

ANARCHISM.

EVER since the beginning of the last quarter of the century just past the nations of continental Europe have been persistently haunted by the grim spectre of Anarchy. During this period its appearances have been growing in frequency, and have been embracing a wider and wider area, whilst its manifestations have been growing more violent and more appalling. We have not been unfamiliar with Anarchism in the United States. But with us, if we except the Chicago outbreak of 1886, the phenomenon has been a passive one, and our interest in it has been largely of the sort termed academic. Aside from the Chicago manifestation and the period of excitement that followed it, the development of Anarchism here, or the discussion and dissemination of its principles, has not caused us much concern; nor has it impressed us as a serious menace to persons or things in these United States, or as presenting any dangers sufficiently actual or tangible to warrant our grappling with it as a practical problem.

It all seemed something rather remote from us. When from time to time an Anarchist, with pistol or dagger, has struck down some foreign ruler, or other high political personage, or with a bursting bomb has converted some dignified political assemblage or some quiet pleasure seeking gathering into a panic-stricken mob, and sent terror abroad throughout the state, we have been shocked in no small degree, and we have felt a natural and a sincere sympathy with the state or the community that has sustained the shock. But in the natural order our own sense of shock, and even our sympathy, have been tempered by distance; and we did not, and could not, appreciate the full shock or the full significance of Anarchist outrage, until, occurring at our own doors, it appalled and stunned our senses by its suddenness, its nearness, its wanton hideousness. Then Anarchism and Anarchists became a theme of all absorbing interest to us.

In the pulpit and the press, in club and in drawing room, in office, factory and shop, in the corner grocery and on the street curb, Anarchy was the theme, and every one was ready with a dogmatic theory as to its one and only source, and with clearly formulated remedy for its extirpation. Not that all this assurance came from any deeper study, or clearer knowledge of the subject than we had had before; it was merely that the calmness with which we had regarded Anarchy, and discussed it, when it seemed merely Europe's concern, had, nearly everywhere, given way precipitately to excited

thought and intemperate speech. "Stamping out" was the catchword of the hour, and the retrospect of that feverish outburst is not entirely flattering. Even conservative papers opened their columns freely to letters proposing punishment of varying degrees of ferocity. This was nothing short of a recrudescence of savagery. Ministers of the sublime gospel of peace and forgiveness, standing in their high places and speaking as accredited leaders of thought, clamored for the fullest revenge, after the fashion of the most unregenerate humanity; and some of them—if reported correctly in the daily press—went so far as to regret that they had not been by to slay the assassin with their own hand—to revenge assassination by assassination. These men were of the stuff that mobs are made of; and it was aptly said of them that they were "invoking anarchy in one of its manifestations to stamp out anarchy in another of its manifestations." Then, too, we had a clamor for drastic legislation that should punish by banishment or imprisonment any one who "thought anarchy," or held any views subversive of the existing social order, and a huge secret service was to be established to spy out men's secret thoughts. Of course all this would have been thoroughly impracticable, even if it had been politic; and if it had been practical its consequence would have been to turn back the whole march of progress, and abandon in a moment of panic the choicest privileges, rights, and safeguards of freedom that the race had suffered and struggled through centuries to attain. But this frame of mind did not endure; it was merely a passing hysteric.

The days following the brutal assassination of President McKinley were days that tried severely men's powers of self-restraint and of measured thought and speech; and so few there were who withstood the test, that most of us would agree with the sober minded reviewer who wrote: "One fact that recent events must have impressed upon the country is the comparatively small proportion of those figuring prominently as moulders of public opinion whose counsels can be followed safely at critical periods."

Our calmer judgment is now resuming its sway, and the later articles that are appearing on the subject are dealing with the problem of Anarchism from a saner point of view. But the reaction seems to be inclining us too much the other way, and there is a tendency to minimize the character of the problem that Anarchism presents, and to mistake the nature of Anarchism itself. We are too much inclined to investigate the subject at long range, and, in consequence, we are not getting that intimate knowledge of it that we should possess before we try to determine its causes or formulate antidotes.

At the outset we must distinguish between the philosophy or the

theory of Anarchism, and the propaganda; and we must clearly understand the sense in which we are to take the term anarchy or anarchism.

Anarchy, etymologically, means simply "without government," and it is in this colorless sense that we must understand it in our discussion. The lesson of history almost everywhere has been that "no government" has meant disorder, riot, chaos, so that the term anarchy has come historically to signify political and social chaos. But we must dissociate this meaning from our word, if we are to make any progress in the attempt to understand the nature and the development of the "Anarchism" proposed by Proudhon and the later anarchists as a programme for social reform. In the light of all our experience, and with human nature as we know it, and as it has always been since that misty prehistoric "golden age" of the poets, it may of course be argued that chaos is what the adoption of any form of Anarchism would surely bring us to again; but this is not what the anarchist advocates, nor what he professedly anticipates, and in studying his theory we must take it first as he understands it. Let us, then, first, give the theory its mildest exposition; and, then, take it in its active expression.

The Century Dictionary gives as one definition of Anarchy, "A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal; absolute individual liberty." This is a statement of the essence of the theory, and is accepted as a correct statement of it by Anarchists themselves—one Anarchist organ flying it at the masthead. Beyond these two ideas, of order and absence of government, there is nothing that can be added as an essential element of the root theory of Anarchism. Various economic systems have been advocated at different times by Anarchists. The Anarchism of Proudhon, for example, was a "collectivism," similar in many respects to the programme of Socialism at the present time. It differed from "State Socialism" chiefly in this, that it was not to be founded on compulsion, but was to be a voluntary organization entered into freely by all, and any organization or any form of organization was to be terminable at will. When asked what was to be the power that should secure order in such a society, Proudhon always answered, "Justice."

