

Although not acknowledged as such by the Bolsheviks, Bakunin (accent on the "u,") is one of their ancestors, a prominent leader in the revolutionary process which culminated in Bolshevism.

BAKUNIN, FATHER OF ANARCHISM

By WALTER GÖRLITZ

BORN on April 18, 1814, at Pryamukhino, an estate in the Province of Tver, Bakunin was the scion of an old, distinguished family of the nobility. His father, Alexander Bakunin, was master over several thousand serfs and marshal of the nobility of his native district. One of his ancestors had distinguished himself in the diplomatic service under Catherine II, and one of his relatives was a general in the Tsarist Army. The revolutionary heritage which was later to unfold to such an extent in the son was already apparent in the father: he was a member of one of the two secret conspiracies formed by officers and members of the aristocracy which led to the Decembrist rising, and after the failure of this rising he had to go to Siberia for a certain length of time. In his mother's family, that of the Counts Muravyov, we also find a revolutionary tradition, as several of her relatives were among the leaders of the Decembrists, one of them, Colonel Sergius Muravyov-Apostol, having been hanged at the Tsar's orders in St. Petersburg in 1826.

In view of the reactionary character of Russian absolutism and the scanty hopes for liberal reforms, many progressive minds in Russia were convinced that there could be no other way but revolution. On the other hand, since an urban middle class and industrial proletariat did not evolve until late in the nineteenth century and the peasant masses continued in their traditional passivity, these ideas of revolution were maintained for a long time almost exclusively by the nobility, as this was the only class to have all the means of education at its disposal. Almost all the standard-bearers of revolt, from the Decembrists (named after the December uprising of 1825) to Lenin (whose real name was Ulyanov) were descendants of the nobility.

The youth of Mikhail Bakunin provides no inkling of the thorny path which fate had destined him to tread one day. He grew up in a comfortable, wealthy, and secure environment. Following the tradition of his

family, Michael attended the Artillery School in St. Petersburg to become an officer, if possible of the Guards, and graduated after having done fairly well in his final examinations. He was disappointed when, instead of being ordered to the Guards, he was posted with an artillery detachment stationed in the provinces. His duties did not offer him any satisfaction whatever. Soon he neglected them entirely, spending days on end lying on his bed in a dressing gown, idling away his time with daydreams. Finally, after less than a year, filled with loathing at so much emptiness and boredom, he resigned his commission. After that he lived either on his father's estate or in Moscow, a young aristocrat who, like so many of his peers, did not have to work for a living.

Outwardly, Bakunin was of a striking appearance. With his tall, athletic figure, his wide shoulders, and his big, impressive head with its shock of waving brown hair, he seemed like a *bogaty*r, one of those mythical heroes of old Russian legends. His features pointed to frankness and good nature. A likeable fellow, one might have thought, with such unusual intellectual gifts that he would seem to be born for more than whiling away his life with the vanities of aristocratic *salons*. His talents were obviously far above the average. He possessed a lively imagination, a brilliant intellectual grasp, wrote in an exquisite style, and was a fluent, even inspiring speaker. But his stock of actual knowledge was fragmentary.

Thus equipped, or rather unequipped, he entered the circle of Moscow's intellectual *jeunesse dorée*, which was at that time greedily absorbing the philosophy of the Occident. It was, so to speak, a period of intellectual spring awakening. Russia was opening her eyes after a long hibernation and, full of thirst for knowledge, seeking to catch up with the culture and sciences of Europe. An enthusiastic feeling of being called upon to create new and better forms

of life permeated all these easily inflammable minds. The first ideas of Pan-Slavism, the mission of the Slavic nations under Russia's leadership, mingled chaotically with this youthful storm and stress. Men who were led by the traditions of the ancient Moscow period in their desire to see the Pan-Slavic idea materialize, united in this national urge for power with the "Westerners," who deemed a new liberal and democratic Russia to be an essential condition for the realization of this great aim. Their chief representatives were the poet Alexander Herzen, the illegitimate son of a rich Moscow aristocrat and a German woman, a brilliant, sensitive, and romantically inclined man, and his friend Ogarev, the scion of a rich family of the nobility.

