

CHAPTER VII

THE REVOLUTION OF 1871

The Franco-Prussian War—Internationalism—Karl Marx, pan-Germanist
—The Commune—Conflict between Marx and Bakunin—End of
the Internationale.

WE have seen in the last chapter that as a means for the reorganization of industry the Internationale had failed signally of its purpose. What then of its Internationalism? How far was the brotherhood of man which had constituted one of its fundamental doctrines to avail as a barrier against militarism?

The conviction that war is a relic of barbarism and should be done away with, has been held by humanitarians at every stage in the history of civilization; the question is how so obviously desirable an end can be accomplished. In France, as we have seen, groups of enthusiasts as far back as the *Confrères* of the twelfth century had declared it possible, and the Constituent Assembly of the First Revolution had devoted their energies to the formation of a "League of Perpetual Peace." "Let all men be free as we are," a deputy had cried, "and we shall have no more wars!" Forthwith the decree was passed that the French nation should never again undertake any war of conquest.

Mirabeau alone had shown the futility of such resolutions in his immortal reply: "I ask myself," he said to the Assembly, lulled in its dreams of pacifism, "I ask myself whether because we suddenly change our political system we shall force other nations to change theirs. . . . Until then perpetual peace will remain a dream and a dangerous dream if it leads France to disarm before a Europe in arms." ¹

¹ Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, ii. 87.

Mirabeau's prophetic instinct was justified when eighty years later the same dangerous dream led the French workers of the Internationale to weaken before a Prussia in arms.

The idea of "a strike of the peoples against war" was proposed as early as 1868 at the Congress of the Internationale in Brussels, and Dupont, the mouthpiece of Marx, closed his presidential address with the words :

The clerics say : " See this Congress, it declares that it wishes neither for government, armies, nor religion." They say the truth, we wish for no more governments because governments crush us with taxes ; we wish for no more armies because armies massacre us ; we wish for no more religion because religion stifles intelligence.¹

When, therefore, two years later the first rumblings of the Franco-Prussian War were heard, the French workers fondly imagined that the Internationale would intervene and stop the conflict. Accordingly with touching *naïveté* they published in their paper *Le Reveil* on the 12th of July 1870 an address to the people of Germany begging them to desist from strife :

Brothers of Germany, in the name of peace do not listen to the subsidized or servile voices which seek to deceive you on the true spirit of France. Remain deaf to senseless provocations, for war between us would be a fratricidal war. Remain calm, as a great and courageous people can do without compromising its dignity. Our divisions would only bring about on both sides of the Rhine the complete triumph of despotism.²

When, however, a week later, on July 19, Napoleon III. was tricked by Bismarck into declaring war on Prussia, the German Social Democrats rallied in a body to the standard of Imperialism, and the so-called "Central Committee of the German International Sections" sitting at Brunswick issued a proclamation on the 24th of July referring to "the legitimate aspirations of the German people for national unity," and ending with the words : "Long live Germany ! Long live the International struggle of the proletariat."³

¹ Guillaume, *Karl Marx, pan-Germaniste*, p. 51.

² *Ibid.* p. 84.

³ Guillaume, *Documents*, ii. 70.

Deluded by the last hypocritical protestation, *Solidarité*, the organ of the Internationale, still expressed its hopes for the future.

Two great military powers are about to devour each other. Since we have obtained this immense result, that the two peoples whom their masters have declared to be in a state of war, instead of hating each other, hold out the hand of friendship, we can await the *dénouement* with confidence.¹

But it was not until the tide of war had turned definitely in favour of Prussia that the Committee of Brunswick saw fit to respond with a plea for peace. It is true that isolated working-men in Germany expressed their sympathy with the French people, and that the Socialists Bebel and Liebknecht were later on thrown into prison for protesting against the war after it had broken out, nevertheless Liebknecht himself, before it was too late, had urged Prussia on to aggression. Thus in the *Volksstaat* for July 13, 1870, he "had reproached Bismarck and the King of Prussia for showing themselves too conciliatory towards France and of damaging the prestige of Germany by a too humble attitude."²

The fact then remains that as a preventive to war the Internationale proved completely futile for the very reason given by Mirabeau eighty years earlier. The French Internationalists had reckoned without the German national spirit, and Guillaume, writing in *Solidarité* on March 28, 1871, is obliged to confess :

What an infinitesimal minority is formed by these men with convictions (Bebel and Liebknecht)! How many are there in Germany, alas! of whom we can call ourselves the brothers? The immense majority of the German working-men, are they not intoxicated like the *bourgeoisie* by Bismarck's victories? And are we not obliged to-day, whilst making an honourable exception of the friends we have just mentioned, to consider the German people in the mass as an obstacle to the Revolution?³

It was not till two years later that the Latin members of the Internationale discovered to their pained surprise

¹ Guillaume, *Documents, etc.*, ii. 69.

² Laskine, *L'Internationale et le pan-Germanisme*, p. 202.

