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1883

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We are going to say what anarchy is, what anarchists are.

The anarchists, messieurs, are citizens who, in a century where freedom of opinion is preached everywhere, believe it to be their obligation to call for unlimited freedom.

Yes messieurs, throughout the world we are a few thousand, a few million workers who demand absolute freedom, nothing but freedom, all of freedom!

We want freedom, which is to say that we demand the right and the means for all human beings to do whatever pleases them, to fully satisfy all their needs, without any limit but that imposed by their natural possibilities and the needs of their neighbors, which are equally worthy of respect.

We want freedom, and we believe its existence is incompatible with the existence of any kind of power, whatever its origin or form, be it elected or imposed, monarchical or republican, be it inspired

by divine right or popular right, by Saint-Whoever or universal suffrage.

History teaches us that all governments resemble each other and are worth the same. The best are the worst. There's a greater part of cynicism among some, and more hypocrisy among others! But deep down it's always the same procedures, always the same intolerance. Even those liberal in appearance have in reserve, under the dust of legislative arsenals, some nice little law on the International to be used against bothersome opponents.

In other words, the evil doesn't reside in one form of government more than another. It's in the governmental idea itself, it's in the principle of authority.

In a word, our ideal is the substitution in human relations of a free contract, perpetually revisable and terminable, for administrative and legal guardianship, for imposed discipline.

The anarchists thus propose to teach the people to do without government the same way they are beginning to learn to do without God.

It will also learn to do without owners. The worst of tyrants, in fact, is not he who imprisons you, it's he who starves you. It's not he who grabs you by the collar, it's he who grabs you by the belly.

There can be no freedom without equality! There can be no freedom in a society where capital is monopolized in the hands of an ever-shrinking minority and where nothing is equally shared, not even public education, which is nevertheless paid for out of public funds.

As for us, we believe that capital, the common patrimony of humanity, since it is the fruit of the collaboration of past generations with the current one, should be at the disposal of all, in such a way that none can be excluded, but also that none can take a part to the detriment of the rest.

In a word, we want equality: equality in fact, as a corollary of or, rather, as the primordial condition of freedom. From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs. This is what

we sincerely, energetically want. This is what will be, for there is nothing that can prevail against demands that are both legitimate and necessary. This is why we are subjected to all kinds of punishments.

What scoundrels we are! We demand bread for all, work for all, and for all as well we want independence and justice.