathway, the orbit of civilisation rounds into a new sweep down "the ringing grooves of change" backward toward Communism.

This is the meaning of the recoil everywhere making itself felt from the economic system in which has been formulated the principles of our order; of the stir in the deep under-waters of society, setting steadily against the whole trend of competitive

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civilisation. This new movement assumes different forms, and takes different names in different lands. It mingles itself in some countries with political currents, as in Russia; and occasionally loses any distinctively economic character in a wild outburst of all the turbulent elements, a civic craze, as in the war of the Parisian Commune in 1871, when the stream suddenly becomes a whirlpool, and sucks all counter-currents into a maddening vortex that engulfs society. Substantially, however, Russian Nihilism, German Socialism, French Communism (distinguishable always from the purely political system of the commune, civic autonomy), English Trades-Unionism, and the legion varieties of labour organisations in America, are the changing crystallisations of the huge mass characterised by the *Nation* as "the party of discontent." The discontent is often groundless, as against society, being caused in reality by the personal faults and follies of the discontented, by the "laws mighty and brazen" which press so hard round all life. It is often inflamed by ignorance and diverted by demagogism from its legitimate aim to further selfish schemes. Not unfrequently, also, it is the cloak under which dishonesty seeks to shirk its just responsibilities. Nevertheless, at bottom, this discontent grounds itself upon the admitted evils of our civilisation. There is thus massing over against our order the sullen forces of labour, in a recoil admeasured by the resistance of the increasing enlightenment and increasing power of the class most oppressed by our civilisation. It is still largely a vague revolt against the existing order, the aimless striking out of men who do not see very clearly, but who feel very keenly with Tregarva, "Somebody deserves to be whopped for all this." It is, however, rapidly becoming a conviction that the disorders and wrongs of civilisation are not the mere accidents of our social system but its legitimate and inevitable products, and a determination to reconstruct society. Brains are no longer confined to the cultured classes. Poor men are studying social science, with the keen insight born of suffering and spurred by the stinging sense of wrong. They are applying the ethical stethoscope to the vital parts of the social organism, sounding every suspected organ, diagnosing the patient with an honest frankness undisturbed by traditions, undismayed before authority, and unseduced by interest. In the social revolution of the nineteenth century, which is following the political revolution of the eighteenth century, the venerable economic wrongs of civilisation are docketed for trial immediately after the hoary governmental wrongs have been adjudged. The next "suspect" to be called before the bar of the people is property. Each problem of property, however fundamental, however axiomatic we deem it, is to be reopened and worked out to a new conclusion which may turn out other than that set down in the books. That equation will be sought in terms of ethics. While tender-hearted philanthropists have been studying to alleviate the secondary and symptomatic disorders of society, socialistic thinkers have been seeking a constitutional cure, and propose now a radical alterative.

The social revolution is evolving its philosophy of property rights, as the political revolution evolved its philosophy of personal rights. This new philosophy of Socialism, an ism colouring itself

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according to the idiosyncrasies of nations and individuals, yet preserving one character in all its phases. All of its schools unite in finding the essential evil of the social organism in the excess of individualism, and in prescribing, in large doses, the alterative of association. Saint-Simon, Proudhon, Fourier, Karl Marx, Lassalle, Bakunin, Herzen, and Owen agree in their diagnosis, and differ in their therapeutics only as to the form and measure of the one specific to be used. The common production and the just distribution of wealth are to cure the maladies created by the private production and the selfish distribution of wealth. The joint-stock association of capital and labour of Fourier, the non-interest-bearing credit banks of Proudhon, the co-operative capital of Marx, the New Harmony of Owen, the Mir of Russia, are but varying forms of one principle,—co-work for a common wealth, in whose brotherly production and distribution the good of each shall be subserved by the good of all,

> Till each man finds his own in all men's good,
> And all men work in noble brotherhood.

Much that is supposed to be essential to Socialism is really accidental, the colouring of circumstance. Socialism is ordinarily identified with State organisation and direction of the co-operative industry and trade; but this is only the idiosyncracy of the French and German mind, educated under a bureaucracy, accustomed to look to it for the initiative in all matters, and naturally, therefore modelling a Socialistic State. Russian Socialism makes the local autonomic Commune, the Mir, the spring and centre of society. Its ideal is "the federation of free unions of working men."

Socialism is frequently identified with Communism, as popularly understood,—the Communism which, as in our American local societies, holds all real property in common, divides the yield of labour equally among its members, irrespective of relative skill and service, and leaves scarcely any place for personal possessions. A few Socialists, out of Russia, are perhaps such thorough-going Communists. There are, however, no stronger opponents of literal Communism than the leading Socialists. They are wise enough to discern that this obliteration of individualism would be fatal to progress; and their systems would leave large play for this force, and would secure its action by the retention of private property, real and personal. The Socialist dream of huge industrial and trade organisations, which shall regulate all production and exchange, under the supervision perhaps of the State is simply an extension of the principle of co-operation, in no wise interfering with the present system of property.

Nevertheless, of this "ism," as of how many others, the sage's word holds true: "They builded wiser than they knew." Meaning only co-operation, the Socialists swell the current that sets toward Communism, in the large sense in which I use the term. No one can attentively study these various systems without perceiving that, call them by what name we will, they are in reality communistic; that their tendency is to narrow the area of private property and enlarge the ensphering body of common property; that their ideal is a real commonwealth, from which rises the inspiration kindling the enthusiasm of their fellows.

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Behind all European Socialism, pressing it on, looms up Russia. Russian Socialism believes itself destined to inspire and guide the whole European movement.

"There are only two real questions," said Herzen,—"the social question and the Russian question; and these two are one. . . . . Socialism will unite the two factions, the European revolutionary with the Panslavonian."

In the same article, Herzen says: "The deserts of the Wolga and the Oural have been, from all time, the bivouac of peoples in migration; their waiting-rooms and places of meeting; the laboratory of nations, where in silence destiny has prepared those swarms of savages, to let them loose upon the dying peoples, upon civilisation in consumption, in order to make an end of them. . . . The Russian question is the new apparition of the barbarians, scenting the death agony, screaming their *memento mori* in the ears of the Old World, and ready to put it out of the way if it will not die of its own accord."

For this regenerating task, Slavic philosophy thinks the Slavic force has been held back so long in the history of Europe. These peoples are to inundate Europe with their ideas, to build on the decadent social system of the old world their own new world. The fundamental Russian institution is the Mir,—the collective proprietorship of the soil, and its equal and periodic apportionment among the members of the community. On this basis, the Russian Genius is seeking to rear the superstructure of her society. The people are expecting now an ukase to divide among them the whole Russian soil, still largely held by the aristocracy. "Land and Liberty" is the significant watchword of the revolution. Working men in distant cities keep their membership in the native commune, model their industrial organisations upon the Mir, and aspire to "a confederation of autonomous communes." Russian influence, according to a remarkable article in the *Contemporary Review* for August, 1881, is gradually dominating European Socialism. This is what might be expected of the youngest, freshest, largest race of Europe. And Russia is Communism.

"Is there," asked Herzen, "in the nineteenth century any other serious question besides that of communism and the partition of the land?"

No wonder that Cavour said, as reported of him, that the Russian Commune will create more dangers to Western Europe than any army.

If out of the political revolution, precipitated by the attack of the forces of discontent in the eighteenth century upon the divine rights of kings to govern wrong, there issued the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, they may not be far wrong who predict that out of the social revolution, to be precipitated by the attack of the forces of discontent in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries on the natural right of the market to regulate wrong, there will issue the proprietorship of the people, by the people, and for the people,—the social commonwealth after the political republic.

Such a set of this reactionary current in society will convince most men that, whatsoever its volume and force, it is not a return-

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ing sweep in the cycling ascent of humanity, but a direct backward movement along the straight line of progress, an ebb-tide of the waters of civilization. The fact that the pattern of this "ism" is framed in the childhood of the world, and that the childhood of the world, and that the child races are its fashioners, will confirm their belief that it is a return to childishness, forgetful of that vision of the good time coming for the weary peoples of the earth whereinto, as the prophet saw, "a little child shall lead them."

The leading economists of the most orthodox English school give abundant testimony to the coincidence of this socialistic movement with the lines of true progress. Herbert Spencer devotes a chapter in the *Data of Ethics* to unfolding the place of this movement in the evolution of society. John Stuart Mill furnishes all the premises Socialism needs from which to draw its conclusions, and even pressed on himself to most of these conclusions. His death left a fragmentary essay, since published, which ranks him clearly with the Socialists of the chair.

The historic method which we have followed gives us, however, that bird's-eye view which best indicates the relation of this new "ism." As we have already seen, the retrospect of history leads us to expect a natural return toward Communism when the individualistic system has run *in extremis*. The signs of the present indicate this position, and identify the social movement with such a recoil. This of itself should assure us that we are witnessing nature's corrective action.

It may dispose us to the wise attitude of Gamaliel toward a new and prejudiced movement if, from this backward look along the natural evolution of society, we turn our eyes forward, and, following the tendencies legitimately working in society, can see them developing in this direction from within by purely natural processes.

In each of the three great institutes of society there lies bedded a core of Communism, whose development, under quickening conditions, we are now experiencing.

The family is at its core a Communism. This original and natural association of mankind gives free play to the individuality, and evolves in its tender culture the spiritual personality; but to the earliest point whither we can trace it, and through all its changing forms, it has been, as it still remains, a realised Communism. It has one common store, draws from one common purse, partakes of one common table, dwells in one common home. Personal possessions there may be for each member of the household and special purses for some, but all private property is ensphered within a common property. How could there be the life in common which makes the family so divine an institution, unless this soul of the home, this spiritual communion, had its enclothing body, this material Communism? The social crystallization which forms upon the family must be in some form a Communism.

The Church is, at its core, a Communism. It certainly opens abundant scope for the energies, and supplies abundant motive power to the interests of the individual. Indeed, its failures seem to me to grow chiefly out of its disproportionate cultivation of the

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individuality. For the Church is also, as we are perhaps not sufficiently reminded, the organization for the evolution of the sacred social order, the kingdom of heaven slowly coming forth upon the earth, the sphere for the true inter-relation of the true individualities. The Church holds at once the ideals of individuality and of association. It is a republic which has of necessity its *res publicæ*; and these public things constitute it a commonwealth, a communion of spirit, which, without interfering with private possessions, tends to sublimate them into a free Communism.

The historic foundations of the Christian Church were laid in the Hebrew polity, which, whether in an original plan by Moses or in subsequent designs overlaying his rough draft, whether actually operative at any period or only a paper constitution, was a genuine Communism. This constitution nationalised the land of Canaan; vested the title in the head of the State, Jehovah; apportioned it among the families of the tribes; limited the term of all transfers between the people; vacated all real estate bargains at the end of every fifty years, restoring then to each family its inalienable right to its share of the soil; and thus prevented the accumulation of great estates and any possible monopoly of the first resources of life. It passed all debtors through an act of bankruptcy every seven years, and guarded thus against the enslaving action of debt, which has repeated itself so commonly in history. It even pronounced all interest usury, and thus radically estopped the manifold oppressions of unscrupulous capital that every society has experienced. This polity thus subsoiled Israel with a real Communism. It is certainly curious that the portion of the Church which professes to regard the Old Testament as divinely dictated and oracularly authoritative should so successfully dodge this disagreeable fact. The children of this world find it hard sometimes to prove wiser than the children of light.

The plan of Jesus, in so far as seeing clearly we may speak positively, followed this historic groundwork. If we follow Luke's Gospel as a trustworthy guide, we cannot miss the broadly drawn idiosyncrasy of the Nazarene; and if we discredit Luke, and see in this delineation the tracings of Essenic tradition and the colourings of socialistic writing, yet the features of the Christ therein sketched appear in the portraiture of the other evangelists, though in milder light, and we need not hesitate to trust the picture outlined.