On the other hand, the economic system advocated by Kropotkin and his school—which is perhaps the representative school of present day Anarchism—is not a "collectivist" but a communistic régime. And the force that Kropotkin relies upon to preserve order in his free society is a "sense of solidarity," which he maintains is inherent in men.

We are not concerned here to discuss the practicability of either of these forms of economic and social organization, nor the weakness of the compelling forces upon which they depend to preserve order. Proudhon himself is quoted as having in his later life become "convinced and expressed his conviction in his work upon the federative principle (*Du Principe Fédératif*) that ordered Anarchy was an ideal, and as such could never be realized, but that nevertheless human society should strive to attain it by means of federative organizations, as he had sketched it in his earlier writings." (Zenker, p. 89.)

The theory of anarchy as sketched by Proudhon, and his hope of approximating towards it by education and perfection of the individual, did not impress even those of his contemporaries who were firm adherents of the established order as anything very terrible.

In 1850 a review of Proudhon's "*Les Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire*," in the *Eclectic Magazine*, an English evangelical journal, thus passes judgment on Proudhon's plan of anarchism:

"If ever there was a system which deserved the name of Utopian, it is surely this. Obviously, however, there is nothing offensive or terrible in socialism of such a stamp. It aims at realizing for all what the choicest spirits do even now realize for themselves—that is, perfect independence of thought and action. The moral, well educated man never feels the existence of authority but as a grievous or necessary evil. Suppose all moral and well educated—what then? Government is only rendered necessary by vice and ignorance; and, these two enemies extirpated, becomes a useless burden. . . . But we confess that, as yet, we see nothing ahead that warrants us in supposing that man is about to be regenerated; and, for the present, must pronounce anarchy to be a delightful dream."

Nothing occurred to change this tolerant view of Anarchy until the renaissance of its propaganda under new and more aggressive leaders, who were men of action more than of theory, revolutionists who gave to the new agitation the sanction of the dagger and the bomb.

Then the theory and the propaganda were not distinguished, and both alike came in for indiscriminate attack. After every outrage committed in its name, Anarchism comes in for a torrent of abuse. When the excitement of the hour has passed, the reaction sets in, as at present with us, and a distinction is made between what is termed "philosophic anarchy," and anarchist outrage; and whilst the latter comes in for all the excoriation it merits, the former is handled much in the spirit of the earlier period, as indicated in the review of 1850, above quoted.

Thus, for example, a distinguished rector of a New York parish

of one of our most conservative denominations, was quoted, some time after the assassination of the President, as having said :

"Anarchism is in reality the ideal of political and social science, and also the ideal of religion. It is the ideal to which Jesus Christ looked forward. Christ founded no Church, established no State, gave practically no laws, organized no government and set up no external authority, but he did seek to write on the hearts of men God's law and make them self-legislating."

And the following, from a Western paper, is typical of the attitude towards Anarchism taken by most of the calmer minded who set themselves to oppose the violent outcry that was being raised against that theory :

"Anarchy is in itself no crime. If a man is a member of the Methodist Church and commits a murder, it doesn't follow that all Methodists must be hanged or exiled. There have, in fact, been many thousands of murders committed in the name of religion, while you can count on your fingers all that are charged to Anarchy in both hemispheres. The Anarchists are simply a society that holds that the world has arrived at that plane of intelligence wherein society would be better without formal laws than with it."

It is even said by many who wish to deal fairly with "philosophic Anarchy," that Anarchism is nothing more than the expression of man's longing for the ideal, the perfect moral state. The legends, it is pointed out, of all idealistic peoples have revelled in the picture of a prehistoric "golden age," when men lived with no other rule than that of each one's moral sense, when each one merely followed the law of his own unfallen, uncorrupted nature. Every age, in turn, has longed for the return of that lost paradise, and has fixed its hopes in the "millennium" that is yet to come, when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and all strife shall cease, and love, not force, shall rule. All this, it is argued, is merely the ideal of Anarchism; in this sense it is said we may all be termed Anarchists; and that what differentiates the man we call the "philosophic Anarchist" from the rest of us is merely his belief that the world is ready now, or that it could be made ready in the not distant future, for the Anarchic régime that we all desire, but the realization of which most of us defer to the remote and misty future of our "millennium."

Now all this may possibly be true of the ideal of an individual Anarchist here or there; but we cannot accept the comparison as in any sense descriptive of the content or the philosophy of the *actual movement* for Anarchism that is going on about us to-day.

The present Anarchist movement rests upon a philosophy of Atheism, and upon the crudest and most materialistic interpretation of the hypothesis of evolution; and it seems inextricably bound up with these. The comparison of Anarchism, as it exists here and now, with the ideal of the Christian "millennium," with the longed for kingdom of God upon earth, cloaks a most serious error, and masks a hideous incongruity. Between the two things there is a difference that is just as wide and just as deep as the gulf that lies between two

fundamentally antagonistic systems of philosophy. This, I believe, will be fully borne out by a brief survey of some of the basic principles that underlie modern Anarchism.

