

The Anarchists in America

By Francis H. Nichols

THE murder of Humbert I., King of Italy, on July 29, 1900, the anniversary of which was last week made the occasion of public rejoicings and addresses by Anarchists in Paterson, was the fourth of a series of Anarchist assassinations of the rulers of nations which have startled the world during the last four years. In all four cases the assassins were Italians. President Carnot, of France; Canovas, Prime Minister of Spain, and Elizabeth, Empress of Austria, all perished at the hands of men who were subjects of the King who was himself the last of Anarchy's victims.

Gaetano Bresci, Humbert's assassin, who recently took his own life in his cell in San Stefano prison, came from Paterson, N. J., where his American wife survives him. Since Bresci's suicide foreign despatches tell of frustrated plots by Italian Anarchists to kill the Kaiser of Germany and the King of Spain. The starting point of both murderers was said to be the United States. This country is without doubt the center and headquarters of the Italian latter-day Anarchy, which is far more dangerous than any of the forms which have preceded.

In theory it has progressed not a particle beyond the universal system of government destruction which was founded by Bakunin, but both in spirit and application it is different. The Italian Anarchist does not cherish that blind personal hatred of individuals and institutions that characterized the cart-tail oratory preceding the Haymarket riot in Chicago. He has little to say about his own hard lot or starvation wages. Almost without exception the Italian Anarchists are regularly employed in some trade at fair pay. Some have comfortable savings-bank accounts.

To understand them we must understand the Italian character and its capabilities for devotion to a purely theoretical liberty. These Italian Anarchists have the spirit which found utterance in the liberty fervor of Mazzini in '48, whose contagion started revolutions.

On Mazzini's banner were the four

words, "God and the People." For the Italian Anarchist the first obligation is of course eliminated, but the second is an altar on which he considers his life a small sacrifice, and for him the voice of his people says only, "Kill."

Latter-day Anarchists seldom preach or agitate for their faith. Publicly they seldom speak of it. By individual persuasion they try to make proselytes to their cause, but never in the open. They labor with a prospective convert as a missionary might with one whose soul he was trying to save. They are sure that he enrolls under the red flag with his eyes open, and that he realizes the hatred, persecution, and possibly even death that awaits his devotion to anarchy. They are more like a sect of political heretics apart, studying to perfect themselves in their life religion. None of the four great recent Anarchist assassinations has been accomplished by any of the melodramatic scenery or effects that one is apt to expect of an Anarchist maneuver.

No palaces were undermined with dynamite. No bombs were thrown into royal processions. In every case the Anarchist killed his victim with a simple weapon as calmly and as stoically as a premeditated suicide might walk off a Battery Park pier with a policeman looking on.

In nearly all the Continental nations to be even suspected of being an Anarchist is equivalent to being a criminal punishable with imprisonment or exile. For a man who has been known to actually advocate law-destruction there is really but one escape, and that is America. The consequence is that the men and women Anarchists who have come to this country during the last seven or eight years have all been graduates of Anarchist antecedents in Italy. The era of doubt and questioning with them is over. They have reached a point where they are out-and-out Anarchists, else they would not have been obliged to leave their native land. The Italian Anarchist in America is a veteran, not a cadet. Ninety per

cent. of the Anarchists in Italy are found in the northern provinces of Lombardy and Piedmont, the section of the country where education is most general. Silk weaving in the mills is one of the chief industries of that part of the country. When the first of the present Italian group came to the United States they naturally drifted to Paterson, N. J., whose enormous silk industry afforded them an opportunity of continuing the trade they had learned in Italy. For the others who followed there was the additional inducement of living with their fellow-townsmen who had preceded them. The result is that Paterson has come to be the center of what is probably the most important Anarchist group in the world. Once regularly employed in Paterson, and realizing American free speech, the Anarchist makes no secret of his political faith. To be sure, he does not shout it from the housetops or bore every one he meets by talking about it, for that is not his way; but if asked for a sincere expression he never hesitates to tell you that he believes the greatest immediate benefit that could be conferred upon humanity would be the destruction of all its rulers.