³ Guillaume *Documents, etc.*, ii. 137.

that the "Central Committee of the German International Sections" was not, as they had imagined, the German branch of the Internationale but merely an unofficial group with no organization, for the German Government had taken the precaution to forbid the formation of an Internationale amongst its own people.¹ Thus, although Germans controlled the policy of the Internationale abroad, the Internationale was not allowed to exist in Germany! As Mr. Adolphe Smith has well expressed it in relation to the 1917 situation:

That Socialism, as "made in Germany," and destined mainly for foreign exportation, would facilitate the invasion not only of Russia, but also of France, Italy, and even England, was not very apparent at first. Yet this might have been suspected, for it was evident that the *Socialist Internationale, whenever it was controlled by Germans, became a pan-German association.*²

The real meaning of Internationalism became in time apparent to the French workers. The hand of Bismarck had been strongly suspected in the great strike at Creuzot.³

"Strikes, always strikes, and still more strikes," Fribourg wrote in 1871, "no more study nor anything that resembles it. . . . Foreign Internationals who hold the ground, support the movement, found violent newspapers, an epidemic of disturbances rages in France and paralyses production."⁴

What was the rôle of Marx in this question of Internationalism? In order to realize his full perfidy we must refer again to the Preamble to the Statutes of the Internationale drawn up by him. The first principle, that "the emancipation of the workers must be brought about by the workers themselves," he had violated, as we have seen, by insisting on the admission of non-workers to the Association; the further principle of "a fraternal union between the workers of different countries" was now at stake, and Marx repudiated this likewise.

The truth is that Marx had never believed in universal brotherhood any more than he had believed in the dictator-

¹ Guillaume, *Documents, etc.*, ii. 137.

² *The Pan-German Internationale*, p. 3.

³ *La Commune de Paris*, by the Comte de Beaumont Vassy, p. 13.

⁴ Fribourg, *L'Association Internationale des Travailleurs* (1871).

ship of the proletariat—these were slogans to be made use of but not carried into practice. Thus just before Sadowa he had written to Engels :

The Proudhonien clique amongst the Paris students preaches peace, declares war an anachronism, nationalities vain words, attacks Bismarck. . . . As disciples of Proudhon—my good friends Lafargue and Longuet are amongst them—they wish to abolish misery and ignorance, ignorance with which they themselves are afflicted all the more that they make a parade of a so-called “ social science,” *they are quite simply grotesque.*¹

The appeal of the French working-men to their brothers of Germany in 1870 was now declared by Marx to be “ pure Jingoism.”

“ The French,” he wrote to Engels on July 20, “ need a thrashing (die Französer brauchen Prügel). If the Prussians are victorious, the centralization of the power of the State will be useful to the centralization of the German working-class. Besides, German preponderance will transport the centre of gravity of the working-class movement from France to Germany, and it is sufficient to compare the movement in the two countries from 1866 until the present moment in order to see that the German working-class is superior to the French as much from the point of view of theory as of organization.

The preponderance in the theatre of the world of the German proletariat over the French proletariat would be at the same time the preponderance of our theory over Proudhon’s.²

Now it is curious to notice that Nietzsche, who as the prophet of autocracy, Imperialism, and warfare has usually been regarded as the opposite pole to Marx, had expressed himself at the above-quoted date, namely in 1866, at the time of Prussia’s victory over Austria at Sadowa, in the following words :

We hold the cards ; but as long as Paris remains the centre of Europe things will remain in the old condition. It is inevitable that we should make an effort to upset this equilibrium, or at least try to upset it. If we fail, then let us hope to fall, each of us, on a field of battle, struck by some French shell.³

¹ Laskine, *L’Internationale et le pan-Germanisme*, p. 23 ; letter of June 7, 1866.

² *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Marx und Engels*, iv. 296.

³ *Life of Nietzsche*, by Daniel Halévy (Eng. trans.), p. 53.

How are we to explain the extraordinary resemblance between the point of view expressed in these two passages? Can we attribute it to mere coincidence, or shall we find a common inspiration at work behind both writers? It is impossible to study the lives and writings of Marx and Nietzsche without recognizing a certain resemblance between the two men; both were continually at war with the rest of the human race, both had been embittered by early experiences, and both were animated by a fierce and undying hatred towards Christianity arising from the same cause, namely that both worshipped *force*. If Marx incarnated the destructive spirit we associate with Bolshevism, Nietzsche was in reality an inverted Bolshevik, a man who had narrowly escaped being a violent revolutionary Socialist. Whilst Nietzsche desired to maintain the uneducated classes in a state of slavery, Marx aimed at the enslavement of the *intelligenzia*; whilst Nietzsche advocated the autocracy of Superman, Marx professed to believe in the dictatorship of the proletariat; whilst Marx devoted his energies to stirring up class hatred from below, Nietzsche by his "class consciousness of a higher class"¹ strove to promote it from above. In a word, both were in revolt against the existing social order tempered by Christian forbearance and compassion, which they regarded as debilitating to man's highest faculties.

This meeting of extremes explains the fact that Nietzsche found an affinity in Mazzini whilst Marx entered wholeheartedly into the aims of Bismarck. It is impossible not to suspect a common inspiration behind them both, working for the advancement of pan-German interests.

At any rate in 1870 Marx faithfully served the cause of German Imperialism. Indeed the French branch of the Internationale in London actually denounced him as an agent of Bismarck, and Marx wrote to Engels on August 3, 1870, saying that he was not only accused of being a Prussian agent but of having received £10,000 from Bismarck. Fortunately, adds the author of *The Pan-German Internationale*, who quotes these admissions, "all this private correspondence has been recently printed by the Socialist

¹ *Friedrich Nietzsche*, by Georges Brandes (Eng. trans.), p. 30.

publisher, Dietz of Stuttgart. We are thus able to obtain, not from what others have said but from what the principals themselves wrote, a clear indication of their motives and acts." ¹

