

CENTENNIAL
EXPRESSIONS
on PETER KROPOTKIN

1842—1942

By Pertinent Thinkers

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The Kropotkin Literary Society of Los Angeles were loyal supporters of the effort to publish these articles in the ROMAN FORUM Magazine, the type of which has been made available to the Rocker Publication Committee who have secured many likenesses of the authors as published herein.

Speakers on this occasion were Dr. Guy E. Talbot and Dr. Arthur E. Briggs, with Frederick W. Roman, Editor of The ROMAN FORUM Magazine as Chairman, at 214 Loma Drive, Parliament of Man Auditorium, Los Angeles, Calif.

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THE MEANING OF PETER KROPOTKIN TO THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD

By Dr. Frederick W. Roman

For the world outside of the United States the name Kropotkin will be a symbol of a struggle against tyranny and a cultural effort to rise by means of contributions in the field of literature and inspiration to radical groups and growing restlessness; for populations in prison and also in many cases for those forced to suffer the penalty of death. We have in mind the rebellious groups in Russia itself during the days of the Czar; and also, the striving for real political freedom even after the Soviets came to power. Kropotkin served as a stimulating ideal for the freedom-loving patriots in Spain and throughout the Balkans, and his example was emulated by untiring lovers of liberty in Germany; and it seems that even in countries such as India, the example of a sacrifice inspired a never-dying hope. With all the defects that people are accustomed to heap upon England, the record of many generations shows how tolerant England has been. Her government has been strong enough to allow these free spirits to be harbored and to give them a certain latitude of expression that was not obtainable in other parts. She did this for Karl Marx and for Victor Hugo, and for the exiles of those who once occupied the throne in France, Spain, Albania, Ethiopia; and even now is the home of the exiles from all parts of the world.

For the United States, Kropotkin was not so much an emblem of an escape from prison as he was a genuine stimulant for our literary groups by virtue of his contribution to sociological thought, in terms of "Mutual Aid," and also by virtue of his extended studies in geology. It was the literary man, Kropotkin, that extended his brightest rays. Over here we have not bothered too much about the prisons of Europe; they have not meant too much to us! Whatever have been our shortcomings we have not been in prison over here very much by means of political oppression, and therefore we have not understood that which



DR. FREDERICK W. ROMAN

we have not suffered. However, we have been intrigued by virtue of the literary capacity and the ingenuity of the ideas of Kropotkin. Whether the average American scholar agrees in full or in part with the contributions of Kropotkin, there is no denial but that his achievements in his chosen fields have left a permanent influence on American thought and attitude toward the potential solution of the social and political problems of the world.

"Mutual Aid" has offered a challenge, a mode of procedure that in this hour of careful searching for a new plan to readjust the coming world order, will not be disregarded. There is being brought to the attention of an increasing number of our students and savants that you can hardly be classed amongst those who know unless you know Kropotkin!

PETER KROPOTKIN, GEOGRAPHER, EXPLORER, MUTUALIST

By J. Scott Keltie, *Secretary:*
Royal Geographical Society of
England

The announcement of the death of Prince Peter Alexeivich Kropotkin on February 8, 1921, in a small town near Moscow, where he was virtually interned, will have been received with regret by a wide circle of all classes and all creeds. He had left England (which had been his home for many years) for Russia in 1917, after the Revolution had broken out, no doubt with the hope that his "anarchist" aspirations would be realized on a large scale. It need hardly be said that he was grievously disappointed. But this is not the place to deal in detail with Kropotkin's political views, except to regret that his absorption in these seriously diminished the services which otherwise he might have rendered to Geography.

Prince Kropotkin, descended from one of the oldest princely houses in Russia, was born in the "Old Equerries Quarter" in Moscow on December 9, 1842, so that when he died he had entered on his seventy-ninth year. In this aristocratic quarter, surrounded by troops of serfs, he spent his first fifteen years. He and his brother Alexander, who were devoted to each other, received a somewhat irregular education from private tutors—French, German and Russian. The education was mainly literary and historical. So keenly interested in literature was Kropotkin even then (aged thirteen), that he started a *Review* which continued for two years, till he had to leave for St. Petersburg. His father had determined that his sons should enter the Army, and at the age of fifteen Kropotkin, much against his wishes, was admitted to the Cadet Corps, or Corps of Pages, which received only 150 boys, mostly children of the nobility belonging to the Court. Those who passed the final examination could enter any regiment of the Guards or of the Army they chose, while a certain number were attached as pages to members of the Imperial Family. After all, Kropotkin became reconciled to the school, and spent quite an interesting and useful five years going through the various forms. At first he found the lessons so easy that he had plenty of time for private reading. In time he took up various sciences—Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Geography, Cartography,

and both in classes and by himself made considerable progress in this direction.

When in 1863 he had passed his final examinations, in which he took high rank, he had to decide what regiment he wished to enter, it being expected that, like his fellow-cadets, he would choose one of the most select—some regiment attached to the Court. But to the consternation of his father and his comrades, he decided to join the Mounted Cossacks in the Amur, a new and undistinguished regiment. He had long been interested in Siberia and its geographical problems, especially those connected with the Amur and the Usuri. By selecting a Siberian regiment he would have ample scope for exploration in little-known Eastern Siberia. During his five years in Siberia he had opportunities for carrying out exploring and surveying work on the Amur and in Manchuria, the maps of which abounded in blanks and errors. Later still he explored the Western Sayans, and caught a glimpse of the Siberian Highlands. Finally he undertook a long journey to discover a direct communication between the gold mines of the Yakutsk Province and Transbaikalia. All this proved of great service to Kropotkin when, after his return to Europe, he took up the difficult problem of the structure of Northern and Central Asia.

In time, Kropotkin and his brother Alexander, who was stationed at Irkutsk, became more and more interested in the revolutionary movements which were developing in Russia and other European countries. They decided to leave the Army and return to St. Petersburg; this they did early in 1867. Kropotkin entered the University, where he worked hard for five years mainly on scientific subjects, devoting special attention to geography. He became intimately associated with the Imperial Geographical Society in his capacity of Secretary to its section of Physical Geography. But his main geographical interest at this time was the vast problem of the orography of Northern Asia, the maps of which he considered were "mostly fantastic." This led him in time to extend his investigations into Central Asia. He not only made use of the re-

sults of his own travels in Siberia, but with infinite labor collected all the barometrical, geological and physical observations that had been recorded by other travelers. This preparatory work took him more than two years, followed by months of intense thought, to bring order out of what seemed a "bewildering chaos." Suddenly the solution flashed upon him: The structural lines of Asia, he was convinced, did not run north and south or east and west, as Humboldt represented them, but from north-east to south-west. This work he considered his chief contribution to science.

The next important geographical work undertaken by Kropotkin at the request of the Imperial Geographical Society was a journey through Finland in 1871-72 to study the glaciology of the Country. He returned with a mass of most interesting observations. After a visit to Western Europe, Kropotkin returned to St. Petersburg, and in 1874 presented his report on Finland.

This he did at a meeting of the Geographical Society where it was keenly discussed. A day or two later he was arrested, and finally imprisoned in the terrible Fortress of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, but was permitted to finish his work on the Glacial Period in Finland and in Central Europe, which with his *magnum opus*, "The Orography of Asia," were published after his escape, while he was residing in England under the name of Levashoff. In April, 1876, he had been transferred to another prison, and in a few days placed in the military hospital. The romantic story of his escape from this hospital is well known. He had no difficulty in passing through Finland and Sweden to Christiania, where in a British steamer he crossed to England, landing in Hull and going to Edinburgh. As he had to work for his living he began to send, in his assumed name of Levashoff, notes, mainly geographical, to *The Times* and *Nature*; of the latter I was then Sub-Editor. He ultimately, in 1877, I think, moved to London where I made his personal acquaintance, which developed into a life friendship. Soon after his arrival a large work in Russian was to come for review and naturally it was sent to Levashoff. He called to see me with the book and asked if I read Russian, and alas, I had to admit that I could not. Pointing to the title-page he told me it was a treatise on the geology and glaciation of Finland, by

P. Kropotkin. . . . He told me briefly his story, and naturally I was intensely interested. I told him we had no one in a position to review the book, and he might write an article stating briefly its main features and conclusions, which I am glad to say he did. Between London, France and Switzerland he migrated, until, after two years' imprisonment in France he finally settled down in London, where he remained, with a few intermissions, till his unfortunate return to Russia in 1917. He soon formed literary connections in England in addition to *The Times* and *Nature*. He wrote largely for *The Nineteenth Century*, through which he ran his two well-known books, "Fields, Factories and Workshops" and "Mutual Aid Among Animals." To the eleventh edition of the "Britannica" he contributed most of the Russian geographical articles. Of course, he soon made himself at home at the Royal Geographical Society, and was a valued contributor to *The Journal*. Among his contributions to *The Nineteenth Century* was an article in December, 1885, entitled, "What Geography Ought to Be," which is well worth reading. It is based on the "Report on Geographical Education," issued by the Society in that year, and gives a comprehensive view of what he considered the field of geography ought to be, its value from the scientific and practical standpoint, and the place it ought to hold in education. "Surely," he says, "there is scarcely another science which might be rendered as attractive for the child as geography, and as powerful an instrument for the general development of the mind, for familiarizing the scholar with the true method of scientific reasoning, and for awakening the taste for natural science altogether."

Unfortunately, Kropotkin never again had an opportunity of doing active work in the field of scientific exploration. He became more and more absorbed in the promotion of his socialistic or rather anarchistic views, and suffered more and more from the consequences of the hardships he had to endure in prison. In his later years he became almost a chronic invalid, wheeled in a bath-chair about Brighton, where he lived for the last few years. His main contributions to geography are the records of his explorations in Eastern Siberia and the discussion of the great problems which they suggested to him; and his investigations into the glaciology of Finland. He was a keen observer, with a well-trained

intellect, familiar with all the sciences bearing on his subject; and although his conclusions may not be universally accepted, there is no doubt that his contributions to geographical science are of the highest value.

He made many friends in England. He had a singularly attractive and lovable personality, sympathetic nature, a warm but perhaps too tender heart, and a wide knowledge in literature, science and art.

REMINISCENCES OF PETER KROPOTKIN

By Dr. Frank Oppenheimer, *Author:*
"The State"; Formerly Professor
of Berlin University

It was in the year 1910 when I met Peter Kropotkin, person to person. I had made a trip to Scotland, following the invitation of a group of Zionists who wanted to settle in Palestine; and indeed these people became the neighbors of my first settlement there, Merchawjah, "God's Wide Open Spaces," the first foothold of the movement in the Plain of Jezreel which now is completely occupied by Jews. I had written to Kropotkin that I would pay him a visit and thereupon had received his invitation to be his guest at Brighton, where he was staying for his health.

For a long time we had been corresponding about the problems of our branch of science. So far back date the beginnings of this pleasant relationship that I cannot even remember by what it had been started. The man who made us acquainted must have been either my great friend, Frederick van Eden, poet of "Little John," or another dear friend of mine, Gustav Landauer, the ardent humanitarian, who was murdered in a bestial fashion by the forerunners of the Nazis, the Korps-students, during their quelling of the Communistic Revolution in Munich. They literally trampled his heart out of his body. Both of them were close to Kropotkin in their economic-political conception, being Communistic Anarchists and opponents of the Marxian State Capitalism. Landauer had translated Kropotkin's immortal "Mutual Aid Among Men and Animals" into German, the most potent weapon ever wrought against the stupid "Socialdarwinism," which is working itself out so gruesomely today.

Unfortunately I had to leave my files in Germany, when, almost 75 years old, I was forced to leave; and that happened almost four years ago. For that reason I am not in a position to aid my memory by looking up the old letters. But I remember very clearly that he wrote me in the German language which he must have mastered once upon a

time but which, during his long exile in England, had grown somewhat "rusty." We both found very amusing a "Lapsus Calami" which occurred in one of his letters. He had read my "State" with great approval and gave me some material about parallel developments in Russia. The peasants, he wrote, "bekamen Sklaven," which, of course, was the exact opposite of what he wanted to say; naturally, I understood that he had meant to say "they became slaves," which, translated into German, was "sie wurden Sklaven." "Sie bekamen Sklaven," which he had written, means, in the German language, "they acquired slaves."

Our relationship was that of two seekers after truth who, by principle, were determined to put under the microscope any, no matter how famous, theory and to attack it regardless of hurt feelings, if the substantiating proofs would not hold water. I was inspired by the deep respect which is due to the great scientist. I am a layman in the realm of Geophysics, but I knew that at least one great authority in this science (was it Professor Richthoten?) had acknowledged Kropotkin as the genius who first had solved the riddle of the formation of the mountain ranges on the continent of Asia.

As to my own science, Political Economy and Sociology, I can say that Kropotkin has judged with approval my endeavors to solve the social problem.

We could not agree all the way. He was and remained an Anarchist, while I, for good reasons, had returned to the liberalism of Adam Smith, Payne, Jefferson, etc., which is entirely different from the so-called "liberalism" of the capitalistic apologizers and advocates. The difference lies in the conception of the State. The Anarchist is convinced that each order of society held up by legalized force is bad, objectionable, and therefore must be abolished and should be succeeded by the

free mutualism of the groups. The real liberal, however, while agreeing that the villain in the process of history is the Class-State created by other than economic force, is convinced that we cannot dispense with a public order which commands the means necessary to maintain the common interest against opposition dangerous to the commonwealth. *No great society can exist without a body which renders final decisions on debatable issues and has the means, in case of emergency, to enforce the decisions.* No society can exist without the power of punishment of the judge, nor without the right to expropriate property even against the wish of the proprietor, if the public interest urgently demands it. Such powers existed, as far as we can see, everywhere among the societies of free and equals and are still in existence in tribes that have preserved their stone-age mode of life. Only the tiny groups of the Eskimos seem to get along without criminal punishment, just because they are such tiny groups. But the history of this country shows clearly that each society, no matter how crude, was compelled to establish criminal laws and powers to execute punishment in places where the orderly power of the courts of the State had not been able to penetrate—Moderators, Regulators, Vigilantes, Miners' meetings, proved to be indispensable in keeping down robbers, pirates, jayhawkers and gangsters.

Large societies need even more than that. The eminent philosopher of law, Radbruch, says that there must be somebody to decide whether to pass each other on the right or on the left, and that "even the heavenly Legions hardly could get along without army regulations." There must be authorities regulating traffic, deciding on and watching over weights and measures, determining what should be the medium of exchange and so forth.

All this can be abused in the historical Class-State, and has been abused and is now being abused. Therefore, so argues the Liberal, we must pull the poison-teeth of the Class State, and this means we must get rid of all monopolistic positions of power created by what John Stuart Mill called "violence and fraud." The basic ones are the political monopoly of State—domination and administration usurped by the ruling class, and the economic monopoly of the land without which there could exist neither the class of proletarians nor the capitalistic class which goes with it. In such society all political power

would lie in the base of the pyramid: in the communitives and cooperatives, while the administrators on top, as I once wrote, would only have a power comparable, let us say, to the one of the international geodetic committee.

Kropotkin was inclined to concede quite a lot to me. Perhaps he was not quite convinced that the monopoly of capital is only a branch growing out of the monopoly of the land, a branch which must wither if the trunk is chopped off. But he was not far from accepting this part of my theory. He knew better than most others how immensely large, compared to the need, the arable land of this planet is: he had figured out that, with intense garden cultivation, the small area of the "Department Seine" would suffice to supply the Metropolis of Paris with food. Therefore he could not get away from realizing that the monopoly of the land is not a natural one, based on the fact that the area is too small compared to the need, but a legal monopoly based on the fact that the ruling class had surped the right to corner the abounding land away from the vast majority of the people. Purpose and effect of the monopoly was to turn them into proletarians, to wit, into people who are forced to offer their services for a wage leaving the surplus value (or profit) to the owners of the means of production, the produced means (e.g., machinery), as well as the non-produced one, the land. If people had free access to the land as their means of production, then there could be neither a class of exploiters nor of exploited! Even Karl Marx concedes this, as may be read in the 25th chapter, "On Colonial Systems" in the first volume of his "Capital" and in his letter to Friedrich Engels dated November 26, 1869.

In this point, I believe, we were not far from coming to an agreement. It was another point where this proved to be impossible, the point where Anarchist and Liberal never can agree, until the Classless-State will have been materialized, and its functioning can be observed.

The Anarchist cannot get away from the fear that the once established Classless-State, no matter whether created by reform, or by revolution, will again revert into the Class-State by abuse of the power of administration. His opinion is that all power will be abused; therefore, he does not want to put power into anybody's hands. This opinion

sprouts from the foolish doctrine with which the bourgeoisie in former times tried to justify her factual privileges, from the "nursery tale" of previous accumulation, which claims that the Class-State of history has not been created by extra-economic violence, but by peaceful development due to the innate differences in economic talent and moral restraint.

When arguing this point with Peter Kropotkin I had not yet found the decisive answer to this most important question. It is that social science has to deal with mass manifestations exclusively but is not in the least interested in purely individual cases, neither in theory nor in practice. The task of social theory is to explain, that of social practice is to remove undesired and to effect desired mass manifestations.

In the Class-State, power may be abused toward permanent detriment of the society, if the holder of office is backed by a powerful group which derives benefits from the abuse. This is impossible in a class-less society, where, to quote Rousseau, "nobody is rich enough to bribe many, and nobody poor enough to have to accept bribe." For that reason abuse of office is perhaps not impossible, maybe not even improbable, "as human beings go," but it is impossible that the guilty one, once found out, remains in office to continue his misconduct and to grow bolder at it while society suffers. Such cases in the class-less society are turned over to the prosecuting attorney, just as it is up to the physician to go after singular cases of, let us say, tuberculosis, while society will do everything to weed out any mass epidemics. Singular cases are just as harmless

for the welfare of society as an abrasion is for the individual, though a few cells may be destroyed by it.