The Anarchists had little in common with the rest of the Italian population in Paterson. Their favorite meeting-places were each other's tenement-house rooms, where, in the evenings, after the day's last yard of silk had been run off the bobbins, they met and studied and discussed. Paterson does not contain all the latter-day Anarchists of America. There is a very large colony of them in West Hoboken, N. J., many live in Macdougall and Houston Street tenements in New York City, while others are scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific; but, wherever they are, they constantly are in touch with the group in Paterson, whom they recognize as the center of Anarchist activity in the Western hemisphere. It was in the midst of this group that Enrico Malatesta appeared in 1898.

To say that Malatesta ever arrives at a place is almost a misapplication of terms. No one, not even the Anarchists themselves, knows the reasons which cause his advent anywhere. For almost twenty years he has appeared among men of his creed in almost every large city of the

world. His visits are sometimes short and sometimes prolonged into months and even years. After his purpose, whatever it may be, is accomplished he disappears again, perhaps not to be heard from for a long while, and he may then turn up in some distant corner of the globe.

Enrico Malatesta is, without doubt, the most important figure in the Anarchy of these latter days. He cannot correctly be called either an agitator or a prophet, because he never appeals publicly for his cause. Silent, cold, and plotting, he is, rather, the living, working genius of Anarchy itself. With these men whose lives are devoted to the destruction of all authority Malatesta's word is law. When he advises or suggests any ambitious member of an Anarchist group throughout the world for some act of assassination, the man selected feels honored at the choice, and becomes the object of his companions' envy. For him to weaken or show the slightest degree of hesitation would make him a coward to his own conscience and bring upon himself the death by secret assassination by which Anarchists punish traitors. Malatesta is now about fifty years old. He is one of the very few Anarchists who originated in southern Italy. He belongs to an old family whose natural legacy to him would have been wealth and social position, but Malatesta turned his back on the allurements that would have appealed to the ambition of most men.

After graduating with honor from an Italian university, he became an Anarchist. His family disowned him and the Government hunted him. He was driven into exile and began the mysterious nomadic wanderings which he has continued ever since. As his power and influence grew among Anarchists all over the world, he became dreaded and feared as much in other countries as in Italy. With the exception of England the appearance of Malatesta in any nation in Europe would at once be the signal for his immediate arrest and close imprisonment. Yet there is no doubt that, incognito, he has lived for long periods in the capitals where he is dreaded as an evil spirit. He is known to have been a resident during the last five years of both France and Spain. His residence anywhere is said by European detectives to be always fol-

lowed by an attempt to kill the head of the nation. This may be something of an exaggeration, but there can be little doubt that Enrico Malatesta was the head and moving spirit of all the conspiracies which have recently startled the world by the awful success which attended their execution. Personally he is quiet and reserved to the point of taciturnity. In manner he is mild and gentle; his conversation, in any of the several languages of which he is master, is that of an accomplished man of the world. He is described as having a very pleasant smile, but seldom laughs.

As at every previous move in his life, Malatesta's appearance in Paterson was unheralded and unexpected. He was seen by some of his friends one day drinking at the bar of an Italian saloon called "The Bartholdi." From that moment Anarchists everywhere recognized the group at Paterson as the most important in the world. The genuine spirit of Anarchy dwelt in its midst.

From students and enthusiasts Paterson Anarchists became aggressive workers in the cause of destruction. In a little upstairs back room on Market Street was founded "La Question Sociale." For a while Malatesta was its only editor, and then, as the scope of his labors and plottings increased, he brought over a Spanish Anarchist named Pedro Esteve to assist him as sub-editor. There is no denying that in its way "La Question Sociale" is a well-written paper. It is much freer from personalities and denunciations of individuals than one would expect from an Anarchist organ. Its articles are nearly all long editorials that are intense but not rabid. In none of them does the writer seem to have lost his self-control. Many of them are cynical and sarcastic rather than violent. Malatesta's stay in Paterson was long enough to learn the personnel of his admirers very thoroughly. He knew the capacities of each—how far each man's brain and nerve could be trusted for carrying out his share of the plot which the master mind was planning. Then Malatesta disappeared again. Anarchists say that he went to South America to look after a budding colony of his followers in Buenos Ayres. But it is largely a matter of conjecture. It is quite as likely that he is living under an assumed

name in Italy as that he is openly organizing Anarchy in Argentina.

