

Memoirs of Raymond 'the Science' Callemin

My Memoirs
WHY I BURGLARIZED
WHY I KILLED

Raymond Callemin

1912–1913?

Every being coming into existence has a right to life, this is undeniable because it is a law of nature. Thus, I ask myself why, on this earth, there are people who think they have all the rights. They claim to have money but when we ask them where they took it what do they answer ? I answer this myself: I recognize to nobody the right to impose their desires for whatever pretext it may be. I don't see why I couldn't eat those raisins or apples because it is the property of Mr. X... What did he do more than me to be the only one able to profit from it ? I don't answer anything and thus I have the right to profit from it according to my needs and if he wants to block me by force, I will revolt and will answer his force by mine because, attacked, I will defend myself by any means necessary.

This is why, to those who'll say to me that they have money and thus I need to obey them, I will say to them that when they are able to demonstrate that a part of the whole represents the whole, when it will be another earth than the one on which they are born like me and that another sun than the one that lights them made those trees grow and those fruits ripen, when they will have demonstrated that to me, I will recognize you have the right to block me from living from it. Because, where does silver/money come from ? It comes from the earth, and a small part of the world took the monopoly of that silver and, by force, using that metal, made the rest of the world obey them. For that deed, they invented many torture systems such as prisons, etc...

Why is this minority of owners stronger than the majority which is dispossessed ? Because this majority of the People is ignorant and without energy: it supports everything from the owners with their shoulders dropped. Those people are too cowardly to revolt and even worse, if among themselves there are some who leave their flock they try to block them either deliberately or by their idiocy. But an undeniable hypocrisy and cowardice hide under their slogan.

Let them show me an honest man.

Those were the reasons that made me revolt. It's because I didn't want to live the life of current society and I didn't want to wait until I was dead to live. This is why I defended myself against the oppressors by various means at my disposal.

From my youngest age, I knew father and mother authority and, even before having the age to understand, I revolted against any authority and the authority of school.

I was then 13 years old. I started working; reason beginning to appear, I started to understand what life and social injustice were ; I saw evil individuals, I said to myself “I must find a way to get out of this filth that is bosses, workers, bourgeois, magistrates, policemen and the others”. All these people repugned me: some because they suffered to make all these actions. I didn’t want to be exploited nor exploit others, I started shoplifting. I was arrested for the first time, I was then 17 years old, they sentenced me to three months of prison — and I understood then what justice was: my comrade who was accused of the same charge as we were together, was sentenced to two months in prison with a suspended sentence. Why? I often asked myself that question, but I can say that I recognize to nobody, no more an Investigative Judge than a president of tribunal, the right to judge me, because nobody can understand the determining reasons that make me act ; nobody can be in my spot, in one word, nobody can be me.

When I left prison, I went back to my parents, who reproached me quite violently for it. But having suffered what is called justice, prison had revolted me even more. I started to work again, but not in the same job. This was when, after having been in an office, I worked in a butcher’s shop and then breadmaking, and when I got out of prison I wanted to work in breadmaking, a job I knew very well, but everywhere I went, they asked for certificates, which I didn’t have, so they didn’t want to hire me — which revolted me even more. This is when I started to scheme to find a job, I faked certificates and ultimately found a spot where I worked between 16 to 18 hours a day for the sum of 70 to 80 francs per week of seven-day work — and when I asked for a day off, this didn’t suit Mr. Boss.

After three years of this job, I was exhausted, worn out and still, I had to continue or die of hunger, because what I earned barely sufficed for my main needs but, on the other side, I saw that my boss was earning from the benefits of my work and what did he do for that ? Nothing except saying “You are ten minutes late today” or “Your work is not well done today, be careful, otherwise...”

Lastly, as I don’t like to always do the same action because I don’t see myself as a machine, I would have liked to educate myself, know a lot of things, develop my intelligence, my body, in one word becoming a being able to go in all directions, and at the same time needing others the least. But to achieve this, I needed time, books. How could I have that with my job ? It was impossible to unite those things because I had to eat and for that I needed to work and for whom ? For a boss. I was thinking about all of this and said to myself : “I will change jobs again, maybe it will be better” but I didn’t take into account the current social order. I had a taste for mechanical work, but when I went to see mechanics, they said to me: “We can take you in, but we can’t pay you because you don’t know the craft and won’t produce enough, we will pay you when you are able to work” meaning after 15 or 18 months and then to be paid 6 to 8 francs per day for 10 to 12 hours of work. The social order started to singularly disgust me, and after all of that I found a job in earthwork, only to find out that it was the same thing: work a lot to not even be able to meet my needs. I drew the following deductions that everywhere and in everything, it was the same ; I only saw misery among all those who worked alongside and with me. Even worse, those poor people, instead of trying to get out of this situation, got into it even more by drinking alcohol until they lost all reason and fell on the ground. I saw all of this and also the exploiter being happy with the situation and even worse, pay the drinks to these brutes who already had

taken too much, and for a good reason that, while they were drunk, those people couldn't think straight and this was the best way to hold them under his authority.