These young people were now joined by Bakunin, whose active mind was thirsting for occupation and fulfillment. All of them were under the influence of a new spiritual revelation, the philosophy of Hegel. The life of the world as the eternal rational process of pure intellect, to be apprehended by perception: that was the new gospel filling all these brains with ecstasy. Side by side with the old, torpid world of the state Church with its uneducated priests, the cult of reason affected the minds of the young people like fermenting wine. All that ever was, is, or will be is, according to Hegel, only divine reason in its unfolding. "Whatever is, is rational; and only that which is rational is," that is the quintessence of his philosophy. It seemed to give the reply to all the questions of life, and so these young Russians hungrily seized upon it. Their night-long passionate debates over tea and cigarettes on every single paragraph of the master's doctrine were the forerunners of the later nihilistic discussions with their pale, feverishly excited, unkempt participants who, forgetting everything around them, in endless loquacity tore everything to pieces and misinterpreted it all.

THE state in which Bakunin and his friends were living was the Russia of Tsar Nicholas I who, after the Decembrist revolt, ruthlessly suppressed any liberal thought. Hence it was not long before doubt made its appearance in these nightly discussions as to how this reality, which could not be rational, was to be reconciled to Hegel's doctrine. Bakunin went to Berlin to study the master's wisdom on the spot. Herzen and his friends loaned

him the money for the journey. For Bakunin this was the decisive step of his life. His stay abroad uprooted him from his accustomed environment and, as he lacked true moral backbone, he soon lost all stability.

In the winter of 1840/41, when Bakunin began his studies, the "Hegelian Leftists" held sway over the lecture halls in the Berlin University. Bakunin learned to his delight that there was a truth which went even beyond the master's truth, a truth able to solve those contradictions over which he had almost despaired. Lacking any inherent creative power, he could only appropriate the ideas of others—which, moreover, he misinterpreted—and carry them to boundless extremes. The ideological system which he built up in this way, although full of bold conclusions, was devoid of any reality. Outwardly, too, his studies showed little in the way of results. He reported to Herzen on his attendance at lectures, and took part in new, night-long debates over tea and cigarettes on the riddles of the world, at which Turgenyev, who was later to gain such fame as an author, was also present; but with that restlessness which formed Bakunin's most outstanding characteristic he suddenly broke all this off.

He gave up his studies and in 1842, with a publication on *Schelling and the Revelation, Critique of the Latest Attempt at Reaction in Philosophy*, he appeared on the scene as a reformer of German philosophy. His work captivates the reader by its brilliant style; thanks to his quick grasp he had mastered the German language in a surprisingly short time. But through the tangle of more or less misunderstood Hegelian theses, the complete anarchist is already discernible between the lines. He places the idea in juxtaposition to reality and demands that the idea be burned at the stake so that, like the phoenix of legend, it may arise purified from the ashes. This means no less than the annihilation of the existing world in favor of a phantom. For the idea, he proclaims, everything must be sacrificed, even one's life. The first strains of the marching song of that all-embracing revolution, whose apostle he was soon to become, are already audible in this work: "The day of the great decision of the battle of nations is approaching, and victory must be ours."

The Tsar ordered him to return to Russia. He disregarded the order, and as a result he

was expelled from the nobility and banished for life from his country. The 5,000 rubles Herzen and Ogarev had given him were soon spent, and Bakunin got into financial difficulties. His family could not support him, since he was banished; so he recklessly made debts everywhere, unable to make an honest living by working.

From Berlin he moved to Dresden, where he became acquainted with a number of German democratic revolutionaries. Here, under the pseudonym of Jules Elyzard, he published an article on the reactionary movement in Germany which openly revealed his revolutionary bent. In it, as a violent opponent of any idea supporting the state, he espoused the literal interpretation of the motto of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity. What he demanded was the ruthless destruction of existing society and its political forms of expression. "The air is sultry, it is pregnant with storms" we read. He ended with the words:

Open your spiritual eyes, let the dead bury their dead, and let yourselves be convinced finally that the spirit, the eternally young, new-born spirit, is not to be sought in ruined halls Let us put our faith in the eternal spirit, which only destroys and annihilates because it is the bottomless, creative source of all life. The lust for destruction is also a creative lust.

That was the first fanfare of nihilism. But as to what was to come after the destruction of all existing things, Bakunin was completely in the dark. He was led solely by the vague hope that something would arise from chaos which would be better than the present. In his *Principles of Revolution* he later proclaimed:

By revolution we mean a radical change, a replacement of all forms of contemporary European life, without exception, by new, entirely opposed forms. If all existing forms are bad, new ones can only arise when no single old one has been spared destruction, i.e., entirely new forms of life can only arise from complete amorphism.