These, approximately, were the things which we discussed and over which we argued, —Kropotkin, once the page of Czar Nicholas and later prisoner in the Peter Paul Fort of Petersburg, and myself; the two of us thinkers who were close enough in ideas to ardently seek agreement on these last differences in our opinions.

It was one of the finest days of my life, a day indelible in the memory and full of real living: I can still see the kind and knowing face of the Sage who sat next to me on a bench on the Beach. I can see the colorful crowds move by us, old people in their wheel chairs, and babies in perambulators. I can still hear the distant music from the Band in the Pavillion. And I remember how Peter Kropotkin and I, together, admired a daring lad who, from a high tower, somersaulted into the ocean on a bicycle. When I had to bid him good-bye to get back to London he embraced me and kissed both of my cheeks in Russian fashion.

I never saw him again and did not correspond with him after the beginning of World War I. I only heard that he had gone back to Russia as soon as the Revolution had opened to him the doors so long closed. He had since long predicted the Revolution and had wished for it ardently. How he fared there I never knew. Now I see that they named a City in the South after him.

Honor to his memory!

KROPOTKIN'S DOCTRINE OF MUTUAL AID By Dr. E. Guy Talbott

Prince Peter Alexeivich Kropotkin, Russian revolutionary and sociologist, was born in Moscow on December 9, 1842. He early developed an interest in the Russian peasants. During his last years as a student he came under the influence of the new revolutionary literature, which so largely expressed his own aspirations. In 1864 Kropotkin took charge of a geographical survey expedition in Manchuria and Eastern Siberia. In 1867 he became secretary of the physical geography section of the Russian Geographical Society.

In 1872 he visited Switzerland, and became a member of the International Workingmen's Association at Geneva. He then adopted the creed of anarchism, and on his return

to Russia he took an active part in spreading nihilist propaganda. He was arrested and imprisoned in 1874 but escaped in 1876 and went to England, and again to Switzerland, where he joined the Jura Federation and edited its paper *Le Revolta*. He also published various revolutionary pamphlets.

Kropotkin was expelled from Switzerland in 1881, shortly after the assassination of Czar Alexander II. He spent some time in England and France, and at Lyons he was sentenced to five years imprisonment for membership in revolutionary organizations. However, in 1886, as a result of repeated efforts on his behalf in the French Chamber, he was released, and settled near London.

From this time Kropotkin devoted his time to literary work, and to the development of his doctrine of "mutual aid." His best known book was: "Mutual Aid a Factor in Evolution," published in 1902 and revised in 1915. He had a singularly gentle and attractive personality, and was much loved and respected in England. He desired the minimum of government, and the development of a system of human cooperation which would render government from above superfluous. When the Russian Revolution broke out, he returned to his native land in 1917 and settled near Moscow. He took no part in Russian politics and died on February 8, 1921.

Another eminent Russian sociologist, Novikov, defined "social Darwinism" as "the doctrine that collective homicide is the cause of the progress of the human race." Kropotkin was once described as "the only true Darwinian in England." Regarding Darwin's misinterpreters, Kropotkin said: "They came to conceive the animal world as a world of perpetual struggle among half-starved individuals, thirsting for one another's blood. They made modern literature resound with the war-cry of 'woe to the vanquished,' as if it were the last word of modern biology. They raised the 'pitiless' struggle for personal advantages to the height of a biological principle which man must submit to as well, under the menace of otherwise succumbing in a world based upon mutual extermination."

Kropotkin held the view that the struggle for existence and war between members of the same species cannot be considered as identical terms, especially as applied to man. The human struggle for existence is basically a struggle of man against nature, not against members of his own species. He said he could not accept pseudo-Darwinism, "because I was persuaded that to admit a pitiless inner war for life within each species, and to see in that war a condition of progress, was to admit something which not only had not yet been proved, but also lacked confirmation from direct observation."

Kropotkin concludes, from his own observations, that if the struggle for existence improves the species, it is the struggle against physical environment and not the struggle between fellow creatures. As a result of his studies in human association, Kropotkin said: "Wherever we go we find the same sociable manners, the same spirit of solidarity. And when we endeavor to penetrate into the dark-

ness of past ages, we find the same tribal life, the same associations of men, however primitive, for mutual support. Therefore Darwin was right when he saw in man's social qualities the chief factor for his further evolution, and Darwin's vulgarizers are entirely wrong when they maintain the contrary."

Darwin himself said that man "manifestly owes this immense superiority to his intellectual faculties, to his social habits, which lead him to aid and defend his fellows." The inclusion of the entire human race within the bounds of moral law is, in the true Darwinian theory, the ultimate goal of human evolution. Darwin said: "There is only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathies extending to the men of all nations and races."

Prince Kropotkin is the best interpreter of Darwin's theory of mutual aid as the central principle of social progress. His book, "Mutual Aid a Factor in Evolution," has become a classic. It is an utter refutation of the doctrine that force is the determining factor in social progress. He calls attention to the futility of struggle, especially "collective homicide" and the effectiveness of mutual aid or cooperation in social evolution.

The best American interpreter for the mutual aid theories of Kropotkin and Novikov was George Nasmyth. In his book, "Social Progress and the Darwinian Theory," published in 1916, Nasmyth says: "The philosophy of force, which is anti-Democratic, and anti-Christian, has fallen like a blight upon the intellectual life of Christendom during the past half-century, but its effects have been almost entirely confined to the aristocratic, intellectual, and governing classes." He pays high tribute to Kropotkin as the prophet of a new order of cooperative society, and concludes with this quotation from Kropotkin:

"The ethical progress of our race viewed in its broad lines, appears as a gradual extension of the mutual aid principles from the tribe to always larger and larger agglomerations so as to finally embrace one day the whole of mankind, without respect to its diverse creeds, languages, and races . . . We can affirm that in the ethical progress of man, mutual support — not mutual struggle—has had the leading part. In its wide extension, even at the present time, we also see the best guarantee of a still loftier evolution of our race."

PETER KROPOTKIN, EVOLUTIONIST

By Joseph Ishill, *Editor:*
The Oracle Press

How shall we, this day, commemorate the spirit of that great man, rebel and scientist, Peter Kropotkin? Cataclysmic events have occurred since he was born, much devastation of the flower of human life and achievement, sufferings on an unprecedented scale—all endured in the dark transition period from a moribund "civilization" to an eternally bright and just future way of life.

Anyone familiar with Kropotkin's precepts will agree that the contributions of his career as philosopher, scientist and propagandist were of prime value and of the utmost benefit to all who have integrated their intellectual capacities and seen in him one of the few great liberators of the oppressed everywhere. He was the incarnation of truth, goodness and brotherhood toward which mankind aspires in its vision of a better world.

One cannot adequately express how much we miss him in these tragic and barbarous times of total and totalitarian darkness let loose upon the world by a horde of neurasthenic psychopaths. How ably he would have come to the assistance of all those down-trodden victims of aggression and perversion. We well remember how the so-called Aryan master-race (of Germanic origin) sought in the First World War to justify their abominations against the innocent and defenseless. They have proved themselves masters, indeed, of darkness! Their German "Kultur" truly a *germ*-culture, which they foster for the destruction of the world. A number of German writers in the First World War excused themselves on the score that the horrors of that War, in the guilt of which they hold equal share with the militarists, were unavoidable consequences of the "struggle for existence," the necessity of which, they maintained, was proven by Darwin's theories for the improvement of the human race. Kropotkin sharply refuted these deductions in his scientific work, "Mutual Aid." On the contrary, he proves that this was not Darwin's conception of Nature at all, since, for the preservation of the species, he attached the greatest importance to the social instinct; and above all he proves, with many facts from the life of animals and

the evolution of society, that progress, both biological and social, is best fostered, not by brute force or cunning, but by the practice of mutual aid and cooperation.

To combat this poisonous Germanic propaganda via perverted Darwinisms, the British people sought another scientist and immediately there came to light Kropotkin's "Mutual Aid—A Factor of Evolution"—of which a large popular edition was published at one shilling per copy, notwithstanding the previous eight editions which were completely exhausted.

It must have been a great satisfaction to Kropotkin to see that quite a number of English Tories who were in complete disagreement with his political views had to endorse this work by a Russian revolutionist! Regardless of his affiliations, he was loved and respected by many of the social strata both high and low.

Were he alive today it is certain he would have allied himself with the United Nations as he did in the First World War when many pacifist-minded, and other various radicals sharply condemned him for siding with the Allies. But Kropotkin had clearly seen and understood, as could only one of his keen mentality, the menace of Prussian militarism which was rapidly darkening the world-horizon. In spite of the gloomy spectre of the First World War, Kropotkin did not become utterly disillusioned at the somber sweep of events. He still hoped for a better world of the future, and here it is well to quote the concluding words of his preface to "Mutual Aid," November, 1914—which gives in true perspective the integral and exemplary idealist:—"In the midst of misery and agony which this War has flung over the world, there is still room for the belief that the constructive forces of men being nevertheless at work, their action will tend to promote a better understanding between men, and eventually among nations."

Those words will be proven as unalterably true, a prophecy and a statement of faith.

ETHICS: FOR AND AGAINST

The life of Peter Kropotkin is effective in proportion as he influenced others, day by day. His teachings were alive and understandable as they influenced others to act.

That he did this is evident from those that

By Cassius V. Cook, Sec.-Treas.:

accepted his ethics—"from every man according to his ability, to every man according to his needs." Among those who disagreed are a few who feared to erect a "tyranny of needs."

KROPOTKIN—A SOCIAL THINKER—OPPOSED TO STATE TOTALITARIANISM

By Pitirim A. Sorokin,

*Department of Sociology,
Harvard University*

Most sincerely I join your meeting in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Peter Kropotkin, as an eminent social thinker; as a great apostle of Mutual Aid; as an indefatigable critic of social injustice in all its forms; as a relentless warrior against State bureaucracy and dictatorship; as a most notable ethical thinker and reformer.

It was my good fortune to meet and to know him personally during the last years of

his life in Russia. This direct contact showed that, in addition to all his contributions to mankind, he was an excellent personality in his life and conduct.

In these times when State Totalitarianism menaces, to turn human beings into enslaved puppets, and free human creativeness into a coercive, soulless drudgery, the warnings and teachings of this great man are especially timely and significant!

PETER KROPOTKIN ON KARL MARX AND MARXISM

*By Dr. Herman Frank, Editor:
Freie Arbeiter Stimme, New York*

One of the central ideas of the scientific social thought in the past hundred years has been the question whether or not economic change in itself is endowed with a rational purpose. During the 19th Century, at least four great systems of thought were built up with the view of bridging the gulf between evolutionary change and social progress. Auguste Comte in France, Herbert Spencer in England, Karl Marx in Germany, and Lester Ward in the United States built up their monumental social philosophies in the hope of resolving this dilemma.

Karl Marx spent over forty years in an endeavor to supply an answer to this problem—by imputing a transcendental goal to history. The capitalistic system, he claimed, by its own inherent process being driven toward a higher social organization, namely, Socialism. Although no definitely convincing proof could be offered for the Marxian solution, and it has remained a matter of faith yet as a matter of fact, Marxism, of the four above named systems, has become the most influential one, and has proved, in more than



DR. HERMAN FRANK

one sense, epoch-making. Nonetheless, of them all, none has exercised less attraction and evoked more criticism on the part of that outstanding revolutionary, Peter Kropotkin, than just Marxism, that is the most revolutionary system among these four.

In conversation with friends on such topics as the First International or the Russian revolutionary movement, Kropotkin used harsh terms in regard to Marx, and spoke still more harshly of Engels. As he saw it, Engels exercised the worst influence upon

Unfortunately, very little written evidence of Kropotkin's criticism has been brought out into the open—very few of his observations on the nature and trend of Marx's contribution to revolutionary thought. Of still greater importance, therefore, is it to explore the extant traces of Kropotkin's ideas which throw some light upon an issue so controversial and yet so relevant to any serious socio-philosophical discussion of our own times and the years to come.

The most revealing document, virtually unknown to the great mass of Peter Kropotkin's followers and friends, is a letter of his, written to a life-long friend James Guillaume (1844-1916) and made public, not so long ago, by that indefatigable historian of the Libertarian Movement in the 19th century, Dr. Max Nettlau.²

Guillaume, born in London as a son of a Swiss of French origin, became active in the Swiss revolutionary movement, particularly in the Jura revolutionary group (Federation Romande, 1869-1878), in which Peter Kropotkin also took part, as is well known to all who are familiar with his immortal "Memoirs of a Revolutionist". Under Bakunin's influence, Guillaume abandoned his early ideals of the development of individual perfection and turned to the development of mass consciousness

¹Cf. "A Visit to Kropotkin in 1905," by Dr. F. Brupbacher, in Joseph Ishill's Peter Kropotkin Memorial Volume, Berkeley Heights, N. J. 1923, pp. 91-96.

²In a collection of Kropotkin's letters, most of them never published before, printed in the Kropotkin issue (February, 1931) of the Russian Libertarian monthly, *Probuzhdenye* (Awakening) of Detroit, Mich., on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of P. K.'s death. Of course, all these letters appeared in a Russian version and accordingly we were obliged to render the quotations into English instead of being able to submit them exactly as the words were written originally by P. K.—most likely in French. H. F.

and solidarity as a means toward social revolution. He was one of Bakunin's chief supporters of the anti-authoritarian group in the International and followed him in the split with the Marxists.

The letter to Guillaume was written by Kropotkin in November, 1903, (it appears in Nettlau's Russian collection under No. 71) and may be considered a reply to Guillaume's disparaging remarks about peculiar Jewish traits playing a part in the formation of Marxian doctrines and, in addition, exerting a baleful influence on the social-democratic movement, so frequently led by persons of Jewish origin. Referring to these accusations, Kropotkin writes as follows:

"To my mind, dear friend, you are carried too far away when you come to speak about the Jews. Oh, I wish you were acquainted with our Jews—the anarchists of Whitechapel and New York! Among them you will find so many splendid individuals, just as our old Jura friends and—so perfect a devotion! Just these comrades of ours are fit to carry libertarianism back to Russia—our publications, our ideas, our periodical (*Bread and Freedom*, published at the time in Russian in Geneva). Splendid comrades they are indeed!

Truth to tell, Jewish mentality does display a peculiar fondness for building up systems. It is dialectical, just as is the case with so many other peoples that hail from the Orient. And for that reason, mainly, they take national pride in such thinkers as Marx and Lassalle. System—this, I think, is a thing most essential to the mind of Jews. Besides, they, who have been for so many years persecuted and oppressed, are naturally most appreciative of the fact that socialism opens the door to them, with no regard whatsoever to race differences. They seem to be firmly convinced, for that matter, that the words (concerning justice and equality to all, with no distinction as between creed or nationality, etc.) in the Constitution of the First International have been written by none other than Marx himself.

No, my dear friend, race has nothing to do with the matter. Social-democrats are, and always will be, recruited from all those who are bent upon avoiding taking risks, while at the same time being by far too ambitious to abstain from playing any political part in communal life. Just think of all those who have

forsaken us (the Libertarian Movement) in order to join the opposite camp. Have they not been, all of them, just ambitious and vain-glorious individuals, first of all!

. . . As to Marx himself, let us pay to him homage that is his due—in recognition for his entering the International at all. He also deserves our gratitude for his “Capital”—an immense revolutionary pamphlet or tract, composed in a scientific jargon. He seems to have said to the capitalists: ‘Think of it, I have taken your bourgeois political economy for a starting point and yet I succeeded in proving for all the world to see that you are robbing the working-man.’ But should Marx also claim that his writings had a scientific worth as well, then, mark it, I must say ‘No.’”

Now, from this passage, filled to the brim with true love of suffering humanity and with fine humor, we first of all see that to Peter Kropotkin’s mind the Jewish race as such was in no way responsible for either the theory or practice of the social-democratic movement—a fallacy to which, most probably, Guillaume in his mature age fell victim. In the second place, the underlying cause of Kropotkin’s opposition to Marxism, as a *pseudo-science*, can, by a not too heavily veiled implication, be discovered. On both these points let us dwell here only briefly, yet in quite definite and well documented statements.

Allusions to a peculiar Jewish mentality, inclined to a certain kind of dialectic or system-building, can be found in two later articles by Kropotkin: “The Nationality Problem” and “Anarchism and Zionism”, published by him in 1906 and 1907, respectively, in his London (Russian) periodical, “*Litsky-Khleb i Volia*” (Leaves—Bread and Freedom). But previously, about the time the long letter to Guillaume was written, Kropotkin had a chance to express himself, at much greater length, about the proneness of the Jewish workers to undertake revolutionary activity. This was done in a letter written, in March of 1904, to a group of Jewish workers which probably was composed under the fresh

³This letter is reprinted in Ishill’s Memorial Volume, referred to above, pp. 189-190. Cf. also the article by Rudolph Rucker, “Peter Kropotkin and the Yiddish Workers,” in the same book, pp. 78-86. Unfortunately this book, a true labor of love by Ishill, an artist-typographer, was printed in a very limited edition and is known only to a chosen few among the friends and admirers of Peter Kropotkin.

ers in London who had published in Yiddish a translation of his “Memoirs.”³

We invite the reader’s attention to just the concluding part of this remarkable letter, impression of the fallacious aspersions on the Jews contained in a misguided friend’s letter referred to above:

. . . “The Jewish workers took a prominent part in the great movement which began in Russia during these last years. . . . And not only have the young heroes stepped forth bravely, unafraid of death and annihilation in the lonely prison-cells, in the snows of frozen Siberia, but also a great number of Jewish working-men in the large and small towns have not feared to rise bravely and vigorously against the hundred years’ oppression, declaring frankly and freely before the entire world their demands and hopes for the final liberation of the hundred-year-old slavery. I heartily wish that my “Memoirs” may help the Jewish youth to read the divers problems of the present movement against the all-destroying power of existent capitalism and authority. I will consider myself fortunate if one of the downtrodden of Capitalism and Authority, wafted to one of the distant nooks of Russia, will find upon reading those lines that he does not stand quite alone on the battlefield. May he know that, on going into battle for liberation of those who create all wealth and receive as reward nothing but poverty, he becomes, by this alone, a participant of the great cause—of the great struggle which is conducted everywhere for the freedom and happiness of all mankind, that he enters into the family of the workers of the entire world who are united in one great confraternity demanding freedom and equality for all.”

