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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

UNREST IN EUROPE

THE FOLLOWING "United Press" report from London seems to give a very moderate view of the Old World's affairs: –

"After an undisputed reign of more than 1,000 years, the European 'ruling classes' are beginning to realize that the existence of their order is threatened everywhere. Not even the French Revolution itself – hitherto perhaps the most remarkable social upheaval in the world's history – was so significant as the present movement of the masses against the classes.

"Curiously enough, it is in England, with all its conservative traditions and the freest government in Europe, that the feeling is strongest. To a great extent this is due to the fact that in Great Britain the upper classes and the landed interests have always been practically identical. And the land-hunger which has been increasing among the English masses for forty years past has intensified popular hostility against those representatives of the upper classes (which substantially means all of them) who have selfishly monopolized the land for their own pleasures.

"Recent advanced legislation, tending toward the breaking up of the great landed estates, has made matters worse, too, instead of better. The people who want land are angrier than they were before, because they have secured only a part of what they consider their due, while the landed aristocracy is furious over having had to relinquish even a fraction of its possessions.

"The change that has come over rural England in the past three decades, is, in fact, nothing short of marvelous. In the old days, if a villager failed to doff his hat to the parson or the squire, or if his wife omitted a reverential courtesy to them, it was a foregone conclusion

that that couple would be driven from the village forthwith, or that at any rate, if they remained, their lives would be made intolerable. Today, even in cases where the farm laborer retains an outward appearance of respect for those above him, he looks on the latter as his natural enemies, and never misses a chance of voting against them at the polls. More than this, he has reached a point where he not only disputes the aristocracy's title to monopolize the land which he thinks should be his own, but refuses to acknowledge its superiority over him in any form.

"In the towns, of course, where radicalism has long been rampant, the ruling classes have been hated for a much greater length of time than in the country. But whereas they were merely hated fifty years ago, their very right to exist is now disputed. Popular education and popular newspapers have been mainly responsible for the growth of this feeling. The average mechanic who has to work hard for small wages, denies the right of another to live in idleness upon what his father left him. The present-day British workmen's creed is that everyone in the world ought to start equal.

"To a large extent, the growth of this sentiment has been at the bottom of recent labor troubles in England. Complaints have been made everywhere that the labor unionists have refused to obey their own chief's orders and have thus precipitated useless strikes. But this is only partly true. Leaving out the fact that most of the labor leaders belong to a passing generation, and are not in as close touch as they should be with the rank-and-file, there is quite a different reason for the men's unmanageability. And this reason is that the feeling of unrest and discontent is so rife as to render the masses of workmen anxious to defy rather than to treat with their employers. Just as the village laborer regards the squire, so the city mechanic regards the capitalist. Both country squire and city capitalist represent the ruling classes to the man who works.

THE SPREAD OF SOCIALISM

"Generally throughout Europe, the growth of Socialism is held accountable by the aristocracy for the masses' discontent.

"In England, for instance, it is the Tories' custom to refer to any man of progressive political ideas as a 'Socialist.' They use the word as a term of reproach, but the truth is that it is really not the right word to use as the Tories use it. 'Advanced radicalism' would be more accurately descriptive. Not many English workmen admit that they are Socialists and not many of them are.

"In Germany they do admit – assent it in fact. And the spread of Socialism in the Fatherland is making the old aristocracy shake in its shoes. No one there would be surprised by a Socialist victory at any election and when the Socialists secure control of the Reichstag the aristocracy's – and the monarchy's – days are numbered. German Socialists, like the English, are advanced Radicals. Their idea is less the rule of Socialism than an evening-up of conditions – with perhaps a not entirely unnatural desire, on the part of some of them, for revenge upon the privileged classes who have oppressed them so long. [R4844 : page 196]

"In Austria-Hungary an identical process is at work. The dear-food riots – the revolt against the excessive cost of living – are the first expressions of the popular demand. Exploited, generation after generation by the greedy rich, the masses have lost their patience at last.

"The strained industrial situation in France is due to the same cause. In France, however, the rebellion is not against an aristocracy, but against the ring of capitalists which runs the government and every thing else in the republic. As the members of this ring grow richer, the poor – and the middle classes – grow poorer every day. Concessions in one particular trade will do no good in France. What is needed is a change in the entire economic system.