In the light of these revelations it is difficult to see in Marx's revolutionary violence the Jewish spirit of revenge for the persecution of his race to which it has frequently been attributed. If Marx resented persecution, why did he throw in his lot with the country in which *Judenhetze* was most rampant? It is possible that Bismarck knew how to exploit his racial hatred against Christian civilization, but the fact remains that, as two modern writers have expressed it, Marx was, or at any rate became, "a German of the Germans, and Marx has done more for the Fatherland"—which incidentally had exiled him!—"than all the hordes of German agents that have filtered across the world." ²

In this attitude he was naturally supported by Engels—"Marx's evil genius," as Mrs. Marx was wont to describe him—a constitutional militarist. Thus when the Internationale of Paris again protested to the German people against the invasion of French territory, and this time the German Social Democrats at Brunswick responded with the proposal of "an honourable peace with the French Republic," Engels wrote indignantly to Marx:

It is just the old infatuation, the superiority of France, the inviolability of the soil sanctified by 1793, and from which all the French swinishnesses (*les cochonneries françaises*) committed since then have not been able to take away the character, the sanctity of the word Republic. . . . I hope that these people will return to good sense once their first intoxication has passed, otherwise it will become devilishly difficult to continue international relations with them. ³

By Marx and Engels the French working-men were therefore abjured to dissociate themselves from the war

¹ Adolphe Smith, *The Pan-German Internationale*, p. 5; see also Laskine, *L'Internationale et le pan-Germanisme*, p. 83. Note that both these writers are themselves Socialists. Edmond Laskine is said to be a Russian Jew; he was educated in France.

² *Bolshevik Russia*, by G. E. Raine and E. Luboff, p. 17.

³ Guillaume, *Karl Marx, pan-Germaniste*, p. 95.

and to forget the memories of 1792. Meanwhile the German workers must be kept quiet.

"Longuet (the French Socialist)," Engels wrote again, "is very amusing! Because William I. has granted them a Republic now they want to make a revolution in Germany! . . . If we have any influence in Paris we must prevent the working-men from moving until peace is made. . . ." ¹

And next day he adds :

The war by being prolonged is taking a disagreeable turn. The French have not yet been thrashed enough, and yet on the other hand the Germans have already triumphed a good deal.

It is true that, in the end, Marx in a letter to the *Daily News* on January 16, 1871, professed some sympathy with the martyred nation, and even expressed the opinion that the complete supremacy of Prussia not only over the people of France but of the rest of Germany would be fatal to the cause of liberty, but as by this time the triumph of Prussia was a *fait accompli*—for two days later the King of Prussia was crowned Emperor of Germany at Versailles—such protestations could be made with impunity. The fact remains that, as M. Guillaume expresses it :

In 1870 Marx and Engels, German patriots before everything, applauded the victories of the German armies. . . . And they took advantage of their position to try, in the name of the General Council of the Internationale, to dissuade the French proletariat from fighting against the invaders. . . . Their attitude at this moment was a real treachery towards the Internationale for the profit of pan-German interests. These are things that it is necessary to make known to all Republicans, Socialists or otherwise, in France and elsewhere. ²

It will be seen, then, that Internationalism as devised by Weishaupt, interpreted by Cloutz, and carried out by Marx and Engels, and in our own day by the agent of Germany, Nicholas Lenin, has served two causes only—German Imperialism and Jewish intrigue.

After the defeat of the French armies at Sedan on

¹ Guillaume, *Karl Marx, pan-Germaniste*, p. 99.

² *Ibid.* p. iv.

September 1, 1870, the Empire was swept away and social revolution dealt the final blows to crushed and suffering France.

The first outbreak of revolution occurred in the provinces, and at Lyons was carried out by the Bakunists. Like the war-horse smelling the battle afar, Bakunin himself at Locarno heard the revolutionary Socialists of Lyons calling, and borrowing some money, according to his usual custom, hastened to the scene of action. Here he found himself once more in his element. The city was in a state of chaos; "none of the leaders of the Internationale had any clear idea what they intended to do;" public meetings of extraordinary violence were taking place, at which "the most sanguinary motions were put forward and received with enthusiasm;"¹ in a word, it was a state of affairs after Bakunin's own heart.

But once again the *bourgeoisie* rose in defence of law and order; and the *Comité de Salut Public*, that had occupied the Town Hall, was obliged to evacuate. The rôle of Bakunin himself was thus derisively described by Marx:

On the 28th of September, the day of his arrival, the people had seized the Hôtel de Ville. Bakunin installed himself there; then the critical moment arrived, the moment awaited for so many years, when Bakunin was able to accomplish the most revolutionary act the world has ever seen. He decreed the *abolition of the State*. But the State, in the shape and kind of two companies of *bourgeois* National Guards, entered by a door that it had been forgotten to guard, cleared the hall, and made Bakunin hastily take the road for Geneva.²

Bakunin, therefore, bruised and battered—for he had been severely handled in the fray—returned to Italy a chastened man. Yet wild as appears his scheme of saving France from Prussia by "the complete destruction of the whole administrative and governmental machine,"³ we must admit that he displayed a certain perspicacity with regard to the future of French Socialism:

¹ Guillaume, *Documents, etc.*, ii. 92.

² *Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste, etc., publiée par ordre du Congrès Internationale de la Haye* (1873), p. 21.

³ Guillaume, *Documents, etc.*, ii. 98.

"I begin to think now," he wrote to Palix, "that it is all up with France. . . . She will become a viceroyalty of Germany. In the place of her real and living Socialism we shall have the *doctrinaire* Socialism of the Germans, who will say no more than the Prussian bayonets permit them to say."¹

But the final triumph of German Social Democracy was reserved for three years later.

