Regeneración.

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Prostrate at the Detective's Feet

"Labor is lawless by violence, capital by cunning." Thus Prof. George B Foster, of the University of Chicago, sums up the existing social situation in his article on the McNamara case. To me the summing up is incomplete, since it omits the all-important fact that back of the capitalist's cunning, and rendering it effective, stands the organized violence of government It is to that we owe the hideous inequalities that keep us in perpetual civil war, inasmuch as but for the repressive force of government, the masses would not tolerate for twenty-four hours the absurd conditions that prevail. Strip him of his bayonets and the monarch's throne is not worth a moment's purchase. Withdraw its government-created privileges and millionairism melts away like a snowball in a steel trust furnace. Sending us naked into the world nature gives each an equal start.

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In its worship of government this country is the fanatic of the ages. Nowhere have laws been multiplied so preposterously; nowhere is the lawyer so predominant. But let him look a little out, for he is in danger of being jostled from his seat. Burns is the hero of the hour and the detective bids fair to become our popular idol. I can think of nothing so illustrative of the depths to which our moneyed society has fallen. The career, the inevitable daily work, of the detective involve everything that the wisdom of the ages stamps as most unworthy. He sneaks, he crawls, he moves among his fellow creatures pretending to be what he is not; he plans and schemes and puts up jobs; he sticks at nothing to attain his ends and—a past president of this Republic, a man who is fishing once more for presidential honors, glorifies him. Talk about national degradation!

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To my dying day there will be green in my memory the story of a celebrated capture to which the Pacific Coast papers devoted innumerable columns. The alleged criminal—who, in my judgment, had been hounded into outlawry by the Southern Pacific sleuth-hounds—had evaded all pursuit. One chance there was of nabbing him, and it lay in his noted affection for his family. The man who occupied at that time the position in California that Burns now holds in the United States forthwith took the trail. For weeks he devoted himself to winning the confidence of the fugitive's most faithful wife; a woman determined to shield her husband at every cost. Posing as a poor man and former comrade, this shining light of detectivedom made himself useful to the woman in a thousand ways. He cut the wood, brought the water, did the household chores and finally convinced her that he was the one friend she had on earth. As such she told him, in her overwhelming joy, that on such-and-such a date her husband would visit her, and, of course, he used the information to grab his man. With one voice our papers lauded the exploit as a stroke of genius!

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Radicals have at their backs a large and most distinguished following when they denounce the conditions that exist. They should not be afraid. They should advance remorselessly to the attack and make it apparent to all the world that the time for standing on the defense passed long ago. I pick up the "Los Angeles Times" and read, flaring across its front page, the head: "Rotten, says La Follette of Federal Government." In the text below I read as follows: "The Senator trailed the course of corruption which, he declared, made the United States government 'rotten, as a government of the people.' The beginning of the corruption was felt, said he, soon after the organization of the large corporations. 'Now we are paying the cost of legitimate profits and on stock watered four times,' said the speaker, referring to the cost of living. A list of ninety-six men who, the Senator said, control the destinies of the government, was reduced to fourteen by the speaker, with J. P. Morgan and John D. Rockefeller as the leaders. The speaker accused the fourteen men of controlling the free capital and credit of the country, of not ministering to the business of the country, and of being a menace to commercial banking."

* * *

There is nothing new in that statement, laid before the country by a man who may be our next president. He merely repeats a story told ,and He merely repeats a story told, and countless writers. The new fact, and the essentially important fact, is that this country is full of men whose indignation has been worked up to such a pitch that they propose to knock to pieces the existing rottenness by violent, physical attack. That school of thought—a thought that has deepened into conviction—has many more adherents than is generally supposed, and its numbers are increasing rapidly. It is a school of pessimism, if you like, but you cannot dismiss it by that word. It exists and exists quite naturally, since pessimism and optimism are merely the impressions produced on the human mind by reflecting on a given set of circumstances. The mind acts as it is compelled to act; conditions force it inexorably to its conclusions, and if those conclusions are pessimistic it will act, sooner or later, in accordance with them. If you want to convince yourself of the existence of that pessimism read the list of dynamite explosions since November, 1905, published by the "New York Sun."

