

# Malatesta, the "Stormy Petrel" of Anarchy.

So much has been written lately about Malatesta that one needs a special excuse for saying more about this remarkable anarchist. The excuse offered here is that much of what has been written about him wasn't true, and also that much that is significant has never been told although it is true.

There is reason to suppose that this Italian, whose name is Malatesta, who has been writing and editing for many years, occupies a much more important position than has generally been assigned to him and is considerably more than Emma Goldman about the murder of President McKinley.

Malatesta—his name invariably has been printed Enrico, which is considered by the "Department of Criminal Investigation" as Scotland Yard to be the real name of the organized anarchists in London, numbering between 3,000 and 4,000 members. He is also known to be in close touch with anarchist organizations in America, France and Italy, and he is supposed to be the London police of being a good deal and moving spirit of international affiliations of anarchists. He has a few intimate friends outside of anarchist circles and outside of the inner circles, and from talks with some of these, I gather that they fully believe Malatesta to be the anarchist leader.

He is not only watched continually by the police today, but anyone who wishes to see him is followed. He settled in London four years ago and has been so cautious that no charge of meeting to violence has been brought against him, but his liberty is not so great in London and Italy, and in either of these countries he would be arrested if he could be caught.

The talk concerning this Italian anarchist, his wealth and title, his suspected of weaving plots while detectives representing at least four nations look on with watching in vain for some one on which to hold him are more dramatic than any of the things that have been written about Malatesta is his own name and family is one of the oldest and most respected in Italy today. As Malatesta has inherited the title of baron and would have come into a considerable property if his family had not disowned him on account of his revolutionary tendencies. He has

a brother Henry, who is in the public service in Italy today.

Malatesta was intended by his father to be a scientist, and after an excellent education under tutors was sent to Milan University to prepare for the study of medicine. He was a turbulent, headstrong youth, and soon became the leader of the more restless spirits at the university. Before he had time to graduate he was arrested as the leader of a revolutionary movement and, although his family managed to get him out of jail, they informed him that thenceforth they would have nothing to do with him unless he changed his views about the iniquity of all forms of government. Malatesta promptly refused and was invited by the family to go and be hanged.

He plunged into all sorts of plots against the Italian government after that, and for this complicity in the riots of 1893 was imprisoned again. After his release he went to America. He seems to have spent most of his time there in quiet conferences with anarchist leaders. Emma Goldman and Johann Most were his intimates, but, unlike them, he kept himself in the background as much as possible.

Malatesta came to London three years ago, and his headquarters ever since have been at 112 High Street, in the rather squalid district in the north of London known as Islington. His place is not far from the lodgings of the famous organ grinder, who is unquestionably the oldest son of the late Earl Poullet, and who is trying to establish his claim to the title.

High street, in the neighborhood where the famous anarchist's lair is situated, narrows down into a shabby little lane flanked by unimposing shops and a few shabby dwellings. It is in a room over a little wine shop with the name Defendi over the door that Malatesta lodges.

Defendi is said to be an intimate friend of the anarchist leader and is declared to be a revolutionary exile from Italy, and his son, a boy of 17, has been informally adopted by Malatesta and is his closest companion.

Two women who live opposite Defendi's shop positively declined to allow our photographer to obtain a picture of the shop from their first-story windows, though they were obviously poor and the request was accompanied by an offer to pay for the privilege. One of them said:

"They are queer people and I don't want to do anything to get their ill will. They seem peaceful enough, but we all know what they are, and if we don't know what they might do if they took a grudge against any one

than likely to lead to surveillance by Scotland Yard officials."

Malatesta's shop is a bare little place with one or two broken bicycles about, odds and ends of lead pipe and a few old gas meters. He is a keen student of chemistry and electricity, and is said to have made one or two electrical inventions that would have brought him money if he had not been opposed to the idea of patents. If he had not been so busy promoting anarchy he might have been as useful a citizen as his fellow countryman Marconi.

Those who believe most firmly that this man is the leading spirit of the anarchists all over the world deny strenuously that he gets a penny of salary. "He works too hard to be on salary," observed one of them. His hard life and prison experience make him look much older than he really is. Whereas his age usually has been given as 50, I am told that he is only 38. He has a heavily-lined face, jet-black hair and beard, and piercing black eyes. He is a teetotaler, or the next thing to it, and has vigorous views on the subject of strong drink. His only dissipation, so far as is known, is a cheap pipe.