Yours,

PETER KROPOTKIN.

Now, to return to the second point, raised above in analyzing the important letter to James Guillaume. Kropotkin ascribed the Jewish workers’ adoration of Karl Marx to the following cause: presumably they saw in Marx the author of the concepts of justice and equality to all creeds and races, as expressed in the Constitution of the International Workingmen’s Association (First International). Now, at the time Kropotkin wrote his letter to Guillaume (November,

1903) there had not yet been published the extensive correspondence between Marx and Engels. If its contents had been known to Kropotkin, his opinions of Marx would have become much lower indeed. In a letter, addressed to Engels November 4, 1864, in which Marx describes his part in shaping the final text of the preamble to the International's Constitution, he makes it very plain that the words "rights" and "duties" (mentioned twice) and the phrases about "truth, ethics, and justice" were inserted later—and not by him.

Another question remains open, to-wit: who wrote the words about "no discrimination as to color, creed and nationality"? On this point, Dr. Max Nettlau, who edited this recent and too little known collection of Kropotkin correspondence for many years, has this to say: "As words voicing the general feeling (at that time) of protest against the negro slavery, religious intolerance and national hatreds, these expressions simply were the products of a sentiment peculiar at the time to all people of good-will anywhere; and it is altogether beside the point whether Marx or anyone else of the subcommittee, editing the document (Marx, Lelubet and Weston), authorized these few words, which, to Kropotkin's way of thinking, might have carried a particularly compelling appeal to the mass of Jewish revolutionary working-men."

On the other hand, with the publication of the four large volumes of Marx-Engels correspondence, which took place a few years before the World War No. 1, Kropotkin's censorious opinion of Engels, referred to in the beginning

of this inquiry, more especially of Engels' influence upon Marx, is clearly in need of revision. We quote from Nettlau's comments on the before-mentioned article by Brupbacher (published together with the article in the *Ishill Memorial Volume*, issued in 1923) as follows: "These four large volumes contain such abundant intimate material on the real relations between Marx and Engels that opinions expressed before cannot be considered definite." (p. 93).

One outstanding deduction follows from this rather casual attempt at delving into an intriguing subject, deserving of a much more comprehensive inquiry: With all his methodical, scientific mind, Kropotkin, deliberately and openly, invested ethical and moral principles with the utmost objective, even absolute value, and with sociological significance. He did not consider Marxism a true scientific system; and one, and perhaps not the least, of the reasons for Kropotkin's reflection upon the Gargantuan product of Marxian thought might have been just this unfortunate disregard by Marx of all the higher, nobler human aspirations—the true hallmark of humanity. Of the big two, Kropotkin and not Marx was perhaps the greater, the truer realist, as regards human nature. For as scholar and humanist, Kropotkin, following in the footsteps of his great teacher Proudhon, knew too well that only by welding science and conscience will mankind be able to achieve the proper basis for material, mental and spiritual progress.

New York, November, 1942.

FROM AMONG IMPORTANT ENCYCLOPAEDIAE

By S. Alexander

We thought it might be of some interest to our readers to give a few short excerpts of such judgments under the pen of Peter Kropotkin's contemporaries.

Rodolfo Mondolfo writes thus in the "Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences" (New York, 1935):

". . . While his system is often ingenious, K leaves many philosophical and practical questions unanswered and frequently contradicts himself. . . . K. never explained how the rise of the oppressive tendency which along with cooperation he saw as the offspring of social life, could be avoided in an anarchist

regime; how the multitude which, he held, has no clear program and consequently tends to follow a party of action and to be governed by it, could avoid this fate under anarchism; how everything would be organized without organs of government; how communal, regional, national and international groups and federations of production and consumption would function without delegated and representative authority. The incompleteness of the anarchist program became especially clear after the fall of the czar, when K. had no plan for 'the people' to follow except that of supporting the Kerensky government.

The nobility of Kropotkin's inspiration, his honesty in discussion and the sincerity of his conviction evidenced by his whole life are, however, beyond question."

The "Encyclopaedia Britannica" (American Edition, 1941) is very reserved:

" . . . He was an authority on agriculture as well as on geographical subjects, and put forward many practical suggestions for its development. K. had a singularly gentle and attractive personality and was much loved and respected in England. He desired the minimum of government, and the development of a system of human cooperation which should render government from above superfluous."

The "New International Encyclopaedia" (New York, 1926) is trying hard to understand what is revolution and what is violence:

" . . . His exploration in Asia had convinced him that the maps of that continent were based on an erroneous principle. After two years of work he published a new hypothesis, which has since been adopted by most cartographers. . . . Observations of the economic conditions of the Finnish peasants inspired in him a feeling that natural science avails little so long as the social problem remains unsolved. . . . While a believer in revolution as a necessary means to social reform, K. has always displayed a disinclination for violent measures. His ideal is a society of small communities of equals, federated for the purpose of securing the greatest possible sum of well-being, with full and free scope for every individual initiative. Government and leadership have no place in his scheme of social organization. He recognizes that it is impossible for any man to conceive the method of operation of such a society, but trusts to the collective wisdom of the masses to solve the problems involved."

The "Encyclopaedia Americana," 1941, has this to say:

" . . . K. was one of the ablest representatives and most eloquent exponents of that theory of society known as anarchist communism. He was opposed to all societies based on force or restraint, and looked forward to the advent of a purely voluntary society on a communistic basis. He desired to see the division of labor, which is the dominant factor in modern industry, replaced by what he called the 'integration of labor,' and was a staunch believer in the immense possibilities of intensive agriculture."

In turning our readings to other countries,

we find the "Encyclopaedia Italiana," published "under the High Patronage of His Majesty the King of Italy" (1933), very sympathetic:

" . . . K. is one of the most characteristic representatives of anarchist communism. According to him, the social revolution has to destroy the state (from here arises his aversion to the dictatorship of the proletariat propagated by the bolsheviks) and private property (socializing not only the means of production but also the objects for consumption). Not the limitation exercised by the powers that be, but the social instincts which develop freely will determine, as the time passes, the life of humanity."

While the "Grande Enciclopedia Popolare" (Milan, 1928) is slightly sarcastic:

" . . . The main characteristic of his doctrine was an unlimited optimism which is almost ingenuous. Crowds and international demagoguery enjoyed making of him a terrible revolutionary. But in reality he was no more than an aristocratic dreamer and a man of refined sensitiveness. The pages of his autobiography ('Memoirs of a Revolutionist') are a literary and spiritual *chef d'oeuvre*. Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky did not penetrate so deeply the child's soul as he did. At the outset of the European War, K. was for the coalition of the free peoples against German imperialism which, with czarism, represented the greatest obstacle to human progress. . . ."

The German "Der Grosse Brockhaus" (1931) might have said a little more, especially as it was published under the Weimar regime:

" . . . In seiner Gesellschaftslehre ist K. der bedeutendste Vertreter des sog. Kommunistischen Anarchismus; er erstrebt das Gemeinwohl und den Produktions- und Konsumtionsmitteln, das auf kleine Interessengruppen übertragen werden soll, unter Abschaffung aller Regierungsformen. Seinen sittlichen und Gesellschaftlichen Anschauungen gipfeln in dem Grundsatz der gegenseitigen Hilfe."

The French "Larousse" has no more than half-a-dozen empty lines. As to the "Bulgarian Encyclopaedia" (Sofia, 1936) it is the most laconic one and perhaps the most cryptic:

" . . . Kropotkin was a pitiless theoretician but a quiet, hard-working utopist"!!

The Spanish "Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europea-Americana," 1926, is very reserved, considering the date of its publication.

It only says that Kropotkin "was a man of a truly encyclopaedic culture and possessed profound knowledge of geography, geology, economic science, history and sociology."

In wading through the Russian Encyclopaediae, we find, oddly enough, that the most important of these—the Russian Encyclopaedic Dictionary, better known as the "Brockhaus-Efron," called Kropotkin Peter *Alexandrovitch*, and not Peter *Alexeyevitch*. This *Russian* work has therefore the honor of being the only Encyclopaedia having made a mistake in the name of this *Russian* scientist and writer. A few short biographic notes are given, but it must be remembered that the volume appeared in 1895!

In the other Russian Encyclopaedic Dictionary, known as the "Granat" Encyclopaedia, N. Russanov has a long article on K. from which we can usefully extract just these few lines (x):

" . . . Kropotkin's law, not quite new but solidly based on scientific data, of 'mutual aid,' is an important addition in K.'s system, or rather is it a serious modification of the Darwinian law of the 'struggle for existence.' . . ."

The Russian "Encyclopaedia of State and Jurisprudence," published by the Communist Academy (1925), has, under the word "Anarchism," the following judgment on Kropotkin, under the pen of I. Razumovsky:

" . . . Although very close to the communist ideals, K. is still laboring under all the characteristics of an intellectual whose starting point develops from ethical considerations and who does not see the concrete roads for the realization of these ideals. . . . In K.'s system the *ethical philosophy* of Anarchism plays a great role, and he looks for its principles in

(x) This was printed after P. K.'s death but from old stereotypes which date back to about the year 1910, i.e., before World War I.

the useful for the upkeep of the species and in the tendency of Man towards enjoyment . . . "

The "Big Soviet Encyclopaedia" (1937) notes how K. was slated for his attitude during World War I, with quotations from Lenin who had then attacked P. K. for such attitude. The biography continues thus:

" . . . In the works in which K. developed the fundamental problems of Anarchism, he expressed himself against the centralized organization of society, for the socialization of means of production; he negated the necessity of the State and put forward as ideal of socialism the association of producers' communes. His protest against state compulsion led him to the complete negation of every discipline. K. was an irreducible enemy of Marxism. . . . After the Great October Social Revolution he remained an irreducible enemy of proletarian dictatorship and while he considered the bolsheviks as the new Jacobines, he nevertheless recognized their great revolutionary value and importance not only within Russia, but on an international scale."

The "Small Soviet Encyclopaedia" (1929) is bitter, under the pen of M. Klevensky:

" . . . Most resolutely opposed to every State, K. would not even recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat as a temporary transitory form towards the dying out of classes and of the State. He was convinced that on the day following the Revolution the questions of distribution will be justly and reasonably solved in full by 'volunteers.' Such equally volunteer unions would, on the basis of free agreements, carry out the whole task of production. K. based himself upon the spirit of solidarity inherent to the human species and to the limitless productivity of the soil. The theories of Kropotkin, who attempted to weld together petty bourgeois radicalism with the ideal of communism, are saturated with idealistic naiveness. . . . "

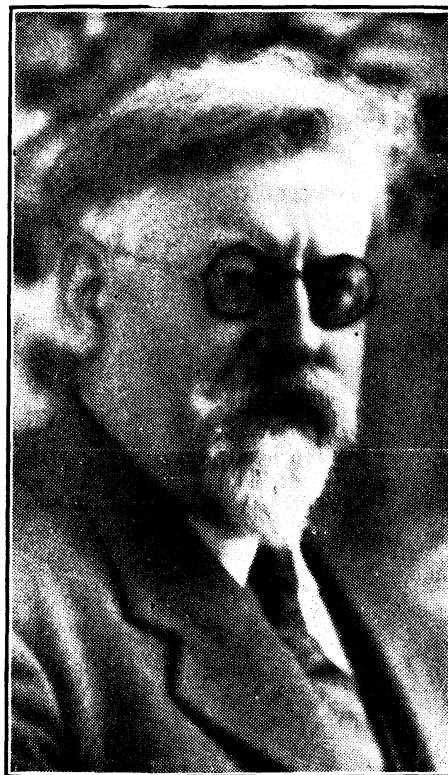
KROPOTKIN AND THE JEWISH LABOR MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND

By Rudolf Rocker, *Author:*
"Nationalism and Culture"

Whoever first visits the narrow and winding streets and alleys of the Russian immigrants' quarter in the East of London, stretching from Bishopsgate to Bow and from Bethnal Green in the direction toward the London Docks, is strangely impressed by the contrast he observes between this and ordinary London street life, and seems to move in quite another world. The view of this involved mass of streets where the stranger loses his way, of this strange population, these dark symptoms of proletarian misery and fretting care, is far from elevating, and the visitor always breathes more freely when he turns his back upon this quarter. Very few, however, are aware that behind the darkened walls of these time-worn houses not only need and misery are living, but that idealism is at home there also, hopeful idealism, prepared for every sacrifice. I have lived nearly twenty years in the midst of this singular world; accident introduced me there and I felt during this time the strongest and most imperishable impressions of my life.

Ninety out of a hundred of the immigrant quarter's population are Jewish proletarians from Russia and Poland, who were driven from their homes by the ruthless persecution of the old czarist system, and finding an asylum in this quarter, they created new industries, chiefly in the ready-made tailoring trade, to eke out a bare living in this foreign country. In this remarkable center a handful of intellectuals, about sixty years ago, laid the first foundations of a labor movement, the history of which remains to be written and may form one of the most interesting chapters of international labor history. Sixty-six years ago the *Arbeiter Freund* (Worker's Friend) was founded here, for many years one of the oldest continuous libertarian publications, besides the Paris *Temps Nouveaux* (1879) and "*Freedom*" (1886).

To the East End immigrants the name of Kropotkin was a kind of symbol; no other man had such a great influence upon the mental development of the Jewish workers as he. His writings formed the real basis of their libertarian education and were spread in many thousands of copies. The groups, especially the "Workers' Friend" group, practiced sacrifice and devotion to render the



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production of this literature possible, to an extent which I never observed elsewhere. Some really gave the last they had; there was a rivalry in sacrifice and solidarity. None wanted to stand back. Young women and girls earning with pains their 10 or 12 shillings a week in the infamous sweating trades of the East End, regularly gave their share, took it from their last money, in order not to be behind their male comrades. In this way the "Worker's Friend" group alone, within not quite ten years, published nearly a half million books and pamphlets, among them numerous works of some hundreds of pages, like Kropotkin's "Words of a Rebel" and "The Conquest of Bread"; Louise Michel's "Memoirs"; Grave's "Moribund Society"; Rocker's "Francisco Ferrer," and many others.

London was, so to speak, the school where the newly arrived from Russia and Poland, drifting continuously to England, were introduced to the new ideas; from here propaganda spread over many countries. Want of work, material privations, and often that restless migratory impulse proper to many Jewish

proletarians, led hundreds of good comrades from London to France, Belgium, Germany, Egypt, South Africa, and to North and South America; most of whom maintained their contact with the London Movement and worked untiringly in their new spheres of life, until yonder also groups of Libertarians were formed among the Jewish immigrants. They did not forget the financial support of the London mother movement to render possible the publication of the weekly paper and that of further libertarian literature.

But Kropotkin not only influenced this Movement by his writings, he was also in very intimate personal contact with it and took a lively interest in all its struggles and undertakings. After coming to England in 1886, when released from the prison of Clairvaux, he often visited the "Bernier Street Club," the then intellectual centre of the Jewish labor movement. In later years, when chronic heart disease made his participation in public meetings always more difficult or impossible, his East End visits became rarer, but the intellectual contact always remained and took again quite regular forms, when the Libertarian Movement in Russia began to have a larger development. During the first years of the present century quite a number of good comrades returned from London to Russia where they worked in the underground movement to spread their libertarian ideas. Some of them died on the gallows, and many were buried for long years in the prisons of Russia and Siberia. Secret means of communication between London and Russia were created and kept up by correspondence and secret emissaries. A very great quantity of Russian and Yiddish literature was smuggled from England into Russia to help the comrades there at their ceaseless task. It was at that time that Kropotkin and his friends in England and France founded the paper *Chleb i Volya* (Bread and Freedom) which he edited until it was transferred to Geneva.

In England itself, the Libertarian Movement of the Jewish workers reached its highest development before and after the Russian Revolution of 1905. Labor Unions, in which the Libertarians unceasingly took part, flourished; great strike movements stirred up the immigrants' quarter to the utmost as never before. At that time the "old man," as the Jewish workers used to call Kropotkin, came oftener to the East End and spoke even at meetings, whilst strictly forbidden to do so

by medical orders. I remember especially a meeting held at our Club in Jubilee Street in December, 1905, on the anniversary day of the revolt of the Decabrists (1825): Kropotkin was one of the speakers. To prevent overcrowding, the meeting was not publicly announced, since Kropotkin's wife urgently appealed to us to take care of the "old man." Nevertheless, the news spread like lightning, and in the evening the great hall and the gallery were overcrowded, and hundreds could not be admitted and had to turn back. His voice faltered slightly at the beginning of his speech. An invisible charm seemed to issue from this man and enter into the inmost hearts of the audience. I had heard him speak many times, but only once before this had I noticed such a tremendous impression as that evening. Kropotkin was no orator of rhetorical gifts; sometimes even, his words were uttered with some hesitation; but the manner of his speaking, this undertone of deepest conviction underlying each word penetrated the minds of the audience with elementary force and put them completely under his spell. But Kropotkin, also, was mightily impressed by this audience which listened to his words with breathless attention, and when he had returned home, he suffered from a grave heart attack which put his life in danger and tied him down for several weeks to a sick-bed.

I had a similar impression at a great demonstration in Hyde Park held in protest against the massacre of the Jewish inhabitants of Kishineff instigated by the Czar's Government. The inhuman cruelties of this gruesome tragedy created the greatest excitement in the East End. Organizations of all shades of opinion and parties met in conference which led to the Hyde Park meeting. Many thousands of Jewish workers marched from Mile End Gate to the Park, one of the strangest demonstrations which London ever saw. Many prominent men of all parties addressed the masses gathered round their platform, raising a just protest in vehement words against the atrocious policy of blood, of Plehve's system.