It is not, of course, possible to give any statement of Anarchism and say that it is the only correct statement of the theory; for there is not, and from the very nature of the thing there cannot be any authoritative declaration of principles or formulation of platform. The Anarchism of one man may be very different from that of another; and neither can claim for his theory anything more than his own authority. In the same way it may seem equally impossible to predicate any system of philosophy as the basis of Anarchism; and this point has been explicitly urged by one Anarchist leader, who writes:

"Myself at one time asserted very stoutly that no one could be an Anarchist and believe in God at the same time. Others assert as stoutly that one cannot accept the spiritualistic philosophy and be an Anarchist. At present I hold with C. L. James, the most learned of American Anarchists, that one's metaphysical system has very little to do with the matter. The chain of reasoning which once appeared so conclusive to me, namely, that Anarchism, being a denial of authority over the individual, could not coexist with a belief in a Supreme Ruler of the universe, is contradicted in the case of Leo Tolstoy, who comes to the conclusion that none has a right to rule another just because of his belief in God, just because he believes that all are equal children of one father, and therefore none has a right to rule the other. I speak of him because he is a familiar and notable personage, but there have frequently been instances where the same idea has been worked out by a whole sect of believers, especially in the earlier (and persecuted) stages of their development. It no longer seems necessary to me, therefore, that one should base his Anarchism upon any particular world-conception; it is a theory of the relations of man to man, and comes as an offered solution to the societary problems arising from the existence of these two tendencies of which I have spoken."

But none the less there is, as a matter of fact, enough that is common in the beliefs and the teachings of the leaders of the present movement for Anarchism to give a distinctive character to that movement; and I have made a conscientious effort to get at the dominant phases of Anarchism as it is preached here in the United States at the present time. I have read much of the pamphlet and the periodical literature that has been furnished by professed Anarchists, and which represents their current thought; and I have been in correspondence with a number of Anarchists, in widely scattered parts of the country to find out from them exactly their views.¹

I believe that it is a fair statement of the real case to say that a crude interpretation of the hypothesis of evolution and a consequent corresponding denial of God are basic characteristics of current Anarchism. It may, of course, be urged, as is done in the extract above, that these are not necessary bases for a theory that is purely social. It may, indeed, be argued that much is mixed up with the actual movement to-day that is not essential to Anarch-

¹ And I beg to acknowledge here the uniform courtesy that I have received from them, and the willingness and the frankness with which they have answered all my inquiries, either about themselves or their teaching.

ism; and that we can conceive of the movement as dissociate from all this. But be this as it may, it cannot be too clearly realized that it is the actual movement—and that movement in its entirety, or in its dominating aspects—with which we are concerned as a practical problem; and not with a conceivable Anarchism that exists only in some discriminating imaginations.

In answer to the question, asked of a number of Anarchists, as to what writers had most influenced their thinking, the names of Bakounine and Kropotkin were in nearly every case given. Let us, then, take some of the principles of these two writers under review.

Bakounine rests his Anarchism on man's animal evolution. He takes as a "fundamental and decisive truth," that "the social world, properly speaking, the human world—in short, humanity—is nothing other than the supreme development, the highest manifestation of animality, at least on our planet as far as we know." (Bakounine: "God and the State," p. 3.)

Our first ancestors were "omnivorous, intelligent and ferocious beasts;" and their point of departure from their fellows in the process of evolution was that they had come to be "endowed in a higher degree than the animals of any other species with two precious faculties—the power to think and the desire to rebel." ("God and the State," p. 3.)

Bakounine, assuming the rôle of Biblical expositor, regards the story of the Fall, narrated in Genesis, as a myth, but with a kernel of truth hidden in it. This truth, he insists, is clear, but it has been inverted in the accepted interpretation, and it was reserved for him to give us the true explanation. There was no Fall, he explains, by the act of disobedience chronicled in Genesis; it was a rise. It was the beginning of the human stage in evolution. By this act "man has emancipated himself; he has separated himself from animality and constituted himself a man; he has begun his distinctively human history by an act of disobedience and science—that is, by rebellion and thought." ("God and the State," p. 4.)

With the instinct of a mad revolutionist, Bakounine aspostrophises the Satan of the story as "the eternal rebel, the first free thinker and the emancipator of worlds." For Bakounine, Satan is the real creator of man, for "he emancipates him—stamps upon his brow the seal of liberty and humanity, in urging him to disobey and eat of the fruit of knowledge." ("God and the State," p. 4.)

Only under an anarchic régime, then, can man realize the omega of his evolution, the goal of his rebellion; and the anarchic society of Bakounine must set up Satan as its patron saint, for it is the realization of his kingdom, rather than the "millennium" of Christ and his saints.

Starting from this basis, Bakounine reasons that Anarchism, the true freedom of man, is not compatible with the acceptance of a belief in God. Not only must man throw off all external authority to obtain his rightful freedom, not only must he reject the yoke of the state, or the authority of a visible church, but he cannot even acknowledge a God, or any moral order that would limit in any way the free play of his desires and his passions.

Treating "this question of the existence of a God, or of the divine origin of the world or of man, solely from the standpoint of its moral and social utility," he writes: "The idea of God implies the abdication of human reason and justice; it is the most decisive negation of human liberty, and necessarily ends in the enslavement of mankind, both in theory and practice." ("God and the State," p. 10.) He insists that the very ideas of God and of human liberty are logical contradictions, and that there can be no claim to liberty by a race holding to a belief in God. "For if God is, He is necessarily the eternal, supreme, absolute master, and if such a master exists, man is a slave; . . . His existence necessarily implies the slavery of all that is beneath Him. Therefore, if God existed, only in one way could He serve human liberty—that is, by ceasing to exist.

"A jealous lover of human liberty, and deeming it the absolute condition of all that we admire and respect in humanity, I reverse the phrase of Voltaire and say that if God existed, it would be necessary to abolish Him." ("God and the State," p. 12.) Is it from such seed as this that we are to reap on earth the kingdom of God and His justice?