* * *

People of the Otis type; men of the stamp of a well-known Los Angeles banker who is the loud-mouthed advocate of the "removal" of agitators; have wished themselves into the delusion that by screwing down the valve more tightly they can insure the safety of the social boiler. They fly in the face of physics and exhibit only their own ignorance of criminology, in which, as in every department of the so-called art of war, the destructive forces of attack outstrip easily the ingenuity of the defense. If they reflected on the very list to which I have alluded they would note that the dynamiting recorded there began before and continued unchecked by the Moyer-Haywood-Pettibone trial; and it is, to me at least, unthinkable that violence will be halted, even temporarily, by the McNamara confessions. If the conditions are such as to provoke violent retaliation, violent retaliation will continue. If the conditions grow worse violence will increase, despite all the repressive agencies government may enlist. It is not in the nature of corruption to endure—Life itself takes care of that—and when you multiply detectives, add to the number of your hireling gladiators and draft more and more of your population from the honorable path of industry into the dishonorable occupation of paid defenders of the indefensible, you merely add to the corruption and hasten the inevitable smash.

* * *

A social machine which grinds out in continually increasing numbers paupers and millionaires, desperadoes and effetes putrid with the possession of millions, should be tossed to the scrap heap. Beyond all question that is what is coming. Beyond all question that must be done if our race is to save itself from a creeping paralysis that will end in absolute collapse. The papers are playing up an interview with Rider Haggard, who is not only a well-known writer but also an excellent type of level-headed, vigorous manhood. He shows that in the huge cities real estate speculation works so industriously to build, and on which we pride ourselves so fatuously, we are "turning the race into a set of neurotic creatures, unfit, at any rate in the second or third generation, to face the realities of existence," and are "filling the poorhouses, the asylums and the hospitals." He appeals to all history as proving that "the flocking of the land-born to the city has always been preliminary to the destruction of nations," and adds that in this respect the United States is a most recklessly criminal offender. Rider Haggard writes as a physician and states facts that his brother professionals all admit among themselves, but to which they are afraid to give publicity.

* * *

In the municipal shelters of Berlin terrible scenes are being enacted, a mysterious disease known as the "Black Death" decimating the unfortunates who flock to them for refuge. Men fall writhing to the floor and expire in frightful agony. What I note especially in the accounts is this, taken from an interview with one of the attendants: "We had expected that after the deaths on the first night the shelter would be almost deserted, but, on the contrary, it was again crowded by more than 4000 destitutes." There is a pen-picture for you of life in the metropolis of what plumes itself on being a great and civilized country. Do you wonder that the Mexicans are fighting with every weapon at their command against a similar fate? They are right, profoundly right. In their distrust of politicians and determination to take their own fate into their own hands by recovering their lands, at all and every cost, they are setting us an example of wisdom of the highest type. Not all of them are doing it. Many, far too many, still stand indifferent. Many, far too many, are flinching from the fight and turning to the United States, which they fondly hope may prove a haven. But we should pray most soulfully that enough are left to save the situation, since on that may hang our own salvation. If the Mexicans succeed in their struggle for the land a similar movement will sweep, and sweep successfully, this country.

WM. C. OWEN.

DOWN COMES THE BALLOON.

What will be the effect on the social movement in this country of the McNamara case? Will it produce a radical change in the tactics of organized labor? Will it bring Trades Unionists and Socialists closer together, and thus pave the way for a really formidable workers' party? Will old methods be discarded and a new departure made? These are the questions thousands of intelligent men and women are asking, and they are profoundly anxious for an answer. In part that answer seems to be furnished by the official article in the January issue of the "American Federationist," official organ of the American Federation of Labor. After stating that its editors have been flooded by letters from all parts of the country, and that such letters have been searched industriously for suggestions as to a new and better course, the article continues:

"Nothing new has come, in reply to these queries. Among the intense participants in the social conflict, the same groups are but reiterating their well-known sentiments. What could be expected from the National Manufacturers' Association, their agents and hirelings, but precisely what they are saying—which is merely what they have been saying? What from the Socialists EXCEPT TO EMPLOY THE OCCASION FOR VOTE-CATCHING? What from such reactionary organs as the New York Sun but diatribes covering half the editorial page? So long as these declared ENEMIES of the trade unions are what they are, and unionism is what it is, no help can come from them to the labor movement."