"Russia is no better off. The revolutionary movement there is and always has been an attempt to "pull" the system of feudal tyranny which grinds the people into the dirt. Unlike his fellows elsewhere throughout Europe, the Russian workman thinks nothing and knows nothing [R4845 : page 196] about the working of economic laws. All he knows is that for centuries he and his ancestors have been down-trodden – and he sees clearly who the people are who have been responsible for it. He simply takes the position that, if he can remove these people, it will be all the better for him.

"The question is whether all these different national movements can ever be combined into one. Labor leaders answer affirmatively. Year by year international conferences are more successful in drawing the strings of such a union tighter. At the present moment there is the common ground of the increased cost of living upon which all are fighting. Those who are responsible for the high price of necessities are held always to be the ruling classes. It is against these that the campaign will be waged.

"One thing, however, is becoming increasingly clear. It is that, so far as the working classes are concerned, the form of government makes very little difference. A monarchy may be more corrupt than a republic, or it may not. There is probably less corruption in England than in any other European country of the first class. There is at least as much of it in France as there is anywhere else upon the continent.

"The truth is, as European workingmen see it, that the form of government counts less than the sort of people who conduct it. If labor unions or any other sort of organization can put matters straight with these people, then in the opinion of European workingmen, the condition of the masses is bound to improve without much regard for the actual form of government.

"Naturally the upper classes are not insensible to the change coming over the attitude of those whom they consider beneath them. This is plain from their frantic appeals during outbreaks in Berlin,

Vienna, Paris, Barcelona and South Wales to have the military hurled against the strikers and demonstrators. In every case these appeals were made by the wealthy under the guise of appeals for the maintenance of law and order. In reality, it is understood on all hands that the aristocracy throughout Europe realizes that it is in the last ditch. Hence its anxiety to put the popular movement down at all costs.

"The class war in Europe has certainly begun. It will be marked by actual violence in spots, but in the main it will be fought out at the polls. And when the people that do the work begin to know their real strength, popular leaders declare, there will not be much chance left for those who have hitherto regarded it as their right to rule."

MINISTERIAL HUMAN DOCUMENT

While the average minister's salary outside of cities does not rise above \$1,000 – a figure about on a par with that of the unskilled laborer, human documents like one printed by *The Standard* (Baptist, Chicago) need cause no surprise. It comes from a minister who tells why he is quitting his profession to enter business. The editor of this paper tells us that the letter was not intended for publication; and the early part of it shows that it was addressed to an old friend of seminary days, who, with the writer, had "talked of the future and painted pictures of what we were to do for the Kingdom of God." Twenty-five years have passed and the old friend is given the reasons that led to this man's decision to desert the active ministry. Thus: –

"To be perfectly honest with you, money has had much to do with my decision. I think you will not charge me with being mercenary in those days when you knew me well, and I am not conscious of caring any more for money now than I did then. I have never desired to be rich; I do not now desire to be. I have not gone into business with any expectation of making a fortune, but I do want to have something for the years when I can no longer work, and for my family, if I should be taken from them. I do want to be able to meet my bills as they fall due. A month ago in our ministers' meeting an old minister, shabby almost

to raggedness, arose and told us that he and his wife were on the verge of starvation. He had no money, his credit was exhausted, they had no food, no coal, and were about to be put upon the street because they could not pay the rent. We raised some \$30 among us and gave it to him, and I suppose he will go to the home for aged ministers; but it scared me. I saw myself in him. What reason have I to expect that I shall not be where he is twenty years from now?

"Frugality? Well, I have not been thriftless. Wife and I have tried hard to lay up a little each year. We did get \$500 saved up, and then Edna was taken with tuberculosis and it all went, and much more, before God took her home. I had \$1,000 per year from the church at B_____. They paid it promptly, and possibly some men would have been able to save something out of it each year. We tried our best, and failed. Once the church thought of increasing the pastor's salary, but Deacon Edmunds argued that the minister should trust God; said that when he began life he had an income of only \$200 for the first year; spoke of the joys of Christian sacrifice; pointed to the Savior of the world and His self-abnegation, and the salary was not increased. I may say that the deacon is supposed to be worth not less than \$200,000. Then I was called to this field at \$1,200 per year. I have been here seven years, and there has never been a month since the beginning when my salary has been paid promptly. At times the church has owed me \$600 and \$700. I have borrowed and paid interest, have 'stood off' my creditors until I was ashamed to go upon the street, have scrimped and twisted and wiggled until my soul was raw. I've had enough.