There is no difficulty, then, in discovering the basis for Bakounine's demand for anarchic liberty; nor is it difficult to discern the nature and the extent of the liberty demanded for a deified, self-created humanity. Doubtless most of the "outsiders," who have been explaining "philosophic Anarchy" as merely the desire for the liberty that will come with moral development and self-restraint, would start back from the prospect of the "liberty" exercised in a social system based on the philosophy of Bakounine; and instead of confusing this type of Anarchism with the hope for the "millennium," we should rather proclaim that the liberty demanded is of a sort with which we have neither part nor sympathy.

In the writings of Kropotkin, who, after Bakounine, is one of the foremost of the godfathers and the prophets of modern Anarchism, we shall find more clearly worked out the moral principles that flow from the philosophy of Bakounine; and we shall understand just what is the nature of the moral force relied upon to secure the "order" that is to go hand in hand with absolute liberty in the day of Anarchism. Like Bakounine, he is an evolutionist who sees in

man only a higher development of animality, and he, consistently, goes to the animal kingdom to seek a basis for morality, and to find the standard for the distinction between what is good and what is evil.

For Kropotkin, the moral sense is merely "a feeling of solidarity," which he claims to find in beasts of every type as well as in man. "This feeling little by little became a habit, and was transmitted by heredity from the simplest microscopic organism to its descendants, insects, birds, reptiles, mammals, man." Finally, this feeling of solidarity, or in other words, the moral sentiment, becomes "a necessity to the animal, like food or the organ for digesting it." We need not fear that man will lose the moral sentiment, for "even if we wished to get rid of it, we could not. It would be easier for a man to accustom himself to walk on all fours than to get rid of the moral sentiment. It is anterior, in animal evolution, to the upright posture of man. The moral sense is a natural faculty in us, like the sense of smell or touch." (Kropotkin: "Anarchist Morality," p. 13.)

This "feeling of solidarity" leads all animals, man included, to recognize as good any action or line of conduct that tends to "the preservation of the race;" and as bad, all that operates against this preservation. The Anarchist standard of moral action, according to Kropotkin, is thus simply summed up: "Is this useful to society? Then it is good. Is this hurtful? Then it is bad." ("Anarchist Morality," p. 9.)

So much for the speculative basis of his philosophy. And we may, perhaps, argue that so far organized society need have no quarrel with this philosophy or this standard of morality, since they seem to make for the preservation of society itself. But when we come to the practical application that Kropotkin makes of the conclusions that naturally flow from his premises, we reach the point at which society will most certainly take issue with Anarchism. The brain, says Kropotkin, "released from religious terrors," asks itself, "why should any morality be obligatory?" Having founded his moral sense on an evolved animal instinct, having made it a natural faculty, "like the sense of smell or touch," he sees that we have no more right to force our own peculiar development of this instinct upon our neighbor than we have to try to force upon him our peculiar individual standard of touch or smell, and he, therefore, denies "both obligation and moral sanction." "We forego, with Gayau, even sanctions of all kinds, even obligations to morality. We are not afraid to say: 'Do what you will; act as you will;' because we are persuaded that the great majority of mankind, in proportion to their degree of enlightenment, and the completeness with which they free themselves from existing fetters, will behave and act always in

a direction useful to society; just as we are persuaded beforehand that a child will one day walk on its two feet, and not on all fours, simply because it is born of parents belonging to the genus homo."

This is, truly, the superlative of optimism—it sounds, indeed, like the very ecstasy of madness. But if such naïve optimism be as unwarranted as experience leads the judicious to suspect it is, our philosopher leaves us helpless. For he stoutly maintains that in dealing with the refractory "all we can do is to give advice;" and lest even this might seem an impertinent attempt to limit that absolute freedom of the individual so precious to the Anarchist, we must always modestly add: "This advice will be valueless if your own experience and observation do not lead you to recognize that it is worth following." . . . We have only the right to give advice, to which we add: Follow it, if it seems good to you." ("Anarchist Morality," p. 16.)

So insistent is he that we must leave "to each one the right to act as he thinks best," that our philosopher denies utterly "the right of society to punish any one, in any way, for any anti-social act he may have committed." ("Anarchist Morality," p. 16.) Here is no modest demand for "freedom of thought," but an unmistakable shriek for freedom of action. How much this means, what its logical consequences are, we shall understand better when we come to discuss the Anarchist theory of "propaganda by deed." But even in its abstract form we recognize it as a mild invitation to social suicide, and, with the recollection of such acts as Czolgosz's still fresh in our minds, society will most emphatically decline to leave to each one the right to act as he thinks best—with impunity.

The attitude of Anarchism towards marriage and the family is here shadowed forth. It naturally follows from Kropotkin's premises that marriage, as an institution, should cease. I have not come upon anything of Kropotkin's dealing specifically with the institution of marriage; but the consequence of his teaching is too plain to be mistaken. Some of his colleagues deal with the matter more directly, and state in exact terms the attitude of Anarchism towards marriage. Says Grave: "The Anarchists, therefore, reject the institution of marriage. . . . What they (the parties to a marriage) have made of their own free will they can unmake of their own free will. . . . Is it necessary that these two beings, because in a moment of passionate effervescence they deceived themselves with illusions, should pay a whole lifetime of suffering for the error of a moment, which made them take for a profound and eternal passion what was but the result of an over-excitation of the senses?" (Grave: "Moribund Society and Anarchy," p. 39.)