Jesus was a pronounced Communist,—not indeed such as we conjure up when the irreverent *bon mot* of Camille Desmoulins echoes in our ears, but rather such as rises before us in the lofty confession of that crotchety, grand soul, John Ruskin: "For indeed I am myself a Communist of the old school, reddest of the red. . . . We Communists of the old school think that our property belongs to everybody and everbody's property to us."

Jesus appears to have always lived in a Communism. For thirty years he was a member of the Family Commune in the Nazarite carpenter's home. During the three years of his public life, he was the centre of the little brotherhood of thirteen which he himself formed, and which seems to have had one purse in

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common, from which they drew for the common needs. The members of that Communism literally gave up all their possessions to follow the Master.

The constant attitude of Jesus toward the society of his day buttressed this example. He evidently was at one with the Hebrew prophets in their radical judgment on the competitive civilisation of Israel. It was repulsive to him as fostering the prudential virtues we so highly esteem and he so lightly valued, as cultivating the material, worldly, selfish instincts in which he found the secret of human ill. His language to the rich was radical. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." The counsel of perfection he offered the rich young ruler was, "Go, sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow me." He warned men against the love of money, the motor of our civilisation, and saw in Mammon, the gain-god, the social Satan whose service is irreconcilable with the service of God. He opened his ministry, according to Luke, by reading in the synagogue of his native village this passage from Isaiah: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor . . . to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord;" according to Mark, "preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of God," the social regeneration. As plainly as words and deeds could speak, Jesus regarded a competitive civilisation not merely as falling short of the divine ideals of social life, but as running counter to them; and he sharply turned the faces of those who sought the kingdom of the Good One and his righteousness away from the kingdom of the Evil One and his unrighteousness. He was so understood by his hearers, and derided for his Quixotic teaching. The ethics of Jesus found no *nidus* in our social system: his religion asphyxiated in its atmosphere. Amid the evils growing out of a society based on private property and subordinating public things to personal things, common interests to individual interests, he held out, as the hope of man, a true Communism.

But this Communism of Jesus was no coarse, hard, literal system laid down as the order of society before the world was ready for it, decreed arbitrarily by statute and to be enforced rigidly by ecclesiastical authority. It was left for the enactment of "the law-making power within," when inspired from himself. It was, as Renan finely says, "the delicate communism of a flock of God children." The elder brother lived it, and thus breathed its spirit within the other children.

When his spirit breathed forth again from their souls, his ideal shaped itself in their aspirations, the natural response to that inspiration. The full-flooding sense of a life in common, awakened in these happy children of the heavenly Father, submerged the highest, driest levels of selfishness, overflowed the coast-lines of private property, obliterated all boundaries of *meum* and *tuum*, and spreading over the nascent Church resolved the communion of the disciples into the Communism whose record on the shores of time still marks the high-water reach of the Christian spirit. "And all that believeth were together, and had all things common; . . . and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all,

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according as any man had need." Beautiful, spontaneous, momentary crystallization of the forces of Christian socialism into the figure of the ideal order. Too delicate to endure, like all premature fruit, it would have decayed, as it soon showed signs of doing, into social putrescence, if it had not been swept away in the overthrow of Jerusalem and its little Christian community. Too ethereal to bear the coming down from "the thin air of life's supremest heights," that vision has lived on in the memory of the Church as the transfiguration of society, unto which in every age of renewed inspiration the social aspiration should rise. From that time on, each new movement of spiritual life has revived this dream of the Mount, and stirred some effort at its realization. When we rightly restore the early Church, we shall probably find a great number of communistic societies, Christian Essenism in one form and another. Through the later periods of church history, each wave of impulse toward personal holiness was followed by a wave of impulse toward social justice, in the brotherhoods and sisterhoods, the mendicant orders and communistic sects, of the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages. The Reformation, with its mighty spiritual quickening, spawned on Europe a swarm of inchoate socialisms, fanatical, grotesque, impossible; witnesssing nevertheless to the yearnings of new life. German pietism, probably the simplest, sweetest type of spiritual life produced by modern Christianity, has tended toward socialism; and our American communistic societies have been chiefly the work of these literal disciples of the Nazarene. America has curiously suggested the relation between individual inspiration and social aspiration in religion. There has been a rhythmical alternation between these two movements. Each wave of revivalism has been followed by a wave of socialism. After Nettleton, in 1817, came Robert Owen, in 1824; after Finney, in 1831-33, came the Fourierite enthusiasm, in 1842-43; after the great awakening of 1857, the social movement which might have followed was withheld by the civil war; after the practical Moody has come the practical co-operative efforts now being widely made. First the regeneration of the soul, then the regeneration of society. No dislike we may feel for the methods of either of these movements should blind us to their inter-relation and their combined trend.

Wherever the local churches are alive to-day, they are feeling the urgency of the social problem, and are, even though unconsciously, seeking its solution in that unwritten Communism which holds every gift and power as a trust for the common service, all wealth a stewardship for the common needs of the brotherhood. In the house of the Christian stands the table of the All-Father, where the children gather from the common meal of the community. Abiding sign of society's salvation from slavery and strife and every sin of selfishness, in the holy communion which must ultimately build round itself a righteous Communism!

The deepening life of the Church and its growing pressure against the unsympathetic environment of our competitive civilization must produce tenser yearnings of the Christian conscience to realize its ideals of the common life in some "ism" of common property. Following upon other revivals, such as we all believe

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in,—the upflowings within the soul of the Eternal Spirit ensphering us all, in whom we live and move and have our being,—there will come other efforts after a Christian brotherhood; local churches perhaps essaying some form of voluntary Communism; which will fail only to be tried again, till gradually that spring blossom of the Pentecost opens into the full-blown fruit of summer, and, the spirit filling all men, it shall come to pass that the multitude of them that believe shall be of one heart and soul, and not one of them shall say that aught of the things which he possesses is his own, but they will have all things common.

Thus will that notable judgment of a well-known economist fulfil itself, as the Christian ideal slowly possesses humanity: "If Christianity were taught and understood conformably to the spirit of its Founder, the existing social organization could not last a day."

Thus, too, will verify itself the great word of Mazzini to those seeking a human brotherhood without any uplook to a divine fatherhood: "Every political question in this age is rapidly becoming a social question, and every social question a religious question."

(To be continued).

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Ghosts.

ACT III.

(*The room as before. All the doors stand open. The lamp is still burning on the table. It is dark out of doors; there is only a faint glimmer of fire in the background to the left.* MRS. ALVING, *with a large handkerchief over her head, stands up in the Conservatory and looks out.* REGINA, *also with a handkerchief over her head, stands a little behind her*).

MRS. ALVING. It's all burnt. Down to the ground!

REGINA. It's burning in the cellars still.

MRS. ALVING. How is it Oswald doesn't come up here? There's nothing whatever to save.

REGINA. Would you like me to go down to him with his hat?

MRS. ALVING. Hasn't he got his hat with him?

REGINA. (*Pointing to the hall.*) No; there it hangs.

MRS. ALVING. Let it be. He must be coming up soon, now. I will go and look for myself. (*She goes out through the garden door*).

MR. MANDERS. (*Comes in from the hall.*) Isn't Mrs. Alving here?

REGINA. She's just this moment gone down into the garden.

MR. MANDERS. This is the most terrible night I ever lived through.

REGINA. Yes; isn't it a dreadful misfortune, Sir?

MR. MANDERS. Oh! don't talk about it! I can hardly bear to think of it.

REGINA. But how can it possibly have happened?

MR. MANDERS. Don't ask me, Regina! How can I know that? And do *you*, too?—Isn't it enough for your father?——

REGINA. What about him?

MR. MANDERS. Oh! he has driven me clean out of my mind—

ENGSTRAND. (*Comes through the hall*). Your Reverence!

MR. MANDERS. (*Turns round in terror*). Are you after me here, too?

ENGSTRAND, Yes, the Lord strike me dead! Oh! gracious me! But it's an awfully ugly business, your Reverence.

MR. MANDERS. (*Walks to and fro*). Alas! alas!

REGINA. What is the matter?

ENGSTRAND. Why, it all came of that there prayer meeting, you see. (*Softly*). The bird's caught now, my darling child. (*Aloud*). And to think that it's my fault, that it's his Reverence's fault!

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MR. MANDERS. But I assure you, Engstrand——

ENGSTRAND. But there wasn't another soul except your Reverence who had anything to do with lights in there.

MR. MANDERS. (*Stands still*). Ah! so you persist in saying. But I certainly can't recollect that I ever had a light in my hand.

ENGSTRAND. And I saw so certain and clear that your Reverence took the light and snuffed it with your fingers and threw away what you snuffed among the shavings.

MR. MANDERS. And you actually saw that?

ENGSTRAND. Yes. I saw it as plain as a pike-staff.

MR. MANDERS. It is quite beyond my comprehension. Besides it has never been my habit to snuff a light with my fingers.

ENGSTRAND. And a beastly dirty trick it looked, that it did! But can it turn out such a dangerous job, your Reverence?

MR. MANDERS. (*Walks restlessly to and fro*). Oh! don't ask me.

ENGSTRAND. (*Walks with him*). And your Reverence hadn't insured it, neither?

MR. MANDERS. (*Continuing to walk up and down*). No, no, no; you've heard that already.

ENGSTRAND. (*Following him*). It ain't insured. And then he goes right down there and sets a light to the whole lot of it. Oh! lor', Oh! lor', what a misfortune!

MR. MANDERS. (*Wipes the sweat from his forehead*). Ay, you may well say that, Engstrand.

ENGSTRAND. And to think that the likes of it could happen with a benevolent Institution, that was to be of use to town and country as the sayin' is! The newspapers won't handle your Reverence very gentle, I don't expect.

MR. MANDERS. No; that's just what I am turning over in my mind. That's almost the worst feature in the whole thing. All those hateful attacks and accusations! Oh! it is a terrible thing only to imagine it.

MRS. ALVING. (*Comes in from the garden*). He can't be persuaded to go away till the fire is quite out.

MR. MANDERS. Ah! there you are, Mrs. Alving!

MRS. ALVING. So you have got out of preaching your discourse on the Festival, Mr. Manders.

MR. MANDERS. Oh! I should so gladly—

MRS. ALVING. (*In an undertone*). It was best that it happened as it did. That Orphanage would have turned out no blessing to anybody.

MR. MANDERS. Don't you think so?

MRS. ALVING. Do you think it would?

MR. MANDERS. But it was an enormous pity, all the same.

MRS. ALVING. We will speak of it in plain language as a piece of business.—Are you waiting for Mr. Manders, Engstrand?

ENGSTRAND. (*At the hall door*). Ay, Ma'am; indeed I am.

MRS. ALVING. Then sit down meanwhile.

ENGSTRAND. I thank you kindly, Ma'am; I can easy stand.

MRS. ALVING. (*To* MR. MANDERS). I suppose you are going away now by the steamer?

MR. MANDERS. Yes, it goes in an hour's time.

MRS. ALVING. Be so good as to take all the papers with you

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again. I won't hear another word about that affair. I have got other matters to think about.

MR. MANDERS. Mrs. Alving——

MRS. ALVING. Later on I shall send you a Power of Attorney to settle everything as you yourself please.

MR. MANDERS. That I shall be most sincerely glad to take upon myself. The original destination of the gift must now be completely changed, alas!

MRS. ALVING. Of course it must.

MR. MANDERS. Well, I think, first of all, I shall arrange that the part of the estate known as Sunnyside shall become part of the parish lands. The road cannot be said to be wholly valueless in any part. It will always be able to be turned to account for some purpose or other. And the current account that lies at the Savings Bank I could perhaps suitably apply to support some undertaking or other that might be said to be a gain for the town.

