

No. 181.
Saturday, March 21, 1914.Men Say That Even
A Worm Will Turn

If what is going on East and West in connection with the unemployed does not show American workers the hollowness of words, clinch their growing distrust of cater-to-the-rich leaders and kill their self-conceit, they will prove themselves sunk beneath all possibility of education. Eternally they have had it dinned into their ears by interested officials that they are the salt of the earth, and that they are being treated as offal. Eternally they have been told to look to the State for protection; and in their hour of utmost need the State has mocked their misery with the fireman's hose, the policeman's billy and the soldier's rifle. Eternally they have been told to hold the fort and organize on the job; and now it is being demonstrated to them, one hopes conclusively, that they have not so much as one inch of shelter against their enemies, while their jobs are either non-existent or held by a thread so frail that the master's whim can break it at any moment. In San Francisco the carpenters, for example, number thousands and have prided themselves on their union's strength. Today, according to the best information at my command, two-thirds of them are out of work and dependent on the charity of those still able to hold down a job. They are superfluous mendicants, and elimination of the superfluous is a universal and inevitable law.

About two thousand of these artificially-created superfluities—for whom my sympathy is of the deepest, since I myself have been one of them—recently set out on their pilgrimage from San Francisco, where they had herded under conditions that would have goaded an Esquimaux into running amuck. From their first halting-place, Oakland, they were driven in the early morning, still breakfastless, by the policeman's club. At Richmond, their next stop, they fared a trifle better, for the town is a small one and the authorities inclined to caution. But they had to move on, and they got to Sacramento. There the Oakland experiences were repeated, but with infinitely greater cruelty. They were doused with water from the fire-department hoses, and blinded with steam from the railroad company's engines. Thus rendered incapable of retaliation they were clubbed most brutally and driven across the river bridge into another county, which also had armed itself to repel them. For more than a week past the military tactic employed has been that of starving them into dispersion. Whither they shall go their enemies, the comfortably well-to-do, care not one jot. What they are to do is nobody's business. The one thing is to get rid of these workmen—Oh! Irony of language!—of these obnoxious superfluities.

How do the papers, which the workman reads and supports, handle this question? When the movement is still young and its future uncertain they feel their way. When it has grown and begins to show its teeth they scent a big story, and put their human-interest crack writers to work on it. When it weakens, since it has no economic foundation and is trying to make bricks without straw, they smother it with contempt. The "Los Angeles Times" urges the "army"—again what irony of language!—to hike hot-foot for the Colorado River, where a shipload of beer, abandoned by smugglers, has been discovered. Other papers follow suit. Occasionally a radical paper, such as the San Francisco "Bulletin," treats the problem with some show of dignity, but this is the exception. The general attitude is that the men concerned are clearly superfluous and, therefore, "To hell with them." Our laws, you understand, are for the protection of property. That human life is in itself the highest form of property only a crack-brained Anarchist would dream.

Step across the continent, to New York City; where the patently unemployed are estimated at 350,000. With God only knows how many who hide their sad condition. First, the author-

ities establish an employment bureau, which registers names by thousands. Unhappily it cannot manufacture jobs. The pressure—the awful pressure of utter want faced by an almost Arctic winter—increases and wrings ominous mutterings even from those whose spirit the mills of misfortune have ground to dust. A leader arises; a mere youth, with whom, as one supposes, the innate flame of rebellion has not been quenched by time. He proposes that they invade the churches, where the doctrine of human brotherhood is preached. At least the buildings promise shelter. "This is the man," says the mob, always longing for a Messiah, and it follows him. "This is the man," say the authorities, always on the look-out for a modern Christ, who "stirreth up the people." So Tannebaum—such is this rash youth's name—is arrested; his bail is placed at \$5000, which is subsequently raised to \$7500, and they write me that he faces a sentence of not less than five years. The workingmen, or would-be workingmen, will attack, will they? Let them learn that society—our goods-society—means to protect itself. Who are the unemployed, or, for that matter, those whom we still keep at work? Superfluities. Most of them are producing mere luxuries, with which, at a pinch, we can easily dispense. If the others prove a nuisance we will get machines to take their place.