When Kropotkin arrived at the Park entrance, a large crowd of workers received him enthusiastically, took the dear "old man" in their midst, and led him to the meeting place. Here he was carefully lifted above the heads of the crowd up to the car which served as a platform. When he began to speak I noticed

again the vibration of his voice which always made a peculiar impression. By and by his voice became stronger and his pauses more regular. He was seized with strong feeling, and this was communicated to the thousands who listened with bated breath and followed his words with silent veneration. His speech was a flaming accusation of the bloody régime of the Russian henchmen. Every word came from the depth of his heart and had the pressure of a hundred-weight. The expression of mildness which made his face so very attractive, had quite left it; his eyes were flaming, and the gray beard trembled violently as if swayed by the tremendous impetus of his sweeping accusations. Every sentence was inspired by the spirit of deepest truth and met an impressive echo in the hearts of the audience under his spell. When he had finished, his face was unusually pale, and his entire body trembled with inward excitement. I am convinced that the strong impression of his words on that occasion remained unforgettably by all those who heard him.

Kropotkin also took a lively interest in the great economic struggles of the Jewish working-men. In 1911 the great tailors' strike began at the East End, first as a mere strike of solidarity to help the West End tailors, and gradually growing to be a gigantic struggle against the hellish sweating system which was actually crushed by it. I visited Kropotkin soon after the end of this strike; he had followed its phases with the greatest attention. I acquainted him with all the details in which I had an active part from beginning to end. I related to him the situation at the beginning of the strike. The various organizations then had almost no funds at hand, but it was necessary to keep faith with the fighting English and German comrades of the West End, and wavering was out of place. It was a famine strike in the worst sense of the word, for even the splendid solidarity of the other Jewish trades could not guarantee even a bare pittance to the strikers and their families. From twelve to fourteen thousand workers were out on strike, and hardly three or four shillings a week could be given as strike pay. Feverish activity set in on the East End to alleviate the misery in some degree. Community kitchens were created in most of the workers' clubs. The Jewish Bakers' Union baked bread for the strikers; all the Jewish trades-unions raised special lev-

ies which were gladly paid by the members. All means of action were used in this struggle, and many workers were arrested and sent to prison. The struggle lasted six weeks when that memorable midnight meeting which was to decide on the continuation of the strike was held at the Pavilion Theatre. The Theatre was crowded, and many hundreds who could not be admitted stood waiting in the street. Many strikers had brought their wives with them who nearly all had stood up splendidly during these hard times. I shall never forget this picture,—the monster meeting at midnight with all those pale faces marked by toil and care!

When at last the audience was asked to decide whether the strike should come to an end, and the moderate concessions of the employers remain all that resulted of it, a storm swept the audience, and a powerful "No! No! No!" sounded all over the wide hall. They did not want to have undergone all this sacrifice to no purpose! This broke the spell. The "Masters' Association" split, and the struggle ended in a complete victory for the workers.

All this I told Kropotkin, who listened attentively and took many notes. When I told him further that the same Jewish workers, quite exhausted by this strenuous struggle, had at once undertaken a new act of solidarity by boarding about three hundred children of the striking dockers in their families, to help their English comrades in their hard struggle against Lord Davenport, Kropotkin's eyes became moist, and he pressed my hand in silence.—"This is a good contribution to the chapter of Mutual Aid," I said.—"Certainly certainly," he replied with deep emotion. "As long as such forces operate within the masses there is no reason to despair of the future."

When, on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, a splendid meeting was held at the Pavilion Theatre (East End), addressed by Socialists, and radicals of all shades, Bernard Shaw in his address made the significant remark: "I am persuaded that of all manifestations of these days to express love and sympathy to him, Kropotkin will be touched by none so deeply and moved so joyfully, as by this greeting of the proletarians of the East End."

I know not whether Shaw knew of the intimate relation which always existed between Kropotkin and the Jewish Workers' Movement, but in any case he hit upon the simple truth by his observation.

KROPOTKIN AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

By Dr. Marc Pierrot

Kropotkin's attitude toward the War was in complete accord with his character. As ever, he looked to the future of humanity and embraced the most noble cause.

I may add that his attitude was in harmony with his ideas. Those who have known Kropotkin do not doubt it, but many revolutionists have never come to understand.

It is the absolute of principles and the abuse of reasoning that often border upon fanaticism. Fanatics do not observe; they have never observed. Possessing the primary verities, they draw from them inflexible conclusions without bothering about the complexity of problems. Severity of reasoning gives an appearance of solidity to their doctrines but it is only a doctrine and life mocks at it.

The scientific pretensions of the social-democrats are but founded upon deductive reasoning applied to a narrow materialism, to simple, economic facts. But being unable to include in their mathematical argument either the sentiment or problems of liberty, these pseudo-scientists simply and purely suppress the moral facts.

The true syndicalists also see nothing but the economic aspects of facts, and so as long as they remain on their province of professional interests, they are on a firm foundation. But they render themselves puerile and ridiculous by affirming with the social-democrats that "capitalism" is sufficient to explain all social phenomena. They fall into meanness and impotence by shutting themselves up in their class-egoism.

The Tolstoyans only occupy themselves with the moral without taking into account the material and economic life. They only succeed in getting utterly beyond reality.

A great many Anarchists are only individualists. From this viewpoint they are naturally all defeatists.

There is an abyss between these people and Kropotkin. In his ideal Kropotkin knows how to keep in view an ensemble of the aspirations and needs of all humanity and to reckon with the realities. Far from sharing the absolutism of revolutionists as to system, he has on the contrary, recommended applying to the study of social facts the method of the natural sciences that is to say, *observation*. (See, for ex-

ample, "Modern Science and Anarchism.")

To observe: That would mean to seek the truth without preconceived opinions; to strive to comprehend all the complexity of phenomena without abstractions, and to distrust deductive reasoning. This is the only means of honestly serving the ideal.

Ignorance permits itself to be enclosed within a deductive and absolute system. Kropotkin had the most extensive culture and the knowledge of the true historian.

One may be against war *a priori* and we are all against war. Kropotkin was against war. We have all made anti-militarist propaganda in the hope of achieving disarmament, international understanding, internationalism. The War broke out before we were able to succeed. How many times have human gropings toward the ideal thus been beaten off by catastrophies! But these catastrophies, which are nothing but accidents in the history of humanity, do not prevent mankind from marching toward his aspirations.

We are against war, but war have we suffered. We have accepted the War because we were forced to do so. What could our attitude have been?

Kropotkin thought it was impossible to remain indifferent to the conflict. To tell the truth, how could one remain neutral or indifferent?

However, there is the indifference of the poor, the ignorant, of those who do not take account of the weight of a strong oppression, or of those for whom political liberty is without importance. Thus may be explained the anti-patriotism of the early Christians. Thus can one readily understand why the Mujiks should have deserted *en masse* from the front after the Revolution of 1917.

There is also the indifference of the *Kienthaliens* enclosed in their narrow class-egoism who scorned the questions of moral order. They were afraid of being dupes as other revolutionists of the same ilk were afraid at the time of the Dreyfuss affair. Such a shabbiness of sentiment could bring no result from the social point of view. One must know how to give oneself without reserve and see more than material results.

The idealism of Kropotkin was full of nobility and optimism without rancor and

without distrust. Only such powerful souls can conquer the future!

Even if we *are* opponents of the bourgeois republic, it does not follow that we prefer an autocratic regime. If the material fate of the proletariat were unchanged, it is none the less true that we should all undergo a moral deterioration.

If State-oppression is real in all independent nations, it becomes intolerable in a subject nation.

Kropotkin reckons with this double point of view in his manifesto known as "The Manifesto of the Sixteen."

Besides, here are extracts of letters he has written during the War:

"Can one demonstrate that it is not a matter of indifference to a French worker to be under German officers in a French Republic; that the Revolutions of 1789, 1830, 1848, 1870, have created a Nation and ideas that are not in accord with the German lash; that it is not a matter of indifference whether France be a Monarchy or a Republic—that there is in human civilization something to which one should cling; in effect the most horrible thing in Germany is that thousands of workers are partisans of the subjection of countries backward from the industrial point of view?" (December 21, 1915.)

"Among the signers of Zimmerwald there are those who do not like to hear the War mentioned, who speak of "stirring up a revolution behind the troops" and who, evidently, like those of the *Libertaire*, are forced to undertake nothing. I know the Russians who have been at Zimmerwald; I knew those who have declared themselves against resistance to invaders; I knew those who desired to "keep themselves for the revolution," certainly the latter are ready to accept "peace at any price," even at the price of a new war five or ten years hence, and a new dismemberment of France. . . .

"The words 'against all wars of aggression' completely explain the groundwork of our ideas.

"These words only exclude those who pretend that a Frenchman or a Belgian is indifferent as to whether he is under a German, Swiss or French Government. But these latter forget that today, as throughout all history, every political subjection had for its aim, economic exploitation. Ireland, and India, under the English; Finland and Poland under Rus-

sia; the Balkan Slavs and Roumanians under Turkey; the Slavs under Hungary, etc., are the proofs of it." (November 23, 1916.)

"The first, true International, did not declare itself cosmopolitan. It proclaimed the right of every nationality to develop freely as was intended; her privilege of revolting against those who refused her this right; and the duty of all workers to unite and revolt against any attempt at oppression of one nation by another. So that Bakounine in 1871 said to the German workers that it was their right and duty to revolt against the Government which intended to make a conquest of France. But, as Bakounine and his friends well knew that the German people would not heed them, they appealed to the Revolutionists of all Nations to defend France against the invaders." (February 23, 1916.)

"And what is still worse, is the teaching sown broadcast under the name of Marxism—which declares that one must contribute to the fullest development of great and concentrated capitalism for socialism will only be achieved when capitalism will have accomplished its evolution. With this teaching, one quickly comes to justify all the conquests of a capitalistic and militaristic State.

"By permitting oneself to be killed in order to conquer Colonies for the German Empire, one believes that one contributes to the advent of the concentration of capitalism and the reinforcement of the State; one believes one helps forward the cause of socialism. Colonies are necessary to the German capitalists; it is a fine means of enriching themselves." (Feb. 23, 1916.)

These declarations of Kropotkin were not statements of circumstance. I have heard him in 1913, in the office of the *Temps Nouveaux*, rise vehemently against capitalism, vis-à-vis with a German aggression that already seemed possible. He knew the iron grip of Teutonic reaction and realized the arrogance of the troublesome Prussians could not be stopped with phrases. He feared the defeat of France, the home of libertarian ideas, and the subjection of Russia menaced with colonization under a bureaucracy harsher than that of the Czar.*

What other attitude could have been taken against the ideas of Kropotkin at the time of

*The capitulation of Brest-Litovsk proves it. The Treaty, accepted by the Bolsheviks, placed Russia under the domination of German capitalism.

the declaration of war by William II? Allow the invasion of Belgium in order to work for general freedom later on?

Strange way of helping revolutionary propaganda, that of first advising the submission to brute force and the resignation to the militaristic and police-infested régime that defeatism would have meant for us.

Or bring about revolution? We were powerless to do so. Kropotkin ironically emphasises that impotence in the fragment of the following letter:

“What have we done of practical import during the two years of the War? What have we said that should be well for us? That it is not necessary to desert to the enemy’s camp; that it was necessary to prevent the War by a revolution although as Malatesta avowed we had not the force for that.” (July 24, 1916.)

Resistance to the German invasion did not imply, for Kropotkin, any change in his ideal. He protested against the subjection of all peoples, against colonial conquests as well as European wars. He foresaw, moreover, the

PETER KROPOTKIN—EVOLUTIONIST AND HUMANIST

By Georg Brandes,
Famous Danish Writer and Critic

He is the man of whose friendship I am proud. I know no man whose disinterestedness is so great, no one who possesses such a store of varied knowledge, and no one whose love of mankind is up to the standard of his.

He has the genius of the heart, and where his originality is greatest as in “Mutual Aid,” it is his heart which has guided his intellect.

The passion for liberty which is quenched in other men when they have attained the liberty they wanted for themselves, is inextinguishable in his breast.

His confidence in men gives evidence of the nobility of his soul, even if he had perhaps given the work of his life a firmer foundation, having received a deeper impression of the slowness of evolution.

But it is impossible not to admire him when we see him preserving his enthusiasm in spite of bitter experience and numerous deceptions.

A character like his is an inspiration and an example.

In 1906, the Danes of London desired my arrival in England in order to deliver an address at the annual fete in celebrating our Constitution; and they begged me to let them know of some friends whose presence would

Nationalist ambitions of the Allies and their particularity.

“No one,” he wrote in a letter dated February 17, 1915, “has the least notion of our European National progress.”

He was not the dupe of governmental promises. But their very statements—these solemn declarations—already show cognizance of the rights of the people and the aspirations of liberty. They may be denied again but the pledge remains; the moral effect is produced and nothing can alter it. Look at Ireland and Egypt. Others will follow.

The liberal promises made to their people in 1813 by the allied autocrats against the imperialism of Napoleon were not kept. They were, however, the point of departure for the democratic emancipation and the stirrings of revolt that were propagated in all Europe principally between 1820 and 1850.

One must be optimistic! Pessimism and distrust lead nowhere. Kropotkin is far above parties and classes, their politics and vile maneuvers by his vision of the future, his optimism, and his generosity!

be agreeable to me on that occasion. I named but one friend.

Since Kropotkin understood everything, even a little of the Scandinavian language, I caused him to be invited to the Banquet. He sent a polite refusal to the Committee under some pretext or other. When I asked the real reason of him, he responded: “I cannot come. Doubtlessly they will toast the King of England. In conformity with my convictions I could not rise and this would scandalize the assembly. A month ago I was invited to a Banquet of the Geographical Society of London. The chairman proposed, ‘The King!’ Everybody arose and I alone remained seated. It was a painful moment. And I was thunderstruck when immediately afterward the same chairman cried, ‘Long live Prince Kropotkin!’ And everybody, without exception, arose.”

The members of the Geographical Society were men of mind and soul. They have set the example. In good society, no matter where, one only needs to say “Peter Kropotkin,” and, regardless of political or social convictions, everybody will arise, moved.

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Copenhagen, February, 1921.

MY FIRST MEETING WITH KROPOTKIN

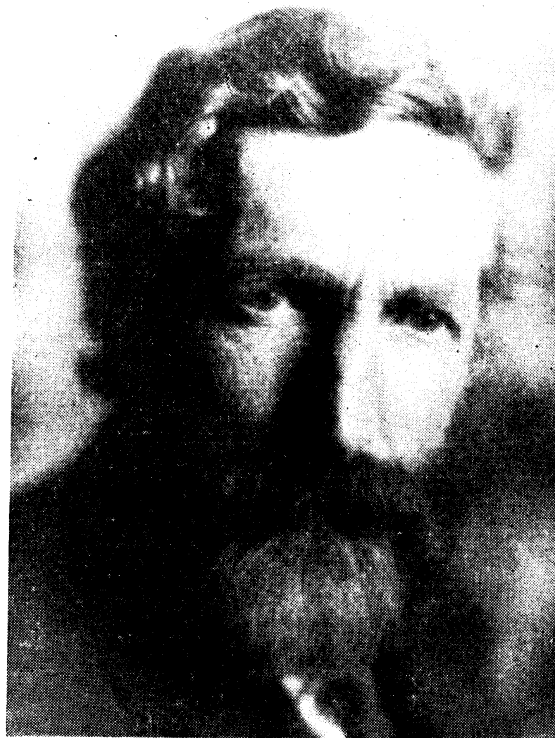
By Tom Bell, *Author:*
—Edward Carpenter,
The English Toistoi
—Oscar Wilde Without
Whitewash

If, after you read this article, you declare that there is nothing to it, that it is made up of chatter and frivolity, an old man's garrulity about times long past, don't blame me! Jump on your Editor — who wanted it; and upon his minion, H. Yaffe, whose mission it was to hold my nose down till I dictated an article or what he thought to be an article.

Yes, I suppose I can speak of having known Kropotkin longer than anybody else in this Country. I should say rather, properly speaking, that I made his acquaintance, a long time ago; though I was then too young, and too new to the Movement to have any real understanding of his talk.

I was then a member of the Scottish Land and Labour League, in Edinburgh, Scotland. It must have been in the very early Eighties I guess in 1883. The Scottish Land and Labour League was the first body in Scotland to take up the "New" Socialism, that is to say, it was the first to study Marx. *Das Kapital* had not yet been translated into English; we studied it from the French translation. We had affiliated ourselves with the Socialist League in London. The old Democratic Federation had been split into two two bodies,—one the Social Democratic Federation (Marxist Reformists) headed by H. M. Hyndman, and the other the Socialist League (Non-Parliamentarian) headed by William Morris. Not Anti-Parliamentarian, notice; not distinctly Anarchist, but skeptical of the Parliamentarian method.

Edinburgh was a University town and a City with a high reputation for scholarship and culture. We had some very distinguished members: Leon Melliet, who had been Maire of an Arrondissement in Paris during the Commune and had escaped "by the skin of his teeth" from the butcheries of the suppression. The Communards you know, who escaped, carried revolutionary doctrines all the world over, and Melliet was an exceptionally brilliant man. We had Andreas Scheu, formerly of Vienna, who, with his brother, had helped materially to establish Marxism in En-



THOMAS H. BELL

gland; Patrick Geddes, considered in his later life one of the four of five "brainiest" men in Great Britain; Sidney Mavor who had a distinguished career in Canadian Universities and is well known through the "History of Russia," which he wrote. We had Tuke; Gilray; J. H. Smith (you will find his books on Socialist Economics in the Public Libraries); we had Howie, as clever a man as Bernard Shaw, but tied down to his job; John Ferguson, the Mason, a man of the strongest intelligence; and we had old John Smith, another Mason, who later was my partner in the Anarchist Propaganda of our City.