To all seeming he is one of the most quiet, mild and peaceable of men. He is known to have expelled from authority among London anarchists one or two men who talked too violently. His voice is soft and pleasant, and it is said of him that he wouldn't personally kill so much as a fly. His former roommate at Defendi's, a chum of his at college and a companion in many revolutionary adventures, was dropped by him and requested to move elsewhere because he kicked up a row in Soho one night, flourished a revolver and talked about slaying somebody.

No, the soft-voiced Malatesta declares that he doesn't believe in killing people. He disappeared from London last before King Humbert was slain, and turned up in Italy, although the police there didn't know of it then. He was back in London by the time Bresi had freed his fatal shot. Malatesta, of course, disavowed all knowledge of this deed, but had to admit that he was well acquainted with Bresi, for the fact was generally known. He was watched by London detectives and all sorts of traps were laid for him, but nothing could be found that definitely connected him with the crime.

In the same way detectives did their best to connect him with the murder of the empress of Austria. He was known to have been in touch with her slayer, but there was nothing to prove that Malatesta had planned

this crime from his little back room in Islington.

Did Enrico Malatesta plot the death of President McKinley? It is safe to say that no document will ever be found to prove it. But this soft-spoken anarchist seems to have had an especial grudge against the conditions in America, apparently because of the number of rich men there. He declared recently to one of my informants that there were more anarchists in America today than in any other country in the world, and that the number would increase steadily. He ranted bitterly about oppression there. He was especially solicitous about the Filipinos, and said President McKinley was as much an imperialist as any European monarch. "There is in America," he said, "a despotic monarchy that rules by gold," and went on with exactly the sort of talk that is familiar in the columns of yellow journalism. "America," he said, "is producing more real anarchists than any other country." In Malatesta's view, a "real" anarchist is one who acts and doesn't talk.

It would be interesting to see whether Emma Goldman denies that she was as much influenced by Malatesta as Czolgosz declared himself to be influenced by Emma Goldman.

Despite the best efforts of the London police, Malatesta and Emma Goldman were in frequent close communication during her stay in London, as they were when she Italian was in New York.

I was told yesterday on what seemed rather good authority that in my informant's opinion Malatesta made the time of his visit to America at the time of his visit to America. That was four or five years ago, and owing to the youthfulness of the assassin, the statement seems improbable, but the bare possibility of its being true makes it worth giving. If it could be proved, its importance obviously would be great indeed.

This Italian, whom no self-respecting London journalist ever mentions in print without calling him "the stormy petrel of anarchy," seems to be as crafty as Prof. Moriarty in "Sherlock Holmes." The Italian police are even more anxious than the Scotland Yard folks to get a hold on him. At the Italian embassy in London it was admitted in answer to my queries that the man has been under constant surveillance in their behalf ever since he came to London. In spite of this, however, he not only slipped over to Italy just before King Humbert's death, but three years ago he had gone over and even taken with him his adopted son. By the time the detectives got on his track, however, he was back safe and sound in London. Some time ago the embassy was notified that Malatesta had

gone to Canada, but satisfied itself that he had not left England.

The secretary said that the various Italian ambassadors had orders to keep under surveillance such notorious countrymen of theirs as Malatesta, and added that the consul at New York kept a careful watch over several of them. He said, too, that the Italian government, since the assassination of King Humbert, has increased the rigor of its precautions against anarchists and that he is able to state that the ministry is preparing to adopt drastic measures to wipe them out. The staff of detectives whose business it is to guard the king has been greatly increased.

The secretary of the embassy confirmed the statement that the Malatesta family was one of the oldest and most honored in Italy. He refused to say definitely that the anarchist was a scion of the family, but assurance on that point is hardly needed.

Although Malatesta keeps profoundly secret whatever connection he may have with the violent side of anarchy, he makes no mystery of his adherence to the philosophical side of it. He even wrote an article on it not long ago in the hope of getting it printed in one of the most staid and dignified of the English magazines. The magazine, however, wasn't going in for that sort of thing, and the article never got into print. It was not rejected for lack of literary ability, however, as one may judge from this concluding paragraph of it, which I copied from the original manuscript:

"We anarchists regret violence and deplore its sickening consequences, but we don't shut our eyes to the true condition of the struggle. We only ask for liberty of propaganda and organization, expecting the triumph of our ideas not by a coup de main, not by the employment of force, but by the full consent of the people. Let us have liberty, it will be the safest way for all concerned."

Since the murder of President McKinley Malatesta has been watched more closely than ever, and for the last week or two has rarely stirred from his room. He sits there alone most of the time, reading and meditating.

CURTIS BROWN.

Deposit Place for Ransom.

Berlin, Oct. 12—According to reports received here from Sofia, the captors of Miss Stone demand that the ransom shall be deposited at Semakoff, Bulgaria.

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