Note the language. As the result of all this jockeying, all this fishing, all this wholesale slaughter of principle to trap the labor vote, we find the official organ of America's organized labor movement expressing its opinion of the Socialists in the words capitalized. The gas is escaping. Down comes the balloon.

PROVING GOOD FAITH.

The Spanish editors of "Regeneración" have sent a circular letter to a number of their exchanges, which, literally translated, runs as follows:

"Last week we sent you two packages of Mexico City capitalist papers, in which we marked the passages showing the economic aspect of the Mexican revolutionary movement. We now send you another package, and hereafter, to the extent of our ability, we shall send you copies of the Mexican papers bearing on the same subject, that you may be able to write on the Mexican question, and base what you write on the confession of the capitalist papers themselves.

"Although it increases our expenses we have decided to do this in order to meet and stop the unjust attacks of those who have given it out that this movement exists only in the writings of "Regeneracion," and is put out by the Junta as a bait to exploit more easily our liberty-loving comrades."

As explained in last week's English section, its editor has adopted a somewhat similar plan, and this week he sent to a hundred English exchanges copy of the letter which appeared in last week's issue. The naming therein of the sources from which it was compiled refutes completely the charge made and rashly credited in certain quarters. Any one can make charges, and, no matter what their motive, such charges will do harm, destruction being always a thousand times easier than construction.

In the case of the Mexican Revolution it is all-important that foreign intervention be discouraged, and the greatest guarantee we can have lies in the solidarity of the foreign labor movement.

Addressing the soldiers Lord Wolseley said: "The soldier ought to consider his duties the noblest that fall to man's lot. The soldier must learn to despise the duties of civil life. This sentiment is not confined to occasions when the soldier is defending his country but embraces also the case of the soldier who is invading foreign countries, especially those of weak nations. (Francisco Ferrer.)

Agricultural Workers Strike By Thousands

Economic Character of Revolution Developes Steadily

Federal Forces Concentrated on Effort to Crush Zapata

The editorial section of "El Imparcial," dated Jan. 3, contains the following: "Daily the press, in different tones, is giving us accounts of protests and manifestations that the workingman is making with the object of demonstrating discontent with his actual situation. The workingman of the present day recognizes neither the law nor the obligations the economic system imposes on him. To get himself a hearing he organizes meetings more or less subversive in character; and orders strikes that often have a revolutionary aspect and amount to conspiracies, thinking that in this manner he will give more effect to his demands." The writer then urges careful study of the situation, pointing out that if we examine these strikes we shall find "at the bottom of them a sentiment purely anarchistic." This he attributes to the work of revolutionary Socialists, and declares that, while true Socialism (meaning clearly municipal Socialism of the Milwaukee, Good Government type) may prove the salvation of the nation, revolutionary Socialism will be its ruin. The latter, he asserts, "is the stormy sea which, unfortunately, the workingmen of these times is navigating."

The article then appeals to the employer "to aid in the solution of this arduous and difficult problem by giving the worker a life less miserable than he actually has, and by extending to him more kindness and affection." Those who are familiar with the past history of Mexican Labor will join us in bidding it distrust the "affection" of its masters. Most of them are absentee corporations, with souls only for dividends.