I was the Librarian for the Branch. It sounds quite a dignified position, I know; but then so did that title I always received in every Colony I joined, of Sanitary Officer, in which I officiated with a shovel and a suit of clothes which was to be changed before I sat down with the other people. I was Librarian, and

it is true that there was a Library; but my real job was to receive and distribute the weekly paper coming from London, *The Commonweal*, edited by William Morris, and containing some of his finest writing.

Well, I called one day at the building in which we had our rooms and the janitor told me that a man had been enquiring for us, a stranger, a foreigner evidently. He had left his name and address,—Kropotkin; a Pole or Hungarian or Russian I supposed. The name conveyed nothing to me, but I called at the address, a "Temperance" Hotel in High Street, (High Street had once been aristocratic but was now just a working-man's rooming-house) and I saw this man Kropotkin. The name meant nothing to me—I had not heard it before, and I cannot remember that I grasped any of his ideas but I could see that he was a personality all right—so I went around to some of our most active members and a little party was got up to meet him. Some of them were better informed of our Peter Kropotkin than I was. The party was held at the house of Rev. John Glasse, yes, that's quite right, the Rev. John Glasse! He was the Minister at the old Greyfriars Kirk, one of the old historic Churches of the City. He had been converted by his own reading of Socialism, rather suddenly; and rather suddenly had changed over his sermons from sin and salvation to attacks upon exploitation and a call for brotherhood. That did not suit his highly respectable audience at all! They got together to throw him out—now if he had belonged to the Free Church or the United Presbyterian Church or the Baptists or the Methodists he would have been thrown right out upon his head; but, on the contrary, he belonged to the Established Kirk of Scotland. (The King you know is an Episcopalian when he is in England, but when he crosses the Tweed he becomes a Presbyterian, a member of the Church of Scotland). Please note: the Church is not the State, no, but it is connected sufficiently with the State, to give its Ministers a certain position. John explained to me long years afterwards, laughing at the affair himself, that his congregation soon found that a Minister of the Established Church could be ejected from his pulpit on one ground only—heresy. Now John was not at all a heretic; he had been a rather naive and simple man who had not thought of heresy so that in the long run it was not John who left the Church, but his congregation,

and that did not matter—his pay come to him anyhow; and his eloquence soon filled the Church to the brim with another congregation much more intelligent. John knew all about Kropotkin evidently. I was present at the party and I remember that there was a good deal of discussion after Kropotkin spoke but I was young and innocent and I couldn't make out what it was all about. Kropotkin went back to London after a week or two, and there you have all my story about our first meeting, save for one episode, which I forgot altogether but which Kropotkin remembered, and brought up to me at our next meeting as you will see when I write about that in my next article.

If you have read his "Memoirs," you will remember that on escaping from Russia he went direct to Granton, one of the two ports of Edinburgh, and that he lived in Edinburgh then for some time. But it could not have been on that occasion when I saw him; much later. Probably he explained then what he was doing, but if he did I have forgotten. I put two and two together however: Stepnick appeared two or three years later (I found the Hall for him in which he made his first address to an English audience. And much later came Tcherkesoff. Now I remember what Tcherkesoff came for. Edinburgh is a garrison town with a regiment of infantry in the Castle and a regiment of cavalry in one of the outskirts; and among the officers there were always some studying Russian. These were paid a handsome premium when they succeeded. That is what brought Tcherkesoff. I have forgotten whether he was tutoring or examining. Probably all three of them came for that purpose. Former Officers of the Czar's Army would do them no harm if they were known as Prince Kropotkin and Prince Tcherkesoff.

That episode I will tell you about in my next article.

II.

In my last article I told you about meeting Kropotkin some time in the early Eighties. I met him for the second time in 1890, about seven years later. But these seven years were the years of a young man, and a good deal of water had been flowing under the bridge. When I first met him, as I told you, I understood but little of the discussion that took place; so little, that none of it left any permanent impression on me. I was already an ardent Marxist Propagandist; I became a very

keen student of Marx. Unfortunately I had pushed my studies a little too far. To enable me to reply better to the enemy I had been reading up all that I could find in the way of objections to Marxism. Most of these objections were the objections of the bourgeois,—weak, if not insincere or absurd. But I was startled once or twice. Once when I came across a book of Proudhon's and once, again, when I came across the Gevonian Theory of Value. These set me off thinking more seriously, and after a bitter struggle with myself, I had been obliged to recognize that Marxism would not do. In the course of time, I became an Anarchist—the first one in my native Scotland. I was now going back there, after having spent a year in Paris, after being expelled from France in fact, and I was passing through London, when I called on my warm friend and fellow-Anarchist, James Blackwell.

Blackwell, too, had been a Marxist from the start of the Social Democratic Federation. He had been the compositor and the real editor of *Justice the Organ of Social Democracy*, and for years, had worked for it both day and night on a starving pittance; but he too, in the long run, had recognized the fallacies of the doctrine; he had developed in an Anarchist direction, until he had to speak out, when, of course, he was instantly dismissed. Later he had become the Editor of *Freedom*, a little Anarchist Monthly.

I have often quoted him in connection with Marxism and Anarchism. He explained to me: "When you meet a man who has not been a Marxist and who calls himself an Anarchist, well, he may be, he may be. But if you meet a man who has been a Marxist and now calls himself an Anarchist, then you know positively that he is one all right!"

When I wrote him from Paris, when I was there, about the new movement projected (Syndicalism) it had brought him over too; he got a job and both of us had been closely connected with the new development. Now here he was, back in London before me. When I visited him, he proposed that the next evening we should go out to see Kropotkin. I told him that I should be delighted indeed.

But next evening when I called for Blackwell, I found that his cousin, with whom he was very much in love, had come up from Cornwall. Naturally he begged off. "Why shouldn't you go by yourself? It would be all right," he assured me. I should have been

too shy to go entirely on my own hook, but I was loathe to give up what I had been looking forward to so eagerly. So finally off I went to Bromley.

It was Winter, and by the time I got out, quite dark. When I knocked, the door was opened by Sophie herself (Madame Kropotkin). She looked at me very piercingly, and asked who I was, and what did I want? I suppose I hesitated and stumbled a bit. Anyhow for a while she was evidently suspicious and very doubtful about admitting me, and questioned me a good deal. I am quite sure that Sophie's woman's intuition told her from the beginning that I was an undesirable person for her husband to have as a visitor. She was quite right, as you will see! But what she had in her mind that night, of course, was something different. She had two dangers in mind in guarding the door as she did. First of all she feared assassination, yes, assassination! She knew that Kropotkin's life had been in danger while he was in Switzerland. Trotzky was not at all the first to be slain by order from Russia, and in a later article I will tell you of one of my own friends assassinated in America, I feel very sure by an agent of the Russian Government. When Stephaniak, too, was found dead on the railroad tracks near his home, there was a good deal of doubt as to it being an accident, and an investigation was actually made in regard to the matter. Sophie was quite right in being cautious! The other danger was not so serious, but still annoying: it was the danger always present in England from the "Tuft-Hunter." What the devil in a "Tuft-Hunter"? A "Tuft-Hunter" in England was the man seeking to make the acquaintance of some titled person or celebrity so that he could boast of his high-grade acquaintances. The acquaintance of a Prince was much sought after.

But finally Sophie, against her better judgment, as I say, agreed to take my name to her husband, who was working upstairs. When she took it up, Peter recognized it. I had been pretty active for a while. He came downstairs at once. People talk sometimes about the manners of an aristocrat being delightful, and that may be true, but of course it was merely the comradely spirit of the man that made his welcome always seem so genuine and put one so much at one's ease. He shook hands with me warmly and told me that he knew my name. He spoke of an ex-

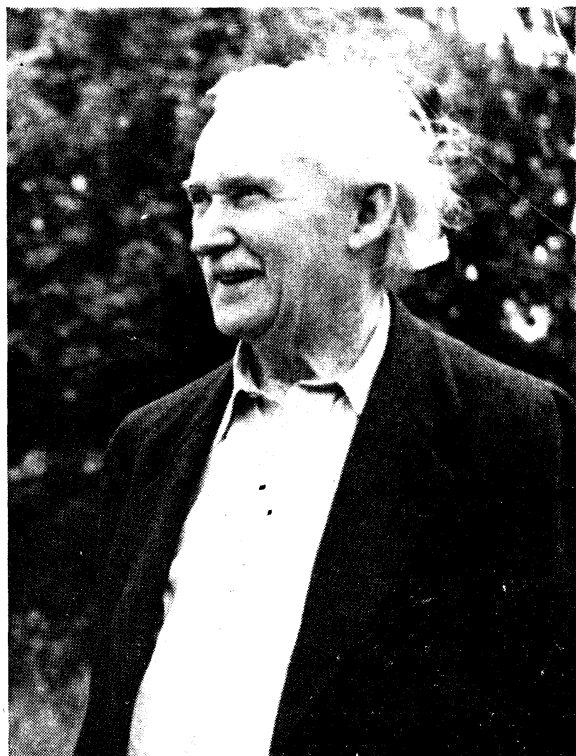
plot I had been in not long before that, and complimented me on it in terms which I am still too modest to repeat. But all of a sudden he broke out "Why I know you, I know you all right, you are the lad that wanted to give me the overcoat!" The overcoat! I did not remember at first about my overcoat, but Kropotkin had not forgotten. It came back to me. That time he was in Edinburgh and we got him to spend an evening with us Comrades, we noted that he had no overcoat. Well, the climate of Edinburgh is not arctic; a man will not freeze to death without an overcoat. Nevertheless, the boys had got together and each put up something towards an overcoat for him. Just why after that they should have selected me for the delicate mission of inducing him to accept it is not clear to me; but I suppose it was because it was I who had first got acquainted with him and they imagined that I knew him better. In those days hand-me-down, the ready made, was not so common. Garments were made more to measure at the time. Gilray gave me an order on his tailor for a good overcoat. Of course Kropotkin had merely laughed the idea away, when I brought it up. No, he could not accept the overcoat; he was doing all right and did not need assistance in that way. I had forgot-

ten the whole affair. But the old man had remembered. We could not induce him then to give up his hotel room and stay with one of us, but I am glad to say that later he became better acquainted with our Scottish hospitality. On a later visit he stayed for a week with Harry Campbell, one of our working-men Comrades, and evidently had quite a happy time with Harry and Harry's fine wife, and even with the two little devils, Harry's boys, now grown up in New Zealand, into fine brave men like their father. I had a long and animated discussion with Peter that night; I shall tell you about it in my next.

I went abroad again soon and saw but little of Kropotkin for some years. But sometime in the later Nineties, I was settled in London for a while and I went to live at Hither Green which is not far from Bromley. My wife, Lizzie Turner, a sister of John Turner, knew the Kropotkins well and was very fond of them as they were of her, so we had the habit of going over to the old man's on Sunday afternoon, along with Harry Kelly and his Mary. There we met many of the most interesting people and heard Peter's discussions with them — with Malatista, Tchaikovsky, Torrida del Maronol, for instance. I shall try to tell you about it.

REMINISCENCES AND REFLECTIONS ON PETER KROPOTKIN

By Harry Kelly, *Organizer:*
Ferrer Modern Schools



HARRY KELLY

My first meeting with Kropotkin was in the summer of 1895. It was my first visit to the British Isles and after spending three months there I prepared to return home but before leaving there was something on my mind. Eugene Debs had run afoul of the powers that be at Chicago and was then sitting in Cook County Jail for violating an injunction issued against the Union of Railway Workers of which he was the head.

It occurred to me if a set of Kropotkin's pamphlets could be bound and then have the author autograph the volume to send to Debs it might make the latter a convert to our cause. I learned later that some thousands of other people had similar ideas regarding their causes but it did not occur to me then. I spoke of the idea to John Turner who thought well of it and he offered to give me a letter of introduction to Kropotkin with instructions how to reach Bromley, where he lived.

Bromley was not far from London and in due time I arrived at the little house. Sophie Kropotkin opened the door and for some reason mistook me for a reporter and as she did

not like reporters and they also had a visitor, was unwilling to admit me. Our conversation must have been loud enough for Peter to hear us and in no time I was in the house and being treated like an old friend. Incidentally, in the years that followed, Sophie and I became dear friends and we exchanged letters as late as seven or eight years ago. My visit was brief, with Kropotkin whole-heartedly endorsing my plan and writing a warm and appreciative message to Debs on the fly-leaf of the little volume which in the course of time was sent to the latter, and we talked it over a year or so later when we met in Boston.

The next time we met was here in New York in 1897. He had attended a conference of scientists in Canada and at its conclusion made a trip across Canada and on his return came to New York where he was a guest of John H. and Rachelle Edleman during his stay. He gave two lectures while here, the first at Chickering Hall, then at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirteenth Street, and the other at Cooper Union. Ernest H. Crosby, poet, and exponent of the theories of Tolstoy, presided at Chickering Hall and John Swinton, then a man of eighty but famous in his day as an anti-slavery advocate, associate of Horace Greeley, and later editor of the *New York Tribune*, was chairman of the Cooper Union meeting.

I am unable to reconcile myself to the title "old fossil" but am positively shameless in declaring that I have grave doubts that at this time it would be possible to find two such men as John Swinton and Ernest H. Crosby to serve as chairmen for lectures in Anarchism in New York. Both meetings were packed and both were magnificent demonstrations of love and appreciation for a great man and great revolutionist. It looked to me, a very young man, as if the social revolution was "around the corner," alas! For the record, let it be said that during Kropotkin's stay in New York he met scores and scores of comrades and he won the hearts of all.

In January, 1898, I paid my second visit to Britain and this time for a long stay,—nearly seven years, two of which I lived in a suburb about four miles from Bromley.

During these years spent in England I saw and visited the Kropotkins many times and considering the difference in age, background and experience we were friendly and even intimate to a considerable degree. The simplicity of his home life was warm and friendly and one always felt at home with him and Sophie; and the many friends and comrades one met there constituted a great treat. The comrades knew he did most of his work at home, so Sunday was "at home day" for visitors. Men and women of all nations met there and it was not unusual to hear the host talking with those present in three or four languages almost simultaneously. Among those I met there were Fanny Stepniak, Elie Reclus and wife, V. and Freda Tcherkesov, Tchaikovsky, Malatesta, Marmol, Nettlau, Bernard Kampfmyer, Jean Grave, Turner, Marsh, then Editor of *Freedom*, (Miss) A. A. Davies, Rocker, Cobden-Saunderson, famous art bookbinder and friend of William Morris and his wife, daughter of Cobden of Corn Law fame, and many, many others. There were many points of view, of course, and many different angles of conditions prevailing in the different Countries presented as only natives can present them, but a common purpose animated those men and women of different cultures and languages—freedom of the individual and the right of all to live their lives according to their understanding and intelligence. However, in spite of his broad tolerance toward other political views and his strong belief that a period of liberalism must intervene between the then present and the future as he saw it, he had very decided views on how far certain types of mind can work together.

On one of my visits he told me Tchaikovsky had just left and the purpose of his visit. The latter had long dreamed of establishing a "Peoples House" in the East End where Russian Revolutionists in exile could get together, and which could serve as a rendezvous for others who had managed to escape the clutches of the Czar. After much work he had managed to get a number of individuals and groups to cooperate and the House finally became a reality. Part of this enterprise was a library owned by a Russian named Toploff. Sad to relate the Socialists of that day were much like our present day "Communists" and before long began to lay plans to capture the organization and its property. Six or eight individuals formed six

or eight groups, each sending a delegate to the meetings to outvote the others and take over. Tchaikovsky came to Bromley for advice and it was this visit that ended a half-hour or so before my arrival. Kropotkin was still worked up over it and said to me, "I have known Tchaikovsky for over thirty years and all this time he has been trying to bring Anarchists and Socialists together and it cannot be done; their minds are different and it is impossible for them to work together." At another time when Tcherkesov was there they were both elated over "the first Anarchist Opera that had been written" and joking over the fact that the Socialists had not yet managed to have one written. The "Anarchist Opera," as they described it, was "*Louise*," written by Carpentier.

It was during the years I spent in England that Kropotkin made his second visit to America and while he felt himself a European he had a great admiration for the United States of America and its lack of hidebound tradition; he found pleasure in such small things as the absence of fences between small houses in suburban areas. "It looked more friendly," as he put it. Readers of his "Memoirs" will remember his description of the Russian revolutionists, imprisoned in St. Peter and St. Paul, putting small American flags outside their cell windows on the Fourth of July. Also, during these years he wrote his "Memoirs" and "Mutual Aid," or rather had them published, for he spent many years preparing them, and while it is hard to estimate the influence these books have had, both of them have, for many years, been used in college courses and are part of libraries all over the land.

These notes, inadequate as they are, would be even more so without a few words on Kropotkin's attitude toward World War I, and his probable attitude on the present struggle: He had expressed the opinion years before, and on many occasions, that the shadow of Germany lay heavy on France from 1870 preventing her from solving some of the more urgent evils in her own way. He wrote how the workers of France had shed their blood more often than the workers of other Continental Countries and believed the defeat of France by Germany would be a calamity, a viewpoint held by many others not Anarchists. Whatever the opinions of others, for myself I feel that events of recent years have proven overwhelmingly the soundness of his conclu-

sions and truth of his attitude in World War I.

In his "Mutual Aid," Kropotkin took issue with Huxley's interpretation of Darwinism and while not denying the tooth and claw factor, asserted there was also the factor of mutual aid. He gave many proofs of this element in the human, as well as other species; and in these days when the barbaric and savage instincts have reached a new high in the human animal, the element of mutual aid manifests itself in thousands of ways and among millions in helping to save men, women and children from death and torture. It looks like a duel between two forces struggling for the mastery of man.

We have no means of knowing how many

Germans agree with or even understand Hitlerism, but if "by their fruits ye shall know men," it means force, naked and unashamed, and the triumph of the tooth-and-claw theory.

Not all of the horrors are on one side by any means, but even among those who abominate Hitlerism the feeling is growing that to defeat barbarism one must use barbaric methods and therefore practice the tooth-and-claw theory for the time, hoping always to renounce it when the danger is past. That this has its dangers is obvious, but as long as we remember that the acts of kindness, humanity and mutual helpfulness continue and grow in influence it will one day lift humanity to heights heretofore only dreamed of by great souls like Peter Kropotkin.