The San Francisco "Bulletin" has been treating our Pacific Coast labor troubles gravely, and Pauline Jacobson has handled the Sacramento end like a civilized being. She has written philosophically, and passed in review the twenty years that have elapsed since Coxey marched to Washington. She notes the psychological changes that have taken place; shows how the magazine "muckrakers" started the ball rolling by exposing the infamies of high finance; dwells on the attacks made by Single-Taxers, Socialists, Anarchists, all the great army of modern thought which has been setting into motion the avalanche of national and world-wide discontent. She knows the mental make-up of the present armies, and warns us that it is vastly different from that of the men who followed Coxey; that it has no longer any belief in the good-will or ability of Washington; that its hope lies in the future; that it is not hankering for jobs but for industrial freedom, and that it is marching on a crusade for the "spread of enlightened discontent." As yet it plays passive resistance, stands exclusively on the defense and endures meekly the torture and abuse to which Authority, at the behest of barbarous profit-mongering, subjects it. Perhaps, however, the day is not far distant when it will move to the attack, copy the military tactics today employed against it, and—improve on them.

Having alluded to the basic impotence of trades unionism and instanced the out-of-work carpenters; I bethink me that Pauline Jacobson quotes a professional investigator as reporting that in San Francisco he had found 2000 kits of carpenters' tools held in the Wells-Fargo Express Company's warehouse, the owners being unable to pay the expressage charges. It is a little bit of evidence, but one that proves conclusively how impotent, even for ordinary defense against the breakdown of a worn-out economic system, the unions are. As such it is worth a ton of Gompers' oratory or the mouthings of I. W. W. organizers who tell their audiences that at Paterson, at Lawrence and other points where the I. W. W. has been prominently active, the workers dominate their job. They do not. Nowhere in the United States do they. Nowhere, with the unemployed threatening them on one flank and impending mechanical changes on the other, are the would-be workers secure; and that insecurity will force them to the attack. With the realization of the situation as it is: with the mental change which will take place when the attacked becomes attacker; with the point of view revolutionized there will come, instantly, new tactics. Let us pray that they may prove as effective as those now in use are impotent, for it is senseless to prolong the birth-agony in which we have writhed so long.

WM. C. OWEN.

"It is in the United States, with its I. W. W., that we see organization having the clearest conception and manifestation of an organization conscious of both its DESTRUCTIVE as well as of its constructive mission," says "Wilshire's." Good, except that the editor failed to capitalize the word

"destructive," as we have done. Perhaps some day our Intellectuals will have the boldness to tell the proletariat that the destructive part of their program is the only one worth two pence. The reasons are as clear as day. The disinherited cannot build. For the other side have monopolized the materials. The class is in possession and the mass has to burn it out. The means of supporting life have been cornered, and the corner must be broken up.

As for the idea that the disinherited increase their power for attack by massing, it is more doubtful. Hitherto it is the individual guerrilla who has struck the really effective blows. Hitherto our huge labor organizations have served for little except to demonstrate the axiom that large bodies move slowly.

Bakunin's
Program.

It is easy to put things on paper, but to translate them into living fact is often a Herculean task. Look at the Anarchist movement, for example! It is now 1914, and we are thirty-two years from the date of the Geneva conference, at which, under the magic hand of Bakunin, the Anarchists published the following brief but most comprehensive summary of their views:

"We Anarchists—i. e. men who would be without rulers—fight against all who have usurped power, or who wish to usurp it. Our enemy is the owner who keeps the land for himself and makes the peasant work for his advantage. Our enemy is the manufacturer who fills his factory with slaves. Our enemy is the State—whether monarchical, oligarchical or democratic—with its officials and staff of officers, magistrates and police spies. Our enemy is every thought of authority, whether men call it God or Devil, in whose name the priests have ruled honest people so long. Our enemy is the law, under which the weak always oppress the weak, to the justification and apotheosis of crime.

"But, if the landowners, the manufacturers, the heads of the State, the priests and the law are our enemies, we are also theirs, and we oppose them boldly. We intend to reconquer the land and the factory from the landowner and the manufacturer. We mean to annihilate the State, under whatever name it may be concealed; and we mean to get our freedom back again in spite of priest or law."