One day in the fall of 1899 a man walked into a little café in Macdougall Street in New York and shook hands with the proprietor. The visitor was Malatesta come back again to America.

For several months following, his refined face, partly hidden by his careless slouch hat, was a familiar figure on Bleecker and Houston Streets. He lived in lodging-houses and fifteen-cent hotels with the poorest of laborers. During the winter, at a hall on Bleecker Street, not far from Mills Hotel No. 1, he delivered a series of lectures on Anarchy to Italian workingmen. The lectures constituted a regular course, to which the auditors subscribed by ticket. Malatesta conducted them with all the decorum and dignity of a college professor before his class. Thoughtful questions he answered, and he endeavored to make plain the hard points of Anarchy. But there were no violent discussions, none of the ebullitions of ignorance which have always in the past marked Anarchists' gatherings. Through the lectures Malatesta drew around him a small coterie of men whom he understood better than they understood themselves, and whom he inspired with a burning desire to do something for Anarchy. One of these was Gaetano Bresci. In Anarchist vernacular he was one of the humblest of proletarians, a weaver, thirty-five years old. He possessed that ignorant "little learning" which has ever been a "dangerous thing."

He was the sort of man who has many limitations but can do two things well—keep a secret and strike a blow. Bresci came to West Hoboken six years ago from Prato, a suburb of Florence. His parents were extremely poor, and his early education was as limited as is usually the case with children of the working class in Italian cities. A brother of Bresci was a shoemaker; another, Angelo, entered the Italian army as a private, and by good conduct and devotion to duty rose to the rank of lieutenant. Bresci was an Anarchist when he came to West Hoboken, and the letters of introduction he brought with him from Europe readily gained him admittance into the Anarchist group of Paterson.

During his second year in America he

was married by a justice of the peace to Sophia Knieland, an American of about his own age. He worked at his trade, first in West Hoboken and later in Paterson, up to the day that he sailed for Italy to kill the King. During the week he boarded with some fellow Anarchists in a hotel in Paterson. His Sundays he spent with his wife and child in their tenement-house home in West Hoboken. In appearance Bresci was delicate even to the point of being consumptive-looking; he was thin and shallow, and had the factory stoop of the shoulders. His mouth was firm and his lips thin and compressed. His eyes were small and bright. He spoke English only very imperfectly.

Next to Anarchy, Madeline, the three-year-old daughter of the regicide, was his idol. She has the large blue eyes of her American mother, but her dark clustering hair and clear olive skin are a legacy from her father. Bresci never returned from Paterson on a Saturday evening without a bunch of bananas or a bag of candy for Madeline. It was his delight to spend whole hours romping on all fours with her on the floor. The day after the assassination of the King, Mrs. Bresci, in West Hoboken, hoping against hope that her husband was not the murderer, used as an argument his devotion to his child. "Gaetano could not have done it," she said simply; "he was sometimes an Anarchist, but when he played with Madeline he was himself a child."

Outside of the group at Paterson, Bresci never said much about Anarchy. To be sure, he used often to remark regretfully that all governments were wrong, and he sometimes read aloud "La Question's" editorials to Mrs. Bresci, who understands Italian, but he never gave her the slightest intimation of how deep was his devotion to the cause.

It was in January, 1900, that Bresci first began to complain of his failing health. He said he was threatened with consumption, and told his wife that his speedy decline could only be prevented by his spending a few months with his brother in Italy. He did not name the date upon which he expected to start until only a few days before he sailed; then he suddenly appeared one evening from Paterson with a French line steerage ticket and a hundred dollars, which, he explained,

he had saved for traveling expenses. As a matter of fact it was undoubtedly the result of a collection among the group.