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH PETER ALEXEIVICH KROPOTKIN

By V. Tchertkoff

I made Kropotkin's personal acquaintance in England in 1897, after my expulsion from Russia by the Czarist Government.

He received me with that cordial welcome, with that fineness, so well known by those who came in contact with him. And soon I felt his sincere benevolence which made us realize that we could count on him in case of need. My intimacy with Leo Tolstoy, for whom I entertained a profound respect and sincere sympathy, naturally played a great role in his relations with me. Tolstoy, on his part, also respected Kropotkin highly.

In the Spring of 1897, having delivered a letter from Kropotkin to Tolstoy, I received one from Tolstoy in which he wrote me: "Kropotkin's letter has pleased me very much. His arguments in favor of violence do not seem to me to be the expression of his opinion but only of his fidelity to the banner under which he has served so honestly all his life. He cannot fail to see that the protest against violence, in order to be strong, must have a solid foundation. But a protest for violence has no foundation and for this very reason is destined to failure."

When I had read these words to Kropotkin, the latter, evidently touched by the sympathy of Tolstoy, and as if to confirm the lines I had just read, spoke some phrases to me whose gist, if not the very words, has been indelibly impressed upon my brain: "In order to comprehend how much I sympathize with the ideas of Tolstoy, it suffices to say that I have written a whole volume to demonstrate

that life is created, not by the struggle for existence, but by mutual aid."

Leo Nicholeyevitch wrote me in January 1903: "One has time to reflect when one is ill. During this illness I was particularly occupied with recollections and my beautiful memories of Kropotkin were given special preference." Later, in February, Tolstoy wrote me: "Send Kropotkin my kindest greetings. . . . I have recently read his 'Memoirs' and I am delighted with them!"

On the question of non-resistance to evil and violence, we came to have hot disputes, as was necessarily to be expected and he sometimes became greatly excited over my obstinacy, as a consequence of his ardent temperament; but these transitory differences always terminated in a touching reconciliation which showed, indeed, the extreme and fundamental goodness of Kropotkin's character.

I was constantly surprised at the rapidity of his impressions and conceptions, at the extent of his interests, his remarkable erudition in the sphere of economics and international politics.

Kropotkin reminded me of Tolstoy by the astonishing variety of subjects which interested him. And if Kropotkin, in his intercourse with me, was silent upon the "spiritual" questions which Tolstoy looked upon as the foundation of a comprehension of life, one nevertheless felt, incontestably, that at the core of his heart, Peter Alexeivich was not a materialist, but an idealist of the purest water.

KROPOTKIN'S IDEAS

By Dr. Arthur E. Briggs,
Author: The Concept of Personality



DR. ARTHUR E. BRIGGS

Men famous in their time often pass to obscurity after death.

Kropotkin distinguished in his lifetime may be one of those with a better claim for distinction from posterity. I believe we can discover in him more that is worthy for perpetuation than his disciples knew. For followers usually seize upon some ephemeral portion of a leader's work and hold tenaciously to that which had better be forgotten as disparaging to his greater achievements.

Kropotkin like every man carried contradictory elements in his soul. We have to take account of the opposition within him of evolutionist and revolutionist, of the mild mannered and kindly man who nevertheless countenanced or advocated violence, of the natural scientist who left his studies for social propagandism, of the communist who could not endure the Great Society of compulsion, of the socialist who was yet a professed anarchist, of one who despised Marx and all his breed of social absolutists and yet endured the Russian Marxist Revolution, of the ex-patriate who felt the necessity to die in his native land notwithstanding it was alien to his spiritual

home. This is the Kropotkin a disciple who counts all of equal merit is loth to recognize, but who can be understood only in the light of his apparent contradictions which yet so mingled in him as to create that loveable and striking character to which all who knew him paid tribute.

I cannot here give attention to all of the great variety in the man. I am concerned mainly with his ideas, rather than to analyze his character. As Kropotkin was more a thinking man and somewhat less a man of action, we will take note in three points of some of his outstanding ideas, such as his social evolutionism, his ethical conception of a better humanity, and his program for social reconstruction.

The sanity of the man is notably shown in his reaction against the current evolutionism of his time. He was indeed one of those rising young men of science to whom Darwin looked forward for justification of his theory of evolution against the old detractors of his own generation. It is admirable when one finds a convert to a doctrine also a searching critic of it. That was what Kropotkin demanded as an ethical obligation of every adherent to any cause. And true to his own principles and not as a blind follower of evolutionism, to the conception of evolution as resultant of the struggle for existence he opposed his own view of mutual aid as also a factor of evolution. He knew furthermore that "the evolution of mankind has not had the character of one unbroken series." Nevertheless he shared the general misconception of his time that communism was the prevalent economic order of the primitive world. And he believed that private property in land was not found in primitive society. The truth is, that as in our capitalist society, so too among savages and barbarians there were both private and common property in land as in everything else.

Kropotkin rightly struck at another erroneous assumption of evolutionists, namely, that any change must come slowly. When things are out of joint it is imperative that change be made quickly, or else revolution with all its disastrous consequences will force change violently and destructively. For Kropotkin had

no illusions about revolutions. As he said of the Russian Revolution: "It is perpetrating horrors. . . . That is why it is a revolution and not a peaceful progress, because it is destroying without regarding what it destroys and whither it goes. . . . A reaction is absolutely inevitable."

Deploring the frequent inevitability of revolution, he sought the better way in the ethical advancement of mankind through peaceful progress. That the last work of his life was his book on *Ethics* is evidence of the continuous direction of his mind. In the prime of life he wrote *Mutual Aid*, which is his most famous book. But his essay entitled *Anarchist Morality* is the most explicit statement of his ethical principles. In that the most significant idea is his conception of our common human nature as the natural basis of any good morals. Into that was injected his evolutionism, for he insisted that social animals have an ethical nature of the same kind as man and differing only in degree. But, again showing his excellent judgment, his naturalistic ethics did not dispense with intelligence, thinking, and what he called criticism. He had no blind faith in social institutions, customs and traditions. He relied upon criticism courageously made to break "the cake of custom." Indeed, "in some instances it is a custom, a venerated tradition, that is fundamentally immoral."

Nor did he feel any bondage to abstract principles of morals, such as Kant's Categorical Imperative. He refused "once and for all to model individuals according to an abstract idea." Free men, not servile to any authority, was his ideal. Duty he conceived not as restraint, but as super-abundant life and energy in a man with power to act and willingness to give without asking anything in recompense. Therefore, mutual aid is the law of growth and progress. He thought he found in anarchist morality and communism and equality of men a synthesis which at once embraced solidarity and free individuality. He believed that the more we have of solidarity and equality, the greater is free individual initiative. And he identified this principle of solidarity with the Golden Rule. His ethics might seem to be hedonistic utilitarianism—the attainment of human pleasure or happiness is the test of good conduct. But the test of the good was for him social rather than merely individual. The higher principle

for his ethics was therefore sympathy or mutual aid.

Out of this social ethics Kropotkin attempted to formulate a scientific program of economic and political reform. As to politics it was the common profession of all schools of Socialism in his time to abhor the State. Yet all of them proposed some form of organization of society. Even Marxists, whom Kropotkin called state-socialists, dislike the name. Nevertheless, the anarchists also find it necessary to resort to some compulsory type of institution. Thus the individualist, Tucker, would have associations to resist invasion by force, that is, to compel respect for the voluntary institutions of anarchism. Kropotkin proposes syndicates or communes, and federations of these, to carry on what we call government. In what respect then are his ideas in conflict, say, with Jeffersonian democracy? In this that he is offended by the institution of representative government, legislatures, courts, written laws, and constitutions. His "new form of political organization" would "be more popular, more decentralized, and nearer to the folk-mote self-government than representative government can ever be." It is what Mallock called "pure democracy."

In another respect there is apparent agreement between Kropotkin's communism and that of nearly all socialists. That is, nearly all of them would abolish private property. State socialists such as Marxians, instead of private property, would have socialized property, which means that all property is owned corporately or by the state. Strictly according with the Marxian definition modern corporate property is socialized property, for it is not the private property of the stockholders. Benjamin Tucker, it will be recalled, defended the American trust system against government regulation. And we find Kropotkin citing these great private autonomous corporations as proof of the feasibility of his communes. Kropotkin calls such property the common property of the community. However, the tendency of recent socialism is to distinguish private property as that which can be truly owned privately because its use is chiefly individual, and that which is held more or less publicly or in common by the indefinite individuals constituting the state or community.

The vagueness of these ideas about property is also the vice of non-socialists. It is decidedly the merit of Kropotkin that he pointed out

so clearly how much communistic institutions and property prevail amid the present capitalistic order of society as well as in every other society that has ever been known. If only he had asserted how universal and necessary is private use of property in every society, he would have provided a highly useful and scientific definition of property. To some extent Proudhon before him had done that.

None of these socialists, whether Marxian or anarchist, have sufficient appreciation of the fact that the real evil is not property but its maldistribution, and especially monopoly control of property such as "the money power" and large land holdings. Undiscriminatingly they hate the petty bourgeois as much as the bloated capitalist and great landlord.

However Kropotkin, evidently again to prove the workability of communes, tried to show the advantages in agricultural production of intensive cultivation as compared with the uneconomic extensive cultivation of the "bonanza" farms and cattle ranches. These valuable studies are contained in his books entitled "*Fields, Factories and Workshops*" and "*The Conquest of Bread*." One feels, however, in reading them that Kropotkin got lost in the fog of his own doctrine of solidarity. Inasmuch as these intensively cultivated fields would in his assumed best organization of them involve the cooperation of quite a number of workers in one enterprise, we think he failed to realize how lamentably incompetent are communistic undertakings. Where a number of persons work together it is indispensable that the manager's authority and direction be not subject to dispute. That means necessarily limitation upon individual initiative and restraint of individual freedom of the subordinate workers. That is why anarchistic communism is not practicable in large scale production.

On the other hand, Kropotkin's analysis of agricultural improvement has great value as a criticism of traditional economics. His shift of emphasis from production to consumption, from labor done to need for produce or goods, is definitely in the direction of humanizing economics. Combining his several definitions of economics, political economy is conceived by him as in process of becoming "a science devoted to the study of the needs of men and of the means of satisfying them," or as "the study of the most favorable condition for giving society the greatest amount of useful products," "with the smallest possible waste of

labor" or "with the least waste of human energy" "and with the greatest benefit to mankind in general." He regards the self-sustaining community as more economical than our present exchange economy based on roundabout production. His argument for mutual aid goes no further than saying that this is one of the two factors of progress or evolution, the other factor being the competitive struggle for existence. Highly as he regarded Adam Smith, he deemed division of labor as a "horrible principle," "noxious to society," "brutalizing to the individual," and "source of so much harm." It "means labelling and stamping men for life." It destroys "the love of work and the capacity of invention."

He maintained long before the first World War that decentralization of industries is rapidly taking place. The industrialized nations are losing their monopoly of manufactures. The backward agricultural countries are supplementing their economies with industrial development. Intensive agriculture and other improvements are taking place. Side by "side of the great centralized concerns" is "the growth of an infinite variety of small enterprises." Electrical power has stimulated this development. Since his time the automobile and now airways and aircraft development further this trend. Decentralization is therefore the tendency of the economic order.

Likewise he foresaw political decentralization. Representative democracy had its value against autocracy, but it is not the ideal. The best social life lies in the direction of decentralization, both territorial, professional and functional. Are we not now forecasting with him that imperialism is at an end?

But can we agree with his communism? Is it true that all we have is the product of "the common efforts of all," and therefore "must be at the disposal of all." He has to admit that every commune must retain the power to oust the idler and shirker. Does he realize that communism strikes with lethargy the ablest and most willing workers? He thinks "the growing tendency of modern society is towards communism — free communism — notwithstanding the seemingly contradictory growth of individualism," which latter he accounts for as "merely the endeavors of the individual towards emancipating himself from the steadily growing powers of capital and the state." "Economic freedom is the only secure basis for political freedom."

What he rightly protests is the spirit in our

society to encourage the individual to a selfish demand of more reward for his services rendered than their actual value. The ethical and social ideal, on the contrary, is the glad and abundant giving which characterizes the free and generous man.

His antagonism to law is also a moral reaction. Compulsory good is not good. He sees law as a perversion. It is security only for the exploiters, the privileged few. The threat of the law and punishment are demoralizing. However useful it may have been in the democratizing process, law too is passing. "Free agreement is becoming a substitute for law." "The feeling of honor in keeping agreements" alone makes trade possible and is the only necessary sanction. The numerous charitable societies show the trend to be "not in increasing powers of the state, but in resorting to free organization and free federation in all those branches which are now considered as attributes of the state."

In his essay, "*Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal*," there is a better balancing up between the philosophy of solidarism and the philosophy of individualism. There he maintained that political economy is no longer "the study of the wealth of individuals." The ideal is to seek "the most complete development of individuality combined with the highest development of voluntary association in all its aspects, in all possible degrees, for all imaginable aims." That is accomplished "not by subjecting all its members to an authority that is fictitiously supposed to represent society, not by trying to establish uniformity, but by urging all men to develop free initiative, free action, free association." It is "the ideal of a society where each governs himself according to his own will." For "we need not fear the dangers and abuses of liberty." This doctrine

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAN

Kropotkin did a great deal for me. Back in the old days, when, following Huxley, I was leaning toward an extreme form of Darwinian ethics, Kropotkin gave me a foundation for a more humane outlook on life. His

is always implicit in his teaching. Only elsewhere he was especially concerned to emphasize the solidarist rather than the individualist or libertarian viewpoint.

What is outstanding in Kropotkin is that despite the turmoil of his early life and hardships to the end, he grew steadily in balance of judgment and human understanding. Although professing to be a materialist, he reacted healthily against the brutal doctrine of a relentless struggle for survival. He was more nearly right and certainly more humane in making insistence upon mutual aid as the better road to progress. He was no pacifist and recognized revolution and violence as often necessary, though ideally undesirable. He took a lesson from Nature's book that the peacefulness of the social animals is the best assurance of survival, and the proof is that they are the most numerous on the face of the earth.

Thus Kropotkin's naturalism is nobly inspiring. It gives primacy to intellect and good-will. It is a corrective of conventional and traditional sociality. It idealizes only that social life which is humane.

Does it matter then that Kropotkin misnamed his philosophy anarchist communism and that he did not understand that a responsible state is not only possible but is substantially what he also believed in? Among the very great must his name be permanently enrolled—the scholar, the true scientist, the kindly man who really loved his fellowmen and gave himself whole-heartedly with that abundant energy which for him was synonymous with duty.

His true disciple will pass over what was ephemeral in him and hold fast to the great truths of enduring humanity which so eloquently and ably he pleaded for.

By Edward Adams Cantrell

biological and anthropological arguments for mutualism, I think, are unassailable. "Mutual Aid" is one of the great books of our time, and Kropotkin himself was one of the great free spirits of all time. I revere his memory.

WHAT KROPOTKIN MEANS TO ME

By Walter E. Holloway, *Author:*
"The Rubiyat of Today"

It is a pleasant thing to do to pay tribute to the memory of a man whose life has had a powerful influence upon our own lives and to whom we owe a debt of gratitude for a clearer understanding of the world and of men and their ways than we could otherwise have had. Hence these few words of mine about Kropotkin.

The real significance of a man is to be found, I am sure, in his life—his activities, his accomplishments, what he did or tried earnestly to do—and the key to the understanding of a man's activities is to be found in his beliefs, his fundamental convictions. To be sure, the pattern of no man's life is consistently simple or all of one piece any more than is the pattern of history, the life-story of the human race, but the main outlines of Kropotkin's thoughts and purposes are remarkably clear in his life and in his writings. We radicals and libertarians are too prone, I fear, to lay emphasis upon our differences of opinion rather than upon our agreements. This springs naturally from our very earnestness of purpose and we would do well to remember that we ourselves may be wrong, and that in any event we all learn by mutual exchange of opinion and that out of conflicting opinions comes enlightened understanding. We may not always have agreed with Kropotkin's ideas but none of us, I am sure, can fail to appreciate the engaging simplicity of his character and the steadfast singleness of purpose of his long and useful life. We do well to remember him with affection and gratitude on this hundredth anniversary of his birth.

What then were the fundamental convictions of Kropotkin? What were the deep motivations of his activities? What made him live as he did, write what he wrote, and strive throughout his whole life to accomplish what, in his early manhood, he conceived would benefit his fellowmen? Surely, here we have an opportunity to discover the real man—the great and good man who left an indelible mark upon the minds and hearts of his own time and whose influence will extend into the limitless future. Kropotkin believed in the people, the common people who had been disinherited and despoiled all through the ages. He loved them. He had confidence in their

potential capacity to learn and in their courage to act upon this knowledge. He really believed they would in time establish a society upon earth in which mankind might live comfortably and happily together. To some of us his confidence may seem too naive, too ingenuous, in the light of the astounding stupidity and subserviousness of mankind, but it is none the less beautiful, and we may still hope that it will yet be justified. Kropotkin was a real democrat. He believed in the intelligence and courage of the common people. We see the same pattern of mentality and sympathy as in Jefferson and Lincoln. It is this identity of mind and heart that makes these great men brothers and will associate them in the minds of men as long as liberty is loved and justice respected.

Understanding this we can see why Kropotkin early in life cast aside the privileges of his princely station to devote himself to the education and emancipation of the common people.

