

Dyer D. Lum, *A Concise History of the Great Trial of the Chicago Anarchists in 1886* (Chicago: Socialistic Publishing Society, [1886]), Title Page. (Gilder Lehrman Institute, GLC05640)

PREFACE.

A bomb! A dynamite bomb! Such was the startling intelligence which went over the wires from the city of Chicago on the night of May 4th, 1886. Who threw it? After a long and protracted trial the question remains unanswered. Whether thrown by some one indignant at the raid by the police upon a peaceable meeting, an individualistic attempt to resist invasion, or thrown by some hireling to break the great eight-hour movement which, at the time, seemed likely to compel the acquiesence of manufacturers in the growing demand for shorter hours of toil, the trial did not reveal.

Yet, eight men were placed on trial for their lives, their houses searched without process of law; they were subjected to personal abuse by city officials, denounced and virtually tried and condemned by a press whose existence, as caterers to capitalists, laid in creating a scarecrow and imparting to it some semblance of reality.

Property alone found voice; Labor, aghast, awaited developments. Some regarded it as the opening of a new struggle between these two classes, which were now clearly seen to have a defined and divergent existence. Capital and Labor were asserted to be pitted against each other in a new "irrepressible conflict." Others, alarmed at the danger to vested rights and existing social conditions, with equal impetuosity and want of logic, fell back on the law and demanded extreme measures of repression; a reign of terror set in. Property trembled for its existence before a phantom; every way-side bush seemed a secret danger; fear paralyzed reason, and force—arbitrary and illegal—held full sway.

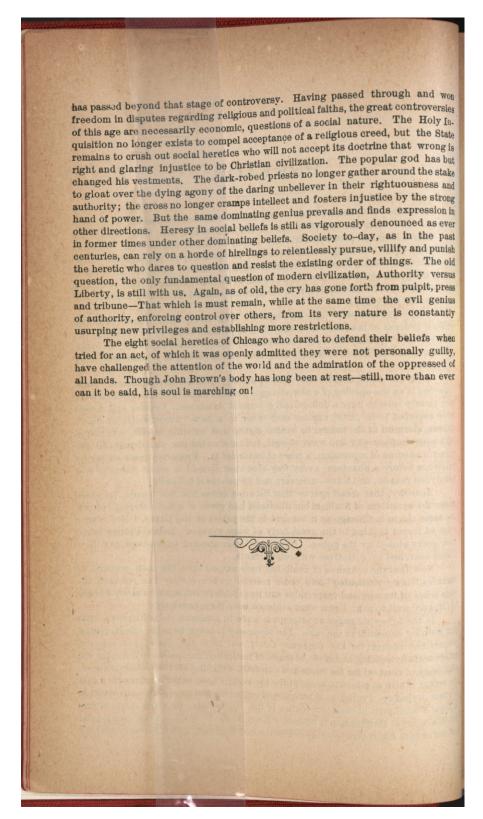
Anarchy, that dread spectre that Siberian snows had not frozen; to which under the synonym of Nihilism our dilettanti had given a quasi interest, struck the same alarm in Chicago as it brought to the palace of the Czars. Nor was a reign of terror lacking to the great body of wage workers. Labor Unions found their doors closed by the police. "Suspects" were arrested, imprisoned, and their homes searched by detectives without warrants.

Now that the sentence of death has been passed upon the men accused of "murder," law "vindicated" and order restored; when society I as resumed the even tenor of its way and respectable and legal jobbery can again be safely carried on, it were well to ask: Upon what evidence were they convicted?

In the following pages an attempt is made to condense the testimony, emitting nothing essential to the case. The testimony is taken from the official record prepared by counsel for the Supreme Court, not from the newspaper reports. After carefully reading hundreds of pages of testimony, scrupulously scanning the addresses of counsel for the State and carefully weighing all the facts in the case, the writer is still at a loss to account for the verdict upon other grounds than that of class prejudice. Prejudice as strong and envenomed as moved the narrow minds of loyal Frenchmen in their persecution of the Huguenots, or which inspired the breasts of loyal Englishmen in hounding Roundheads to death. True, religion did not enter into the controversy as in France and England. The nineteenth century

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The Haymarket Affair, 1886



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