

THE FIREBRAND

For the Burning Away of the Cobwebs of Ignorance and Superstition.

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THE FIREBRAND

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THE DAY IS COMING.

COME hither, lads, and harken,
 For a tale there is to tell,
 Of the wonderful days a-coming,
 When all shall be better than well.

Then a man shall work and bethink him,
 And rejoice in the deed of his hand,
 Nor yet come home in the even
 Too faint and weary to stand.

Men in that time a-coming
 Shall work and have no fear
 Of the morrow's lack of earning
 And the hunger-wolf anear.

I tell you this for a wonder,
 That no man then shall be glad
 Of his fellow's fall and mishap,
 To snatch at the work he had!

For that which the worker winneth
 Shall then be his indeed,
 Nor shall half be reaped for nothing
 By him that sowed no seed.

Oh, strange, new, wonderful Justice!
 But for whom shall we gather the gain?
 For ourselves and for each of our fellows,
 And no hand shall labor in vain.
 —William Morris.

THE DISCUSSION ON DUTY.

A FEW WORDS TO BROTHER MORRIS:—If you wish to make a new dictionary all right. When I get access to it I will study and we will argue from its definitions. Until then we will have to worry along vaguely with Webster and others now in use. By a natural obligation Webster means what a human being would feel obligated to do under certain conditions. If a man was drowning the natural duty would be to help him out, not shove him under. That I think is good communist doctrine. If we could all get to act upon it, always, we could dispense with legal enactments. But here comes in the vagueness of the word natural. It would be natural for some to shove him under, and so the word is here adjusted to a sort of humane standard which it is supposed people of a certain elevation in the evolutionary scale will recognize as right, and secondly what is generally regarded as right. When there is a discrepancy of any

considerable magnitude, force is resorted to, as a means of settlement, and the strongest comes out ahead. That is inevitable. The only way I can think of to better things is to make might and right agree as far as possible. By legal obligations is meant obedience to statutes which are right. No men are more honored than those who disobeyed laws that were wrong, but to get that kind of honor you must be dead. Good men, who disobeyed the laws, like good Indians, are all dead.

If you owe people nothing and they owe you nothing your accounts are balanced, (0=0) but the only legitimate way to get the word duty out of the dictionary is to prove, not assume, that the word duty is meaningless, that is duty=0. When you say that the word duty has no meaning to you, your word is perfectly good, but that is only negative testimony, concerning a vacancy in your mind, and does not entitle you to any general inference.

Yes: It is your duty to do as you please; it is your duty to do your duty, and happiness is happiness. You cannot define happiness any more than you can the taste of molasses candy. You only know that it is lickin' good when you get a little taste of it.

I never came across any dead or meaningless words or languages. God and ghost, Brahma and Jehova, diakka and mahatma are good and useful names and words, though the ghosts have vanished from the imaginations of (some) men.

Yes: "The moon might be a green cheese." You undertook to approve negative, and in order to accomplish it, all the might be's must be disposed of.

Artificial conditions have been imposed upon plants and that is about all that makes them good for anything. All our cereals and fruits are artificial products. Clothing and shelter are works of art. Languages and literature, steamships and railroads, telephones and telegraphs, the Oregonian and THE FIREBRAND are artificial products. Laws and social institutions are artificial. From the discovery of fire to the production of the Firebrand; from the chipping of stone into implements to the fashioning of the lens of a telescope and the measurements of the distances of the stars, all is art. "In the removal of artificial conditions" lies not liberty but annihilation.

D. PRIESTLEY.

THE FINISHING TOUCH.—The main point in this discussion is as to whether or not I have "duties." I have not questioned the meaning of the word, nor tried to set up a new meaning. I am after the ghost, not its English name. The "vacancy" in my mind is not as to the meaning of a word, but as to an idea—and a superstitious one. I have no desire to get the word out of the dictionary, but my aim is to free myself from all the ghosts, whether of abstract ideas or mythical beings. The whole question as to definitions was raised by my critic, and though I have given some attention to it, it really has no bearing on the main issue.

It might be the natural desire to help a drowning man; but it could no more be the natural duty of a man than of a dog. If so,

at what particular point in the evolution of animal life does duty begin?

No, communism has no creeds or doctrines. It does not assert any duties, natural or otherwise. Communism is voluntary association, and proceeds upon mutuality of interests, not upon obligations. Under communism the practice of helping those in distress would beyond doubt be more universal than at present; not on account of duty, but because it would be to the interest of no one that any should suffer or perish, but emphatically the contrary. Then, too, it would be well for people to make a habit of so doing, for if the opposite habit was in vogue I might want assistance myself on occasion and the prevailing idea would not permit succor.

Mr. Webster does not say that by the word "legal" he means "statutes which are right". Perhaps he would have appreciated the suggestion had it not come too late. Legal means lawful, and has nothing to do with ethics. Brother Priestley is a stickler for Webster—on occasion.