When, by sheer luck, there was an act of revolt among those imbeciles (I don't discriminate between workers of each trade), immediately the boss threatened to fire them and then calm came back. I did strikes too but I quickly understood the meaning and scope of such actions. All this crowd of "men" named a leader they entrusted to talk to the boss.

Sometimes, this idiotic and greedy leader capitulated to the boss for some silver coins and when all those brutes didn't have money anymore, he advised them to go back to work. This is the extent of strikes. When, sometimes, the strike succeeded and workers had won what they had asked for: a salary rise, then capitalists would raise prices for food and other products, so we had lost endless time and energy uselessly because nothing was truly changed. Thus, I only appeared briefly in trade unions, because I quickly understood that all these gentlemen were only profiteers and careerists who cried to revolt everywhere, that the capitalist must be destroyed, and other such things. But why? I understood that they wanted to destroy the current social order to take the spot for themselves, replace the Republic by the trade union, meaning deleting a state to replace it by another in which there are laws and all the same current social filth. In summary, only change the name to achieve that, as capitalists, they use the same methods: promises.

Your honesty. In summary, they only ever exploit the workers' stupidity. When I left this circle, I joined another which was nearly the same: revolutionaries. But I only passed through. I then became an anarchist. I was around 18 years old, I didn't want to work anymore and I started individual action, but with no more luck than the first time. After three or four months, they arrested me again. I was sentenced to two months. I got out and started to try to find work again. I participated in a general strike in which there was a fight with the police, I was arrested and sentenced to six days in jail.

All of this contributed to fortify my character and naturally, the more I advanced, the more I educated myself, the more I understood life. As I was meeting the anarchists, I understood their theories and I became a zealous partisan of those, not because those theories suited me, but among the debatables, they seemed the most righteous.

I met individuals ready for life in anarchist circles, individuals trying as much as possible to destroy the prejudices that make the world ignorant and savage. I was happy to speak with those men because they didn't demonstrate utopias but things that one could see and feel, and moreover, those individuals were sober. When I spoke with them, I didn't have to, as with the majority of brutes, turn my head when they spoke to me, their mouth didn't exhale a strong odor of alcohol or tobacco. I found them reasonable and I met some which had an iron will and were very energetic.

My opinion was quickly established, I became like them, I no longer wanted to work for others at all, I wanted to work for myself too, but how to do that? I didn't have much choice, but having acquired a bit of experience, and being full of energy, I resolved to defend myself until death against this pack full of stupidity and iniquity which is the present Society.

I left Paris around my 19 and half years old, because I had to go to the military service with horror. There I saw again, with a lot more reason, what was that law they call 'social' and 'humanitarian'. I understood what meant those words: Republic, Freedom, Equality, Fraternity, flag, Fatherland, and others. I was thinking about what to do, the side I had to choose, and I discussed the value of this social terminology that the state puts everywhere and on every public building. I understood the horrendous hypocrisy represented in that language. All of this is but a religion

like the one of God that they feed all the religious, who are the majority of the world. They say to them: 'You must respect the Fatherland, die for it' but what is Fatherland for me, Fatherland is the whole earth, without borders. The Fatherland is where I live, whether in Germany, in Russia, or in France. For me, the Fatherland has no borders, it is everywhere I am happy to be. I don't do distinctions between peoples, I only want good relationships everywhere. But around me I saw only religious or Christians or scummy hypocrites. If workers thought a bit, they would see and understand that between Capitalists, there are no borders, that those rapacious criminals organize between themselves to better oppress them and then they wouldn't work anymore to produce canons, sabres, coins, military costumes. They would leave the arsenals, they would stop taking alcohol, which is the most dangerous problem for reason, as well as tobacco which destroys the brain, but they are too coward right now. Maybe this unconscious and tricky crowd will change, I hope so, but I don't want to sacrifice myself for it. It's now that I'm on the earth and it's now that I must live and I will use any means that science gives me for that goal. Maybe I won't live old, maybe I will lose this struggle opened between myself and all that Society — with their incomparable arsenal compared to mine, but I will defend myself the best I can, to trickery I will answer by trickery and to force, I will answer by force until I lose the fight, meaning dead.