"Through all these years a conviction has been growing within me that the average church-member cares precious little about the Kingdom of God and its advancement, or the welfare of his fellowmen. He is a Christian in order that he may save his soul from hell, and for no other reason. He does as little as he can, lives as indifferently as he dares. If he thought he could gain heaven without even lifting his finger for others, he would jump at the chance. Never

have I known more than a small minority of any church which I have served to be really interested in and unselfishly devoted to God's work. [R4845 : page 197] It took my whole time to pull and push and urge and persuade the reluctant members of my church to undertake a little something for their fellowmen. They took a covenant to be faithful in attendance upon the services of the church, and not one out of ten ever thought of attending prayer-meeting. A large percentage seldom attended church in the morning, and a pitifully small number in the evening. It did not seem to mean anything to them that they had dedicated themselves to the service of Christ.

"I am tired; tired of being the only one in the church from whom real sacrifice is expected; tired of straining and tugging to get Christian people to live like Christians; tired of planning work for my people and then being compelled to do it myself or see it left undone; tired of dodging my creditors when I would not need to if I had what is due me; tired of the affrighting vision of a penniless old age. I am not leaving Christ. I love Him; I shall still try to serve Him.

"Judge me leniently, old man, for I cannot bear to lose your friendship."

– *Literary Digest.*

THE CAUSE OF PORTUGAL'S REVOLUTION

A Portuguese resident in London, being questioned by the *Daily Mirror* as to the reasons for the intense hatred evinced by the people of Portugal against the Church, replied to the following effect: –

"The frenzied hatred of the populace of Portugal against the religious orders and the priesthood generally, which is so strongly marked a feature of the actual revolution, is no new thing in European history.

"In Portugal today, as in Northern Europe four hundred years ago, *the clergy exact privileges, social, moral, and financial, to which they have no just claim.* "The religious fraternities possess vast wealth, which is every day growing greater, and they evade taxation and do as little as they possibly can towards the maintenance and defence of the State. "They are a clog upon the intellectual advancement of the country. Education is entirely in their hands, and Portugal has, as a consequence, the largest percentage of illiterates of any country in Europe, with the one exception of Turkey.

"The mendicant Orders bleed the ignorant and superstitious peasantry to an incredible extent. Money, food, wine, garments – all is fish that comes to their net. The bitter proverb to the effect that *'three beggars make one priest,'* once a household word in England and in Germany also, is still current in Portugal.

"They infest the bedsides of the old, the sick, and the feeble-minded, and persuade them to bequeath large portions of their goods – sometimes all they possess – to the monasteries.

"It is almost impossible for a layman who has a grievance against a priest or a religious house to get justice done to him."

The situation described by a dispatch to the New York *Sun* is this:

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"Popular feeling against the Church is very strong in Lisbon. The Government opposes excesses and says it will prevent them, but Quelhaes has been the scene of shameful vandalism by a mob. The accounts of the origin of the trouble there are conflicting.

"The throwing of bombs by Jesuits is as vehemently denied on one side as it is asserted on the other. Sympathizers with the Jesuits say the mob attacked the Jesuits without the least provocation, but they admit that the Jesuits [R4846 : page 197] fired rifles in self-defense.

Whoever was initially to blame, the seizure of the convent by the mob was followed by disgraceful barbarism, which was not checked by the authorities.

"There is no doubt that the mob's object was plunder, and in the search for treasure the rioters smashed, tore, and generally destroyed almost everything of value within the building.

"Sacred images, altar-vessels, priceless volumes, illuminated missals, gorgeous vestments were smashed or torn and trampled upon with senseless fury, while everything that was regarded as worth stealing was looted. Disgusting acts of ribaldry and defilement were also committed by the mob.

"It was a brutal expression of the popular hatred for the priesthood, especially the Jesuits, which was the animating cause of the revolution far more than hostility to the monarchy. A similar orgy was enacted at the Trinas Convent. Apart from these scenes, however, the self-control of the people has been exemplary and the city is entirely orderly."

RAVAGES OF THE BLACK PLAGUE

Harrowing reports come from both China and India. Eighty-eight thousand four hundred and ninety-eight are said to have died in India in February, as reported by the British India Office. In Northern China the plague has been gradually progressing since early in December. And it is said that not one who has taken the disease has, thus far, recovered. Death follows it in from three to six days.

