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Notes [Nov, 1887]

Freedom Press (London)

November, 1887

The performance of a play with the Social Revolution for theme marks an epoch in the history of the English Socialist propaganda. More especially when, as in our comrade William Morris's Interlude— "The Tables Turned, or Nupkins Awakened"(1)—the Social Revolution is understood to mean the total overthrow of domination in its three principal modern forms of property, law, and authority.

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The broad, quaint humor of the trial scene is delightful, with its touches of pathos and deep human sympathy, and its faithful delineation of "the stupid red-tape that hinders the court from getting at the truth; the impossibility of making your stupid judge understand the real state of the case, because he is not thinking of you and your life as a man, but of a set of rules drawn up to allow men to make money of other people's misfortunes." And all this gloomy reality of our days is exquisitely contrasted with the manly and humane good-sense, and merry, kindly fooling of the men and women of the free commune that will be the reality of the future,

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men and women too busy, too happy, too social for revenge. "Punish you?" says Jack Freeman to the abject Nupkins, the Mr. Justice Nupkins of the bad old times, "How can we punish you? Who do you think is going to do such work as that! People punish others because they like to, and we don't like to. Once more learn to live decently." Nupkins: "But how *am* I to live?" Jack: "You must work a little." Nupkins: "But what at, since you object to lawyers?" Jack: "Look round you, friend, at the fields all yellowing for harvest, -we will find you work to do." Nupkins: "Ah, I see. This means hard labor for life after all."

* * *

The whole play, with its poetry and its wit, is the work of a man who has realized in his own soul what a Social Revolution means, and would lead his fellows to "look on life of its rags of habit bared." And to hard pressed Revolutionists, who amid the dust and heat of the strife find it difficult to keep ever before their mental vision the "pictures of all the glory to come," such a living presentment of their hope and conviction is as a draft of fresh and sparkling water to parched lips.

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An American capitalist, named Daniels, being asked to contribute to the defense fund for the Chicago Anarchists, replied: "I pay 10,000 dollars yearly to have such people prosecuted. It is the poor people that ought to furnish the money to defend them, as it was their interests they were working for." -*Denver Labor Enquirer*.

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The property-holding class in America do not hesitate to avow what was plainly stated by the prosecution during the Chicago trial, namely that even according to the law of Illinois our comrades were no more guilty of "conspiracy to murder" than the thousands who shared their opinions, but that they were picked out for capitalist vengeance as the most capable and devoted champions of the cause of labor. One prominent

Social Reformer alone dares to deny the truth, that Pecksniff of the American labor movement, the renegade Henry George.