

fired at and bombarded by the Communists with the sole object of adding to the ruin, were justified in calling for strong measures, and the Government was equally justified in applying them. All the spectators of those sights will say that sympathy for such fiends is totally misplaced, and that their immediate destruction, so long as they continued their work of fire and murder was absolutely indispensable. The ordinary forms of trial are now resumed; but it ought to be acknowledged that the Government, represented by military authority, had no alternative but to suspend them while the struggle lasted.

Now that it is over, the feeling in France is that Paris has been made to pay for Europe, and that the Communal insurrection was far from being an entirely French question. It is urged that Paris happened to present at a given moment certain political and material conditions which facilitated an explosion, but that the true causes of that explosion exist elsewhere as completely as they did in Paris. There is exaggeration in this view of the matter, but it is correct within certain limits. It is exaggerated, because it does not sufficiently take into account the important action of the purely French elements of the Commune; it is correct in principle, because every country is more or less menaced by a similar outbreak at some time or other. Most of the revolutions which have occurred in Europe during this century have been direct or indirect results of a previous revolution in Paris; and on the present occasion it is more than ever probable that similar risings will be attempted elsewhere, because of the cosmopolitan character of the agents who have just been defeated in France. The objects which the Commune proposed to attain are avowedly and publicly pursued by its friends in other countries of Europe: those countries may not yet be ripe for action, as Paris was; but if they continue to be worked up by the Internationale, their turn will some day come. It is because they are convinced of this that the Parisians argue that they have suffered as a warning to the world; but however right they may be in that impression, it remains indisputable that the recent insurrection

would have been no more possible in Paris than it is at Madrid or Brussels at this moment, if the revolutionary tendencies which may be said to exist in a chronic state amongst part of its population had not prepared the way for it, and facilitated its success. The share of the Internationale in the responsibility of these events is enormous; but the Internationale did not do anything itself; it found half the work done beforehand by French Socialists, by French Communists, by French agitators, who had been conspiring for years before the Internationale was created. That society organised the discontented; it brought together various elements which had previously been conflicting between themselves; it supplied leaders, and probably money; but it was able to do all this solely because Paris was a willing instrument in its hands. Paris must accept its own share of the blame, and a very large share it is. Its lower classes furnished the soldiers of the Central Committee; its middle classes stood, for the most part, apathetically aside when the danger came; its upper classes ran away. With such facts as these before our eyes, it is not possible to admit that Paris is an innocent victim, sacrificed for the enlightenment of Europe. Paris might have escaped if it had not lent itself to its own ruin. Europe may feel the deepest sympathy for its sufferings, but it cannot acquit it of the charge of having provoked them by its own acts.

The French Chamber has appointed a Committee of Investigation into the circumstances which brought about the revolution of the 18th March. These circumstances are somewhat imperfectly known thus far, and it is not yet possible to indicate them with absolute precision; but enough has come out already to enable us to judge the main features of the story, and to recognise that the war of classes has seriously commenced, and that the entire system of society is attacked. It is for the Governments of Europe to consider whether they can find the means of satisfying the appetites which are growing round them, or whether they will crush them out by force before it is too late.

PARIS, *June 20th*, 1871.