Whilst these events were taking place in Lyons, the Third Republic had been proclaimed after the abdication of Napoleon III. On the 17th of September the Siege of Paris began. Six weeks later, on the 31st of October, great popular indignation was created by the belief that the Government had attempted to conceal the news of the surrender of Bazaine and the capitulation of Metz. At the same time it was announced that the recent victory outside Paris had been turned into a defeat and Le Bourget recaptured by the Germans; further, that M. Thiers was coming to Paris, under a flag of truce, to negotiate an armistice. Then the people who had endured so much throughout the siege, feeling that all their sacrifices had been in vain, rose against the Government, and the anarchic elements, exploiting the outraged patriotism of the Parisians, threw the city into confusion. National unity was thus destroyed, and the Prussians, emboldened by these dissensions, immediately increased the severity of their terms, demanding the ceding of Alsace and Lorraine and a heavy war indemnity.² Meanwhile their troops were carrying terror and desolation throughout the provinces of France—burning, pillaging, destroying, and killing without mercy those who offered the least resistance.

According to the terms of the armistice declared after the coronation of the Emperor William I., the garrison of Paris, with the exception of 12,000 men, was ordered to be disbanded, but the National Guards, known to be infected with revolutionary doctrines, were to be retained. It was thus that some of the French soldiers refused to march against the Prussians, declaring that they preferred to reserve themselves for fighting Frenchmen; that civil war

¹ Guillaume, *Documents, etc.*, ii. 98.

² Bonnechose, p. 707.

was to be preferred to war against a foreign enemy.¹ But it was observed that these doctrines, the outcome of German Social Democracy, exercised no influence over the German mind, for whilst the French disciples of Internationalism fell back in battle not one Prussian faltered.²

The triumphal entry of the Prussians into Paris on March 1 was the signal for the revolution to break out; and on the 18th of March the National Guards, acting on this occasion in a spirit of outraged patriotism at the incompetence of the Government in the matter of national defence, took possession of the guns ranged in the Place des Vosges lest they should fall into the hands of the Prussians, and carried them up to the heights of Montmartre.

At the same time a central committee of National Guards, formed on the plan of the Committee of Insurrection that had organized the plan of attack on August 10, 1792, seized the reins of power. In vain the Government ordered fresh troops to recapture the guns. The soldiers went over to the side of revolution, and barbarously murdered their generals Lecomte and Thomas. Once more the *tricouleur*, defeated, gave way to the red flag of the social revolution.

Four days later the affray known as the "Massacre of the Place Vendôme" took place, when a procession of "the Friends of Order"—an immense demonstration composed of unarmed National Guards, civilians, women, and children, bearing the *tricouleur* as a rallying sign against disorder—were fired on by the insurgents and—according to certain contemporaries—thirty of their number killed.³

From this moment the revolutionaries were masters of Paris. The Hôtel de Ville was seized, the Government driven out of Versailles and the Commune established in its place.

It is impossible to follow the events of 1871 with the same precision as those of 1848 owing to the chaotic nature of the movement. Whilst 1848, in spite of the diversity of views that prevailed amongst the leaders, remained essenti-

¹ Louis Énault, *Paris brûlé*, p. 16.

² Heckethorn's *Secret Societies*, ii. 250.

³ Bonnechose, *Histoire de France*, ii. 722; Louis Énault, *Paris brûlé par la Commune*, p. 33; John Leighton, *Paris under the Commune*, p. 54.

ally a Socialist revolution, 1871 developed more along the lines of Anarchy. It is true that at the outset some attempt was made by Marx and Engels to control the movement.

"When the Commune insurrection began in Paris," writes Prince Kropotkine, "the General Council insisted upon directing the insurrection from London. It required daily reports about the events, gave orders, favoured this and hampered that, and thus put in evidence the disadvantage of having a governing body, even within the association."¹

But these orders of Marx seem to have been disregarded, and it was German Illuminism rather than German Social Democracy that gained the ascendancy. When on the 26th of April a deputation of Freemasons arrived to congratulate the Commune, the old war-cry of Illuminism, "The Universal Republic," inaugurated by Anacharsis Cloutz, greeted their appearance.²

Brother Thirifocque, the orator of the procession, declared that "the Commune was the greatest revolution it had been given to the world to contemplate; that it was the new Temple of Solomon which Freemasons were bound in duty to defend." To which Lefrançais, member of the Commune, replied that he himself had been received into the *Loge Écossaise*, and had long been convinced that the aim of the association was the same as that of the Commune—social regeneration.³

In accordance with the principles of "universal masonry" national interests were soon lost to sight and French patriotism became dominated by the spirit of the World Revolution. Here again 1871 differed essentially from 1848, for whilst that earlier movement, led entirely by Frenchmen, retained its national character throughout, the Commune quickly became an assemblage of cosmopolitan elements entirely unrepresentative of the spirit of France.

Amongst the foreigners in the service of the Commune there were 19 Poles, 10 Italians, 7 Germans, 2 Americans,

¹ *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*, ii. 66.

² Leighton, *Paris under the Commune*, p. 221: "An enthusiastic cry of *Vive la Franc-Maçonnerie! Vive la République Universelle!* is re-echoed from mouth to mouth."

³ Deschamps, ii. 421, 422.

2 Russians, 2 Wallachians, 2 Portuguese, 1 Egyptian, 1 Belgian, 1 Hungarian, 1 Spaniard, and 1 Dutchman.¹ Generically its elements were divided into Internationals, Jacobins, and professional agitators. Amongst this heterogeneous crowd—"the *déclassés* of the whole world," writes a contemporary²—there could be no unity of action or of purpose.

