

TO THE TUILERIES.

10TH AUGUST, 1792.

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On the 14th of July, 1789, fell the decayed and effete feudalism; on the 10th of August, 1792, fell the still powerful monarchy, and a hundred years after its downfall its partisans still hope to re-establish it and to bring about a new era of shame in France. The 10th of August was far bloodier than the 14th of July, but it was, in the highest degree, a day of the people. On the 14th of July the people of Paris had fought, led by Camille Desmoulins and by other leaders. On the 10th of August, the people fought alone, without leaders, only led by the need of fulfilling revolutionary duty and by revolutionary ardour. That is why it is such a great day. On the 14th of July the carefully-planned tricks of the Court were frustrated by the Revolution, and the Court were defeated, though they thought they could overcome the fine speeches of the National Assembly by phrases. After the victorious storming of the Bastille there was universal joy and congratulation. The Third Estate—bourgeois, peasant and workman—was overjoyed, the goal was reached, the golden age had returned. This smoke of peace did not last long. The victors soon split up, looking after their interests, and the conquered, determining to get their power back, dreamed of revenge through treachery.

The bourgeoisie was satisfied and wanted to call a halt in the Revolution, but against them were the workers, who, excited by the Revolution, touched by Socialistic cravings, demanded freedom and equality, while the peasants had got what they wanted, because they had burnt the castles of the nobles and had killed feudalism by murdering all the feudal lords they could get hold of.

People talk a great deal about the glorious night of the 4th of August (1789) which freed France from feudalism, and in which the representatives of the nobles so generously gave up their privileges. What magnanimity! It was due to the revolutionary energy of the peasants, who did not wait for parliamentary resolutions, that on the 4th of August there were really no more privileges of the nobility. The National Assembly were then face to face with accomplished facts, and could only concur and say, "Amen."

The history of the world is not made by Parliaments. They are only the puppets which are pulled by others behind the scenes, sometimes by more or less clever statesmen sitting round a green table, sometimes by the sovereign people acting in the streets. The farce, comedy, or tragedy is always being played. This time it was a tragedy, the greatest which the world had hitherto seen, and the poet was the people. Poet and actor, he is not called a dramatist, but a man of action.

Beaten on the 14th of July, the reactionary Court kept quiet for several months, and in the beginning of October (1789) a new conspiracy was formed. But, in spite of the contented bourgeoisie, the people left Paris for Versailles, and brought back the King and his family, keeping them as hostages. We cannot give all the history of the matter here. But there

was systematic treachery on the part of the Court, high treason and treason against France; the bourgeoisie was privy to the plot, and conspired with royalty against the people, wishing to use the power of the monarchy as a barrier to keep back the Revolution. The workers and lower middle classes became more and more revolutionary, and were aided by the peasants, who, having got possession of part of the land, were satisfied, and were prepared to defend their property by force of arms.

In June, 1791, the flight of the King snapped the last link between the people and the monarchy, and in July, 1791, the massacre of the Champ de Mars broke the last link between the people and the bourgeoisie. The stupid King, his frivolous but crafty wife, and the nobility conspired with the foreigner, so that the hordes of soldiers of united monarchical Europe might enslave France and overthrow the Republic.

War began, and the French armies, commanded by treacherous officers and generals, could not resist the armies of the Allies.

The National Assemblies did not rise to the height of the situation. The Girondins, who in 1792 assumed power, were too obsequious to the Court and its minions; they partly did not understand the guilt of the traitors, and partly they had not the courage to punish the guilty King and nobles. In July, 1792, the Court thought that the time had come when it could effect its designs, the mask was thrown off, the Girondist Ministry was sent packing to the devil. This roused the Girondins, who liked office. In order to get back to power they talked about the promenade of the people in the Tuileries, (June 20, 1792), when one hundred thousand working men paid a visit to the King in his palace without hurting a hair of his head or his family's. It was a festive warning, but the blinded Court did not heed it, and the King was happy because he received news from the seat of war that treachery was doing a good work.

