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José Antonio Emmanuel
Anarchy explained to children
To the children of the Spanish proletariat
1931

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> Toil and fight, Anarchy says to you. Before, you were told: *Toil and pray*. Abandon the prayers, the orations. There is only one devotion that you must never forget: that of toil. Work for the good of Humanity, so that its pain might cease, so that suffering ends, so that bitterness moves far away forever. Be happy in a happy humanity. Be free in a free humanity.

This is Anarchy, dear children. Blessed you are if you understand and practice it!

Begin, then, with a vision for yourselves of a new life of purity and kindness.

He who loves a lot, helps a lot. If they are weak, protect them. The elderly, the disabled, the sick – there is much more love that ties us to them because they are weak. That poor elderly person you see was once strong like you, brave like you; that ailing, disabled person was once like you too. Remember you could become like them; that bourgeois work will age and sicken you. Protect them!

Think of those who are not with us, the prisoners. Because they fought to defend us, they have no liberty. Remember them!

8. Cultivate

   The earth is your mother; the field is your sustenance. We will collect flavourful fruits and optimum harvests if we cultivate them. Leave no land barren. Give land the care it needs so that it may nourish and make you live. In the ideal world, sow ideas, spread thoughts, write and act. In the real world, let the seeds fall on all the land that, well composted and prepared, will fertilize the seed and turn it into flower and fruit.

9. Don't have slaves

   Aspire to be free and let the yearning of your freedom consume all. Do not enslave anybody. Not birds, not any living being that you can imprison with impunity. Open the doors of all cages, break all the bars of every jail where –like a caged bird– human beings endure suffering. Be free and make free, with yourself, and with everyone else. Open the doors to your heart so that all the vices can leave it, all the faults that managed to infiltrate themselves. Be free and be pure: don't have slaves, don't turn into a slave.

10. Toil

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by privilege, hold out your hand to anyone who is a victim of the current bourgeois society.

2. Support

   In those who waver, instill encouragement; to the ones that despair because they see triumph too far away, give them courage. Mutual help is a sacred and universal duty.

3. Copy the beautiful

   Do not imitate the perishable, the ephemeral. You must ward off and chase away all evils: they are the legacy of human imperfection to which we are chained. Above all this chaos of ignominy, raise your eyes to the beauty of Life.

4. Work

   Everything in nature is work and your mission is to contribute, according to your strengths, to perfecting this work. Do not resign yourself to being a servant of a machine, nor a slave of the muscle. Dignify your work, beautify it, purify it.

5. Study

   Let the book be your best friend, your counselor, your guide. We will never know enough. He who adds science, adds anarchy. Investigate on your own, clear the mysteries that surround you. Instruct yourself, educate yourself. This is the only legacy that you must leave in Life.

6. Love

   Science does not put stones in your heart. A pure and human love can pierce us. No matter how far, no matter how distant, every being is a loved one.

7. Protect

strengthen your ideals and multiply the forces you must accumulate for the decisive and final battle. The same worries, the same bitterness that besieged you as children, will besiege you as adults. Enter the Union, shelter yourself in it. All united, all identified, we will resist better. Be loyal and stand in solidarity with your peers, your siblings in fight and in rebellion.

Do not abandon this new school –the school of life. Along with your parents, continue to fight for a better world.

The Cultural Athenæum

So that in this titanic battle you do not lose faith, nor enthusiasm, Anarchy offers you a third school where the struggle for culture is practiced. These are the libertarian Athenæums, complements of the Union, guides to the Union, conductors of militants.

Not only should we be united in this fight for material improvement, we should also show our solidarity with culture. This craving for knowledge that you felt at school must continue, by broadening, increasing and intensifying that craving.

You will see then, how Anarchy shows you its path, dearest children.

3. How do we become worthy of Anarchy?

To identify with Anarchy, to dignify your life, you must meet these anarchist principles.

1. Help

   Never ignore those who are fighting like you, those who are suffering like you. They are your siblings. In school they were by your side. Now, they are with you at the workshop, the factory, the mines, still thirsty for justice. Wherever you see a brother or sister of yours, help them. Above barriers raised

> "Weak and small, children are, for this very reason, sacred."
> — Élisée Reclus

This leaflet was written to answer a question that various comrades have formulated: How will I educate my children? This is a question which we had been expecting and will answer according to what Reason and Science dictate.

Dedicated to the children of the Spanish proletariat, we hope that these pages –modestly written– will direct the education of our youth in a truly renewing manner.

We address ourselves to parents and teachers so that, at home and school, they spread the healthy doctrines of an education where all fanaticism is banished. We aspire to free youth from the heinous oppression to which it is being subjected.

Due to faults from one side or the other, education has remained stuck in a paralysis of servitude, out of which it must emerge redeemed and relieved.

Let these brief pages be an incentive for everyone.