Nevertheless the French Communards numbered several sincere patriots. It is impossible indeed to conceive of any movement taking place in Paris without the romantic and passionately patriotic spirit of the French making itself felt, and the incompetence of the Government had driven many enthusiasts over to the side of the revolution. Unhappily this enthusiasm had led to fanaticism. Thus Flourens, killed by a mounted patrol whilst leading a troop of insurgents to Versailles, has been described by an English contemporary as "an enthusiast in search of a social Eldorado, who would put himself at the service of the most forlorn cause." "In the bitter cold winters he fed and clothed the poor of Belleville, going from attic to attic with money and consolation." But the turbulence of his nature had thrown him into agitation. "He was a man of barricades. He did not seem to think that paving-stones were made to walk on; he only cared to see them heaped up across the street for the protection of armed patriots. . . . Wherever there was a chance of being killed he was sure to be. . . . He was a madman, but he was a hero."³

In justice to the men of 1871 we must admit their bravery. These French Communards did not, like their predecessors who composed the Commune of 1792, sit safely behind thick walls or take refuge in cellars whilst the crowd they had set in motion bore the brunt of the battle on the great days of tumult; the men of 1871 went boldly out into the streets to face the fire of the soldiery, and many died fighting, fired with enthusiasm to the last.

But alas! to what purpose? If the Government had proved incompetent the Commune proved more incompetent

¹ Leighton, *op. cit.* (quoting the *Figaro*) p. 75; Énault, *Paris brûlé*, p. 315.

² *Paris brûlé*, p. 42.

³ Leighton, *op. cit.* 115, 116.

still. And as in all anarchic movements it was inevitably the most violent—more than this, the most criminal—elements that obtained control, M. Énault declares that no less than 52,000 foreigners and 17,000 released convicts took part in the scenes that followed.¹

Under these influences the war on civilization planned by Weishaupt and inaugurated by the Terror of 1793 broke out afresh. As in 1848, all the memories of that earlier period—fatal precedent from which the French seemed destined never to depart—were once again evoked. A "Comité de Salut Public" was formed, the calendar of 1793 revived, and with a pitiable poverty of imagination even the names of the newspapers were copied from those of the first Revolution—the *Cri du Peuple* of Babeuf, the *Père Duchesne* of Hébert, in which the gutter verbiage of the famous "stove merchant" was faithfully reproduced by his imitator Vermesch.

Naturally the de-Christianization of Paris inaugurated in 1793 entered again largely into the programme. The same desecration of the churches took place; the images of the saints were broken or tricked out in ignoble disguises, the pictures torn, plate and ornaments pillaged; parties played at cards on the high altar, orators mounted the pulpit to blaspheme God. In the church of Saint Eustache, where the font had been filled with tobacco and the statue of the Holy Virgin dressed up as a "*vivandière*," a crowd of "female patriots," of the same class as those who had seduced the soldiery in 1789, declaimed the doctrines of the social revolution: "Marriage, citizenesses, is the greatest error of ancient humanity. To be married is to be a slave. . . ." A tall gaunt woman, with a nose like the beak of a hawk and a jaundice-coloured complexion, demanded amidst thunders of applause that the Commune should no longer recognize marriage by according pensions to the legitimate as well as the illegitimate wives of the National Guards: "The matrimonial state is a perpetual crime against morality. . . . We, the illegitimate companions, will no longer suffer the legitimate wives to usurp rights they no longer possess and which they ought never to have

¹ *Paris brûlé*, p. 28.

had at all. Let the decree be modified. All for the free women, none for the slaves ! ”¹

The honest women of the people took no part in these revolting scenes ; indeed the “ Ladies of the Market ” showed themselves some of the most determined opponents of disorder.² In the poor streets of Paris respect for religion still held sway, and women wept to see their children’s coffins lowered into the grave without a prayer. There are mothers, writes our English contemporary, “ quite unworthy of course to bear the children of patriots, who do not want their dear ones to be buried like dogs ; who cannot understand that to pray is a crime, and to kneel down before God an offence to humanity, and who are still weak enough to wish to see a cross planted on the tombs of those they have loved and lost ! Not the cross of the nineteenth century—a red flag ! ”³

This attitude on the part of the people of Paris naturally proved exasperating to the makers of World Revolution. Bakunin, like his prototype Marat, despaired of them altogether.

“ The cause is lost,” he wrote from Locarno, on the 9th of April ; “ it seems that the French, the working-class itself, are not much moved by this state of things. Yet how terrible the lesson is ! But it is not enough. They must have greater calamities, ruder shocks. Everything makes one foresee that neither one nor the other will be wanting. And then perhaps the demon will awake. But as long as it slumbers we can do nothing. It would really be a pity to have to pay for the broken glasses, it would in fact be quite useless. Our task is to do the preparatory work, to organize and spread out so as to hold ourselves in readiness when the demon shall have awoken.”⁴

But as far as the true people of Paris were concerned the demon never did awake, and it was a gang of foreign adventurers, “ the most horrible horde that ever invaded civilization,”⁵ which carried out the pillage and burnings, the outrages and murders that followed on each other throughout those dreadful three days of May.

¹ Leighton, *op. cit.* p. 282.

² *Paris brûlé*, p. 208.

³ Leighton, p. 117. Note adds : “ Early in April the Commune forbade divine service in the Panthéon. They cut off the arms of the cross, and replaced it by the red flag during a salute of artillery.”

⁴ *Correspondance de Bakounine*, p. 350.

⁵ *Paris brûlé*, p. 28.