Strikes continue throughout Mexico, both in the factories and mines and among the agricultural laborers. Thus we find "El Monitor" of January 5 reporting from Tlaxcala: "All the peons of this State have come to an agreement and declared a strike, demanding that they work only until five o'clock in the evening and be paid thirty-six cents an hour, getting pay moreover for the time allowed for rest and dinner." The employers protest that "in no part of the world are day laborers paid what these ill-advised peons ask." The same paper reports from Tulancingo, State of Hidalgo: "Three thousand factory workers in this city have declared a strike, demanding increased wages and diminution of the hours of labor. The factories of Santiago, El Carmen, Santa Isabel and La Sorpresa are paralyzed, but up to date there has been no disorder." "El Monitor" also complains of the great trouble caused by strikes in the State of Chihuahua, which it attributes to the evil counsels of Socialist agitators, against whom it delivers a philippic. It adds that the proof of its allegations is the acknowledged fact that proprietors in that State have "strikes, armed or pacific, as the bread of their daily life."

Masses Were Misled

"El Diario" of Jan. 5 reports Deputy Santiago J. Sierra as leaving for Puebla, "to interpose his good offices with a view to bringing to an end the strike which is desolating that State." Being interviewed the deputy laid the blame on "leaders" who had made the people believe that "the revolution had as the obligation of its triumph the radical amelioration of their situation." Curiously enough "Regeneracion" had had from the first that self-same idea, conceiving that the object of so much bloodshed was not to hoist Madero and a new set of officials into power. The deputy complained that the people by their demands raised the price of the necessities of life and then resorted to violence because they could not fill their stomachs. A view typical of the deputy everywhere.

According to "El País" of Jan. 5 the strike at Manzanillo, State of Colima, "which was causing grave losses to commerce, has been settled in a manner entirely favorable to the longshoremen. The longshoremen have triumphed all along the line, all their demands having been granted, including the substitution for the foremen Elliott and Uraga of two men more agreeable to the Mexican workers."

The foregoing, taken from four leading Mexico City papers just to hand, show a very different state of things from that which prevailed in Mexican labor circles less than six months ago, at which date the workers were only awakening to the necessity of asserting themselves.

"Nueva Era," an ardent partizan of Madero, publishes, under date of Jan. 1, the report of its special correspondent at Puebla, which speaks of large estates invaded by the people of San Sebastian and Zitlaltepec, and adds this comment: "The worst is that the evil will continue to increase if the necessary remedy is not applied immediately; for the inhabitants of the other towns, encouraged by the example of the first invaders, who have remained unpunished, will want to do the same with the lands belonging to other large estate, and this will lead to the most serious results and the greatest difficulties."

Clashes With Zapata

The "El Paso Morning Times" of Jan. 5 reports fighting between Federals and Zapatistas in the States of Morelos, Mexico, six different despatches, all dated Jan. 4, giving account of conflicts at as many points in the latter State. It is essentially guerrilla warfare, the Zapatistas attacking towns and haciendas but retiring, as is their habit, on the approach in force of the Federal troops. Unquestionably the government is making unprecedented efforts to crush Zapata, but, according to a recent despatch in the "Los Angeles Times," his followers are increasing in numbers and the area of his operations is widening. The center of his power is in Morelos but he is also active in the following States, named in the order proportionate to his reported strength—Mexico, Puebla, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, and the Federal District.

"El Paladin," which has been strongly anti-Zapatist, has a leading article, under date of Jan. 4, headed "Zapatism and Senor Madero." It reminds its readers that hardly six months ago Madero lauded Zapata to the skies, styling him "the most honest of them all," and says that "pursuing his crooked policy of promises and deceit, when he grasped the imperial standard of the revolution and signed the plan of San Luis, he entered into a pact with the bandit, in which was muffled up we know not what concessions." It then asserts that "there are many well-informed persons who have talked with Zapata and declare that he has in his possession documents signed by Madero which conferred on him and his followers the rank of Reserve Army of Liberation," and that such documents were signed by Madero because he was "on the lookout all the time for some accident that might frustrate him in his climb to the presidential chair." It then remarks that Madero fully believed he could cheat Zapata with fine words, but that the latter, "rude and unlearned as he may be, is of a suspicious nature, and Madero is not the man to be able to make a lapdog of him."