Oh, no; if you assert that "the moon might be a green cheese", it is yours to prove the possibility, not mine to get away with your "might be". I only deny. So when it is assumed that I have duties, prove it or you cannot hold me to their performance except by force. Then, according to your own logic, I do not do the assumed duty, because it is not I who acts. Really, it seems to miscarry in spite of everything!

No, the removal of artificial conditions does not mean annihilation. If so, you must admit creation and the artistry of the creator. Man is the only artisan I know of, and he must exist before he can produce a work of art.

Although Brother Priestley persists in talking about laws that are right and my duty thereunder, he fails to answer my question as to who shall say which laws are right and which wrong. When he talks about "what is generally regarded as right", he admits my original contention—that the assumption of duty implies a claim prior or superior to my own inclination; in this case it is the superiority of numbers.

When he says that it is my duty to do as I please, he not only surrenders every position he has taken, but he talks nonsense. All he has said becomes laughable in the light of this sage remark. He does not attempt to show how there is any more duty involved in my following my natural inclinations than in the sweet-throated bird or the venomous rattlesnake doing the same.

J. H. MORRIS.

FUN.

It is not every one that can afford to run a paper for fun, but that's what W. W. Astor says he is running the Pall Mall Gazette for. — Twentieth Century.

I don't know about that; the publishers of THE FIREBRAND are not quite so rich as W. W. Astor, but we are running the paper for fun just the same. And I doubt very much if colleague Astor is getting as much fun out of the business as we are.

If we will accept the advice of a well meaning friend in the profession, let him run an anarchistic paper for awhile, and I'll wager my millions against his millions, that he will never return to his plutocratic journal.

It arouses the old savage fighting spirit in a fellow to battle against odds which few leaders of armies ever took; it makes him think of the three hundred Greeks at Thermopylae who stood off the innumerable host of Persians, or of the brave Texan, Col. Bowes, who with Davy Crockett and seventy men died like heroes fighting at San Antonio against Santa Anna and his four thousand Mexicans.

It is a positive pleasure to be able to express our ideas without any reserve or restraint whatever, and to accelerate the downfall of our rotten society by word or deed has an attraction very few can resist after once trying it. In short, we are publishing this paper from the only incentive from which all men act when free, and that is self gratification.

Astor's great wealth gives him a certain amount of freedom, and our customary poverty has taught us to enjoy ourselves with the limited means at our command and having nothing to lose, not being tied to property gives us in a certain way a still greater freedom of action than Brother Astor enjoys.

Of course some well meaning people labor under the delusion that we are publishing the paper for the elevation of humanity, as some one expressed it; but we do nothing of the kind. It is fun we are after and what is more, we get it; besides that we are not in the elevator business anyway. We are just common members of the common herd and take our chances with the rest of them. Elevating of humanity, uplifting of mankind—fiddlesticks! We don't stand on any higher plane than any other poor devil. We don't want to pull anybody up nor down. Give us an equal chance with the rest, is all we ask.

EZEKIEL SLABS.

AUTHORITY.

PEOPLE, and politicians especially, assert continuously, that a different set of men placed in authority will act differently, which means that the actions of man are not influenced in the least by his surroundings, but by his individual character only, hence the expression: "We must place good men only in office."

Without mentioning the numerous instances in practical life to the contrary, I will mention one taken from an article in The Twentieth Century headed, "The New Australia Settlement in Paraguay." A certain William Lane had labored devotedly for years to make propaganda among the Australian workingmen for a co-operative colony. At last he succeeded in interesting a sufficient number of people to make a start. They received a very generous grant of land from the Paraguayan government, free railroad transportation and other favors. After numerous obstacles, which had been placed in the way by the home government, had been overcome, they landed in their new Eldorado.

As a recognition of the labors of Mr. Lane, the

colonists elected him chairman, in which position he became, according to their self-imposed constitution (poor deluded mortals!), provisional director for two years with the sole executive power. Election to that office could not change his character immediately, but it changed his environment, and being entrusted with power, he did not only use it but abuse it. According to the Twentieth Century article, he seemed to have tried to imitate Billy the Terrible, whilom emperor of Germany, and came very near disrupting the colony, until forced to abdicate by a second batch of pioneers which arrived in time to save the undertaking from utter ruin.

Further on it is said that with the extraordinary advantages the colony possesses in its fertile land, etc., it should become a prosperous, happy and enlightened community. But having retained the constitution, laws, regulations and officers, they may be prosperous to some extent, but will not be happy in the fullest sense. "One of the best reasons for establishing the colony so far away was that the members would be obliged to agree, because it would not be easy for them to get back home again. But their experience shows that perfect justice and equality is the only basis upon which co-operation can be built." Perfect justice and equality, esteemed contemporary, and constitutions and officers cannot exist together; it is only possible under freedom.

EZEKIEL SLABS.