Bakunin's claim to responsibility in these happenings finds confirmation in the words of Fribourg, one of the original founders of the Internationale: "Personally we firmly believe that the decrees of spoliation, the arbitrary arrests, the shooting of the hostages, and the systematic incendiarism of the capital are the work of the Russo-German party."¹ In other words, they were the work of German Illuminism and of its development in the Alliance Sociale Démocratique.

The prelude to this final stage of the revolution was the entry of the Versailles troops into Paris, five days after the destruction of the Colonne Vendôme. On the 16th of May the famous monument, erected in honour of French victories and now declared to be an insult to the principle of Internationalism, had been overthrown by order of the Commune—influenced, it was said, by Prussian gold²—whilst German officers looked on, rejoicing.³ This outrage to the national traditions of France infuriated the army of Versailles, which had been recently reinforced by returned prisoners from Germany, and on the 21st of May an entry was made to the capital through the Porte de Saint-Cloud. The "bloody week" of street fighting followed. By the third day the Versailles troops had reached the approaches to the Tuileries, and it was then that the generals of the Commune, Brunel and Bergeret, set fire to the palace and the Rue Royale.

Once again the idea of war on cities, that had originated with Weishaupt, that had been carried out by the Terrorists of 1793 and revived by the Nihilists who had advocated the burning of towns, was put into practice with terrible effect. Amongst the dregs of the populace, wretched, drink-sodden old women, degenerate boys, armed with paraffin, set out to burn down Paris.⁴ The plan had evidently long been premeditated in Germany; eight months before that terrible night of May 23, a cartoon had appeared in the shop windows of German towns depicting Paris in

¹ Fribourg, *L'Association Internationale des Travailleurs*, p. 143.

² Heckethorn's *Secret Societies*, ii. 253.

³ Bonnechose. *Histoire de France*, ii. 729.

⁴ Heckethorn's *Secret Societies*, ii. 258, 262; Leighton, *op. cit.* p. 339.

flames, with Germania above triumphant, and, beneath, the words: "Gefallen, gefallen ist Babylon die Stolze" (Babylon the mighty is fallen, is fallen!)¹

Nearly a hundred years earlier, Weishaupt, the arch-enemy of civilization, had declared, "The day of conflagration will come!" Now it had come, and Paris, once the centre of the world's civilization, was to be burnt to the ground.

It cannot be doubted that the total destruction of the city was desired by the enemies of France, and if this plan was not realized the havoc worked was terrible enough. The Palace of the Tuileries reduced to ashes, the Ministry of Finances, the Palace of the Legion of Honour, the Palais de Justice, the Hôtel de Ville with its treasures of art and priceless national archives—in a word the glory of old France lost to the world for ever—numerous houses in the Rue de Bac, the Rue de Lille, the Rue Royale, turned into rows of blackened ruins; and so little did the incendiaries concern themselves with the cause of the people that the Bureau de l'Assistance Publique, that existed solely to relieve distress, besides several houses belonging to it, of which the revenues belonged to the poor, were consumed by the flames. The granaries containing corn, wine, oil, and other provisions destined to relieve the sufferings of Paris famished by the siege shared a like fate.²

On the evening of the following day the horrible massacring of hostages was carried out. Six victims, including the Archbishop of Paris and four other priests who had been imprisoned seven weeks earlier, were shot down³ in cold blood at the prison of La Roquette; in vain the poor women of the district with tears and cries besought for the life of their pastor the aged Abbé Deguerry, curé of La Madeleine; the massacrers, faithful to the traditions of September 1792, dragged him to his death amidst the curses and invectives of his parishioners.⁴ All died with the courage of their eighteenth century predecessors in martyrdom. At the

¹ This cartoon is reproduced in *Le Fond de la société sous la Commune*, by C. A. Dauban.

² *Paris brûlé*, p. 203.

³ Bonnechose, *op. cit.* ii. 733.

⁴ Beaumont Vassy, *La Commune de Paris*, p. 118.

last moment the Archbishop, hearing the word liberty uttered by one of his murderers, said with dignity, "Do not pronounce that word of liberty; it belongs only to us who die for liberty and faith."¹

As in September 1792, men of the people were not spared, and on the 27th of May a general massacre of the prisoners, including 66 gendarmes, took place. Amongst these was an unfortunate man, the father of eight children, accused of having stolen the blouse and blue trousers he wore, who met with a fearful death at the hands of a mob led by a revolutionary Amazon armed with a *chassepot*.²

But the plan of the Illuminati for the destruction of civilization was once more frustrated. Civilization had risen in self-defence as civilization will always rise, and the fiercer the onslaught the more furious will be the reaction. When the struggle between the revolutionary army of the Commune and the forces of law and order had ended in a victory for the latter, thousands of victims strewed the streets of Paris; according to Prince Kropotkine, no less than 30,000 men, women, and children perished in the fray. But what were these to the Anarchists who, according to Marx, regarded the people as "cannon fodder" (*chair à canon*) on the day of revolution?³

So ended the third experiment in revolutionary government carried out on unhappy France. Even Mr. Adolphe Smith, who had hoped great things of the Commune, admits its incompetence. Sanguine revolutionists after 1871, he writes, "began to realize the innate weakness of mere theories divorced from administrative capacity."

They saw that even when in possession of one of the fairest cities of Europe—with the bank of France in their hands, an enthusiastic army at their command, weapons and munitions of war innumerable—while the country was disorganized, the regular army flying in terror before the insurrection for it could not rely upon its own soldiers—still the Commune, though so strong and successful, was unable to accomplish anything. The leaders frittered away the precious moments for action in futile discussions and squabbles, till the reaction, gathering strength,

¹ Bonnechose, ii. 733.