It cannot be said that this is anything more than the logical conclusion from the premises of Bakounine and Kropotkin. It explicitly reduces marriage to a mere episode of "cohabitation-at-will," and ushers in the reign of "free love." A recognized Anarchist leader, writing in one of their journals of last May, regrets exceedingly that any one "should insult those who believe in free love by treating it as a heinous offense;" and he asks, "In the name of Liberalism, why should a man be discredited for believing in free love, any more than in free silver?"

I think it will be admitted that the nature and the extent of the "liberty" demanded for the individual by Bakounine, Kropotkin and their colleagues, is something very different from the ideal of liberty desired by the Christian and God-fearing men who have been mistakenly abetting the cause of Anarchism by identifying the two things. It cannot be repeated too emphatically, that the confusing of these two ideals is vicious. For, taking the words of the leaders of Anarchism themselves, their demand for liberty rests on a basis that necessitates the annihilation of all belief in a creating God, all belief in a redeeming Christ, all belief in the institution of marriage, and, in short, all belief in any obligatory morality or in any moral standard or moral sanction.

Let us now pass from "philosophic Anarchy" to "practical Anarchy," from the philosophy of Anarchism to the agitation for the spread of this philosophy and the inauguration of the actual revolution that is to usher in the new régime.

This propagandism has two representatives, "the man with a book, and the man with a bomb." Their respective activities may be described as a "campaign of education"—to borrow a phrase from "practical politics"—and a campaign of assassination.

So far as the first sort of campaign is concerned, it does not materially differ from any other peaceful propaganda carried on for the dissemination of a theory; but the extent of the activity in it is, perhaps, little understood.

The second method of propagandism, the campaign of assassination, is more novel; and its real nature and significance are, probably, not at all understood by "outsiders." The list of crimes, which, during the past quarter of a century, have been perpetrated in the name of Anarchism, have not by any means been merely those mad and aimless acts of irresponsible individuals, such as mark every acute social agitation. They have not been aimless. On the contrary, they have a philosophy behind them. They represent one phase of a systematic propagandism, styled by the Anarchists themselves, "propaganda by deed," or "propaganda by action"—which has been one of the distinguishing features of the later Anarchist

movement. It represents a policy borrowed from the Nihilist of Russia, and it was incorporated in the Anarchist movement when Anarchism, which, after a short celebrity, was passing into oblivion, was revived in Western Europe by Russian refugees. For it must be understood that it is the baleful and blasphemous influence of Michael Bakounine, and of his Russian disciples, and not the spirit of Proudhon, or his German contemporaries, that has given character to the modern Anarchist movement, and lent to it the sanction of the dagger and the bomb.

The conditions in Russia were such that many of the Nihilist leaders felt that the great body of the Russian people was ripe for revolt; and that it only needed a few acts of daring on the part of individuals to awaken the masses to the fact that the revolution had begun and to inspire them with a sense of their own power. What was needed, they felt, was not so much to convert the people to the principles of revolution—thanks to the despotism, that was already done; it was only necessary to arouse the masses to action, by acts of personal revolt. "Words," writes one of the Nihilist leaders, "have no value for us, unless followed at once by action. But all is not action that is so called; for example, the modest and too cautious organization of secret societies without external announcements to outsiders is in our eyes merely ridiculous and intolerable child's-play. By external announcements we mean a series of actions that positively destroy something—a person, a cause, a condition that hinders the emancipation of the people. Without sparing our lives, we must break into the life of the people with a series of rash, even senseless, actions, and inspire them with a belief in their powers, awake them, unite them, and lead them on to the triumph of their cause." (Netschajew: quoted by Zenker, "Anarchism," p. 168.)

Brousse, another disciple of Bakounine, and one of the leading spirits of the Bakounist revival of Anarchism, seized the idea of this "propaganda by action," and advocated it for the spread of Anarchism in the Western world. "Deeds," says he, "are talked of on all sides; the indifferent masses inquire about their origin, and thus pay attention to the new doctrine, and discuss it. Let men once get as far as this, and it is not hard to win over many of them." (Zenker, p. 169.)

It is to be noted, therefore, that assassination and outrage are counseled, not because they directly realize the aim of Anarchy; not that it is thought that the removal of a Czar or a King or a President will at once overturn the system of which he is the head; but they are counseled as a sort of "sanguinary advertisement" to attract the mass of the people to the study of Anarchism. The man with the bomb thus acts as advance agent for the man with the book.

In the light of this sort of philosophy, acts of outrage that had seemed wanton and aimless take on another complexion.

Since the assassination of President McKinley it has been asserted on all sides, both by Anarchists themselves and by many who, while having no sympathy with their doctrines, have desired to deal with them in all fairness, that violence and murder are no essential part of the philosophy of Anarchism; and that these outrages, when perpetrated by individual Anarchists, should not be laid to the charge of Anarchism itself. Thus, Emma Goldman writes:

"Having shown that violence is not the result of personal influence or one particular ideal, I deem it unnecessary to go into a lengthy theoretical discussion as to whether Anarchism contains the element of force or not. The question has been discussed time and again, and it is proven that Anarchism and violence are as far apart from each other as liberty and tyranny. I care not what the rabble says, but to those who are still capable of understanding I would say that anarchism, being a philosophy of life, aims to establish a state of society in which man's inner make-up and the conditions around him can blend harmoniously together, so that he will be able to utilize all the forces to enlarge and beautify the life about him. To those I would also say that I do not advocate violence; government does this, and force begets force."—*Free Society*, October 6.