How strong that terse declaration is; how it covers the field; how easy it would have been to make the masses understand it if it had been preached in its compelling simplicity! But it has been taught only in fragments, as this or that other section of what should be a uniform movement has made itself the apostle of some special phase. Yet, if the Anarchist philosophy is grasped in its entirety only by the few, we may say confidently that there is not a phrase in the foregoing to which tens of thousands do not pay mental allegiance today; not one which has not passed into this century's current thought. Let us consider them.

First, observe how the land question is thrust to the very front. Hundreds of thousands today indorse the position taken at Geneva. The whole proletarian world is in revolt against factory wage slavery. All thinking men recognize our huge and highly-centralized governments as the greatest menace of the age. No class' stock has fallen so low within the last generation as has that of the politician.

The Church? Free thought has swept the field, though timidly, begotten by dependence, forces millions to conceal their real convictions.

The Law? How universal and cynical is the current conception of the law as a net in which the little fish are caught, while the big escape. As for the general idea of Freedom, which is the cornerstone of Anarchy, what an enormous impetus it has received within the last generation in the domain of sexual relations!

Surely this vast movement, still so scattered, has to be bound together, that it may advance in its full bulk against the antiquated institutions that stand between it and its goal. For this, however, it must be propagated as a whole, and propagated in all that native simplicity which is the very essence of its strength, since its appeal is to the masses.

In this connection it may be well to recollect that Bakunin feared, above

all else, that a scientific hierarchy would creep into the seat from which modern thought was pushing the priest. His special prophesy was that, in the name of "Scientific Socialism," authority, subordination, discipline, all the paraphernalia of the barracks, would be worshipped; while the great ideals of emancipation, solidarity and humanitarianism would be denounced as Utopian. What a wise and far-sighted man was Bakunin!

Follow Kropotkin

This is a queer world, and everything seems to depend on who says disagreeable things. If you are a Cardinal Manning, you may declare publicly that a starving man has a natural right to help himself to food. Say that as an Emma Goldman and they will shut you up in prison for a year. A Prince Kropotkin may proclaim the social war in specific terms, with definite instructions how to carry it to success, and society will murmur, "How interesting!" Let a Mexican or other workingman talk in that strain and there is no telling how long a sentence he will get.

It is a good many years since Kropotkin published his "Conquest of Bread," in which he virtually put in other words the faith he had proclaimed so stoutly in "What a Rebel has to say." It was greeted with shouts of delight, and one remembers that Zola, in particular, wrote of it as "a true poem." It has been translated into many languages, and, thanks to the efforts of the Mexican Liberal Party, circulated largely in Mexico. Quite recently one of this country's leading art magazines was reproducing it, month by month. Well and good! We certainly have no objection, but, to emphasize the contrast mentioned above, we call attention to the direct advice given by Kropotkin, almost at the start. Having only a Spanish edition of the book at hand, we translate, quite accurately, from pages 27 and 28, in which Kropotkin insists on the following as the direct action which the people MUST take, if their revolution is to be successful.

"It must be recognized and proclaimed," he writes, "that each and every one has, before all else, the RIGHT TO LIVE, and that society ought to distribute to all the world, without exception, the means of existence which it has at its disposal. We must work in such a fashion that, from the first day of the Revolution, the worker may know that a new era is opening before him; that in the future no one will be compelled to sleep under bridges beside which are palaces, or to go hungry while there is food to be had, or to shiver from the cold while there are fur stores in the neighborhood. Let everything be for everybody, in reality as well as in principle, and let us produce, at last, a revolution which will think about the people's NEEDS instead of reading them a tract upon their duties.

"This cannot be realized by decrees, but only by the taking immediate and effective possession of everything that is necessary for the life of all. This is the one truly scientific method of procedure; the only one the mass of the people understands and desires.

"In the name of the uprisen people to take possession of the wheat granaries, of the warehouses stuffed with clothing and of the houses fit for habitation. To waste nothing, and to organize immediately for the filling of empty stomachs, for the facing needs and satisfying them, one and all. To produce, not for the purpose of benefiting any individual, whoever he may be, but that society may live and develop.

"Enough of the old ambiguous formulas, such as the right to work. Let us have the courage to recognize that well-being must be realized at all costs."

Pretty definite, eh? Not a passage standing in solitary isolation, but buttressed by an entire chapter and in harmony with the whole book. Not a sudden burst of thoughtless enthusiasm, but a complete philosophy, carefully elaborated by Kropotkin for years and deliberately entered in books for which a large and permanent circulation was expected.