Here we see revealed a monstrous paralogism; for, side by side with the demand for destruction, there is no program pointing into the future. It was the lowest type of slum proletariat that became the shock troops of Bakunin's revolution. Himself a man of no profession, he instinctively took up the cause of the professionless elements.

The state of financial embarrassment never released the apostle of anarchism for the rest of his life. To escape the clutches of his creditors in Dresden, he went to Zürich. But he could not stay there for long either, as the police soon took an in-

terest in him. Leaving considerable debts behind, he fled to Geneva, and from there to Paris, the rendezvous of all political emigrants. Here he met Alexander Herzen again, who had meanwhile also left Russia and was furthering the cause of the liberalization of the Russian form of government with his periodical *The Bell* in London. "I met him at a street corner," Herzen narrates. "He was walking with three friends and, just as in Moscow, he was preaching something to them, constantly stopping and waving his cigarette around."

As always, he was living off his debts. He hardly did any work at all, the literary production of the years from 1840 to 1847 consisting of five newspaper articles. What occupied him with an almost religious exclusiveness was now the "Revolution" as such. To a friend he wrote: "I am waiting for my, or—if you prefer—for our common wife, the Revolution. Only then shall we be happy, that is to say ourselves, when the entire surface of the earth is in flames." He believed in some immediate catastrophe which would entail a general upheaval, either by an explosion from below or by a *coup d'état*, a revolutionary dictatorship from above. But his sanguine nature always caused him grotesquely to overestimate all realistic possibilities. Herzen once said of him that he always took the second month of pregnancy for the ninth.

WHEN the year 1848 came with its revolutions in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, Bakunin was filled with the most fantastic hopes. Over the democratic intoxication of the middle classes during these months of spring, his figure fluttered like that of a demon filled with a mad lust for destruction. In Paris he fought on the barricades with such wild passion that even his close friends shrank from him. "What a man!" the revolutionary Cossidière exclaimed in consternation. "On the first day of revolution he is a real treasure, on the second he should simply be shot." The Provisional Government soon began to feel uneasy about Bakunin's lack of restraint and his influence on the labor class. So they got rid of him by persuading him that he should be closer to the Russian border to call up his Slavic brothers to join the fight against reaction in Europe.

Bakunin enthusiastically seized upon this idea. He hurried via Cologne, Leipzig, and Breslau to Prague, where a congress of all

Slavic peoples met. Here, too, his feverish revolutionary impetuosity immediately attracted attention. When the Hapsburg powers brought up cannons against the discontented Czechs, he was one of the first to mount the barricades. However, the rebels were no match for the troops; the uprising collapsed in streams of blood; and Bakunin fled under cover of darkness to Germany.

He found little to his taste in the German revolution; he did not care for the German love of order. Although the revolutionary waves were gradually calming down everywhere, he was carried along by new fantastic hopes in which national and revolutionary dreams were merged. He addressed a bombastic appeal to the Slavs, calling upon them to join in brotherhood with all revolutionary peoples and to destroy the Hapsburg Empire as the stronghold of reaction. The Slavs, so he proclaimed, being young peoples, are destined to pour their inner wealth like the fresh sap of spring into the veins of the dried-up life of the European peoples. For Bohemia he drew up a plan for a rebellion which included the dictatorship of the proletariat and the general distribution of all possessions.

In 1849 we find him again in Dresden where, as a sort of Red dictator, he took over the leadership in the May revolt against the King and the Government of Saxony. The wildest plans raced through his brain; he trembled with lust for destruction, ordered fuel and pitch rings to be piled up in the town hall, and wanted the opera house and the beautiful buildings of the Zwinger to be set on fire. He would have liked nothing better than to have all Dresden go up in flames.

But the end was only defeat again. Bakunin was taken prisoner. The Government of Saxony condemned him to death but then, upon the request of the Vienna Cabinet, extradited him to Austria, where he was again condemned to death. Only a request by the Tsar for his extradition saved him from being executed.