Another writer, not an Anarchist, takes up the cudgels for Anarchism, believing that it is being misrepresented, and hails it as a gospel of peace, and not "a message of blood:"

"Anarchy aims to abolish government not by killing rulers, but developing thoughts in the minds of men, that government is not necessary, that there is room enough on earth for men to dwell in peace and plenty, without standing armies, police, jails and scaffolds. The Anarchist propaganda is not a message of blood, but of peace; it appeals to reason, to human sympathy. Study their literature and it will be found that there is no connection between Czolgosz's act and the philosophy of Anarchy. Suppose Czolgosz was an Anarchist. It is cruel and inhuman to hold all Anarchists responsible for the act of one of their number. The slayer of Garfield claimed that he had a mission from God to kill the President, but did the world at large hold Christianity responsible for that bloody act?"—George B. Wheeler in the *Freethought Ideal*, quoted in *Free Society*, October 27.

From London comes the assurance that Anarchism has dispensed with bombs, and that when murder is wrought it is at the wicked instigation of the enemies of Anarchism—the police. "Anarchists do not make plots in these days; they know that in every case where bomb throwing is advocated the suggestion comes from a police pupil or a police dupe." (*Freedom*, London. Quoted in *Free Society*, October 20.)

Another Anarchist leader assures us that the Anarchists themselves deprecated the act of Czolgosz, as likely to injure their cause with the public:

"On September 7 last there was probably not an Anarchist in the United States who did not deprecate the act of Czolgosz, if as nothing else, then as probably a great blow to Anarchism."—*Free Society*, October 27.

And another Anarchist writer seeks to render "propaganda by deed" a mere statement of an old platitude:

"'Propaganda by deed' is now often quoted as an interpretation of assassination.

In reality its advocates meant to convey nothing else than the carrying out of our beliefs into action. All theories are of little value unless they are applied to our daily life and conduct."—*Free Society*, October 27.

These extracts assert: first, that there is no necessary connection between the philosophy of Anarchism and violence or assassination; and, second, that Anarchists do not, as a matter of expediency, counsel violence, and that "propaganda by deed" has no such sinister signification as is claimed by those who identify it with assassination. As to the first position, it is entirely beside the particular point that is of concern to us. The speculative philosophy of Anarchism may or may not be entirely separable in theory from violence, or murder; our concern is not with the philosophy of Anarchism, but with the present Anarchist movement. It may, in turn, be urged that violence and murder are, carefully speaking, not an essential part of the Anarchist movement. But this, too, is beside the point; the question of real interest to us is, does it actually form a part of that movement? We have little concern with a possible, or an imaginary, or an "expurgated" Anarchist movement; but we have much concern with the actual movement that is going on about us—and with that movement in its entirety. As to the contention that the Anarchists do not advocate violence, and that "propaganda by deed" does not mean assassination—all this is simply not true. It will be seen from what follows that the Anarchist movement has, as a matter of fact, incorporated within itself both the philosophy and the practice of the assassination feature of this diabolical "propaganda by deed." In proof of this, let us place in contrast to the disclaimers already quoted the following unequivocal statements, taken from writings at the present time current in Anarchist circles, and written by leaders whose influence is, admittedly, strongly felt in the movement now going on in the United States.

Let us first understand, from an accepted Anarchist source, just what is the interpretation of the phrase "propaganda by deed." We shall find it clearly interpreted in "Moribund Society and Anarchy," a work written in French by Jean Grave, and much esteemed by Anarchists. It was translated into English about two years ago, and has had much circulation in American Anarchist circles. Grave does not mince matters; he is sufficiently explicit for the most exacting. On pages 125-6 we find:

"'Propaganda by deed' is nothing more than thought transferred into action; and in the preceding chapter we observed that to feel a thing profoundly is to want to realize it. This is a sufficient reply to detractors. But, *per contra*, there are some Anarchists more incensed than enlightened who have, in turn, been more anxious to relegate everything to propaganda by deed; to kill the capitalists, to knock employers on the head, set fire to the factories and monu-

ments, that was all they could think of; whoever failed to talk about burning and killing was unworthy to call himself an Anarchist!

“Now, as to action our position is this: We have already said that action is the flowering of thought; but furthermore this action must have an aim, we must know what it is about, it must tend towards an end sought and not turn against itself. Let us take for example, the incendiary burning of a factory in full operation; it employs a large number of workmen. The director of this factory is an average employer, neither too good nor too bad, of whom nothing in particular is to be said. Evidently if this factory is set afire, without either rhyme or reason, it can have no other effect but to throw the workmen into the streets. These latter, furious at the temporary access of misery to which they are thereby reduced, will not hunt for the reasons which prompted the authors of the deed; they will most certainly devote all their anger to the incendiaries and the ideas which led them to take up the torch. Behold the consequences of an unreasonable act! But let us, on the other hand, suppose a struggle between employers and workmen—any sort of strife. In a strike there surely are some employers more cruel than others, who by their exactions have necessitated this strike or by their intrigues have kept it up longer by persuading their colleagues to resist the demands of the strikers; without doubt these employers draw upon themselves the hatred of the workers. Let us suppose one of the like executed in some corner, with a placard posted explaining that he has been killed as an exploiter, or that his factory has been burned from the same motive. In such a case there is no being mistaken as to the reasons prompting the authors of the deeds, and we may be sure that they will be applauded by the whole laboring world. Such are intelligent deeds, which show that actions should always follow a guiding principle.”

