

To the resistance societies

Francisco Ferrer

1903

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Since our reappearance we have been encouraging the study of society on the day after the triumph of the revolutionary strike.

For the corresponding section we have received something, very little; but individual or collective thought, nothing. It is early, we will be told; perhaps societies will study, formulate opinions, discuss and then publish their works. It may be, but we do not know of any societies that do so; we have not seen any call for such a thing, unless they do it in secret. On the other hand, it is public knowledge that in Barcelona there are societies that have spacious and comfortable premises where coffee is drunk, manilla is played and dominoes and sometimes donkey, where the whole intellectual life consists of a Saturday lecture by the boys from the University Extension in which cans of scientific fragments are given out, very recommendable and very appreciated in themselves, but sometimes of doubtful use, because there are occasions when the workers come out of them like the negro of the sermon.

And the truth is that time passes and is urgent, the government's clumsiness increases, the bourgeois irritation and its hunger pacts increase, the General Strike pushes on, and if things continue like this, events could come that would catch us with our hands in our hands or enthralled by a gentleman who would talk to us about the inhabitants of the Moon.

Resistance societies created for the defense of the workers cannot defend themselves better than by studying, not only the General Strike, which is imposed and about which it is necessary to have a clear opinion, but also its consequences. First, each worker must avoid the embarrassment of not knowing how to answer the bourgeois who asks him: "What would the workers do the day after the triumph of the General Strike?" And then it is necessary to have a criterion, determining a common action, to oppose the reaction that the privileged will attempt, who will have in their favor their not yet extinguished prestige, the remains of proletarian servility, the vacillation of the doubtful, the stubbornness of the routine and the force of habit, all of this increased by the initial deficiencies, the sectarian divisions, the attempts of the ambitious and the passion and dead intelligence of the neutrals.

Believe us, our comrades: it is unworthy of serious workers, on whom rests the responsibility of the progressive evolution of humanity and the reparation of all social injustices, to entertain themselves in the shamefully childish game of combining chips and cards, with no other purpose than to kill time, which is a waste of life, a kind of partial suicide and a renunciation of faculties and power, a brutalization, when there is so much need to live in order to revolutionize the world, giving intelligence and will that indefinite, if not infinite, elasticity of which they are capable.

Another day we will goad our fellow members further to see if we can stab them to the sensitive fiber in which dignity, shame and self-respect are found.

To the resistance societies (April 5, 1903)

Continuing my theme from the previous issue, I say that although we leave Saturday for the University Extension conferences, which are a kind of scientific mass, it would be good to reject chips and cards as bourgeois entertainment, in order to devote ourselves to studying which professions, the day after the triumph of the revolutionary strike, will be, for the moment, useless,

unnecessary, and which others must be strengthened and even re-established, according to local, regional and even more extensive conditions.

It will be enough to indicate in general some of the first: jewelers, trimmings, embroiderers, dressmakers, pastry chefs and, in general, all the industries that supply everything that serves the pride, vanity, lust, gluttony, frivolity, etc., of the privileged, who will be permanently discharged.

As for the latter, things are different: although, despite so many drones, there is plenty of production in the present social hive, at the critical moment that we foresee there will be a shortage; which is explained by the disturbing anxiety that the former privileged and the neutral must manifest when they see their routine habits interrupted, which is given a slight idea by the multitude that stocks up on bread for a week as soon as rumours spread that everything is going to go haywire. Thus flour millers, bakers, slaughterers, farmers in general and transport workers, importing as a selfish local need, and exporting as an extra-local need of altruistic solidarity, all referring to food as an extremely urgent need, deserves attention that cannot be sufficiently recommended.

The bricklayers deserve special mention, but not as builders, but as demolition workers. There are buildings that usually occupy preferential positions in cities, towns and villages that not only cast a bad shadow and are real nuisances, but as long as they are standing they will exert evil suggestion and will be a constant source of atavism, quietism, superstition and will also constitute an incessant reactionary danger, and they are those in which the representatives of the two fictions in whose name has caused the most harm to all humanity in general and the disinherited in particular are housed: religion and authority.

That on the one hand; Then there are neighborhoods where the streets and houses are so unhygienic, narrow, and dirty that they are not so much places of human habitation as places of death, where only unfortunate people can be housed, dying from all kinds of infections, to promote the profit of the owners, who, like those emperors who threw slaves into the lakes of moray eels so that by eating the flesh of the former the flesh of the latter would be more appetizing, throw proletarians into the microbes so that there will be an abundance of gold with a shiny appearance and a sonorous timbre in their coffers.

We will not give detailed ideas about the problem of housing for all, nor about clothing and the distribution of all kinds of things for the needs of life; precisely what is needed is that everything be studied, invented, and solved; And to do this, of course, you have to spend brain energy, and that is what we ask of the resistance societies, that they replace cards and cards with books (which there are good, clear, detailed, true and sublime art books), and futile conversation with luminous discussion, and in that way, while they enjoy themselves worthily, they will rise to the height that corresponds to them.

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