AS a prisoner of the state he was held captive in the ill-famed Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul in St. Petersburg. Here he composed a confession to the Tsar by the "repentant sinner Mikhail Bakunin," in the hope of thereby achieving his pardon. In it he confessed to having harbored criminal plans against the Tsar, against Russia, and "all divine and human

laws"; for the rest, however, he represented himself as a sincere Pan-Slavist and national Russian and hinted at his abhorrence of Western Europe with its skepticism and moral decay. This was spoken to suit the Russian Slavophiles, whose ideology was closely related to his own Pan-Slavism. There is no doubt that at that time this idea was actually predominating for the moment in his inconstant mind. Since the revolt from below had failed, he now placed his hopes in a powerful revolutionary dictatorship, in the *coup d'état* from above. At times he was seriously considering a people's Tsar who might bring about the Revolution.

However, if he was counting on such ideas making an impression on Nicholas I, the man who looked like a field marshal and had the brains of a drill sergeant, he was grossly mistaken. Some of his Pan-Slavistic ideas did, it is true, appeal to the Tsar, but the latter still spoke of Bakunin as an extremely dangerous person who should be kept in custody under all circumstances. So he spent altogether seven years in prison, first in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, and after 1854 in near-by Schlüsselburg.

It was only after the death of Tsar Nicholas I that his mother and his relatives succeeded in persuading Tsar Alexander II to banish Bakunin to Siberia. For Bakunin, banishment meant salvation. For the political convict in Siberia did not by any means lose his personal honor; and, moreover, the famous and almighty Governor General of Eastern Siberia, General Count Muravyov-Amursky, was his uncle. A new life began, or rather, the old life began again. For the years of imprisonment did not chasten him. Although he was outwardly given a job in the gold mines which paid him an annual salary of 2,000 rubles, in reality he did nothing, spending his days in empty brooding, with shallow books and endless prattle about the destruction of the world and insipid filosofantiasias.

On the other hand, however, Bakunin discovered someone in Irkutsk who let his revolutionary and Pan-Slavistic hopes rise boundlessly: no less a personage than his uncle, Count Muravyov-Amursky, the representative of His Imperial Majesty in Eastern Siberia. Here in Irkutsk, "Red Pan-Slavism" found its first abode. Bakunin's ideas, in which revolutionary lust for destruction mingled with mad national dreams of power, expressed in concrete form

that of which Count Muravyov and his circle had long had a dim, vague notion. Nowhere else had he been listened to more enthusiastically and attentively than here. Not in vain was Count Muravyov known in St. Petersburg as the "Red General." All these servants of the Tsar were living in that strange confusion of the spirit so characteristic of the old Russia, reeling from one new idea to the next.

Bakunin was enthusiastic. Now he had found the revolutionary dictator of his dreams. "Muravyov is ours in his feelings, thoughts, all his former actions, his endeavors, his desires and firm intentions," he wrote to Alexander Herzen. Muravyov was to become the head of an iron dictatorship. Originally a liberal, an admirer of Western civilization and culture, he had followed his Russian bent for extremes and long ago drifted into the current of the Revolution. Bakunin saw in him the savior of Russia, a second Peter the Great. He already visualized the Russian Revolution taking place under his own and Muravyov's leadership.

Besides this, he was occupied with an entirely different matter: he had begun a courtship. Here, too, his political utopias played a certain role. He had always looked upon Poland as being the predestined tool for destroying the existing form of government in Russia and had sought contact with Polish emigrant circles. Now he met the family of a Polish exile employed like himself at the gold mines. Soon he was giving French lessons to the two daughters of this family, fell in love with one of them, Emma, and married her. His young wife brought him a modest property as her dowry. It was his last chance to follow the example of so many of his fellow-sufferers and begin a settled life in exile. However, the Revolution, which was merely a camouflage for his morbid restlessness, would not let him go. He could not stay put.

In 1861, without any apparent reason, he left Siberia to flee via Japan and the United States to London. Before he left, he remembered that he had been drawing his salary from the mines for three years without having done a stroke of work; so he decided generously to pay back the money. To do so, he needed 6,000 rubles which, of course, he did not have. He finally succeeded in borrowing this sum in Irkutsk. But hardly had he laid hands on the money when his noble intention melted away like butter in the sun: he

used the money to pay for his flight to London.

BACK in London, he took it for granted that his old friends Herzen and Ogarev would take care of his expenses. The fame and influence of Alexander Herzen and his *The Bell* were at that time at their peak. His magazine was even read at court in St. Petersburg; his ardent endeavors to reshape the Russian state by way of peaceful reforms had not failed to impress Tsar Alexander II. But it would seem as if Bakunin were the demoniacal embodiment of the spirit of destruction. Wherever he appeared he sowed the seeds of destruction. Hardly had he gained a footing in London when he began to devote himself to revolutionizing *The Bell*, thereby dealing a death-blow to Herzen's life's work. The peasant riots following upon the abolishment of serfdom in Russia in 1862, the knowledge of the existence of a man like Count Muravyov, and the discontent of the Poles with the Russian rule in Warsaw, served to confirm the conviction he had brought with him from Siberia that the Revolution was about to break out in Russia. When in 1863 the Poles actually rose in open revolt, he lost his last remnant of prudence.