With equal explicitness, Grave tells his Anarchist brethren of other lines of “action” besides assassination:

“At the outset Anarchists must renounce the warfare of army against army, battles arrayed on fields, struggles laid out by strategists and tacticians manœuvring armed bodies as the chess player manœuvres his figures upon the chess-board. The struggle should be directed chiefly towards the destruction of institutions. The burning up of deeds, registers of land surveys, proceedings of notaries and solicitors, tax collectors’ books, the ignoring of the limits of holdings, destruction of the regulations of the civil staff, etc.; the expropriation of the capitalists, taking possession in the name of all, putting articles of consumption freely at the disposal of all—all this is the work of small and scattered groups, of skirmishes, not regular battles. And this is the warfare which the Anarchists must seek to

encourage everywhere in order to harass governments, compel them to scatter their forces; tire them out and decimate them piecemeal. No need of leaders for blows like these; as soon as some one realizes what should be done he preaches by example, acting so as to attract others to him." (P. 123.)

But we need not go so far from home, nor a year or more back, to find the principles of warfare that are recommended by those on the "inside" as proper to the Anarchist movement. A California exponent of principles—a woman—writing in a recognized organ of the Anarchists, under date of the past April, explicitly urges on her comrades a carnival of "looting," in which bank, church, government treasuries, shop, and private household, shall alike be the object of indiscriminate attack. For her text she takes, "The strong, from the beginning, have stolen their bread;" and then proceeds: "But, I would ask, why do those of us who recognize the thieves, hesitate, from 'principle,' to appropriate, 'without money and without price,' anything they 'own' which we want whenever it is handy for us to do so? . . . Courage is required to run the risk of detection and detention by the 'authorities,' but is the need for fearlessness greater than that demanded for the expression of revolutionary ideas, or to defy Grundy in everyday life? . . . Many conventional people excuse theft from vampires if the deed be done to ward off starvation. Is mere capacity for breathing life? To the lover of beauty it is hardship if prevented from having beautiful things. The hindering is, without question, the starving of the part of the individual. If 'self preservation is the first law of nature,' who shall blame a poverty pinched person from pilfering a privileged parasite?"

"Do I advocate theft as part of an economic system of society? By no means. In a FREE society theft would be impossible. In an authoritarian society it cannot be avoided. What I advocate is disobedience to authority, and I maintain that thwarting its schemes in any measure or by any means is estimable—it is revolutionary. . . .

"When a rebel refuses to pay rent or tax, or beats a railroad corporation out of the customary fare, the acts are commended by every genuine revolutionist. In my opinion the deed is not less deserving of praise if it be the looting of a bank, or church money-box, or government treasury, or if shoplifting, common burglary, or petty larceny, be practised. . . .

"Theft from the rich spongers is honorable, not only when committed to slay the wolf of hunger, but also when an artistic taste can be gratified or cultivated, a mechanical faculty developed, work and worry lessened, pleasure gained—in short, whenever the comfort of the oppressed can be enhanced thereby."

And this is the stuff that is preached in the name of the Anarchist movement!

Kropotkin probably stands foremost amongst the living prophets of modern Anarchism, and he is usually regarded as a "philosophic Anarchist," as one who would give no countenance to a campaign of violence, and who rejects the "propaganda of action." But I find him quoted very directly to the contrary. The following is given as his reply to the question of "how words must be translated into deeds:"

"The answer is easy; it is action, the continual, incessantly renewed action of the minority that will produce this transformation. Courage, devotion, self-sacrifice, are as contagious as cowardice, subjection, and terror. What form is action to take? Any form—as different as are circumstances, means, and temperaments. Sometimes arousing sorrow, sometimes scorn, but always bold; sometimes isolated, sometimes in common, it despises no means ready to hand, it neglects no opportunity of public life to propagate discontent, and to clothe it in words, to arouse hatred against the exploiter, to make the ruling powers ridiculous, to show their weakness, and ever to excite audacity, the spirit of revolt, by the preaching of example. If a feeling of revolution awakes in a country, and the spirit of open revolt is already sufficiently alive among the masses to break out in tumultuous disorders in the streets, *émeutes* and risings—then it is 'action' alone by which the minority can create this feeling of independence and that atmosphere of audacity without which no revolution can be completed. Men of courage who do not stop at words, but seek to transform them into deeds, pure characters for whom the action and the idea are inseparable, who prefer prisons, exile, or death, rather than a life not in accordance with their principles, fearless men, who know what must be risked in order to win success—those are the devoted outposts who begin the battle long before the masses are sufficiently moved to unfurl the standard of insurrection, and to march sword in hand to the conquest of their rights. Amid complaints, speeches, theoretical discussions, an act of personal or general revolt takes place. It cannot be otherwise than that the great mass at first remains indifferent; those especially who admire the courage of the person or group that took the initiative will apparently follow the wise and prudent in hastening to describe this act as folly, and in speaking of the fools and hot-headed people who compromise everything. These wise and prudent ones had fully calculated that their party, if it slowly pursued its objects, would perhaps have conquered the world in one, two, or three centuries, and now the unforeseen intrudes! The unforeseen is that which was not foreseen by the prudent. But those who know his-

tory and can lay claim to any well ordered reasoning power, however small, know quite well that a theoretical propaganda of revolution must necessarily be translated into action long before theorists have decided that the time for it has come. None the less, the theorists are enraged with the 'fools' and excommunicate and ban them. But the fools find sympathy, the mass of the people secretly applaud their boldness, and they find imitators. In proportion as the first of them fill the prisons, others come forward to continue their work. The acts of illegal protest, of revolt, of revenge increase. Indifference becomes impossible. Those who at first only asked what on earth the fools meant, are compelled to take them seriously, to discuss their ideas, and to take sides for or against. By acts which are done under the notice of the people the new idea communicates itself to men's minds and finds adherents. One such act makes in a few days more proselytes than thousands of books."²

In his work, "Anarchist Morality" (pp. 14-15), Kropotkin unequivocally, and quite coolly, concedes the right of theft and assassination to those who, in his jargon, "have conquered the right." Here are his words:

"Perhaps it may be said—it has been said sometimes—'But if you think you must always treat others as you would be treated yourself, what right have you to use force under any circumstances whatsoever? What right have you to level a cannon at any barbarous or civilized invaders of your country? What right have you to dispossess the exploiter? What right to kill not only a tyrant, but a mere viper?'