We don't object, but we point out that for taking this advice, the Mexicans are bringing down on their heads the fury of all the world. In particular we call attention to the fact that the Plaza meeting in Los Angeles, last Christmas Day, was broken up by the police because Ojeda made a speech exactly along the lines advocated by Kropotkin. The present writer knows this because he listened carefully to that speech, from start to

finish. As a result, a Mexican shot dead by the police and ten Mexicans are now serving long terms in jail, with torture thrown in by way of good measure.

"THE PUBLIC'S" OPTIMISM

"Our people are awakening from great financial debauch, to find the Almighty Dollar is one of the feeblest of all forces," writes "Public" editorially. We wish we could believe it, but our impression has been that, more than ever, the Almighty Dollar is continuing to sweep everything before it. Above it is plunging into the most extensive speculation in and monopoly of natural resources; and especially on this Pacific Coast, where the prospect of an immense Panama immigration has set monopoly afire with noble ambition of skinning it alive.

In the same issue "The Public" editorially deprecates the criticism "the fundamental democrat" complains that President Wilson's specific proposals as regards the regulation of the Trusts merely lead to a change in form without really destroying the substance of monopoly. It complains that it is not a fair estimate, and decides that "this message will do more to establish a fellow-feeling in an economic world than any other paper for a generation." It adds: "just as passive resistance is coming the Mexican Dictator, so President Wilson's appeal to the business man's better self pave the way for social justice."

Go, Mr. Cabinet-Minister Post-trustee as you are of Henry George's great revolutionary doctrine—and aid the homeless wretch, shivering under some New York archway this bitter winter's night, what he thinks of passive resistance! Go and ask the Mexican, risking his life daily in the battlefield, whether he believes in this which is making Huerta's throne totter!

YET MEXICO WON'T BITE

Our government is spending annually huge sums of money on alluring literature, that it may tempt youth into the army or navy. Meanwhile the I. W. W., which has no license to help itself to public cash, has the government, in circulation photo-cards which tell a very different story. One of them is now before us and presents a group of more than thirty unemployed, recently encamped on Fifth and Howard Sts., San Francisco, and now scattered. God alone knows where, in the old search for work. Back of them is a banner which reads:

"Pacific Division, Co. M, composed of ex-army and navy men of all world. We have fought in Cuba, Porto Rico, China, Mexico, South Africa, Central America and the Philippine Islands, and are now fighting for bread in America. Are you with us?

Incidentally it may be said that finer-looking body of men it would be hard to find; or one more determined. They are not fighting any longer in Wall Street or the Wall-Streeted institutions of this country. On the contrary, they are out on a life-long crusade to overthrow them. For, surrounded by every opportunity for producing wealth beyond their wildest dreams of avarice, they find themselves compelled to hunt a bare existence as no savage is compelled to hunt it.

A pretty civilization we have to offer Mexico!

BANGEY-CLINE DEFENSE FUND.

The money received by this committee for March 18th, 1914, was sent from the following States: CALIFORNIA: I. W. W. Local No. 330.—International Worker Defense League \$20.—INDIANAPOLIS: Collected by Penn. Perruchon, \$2.25.—OHIO: A. Pistillo, \$1.—PHILADELPHIA: G. Rossi, \$1.—D. Carnes, \$1.—CATALUNYA: \$2.—WASHINGTON: I. W. Local No. 338. \$2.—Total: \$32.75, to which we added the following sums: Received from Spanish-speaking comrades as published in Spanish Section of this issue, \$30. From REGENERACION, as published in the Spanish Section of issue No. 150, \$58.33. From the same REGENERACION as printed in this issue, Spanish Section, \$7.70. GENERAL TOTAL: \$128.23.

VICTOR CRAVELLO, Fin. Sec.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT.

In compliance with section 467 of the Postal Laws and Regulations, amended by Act of August 24, 1912, "Regeneracion" publishes here details of its statement, filed March 19, 1914, duplicate, with the postmaster of Los Angeles, and sworn to before F. W. Cook, a notary public. The statement shows that A. L. Figueroa is the editor, publisher, managing editor and business manager; that the paper is not owned by a corporation, and that there are no bondholders, mortgages or holders of any securities. The circulation is given as 10,500.