MRS. ALVING. Do exactly as you please. The whole matter is now one of complete indifference to me.

ENGSTRAND. Give a thought to my Sailors' Home, your Reverence.

MR. MANDERS. Yes, that's not a bad suggestion. Well, that must be considered.

ENGSTRAND. Damn considerin' it—Oh! lor'!

MR. MANDERS. (*With a sigh*). And I'm sorry to say I don't know how long I shall be able to remain mixed up with these things—whether public opinion may not compel me to retire. It entirely depends upon the result of the evidence given on the enquiry into the fire—

MRS. ALVING. What are you talking about?

MR. MANDERS,—and the result can by no means be known beforehand.

ENGSTRAND. (*Comes nearer*). Ay, ay, but in course it can. For here stands Jacob Engstrand and me.

MR. MANDERS. Well, well, but——?

ENGSTRAND. (*More softly*). And Jacob Engstrand ain't the man to desert a worthy benefactor in the hour of need, as the sayin' is.

MR. MANDERS. Yes, but my dear fellow—how—?

ENGSTRAND. Jacob Engstrand ought to be considered as a guardian angel, he ought, your Reverence.

MR. MANDERS. No, no, I certainly can't accept that.

ENGSTRAND. Oh! it'll turn out so, all the same. I know a party as has taken the blame on himself for other parties before now, I do.

MR. MANDERS. Jacob! (*wrings his hand*), you are a rare character. Well, you shall be helped to get your Sailors' Home. That you may rely upon. (ENGSTRAND *tries to thank him, but cannot, for emotion.* MR. MANDERS *hangs his travelling bag over his shoulders*). And now let's be off. We two are journeying together.

ENGSTRAND. (*At the dining-room door, softly to* REGINA). You come along too, girl. You shall live as snug as the yolk in an egg.

REGINA. (*Throws her head back*). *Merci!*

(*She goes out into the hall and fetches* MR. MANDERS'S *travelling coat*).

MR. MANDERS. Goodbye, Mrs. Alving! and may the spirit of

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Order and Law make its entry into this dwelling, and that right soon.

MRS. ALVING. Goodbye, Mr. Manders.

(*She goes up towards the conservatory, as she sees* OSWALD *coming in through the garden door*).

ENGSTRAND. (*While he aud* REGINA *help* MR. MANDERS *get his coat on*). Goodbye, darling child. And if any trouble should come to you, you know where Jacob Engstrand is to be found. (*Softly*). Little Harbour Street. Hm! (*To* MRS. ALVING *and* OSWALD). And the house for travelling sailors shall be called "Captain Alving's Home," that it shall! And if I'm spared to carry on that house after my own pattern, I dare venture to say that it shall be worthy of the poor dear gentleman's name.

MR. MANDERS. (*In the doorway*). Hm—Hm—Now come, my dear Engstrand. Good bye! Good-bye!

(*He and* ENGSTRAND *go out through the hall*).

OSWALD. (*Walks away towards the table*). What sort of a house was it he was talking about?

MRS. ALVING. Oh! it was only a kind of Home that he and Mr. Manders want to set up.

OSWALD. It will get burnt down like that one yonder.

MRS. ALVING. What makes you think so?

OSWALD. Everything will get burnt. There won't remain a single thing that is in memory of father. Here am I, too, going about and burning up.

(REGINA *looks amazed at him*).

MRS. ALVING. Oswald! you ought not to have remained so long down there, my poor boy!

OSWALD. (*Sits down by the table*). I almost think you must be right.

MRS. ALVING. Let me dry your face, Oswald, you are quite wet.

(*She dries him with her pocket handkerchief*).

OSWALD. (*Stares indifferently in front of him*). Thanks, mother.

MRS. ALVING. Are you not tired, Oswald? I daresay you would like to go to sleep?

OSWALD. (*Trembling with fear*). No, no—not sleep. I never sleep. I only pretend to. (*Sadly*). That will come soon enough.

MRS. ALVING. (*Looking anxiously at him*). Oh! you really are ill, whatever else you may choose to say, my darling boy.

REGINA. (*Breathlessly*). Is Mr. Alving ill?

OSWALD. (*Impatiently*). Oh! do shut all the doors! This deadly fear. . . .

MRS. ALVING. Shut them, Regina.

(REGINA *shuts them and remains standing by the hall door.* MRS. ALVING *takes her handkerchief off.* REGINA *does the same.* MRS. ALVING *draws a chair across to* OSWALD'S *and sits by him*).

MRS. ALVING. There! now; I am going to sit by you.

OSWALD. Ah! do. And Regina shall stay in here, too. Regina shall always be with me. You'll give me a helping hand, Regina, won't you?

REGINA. I don't understand——

MRS. ALVING. A helping hand?

OSWALD. Yes, when there is any need for it.

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MRS. ALVING. Oswald, have you not your mother to give you a helping hand?

OSWALD. You? (*Smiles*). No, mother; that helping hand you will never give me. (*Laughs sadly*). You! ha! ha! (*Looks earnestly at her*). Otherwise you ought to be the one to do it, though. (*Impetuously*). Why can't you come and speak to me, Regina? Why don't you call me 'Oswald?'

REGINA. (*Softly*). I don't think my mistress would like it.

MRS. ALVING. In a little while you shall have leave to do it. And come over here, too, and sit down by us.

(REGINA *sits down quietly and hesitatingly on the other side of the table*).

MRS. ALVING. And now, my poor suffering boy, I am going to take the burdens off your mind.

OSWALD. You, mother?

MRS. ALVING. All that you call 'worry' and 'anxiety' and 'reproaches.'

OSWALD. And you believe you can do it, do you?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, now I can, Oswald. You got talking before about enjoying life; and at that moment it was as though a fresh light had been shed for me over all things throughout my whole life.

OSWALD. (*Shakes his head*). I don't know anything about all that.

MRS. ALVING. You ought to have known your father when he was quite a young lieutenant. There was a power of enjoying life brimming over in him, indeed!

OSWALD. Yes, I know there was.

MRS. ALVING. It was like a fine day only to look at him. And then that inexhaustible strength and fullness of life that there was in him!

OSWALD. Well?

MRS. ALVING. And then such a child of enjoyment as he was, for he *was* like a child at that time—had to go and live here at home in a poky little town, where there was nothing happy to enjoy, but only amusements; he had to do without an object in life; he had only an official post; he could see no work into which he could throw himself heart and soul; he had only business details to attend to; he had not single comrade capable of feeling what sort of thing enjoyment of life is—only loungers and boon companions——

OSWALD. Mother!

MRS. ALVING. . . and so that happened which was sure to happen.

OSWALD. And what was sure to happen?

MRS. ALVING. You said yourself, earlier this evening, how it would be with you if you stayed at home.

OSWALD. Do you mean to say by that, that Father ——?

MRS. ALVING. Your poor father found no outlet for the overpowering vigour of enjoyment which was in him. Nor did I bring any brightness into his home, either.

OSWALD. Nor you, either?

MRS. ALVING. They had taught me something about Duties and so on, which I had always accepted as true. Everything was marked out into Duties—into my Duties and his Duties, and—I

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am afraid I made home intolerable for your poor father, Oswald.

OSWALD. Why did you never write me anything about all this?

MRS. ALVING. Never before have I seen it in such a way that I could stir up the matter with you, who were his son.

OSWALD. And how did you see it, then?

MRS. ALVING (*slowly*). I saw only the one thing, that your father was a broken down man before you were born.

OSWALD (*in a choked voice*). Ah! (*he rises and walks away to the window.*)

MRS. ALVING. And so, day and night, I dwelt on the one thought that by rights Regina belonged here in the house,—just like my own son.

OSWALD (*turning round quickly*). Regina!

REGINA (*gasps and asks with bated breath*). I?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, now you know it, both of you.

OSWALD. Regina!

REGINA (*to herself*). So Mother was one of that kind after all.

MRS. ALVING. Your mother was good in many ways, Regina.

REGINA. Yes, but she was one of that kind, all the same. Oh! often enough I've thought she must have been;—but,—. Well, if you please, Ma'am, may I be allowed to go away at once, this very moment.

MRS. ALVING. Do you really wish it, Regina?

REGINA. Yes, indeed I do.

MRS. ALVING. Of course you can do as you will; but. . .

OSWALD (*walks towards Regina*). Go away now? You belong here, of course.

REGINA. *Merci*, Mr. Alving;—Yes, now I may be allowed to say Oswald. But it wasn't in that way I meant to do it.

MRS. ALVING. Regina, I have not been frank with you.

REGINA. No; it would be a sin to say you had. If I'd known that Oswald was ill, why . . . And now too that it never can come to be anything serious between us . . . Oh! I really can't stay out here in the country and wear myself out nursing sick people.

OSWALD. Can't you for one who is so near to you?

REGINA. No; that I can't. A poor girl must make the best of her young days, or she may come to find herself without a rag to her back before she knows where she is. And I want to enjoy my life, too, Ma'am.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, alas! you do. But don't throw yourself away, Regina.

REGINA. Oh! if it turns out so, it will turn out so. If Oswald takes after his father, I take after my mother, I daresay. May I ask, ma'am, if Mr. Manders knows for certain this about me?

MRS. ALVING. Mr. Manders knows all about it.

REGINA (*puts on her handkerchief hastily*). Well, then, I'd better set to work and get away from this place by the steamer as fast as I can. Mr. Manders is so nice to deal with; and I must say I think I'm as likely to get hold of a little of that money as he is—that brute of a carpenter.

MRS. ALVING. You are heartily welcome to it, Regina.

REGINA (*looks stiffly at her*). You might just as well have brought

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me up as the child of a man in a good position, ma'am, it would have been more suitable for me. (*Throws her head back.*) But it's done now—it doesn't matter! (*With a bitter side glance at the corked bottle.*) All the same, I may still come to drink champagne with people of position,—that I may, yet.

MRS. ALVING. And if you ever need a home, Regina, come to me.

REGINA. No, ma'am. Many thanks. Mr. Manders will look after me nicely, I know. And if there 's any trouble up, I know of one house where I've a right to belong.

MRS. ALVING. Which is that?

REGINA. 'Captain Alving's Home.'

MRS. ALVING. Regina—now I see it—you're going to your ruin.

REGINA. Oh, stuff! Good-bye. (*She nods and goes out through the hall.*)

OSWALD (*stands at the window and looks out*). Is she gone?

MRS. ALVING. Yes.

OSWALD (*murmuring aside to himself*). Ah, now! that was a pity.

MRS. ALVING (*goes behind him and lays her hands on his shoulders*). Oswald, my dear boy; has it shaken you very much?

OSWALD (*turns his face towards her*). All that about Father, do you mean?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, about your unhappy father. I am so afraid it will have been too much for you.

OSWALD. Why should you fancy it will? Of course it came upon me as an immense surprise, but it can't matter much to me, after all that's said and done.

MRS. ALVING (*takes her hands off him*). Can't matter! That your father was so awfully wretched!

OSWALD. Of course. I can feel sympathy for him as I could for anybody else; but——

MRS. ALVING. Nothing else? For your own father!

OSWALD (*impatiently*). Oh, there! 'father,' 'father'! After all, I never knew anything of Father. I don't remember anything about him except—that he once made me sick.

MRS. ALVING. That's an awful thought! Should not a child feel love for his father, all the same?

OSWALD. What! when a child has nothing to thank his father for? has never known him? Do you really cling to the old superstition?—you who are so enlightened in every other direction?

MRS. ALVING. And can it be nothing but superstition?

OSWALD. Yes; you can easily see it for yourself, mother. It is just one of those opinions which are set going in the world and so——

MRS. ALVING (*deeply moved*). GHOSTS!