So, around May 1910, I left Paris for the provinces to try to reach the border to avoid being a soldier, but around July, I was sent back to prison for "assault and battery". I was freed around the end of August, one month before my group had to leave. From the moment I was freed, I worked a few days on an earthwork job to gather a small amount of money, I took the train towards the Belgian border, I paid for part of the journey but not the rest because I had to eat while travelling. In Valenciennes, I left the train and tried to get out, but the Chief of the train station ran after me. We discussed a bit, he threatened me with the gendarmes, and finally I won over his pity because he told me to get out. I had no more money upon arriving, I worked on a job for something like a week and then told the boss to go to hell, because in the border areas the bosses have the habit of treating workers like beasts, worse even, and this revolted me. I committed two burglaries and left the country to join Belgium definitively. I arrived there around 6 October 1910 in Charleroi, put myself to work for a few days, met with the anarchists there alone and, around the first days of November, was arrested as an anarchist, but without proof, they had to let me go eight days later.

When I left prison, I worked a few days and met some comrades who shared my opinions, those comrades were good, honest, energetic, we associated for burglaries, because we needed to live, and I didn't want to work neither at the factory nor on an earthwork job anymore. I was then 20 and a half years old.

Around the start of November, I met a companion, we left for Brussels, where my comrades had preceded me. We stayed there until the end of February 1911. I was obligated to leave Brussels because I was wanted for the burglaries I had committed in Charleroi and the surroundings. I thus left Brussels and came back to Paris, where I went to live in the offices of the newspaper *L'Anarchie*, for which I started to work. I worked there nearly every day, and since the proceeds were few, I committed burglaries with comrades, a large number of burglaries, but this didn't bring in a lot of money. I then started counterfeiting but it didn't provide a lot of money and I risked as much as doing a burglary, which brought in more. I left counterfeiting there.

Around July 1911, many of my best comrades fell into police hands. I was very saddened by this and decided to avenge myself on this Criminal Society, so I left the newspaper and went to Vincennes, still with my companion, who was devoted to me and whom I loved a lot.

During the time I spent working at the newspaper, even though I had lost some of my comrades, I met others, as energetic as myself. Thus, we held a discussion on the means to make our revolt heard the most strongly. This is when we decided to rent several places to be able to work in complete safety. We didn't have a lot of money so we started working on it immediately. We did burglary after burglary, I can cite the main ones which were those of August, September and October 1911.

In August, we did several which brought, each, around 300 to 400 francs, including one near Mantes, a post office which brought 700 francs, and a villa in Mantes which brought 4000 francs. But alongside those we also did many that brought nearly nothing. In September and October, during these two months, our main burglary was that of the post office of Chelles, in the Seine-et-Marne region, which brought 4000 francs and some others of little importance. Lastly, around the start of November, we did another one in Compiègne which brought 3500 francs. It was a substantial amount, but this money was spent because many of our comrades had problems with the Police and for other reasons, so we helped them financially.

During these last months, I had tried to find a companion driver, but without success. I had learned to drive, but I wasn't very skilled yet and hesitated to steal a car in order to carry out an operation that would provide us the means to live without needs for some time. At that point, I met Bonnot. We spoke about plans and, finally, agreed.

Then, around 10 December 1911, in the night itself, we stole a car in Boulogne and went to park it at a mechanic's house whose address a friend gave us. He accepted. We didn't tell him the car was stolen, or he might have refused. I told him: "We will come to get it back in about eight days". I gave him a fake name and a fake address, and we left.

We then discussed what we had to do. We had two major operations to do, because, in October, I had bought a blowtorch and we had to have a car to transport it. There were two safes to crack and as I knew how to use the blowtorch and Bonnot knew how to drive well, we concluded with the other comrades that we would try the operation very soon. On the other hand, we had studied another plan, which was to rob a cashier. In case one plan failed, the other could work, but neither the first nor the other was to work in the end. This is how, on the night of 20 to 21 December, we went to get the car from the parking. I paid the mechanic and we drove off — it was around 1 A.M. We picked up the blowtorch by stopping at the home of a friend, who was keeping it.

We were four companions, but circumstances didn't allow us to carry out that operation, because to do it, we had to do it while the weather was bad, and what we were waiting for didn't happen — we needed water to rain.

