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News From Spain

Freedom Press (London)

October, 1889

(From our Collectivist Anarchist Correspondent in Barcelona.)

As I have spoken in my preceding letters of the Anarchist movement in Spain, I will now say something about the middle-class political situation. We are now living under the regime of the Liberal Monarchy. Sagasta, ex-Minister of the Provisional Government of the Revolution of September 1868, ex-Minister of King Amadeo, ex-Minister of the Republic which survived after the coup d'Etat of January 3, 1874 and prepared the way for the Monarchical Restoration, has been Prime Minister since the death of Alfonso XII. He remains in power, partly because he knew how to elaborate a program of Democratic Monarchy which includes universal suffrage and solves small difficulties while continually postponing the more important ones, and partly because of the attachment of the Regent who understands that her only means of remaining Queen is to keep in sympathy with the Liberals.

Our politicians are characterized by an unlimited passion for enrichment. All parties - from the "traditionalists" who sigh after the medieval times, to the Federalists who dream of a universal federation of republics, are guided by a longing for personal power

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and constitute so many sects, the prominent man of each considering himself the pontiff. Under such conditions politics is simply a means of satisfying personal ambition, and the Opposition - Reactionary as well as Radical - is moved by the most miserable trifles. The consequences of this are the complete neglect of all the public services; an immense deficit, never covered even by ruinous loans; a national debt capable of absorbing the whole of the wealth of the nation; the paralyzing of all branches of production; numerous cases of bankruptcy - and emigration to the extent of depopulating our - villages and cities, thousands and thousands of workmen leaving for Brazil or La Plata. To give you an idea of the state of affairs, it is sufficient to say that during the last four months no less than 580 land owners in Granada, the richest province of fertile Andalucia, have been evicted by the State for arrears of taxes. The blackest despair has taken hold of our best educated men who exclaim "Spain is dying! Dying is the nation which starves its workers!" While the anger of the masses finds expression in burning manufactories, granaries, earthen-fields and forests, with terrible frequency. Such is our situation. The nation lives in misery and loses its old faith in religion, law and authority. Anarchism is welcome, as it holds out the hope of regeneration.

The enclosed program of a Socialist competition [our Barcelona comrades have offered prizes, chiefly books, for the best essays on certain questions relating to Anarchist thought] will show you how we work for the scientific elaboration of Anarchist principles.

An Anarchist Communist paper, *La Revolucion Social*, has just appeared in Barcelona, which will certainly contribute to the triumph of truth and justice. Fortunato Serantoni, Calle de, Magalanes, 53, Barcelona, is the publisher.

In a coming number of *El Productor* we propose to discuss the ideas in your article, "Is Communism Just?" Two of the contributors to *El Productor* recently made an excursion into the province of Valencia and held meetings at Valencia, Alcira and Alcoy. It was a triumph for our ideas. In Valencia they spoke in the ball of the

Federalist Republicans, but neither there nor anywhere else has anybody come to contradict them. Another excursion of the same kind will soon follow.