OSWALD (*crossing the floor*). Yes; you might call them Ghosts.

MRS. ALVING (*in an outburst*). Oswald! then you don't love me, either!

OSWALD. You, I do know, at any rate.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, you know me; but is that all?

OSWALD. And of course I know how fond you are of me, and for that I ought to be very much obliged to you. And you can be so extremely useful to me now that I am ill.

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MRS. ALVING. Yes, can't I, Oswald? Oh! I could almost bless your illness which drove you home to me. For I can see very plainly I don't possess you, you have yet to be won.

OSWALD (*impatiently*). Yes, yes, yes; all those are just so many phrases. You must recollect I am a sick man, Mother. I can't be so taken up with other people; I have enough to do in thinking about myself.

MRS. ALVING. (*humbly*). I shall be easily satisfied and patient.

OSWALD. And cheerful, too, Mother.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, my dear boy, you are quite right. (*Goes towards him.*) Have I taken all worry and self-reproach from you now?

OSWALD. Yes; you have done that. But who's to take the anxiety now?

MRS. ALVING. The anxiety?

OSWALD (*walks across the floor*). One could have got Regina to do it.

MRS. ALVING. I don't understand you. What is all this about anxiety—and Regina?

OSWALD. Is it very late at night, Mother?

MRS. ALVING. It is early morning. (*She looks out in the conservatory.*) The day is beginning to dawn over the hills. And the weather is fine, Oswald. In a little while you will see the sun.

OSWALD. I'm glad of that. Oh! there may be many things and much for me to be glad about and live for——

MRS. ALVING. I should think there would, indeed!

OSWALD. Even if I can't work, so——

MRS. ALVING. Oh! you will soon be able to work again, my boy. Why! now you have no longer got all those worrying and depressing thoughts to go brooding over.

OSWALD. Well, it was a good thing that you were able to roll all those fancies away. And when I have only got that one thing more over (*sits on the sofa*). Now we will have a little chat, Mother.

MRS. ALVING! Yes, let us. (*She pushes an arm-chair towards the sofa and sits down close to him.*)

OSWALD. And meantime the sun will be rising and then you will know it all. And then I shan't have that anxiety any longer.

MRS. ALVING. What is that I am to know?

OSWALD (*without listening to her*). Mother, wasn't this what you said earlier this evening; that there was not a single thing in the world you would not do for me if I asked you to do it?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, to be sure I said it.

OSWALD. And you'll stick to it, Mother?

MRS. ALVING. You may rely on that, my dear and only boy! I live for nothing in the world but you only.

OSWALD. All right, then. Now you shall hear. Mother, you have a strong and powerful mind, I know. Now you are to sit quite still when you hear what it is.

MRS. ALVING. But what dreadful thing can it be?

OSWALD. You are not to scream out. Do you hear? Do you promise me that? We'll sit and chat about it quite quietly. Do you promise me this, Mother?

MRS. ALVING Yes, yes: I promise you that. But only tell me.

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OSWALD. Well, now you must know that all that about fatigue, and that about my not being able to bear to think about work—all that is not the illness itself——

MRS. ALVING. Then what is the illness itself?

OSWALD. The disease I have inherited—that (*he points to his forehead and adds very softly*)—that is seated here.

MRS. ALVING (*almost voiceless*), Oswald! No, no!

OSWALD. Don't scream. I can't bear it. Yes, you know, it sits here—waiting. And it may break out any day and hour whatever.

MRS. ALVING. Oh! what a dread!

OSWALD. Now, only do just be quiet. That's how it stands with me——

MRS. ALVING (*jumps up*). This isn't true, Oswald. It is impossible. It can't be so.

OSWALD. I have had one attack down there abroad. It was soon over. But when I got to know what had been the matter with me, then the anxiety came over me so madly and it seemed to pursue me: and so I set off home to you as fast as I could.

MRS. ALVING. Then this was the anxiety.

OSWALD. Yes, for it's so indescribably awful, you know. Oh! if it had been merely an ordinary mortal illness! For I am not so afraid of dying, though I should like to live as long as I can.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, yes, Oswald, you must do so.

OSWALD. But this is so awfully terrible! To be turned into a weak baby again! To have to be fed! To have——Oh! it is past all telling!

MRS. ALVING. The child has his mother to wait on him.

OSWALD. (*Jumps up*). No, never; that's just what I won't have. I can't endure to think that perhaps I should lie in that state for many years,—get old and grey. And you might perhaps die yourself, meanwhile. (*Sits in* MRS. ALVING'S *chair*). For the doctor said it would not necessarily prove mortal immediately. He called it a sort of softening of the brain—or something of the kind. (*Smiles sadly*). I think that expression sounds so nice. It always sets me thinking of cherry-coloured silk drapery—something that is soft to stroke down.

MRS. ALVING. (*Screams*). Oswald!

OSWALD (*jumps up and paces the room*). And now you have taken Regina from me. If I'd only had her! She would have given me the helping hand, I know.

MRS. ALVING (*goes to him*). What do you mean by that, my dearly loved son? Is there any helping hand in the world that I wouldn't give you?

OSWALD. When I was recovering after my attack in Paris, the the doctor told me that when it came again—and it will come again—there was no more hope.

MRS. ALVING. And he was heartless enough to——

OSWALD. I wished him to tell me. I told him I had preparations to make. (*He smiles cunningly*) And so I had. (*He takes a little box from his breast-coat pocket amd opens it*). Mother, do you see these?

MRS. ALVING. What is that?

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OSWALD. Morphia powder?

MRS. ALVING (*looks frightened at him*). Oswald, my boy?

OSWALD. I have accumulated the contents of twelve capsules and put them together.

MRS. ALVING (*snatches at it*). Give me the box, Oswald.

OSWALD. Not yet, Mother. (*He hides the box again in his pocket*).

MRS. ALVING. I shall never survive this.

OSWALD. It must be survived. Now if I had Regina here, I should have told her how it was with me, and asked her for the last helping hand. She would have helped me. I'm certain she would.

MRS. ALVING. Never.

OSWALD. When the dreadful thing had come upon me, and she saw me lying there, helpless as a little new-born baby, beyond all help, lost, hopeless, past all saving——

MRS. ALVING. Never for all the world would Regina have done this.

OSWALD. Regina would have done it. Regina was so gloriously light-hearted. And she would soon have wearied of nursing such a sick person as I——

MRS. ALVING. Then Heaven be praised that Regina is not here.

OSWALD. Well, then, you must be the one to give me the helping hand.

MRS. ALVING (*screams aloud*). I!

OSWALD. Who should do it if not you?

MRS. ALVING. I, your mother?

OSWALD. That's the very reason why.

MRS. ALVING. I, who gave you life!

OSWALD. I never asked you to give me life. And what sort of a life is it that you have given me? I will not have it. You shall take it back again.

MRS. ALVING. Help! help! (*She runs out into the hall*).

OSWALD (*going after her*). Don't go away from me. Where do you want to go to?

MRS. ALVING (*in the hall*). To fetch the doctor to you, Oswald. Let me go out.

OSWALD (*standing still*). You will not go out. And no one shall come in. (*A key is turned in a lock*).

MRS. ALVING (*comes in again*). Oswald—Oswald!—my child!

OSWALD (*follows her*). Have you a mother's heart for me and yet can see me suffer all this deathly anxiety?

MRS. ALVING (*after a moment's silence, says calmly*). Here is my hand upon it.

OSWALD. Will you?

MRS. ALVING. If it becomes necessary. But it will not become necessary. No; no; it will never be possible.

OSWALD. Well, let us hope so. And let us live together as long as we can, any how. Thank you, Mother. (*He sits down in the arm chair which Mrs. Alving moved to the sofa. Day is breaking. The lamp is still burning on the table*).

MRS. ALVIMG (*drawing near cautiously*). Do you feel calm, now?

OSWALD. Yes.

MRS. ALVING (*bending over him*). It has been a dreadful fancy of

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yours, Oswald. Nothing but a fancy, You have not been able to bear all that harrowing story. But now you shall rest a bit, at home with your own mother, my own darling boy. Everything you point to you shall have, just as when you were a little boy. There now! The attack is over now. You see how quickly it went by. Oh! I was sure it would. And do you see, Oswald, what an exquisite day we are going to have? The brightest sunshine! Now you will really be able to see your home. (*She goes to the table and and puts the lamp out. Sunrise. The glacier mountain tops in the back ground lie in a flood of morning light*).

OSWALD (*sits in the arm chair with his back towards the background, without moving. Suddenly he says*) Mother, give me the sun.

MRS. ALVING (*by the table looks in amazement at him*). What do you say?

OSWALD (*repeats stupidly and voicelessly*). The sun, the sun!

MRS. ALVING (*goes to him*). Oswald, what is the matter with you? (*Oswald seems to fall into a heap in the chair: all his muscles give way; his face is expressionless, his eyes stare feebly. Mrs. Alving totters with fear*). What is this? (*cries out*) Oswald, what is the matter with you? (*falls on her knees beside him and shakes him*). Oswald, Oswald! Look at me! Don't you know me?

OSWALD (*tonelessly as before*). The sun, the sun!

MRS. ALVING (*springs up in despair, thrusts her hands into her hair and screams*). I can't bear it (*whispers as though petrified*) I can't bear it! Never! (*suddenly*). Where has he got it, then? (*quick as an arrow she feels over his breast*). Here! (*shrinks back a few steps and screams*) No, no, no! Yes! No, no! (*She stands a few steps from him with her hands buried in her hair and stares at him in speechless terror.*)

OSWALD (*sits motionless as before and says*). The sun! The sun!

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Socialism and National Sobriety.

SOCIALISM is many-sided. To me it has but one possible phase, the action of conscience in national life, guided by the teachings and inspired by the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from such sanction, Socialism does not satisfy me either as a theory of conduct or as a practical reform. I know, however, that there are Socialists who, while seeking the same end, will not agree with me in this definition of the new force which is working so powerfully amongst all civilized people. Be that so; yet I hope that it is possible to enlist the sympathies of those who disagree with my conception of Socialism, for the proposals which I venture to make in this paper.

The question I propose to discuss is, I venture to think, one with which Socialists ought to have something to say and do. The drinking customs of this country are, unhappily, so notorious that there will be no need for me to prove either their extent or character. There is drink at our birth, marriage and death. The habit permeates our whole business and social life. It is the resource of thousands in their sorrow and their joy. It intrudes with most pernicious effect into our workshops and places of trade. In fact it has become a kind of second nature, a national heredity, and in its extreme forms, our national vice. No Socialist can let this question alone. Every principle both moral and humanitarian which we profess must compel us to deal with the matter with a strong hand. It will be convenient if, in brief, I touch upon one or two points in which Socialists, whether abstainers or not, are bound to give their attention to the trade in drink and to the social habits connected with the use of drink.

Socialists, if they are such in any sensible and intelligent degree, must deal with the drink trade because it is beyond all other trades harmful to the wage-earner and much too favourable to the capitalist. The wealth of brewers, like their piety, is almost a proverb, only the one is much more real than the other. The value of public-house property is still notorious. No other business so enhances the value of the property it uses, while no other trade so depreciates all property contiguous to the locality in which it is carried on. Now, Socialists complain, and rightly so, of the unfair division of products in all trades as between the employer and the

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employed, the capitalist and the worker. If there is any justice in this complaint against ordinary trades, it may be made with tenfold force against the trade in drink. This robbery of the workman by the big brewers begins in the malt-house, goes on in every barrel of beer, or bottle of spirits and wine, continues its operation in the retail of the drink, and fleeces the customer all round. With enormous profits at one end and little work, we have at the other poor pay, bad drink, and unjust dealing with the drinker. The servants of the trade are, in comparison with the capitalists engaged in it, worse paid than the match-box makers, the East-end tailors, and the sack-makers. If we want a big field for our first fight with capital we shall find none more favourable for our enthusiasm and for just reform than in the drink trade.