Finally, around 3:30 A.M., we brought the blowtorch back. This is when we decided to rob the bank cashier, a task that, as we would see, was full of complications.

We drove around Paris for the rest of the night, until 8:30 A.M. I was then the one driving to learn how to do it, I was starting well and already felt like I was able to handle dangerous turns at high speed. This was very useful because we needed two drivers in case one was injured, so that we could at least escape from those pursuing us.

At 8:30 A.M., I gave the turning wheel to Bonnot and took my spot alongside him, the others were in the car, because it was a luxurious limousine. We were not in agreement at all about how to carry out the operation, because it was at 9 A.M. in the morning, on Ordener street, in the middle of the street and in a quite populous neighborhood.

Finally, we arrived at 9 A.M. minus two minutes. We were at approximately 200 meters from the place where the cashier would pass, because he came from Provence street, from the central bureau of the Société Générale, and went from there to Ordener street, bringing money to their branch.

Some days before, I had come with Bonnot to observe the exact time and path followed by the cashier.

At 9 A.M., exactly, we saw him, getting down from the tramway as usual, guarded by another person designated especially for that. The time was critical, we needed to act quickly, a single second of hesitation could lose us; the car advances, I get out and one of my companions gets out too while Bonnot remains with the fourth inside the car so that nobody closes in. I walk on the sidewalk, in the direction of the bank employee, the hand in the pocket of my coat, the hand on the grip of my revolver. My companion is, for his part, on the other side of the sidewalk, a few feet behind me.

Arriving at three feet from the employee, I took out my revolver and, coldly, shot a first bullet, then a second; he falls while the one accompanying him fled running, full of fear; I take one bag, my friend takes another one that this imbecile doesn't want to let go, because he is not dead, but he finally lets it go, because he loses consciousness.

We went to get back in the car, some people passing in the street tried to stop us from doing so, but we took our revolvers out, fired a few shots, and everyone fled. We get back in the car, me always on the side of Bonnot. It is 9:30 A.M., we are in Saint-Denis, we don't know in which direction to go. Finally, we take the road leading to Le Havre, but not directly, we made a lot of turns to avoid being caught or having to start a battle, because we were armed like never before: I had nothing less than six revolvers on me, including one you could mount on a grip and then would have a range of 800 meters, and my companions had three each, and we had 400 bullets in our pockets and [we were] determined to defend ourselves until death.

It was approximately 11 A.M., we arrived in Pontoise, we stopped for a bit and opened the bags. In the bags I had taken, there were 5500 francs. We shared it on the spot. In the bag my friend had taken, there were securities worth 320,000 francs. We were disappointed. We had hoped to find 150,000 francs in cash. Finally, don't be sad, we might be able to sell the titles or we would try something else.

I took the steering wheel in turn and we left. It's raining, doesn't matter, we fight against the rain. We arrived in Beauvais, the local tax officer made us a sign to stop and we didn't care, I put my foot on the accelerator and we continued without caring: his stupidity was so great that he tried to run after us, then stayed in stupefaction, this disgusting brute probably never saw that.

We stop, I stop the car in front of a bakery, a comrade goes there to buy bread and chocolate and we leave. It was approximately 4:30 P.M., we had done a lot of driving, we are exhausted but we have to get there. I gave the steering wheel to Bonnot, and around 5:15 P.M., we arrived in a small town where I get out of the car to search for an oil cannister — I take the steering wheel back. While driving, we missed the right path and instead of getting to Le Havre, we arrived at Dieppe, the night was deep, it was past 6 P.M., and we didn't have any gasoline left. We took the resolution to abandon the car in Dieppe so I searched for an empty street where to leave it. I found one, I follow it when, suddenly, the car stops advancing, the motor stops, I get out of the car but the moment I got out I sank in up to the knee, I take my flashlight because all the gas lights are turned off, I look on the ground, I see mud up to the middle of the wheels. Then, I saw the sea cliffs and the sea, so I told my friends what was happening — we quickly took the

decision to leave the car, we removed the numbers from the car and sent them into the sea and then we left in the direction of the train station.

While going, my hat was caught by the wind and I didn't see it again. Luckily, I have a cap, I put on my cap and that's it. We reach the train station, one of us goes to buy 4 tickets for Paris, we have a train nearly immediately, which arrives at 1 A.M. in Paris. We took it and came back calmly, each to his home.