"Bakunin strode with seven-league boots across mountains and seas, across years and generations," is how Alexander Herzen describes him during these months. "He already saw the red banner waving on the Urals and on the Volga, in the Ukraine and in the Caucasus, indeed, perhaps even from the Winter Palace and the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul." But although he obviously saw through the fantastic delusions in Bakunin's character, Herzen was well enough to give way to his promptings and openly support the Polish revolt in *The Bell*.

Bakunin's brain was in a whirl again with the craziest plans: an appeal to the Russian Army, to the nobility, to the officers' corps, the hope for a peasant rising, for a large-scale mutiny in the Army. He hurried off to Stockholm to organize an expeditionary corps made up of Polish and Russian emigrants which was to come to the aid of the Poles and, as the standard-bearer of the great Red and Slavic Revolution, be instrumental in kindling an upheaval in Russia. However, he failed dismally at the very beginning. In Russia the Red Pan-Slavism gave way to an absolutistic, orthodox one; the influence of *The Bell*

waned among the leading Russians since it had supported the Polish revolt; the revolt of the Poles was crushed in rivers of blood. On his return to London, Bakunin himself appeared like a shipwrecked man cast upon a desolate beach denuded of all hope.

Once again he began a restless, roving life full of fickle plans. He went to Florence, Naples, Locarno, overflowing with new designs which became more and more formless. Although he was always occupied with all kinds of literary plans and made many enthusiastic beginnings, he dropped them again after a short time. Often we meet with a strange lack of mental discipline in his manuscripts: he could no longer stick to the main ideas of his theme, deviating into arguments which had nothing to do with the original subject.

Most of his best ideas are to be found in his voluminous correspondence. Here there are some flashes of perception which reveal an astonishing farsightedness, for instance when he predicts a duration of fifty years for Bismarck's Empire and declares that it will collapse in a world war. But all this was only piecemeal. His world grew more and more nebulous and unreal. To this came the increasing misery of his constant pecuniary embarrassment, which became even worse when he had his wife join him and became the father of two sons. "I beg you, Herzen, lend me, of course if you can, 600 francs or even only 500." Desperate appeals of that kind became more common every year. There were days when five centimes were all he had in cash, while the butcher and baker, landlord and cobbler, were threatening to attach his few sticks of furniture.

But the less the existing world had to offer him, the more fervent became his hatred, the more fanatically did he pursue the plans for its destruction. He made tireless efforts to found new international workers' associations. In 1865 he founded the "International Brotherhood," whose object was the destruction of all existing state and social organizations. In 1867 he joined the general council of the League for Peace and Liberty in Geneva. In 1868 he appeared in the central committee of the Second International; but as he met with little appreciation there, he founded the "International Alliance of Social Democracy" with thirty political partisans. When even this group did not seem radical enough for him, he undermined his own foundation by

a secret society of which he made himself the dictatorial head.

BAKUNIN envisioned a kind of renewal of the old Cossack constitution of the wild, lawless days of the frontier. On the old Slavic communistic basic cell of the *Mir*, the primitive village community, he wanted to build up a new society composed of free groups of free individuals with complete freedom of action. As the first step he suggested following the example of the Russian bandit Stenka Rasin (seventeenth century) and setting fire to all official buildings in order to destroy the documents upon which the privileges and property of the old governing class were based. He demanded organized terror by declaring in *Principles of the Revolution* that the destruction of the high personages embodying the old order must be begun by individual actions so that, in accordance with the spreading panic in the old ruling class, it may gradually be increased to the actions of collective masses.