In the matter of "hours of work," this trade sins against the worker more than any other. From six in the morning to ten, eleven and twelve at night is the working-day in the retail part of this trade, while in other departments, it is to a great extent work without the full Sunday's rest. Where, too, are the bank holidays in this business? And let it not be forgotten that in the public-houses most of these overworked and underpaid people are young girls. Is it nothing to us as fathers and mothers that such should be the case? Can we fold our hand while all this goes on? We, at least some of us, say hard things against the long hours in drapers' and milliners' shops, and there is a demand by some semi-Socialists for the application of the Factory Act to such places. But surely the first reform in the hours of work ought to come in that business over which *now* the law has control.

In the drink trade, not only does the capitalist make monstrous profits and the workers get low wages and long hours, but the customer is taxed to an enormous extent. Of course some people will greatly rejoice at this. Upon moral grounds I greatly sympathize with them; but upon no just principal of taxation can I approve of the unparalleled amount of taxes raised through the Excise. All of it comes out of the pocket of the customer, and he is, am sorry to say, often one of the working-class. From the Socialist point of view this taxation of the wage-earners is not fair, and we ought not in principle, to condone it. If it is thought desirable to make drink dear, that may be done, but not by a system of taxation which relieves the wealthy at the expense of the poor, and lightens the burdens of the rich by adding to those of the toilers. In these three respects—the enormous profits of the capitalists in the trade, the poor wage and long hours of most of the workers engaged in it, and the unfair taxation enforced upon the poorer classes to the great advantage of the rich—in these respects the drink trade stands condemned by every principle dear to all Socialists.

But on other, quite other, and higher grounds, we must endeavour to deal with the drink trade and the drinking habits of the people. The social, moral, and individual effects of the trade, or rather of the drink, are such as to need no elaborate re-statement or proof. There are associated with the drink trade such a mass and variety of evils that the mere enumeration of them is literally appalling. More than half the distress amongst the poor, both in villages and in towns and cities, is associated if not caused by excessive or un-

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wise drinking. With what other trade, I ask, is crime so intimately connected as with the public-house trade? May not the same be said in regard to prostitution. How intimately too is ignorance, juvenile depravity, and a score of other social evils connected with drinking. Can Socialists hide this fact from themselves? Is it the highest wisdom to attempt to deal with these evils and yet to leave the drink trade and the habit of drinking alone? No! If we follow the effects of frequenting public-houses, the habit of Monday, Saturday night, and Sunday drinking, upon the individual what do we see? As Socialists we want good work done, with the highest motives, for good wages. What does drink do for that? Makes it impossible in the case of thousands of men who, otherwise, would be the finest operatives, and the best workmen in every trade. Every drinker who passes beyond the limits of a very severe moderation makes himself a less capable workman and citizen. Bad workmen bring wages down, are the worst of "knobsticks", are the first victims of the capitalist "grind," and handicap every other fellow-workman. But every drinker who spends as thousands do, an undue proportion of his wage in drink does harm to his co-workers. He deals at the very shop, where hours are longest, wages poor, and the master's profits enormous. He becomes a bad workman, keeps a poorly furnished house, wears indifferent clothes, begets sickly children, adds to the force of fever and epidemics, makes paupers, and becomes more of a burden to the commonwealth than a strong, brave, capable citizen. And worse evils than even these ensue—evils from which the rich man can hide away, but from which honest, sober Socialists cannot. Public-houses, drinking, irregular work, incompetent workmen, and the hundred-and-one other evil concomitants of this trade, depress business, deteriorate localities, create slums, raise rents for bad houses, and compel honest folk to live with surroundings of oaths, vice and sin from which it is the work of Socialists to free them.

Drink shops and drinking are the greatest foes to Socialism. Most people think otherwise. They think that the Socialist is a mean, ill-dressed, lounging and bitter man, the frequenter of low "pubs" and the companion of indolent, idle, and dissolute men. The Socialists of London are not that. And they never will be. They do not draw their recruits from that class. The frequenters of the public house may play an important part in the Social Revolution that is coming; but they will be found on the side of the capitalist, the Tory, and the defender of every abuse. To the Socialist the friends of the publican are the most dangerous of foes. A drinking Socialist is unreliable, easily "got at," and not the man to go through with his work. In every aspect, then, the trade in drink and the habit of drinking, save with exact and severe restraint, are against Socialism and against all its highest and noblest aims.

The question is, how shall Socialists deal with this matter. For brevity's sake I will give my judgment and in a measure, for the present, suppress my reasons.

The application of Socialistic principles to this trade are, both in theory and in practice, not difficult. It is a public trade, intended for the use of the people; in its original intention almost

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as much so as the village pump, the common highway and the common land. It never was intended to be a private venture. As there are markets for food, so there are places for public resort for the "accommodation of man and beast," and the refreshment of travellers and men of business. The business of a publican has been, from time immemorial, for the public. The wishes and will of the public ought to be considered, even apart from Socialistic principles, in the management of the "public"-house trade. But further, in some measure our principles have been, in part, applied to the trade, and it is regulated by the Government, licensed and to a certain degree controlled. We must demand that this principle shall be carried out to its full extent. How far? Can Socialists go in for total prohibition? Certainly, if that be the will of the people. But I do not hesitate to say that such a proposal will never be carried in England. It may be possible in new countries; but, at least for the present, it is not within the range of practical politics. But regulation, control, and absolute possession of the trade for the public weal is not only possible, but necessary. One of the great needs of the future will be a proper public house! We shall require that more than ever, in every village, town, and city, according to the population and the public requirements.

What sort of a public house shall it be? Not a mere drink shop, where the capitalist makes money, where the workers are underpaid and over-worked, where bad articles are sold, heavily taxed, shamefully adulterated, and with the effect that the worst possible habits of life are cherished and developed—crime, poverty, and misery. The public house of the future must be a place of public resort, provided by the municipality, under indirect popular control and managed for the public good. It should be a Place of Rest for travellers, with needful accommodation; a Public Hall to be used for village, town, and city purposes; a Restaurant of the best order, where at reasonable prices food and drink can be obtained. It should also be a Place of Recreation, containing a play ground for children, and I would say for men also; reading room, free library, laundry, baths, writing room, waiting room, rooms for classes in technical subjects, and higher grades of education; and also a room for common worship, to be used under orderly arangements, by the whole citizenship of the municipality as they may desire. A public house, under the control of a popularly elected municipality, the profits to be used, if any, for public purposes, such as the care of the sick, the old, the poor, and the needy, with some help to education. An ideal, say some. Yes, for the present; but nothing impossible upon socialistic principles, or to socialistic hopes. A public house, in which drink should be but one of many things supplied, and that under rules by which mere drinking should not be easy.

But it may be said, when you have done this, what then? Men will drink. Doubtless, but if Socialists have their way, that habit will not be easy. In the Socialist's scheme the *Individual* will, I am bound to confess, have less mere freedom, or rather license, than now. In the public house I have suggested, much would be done to help men and women to be sober, to practise self-restraint, and to live worthy and happy lives. If they elect to do

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otherwise, they will be dealt with. Socialists will not permit men and women to go on in a life of drunkenness. A repetition of five shillings and costs will give place to much more drastic treatment of obdurate drinking. There will be a strong public opinion against all ways of waste, both of character and of possession. The habitual drunkard will be put under restraint, as being next door to a criminal! The Socialists do not mean to let men do as they like with themselves. Parental responsibility as to the state of the home, the feeding and clothing of children, and their education will be enforced; public decency and morals, and the general conduct of the individual will be much more a matter of public action than now, and the drinker will not be allowed to ruin himself, his wife, his children, and harm the State as we find it to day. With shorter hours of work, better earnings, a fair share of profits; with brighter homes, more education, and recreation, there will be less temptation to drink. Idleness will not be permitted, nor will waste. In the new community the individual will have the fullest scope for a strong, industrious, healthy, and happy life; but he will have much less temptation to, and much less opportunity for a life of vice. If, however, he yields to the less temptation he will be dealt with in a manner more severe than pleasant. The critics of this paper will be many. It will not satisfy the strong abstainer; it may offend some Socialists; it will excite the scorn it may be of the tippler and his friends. Yet it may do good. Socialists are bound to consider the question. In the general programme of the future the public house and the drink make up so large an item that they will demand and deserve especial attention. For the present I admit that my public house is but a castle built in the air; but there is much comfort in the thought that all things which have been done were first only real to the thinker and the dreamer. It will more than content me if this article should lead many Socialists to consider, with practical purpose, the question of NATIONAL SOBRIETY.

GEO. S. REANEY.

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Ferdinand Freiligrath.

IN August 1845 Freiligrath wrote his "Leipzig's Todten," and in in February, 1846, the "Requiescat," that grand song of labouring humanity, which no translation can adequately reproduce, for it is written with warm heart's blood. However, rather than pass it over altogether, I will quote two verses of it in Mary Howitt's translation:

Whoe'er the ponderous hammer wields;
Whoe'er compels the earth to flourish;
Or reaps the golden harvest fields,
A wife and little ones to nourish;
Whoever guides the laden bark;
Or, where the mazy wheels are turning,
Toils at the loom till after dark,
Food for his white-haired children earning;

To him be honour and renown!
Honour to handicraft and tillage;
To every sweat-drop falling down
In crowded mill or lonesome village!
All honour to the plodding swain
Who holds the plough! Be't too awarded
To him who toils with soul and brain,
And starves! Pass him not unregarded.

And now appeared his "Ca ira," in which he stands forth as the singer of the Revolution, from which alone he now looked for salvation; the Revolution which was to sweep away all injustice, all wrong. There are only six poems in the tiny volume, which lies before me in its original form of faded yellow paper with the "Ca ira" in dim red letters. But what poems! Rudolf Gottshall has happily called the earlier poets of that time the stormy petrels of the Revolution, "Freiligrath," he says, "in his 'Ca ira' is the storm itself." The first "Vor den Fahrt," is written in the rhythm of the "Marseillaise"; the second is "Eispalast," in which he compares the State to the Palace of Ice built on the frozen Neva and swept away in its thaw to the sea. "Von Unten auf" is the reflections of a stoker on a Rhine steamer, which carries the King

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and Queen to Stolzenfels, whilst he looks out of his engine-room to snatch a breath of air.

In "Wie man's macht," he prophesies how the arsenals shall be stormed by the people, arms seized and distributed, and uniforms allotted all round.

The volume closes with the wonderfully defiant lines, "Springen," in which he compares the world to a game of chess and tells how he is hunted by the caprices of the game from land to land. Little he recks this, however, while the ocean roared round Norway's free peasant homes, while from France sounded the clash of broken chains, while England never yet had refused shelter to a hunted man, while a friend's hand still beckoned from the banks of the Ohio.

As far as I know no translation of these remarkable poems has ever been even attempted, and I doubt whether any rendering could touch the original with its white heat of indignation, with its sonorous verse where you hear the crash of the ice, the rattle of the bullets, the dull thud of the engines. They must always be considered as the most remarkable of political poems of that or of any age. It is not so much the cry of party that stirs one so deeply in reading these volcanic effusions, as the cry of suffering and down-trodden humanity. It is the voice of a poet, who, regardless of what may be the consequence to himself, utters what he considers right and true; and it is that which has given them their immense power and influence, and it is that and that alone which gives them a poetical value to-day, quite apart from strife and faction. With these poems, Freiligrath became the chosen singer of the Revolution.