Meanwhile, the National Assembly did nothing. Instead of taking measures to defend the threatened Revolution, the members took part on the 7th of July in a grotesque farce—the famous kiss of Amourette—a regular farcical performance when, in the open Parliament, royalists, priests, Girondins, and Jacobins all fell on each other's necks, swore to forget all past quarrels, and, in a brotherly way, agreed to defend the fatherland. Naturally, in spite of this epidemic of kissing and swearing to defend their country, the royalists and the priests went on merrily conspiring. The third anniversary of the fall of the Bastille was gloomy and troubled. The air was electric, everyone felt that something must happen. A few days before the National Assembly, which had at last become half awake, had passed a resolution declaring that the fatherland was in danger. From all parts of France volunteers came in, from all parts delegates came to Paris to strengthen the revolutionary party.

The Prussians were advancing, the French army was retiring bewildered. The bravery of the revolutionary soldiers was useless owing to the treachery of the royalist officers.

At the end of July the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto was received in Paris. By this every Frenchman who fought for his country and for the Revolution was declared a rebel and threatened with all the penalties of martial law, and Paris was to be completely destroyed if anything happened to the King. This ridiculous proclamation fell like a bombshell in a magazine, passions were at once inflamed. There was nothing to be hoped from the Government nor from Parliament. As a matter of fact, the Government, *i.e.*, the Court, was the secret headquarters of the enemies of the country, and the National Assembly had not courage enough to act.

It looked as if France and the Revolution were lost, unless the people rose and saved themselves.*

The people rose to the height of the demand made on them. The catastrophe seemed near, for the Prussians advanced and were only a few days' march from Paris. At the Tuileries the treacherous pair (the King and Queen) were looking forward to the moment when the enemy would put down the revolted subjects and end the Revolution by smothering it in blood. But the people were watching and were ready.

The Marseillais, who had joined the Federation at the Fête of July 14th, but had left Paris, came back, bringing the "Marseillaise" with them :

Allons enfants de la patrie !
 Le jour de gloire est arrivé
 Contre nous de la tyrannie
 L' e'tendard sanglant est levé.
 Aux armes, citoyens !
 Formez vos bataillons !
 Marchons, marchons !

And the people prepared for action. They had no time to lose. Every day the Prussians came nearer. "To the Tuileries!" was the cry. On the night of August 9-10th the tocsin sounded. The people marched against the Tuileries, which was defended by the Swiss and had been turned into a regular citadel.

Where were the people's leaders. Where were Danton, Robespierre, Camille Desmoulins and Marat? There were no leaders. They had lost their heads or they were conspicuous by their absence or they marched with the people like common soldiers, as Camille Desmoulins and Danton. We have letters from Camille's wife relating to that night which show what lack of counsel there was on the leaders' side.

There is after all nothing to be wondered at in this. The idea of the Revolution did not come from any one person ; it came from the mass, who were resolved to fight for truth and justice.

Aux armes, citoyens !
 Marchons, marchons !
 Aux Tuileries.

It was a titanic and heroic call. The Swiss fought well ; they were fanatics in their faith ; they were paid to die for their master, and they died. And the people fought well. They were the Revolution, and thousands were wounded and killed. It was like a deadly struggle of a lion with a royal tiger. The people were the lion and they conquered, but it was the bloodiest day of the great French Revolution. The royal family fled to the National Assembly. And with the Tuileries fell the citadel of royalty, and the kingdom fell.

The people had conquered their deadliest foe—the foe in their home, and having done so, they were free to deal with the enemy. The Commune—the glorious child of the 10th of August—marks an epoch in the history of thought. The Commune of the 10th of August, 1792, was the head and arm of the Revolution. The Revolution was saved, and saved by the people. The French Revolution was not, as has been said, a Revolution of the bourgeoisie. The great mass of the bourgeoisie was opposed to the Revolution.

* Liebknecht has hardly done justice to the part played by Danton.—J. B.

All that is great and glorious in the French Revolution comes from the people, from the fighting people.

It was not possible then for the Revolution to be a Socialistic Revolution, but all that is great in the French Revolution has in it Socialistic leanings, and it was the precursor of the future Revolution.

The fighters in the French Revolution, though they were not Socialists, were fighting for the proletariat and for Socialism.

And that is why we celebrate the 10th of August, 1792.

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(Translated by Jacques Bonhomme.)