"What right? What do you mean by that singular word, borrowed from the law? Do you wish to know if I shall feel conscious of having acted well in doing this? If those I esteem will think I have done well? Is that what you ask? If so, the answer is simple.

"Yes, certainly! Because we, we ourselves, should ask to be killed, like venomous beasts, if we went to invade Burmese or Zulus, who have done us no harm. We should say to our son or our friend: 'Kill me, if I ever take part in the invasion!'

"Yes, certainly! Because we, we ourselves, should ask to be dispossessed if, giving the lie to our principles, we seized upon an inheritance, did it fall from on high, to use it for the exploitation of others.

"Yes, certainly! Because any man with a heart asks beforehand that he may be slain, if ever he becomes venomous; that a dagger may be plunged into his heart, if ever he should take the place of a dethroned tyrant. . . .

² I have taken this quotation at second hand. I have not been able to get the original containing it, but it is given in a reliable treatise, and the reference is to Kropotkin's work by title and page, "L'Esprit de Revolte," p. 7.

"Perovskaya and her comrades killed the Russian Czar. And all mankind, despite the repugnance to the spilling of blood, despite the sympathy for one who had allowed the serfs to be liberated, recognized their right to do as they did. Why? Not because the act was generally recognized as useful; two out of three still doubt if it was so; but because it was felt that not for all the gold in the world would Perovskaya and her comrades have consented to become tyrants themselves. Even those who know nothing of the drama are certain that it was no youthful bravado, no palace conspiracy, no attempt to gain power; it was hatred of tyranny, even to the scorn of self, even to the death.

" 'These men and women,' it was said, 'had conquered the right to kill;' as it was said of Louise Michel, 'she had the right to rob;' or again, 'they have the right to steal,' in speaking of those terrorists who lived on dry bread, and stole a million or two of the Kishineff treasure, taking, at their own peril, all possible precaution to free the sentinel, who guarded the wealth with fixed bayonet, from all responsibility.

"Mankind has never refused the right to use force to those who have conquered that right, be it exercised upon the barricades or in the shadow of a cross-way. But if such an act is to produce a deep impression upon men's minds, the right must be conquered. Without this, such an act, whether useful or no, will remain merely a brutal fact, of no importance in the progress of ideas. Folks will see in it nothing but a displacement of force, simply the substitution of one exploiter for another."

In view of utterances like these, all general disclaimers, all assertions that Anarchism, as it actually exists here and now, is purely a gospel of peace, a serene and beautiful philosophic ideal, that involves no theory of violence and neither encourages nor justifies pillage or assassination, simply become empty rhetoric. Not only do Anarchists encourage the ill balanced to acts of murder, but they applaud the actual commission, and accept the perpetrator as one of their heroes. In an Anarchist lecture delivered in Philadelphia last April, and republished in Chicago within a month after the assassination of the President, we find the following "as to methods" of propagandism:

"A few words as to the methods. In times past Anarchists have excluded each other on these grounds also; revolutionists contemptuously said 'Quaker' of peace men; 'savage Communists' anathematized the Quakers in return. This, too, is passing. I say this: all methods are to the individual capacity and decision."

The lecturer then goes on to describe the favorite methods of propagandism adopted by "John Most," "Peter Kropotkin," and other lights, and approves each for adopting the method best suited

to his temperament; and then, passing on to Bresci, the assassin of Humbert, acknowledges him as an Anarchist propagandist, and accepts his "method" as entirely proper:

"And over there in his coffin cell in Italy lies the man whose method was to kill a king and shock the nations into a sudden consciousness of the hollowness of their law and order. Him, too, him and his act, without reserve I accept, and bend in silent acknowledgment of the strength of the man. For there are some whose nature it is to think and plead, and yield, and yet return to the address and so make headway in the minds of their fellowmen; and there are others who are stern and still, resolute, implacable as Judah's dream of God; and those men strike—strike once and have ended. But the blow resounds across the world. And as on a night when the sky is heavy with storm some sudden great white flare sheets across it and every object starts sharply out, so in the flash of Bresci's pistol shot the whole world for a moment saw the tragic figure of the Italian people, starved, stunted, crippled, huddled, degraded, murdered; and at the same moment that their teeth chattered with fear, they came and asked the Anarchists to explain themselves. And hundreds of thousands of people read more in those few days than they had ever read of the idea before."

In conclusion, the lecturer speeds her parting hearers with this significant suggestion: "Each choose that method which expresses your selfhood best, and condemn no other man because he expresses his Self otherwise." And the obvious interpretation of this is, simply, that if any of her auditors have a murderous bent, let them not hesitate to give it sweep.

Here, then, is the real content, the true significance, of Anarchism as it exists about us to-day; and it is important for us to discuss the subject in a practical sense, and not from an academic viewpoint that regards a theoretical Anarchism which has little real likeness to the actual thing.

CHARLES P. NEILL.

Washington, D. C.