But after their publication even Switzerland was no longer a safe abode for him, and he therefore turned his steps to England, although he knew that he should have to enter the commercial life he had quitted so gladly, for the sake of earning a livelihood for the wife and family now growing up around him. Uncomplainingly he acquiesced in the inevitable, and in February, 1846, he was in London. He had had hopes of entering into a house of business at once, but in this he was disappointed. He found a situation, however, presently in the house of Messrs. Huth where he remained till 1848. True, he had many offers of help; notably from William and Mary Howitt, Lord Lytton (then Sir Edward Bulwer), and from Longfellow, who urged him earnestly to come over and settle in America, offers that filled him with affectionate gratitude to the end of his life. But it was not to be. He had his eye turned ever to Germany and to the revolution which he knew must come and which he so eagerly expected. The literary work of these two years is not large, his time being taken up by office work, which, it may not be out of place to say here, was invariably performed with the most zealous conscientiousness, now as at all other times of his life. But his poem, "Ireland," written in the year of the famine, will not easily be forgotten; while his wonderful translations of Hood's "Song of the Shirt," and "The Bridge of Sighs" date from the same year. Of the first named poem I will quote one verse in Mary Howitt's sympathetic translation:

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A wailing cry sweeps like a blast
The length and breadth of Ireland through,
The west wind which every casement passed
Brought to mine ear that wail of sorrow.
Faint, as a dying man's last sigh,
Came o'er the waves, my heart-strings searing,
The cry of woe, the hunger cry,
The death cry of poor weeping Erin.

And then came the Revolution in Italy, in France, and all over Germany; and Freiligrath, in those wildly agitated months, poured out his soul in strains as earnest and fiery as any in the "Ca Ira." In "Im Hochland feil der erste Schuss," in "Die Republik," and in "Schwarz-Roth-Gold" he hails the revolution with all the glad and deep emotion his soul was capable of. But already on the 25th of March he sings his wonderful song, "Berlin," in which he grieves for the fallen of the 18th, and warns against oppression and reaction. And then he left his shelter in England, and the month of June found him, together with his family, in Düsseldorf, ready to take his part in the struggle for freedom. His next poem was a political variation of Burn's poem, "For a' that," and is entitled "Trotz alledem!" Sharp and bitter as is the language contained in it, it is far eclipsed by the next poem, the famous "The Dead to the Living." This poem spread all over Germany in an incredibly short time, and was received everywhere with the wildest enthusiasm. This was written in the last days of July, and on the 4th of August it was moved that the poet should be made responsible for the revolutionary instigations contained in his verses. Freiligrath was, however, not interfered with until the end of the month, when he was arrested and put on his trial early in October of the same year. He was triumphantly acquitted, and his return home was made the scene of a striking popular demonstration. The poem is too well known to need much quotation, but a short extract (in the late Mr. Bayard Taylor's translation) may serve to shew its *sæva indignatio:*

Too much of scorn, too much of shame, heaped daily on your head—
Wrath and Revenge *must* still be left,—believe it, from the Dead!
It *does* remain, and it awakes—it shall and must awake!
The Revolution, half complete, yet wholly forth will break!
It waits the hour to rise in power, like an up-rolling storm,
With lifted arms and streaming hair, a wild and mighty form!
It grasps the rusted gun once more, and swings the battered blade,
While the red banners flap the air from every barricade!
Those banners lead the German Guards, the armies of the Free—
Till princes fly their blazing thrones and hasten towards the sea!
The boding eagles leave the land—the lion's claws are shorn—
The sovereign people, roused and bold, await the Future's morn!

Undaunted by persecution, Freiligrath now moved to Cologne, to become one of the editors of the New Rhenish Gazatte, with Karl Marx. In the feuilleton of this paper appeared his poems: "Wien," "Blum," "Ungarn," (finely translated by Ernest Jones); his indignant verses against Cavaignac, "Reveillé," and in May, 1849, his defiant "Farewell of the New Rhenish Gazette." I can here only quote the two last verses of this fine poem in Ernest Jones' translation, which like all his renderings of Freiligrath, combine the poetry and the vigour of the original to a remarkable degree.

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Farewell! farewell! thou turbulent life!
Farewell to ye! armies engaging.
Farewell! cloud canopied field of strife!
Where the greatness of war is raging.
Farewell! but not for ever farewell!
They can *not* kill the spirit, my brother,
In thunder I'll rise on the field where I fell,
More boldly to fight out another.

When the last of crown's like glass shall break,
On the scene our sorrows have haunted,
And the people the last dread "Guilty" shall speak,
By your side ye shall find me undaunted.
On Rhine or on Danube, in word and deed,
You shall witness, true to his vow,
On the wrecks of thrones, in the midst of the freed,
The rebel, who greets you now!"

Freiligrath remained a year in Cologne after the collapse of the Gazette, and published his volume, "Zwischen den Garben," in which he for the first time inserted his "O lieb so lang Du lieben kannst." As poems of special interest may still be mentioned: "Klänge des Memnons"; "Kreuzigung" with its grand historic background; and the vivid and glowing "Hospitalschiff," a poem which appears to me one of the most characteristic of Freiligrath's earlier writings, and whose absence from the first volume I have always regretted. Most of the others have been alluded to at the time of their production. Translations from Alphonse de Lamartine, Longfellow, Wordsworth, Hood, Allan Cunningham, and from Scott's Border Minstrelsy complete the volume.

He now went to live near Düsseldorf, where he stayed till May, 1851. He had been molested in many ways, and had, for the last two years, never been sure of being tolerated anywhere. The second part of his "Neuere politische and soziale Gedichte" being now ready for publication, he foresaw another lawsuit with probable arrest, to avoid which he once more sought the shores of England. He got off safely, and as he had foreseen, was indicted immediately afterwards for conspiracy against the State. Public advertisements for his capture were issued by the Government, to which he replied in the *Cologne Gazette*, repudiating that such had been his intentions. His next endeavour was to find regular work to do, which, difficult in London at any time, was trebly so to him now. Many houses declared that their doors would not be open to him. And it required all his energy and self-reliance to bear up against the tide which was setting so strongly against him. The appearance of his new poems too was, commercilly speaking, not in his favour. The volume opens with "Revolution," which the fine translation of Ernest Jones has rendered familiar to the readers of this magazine some short time ago. Then comes a translation of Pierre Dupont, "Brod"; and then occurs the remarkable poem, "Am Birkenbaum," in which traits of the poet's own youth are blended with the "second sight" of the Westphalian people, culminating in the vision, grandly described, of the death of the last monarch in Europe. "Nach England" is the earnest outcry of the exiled poet, who vows that he will not allow the toil of every-day work to obstruct his poesy—a vow most nobly kept! His touching "Christmas Song for my

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Children" is well known; and again the volume closes with translations from Hood's and Barry Cornwall's socialistic poems.

In London he set to work compiling two Anthologies, until he should find some new opening. One is his, "Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock," which has for years remained the favourite selection from English poetry with the German public. The other is a German anthology, "Dichtung und Dichter," in which he strove to illustrate the different schools and forms of poetry by the poets themselves. As may be imagined this volume is a very monument of the most detailed and minute knowledge of the entire German literature, put together with the unerring taste and fine discrimination of a poet.

After a year he succeeded in obtaining a situation with a German house where he remained three years. He left this house in May, 1855, and again he was for a whole year without a situation; but in the winter of this year, he began and completed his translation of Longfellow's "Hiawatha." In June 1856, he was chosen as Manager of the London Branch of the General Bank of Switzerland, which post he retained until its dissolution in 1865.

Going back to the first year of his second exile, it may here be briefly said, that Freiligrath, seeing the hopelessness of the political situation in Germany as well as the impossibility of aiding with any efforts of his own, silently and quietly settled down to the work which he had found. During the next seventeen years we see him keeping aloof from all party faction and refraining from participation in the many dissensions that arose among the London refugees of 1848. From time to time he wrote a poem, which instantly made its way through all papers of the Fatherland, testifying to the undimished popularity of the exiled poet. Such poems were "On the death of Johanna Kinkal," which has been translated with much tender feeling by the late Adelaide Anne Proctor, from whose translation I may be allowed to quote one verse; —

"Like soldiers in a fight we stand
To lay a comrade low,
As if upon this foreign land
Shot by a cruel foe.
Our exile is a battle field,
And thou the first to fall;
We have our cause, we cannot yield,
One hope, one aim, for all!"

To the Schiller Centenary in London he contributed a noble cantata; also writing a second for the Germans in America. A poetic appeal for the sick and ageing poet, Julius Mosen, resulted in the latter being able to bring out his works in a collected form. On Ludwig Uhland's last birthday, Freiligrath greeted him with a poem of loving reverence, and thus, although he did not write much, yet that little showed, that although exiled he was not estranged from his country. As usual, translating went on hand in hand with other work, this being a constant and favourite recreation of the poet. From about this time date the translations of Burns' exquisite epistles as well as numerous songs of Herrick.

It was in 1865 that, owing to the dissolution of the Bank of Switzerland, he saw himself, at the approach of age, threatened

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again with trouble and uncertainty. The political horizon, too, grew dark and sombre, and in the summer of 1866 he gave expression to his feelings in his "Westphalian Summer Song," and later on in "Nadel und Draht" and "Allerlei Fanken," in which his sentiments find yet further expression. In the last fine poem there is the same glowing hope and belief in a united Germany, as had ever breathed in his most fervent aspirations.

It was now that the idea of a testimonial originated with the faithful friends in Barmen, who had remained true to him in all these years, and helpful when need was sorest. The poet was asked whether he would accept such a testimonial as was contemplated. He answered that he would right gladly if it came from the German people. For their sake had he given up all prospects in life and uncomplainingly endured a twenty years' exile; only at their hands would he accept his reward. The result was the "Freiligrath Dotation," which enabled the ageing poet to return to Germany in 1868, to spend the rest of his life in the country he had so loyally served, and he settled at Stuttgart. Only two years later the unexpected cyclone of 1870 burst over Germany, and Freiligrath hurled his "Hurrah, Germania" and "So wird es gescheh'n" into the first battle thunders. Long had he abstained from political song, but anger and righteous indignation were the red heat in which these splendid prophecies were fashioned. His song to his eldest son, "An Wolfgang im Felde," shows us the noble humanity of the poet; while the "Trumpet of Gravelotte" is in its pathos and utter simplicity of form, one of the finest war ballads in existence. In December he sang his touching "Freiwillige vor!" and concluded the series by his grand poem and dedication, "An Deutschland," with which he prefaces his collected works. Later on, he was wont to say quietly: "The unity of Germany has been achieved, not in the way we once dreamed of, but achieved nevertheless." This was in answer to some few who wondered that the revolutionary poet of 1848 had sung his war songs of 1870! The poems may be safely left to posterity, who will regard them as a fitting conclusion to a strangely-stirred and varied life. From now, to his death in March, 1876, Freiligrath wrote many of those poems which Goethe calls "Gelegenheits-Gedichte," in which is shown all the sunny humour with which the poet was peculiarly gifted, as all who remember him know full well. They may be read in his collected works, where also are to be found all his translations, which certainly deserve more than a passing mention at the end of an article, ranging as they do from Shakespeare and Spenser to Walt Whitman and Bret Harte. But it is not possible for me to do more than allude to them.

And so a remarkable and rich life lies concluded before us. The poet who was mourned by a nation, lives in its memory; and his songs, although the occasion for them has past away, remain now as then, keen-edged weapons against injustice, oppression and tyranny.

KATE FREILIGRATH-KRŒKER.

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The Unemployed.