² Leighton, *op. cit.* p. 327.

³ *L'Alliance Sociale Démocratique*, p. 15.

organized its scattered forces and crushed them. The similitude of this with the position of Petrograd before and after the Bolsheviks seized the reins of government will not fail to be noticed by every observer.¹

Yet in spite of its ghastly fiasco the régime of the Commune met with unanimous applause from the Internationale; at Zürich, Geneva, Brussels, Leipzig, members vied with each other in extolling the bloody deeds committed during those terrible months of March to May. An English Internationalist declared that "the good time was really coming," and that "soon we shall be able to dethrone the Queen of England, turn Buckingham Palace into a workshop and pull down the York Column as the noble French people had pulled down the Vendôme column."²

Bakunin, who now apparently considered that the demon had awoken, admiringly described the French proletariat as "the modern Satan, the author of the sublime insurrection of the Commune."³

Marx, not to be left out of the movement, which in reality had, in its negation of the State, been conducted on principles opposed to his avowed opinions, now published a panegyric of the Commune entitled *The Civil War in France*, in which he referred to the State as "that parasite which exploits and hinders the free movements of society." How are we to reconcile this with Marx's advocacy of State Socialism?⁴

Guillaume, commenting on Marx's sudden *volte-face*, asks whether he had really become converted to the principles of federalism, and quotes Bakunin as declaring that the power of the Commune had proved so formidable that even the Marxians had been obliged to take off their hats to it. But the measure of Marx's sincerity in writing his panegyric of the Commune was revealed later when his correspondence with his friend Sorge was published in 1906. It seems that at the end of 1871 several refugees of the Commune who had fled to London and Geneva

¹ Unpublished work by Mr. Adolphe Smith entitled *The Betrayal of the Internationale*.

² Heckethorn's *Secret Societies*, ii. 252.

³ Guillaume, *Documents*, ii. 253.

⁴ First formulated in his *Communist Manifesto*: "to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State."

refused to obey his commands. Thereupon Marx wrote to Sorge :

And that is my reward for having wasted nearly five months working for the refugees, and for *having saved their honour* by the publication of the Address on the Civil War.¹

Thus Marx, with his superb talent for using everything that could serve his purpose, turned the anarchic régime of the Commune to account. But now the moment had come to suppress that dynamic force which threatened his supremacy and to concentrate his attention on the Anarchists of the Internationale.

ANARCHY *v.* SOCIALISM

The years that followed on the revolution of 1871 were mainly occupied by the struggle between the two groups represented by Marx and Bakunin.

Until this date the words "Anarchy" and "Anarchist," though claimed by Proudhon and Bakunin, were seldom used, and the word "Socialist" was employed to cover both the warring factions. But from 1871 onwards we find the rival camps ranging themselves definitely beneath their opposing standards, and Socialism more and more becoming the label of the Marxists. The difference between the aims of the two creeds has thus been clearly defined by Malon :²

The State Socialism of Marx was comprised in the conquest of political power, that is to say of the State, by the working-class which has for its historic mission to put an end to the class war by the abolition of classes, and to the present economic miseries and contradictions by "the nationalization of production and distribution of wealth."

Bakunin, on his part, summed up his programme in these words :

Abolition of the State in all its religious, juristic, political, and social realizations ; reorganization by the free initiative of free individuals in free groups. It was this formula that became later that of Anarchy.

¹ Guillaume, *Documents*, ii. 192.

² Article on the Internationale in *La Nouvelle Revue*, xxvi. 753.

And we might add, still later, that of Syndicalism. So the old antagonism between Liberty and Equality flamed out afresh in the great struggle between Marx and Bakunin which was to rend the Internationale in twain. Thus Bakunin, referring to the State Socialism of the Marxists, vehemently declared it to be "the vilest and the most formidable lie which our century has engendered—the official democratism and the *red bureaucracy*."¹ "I abominate Communism," he had declared to the Peace Congress at Berne in 1869, "because it is a denial of freedom and I cannot understand anything human without freedom."² On the other hand, Maurice Hess, the Marxian, had pointed out that between the Collectivists and the Anarchists of the Internationale "there was all the difference which exists between civilization and barbarism, between liberty and despotism, between citizens condemning every form of violence and slaves addicted to the use of brutal force."³

It was not, however, only the bureaucracy of the Marxians that roused the wrath of Bakunin, but their pan-Germanism, which since 1870 had become more and more apparent. "The dream of the Socialists who swear by the head of Marx," he wrote to *La Liberté* of Brussels in 1872, "is the German hegemony, is German omnipotence (*la toute puissance germanique*), at first intellectual and moral, and later on material."⁴

But it was the Marxians who began the attack.

Already in the spring of 1871 Marx, Outine, Hess, Liebknecht, Bebel, in a word all the Germans and German-Jews of the Internationale,⁵ displayed less concern over the régime of the Commune than over their own war on the Alliance Sociale Démocratique. To turn Bakunin and his followers

¹ *Correspondance de Bakounine*, p. 219.

² E. V. Zenker, *Anarchism* (Eng. trans., 1898), p. 148.

³ *Œuvres de Bakounine*, v. 223.

⁴ *Ibid.* iv. 341.