We made an appointment for the next day. During that day the Parisian Sûreté, the General Sûreté, are on edge — cops are wondering what is hitting them, they believe the revolution has come, but it's only a somewhat serious skirmish, they would see much more.

In the middle of January, Bonnot and I and two friends, whose names I can't give here, stole a 40 horsepower car in Paris, not far from Ordener Street: we opened the garage with the help of fake keys, we put the car in motion and we fled without being seen by the concierge.

With that car, a double phaeton from the Itala brand, we went to carry out an operation in the North of France.

Two days later, then, Bonnot and I went to park the car at a friend's place and two days later, we came back to take it and both left towards the area where two other friends were waiting.

We left. It was 6 P.M. We didn't know the road well, which explains why we left so early, because we had 400 kilometers to cover. We each took our turns at the steering wheel and arrived at the designated spot at 5 A.M., but there, we were surprised by a rather disagreeable surprise: the operation, without proper intelligence, had failed.

So, we take back our path towards Douai, we have a tire which bursts, we replace it and after half an hour, we are back on the road. Around noon, rain starts to fall and since there is only one hood on the car, Bonnot and I get soaked. Around evening, it's snow that falls, the headlights don't help much.

We arrive at Aulnay-sous-Bois, a few kilometers away from Paris, I am the one driving, and since snow is falling heavily, I don't see the road well. When we are going through the area, the road turns a bit to the right — I see that too late: the car is on the side of a ditch, I try to make an effort on the steering wheel, but to no avail, the car falls into the ditch. All four of us are safe and without injuries, we take our tools and we go to the train station. It's 7 P.M., we arrive at 7:30 P.M. and we go home very exhausted.

The following day: huge echo in the newspapers.

We don't lose hope because of that, on the contrary. On 20 January 1912, I leave, always in the company of Bonnot, towards Ghent (Belgium), while the two others are trying to liquidate the securities from Ordener Street. On the 22nd, I learn from the newspapers that the police knows me, indeed, my photograph is in all newspapers and the same day, my partner was arrested in Paris. I am very angry about that. Finally, on 23 January, a friend comes to Ghent to join us, we had intel about stuff there. It's more than time, because we are nearly without any money, so, in the night, we steal a car which we transport to Amsterdam where, by the intermediary of my friend, we sold it at a good price — this helped a little. This car, a Minerva, was owned by a doctor. It had a [medical] purse inside, we keep it because it could serve us in the future.

Three or four days later, this friend tells us that we can still bring another one [to his garage]. We go back to Ghent, find another garage where there are two cars, a limousine and a double phaeton 60 horsepower car.

So, that same evening, around 11 P.M., I pick the lock and the door opens. We enter but as soon as we entered, we saw a small room where there was a bed. We assume then that the driver

must sleep there but since he must have gone for a walk, we think we have time to take the two cars before he comes back. So, we start that work, but the first car is completely impossible to start. When, around midnight, we hear a key turn in the lock, because we always had the habit of closing doors behind us immediately, we turn off all our electrical torches, the door opens and a man enters. The instant is critical; he switches a small electrical button and he turns on a bright light in the garage. As soon as he does, we emerge from behind the car and put our revolvers under his nose, saying: "Not a word or you are dead".

He doesn't say anything, so I started to tell him that he needed to start the car. He answered using these words: "What do you want to do with it?" I answered him that we wanted to take it with us. He answered: "And me, what would I do?" I told him that he would stay there. This man didn't understand the danger he was in, he was German, we had found his papers in his room, but he spoke French well. When I saw that he didn't want to listen to my words, I threatened him, but nothing made him budge. This man was really stupid, because that would cost him his life. He told me suddenly that he was German and didn't understand French, which was a lie, but anyway. He believed he had found a trick to escape us, but he was mistaken, we had there a third comrade who spoke German. So they spoke together [original police document is unreadable for a full line] wanted to lie, but our friend wasn't fooled. The German was telling him he was not the driver, but we had proof that he was. At one point, the discussion became so angry and loud that one could hear the words and sentences of our discussion 100 meters down the street.

Meanwhile, Bonnot and I were still searching for the cause of the problem, but when we heard all this noise, we decided it was enough and time for it to stop. So I go to the back of the garage and take a big piece of wood, come back towards the antagonists and hit the driver's head very hard — on his left temple; he falls to the ground without a cry, he was dead or near death. To prevent him from recovering, a friend went to get a jack that weighed 60 kilos and I put this object on his torso, and some minutes later, his body doesn't move anymore — he is dead. I go back to Bonnot, and we resume our search when, suddenly, a voice cries "What are you doing there?" At the same time, a man, a lantern in his hand, tries to open a door to enter the garage, but he can't open it because there is the corpse of the driver in front of it. Thus, we considered that it was useless to make a second corpse, I took the tools and we left.