"WITH the working people again it is not so well. Unlucky! For there are from twenty to twenty-five million of them. Whom, however, we lump together into a kind of compendious unity—monstrous but dim, far off—as the *canaille*, or more humanely as the masses . . . . . Dreary, languid, do these struggle in their obscure remoteness; their hearts cheerless, their diet thin. For them in this world rises no Era of Hope; hardly now in the other,—if it be not hope in the gloomy rest of death—for their faith too is failing. Untaught, uncomforted, unfed! A dumb generation; their voice only an inarticulate cry: spokesman in the King's Council, in the world's forum, they have none that finds credence. At rare intervals they will fling down their hoes and hammers; flock hither and thither; dangerous, aimless; get the length even of Versailles. Turgot is altering the Corn Trade; abrogating the absurdest Corn Laws: there is dearth, real or even were it 'fictitious,' an indubitable scarcity of bread. And so, on the second day of May, 1775, these waste multitudes do here, at Versailles Chateau, in wide-spread wretchedness, in sallow faces, squalor, winged raggedness, present, as in legible hieroglyphic writing, their petition of grievances. . . . . They have seen the King's face; their Petition of Grievances has been, if not read, looked at. For answer, two of them are hanged on 'a new gallows, forty-feet high,' and the rest driven back to their dens—for a time." The words in which Carlyle describes the condition of the French working-class prior to the Revolution of 1789, is applicable word for word to the condition of the English working-classes in this year 1885. To assert this is sufficient to raise a smile on the countenance of the well-to-do upper or middle-class Englishman. As a rule he knows nothing of the conditions under which the workers exist, and in addition he is self-deceived by a curious process of which he himself is altogether ignorant. The deception is practised on him by the public press, on which he depends entirely for all information on social questions. The first thing demanded of a newspaper by its proprietor is that it shall pay a large profit. Profits in all cases can only be obtained by means of advertisements, and advertisements can never be obtained by an extreme paper, that is, a paper which states truthfully the condi-

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tion and feeling of the people. Hence no editor or writer of a single journal dares to write with a free hand the actual state of the case, for it would frighten their patrons, and what would become of the profits of the proprietor. The middle-class like their journals to repeat in rather clearer language their own ideas, and thus they go stumbling along, self-deceived because no journal will be tolerated which ventures to suggest that they are living in a fool's paradise, but they will be ere long rudely awakened by facts. They hire their statisticians as they do their journalists, and the Giffens, the Levis, and other figure-fudgers help to swell the general sense of contentment with which they regard this best of all possible worlds. In fact the statisticians are their most pleasant friends, perhaps; for while they prove that everybody is getting much better off, yet there is still sufficient room for the working-classes to improve their condition,—by their own efforts, of course —to prevent the feeling of satiety which might overwhelm the world if everybody were well off.

It is hopeless to think that anything but the logic of events will ever awaken these self-drugged dreamers. And yet the facts are patent to all who will regard what is passing under their eyes. Take the most pressing question of the day, the distress among the unemployed. It is only within the last few months that the press has admitted the existence of any exceptional distress though the industrial crisis has been going on for about two years. Even now on all sides it is minimised, and the press mentions it apologetically more as if it were a providential arrangement for affording scope to the charity of the rich, than a national disaster which unless met by vigorous and effective measures, threatens to be the commencement of a period of anarchy as certainly as it must be one of revolution. Curious too is the comfort which the press derives from the fact that the distress is equally great in all civilised countries. It would hardly seem to be matter for congratulation that other countries are equally unfortunate; it can only be accounted for by an analogy taken from the lower regions where devils are said to be comforted by the fact that other poor devils are equally badly off with themselves.

What then are the facts to-day? We are face to face with an industrial depression as severe and far more widely spread than the Lancashire cotton famine of 1862-68. Take London first. Go into any street where workmen live and you will find that on an average something like 50 per cent. are out of work. Census of this character have been taken by the Social-Democratic Federation in different parts of London. At Clerkenwell there were found in Eastern Street, 67 in employment, 33 out of employment, 5 in partial work, in Pine Street, 19 in work, 27 out of work, 2 with a few days work in the week. In a street at Bow by no means of the poorest class, there were found to be 25 men in work, 39 men out of work, and 2 in partial employment. In Paddington and parts of Marylebone, investigations have lead to similar results. A visit to any of the dock gates at 8 o'clock any morning, will convince the most sceptical of the numbers of unemployed. There from any hour between 8 and 12, men may be seen literally fighting for the privilege of earning a few pence. Many of them

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are so exhausted from want of food that they are unable to do the work when they have got inside, while to see them come out in the evening is the most heartrending sight that can be conceived, men with large frames who ought to be strong as horses, tottering and staggering out exhausted with the severity of their labour. Again in St. James's Park any morning at 11 o'clock, thousands of unemployed may be seen in Birdcage Walk and outside St. James's Palace, not the loafers one sees there generally, but men who have been looking for work up till 10 or 11 o'clock, and have given up hopes of a job for that day. On the Saturday before the demonstration of the unemployed took place on the Embankment — a comrade and I began to address these men in St. James' Park. We were moved on by the police and a crowd of some 1,500 men followed us from the Park to the Embankment, where they listened earnestly and patiently to the suggestions we made for nearly an hour. There was no horseplay, but they were sober, anxious, desperate men, ready to hear any suggestions for remedying their terrible plight. Again employers of skilled and unskilled labour alike are inundated daily with applications for work. But instead of taking on fresh hands every day men are being discharged. There is less work in the docks, the railways are discharging men, all trade in the East-end is stagnant. Such is the actual state of London, and in stating that 50 per cent. of the working-classes are out of work or at least only in partial work, the assertion is borne out by the returns of the various trade societies in the metropolis. One trade union alone has paid in the last quarter in London £1,200 to members out of work. If we turn to the provinces the outlook is as dreary as in the metropolis itself. The distress among the shipwrights on the Tyne, the Clyde, the Tees, and the Wear, has forced itself so obtrusively on public attention that it is hardly necessary to dwell on it here. When I was in Glasgow in October last the distress was appalling, while very recently the Mayors of Sunderland and Jarrow have made public appeals on behalf of the starving in their respective towns. In Birmingham three months ago it was admitted by the municipal authorities that there were between 3,000 and 4,000 unable to get any work. In Nottingham there have been constant demonstrations of the unemployed, while in Hull, Bristol, and many of the centres of the cotton industry, the misery of the workers is almost unprecedented. Space will not allow me to touch on the condition of each industrial centre, but the coal-mining is such an important industry on which so many others hang, that I will just say a few words on the situation. There is not actual want of employment, though many mines are working short time, but wages are terribly low, not enough to keep body and soul together. In the Durham and Cleveland district, where probably the strongest trades' union in England exists, wages are only at 19s. a-week, while the miners of South Staffordshire are receiving only 14s. to 16s. With distress, starvation and despair surrounding us on every side the press of the country dismisses this unprecedented situation in half-a-dozen lines and turns to some topic more congenial to its proprietors and constituents. "The prophets prophesy falsely; and my people love to have it so—and what shall be done in the end thereof."

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The journal which takes for its motto "Be just and fear not," sneers at the Demonstration of the unemployed held under the auspices of the Social Democratic Federation, and says "Never did starving men receive poorer consolation than that afforded by the socialist speakers who told them that what they wanted was land and capital." Now Socialists, not being for the most part newspaper proprietors, shipowners, or owners of iron-works, cannot feed their fellow-workers. But they can show how the workers are robbed and how depressions arise, and they can further show how alone that robbery can be stopped and how industrial depressions can be avoided. It can only be done permanently by nationalizing the means of production.

But it is untrue to say that this is the only suggestion which is made by Socialists to meet the present distress. There have been laid before the Government certain proposals which are economically sound, and which could be carried out immediately by a vigorous executive. First it is proposed that all works of public utility should be commenced at once. For instance, here in London it is well known that the south bank of the Thames has for a long while needed embanking. Then the new buildings for the Admiralty aad War Office might be put in hand immediately. The Local Government Board, through its mouth-piece, Mr. G. W. E. Russell, intimated to the deputation of unemployed that the Board would grant permission to local bodies to raise loans for the carrying out of useful works. In many districts of London streets want paving, baths and wash-houses erecting, sewerage constructing, and the like. Such steps as these promptly taken would alleviate the immediate distress, and would put large numbers in work besides those actually employed on the public works. If the Government want a precedent they cannot do better than refer back to the Lancashire Cotton Famine. At that time public works such as those above enumerated, were commenced within a fortnight! A loan of £1,500,000 was advanced to local bodies at 3½ per cent., and the works were satisfactorily carried out; the most remarkable feature being that the cost of administration was less than 3s. 6d. per cent. For this fact Sir R. Rawlinson, himself the chief organiser of the works, is authority. What was done in 1864 can surely be done in 1885.

The error committed was that no other measures followed the immediate relief which was afforded by the institution of these works. A revival in trade ensued, and no precautions were taken to prevent the recurrence of similar industrial depression. The legislation of a governing class is always from hand to mouth, unless it is accompanied by strong pressure from without.

Simultaneously with the starting of these public works a short Act should be passed giving the Metropolitan Board of Works powers to erect artizans' dwellings as well as to pull them down. Nothing more senseless could have been devised than to give the Board of Works only such powers as would necessarily increase the overcrowding of the working classes. This mistake should be corrected with the rapid action which the House of Commons showed itself capable of by the passing of the Explosives Act. The building of artizans' dwellings should then be commenced on the

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sites which have been so long vacant throughout the metropolis. In Tooley Street, Clerkenwell Rd., Gray's Inn Rd., in St. Pancras and many other localities, sites are available. More work would be thus afforded, while there would be a nearer prospect of relieving overcrowding and bad housing than is afforded by the suggestions of the Royal Commission.

This being done, a Bill limiting the hours of work to eight in all trades should be quickly passed. The limiting the hours of labour would greatly increase the opportunities of employment. To take the railways alone, the men are kept at work at least twelve hours, and very often fourteen and sixteen hours. To reduce the hours of labour by law to eight, would mean the employment of half as many men again as are now employed in this industry, and if we look at the published returns of the railway companies, it is clear that they can well afford to pay more for the labour by which the whole machine is kept going. The total working expenditure of the railways of the United Kingdom amounts to thirty-seven millions odd, while the net receipts, that is the shareholders' profits, are thirty-three millions. Out of the working expenditure, not more than eleven millions are paid in wages at an outside estimate, while much of that sum even goes to highly-paid managers and directors, the amount which the actual workers take being thus further reduced. Clearly then, the shareholders even under the present system might well afford to employ half as many men again without much loss to themselves, while the increased certainty of safety in travelling would be an enormous advantage to the general public.

What could be done in the railways could equally well be done in factories and shops. When we see accounts of young men and young women working twelve to fifteen hours a day in shops, it must be clear to everyone that for the sake of the well-being of the community, legislative interference of a stringent character is absolutely necessary. But many, even of the workers, fear that an eight hours' Bill would drive away trade from the country, and that it is better for some to be overworked and some without work rather than that all should be without work. But if we examine the working of the Factory Acts, we find that the curtailment of the hours of labour led to the invention of machinery running at increased speed, which made up for the shortened hours of labour. No trade whatever was lost to the country. The same thing would occur again on the reduction of the labour day to eight hours: it is for this reason that if it were attempted to stop here in the social revolution, the lot of the workers would, in a short time, be as deplorable as it is to-day. The advantages of shortening the hours of labour are that more leisure would be given to the working-classes, and in the first instance employment would be given to a larger number of workers. Thus a breathing space would be given for the peaceful accomplishment of the industrial revolution of the Nineteenth Century.

If we turn again to another proposition, put forward by the Social-Democratic Federation, that "light relief works should be started for women or men who are incapable of heavy labour," it will be seen that this, too, is a perfectly practicable proposal. For example, if there is one subject on which the national conscience

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has been aroused, it is on the sweating system. And yet policemen's clothes, and some post-office and army uniforms are regularly given out to "sweaters," who only pay their unfortunate employés rates of wages which enable them to make 5s. to 6s. a week by the most strenuous exertion. Their condition surely calls for some attention at the hands of a Government. What is to prevent factories from being built, not necessarily in our crowded towns, but outside, where, under wholesome conditions, the work which is now done in fever-stricken garrets and sweaters' dens might be carried on for the benefit of all concerned.