To him the REVOLUTION was not merely a revolt against tyranny, a sudden passionate upheaval that would sweep away the accumulated debris of the past and build a new world but rather a process of social change for the better, forced upon the governing class by the common people whose knowledge of men and things was broadening and deepening through education and whose courage was growing through seeing their own growth and accomplishments. Sporadic revolts would come, of course, as the result of misery among the people, but a true revolution never without understanding among the people. How else could a real revolution come? How else could it win and endure? Would the privileged class ever actually abolish tyranny? Who would abolish it unless the common people did? What would enable the common people to do this except the ability on their part to understand the facts of exploitation? Otherwise they would forever be the gullible victims of their oppressors. Hence education! Kropotkin himself understood more clearly than most men of his time and even of this time the profound difference between a bread-riot on a little or big scale and a real revolution founded upon an enlightened understand-

ing of the actualities of social and economic life. Democracy to him meant that the phrases of freedom must be translated into the concrete things of life—into houses, food, clothes and mental improvement for all the people. Otherwise the rose of democracy would smell as rank as the stink-weed of despotism. No one can read Kropotkin's French Revolution without seeing that he looked far beyond the horizon of the men of that day. With all due credit to them for their good intentions we see now that they failed to accomplish as much as they might had they been wiser. Merely to kill a king is not a revolution. Merely to change names and keep old wrongs is not a revolution.

Our libertarian philosophy is untrue and unsound unless it rests upon the facts of science, upon the laws of life and growth. There is a biological basis for freedom. Nature herself demands that men be free. Otherwise they cannot grow. Kropotkin was a scientist and understood this significant fact. He knew that sound growth comes to men only through doing things themselves and hence he sought to educate the common people along these lines. It may seem a small matter to many, but to me it is not without significance that Kropotkin gave much time and study to agriculture and to teaching the Russian peasants better methods of planting and cultivation. The land is under the people. He had little faith in governments of any kind that rest upon force and coercion but he had great confidence in mutually established cooperative endeavors of the people themselves. "As little government as possible," he said. "That government is best which governs least," said Jefferson. Democrats both, with views quite in contrast from the views held by many democrats today who talk in fair terms of freedom but make no actual move to uproot old wrongs and robberies. Most of our poli-

KROPOTKIN AND TOLSTOY

I would have liked to evoke the saintly face of Kropotkin more contemplatively. I would have liked to express all that his book, "Autour d'une Vie" has meant for me and the radiant glow it has left in my heart. Always I think of it with filial gratitude.

You know that I have loved Tolstoy very much. But I have always had the impression that Kropotkin has *been* what Tolstoy has

ticians today remind us of Walt Whitman's remark in his old age: "The saddest sight I have seen in my life is false leaders of the people who themselves have no confidence in the people." Kropotkin really believed in the people. His life and his work were dominated by that belief.

When we look about us today at the horrible welter of blood and violence in the world, when we see the ignorance and arrogance among rulers and the ignorance and subservience among the masses, when we see the confusion of thought even among those who might be supposed to have learned the lessons of history, we are tempted to yield to despair and give up the struggle. Here emerges the VALUE OF THE LIFE AND EXAMPLE OF KROPOTKIN. No doubt he wondered in moments of weariness and discouragement if his ideals would ever be realized, but he never lost sight of his essential belief in the people, in their potential capacity to learn and their courage to act upon that knowledge. He counted upon them to become self-governing. Therein lay his hope of the future. He might have quoted Saint Paul: "If this hope be vain, then indeed we are of all men most miserable."

The world picture today is not encouraging. Force and violence and coercion are on the increase and the ability of men to be self-governing appears to be rapidly on the decline. We must use a long yard-stick for our measurements or we shall grow weary. But still our hope for the future must lie, as it did with Kropotkin, in the capacity and courage of the people. For what is left to me of that hope I pay tribute to him and in gratitude I remember that his example and his writings played no small part in actuating me throughout my life in doing what I could to democratize knowledge and to stimulate courage to act upon it.

By Romain Rolland

written. Simply, naturally, has he realized in his own life the ideal of moral purity, of serene abnegation, of perfect love of humanity that the tormented genius of Tolstoy desired all his life, only achieving it in his art (save during happy and rare moments, by flights, powerful and broken).

I join with pious affection in the homage you render to your great friend.

FROM PUPIL TO TEACHER

*By Roger N. Baldwin, Director:
American Civil Liberties Union*

Any anniversary of Peter Kropotkin would draw from me an expression of the indebtedness I owe to his social philosophy, to which I was introduced at so early an age that it made an enduring mark on my thinking. I have never worn a political label, but I subscribe to the essential ends of human freedom which Kropotkin taught. As a scientist he could not as clearly state his means, and like others I have improvised my own.

A childhood conditioning in New England to the ideas of Thoreau, Emerson and Whitman prepared me for the larger social philosophy of Kropotkin. Harvard College had given me no glimpse of the great social prophets. They were in disrepute among scholars. I achieved a recovery from Harvard in a St. Louis slum, where social work introduced me to the currents of working-class movements. Among them were anarchist exiles from the Russian Revolution of 1905. Though I was conscious of them, I avoided more than polite contact in the thought that they were too alien to enlighten me. But I got a rude jolt when Emma Goldman came to town to lecture and I was dared to go to hear her. She shook me out of social work complacency and reformism by her revolutionary fire.

She was my introduction to Kropotkin. For I read the anarchist literature to which she referred me and found him the most satisfying of all interpreters of freedom. His was the sole mind with the capacity to survey the whole field of human struggle with the scientific training necessary to marshal facts and draw conclusions. He enthused me with what so many young men needed then and now—a basic philosophy of freedom without violence or coercion, and at least an indication of the institutional arrangements for achieving it.

It is commonly said of anarchism that it is a beautiful dream for a remote future when we shall all have become civilized enough to get along without governments or police. Or, according to the Marxists, when the class struggle is over. But I saw in Kropotkin's teaching an ever-present working principle to growth toward larger freedoms in all social activity, through the building up of voluntary association, increased individual liberty and group autonomy.

Personally I learned with Kropotkin as teacher the evils of participating in violence and compulsion. I have always since worked in voluntary associations dedicated to some aspect of freedom; I have resisted compulsion over my own life and services. When I have cooperated with those committed to the principle of power I have limited my participation to some specific liberty. Of course I have not always been consistent, as Kropotkin himself was not. But I have endeavored to maintain an integrity of purpose.

While I met many of those who share Kropotkin's philosophy, I found little opportunity for practical work with them. The scattered company of idealists, divided into sects, has never had much of an impact upon immediate issues. Kropotkin was not that kind of a teacher. He did not head or lead a movement, nor found a school. He expressed a principle too universal to be embodied in a program. Unlike most revolutionists, he was a man far larger than his revolutionary views. He was at once a scientist, a renowned geographer, a biologist ("Mutual Aid" his most notable work), an historian (his "Great French Revolution" his classic). He was famous in half a dozen quite unrelated fields; and held in respect by large numbers of men to whom the word "anarchist" could indicate nothing but the torch and bomb.

But anarchist that he was, he never wrote a book on anarchism. He published periodicals, he wrote articles, he made speeches. From these, pamphlets were made, distributed by the tens of thousands in practically every European language, and Chinese and Japanese as well. Written in a simple style and resounding with calls to action, these tracts appealed by their close reasoning and vivid illustrations. Their systematic treatment of social problems expressed a widespread need among the advanced sections of the working class who rejected the appeal to political methods or the concept of a state dictatorship by a working class. They aroused both the spirit of freedom and of revolution. And they voiced the drama of combat against authority in the camps of capitalists and socialists alike.

I was so impressed with these pamphlets that I ventured to collect them in a single

volume, published in 1928 by the Vanguard Press in New York, which was getting out a series of radical classics. What looked like a comparatively easy job of editing was an unexpectedly difficult chore, occupying spare time for almost four years. It was difficult to find all the pamphlets, to select, translate, edit and arrange them with historical notes. My labor of love, begun at the New York Public Library, took me finally to the British Museum and the National Library in Paris. The volume of 300 pages found a wide market—so wide that it has long been out of print.

The same trip to Europe which brought me to the libraries to complete the work of Kropotkin brought me also to the Soviet Union. In Moscow I was invited by Kropotkin's widow to occupy for my several months' stay her rooms during her absence in her country cottage. It was a privilege to find myself in the very house in which Kropotkin was born, located in the old nobles' quarter in Moscow, and now a State Museum, with a life tenure for his widow. The house stood in a garden and was apparently little changed since he left it. His furniture was about; the room he used as his study after his return from exile in 1917; his books; and the inevitable room in Russia where the funeral testimonials to the great are kept,—the wreaths, banners and scrolls. His widow took me to the cemetery where he was buried in 1921, where, in Russian style, his photograph was mounted under glass on a headstone.

I made the pilgrimage to her country home thirty miles from Moscow where Kropotkin died. There again, in old Russian style, was the room just as he left it,—the bed made up and turned down, his slippers under the bed, his writing materials on the table (he was working on his *Ethics*, published posthumously). His widow allowed me to play his Steinway grand, which I believe she said she had permitted nobody to touch since his death, an honor I cherish.

But I could not share the feelings of hostility to the regime which his widow quietly voiced, and which Kropotkin, with his hostility to all governments, put in restrained words. There was in 1927 too much encouraging alongside the discouraging to arouse a sense of hostility. And the Soviet regime had, in its large view of the revolution, honored Kropotkin, though an opponent in principle, ahead of most men. It had made his home a museum, it had named a library for him, an avenue, a street and a town.

At that time Kropotkin's followers were comparatively free. A few anarchists gathered in a little group which met at the Museum more or less coverly. The anarchist bookstore was open and doing business opposite the main gate of the University. Most of the anarchists out of prison had government jobs! But that was yesterday.

Kropotkin's own view of the Russian Revolution was a large one. He deplored its "horrors" and "mad furor," holding that "we are powerless for the moment to direct it into another channel until such time as it will have played itself out," when constructive work is possible. And Kropotkin always saw constructive work in the trade unions, co-operatives and voluntary associations outside the reach of government.

The revolutionary teachings of Kropotkin have been merged in the democratic stream of thought all over the world, which is attempting to shape the social order coming out of the war. It is one of many views of freedom, one of the long line of prophets, basing his case on the two foundations of individual freedom and social responsibility. "By proclaiming our morality of equality or anarchism," he said, "we refuse to assume a right which moralists have always taken upon themselves to claim, that of mutilating the individual in the name of some ideal. . . . Struggle so that *all* may live a rich overflowing life, and be sure that in this struggle you will find a joy greater than anything else can give."

KROPOTKIN IN BRIGHTON

By Pryns Hopkins, Editor:
Freedom Magazine



PRYNS HOPKINS

It was in August, 1914, that I met Peter Kropotkin. He was then living in Brighton, and I went down to see him from London, bearing a letter of introduction from Emma Goldman.

I always think of Emma as my socio-intellectual mother. I mean that when I had taken a college degree and drifted, with mind still somnolent as far as any knowledge of the contemporary world of struggling human beings was concerned, into New York City, and into a hall where Emma was lecturing—I was rudely awakened. In the few weeks which followed I heard everything challenged which I'd always taken for granted. In addition I learned that there existed a vast literature my university had seemingly never heard of, although many of its great names were familiar to peasant immigrants.

This had happened to me at a very critical moment. For I suddenly came down with a long illness; and during the months I lay in bed recuperating at the sanitarium whither I had been sent, I could *read* voraciously. Recalling the authors Emma was always dwelling on, I went through the complete works of Ibsen and then so much as I could get of the literature of Russia—chiefly Tolstoy and—*Kropotkin*.

What a treat I had found in his *Introduction to Russian Literature!* And with what fascination I read the autobiography of this truly great hero, who, like a modern Gautama, had renounced his princely position and estates to cast his lot with the common people, but whose road to salvation had been a more militant one leading through imprisonments, escapes across wintry Siberia, and exile.

When now, in August, 1914, my train brought me to Brighton, I quickly found the famous anarchist's house. Mrs. Kropotkin opened the door—and, if I recall rightly after so many years, she was small of figure but full of the warmth of welcome.

Prince Kropotkin, who received me in a big armchair in the living room (for his health was not good) was truly the original by whom all the stereotyped cartoons of anarchists have been inspired. An enormous mass of whiskers bristled from his face in every direction. Within such a mane, one might have looked for a leonine type of countenance—but his was far too benevolent to be called that. He more truly *radiated* benevolence than anyone I had ever seen.

While Mrs. Kropotkin provided us with cakes and sweet Russian tea, we launched into a long and most interesting discussion. I recall that there were three points on which we never did come to a truly satisfactory "meeting of the minds," as lawyers would call it. I was at that time a pacifist, and Kropotkin's support of the war against Germany I could reconcile neither with his belief in no-government nor my own (then) belief that even defensive war brought on greater evils than any it protected from. (I was incredulous of the depths of German machinations.) The third point on which we could not meet was the boundless optimism expressed in his *Farms, Factories and Workshops* as to the unlimited fruitfulness he thought could be wrung by science and labor out of a tiny acreage of soil, so that all-over population scares would be rendered nonsense. Failure to agree on these matters, however, in no way clouded the friendly intercourse of that delightful afternoon.

As I was leaving, a few neighbors dropped in and I caught some hint of that veneration with which everyone regarded this mighty rebel, so warmly human.

REMINISCENCES OF OLD TIMES

By Thomas Eyges

A VISIT WITH PETER KROPOTKIN 45 YEARS AGO

Among Anarchist proponents, such as Proudhon, Reclus, Jean Grave, Malatesta and others, Peter Kropotkin was the outstanding authority—a great scientist and a great humanitarian—he propounded his ideas in a most popular, interesting and learned way.

In my younger days, besides Kropotkin I also admired greatly Peretz and Ibsen; in youthful aspirations I always had a desire to meet these great men personally. J. Peretz and Henrik Ibsen were out of my reach, but the day came, which destiny prepared for me, to meet Peter Kropotkin in person.

It was in or about 1898. I was secretary of the "Worker's Friend" Group. The funds for the publication of the "Worker's Friend" were exhausted; the printer refused to release the forms with the type until he was paid; we were in a great predicament; the group, at a special meeting, finally decided to turn to Kropotkin for assistance in our plight, to invite him to London for a lecture, thereby to raise the necessary funds.

At that time I was the only one in the group that could spare the time for the mission to visit Kropotkin and explain the situation. I accepted without hesitation the errand offered to me.

One day during that week, conscious that I was to meet such a great personality, I dressed up in my best; silk hat, Prince Albert, gloves and a walking stick. I took the train at Euston station for Bromley, Kent, where Kropotkin resided.

In the train, on the way to Bromley, I was in deep thought, experiencing a peculiar feeling. I was on a mission to visit a great, learned man, a prince, born in the Russian royal family, raised in luxury and splendor, fostered in the lap of the Czar of all Russians, later obtaining the highest mental training and education possible in those days, having the opportunity to rise to potential degree of social status, and yet, he gave up all that, turned to the extreme left, to consecrate his life for humanity's cause, especially for the peasant and laboring class. What strange twists and turns destiny takes in the life of an individual and often so also in society!

My train was rapidly approaching the destination. Arriving in Bromley and, by the directions of the station master, I walked from the railroad station, through the beautiful country to the house of Peter Kropotkin.

At the house entrance I was met by Sophia Kropotkin. She informed me that her husband was "taknig a nap"; asking me if I cared to wait; unless it was very important she would wake him. I agreed to wait and was invited into the living room of a small cottage, wherein the Prince lived who had given up the Czar's palace "with all its pomp, which he hated so," as he states in his "Autobiography of a Revolutionist," in preference to a modest life where he can peacefully write his great scientific works and educate the world.

While waiting, I observed the scant but neatly furnished room. Opposite from where I sat was a tall glass case containing a variety of specimens of flies, butterflies and other larger insects, all held on pins stick in the back of the case. On the shelves in the same case there was a large assortment of small mineral stones in various sizes and colors; on the bottom shelves were a small beehive, an assortment of small pieces of metals and a piece of tree with a root.

Within a short time the old gentleman came in the room with an outstretched hand toward me, introducing himself with a broad smile. I introduced myself in turn.

"Have you been waiting here long?" he asked in English, and, smiling good naturedly, looked squarely at his visitor.

"No, not very long," I replied, somewhat confused, meeting his eyes.

"You speak Russian, don't you?"

"I do," I answered.

"Well, this is (prekrasne) very nice; now we will have a chat in the language I like most." He said these words in a beautiful Russian accent and to me at that time every word sounded like good music. At that instant Kropotkin's wife came in and, turning quickly to her, he said:

"I have the pleasure of introducing a comrade from London, and he speaks Russian too."

Smiling, she shook hands with me.

And now the Prince continued: "We will have tea, won't we, Sophia, eh?"

"Kenechne (surely)" she said, backing gracefully towards the door, "and we shall have it right away." She went out.

The Russian sage became active. He brought over a small low table which he placed in the center of the room; then he brought over cups and saucers, a bowl with lump sugar and lemon.

At the table, while sitting opposite, he asked me several questions, such as how long I was in England from Russia; how I liked London; what I was doing; how was the movement going, etc. I noticed, during my answers, that he nodded kindly to my replies, yet there was a scrutinous searching look in the eyes of the scientist.

The princess came in with a steaming tea pot, placing it on the table with a movement to pour it in the cups. The Prince stopped her.

"No, no (pozshalusta), please; I'll take care of this; you know how I like to do it; you sit down like a good little girl and have tea with us." And with saying that, he poured out the tea. She left the room and quickly came back with a bowl of cookies which she placed on the table, sitting herself at the same time.

The conversation during the tea consisted in subjects on daily topics. I was careful not to make rash statements and for safety's sake I preferred to be the listener rather than the talker. I made a remark, however, about the country and the surroundings of the cottage; how cozy and pleasant it was.

"Yes, we like it out here," the host remarked; "it is so quiet and peaceful; we take walks during the day in the country. I do my work mostly evenings, very often late into the night; that is why I take an afternoon 'nap'; besides, I have not felt well lately. I suppose we 'sinners' do not do the right thing towards ourselves and nature punishes us for it."

The tea was over. The hostess cleared the table. I took out my cigarettes from my pocket and offered them to the host.