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1. What is Anarchy?

Anarchy, dear children, is the doctrine that does not conform to the organizational model which has been imposed on humanity since the time when Society was being formed, and it tries to give a foundation to life based on the sacred principles of universal love and human solidarity.

Its mission is to abolish the ruling inequity between beings, which divides them into rich and poor, exploited and exploiter, slaves and masters. That life be just what it should be: the free manifestation of its faculties, spontaneity of its actions, an ultimate lib-

eration that destroys the causes inhibiting society from being based on full liberty and the most absolute independence.

Among the causes which Anarchy aims to destroy, as it considers them harmful and detrimental to the free development of the individual and the collectivity, I can list the following, so that you never forget: while resisting them we work for the wellbeing of all of us.

Militarism is the armed force which the ones who have attained power over life use to impose their injustices and strengthen their wickedness. This force does not retreat even in the face of crime; it supplies individuals with arms, against others, it throws them against those who, like you, like your parents and your siblings, have turned toil into virtue. When we rebel against this way of action, when we rise against the injustice that is used against us, they fall upon us. Not happy with wanting to destroy us, they start wars, they tithe humanity, and the crimes pile up on the road we travel.

Anarchy opposes *Peace* to this brute force. The anarchist does not want war, he opposes war and yearns for peace, because that is a fundamental point of his saviour doctrine. He considers all human beings, he does not want boundaries that separate us, only hearts that are founded in one love: the total and absolute emancipation of human beings. Anarchy's arms are the book, the work, the word. With these it combats the organized force of militarism and with them he shall triumph over butchers and man devourers. With the book, the work, the word, it calls everyone, making them see that the force of ideas stands above brute force, and that its final triumph cannot be discussed.

Clericalism is the farce with which the usurpers of life have surrounded themselves to demonstrate that their impositions, their tyrannies, their oppressions are just and agreeable to a "god" they have forged to cover their actions with kindness. With this "god" they address the hearts of the *faithful*, surrounding him with uncommon pageantry and luxury in the temples they have erected

We do not want you to resign; let resignation be reserved for the bourgeois teachers and the scholastic prisons they govern.

The school that Anarchy gives you is that of freedom.

There are books that will help you attain freedom. Three books that have educated three generations. Three books that must remain in your schools as guides and conductors of your lives: *The Universal Pain*, *The Conquest of Bread* and *The Mountain*. Their authors are three lights that still shine: Sébastien Faure, Piotr Kropotkin and Élisée Reclus. Do not forget these three names. When you turn twelve years old, these books must not be missing from your personal library, which you are to build. They will explain to you the causes of your suffering, the origin of slavery in work, the seeds of life and existence, the history of earth. In them you will learn to conquer the difficulties that will present themselves in the battle, fortitude to resist it and hope in the future. Let them be your first steps in life: a precious support in your progress.

The Union

Once you are out of School, Anarchy will not abandon you. The more you grow, the more you move for-ward –still young–, it makes you continue the fight by strengthening your rebelliousness. Anarchy gave you a school so that you got to know and became familiar with the world in which you open your eyes; it made you see inequality, it pointed out where egoism resided, where evil is located, where our eternal enemy hides. It showed you so that you could prepare yourself, combat and destroy it.

Having achieved this, it opens the doors to another organization: the Union. If in your childhood you had a school, then in youth you have another: the school of the proletariat.

The enemies that surrounded you as children, those same ones surround you now. You need to find an organization for battle, a home where you can shelter yourself to recover your faith, to

development of your faculties by freely pursuing the satisfaction of your physical, intellectual and moral needs.

I have mentioned Ferrer. Study his life, follow his work and set him up as your apostle and guide. It is due to him that this rationalist school, built to honor humanity, was created in Spain. He banished from schools the three shams of which I have spoken of: militarism, clericalism and capitalism. He made science penetrate into the brains of the other children that were being educated with him and he injected reason into their hearts. He gave you your sacred right to instruct and educate yourselves outside of the ruin of the old schools and the shrivelled teachers. He banished from your minds the idea of divinity and replaced it with the cult to justice and kindness. He opened the prison of ideas to turn it into a pleasant and delightful place. He saw in you what all people should see in you: the seed of a new humanity.

Honor Ferrer by following his redeeming doctrines. Ferrer was an anarchist; that is to say, he fought against the strong clerical, military and capitalist forces that turn society into shapeless chaos of ignominy. So you must learn to fight. Initiate yourselves in this liberating doctrine and this new world we are constructing will come from you.

It is time for you to know that if you do not redeem yourselves, if you do not free yourselves in school it will be difficult to redeem and liberate you when you are older. Redemption must start with you. That is why, Anarchy gives you the School. Let your teachers also understand the highest truth. Otherwise, you will be left abandoned to your own puny strength and, by your own fault, you will fall into the arms of those that enslave life.