Lastly, there is the proposal to cultivate and work with improved machinery all land, which, in the opinion of skilled agriculturists, it would best pay to cultivate. To be an agriculturist to-day requires an encyclopædic knowledge which it is very certain that most of our farmers do not possess. Thousands of acres of land now out of cultivation could be worked to pay under the direction of skilled men. Many of the unemployed who have been driven into the towns would gladly be at work on the land once more at a sufficient rate of wages. The advantage to the country at large in raising more of our food supplies at home must be manifest to all.

Such are the prospects which Socialists put forward as stepping stones to a complete revolution. As I have already pointed out they are but stepping stones; for if the public works such as I dwelt on above are started and abandoned when this crisis is over, without for instance, giving power to the various local bodies all over the country to deal with the question of the housing of the poor; and if this be done without being followed up by an eight hour's Bill, all the trouble under which the workers are now suffering, will return with redoubled force.

It will be necessary, therefore, to carry forward simultaneously, or at any rate closely after these reforms, a rapid nationalisation of the various industries. It has often been pointed out by Socialists that the railways and shipping industries which are entirely owned by shareholders and entirely worked by paid servants could be worked by the State at once. The joint stock system is but a step towards nationalisation, and many industries have arrived at this period of economic development, and are ready to be worked by the nation for the benefit of the nation.

These are the proposals of Socialists by which a peaceful reorganisation of Society may be commenced. Refuse all reform and anarchy will be brought about! Attempt to stop reform short at any point saying. "Thus far and no farther," and again anarchy will be upon you! Is this foolish talking? Let those who imagine so step down and hear what these workers are saying. It is impossible to form an estimate of their real opinions from parish teas, emigration committees, Sunday schoolteachers, and the like. Talk to men in a workmen's train and again and again you will hear the tale that they are ready to do anything to put a stop to the present state of things.

One of the speakers at the demonstration was stopped in the streets by a man, a French polisher by trade, who had been out of work for four months. He gravely suggested that a raid should be organised on the bakers' shops. Nor is such talk confined to

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single individuals. Knots of men in the East End are constantly discussing similar questions. The feeling of bitterness is also spreading to the upper ranks of labour. Two years ago it would have been impossible for Thomas Burt to have made such a speech as he made a short time back to the working men of Paris, denouncing capitalists, stock-jobbers, loan-mongers, and the like. Again, for three years Socialism has been preached at the street corners and in the clubs of London. The causes of their misery have been pointed out to workers. I myself in speaking at a large number of open-air and other meetings have never failed to gain the sympathy of the working-class portion of my audience. This may not mean much at the time, but when trouble comes upon them they remember what they have heard from Socialist speakers. Warned by the failure of the Chartists of 1848, who stirred the provinces but left London alone, we are to-day directing all our efforts to stirring the nation of five millions which lives around the centre of capitalism. Every day events go to prove that we have to a great extent stirred them, while provincial centres are being greatly influenced by our example and our branches. The demonstration of the 16th February on the Thames Embankment, when, in spite of pouring rain, some 7,000 unemployed men assembled to march and demand work from the Government showed the real temper of the working classes much more than was allowed by the capitalist press. All the speakers were most enthusiastically received, the men there perfectly understood what was said, and endorsed every word of it. If further proof is needed it will be seen in the demonstration of the working classes which is to be held under the auspices of the Social-Democratic Federation on Sunday, April 12th.

These being the facts, the distress being very real, and the temper of the working classes very bitter, what is the Government prepared to do? Is it in a position to refuse a demand for work backed by such a show of force. In Egypt, the Soudan and South Africa, every available soldier is required. The Russian advance on Herat demands troops for India. Lord Spencer writes piteously that he will not be responsible for Ireland if any more troops are taken away, and earthworks are being thrown up within the walls of Dublin Castle. The Highland Crofters are ready to press their claims on the attention of the Government by force if need be, scant attention having been paid to their peaceful agitation. In addition to all this the governing classes have not got a single ally on the Continent, while the relation with our Australian colonies, in spite of tall talk about Federation, is more than strained.

Such is the state of affairs. Is this the time to play with the forces of Revolution? Patriotism is a dead word to the working classes. "The land is not our land, we have no lot or part or interest with our governing classes. Their misfortune is our opportunity." The truth of this language cannot be denied; and Socialists, unlike the Farmers' Alliance who thought it would not be polite to harass the Government during the last session, mean to press the Government as hard as possible at the present juncture. If they yield at all, as yield they must to the reasonable

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requests of the working classes, it will be our business to urge forward reform after reform till the revolution is accomplished. Socialists are men with an ideal, but we shall not be content to have our ideal realised 200 years hence, whilst thousands are going down to the grave daily without a gleam of better things brightening any portion of their lives. We the men of to-day wish to enjoy the benefits of the Social Revolution and to secure that end we press forward.

The governing classes are being constantly warned of the gravity of the situation. Will they take the warning, or will it be left for future historians to point out the blindness which prevented them from seeing the plainest signs of anarchy which are around them to-day? If they refuse ostrich-like to recognise them and to initiate a peaceful revolution, then on them will rest alike the murder of the workers by starvation of to-day, and the universal anarchy and misery of to-morrow.

R. PERCY B. FROST.

To-Day and To-Morrow.

Let us arise and quit ourselves like men
Nor be of those who hug their gold; and say:
"To-morrow shall be with us as to-day
Yet more abundant;" Far beyond their ken
Lies the to-morrow we would strive for; when
None shall upon his brother's shoulder lay
The burden that himself should bear, none pray
For life and hope yet die unheeded then.

To-day we sow; To-morrow we shall reap;
We hope To-day; To-morrow we shall see;
To-day the goal is clear, but not the way
To reach it. If To-day we work and weep,
Yet when To-morrow cometh—it shall be
The brighter for the conflict of To-day!

MARY GRACE WALKER.

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The Terriers and the Rats and the Mice and the Cats.*

A FABLE.

(*Reprinted from "Songs of the Governing Classes"*).

Once on a time—no matter how
(By force of teeth, or mere "bow-wow,"
Let studious minds determine)—
The Terriers upon Ratland seized
Its natives hunted, worried, teas'd,
In short—exactly what they pleas'd,
Did with the whiskered vermin.

They eat them up, when bones ran short
They chased them to their holes for sport,
They seized their garnered riches,
The toothsome cheese—the ripen'd grain,
Monopolised the sunny plain,
Leaving the Rats the loathsome drain,
The gutters, swamps, and ditches.

Coincidence is hist'ry's joy,
And while the Terriers fierce destroy,
Hunt, trample, rob, and feed on,
The ever multiplying Rats,
The ancient warlike race of Cats,
Against the Mice in neighb'ring flats,
Like principles proceed on.

* This reprint is dedicated, without permission, to any English working class "leaders" who may be beginning to fancy themselves Terrriers.

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And so the Rats and Mice are cowed,
And so the Cats and Terriers proud,
  Live in triumphant clover;
The Terriers for the Rats make laws,
Cat legislation Mousedom awes,
Each conquered people—teeth or claws
  Held *in terrorem* over.

Spite of the Terriers throve the Rats,
Not quite so well beneath the Cats
  Got on the pigmy friskers.
Right jolly dogs the Terriers were,
For bones and pastime all their care
(Besides the Rats would sometimes dare
  To shew their teeth and whiskers!)

So long as Tripe and Lights galore
Were in the Lordly kennel's store,
  The Rats might live and welcome;
Nay—(birds and coneys deft to chase)—
Their Rulers gave them sun and space
Only in dearth and famine's case,
  Then would the subjects' knell come!

Not so the Cats—not so the Mice;
Grimalkin's tastes are high and nice,
  And Mousey's views fastidious.
Cat never likes to leave the house
O'er plains to run, in streams to souse,—
Familiarity with Mouse
  Were profanation hideous!

'Tis Mouse's place to yield him food
On Mouse's ever teeming brood,
  'Tis his to feed and fatten.
He by the chimney corner sits
In velvet coat and silken "mits"
Watching his spotless, thriving kits
  Who but on mouse flesh batten.

But Mice are small, quick-witted wights,
With large, round eyes that see great lights;
  To live and feed and revel
They felt their right, and nowise scared,
(Save prudently) their tyrants dared
To criticize—and schemes prepared
  To send them to the devil.

They met in corners and in holes,
These small conspirators with souls
  For Truth and Action mighty.
Their themes—Existence, Corn, and Cheese,
On which their purring tyrants seize,
No panic fears their councils freeze,
  No visions wild or flighty

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Their projects mar. Mere common sense
Directs their plans—"The Cats must hence
And we about must bring it.
Many must die ere ends our wrong;
Speak, Orators! the weak make strong,
Each singing Mouse that knows a song
That's warlike, let him sing it."

The plans were ripe. The dozing Cats
On velvet chairs and fringèd mats,
Began to feel uneasy.
A needle through the cushion pokes;
A lighted match the whisker smokes;
('Tis wondrous how the smallest folks
Whom you have wrong'd can tease ye!)

And now a coat of furry silk
Is dabbed with pitch; and now, of milk,
A saucer rare is shattered.
And now a snow white paw that yet
Ne'er damp contamination met,
Steps on a marbled floor with wet
And slimy mud bespattered.

Up went the Lordly backs with rage,
"So, ho! the pigmies dare to wage
A war with us!" they muttered.
"Quick measures prompt we'll make suffice"—
Their claws they sharpened in a trice;
A thousand palpitating Mice
About their court yards fluttered.

But little Mice have kindred wide,
For every little mangled hide
Of victim sleek and glossy,
A score of bead-like eyes burn bright
For vengeance—in the cellar's night,
In workshop's gloom, on gran'ry's height,
Out in the cornfield mossy.

From far and near the myriads came,
Vengeance and Right, the pigmies claim—
"Down with the Traps and Poison!"
White gleam the teeth and red the eye;
The Tyrant cats torn piece-meal die,
Or panic-stricken, howl and fly,
Pressed by the madd'ning noise on.

The Mice were freed! The Cats who fled,
With draggled fur and eyes all red,
And most with haunches gory—
All blinded by their wild'ring fear,
Plunged swimming o'er the neigh'bring mere
To Ratland; and I've kept till here
The marrow of my story.

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The Terriers met them on the shore:
They had been ancient foes before,
  But still the Curs were kindly.
They gave them milk, and fire and food,
Marvelling in their houndish mood,
How Cats to rule an insect brood
  Of Mice, could fail so blindly.

Answered the Cats, "Nay, marvel we,
If little Mice so dauntless be,
  How you the Rats can master—
A fiercer race." The Terriers laugh'd,
"Had you but learnt our plans to graft
On yours, you'd had a certain raft,
  To cling to in disaster."

The Cats in chorus mew'd, "Explain,
Oh teach us how to pow'r regain,
  And, faith, those mice shall rue it!"
The Terriers said, "'Tis now too late,
You should have earned their love, not hate;
We our fierce Rats conciliate,
  And this is how we do it:

"When game and birds are far from cheap,
And we, a little extra deep,
  Are forced for private eating,
Into the Rats to dip—and they
Turn rusty, and their tusks display
(As once they will do in a way),
  With reeds and spear grass, meeting,

"We beckon out the biggest rat,
And ask him with a friendly pat,
  To join our side—the merrier.
We teach him how to bark; with shears,
We dock his tail and trim his ears,
Give him some bones to calm his fears,
  And tell him he's a Terrier."

R. B. Brough.

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