"No, thank you, I don't smoke; but you may; it is your privilege, and now let us turn (po dellu) to business. You have undoubtedly some mission in coming here to see me, have you not?"

"Yes, I have," I replied. "I have a mission to carry out, which is a request from the 'Workers' Friend' group." I explained

at length the plight of the Anarchist organ, which was the mainspring of the movement; that the publication of the weekly might have to stop. So the comrades felt that by his coming to London to give a lecture, it would surely be both a moral and financial success which would give us a lift, etc., etc.

The Russian prince and apostle of the Social Revolution listened to my plea very attentively, occasionally smoothing his big, bushy, curly beard.

"And what do you think the subject should be?"

"Anarchism and Social Democracy." I replied somewhat timidly.

Kropotkin hesitated for a moment.

"(Sozshaleyu) I'm sorry, it cannot be done; first, because I'm not feeling well recently—as I have already said—but that alone, perhaps, would not be the obstacle, to be sure, but my coming to London to convert the Social Democrats into Anarchists does not seem to me to be the right step; (dorogoy tovarisch) dear comrade, we are not missionaries, we are idealists. Let them be Social Democrats if they so choose, that's their business; our field of activity is among the workers, to help build revolutionary trade-unions who will in time do away with the system of which they are the prey and the victims. (Eto dyele nashy) this is our cause. Now comes the question of assistance to the 'Workers' Friend,' which, to my regret, I cannot read, but which, I was told, is a very good medium for enlightenment; as for that I am willing to do my part."

In saying that, he got up, walked over to the bureau, reached in there for something, and returning to the table, he handed me two sovereigns (gold coins) and smilingly said:

"Please take this with you, comrade, and tell the comrades in London that this is my contribution towards the sustaining fund for the 'Worker's Friend.'"

I looked at the gold pieces and then at the host, and said:

"But I did not come here for this . . ."

"Chorosh, chorosh, ya znayu," he interrupted me; "I know; take it along with you just the same, please." He said these words in such a soft, pleasant and yet decisive tone, that I did not find it necessary to say anything. I took leave, after a while, from that unforgettable man and his wife and departed. They went with me to the door. When I

left them, I turned back, tipped my hat and greeted them. They waved their hands to me, stading in their doorway, smiling.

On my way home, in the train, that visit gave me plenty to think about. In my mind and heart I admired and almost worshipped that man; the thoughts of this great man, his humanitarian teachings, greatly strengthened my belief in the ideal of a future Free Society.

PETER KROPOTKIN ON MAN AND SOCIETY

By S. Alexander

Peter Kropotkin was one of the most all-embracing thinkers of his time. Geographer and historian, scientist and philosopher, but revolutionist and anarchist above all and always, he opposed his conceptions to the current tendencies among his colleagues in the various fields of his activities.

Against the theory of Struggle for Existence, generally admitted at that time as the basic conception of life, he advanced Mutual Aid. Against the tendency of industrialization to the detriment of Agriculture, he brought forward in his "Fields, Factories and Workshops" the idea of Agriculture and Industry going hand in hand. Against the capitalist idea of organization of industry and labor, he put forth the convergence of Manual Labor and Brain Labor. And against the current tendencies of a morality of war and conquest and State power, he advanced in all his revolutionary writings and in his posthumously published "Ethics" a morality of Statelessness and social well-being based upon liberty, equality and mutual solidarity.

But all this is well known to all, or almost all. Many have written about Kropotkin's activities in the various fields of thought, action, science and anarchism. Many will take the centenary celebrations as another occasion to write again on these well-trodden paths. So why not attempt to have a glimpse at some of his less known activities in fields less known to us?

This is one of the weaknesses of propaganda: it takes little or no heed at all of some of our teachers' manifold activities, keeping almost exclusively in the foreground just the externally revolutionary writings, and forgetting unfortunately that other problems and attempts at their solution may be more intrinsically revolutionary than propaganda

At that time I could not possibly visualize that in less than twenty years Kropotkin's dream of the abolition of czardom in Russia would become a reality, and that he would come back to his native city, Moscow, only to die soon after, a restricted and neglected man in poverty. Such is destiny. No greater man ever lived to see his cherished "land of milk and honey. . . ."

pamphlets and leaflets.

It is interesting, for example, to follow Kropotkin's stand for the simultaneous study of natural sciences and of human science, thus making, as it were, Socialism not only a matter for propaganda but a field in which knowledge of Nature and knowledge of the human species must go hand in hand if it is to become a social driving force.

P. Kropotkin delivered before the Teachers' Guild Conference, held in Oxford, England, on April 19, 1893, the opening address on the "Teaching of Physiography." Let us quote a few passages:

"The present system of classical education was born at a time when the knowledge of Nature could be borrowed from the study of antiquity only. It was a sound and necessary reaction against monastic scholasticism. It was a return to our mother Nature. To return to the Greek spirit meant a return to Nature—to Natural Science, to scientific methods instead of verbal discussions, to natural art instead of conventional art, to the freedom of municipal life instead of the slavery of eastern despotical states. This made the force, the historical meaning and the inestimable merits of the mediaeval return to the study of antiquity. . . . But now the parts are reversed. Science can be studied in Aristotle no more; it must be studied in Newton and Mayer. And those who neglect Newton for Aristotle stand now in the same position as the adversaries of classical education stood 500 years ago. They are for Words against Science.

* * * *

"The ancient Greeks did not separate Man from Nature. And the divorce between human science—history, economics, politics, morals—and natural sciences has been accomplished entirely by ourselves, especially

during our century and by that school which the student of Man in gross ignorance of Nature, and the students of Nature in ignorance of Man.

"This artificial separation is, however, done away with every day. We return to Nature. . . . Geographers have especially contributed to destroy the screens which separated the two branches of Science, isolated from each other by the University. Humboldt's "Cosmos" is the work of a geographer; and the geographical work which is most representative of our own times—the 'Géographie Universelle' of Elisée Reclus—gives a description of the Earth so thoroughly intermingled with that of Man, that if Man were taken out of it the entire work would lose its meaning—its very soul.

* * * *

"I cannot conceive Physiography from which Man has been excluded. A study of Nature without Man is the last tribute paid by modern scientists to their previous scholastic education.

* * * *

"If Oxford had had 50 years ago a Ritter(*) occupying one of its chairs and gathering round him students from all the world (Elisée Reclus went on foot to Berlin to follow his lectures) it would be this country [England], not Germany, which would keep now the lead in geographical education."

It is this scholastic education of that time which brought Kropotkin's opposition to Darwin in the sense that Darwin opposed Man to Nature while Kropotkin united them. In "Mutual Aid, a factor of evolution," Kropotkin says:

"I could agree with none of the works and pamphlets that had been written upon this important subject [the relations between Darwinism and Sociology]. They all endeavored to prove that Man, owing to his higher intelligence and knowledge, *may* mitigate the harshness of the struggle for life between men; but they all recognized at the same time that the struggle for the means of existence, of every animal against all its congeners, and

(*)Karl Ritter, 1779-1859, German Geographer, author of "The Science of the Earth in its relation to Nature and to the History of Mankind." Geography was, to use his own expression, a kind of physiology and comparative anatomy of the earth, in which the geographical structure of each country "is a leading element in the historic progress of the Nation."

of every man against all other men, was 'a law of Nature.' This view, however, I could not accept, because I was persuaded that to admit a pitiless inner war for life within each species, and to see in that war a condition of progress, was to admit something which not only had not yet been proved, but also lacked confirmation from direct observation."

Kropotkin fights this separatist idea of Man and Nature which, as a matter of fact, has led, through the ideology of the struggle for existence (against Nature and against co-Man) to that other idea of the War being considered as a "law of Nature." Did not T. H. Huxley himself head that school of thought when he represented primitive man as "a sort of tigers or lions, deprived of all ethical conceptions, fighting out the struggle for existence to its bitter end, and living a life of continual free fight."

Kropotkin finds of course that war has never played any good part in evolution and opposes to war, struggle for existence and centralization of power which is a direct resultant of both, the principles of mutual aid and, therefore, of federalism.

His ideas of federalism received a fresh impulse during his stay in Russia, where the strengthening of the Bolshevik State, derived from the Marxian centralized idea of a dictatorship, showed him, in real life, how Russia could have been happier under a federative regime similar, as he says, to the United States of America.

A "Federalist League" was organized in Russia soon after the Revolution, but its existence was very short-lived. Kropotkin was a member of that League, and on January 7, 1918, he gave, in Moscow, a lecture at one of its meetings, on "Federation as a means to unity." Some of the things he said in that lecture, given in the midst of World War I, make useful reading today, with especial reference to the Allies in World War II; and the following quotations may unwillingly call out a smile of irony:

"The idea grows stronger nowadays as to the necessity for the Russian people to give up definitely its inclination towards hegemony over the peoples that surround them. The impossibility of directing from one single center 180 million people spread over an exceedingly checkered territory, considerably larger than Europe, becomes every day clearer. As it becomes daily clearer that the true creative

power of these millions of men could only exert itself when they will feel they possess the fullest liberty to work out their own peculiarities and build their life in accordance with their aspirations, the physical aptitudes of their territories and their historical past. Thus the thought of a federative union of regions and peoples, which were part of the Russian Empire, grows steadily among thinking people. More than that: a conscious feeling is born that only through a federative agreement and union is it possible to found a union, without which the valleys of Russia risk to become the apple of discord between its fighting — present and future — neighbors. That the true path to the unity of heterogeneous elements of which the Russian Empire is made up lies in this direction is proven by contemporary history. It is full of instances of how federation led to unity and how the opposite path of centralization has led to discord and to disintegration. Here are a few examples:

“The British Empire gives us a peculiarly striking lesson. Both methods were tried; federation and centralization, and the results in both cases are available. Dictated by the impulse given to the English people by the liberal party, the British colonies of Canada, Australia and South Africa received their full freedom, not only of self-administration, but also of political self-administration with their legislative assemblies, their finances, their commercial treaties and their armies. As a result, these colonies not only developed brilliantly their economic life, but when hard times came for England, they hurried lovingly to bring heavy sacrifices for the sake of going to the aid of their metropolis, as if it was an elder sister or a mother. The same spirit was also shown by the small self-administered islands of Jersey, Guernesey and of Man, which are so far independent in their inner life that they still conserve, in matters of land ownership, the old Norman law, and in relations with foreign governments do not permit even those import duties which are still in force in England. Autonomy, so close to independence, and the federative link, thus proved to be the most solid foundations of unity.

“And side by side, what a contrast we find in Ireland, which lived all through the nineteenth century under the ‘strong rule’ of ‘Dublin Castle,’ i.e., under the administration of Governors-General replacing its parliament and its internal organization!

* * * *

“We find a similar situation in the United States in their relation to Cuba on the one side and to the Philippine Islands on the other. In 1898 the United States helped Cuba to throw off the truly unbearable yoke of the Spaniards and hastened to recognize liberated Cuba as an autonomous Republic, under the protectorate of the United States. At first, Cuba remained under the latter’s military administration, but in 1909 it became fully independent and the friendliest relations between Cuba and the United States were established at once.

“On the contrary, misled by the first American Governor who was sent to the Philippine Islands after its liberation from the Spaniards in 1898, the United States were loth of giving to the inhabitants of these islands their full self-administration. It left them under the administration of Catholic monks and fully supported the latter’s government. This gave rise to discontent leading to the insurrection led by Aguinaldo. Now the United States have understood the error of the islands’ rulers. Full self-administration was granted to the Philippines, together with a widely spread net of public education. Since then, the relations between the population of the islands and the United States became so friendly that the Filipinos organized an army of 25,000 volunteers who will join the American Army; and Aguinaldo, the former leader of the insurrection, has sent his son to camp for instructing officers in that Army * * *”

Kropotkin closes his lecture by giving further examples of the dangers of centralization, especially with reference to Finland, which was never allowed to gain its independence under the Czars.

“So it went on until lately,” continues Kropotkin. “*So it goes on now.* Centralization is the plague not only of autocracy. It ruined and ruins the colonies of France and of Germany while close to them are flourishing those British colonies which enjoy a large dose of autonomy transforming itself slowly into a federation of peoples.”

Kropotkin did not live to see the “Union of Soviet Socialist Republics” constitutionally federated but in fact a highly centrally autocratic power, under Stalin, as it ever was under a Romanov.

Much could be learned from the Peter Kropotkin we know little of, and the above excerpts could be multiplied *ad libitum*.

Perhaps at another occasion more could be said on the physio-sociological foundations of Kropotkin's conception of the world order as it should be, *as it could be*.

Let us add—*as it will be*, when the people will, at last, understand that the organization of a new life, based on the true principles of freedom and mutual solidarity, depends upon

two essential factors: that it will be the work of the people themselves, and that it will be carried out from below upwards, from the simple to the complex and not *vice versa*.

In this lies the whole difference between the Kropotkinian theory and the present centralized Statal system.

THE SIX GREAT CHARACTERS

*Introduced by Ray E. Chase,
Rudolf Rocker, Author*

In "The Six," Rudolf Rocker has taken six well-known characters from famous world literature and done two unusual things with them: First, he has made them very much alive, and without doing violence in any way to the traditional character of any one of them, he has used them in this book, to introduce a beautiful dream of *a world rebuilt and mankind set free*.

He begins with a picture. We gaze on a black marble sphinx. Six roads coming from widely separated lands converge and end on the sands before her outstretched palms. Along each road a wanderer moves.

These six wanderers are presented in three contrasting pairs. The first pair: Faust, who burns himself out in aescetic brooding over the mystery of life; contrasted with him, Don Juan, who declares that life is not to be examined and understood, but to be lived and enjoyed!

The second pair: Hamlet, who, seeing life's cruelties and finding them unendurable, flies from them. Don Quixote, who, seeing the same cruelties, horrors and follies, sets out with a rusty sword and broken lance to do them battle.

The third pair: The monk, Hindarclus, created by Hoffman, gives himself up to many forms of mystic sin. The barb, Heinrich von Offendingen, whose songs are inspired by an equally mystic holiness.

These six wanderers moving along each separate road, fall at last exhausted and defeated, in the sands at the feet of the sphinx—who heeds them not at all.

Then a new day dawns. Each wanderer awakes. The melancholy Prince of Denmark and the noble, imaginative Knight of La Mancha; the devil-ridden monk and angel-inspired sinner, face one another on the desert sands.

The dawn advances, the desert turns to greensward, the sphinx dissolves into dust. No summary will serve to convey this picture that Rocker has drawn of *The Awakening*.

I have reveled in the completeness of the understanding with which Rocker has identified himself with each character, thinking his thoughts, feeling his feelings, giving dramatic and satisfying expression to them all. I am impressed with the convincing, defiant sensualism of Don Juan and the unanswerable gloomy logic of Hamlet.

"The Six" seems to me like a great symphony. A short introduction, a prelude, sets the theme, sad and enigmatic. This theme is repeated in each of the six stories, which make up the symphony. Each has its own mood and tempo. At last comes a jubilant, resolving final. The whole work affects me like a great orchestral performance.

"The Six" is the final and finished outgrowth of a set of lectures made into a book. Nothing reveals more convincingly, not only Rocker's literary skill, but also his great power as an orator, than the fact that he could make this series of lectures so real and impressive to new audiences of untaught workers—to the half-literate sailors to whom he gave these lectures during the First World War.

That he did this is made clear by the fact that he was called upon to repeat these lectures again and again. That he did not achieve this by "talking down" to his audiences is shown by the fact that the scholars and writers among the interned men were equally impressed and eager for the repetition.

Men and women who heard him give this Hamlet-Don Quixote antiphony in London described to me the eager responses of his audiences. The reader of this book finds himself equally swayed by the author's changing moods. None of Rocker's works seem to me to hit a higher level of artistry than this.

255 pages (Presentation copy), green leatherette binding, \$1.50; paper, \$1.00. ROCKER PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE (A Non-Profit Cultural Organization), Suite 338, 304 South Broadway (Bradbury Building), Los Angeles, Calif.

NATIONALISM AND CULTURE

By RUDOLF ROCKER

This book of 27 Chapters may be read a chapter at a time and any chapter is a proof of its main thesis, which is that Culture thrives better in proportion as Nationalism is absent. Nationalism is recognized as organized patriotism erected into a religious belief.

It takes the history of the entire western world and interprets it. This book stands as a monumental Libertarian Interpretation of History. It took 20 years to write it. No other book undertakes so much in such a clear manner.

Marx Interpretation—Not Adequate

The first chapter deals with the Marxian or Economic Interpretation of History, which is shown not to be adequate, as presumed, for explaining world development. That social organizations and institutions respond, not to the prevalent method of production and distribution which may occur from time to time, but grows in proportion to the freedom that prevails. Social culture thrives as its boundaries are not limited by Nationalism or centralized politics.

A Single Example—Spain

Ask yourself how it happens that Spain developed Toledo steel and then lost its leadership in steel? Or tapestry? Or libraries? At one time in the history of Spain there were more libraries in Spain than in all the remainder of Europe. What social influence produced them? What drove them away?

Or how did the culture of Greece arise—and then fade away? What were the determining factors?

Rocker regards economic factors as a part of social culture—a very important part. He explains that the origin of economic factors of

production have their existence in the social conditions that give rise to other great cultural elements in society. This social condition is one of freedom for culture and the consequent absence of a centralized Nationalism.

What Causes a Decline in Culture

The historical necessity for the development of the greatest cultural evolution is one of freedom—and not of force. Indeed culture always is on the decline when it encounters invasive force. This force is most uniformly predominant in society in some form of Nationalism.

Worship of the State is now a most prominent superstition of today. Where that worship is most dominant there real Culture is most on the decline. Even though the most dominant activity is to copy and adopt the achievements of a superior Culture such as the Greeks had developed.

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This book distills and consumes Karl Marx and his Economic Interpretation of History. It bewails the worship of the State. It places Freedom as favoring the most constructive social force in History. Without individual liberty, Culture can not develop greatly. A most important book written in the last hundred years. Read it—before you express an opinion.

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