The article explains, as we have explained so often, that Zapata's strength lies in the fact that he represents the time-honored conviction of the natives that the land they cultivate belongs to them; but I quote and refer to it here for the additional light it throws on Madero's actual character. I use the adjective "actual" instead of "true," and months ago I wrote in these columns that Diaz was merely the cruel soldier, but that Madero is the incomparably more dangerous enemy, the Jespitical, up-to-date politician. The charlatan has thrown everybody down, including the Socialists who so foolishly believed in him. "The world is still deceived by show," as Shakespeare remarked some three centuries ago.

Reyes' ridiculous fiasco was followed immediately by a Wall Street boom in Mexican securities, and the conjecture has been hazarded in several quarters that the entire farce may have been stage-managed by Madero, to exhibit himself to the world as invincible. As the proverb goes, "it is a long lane that has no turning."

Our Spanish columns this week contain brief notes of guerrilla warfare covering the States of Sonora, Puebla, Chihuahua, Zacatecas, Sinaloa, Durango, Hidalgo, Guerrero, Guanajuato, Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosi and Tabasco. They have been compiled and condensed from the following well-known capitalist papers: "El Diario," "El Monitor," "Nueva Era," "El País," "El Democrata," "Correo del Norte" and "El Heraldo Mexicano."

The "El Paso Morning Times" reports conditions in Yucatan as most unsatisfactory, but the news censorship is exceedingly strict and the region most remote.

It is self-evident that all Mexico is honeycombed with discontent, more especially in connection with the land question, and that such discontent is expressing itself at a thousand points to the best of its ability; for it must not be forgotten that the masses are extremely poor and, therefore, unable to procure arms. Probably there will be new developments after Jan. 14, when Madero puts to the test the dangerous experiment of conscription.

W. C. O.

Burn I.W.W. Hall; Run Members Into Jail

A good many articles have appeared in Los Angeles papers of late, dealing with the alleged depredations committed by a band of I. W. W. men said to be operating along the border. It is the fashion to describe them as chicken thieves, barn burners, etc., but those who know anything of the character of border officials, working under the fee system and making their living by multiplying arrests, may well suspect that the question has another side. We reproduce verbatim the protest sent us from Brawley, Cal., over the seal of Local 439, I. W. W. It is headed "A Call for Funds. Innocent I. W. W. Men to Be Railroaded." The text is as follows:

"Tirso de la Toba was kidnapped near Holtville and taken across the line to Mexicali, in Mexico, and two American officials were the kidnapers.

"He was taken without any warrant or extradition papers. We appealed to the county officers and the governor, but without results. The Mexican rurales started with him to Ensenada, to be shot. When nearly there he escaped, and, after wandering for three days in the mountains, without food or water, he finally made his way back to Holtville.

"Toba was a member of the Mexican Liberal Party, and fought with the insurrectos in Lower California last winter.

"We learned that Mexico had offered $100 reward for privates and $500 for officers in the late insurreccion. As many I. W. W. men fought in Mexico last winter all I. W. W. men were classed as insurrectos. Then began a campaign of deception and treachery on the part of Mexican and American officials to induce I. W. W. men to cross the line. If they could be quietly captured this side the line it made no difference.

"The number who have been taken to Mexico will probably never be known. Among others, Mrs. Isabel Fieras, a member of the I. W. W., was taken.

"Under these circumstances there was only one thing to do, and that was for every I. W. W. man who could do so to arm himself, which was done. On the 25th of December the sheriff and his deputies presented themselves at the I. W. W. hall at Holtville, and ordered them to give up any arms in their possession. They flatly refused. He then told the boys that he would get them. The boys were armed with pistols, and they knew it would be an easy matter for the sheriff and a posse, armed with long range, high power rifles, to get them; so that night they quietly left, hoping to make their escape out of the valley. The news of their departure was immediately communicated to the sheriff and he began telephoning. Up to date twelve have been caught and lodged in the county jail. Every means will be used to railroad them to the penitentiary for a long term.