This doctrine and his appeal of 1868 to the Russian students not to waste their time with study and the sciences but to go among the people penetrated like a sweet poison into the minds of the discontented in Russia. Strange threads ran from the stuffy, badly furnished, dark rooms in which Bakunin led his miserable existence over papers, cigarette butts, and dirty teacups to the highest circles of the old Russian society which, with the blindness of a suicide, was plotting its own death. A man like the world-famous author Turgenyev, the descendant of an old family of the nobility and the owner of rich estates, supported him with money and was convinced that he was serving the progress of mankind in this way. Princess Obolenskaya, the daughter of the Inspector General of Artillery, became an unconditional adherent of his teachings when she met him in Italy. It is as if a frenzy of self-abandonment had seized liberal society. The slogan of "*v narod*," of "going into the people," came up. In St. Petersburg, Moscow, Samara, Saratov, Kiev, Odessa, groups were formed to work for his ideas. His spirit permeates that striking appeal "Young Russia" of 1862, thousands of copies of which were secretly distributed all over the country: "To the axes! Strike out at the Imperial party without pity, wherever you meet it, in the streets and squares, in the towns and villages!"

Aristocratic girls, the daughters of some of the best families, families regarded as the

pillars of the throne, became Bakunin's willing disciples. Under his influence, noblemen made attempts at assassinating the representatives of the state. Nihilism was celebrated orgies, and shadowy figures emerged from this atmosphere. Prince Peter Krapotkin, the son of one of the oldest and noblest houses of Russia, a pupil of the imperial corps of pages and a famous explorer and geographer, turned to anarchism under Bakunin's influence. During the day he continued his life of an aristocrat, appearing in court society and having meals at the Winter Palace. At night he would hire a cab and go to a poor student district, put on a fur jacket and high boots and, as "Comrade Borodin," preach to factory workers about the overthrow of the existing order.

THE most terrible of all the figures that grew from this soil of disintegration and confusion of minds was that of Sergei Nechayev. All that Bakunin taught in theory only came to horrible life in this student, the son of a priest. He became, so to speak, the reflection of Bakunin in which his satanical core was openly revealed. Finally the master himself was terrified by his own creation. Nechayev's principle of applying the negation of all existing things to civil morality, too, made him stop at nothing and at nobody. He deceived and cheated even Bakunin; he arranged the murder of a comrade, in order to weld his followers more closely to himself; and he finally ended as a common criminal upon whom even Bakunin turned his back in horror.

The result of their days of collaboration, however, was the notorious *Catechism of Revolution*, the organic statute of anarchism. In it we read:

The revolutionary is a consecrated man. He has neither personal interests nor affairs, feelings, attachments, property, indeed not even a name. Everything in him is absorbed by one exclusive idea, one single passion: the revolution.

And further on:

In the depth of his being he has torn asunder, not only in words but in actual fact, every bond linking him with the laws, behavior, morality, and existing customs of this world. He is their implacable enemy, and if he continues to live on in their world, he only does so to destroy it all the more certainly.

The revolutionary, so the catechism demands, must penetrate everywhere, into the palace of the aristocrat as well as into the peasant's hut, into the barracks of the Army as well as into the guardroom of the police, indeed, even into the palace of the Tsar. He must study physics and chemistry as sciences of destruction. The society to be attacked is divided into six categories: (1) people to be killed at the outset; (2) those whose lives are spared only temporarily; (3) "animals in high positions" who can be exploited; (4) liberals who can be compromised and thus made to serve the Revolution; (5) revolutionary talkers who must be transformed into revolutionaries of action; (6) women who, if they are of a revolutionary bent, represent the most valuable treasure of the movement. At the end of this program we find the sentence: "We must join the world of adventurers and brigands, who are the true and the only revolutionaries in Russia."



Mikhail A. Bakunin

Bakunin's own life was swallowed up by the bog of misery, burned out by his own senseless hatred. Once more the fire of revolutionary hope flickered up when the rising of the Commune broke out in Paris in 1871; once more he appealed for

a fight with poison, dagger, and noose and tried himself in Lyon to arouse the devil in masses, as he put it. But this last flame also died away.

There was nothing about this bloated, obese body to remind one of the *bogatyr* of old; now he was just an aging man with bags under his eyes, who breathed with difficulty, living in abject poverty. In 1874 his Italian disciples called him to Bologna, where an anarchist rising was to be staged. He came, a broken man, sick unto death, whose last hope was to find his death in street-fighting. But even this hope proved in vain: the revolt was nipped in the bud, and Bakunin had to flee the city hidden in a hay wagon.

Two years later, on July 6, 1876, he succumbed to his illness in the Workers' Hospital in Bern in Switzerland. The only person at his side during his death hour was a young Italian laborer who could not even read or write, one of the great army of the disinherited.