But meanwhile, the friend who stayed outside had disappeared, we didn't see him anymore. We follow the street, and, having arrived at its end, in another street, I see someone walking who looks kinda like him, I wait a bit but when the thing that was walking comes close, I see it's a cop. So I leave, I join Bonnot and the 3rd friend, and we walk, but the cop follows us. We take a small street, he still follows us. We do a U-turn and walk towards him. When we arrive in contact, he calls me in Flemish, and as I don't understand Flemish, I answer in French. So he asks in French what I have in my purse. I answer to him that it's my traveling stuff. He says to me: "You will open it and show me what's in it." Immediately, seizing my revolver, I told him "There" and shot in his direction twice. I learned from the newspapers that he was heavily injured by a bullet that pierced his arm and went to his liver, and the other to his thigh.

Immediately, we run about a hundred meters and then walk at a calm pace, because immediately, the Police is on high alert, and it's not good to run in the streets. Without knowing the area's topography well, we took a lot of time to get out of the city. Finally, we take the road to Brussels, we take a train at a small train station that we found, and each of us took a ticket to Antwerp.

In Antwerp, Bonnot and I don't leave the train station, whilst the 3rd one left it and took three tickets for Amsterdam.

We take an international train, and, at noon, arrive at a friend's home, where we tell him about our bad luck.

We wait for news from the 4th.

Finally, the next evening, he arrives. The situation becomes worse: everywhere, police are on edge and are actively searching for us. Nearly every day, my photograph and Bonnot's are in the newspapers, and this bothers us, because we can be recognized while travelling. Finally, we discussed what we had to do. Every fence spot is telling us that the securities are unsellable, because the affair had made too much noise. We decide to leave the securities with a friend and leave for The Hague where Bonnot and I searched for a garage where we could steal a car. Meanwhile, the two others left for Antwerp, to search for an operation there. Two days later, they come back, they found a banker to rob around 5 P.M. On our side, we have found a garage. We dine early and after dining, we go to listen to music and around midnight, start heading towards the garage.

We succeed, by breaking a window pane, in operating the window latch. We travel 25 kilometers to reach the closest train station, we each take a ticket for Antwerp. The operation was a failure. We discuss what we should do. We have two operations in mind: one in the east of France and the other in the South, so we split into two teams, one will go South and the other East.

I immediately leave with a friend towards the East, while Bonnot and the other leave for Paris, in search of other friends to do the other work.

We arrive in the area, we gather intelligence. It's an old lady, we must kill her. They tell us that she is old and has a lot of money. We discuss and we decide to do the job two days later.

We go to sleep at the hostel, we walk around in the meantime and, as was agreed, around 5 P.M....

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Translated by anonymous (using AI-assisted translation) on 2025-07-24 from
<commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:M%C3%A9moires_de_Raymond_la_Science.djvu>
Memoirs of Raymond ‘the Science’ Callemin, from the documents found in the Paris police archives (courtesy of Archives anarchistes) in the JA 16 Bonnot Gang file. The text ends abruptly, likely scattered across various police records. Raymond ‘the Science’ Callemin was a significant member of the Bonnot Gang, one of the most notorious illegalist groups. The translation of this text is challenging, partly due to Callemin’s highly oral expression—perhaps dictated to the police (?)—and partly because the version provided by the police archives contains numerous textual issues. In terms of translation, while we use here partner/friend/companion, in the original French, Callemin uses compagne/copain/compagnon all of which stem from the anarchist lexicon and are linked. In this text, among other things, you’ll find a description of the Ordener attack, in which Callemin was a key participant. This was the first motorized robbery in history. It’s worth noting that he doesn’t name any other members besides Bonnot, who was already dead when Callemin was imprisoned. He also presents a situation where only three or four people are ever seen, even though the gang was actually composed of dozens of illegalists—with Bonnot, Callemin, Garnier, and others being the main figures. It’s also possible that Callemin exaggerated the violence of the crimes attributed to him to protect his companions — such as claiming the Ordener attack instead of Garnier — though its unclear who did it. Callemin was guillotined in 1913, but his legacy was kept alive by others. For example, Guy Debord used him as a pseudonym for his song about the anarchist movement, ‘La Java des Bons Enfants’.