On the last night of the old year, the hall at Holtville, being completely deserted but containing all their furniture and library, was burned by a mob of brave and respected citizens.

"If money can be raised to give these men as fair a trial as possible in a capitalist court, they stand a chance of getting free.

"Please send all funds to Peter le Blanc, Box 485, Brawley, Cal.

"Yours for industrial freedom,

"LOCAL 439.

"(SEAL) Brawley, Cal."

Monopoly Drives Workers to Crime

It looks as if an ounce of direct action is worth a ton of political talkee-talkee for the purpose of making the nation sit up and think. There is no end to the symposium respecting the McNamara case that the big capitalist papers are publishing, and the contributors are persons who command a hearing. One of the most outspoken has been the Rev. Haynes Holmes, who, in a sermon at the Church of the Messiah, New York—the noted Robert Collyer is its pastor emeritus—said, in part as follows:

"If I had to choose I would rather be a criminal with blood on my hands than be one of the leaders of the Steel Trust.

"But with all due respect to the ex-President of the United States, it is not true that 'murder is always murder,' and the McNamara brothers are not criminals in the ordinary sense of the word. Rather they are unselfish soldiers of a cause.

"What circumstances made these men think that they were justified in committing that crime? The whole power of the Steel Trust, vested in the Erectors' Association, was turned against the Structural Iron Workers' Union, the only one which had been left uncrushed, simply because it was a union. Then the association acted in the same way as a union does which employs strike and boycott methods.

Violence Inevitable

Human nature being human nature, dynamite was inevitable, for what channels of protest have we placed before the workingman except violence? There are no laws for them and no courts to enforce any laws there might be. The press misunderstands them and the church is reluctant to receive them. Violence cannot be justified from the standpoint of absolute ethics, for America is not yet Russia, even as regards the steel industry; but neither can it be denounced until the denouncers have removed all provocation and opened up a way of protest for the workingman.

"Violence, the strike, the boycott are war measures, for the laborer is not dealing with his friends. If you object to them you object to the Boston Tea Party and the battle of Bunker Hill. Do not blame the laborer for his acts, but blame the capitalists, as you should blame the men who first fired on Fort Sumter instead of Sherman, who made that disgraceful march through Georgia."

ONLY TWO LIES THERE

In "The International Socialist," (Sydney, Australia), of Dec. 9, we read: "Our Mexican comrades have just succeeded in starting the first Socialist paper in that country, under the name of 'Lucha de Clases.' Among its principal collaborators are Juan Sarabia, Juan Humboldt, J. M. Gonzales and Antonio Villarreal. In their declaration of principles the editors announce: 'The struggle of arms is now terminated, since at last political liberty has been obtained.'"

That paragraph contains two gross misstatements; the one being that "La Lucha de Clases" was the first Socialist paper and the other that the struggle by force of arms is over, which it never will be until the Mexican workers get back their lands. It is natural, however, that Madero's henchmen should declare it over.

This thought also suggests itself. For months past "The International Socialist" has received "Regeneración," but never has it deigned to waste one line on the great struggle for economic liberty the Mexican workers are making. Let some of its partizans, however, start a little, and most lying, sheet, and, presto! the event is heralded as of paramount importance.

For the better information of "The International Socialist" we may add that, although its advent was advertised widely, the "Lucha de Clases" never even got itself born, and its unfortunate predecessor, "El Radical," quickly gave up the ghost. Madero has not proved the angel the Socialists expected, and the moment their agitators, such as Guiterrez de Lara, began to spread the doctrine they found themselves in jail. In fact Madero has thrown down everybody except the capitalists.

"No man ever ruled other men for their own good; no man was ever rightly the master of the minds or bodies of his brothers; no man ever ruled other men for anything except for their undoing, and for his own brutalization. The possession of power over others is inherently destructive—both to the possessor of the power and to those over whom it is exercised."

The foregoing, by George D. Herron, a noted Socialist, states most admirably the basic Anarchist position. It is reproduced approvingly by the Socialist organ "Revolt." We are advancing.