It was while Bresci was complaining of ill health that he purchased a cheap revolver at a gun store in Paterson. In the early spring, on several occasions, accompanied by his wife and child, he spent the day in the woods back of Weehawken. While Madeline and her mother searched for wild flowers among the trees Bresci practiced shooting at a target with a revolver.

On La Gascogne, in the latter part of May, Bresci sailed on the mission. He spent a few days in London, probably to receive some final instructions from Malatesta. He visited the Paris Exposition, and from there sent a silk handkerchief to Madeline with his name, "Gaetano," embroidered in crimson in the corner.

It would be hard to imagine a plot more simple, or an instrument more obscure. It was without dynamite, secret rendezvous, or cipher despatches. Only a latter-day zealot carrying a cheap American revolver. But his obscurity and the plot's simplicity were his chief protection. Had the Italian Secret Service been forewarned of his intention, they would have declared its accomplishment impossible. To a Mulberry Street detective it would have seemed ridiculous. But Bresci, his aim perfected by practicing in Weehawken woods, carried out his mission, and killed the King in his carriage at Monza.

The news that Bresci had realized the hopes with which they had bade him farewell in Paterson caused great rejoicing in the group there. On the day following the Monza tragedy a cablegram of congratulation was sent to the regicide from the silk looms of Paterson. Of course the men and women who sent it knew perfectly well that he would never be allowed to receive it. It was only a notice to the Italian Government that the "committee" of Bresci's fellow Anarchists in this country were ready for further acts of violence.

The killing of Humbert has given an impetus to this latter-day Anarchy in America. It has made positive converts of doubting Italians, and attracted the attention of hundreds who believed that the "times are out of joint" but had heretofore seen no cure in Anarchy. Paterson

Anarchists deny publicly that they were aware of Bresci's intentions when he sailed for Europe. But their every action belies their words. They are almost insanely proud of having known him. His portrait on a button they wear in their coat lapels. They talk about giving poor, innocent little Madeline an Anarchist education which will perpetuate the memory of her father. The editorials of "La Question Sociale" tell at great length why Humbert deserved to die, and what a glorious martyr Bresci is.

The question has been many times asked since Humbert's assassination whether our own Government is in danger and whether the President of the United States is regarded by this class of its residents as belonging to the same category with the rulers of Europe.

While any Anarchist purpose is a subject upon which it is extremely difficult to speak positively, many things indicate that, far from wishing to kill an American President, Italian Anarchists hope for his protection and preservation, and the same is true of Edward VII. of Great Britain.

In the present status of modern Anarchy, England and the United States are the only asylums in the entire civilized world for men who believe the king-killing philosophy. Without press censorship, with only a nominal restriction to their wildest utterances, Anarchists find an opportunity for the spread of the propaganda in Great Britain and America which is denied them elsewhere. Their creed has never yet in this country been the slightest hindrance to their earning a livelihood. They thoroughly realize this, and know that these favorable conditions would be reversed if American sentiment were once aroused by an attack on the Chief Executive of the Nation. In a recent editorial on the death of Humbert, an Anarchist paper in San Francisco said: "The Anarchists are treated with sufficiently gross injustice, even in this country. But they are at least allowed the right of conducting a peaceful propaganda; and the consequence is that McKinley, hated and despised though he is, needs no body-guard to protect him from the attacks of revolutionists. So is it in Great Britain. No official there has ever been killed by an Anarchist. England has adopted a comparatively liberal policy

toward revolutionary propagandists, and is reaping the fruits of her wisdom in the security of her ruling class."

Enrico Malatesta when last heard from was living quietly over an Italian bakery in an obscure corner of London. The Italian Foreign Office is said to be making appeals to England to have him extradited and sent back to Italy by international courtesy.