The school must teach you to be rebellious, rebellious against this corrupt and miserable society. The enemies of your parents and your siblings are, and will be, your own enemies. The cause of your unease and your bitterness also weighs over those who gave you life and live with you. You must unite in this sacred battle, the absolute end of our pain and unhappiness depends upon it.

for him, they direct orations and prayers to make everyone believe they are the directors of life, the organizers of life, and that society sins when it does not follow this god, the mandates of this god, the tyrannical orders of this god. Above all, he will have the power over you, dear children, to frighten you with the fabled torments of a hell and the pleasures of a heaven that you must reach by subordinating yourselves to those who represent this god in our world. Those who do not follow him, those who stray disgusted and rebel against him, they are declared "enemies" and opposite to the power of their god, the omnipotence of their god, they create the *devil* who tempts man, woman, and yourselves, condemning us to the eternal grief of an infinite fire.

To secure themselves, to consolidate their dominion of the world and all beings, they call upon militarism, which has life organized into armies willing to make the divine principle triumph. Anarchy opposes this all-embracing power, this absolute power, this terrifying authority; it opposes it with the study of Science. Science, the organized knowledge of life, discovers the laws that govern worlds and society; it reveals how everything that has been attributed to god, that which is inherent to god, is false and erroneous; that there only exists one law that can overthrow divine law, that can destroy divine omnipotence: the natural law of human progress. By virtue of this progress one can easily contemplate life in its purest form; that earth is not god's abode, nor his temple; that humans do not have a divine origin, but that we appeared in this world as a result of profound and incessant evolutive transformations in the animal organism until it has come to our species; that the end of the world isn't subject to the providential destinies of a god, but that science sets its end of the world in a rational way, according to its natural laws.

Capitalism is society organized in brutal and inhuman egoism, wielding absolute power over the part of humanity that produces and works, benefiting from the communal effort to create riches and privileges without which it could not subsist. It erects a power

to sustain itself by founding states, dividing people into nations; its tentacles are nailed to the bowels of the earth to make the money it monopolizes and distributes unequally; it penetrates all areas, from the workshop and the factory, to the total hoarding of lives and possessions, dictates laws and imposes them to strengthen and consolidate itself. An absolute master of all existence, capitalism does not overlook any means of distorting work, appropriates all production, regulating life by usurpation and violence. Lord and master of the social body, it has "clericalism" at its service in its loathsome plans and relies on "militarism" to sustain and support itself. Capitalism wants its "law" to be assumed and obeyed by all: for this, it relies on its hitmen and scribes. It calls this its *mandate*; it names this *power*.

But Anarchy, dear children, stands against this manner of conceiving life and rebels against this way of organizing existence. Anarchy aspires to remove all these causes that sink humanity in its opium slumber. It does not want states that, because of the fact of their existence, maintain irritating inequality and bloody injustice. Money opposes to the free exchange of products; remunerated work for the privileged opposes to work distributed according to the strength of each person; to the unhealthy egoism of the powerful, it oposses that the necessities of everyone be provided for. It opposes an oppressing law with the law of love. To egoism, it counters with the thesis that the land belongs to those who work and produce from it.

This is Anarchy, dear children. This and much more that I cannot explain in these brief pages, but time will teach you, and life will show you.

Anarchy wants you to investigate the origin of all these inequities, the reason for all the injustice; it wants you to educate yourself so that you understand the life you live, a reflection of the bitter life of your parents, it is not like this, and it cannot be. Life is beauty; life is justice; life is peace and wellbeing.

Anarchy puts you on the path to achieve and obtain this; and, for you are the weakest, the most innocent of this doomed organization, that you know how to rebel before that which oppresses and imprisons you. You are not alone. There are people who fight to take you out of the bitterness that surrounds you, out of the brambles that hurt your flesh, out of the poison that filters to your pure and sacred hearts.

These people will not offer you temples, nor will they make you worship deities, nor will they put fear in your spirits, neither will they corrupt your conscience by polluting them with malice and deceit.

Raise your eyes, look around you. The hour of healthy joys, of happiness and peace will come for you.

Anarchy speeds the arrival of this time, this happi-ness and joy, this peace that you don't yet have, come quicker.

2. How do you reach Anarchy?

Anarchy, dear children, provides the path to get to it. You can count on the School, the Union and the Cultural Athenæum. We will explain to you these three powerful forces on which you will always have to turn to.

The School

You will easily understand that we could not be referring to the bourgeois and reactionary school which you have been forced to attend. Our school, the school we offer you, is not grounded on a basis of foolish and daft teachings, but it is a *rationalist* school.

It is necessary for you to know that our school has a scientific foundation towards which our lives must be oriented. Your teacher, the only one whom you must thank for his efforts in educating you, defined this school by saying that he endorsed the spontaneous