This black death plague is said to be of the same kind as that which so devastated Europe in the Middle Ages. It is pneumonic as distinct from bubonic; that is to say, it attacks the mucous lining of the nostrils, throat and lungs, rather than the glands. It is so deadly that the

physicians who inspect and those who handle the corpses take every precaution, some wearing a suit of linen from head to foot, and all breathing through pads of lint soaked with carbolic acid. Any houses in which the plague has appeared are so contaminated as to make necessary their burning. Japanese and Russian physicians are assisting Chinese authorities and physicians. It is feared that with the coming summer the disease may be further spread by fleas. Following is a clipping from the press:

"The lives of scores of physicians have been sacrificed in the fight against the spread of the pestilence. Hundreds of soldiers have died in the plague zone. Orders have been given to prevent residents of certain sections of Manchuria and China from fleeing, but, despite this order, refugees are finding their way into Vladivostock and Shanghai. Traffic upon the Chinese Eastern Railway is practically dead. Advices from Kuang-Chang-Tsu, Mukden, Harbin, Feng Hua and other towns in Manchuria, state that the plague has made steady headway despite efforts of the Chinese and Japanese to head it off. Along the great wall conditions are appalling."

The poor world needs the intervention of Divine power; although medical knowledge has greatly increased in recent years we recognize more and more that only power Divine can release humanity from the bonds of sin and death.

ARTIFICIAL MILK, BUTTER AND CHEESE

Information comes from Paris that a skilled chemist and Chinaman, Li Yu Ying, has discovered a means by which synthetically he can produce good imitations of cow's milk, butter and cheese from the China bean known as soja. It is said that he has already established a factory in which twenty-four men are kept busily employed. **[R4846 : page 198]** A by-product is a sweet syrup that may be used in preserving, cake-making, etc.

Why not? By some process the cow changes the quality of grass, beets, etc., producing milk and cream, from which butter and cheese can be manufactured. What wonderful things the Lord evidently has in store for the world's comfort and nourishment during Messiah's Kingdom and subsequently! God is only now unlocking the mysteries of nature to mankind – now, because we are entering the day of His preparation.

PRESENT-DAY NEEDS OF METHODISM

The *Rochester (N.Y.) Times* says that "at a meeting of the Methodist ministers of this district, in the Parish House, of the First Methodist Church, Rev. S. J. Clarkson, of Middleport, made a sensational arraignment of the church, stating that Methodism *was fast losing its reason for existing and that as a church it was making itself a laughing-stock for the world, inconsistent within itself in its teachings* and preachings. He said that it was making itself foolish *because one minister in one place would state that dancing and card playing were proper and not harmful, while another would pass upon them as the devices of the Devil*. He said that the teachings of the ministers should either enforce Paragraph 248, respecting card playing and dancing, or should strike it from the book.

"Methodism is fast losing her reason for existing, by the dropping of many things which have distinguished her from other denominations in the past. Methodism must retain her progressive character and still do that branch of work of evangelizing the world that only she seems fitted to do, or she will fail and cease to exist.

PRAYER MEETING OBSOLETE

"In the past, the prayer-meeting was the starting point of the revival. Today the average small church prayer-meeting is a waste of time, and a burden to the flesh and the revival is no more. Too many

of our laymen have too much faith in the ability of their wives to do the praying for the household.

MAKES CHURCH A JOKE

"Methodism needs some settled policy on the question of amusements. Nothing better could have been invented to keep this church than Paragraph 248. I believe in being charitable, but the day is here when we need some young people ourselves. I am not discussing the right or wrong of dancing. But it sounds foolish for a Methodist minister to stand in his pulpit and say that dancing is right when the ban-book says that is one of the things for which a man can be tried for immoral conduct. It sounds just as foolish, and makes the church a joke, when the minister in Podunk declares that there is no harm in dancing. Then next Sunday the minister in Pig Valley declares that it's the Devil's best snare. If dancing is right in Buffalo it is right in Rochester. If it's wrong in Buffalo, it's wrong in Rochester. We need to be consistent.

"Now when Methodism undertakes to tell people what is right and wrong in amusements it should first have some settled policy itself. Enforce Paragraph 248, or else have the courage to take it out of the Discipline. We stand before the world today in the attitude of the man who had the bear by the tail while it chased him around the tree. He was afraid to let go and afraid to hang on."

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