Malatesta's most able lieutenant now in this country is Pedro Esteve, the present editor of "La Question Sociale" in Paterson. A more amiable, cultivated, and really scholarly man it would be hard to find anywhere. He is about forty-five years old. If you knew nothing of his antecedents you would take him at once for a professor in some university of the Continent. With his wife and six-year-old son he lives in a comfortable little flat on Clay Street, in the Italian quarter of Paterson. His lodgings are plainly and simply furnished, but are in excellent taste and exceedingly comfortable. On the walls of the parlor are bronze medallions of Bakunin, Prince Kropotkin, Valiant, who threw a bomb into the French Chamber of Deputies, and several other of the exemplars of modern Anarchy. On his book-shelves, along with French pamphlets by Jean Grave, are Emerson's Essays. For Emerson, Mr. Esteve maintains, was a simon-pure Anarchist without knowing it.

While almost totally ignorant of the English language, Mr. Esteve speaks French, Spanish, and Italian with equal fluency.

"Gaetano Bresci," he said, "was my friend. I regard his acquaintance as perhaps the greatest honor in my life. In killing the King of Italy he realized the futility of attempting to overthrow the system of Italian despotism. He was not insane enough to expect that a change of government would follow his act. But how else could he let the people of Italy know that there was any such force in the world as Anarchy? Anarchists there are hunted like wild beasts. We cannot meet; we cannot even whisper to each other. We cannot publish papers or write books. The Government had come to the conclusion that it had stamped out Anarchy, but when Bresci struck it realized that it had failed."

The Man from Glengarry

By *Ralph Connor*

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Chapter VII.—Maimie

BEFORE Hughie came back from the sugar camp, the minister had returned from the presbytery, bringing with him his wife's niece, Maimie St. Clair, who had come from her home in a Western city to meet him. Her father, Eugene St. Clair, was a wealthy lumberman, of the firm of Raymond, St. Clair & Co. Seventeen years before this time he had married Mrs. Murray's elder sister, and established his home with every prospect of a prosperous and happy life, but after four short, bright years of almost perfect joy, his young wife, his heart's idol, after two days' illness, fluttered out from her beautiful home, leaving with her broken-hearted husband her little boy and a baby girl two weeks old. Then Eugene St. Clair besought his sister to come out from England and preside over his home and care for his children; and that he might forget his grief, he gave himself, heart and mind, to his business. Wealth came to him, and under his sister's rule his home became a place of cultured elegance and a center of fashionable pleasure.

Miss Frances St. Clair was a woman of the world, proud of her family-tree, whose roots disappeared in the depths of past centuries, and devoted to the pursuit and cultivation of those graces and manners that are supposed to distinguish people of birth and breeding from the common sort. Indeed, from common men and things she shrank almost with horror. The entrance of "trade" into the social sphere of her life she would regard as an impertinent intrusion. It was as much as she could bear to allow the approach of "commerce," which her brother represented. She supposed, of course, there must be people to carry on the trades and

industries of the country—very worthy people, too—but these were people one could not be expected to know. Miss St. Clair thanked heaven that she had had the advantages of an English education and up-bringing, and she lamented the stubborn democratic opinions of her brother, who insisted that Harry should attend the public school. She was not surprised, therefore, though greatly grieved, that Harry chose his friends in school with a fine disregard of "their people." It was with surprise amounting to pain that she found herself one day introduced by her nephew to Billie Barclay, who turned out to be the son of Harry's favorite confectioner. To his aunt's remonstrance it seemed to Harry a sufficient reply that Billie was a "brick" and a shining "quarter" on the school Rugby team.

"But, Harry, think of his people," urged his aunt.

"Oh, rot!" replied her irreverent nephew; "I don't play with his people."

"Yes, but Harry, you don't expect to make him your friend?"

"But he *is* my friend, and I don't care what his people are. Besides, I think his Governor is a fine old boy, and I know he gives us jolly good taffy."

"But, Harry," answered his aunt in despair, "you are positively dreadful. Why can't you make friends in your own set? There is Hubert Evans and the Langford boys."

"Evans!" snorted Harry with contempt; "beastly snob, and the Langfords are regular Mollies;" whereupon Miss St. Clair gave up her nephew as impossible. But Billie did not repeat his visit to his friend Harry's home. Miss Frances St. Clair had a way of looking through her *pince-nez* that even a boy could understand and would seek to avoid.