⁵ Guillaume, referring to the Jews in the Internationale, enumerates as the most important Marx, Outine, Maurice Hess, Borkheim, the editor of the *Zukunft*, a Socialist paper entirely controlled by Jews, Hepner, editor of the *Volksstaat*, and Frankel, member of the Paris Commune. Guillaume adds: "Calumniated and vilified by a pack of intriguers, we have been obliged to state that some of the most violent (*les plus acharnés contre nous*) were German and Russian Jews who seemed to hold together by a sort of *esprit de corps*" (*Documents de l'Internationale*, ii. 157 note).

out of the Internationale and remain himself in possession of the field now became the great aim of the man whom his Jewish disciples were fond of referring to as "the modern Moses."¹

Fortunately for Marx a pretext was provided by the discovery that Netchaïeff, Bakunin's former ally, had been guilty of fraud, and at the Congress of the Internationale in London in 1871 the General Council, led by Marx, took the resolution to make an inquiry into the participation of Bakunin and the Alliance Sociale Démocratique in the Affaire Netchaïeff. The Jew Nicholas Outine was ordered to draw up the report. Outine, who throughout acted consistently as the "acolyte of Marx," had already made an attempt to eject the Alliance from the Internationale by a ruse. At a meeting of the Geneva sections of the association that same spring, he and his allies had declared that the Alliance had never been received into the Internationale at all, and when in reply to this statement the secretary of the Alliance produced the original letters signed by Eccarius and Jung in the name of the Internationale announcing that the General Council had admitted the Alliance on the 25th of August 1869, Outine calmly replied that the letters were forgeries and brought forward a Russian Jewess, Mme Dmitrieff, who had just arrived from London, in support of this assertion.²

A conference was finally arranged between the two factions on the 25th of July, 1871, at which Jung himself presided and Marx and Engels were present. The documents were again produced, and this time Jung was obliged to confess that he had signed the second, whilst Engels, after a quarter of an hour of prevarications, mumbled that it was impossible to deny either of the letters. As to Marx, Guillaume observes: "The great man, usually so sure of himself in the midst of his courtiers, was dumbfounded. He was caught in the *flagrant délit* of a lie and his act was authentically proved."³

Marx afterwards retaliated by accusing Bakunin of duplicity, declaring that in 1869 he had believed the Alliance

¹ Guillaume, *Documents*, ii. 297.

² *Ibid.* ii. 157.

³ *Ibid.* ii. 176, 177.

to have been dissolved whilst in reality it continued to work in secret, and that "by means of this freemasonry its existence was not even suspected by the great mass of the Internationals." ¹

It is impossible to disentangle the truth from all this web of lying and intrigue; both sides had, as we know, accepted the doctrine that the end justifies the means, and both lied freely to obtain the mastery. Suffice it then to say that finally, at the Hague Congress of the Internationale held in 1872, the London General Council—"by a fictitious majority," says Prince Kropotkine—excluded the Bakuninists and the Jura Federation they had formed from the Internationale. The latter now moved its headquarters to New York and four years later quietly expired at Philadelphia. So ended the great association which for twelve years had spread terror throughout Europe. Long before its death the working-men had lost all faith in it, and the engineers of Brussels, led by it into an abortive strike, had denounced it as "the leprosy of Europe" and "the Company of Millionaires on paper." ²

As a means for ameliorating the conditions of Labour it had proved from 1864 a fraud, as a barrier against international conflicts it had proved its futility in 1870, throughout its whole career it had existed merely as a hotbed of intrigue—mainly pan-German—and all its protestations of fraternity had led only to the old conflict between the rival forces of revolution. The inner history of the Internationale, like the history of all revolutionary organizations from the Terror onwards, is simply a series of petty rivalries and of miserable quarrels between the leaders, conducted without the faintest regard for the interests of the people whom such demagogues profess to represent. Readers have merely to glance through the voluminous *Documents de l'Internationale* by James Guillaume (4 vols. 1907), the best official record of the proceedings of the society, to convince themselves of the truth of this assertion. Further light has been thrown on the Marxian intrigues by Guillaume's recent brochure *Karl Marx, pan-Germaniste* (Armand

¹ *L'Alliance Sociale Démocratique.*

² Heckethorn's *Secret Societies*, ii. 235.

Colin, 1915), and by Edmond Laskine's admirable work, *L'Internationale et le pan-Germanisme* (Floury, 1916). In France, therefore, the Marxian legend has been completely shattered, and it is doubtless owing to the fact that none of these books have been translated into English that a belief in Marx still survives in this country. Mr. Adolphe Smith's very valuable pamphlet is the only English work of this kind known to the present writer, and it should be scattered broadcast through the land.¹

On the other hand, the Marxians' accusations against the Anarchists may be read in the pamphlet *L'Alliance Sociale Démocratique*, published by order of the Congress of La Haye in 1873; the first part written by Engels and Lafargue, the conclusion by Marx and Engels with "the object of killing Bakunin dead (*le tuer raide mort*)."²

After perusing the case for both sides in this final dispute it is impossible to retain any illusions on the character of either Marx or his opponent; we need not, therefore, have recourse to anti-Socialist literature in order to realize to the full the perfidy and hypocrisy of that bogus company that called itself "The International Association of Working Men."

¹ *The Pan-German Internationale*, articles by Adolphe Smith, Official Anglo-French Interpreter from 1882 at the Congresses of the Internationale. Reprinted from the *Times*, price 3d. Copies may be obtained from Adolphe Smith, 17 Scarsdale Terrace, Kensington, W.8. It is regrettable that Mr. Smith's larger work, *The Betrayal of the Internationale*, of which he has kindly allowed me to make use, has not yet been published.

² Guillaume, *Documents*, iii. 148.