A REMEDY FOR SOMETHING.

OBJECTIONS have been made that THE FIREBRAND has not set forth the principles upon which we propose to reconstruct society, or, as brother Priestly expresses it, has not furnished a remedy for anything. We do not consider it incumbent upon us, as objectors to the present system, to make grooves and ruts into which society shall slide when relieved from present restrictions; nevertheless, we all have an ideal society in mind, whether a practical one and whether it will even be realized are as yet open questions. What we contend for is Liberty—the freedom of each individual to follow his own inclination and to engage in the pursuit of happiness according to his own ideas of that desired state, and when we propose Liberty, we propose a remedy for everything. But a careful study of the human animal and his wants, and the source from which they must be realized, leads us to conclude that men will learn the mutuality of their interests and will associate freely according to individual tastes and inclinations, and the following address, issued some time ago, we submit as an embodiment of some of our ideas on the subject:

THE ANARCHIST-COMMUNIST TO THE PROLETARIAT.

We wage war against PRIVATE PROPERTY, against the State, and against the Church—a war having for its object their utter annihilation.

We struggle for the attainment of a communistic-anarchistic society, that is to say, a condition of society in which it is possible to develop individual freedom. We claim, therefore, for every one the RIGHT TO ENJOY LIFE as his taste may direct, a right rendered possible when everyone occupies himself according to his inclinations, strength and abilities. In other words, every one shall do his best as to industry, agriculture, education, art, science, etc., while each places the result of his doings at the disposition of society.

We look to the SOCIAL REVOLUTION as the means whereby this goal can be attained—a revolution joined in by the workers in every country, and by them carried to its furthest end—a general popular uprising. This we regard as unavoidable, and we seek to

prepare the proletariat for it by WORD, BY ACT BY DEED.

As regards ORGANIZATION, we recommend the FORMATION OF FREE GROUPS, untrammelled by centralization, AUTONOMOUS in every respect, and FEDERATED where it may seem desirable to do so, the point to be held in view being always the furtherance of the special objects of the propaganda.

We repudiate the institution of PRIVATE PROPERTY, because its history is the history of all human suffering. So long as private property prevails there will be rich and poor, and the latter will be dependent on the former. Such a condition of things leads, on the one hand, to a monstrous accumulation of wealth, to insufferable pride, to insane avarice, ambition and cruelty; on the other hand, to an impoverishment of the masses that grows constantly more and more shocking, and is accompanied by all the characteristics of physical and intellectual decay.

Society has passed, in the course of thousands of years, through many changes—from the system of the compulsory labor of slaves and serfs to that of our pretended "free labor"—but, as it has again and again invariably made legal property the basis of its so-called order, no alteration, no improvement has been effected in the condition of the masses. Yes, it has even proved that, take all in all, that condition has become actually more hideous the more complete man's access, by his inventions and discoveries, to the treasure-house of nature, and the greater the facility with which he converts the treasury to his use. To the masses the whole evolution of our civilization has proved as yet nothing but a bitter farce, inasmuch as it has only helped a small minority to pile up gigantic fortunes for which it has no reasonable use. Such has been the curse of private property, and it will endure as long as private property remains. Whoever, therefore, is truly striving for the happiness of mankind at large must join us in the cry: DOWN WITH PRIVATE PROPERTY!

The State, far from being, as many fancy, an institution for securing the general well being of the people, is simply a means of defense set up by the rich against the propertyless. The smaller the number of the former, and the greater the number of the latter, the greater the elaboration of this protective machine, until it finally degenerates into the monster that now stands before us with its countless hands in everybody's pockets; with its ropes and halters to hold us fast; with its hundreds of thousands of rifles, swords and clubs that it swings above our heads; with its prisons and scaffolds that threaten our destruction.

Whoever, therefore, will wage war against private property cannot run to its patron saint, the State, for aid, as many in their blindness would do.

Private property can only be overthrown by the destruction of its guardian, the State. Both institutions must stand and fall together. The watchword, therefore, of every consistent champion of freedom must be, Down with the State.

The Church—no matter what its particular denomination may be—is the condensation of the most enormous swindle ever perpetrated upon humanity. It controls several millions of crafty scoundrels (priests) who, year in and year out, in every country, are let loose upon the people that they may fill their brains with such nonsense as only a real enemy of mankind could invent.

He who wishes to come to a proper reasoning, as he surely must do if he intends to set himself free from social exploitation (inequality), and from state tyranny (slavery), must take the field armed with every weapon at command against this brood also. In the free society of the future there will be no possibility of our having either church or priests, because nobody will be any longer interested in getting his

fellow beings into such and such a state of mind, in order that it may be easier for him to exploit them. Where we see this done today we find the whole parson brood a mere band of moral—that is to say immoral—hypnotizers, who reduce their victims, the common people, to idiocy that they may hand them over, bereft of all will of their own, to the exploitation of the capitalistic class and the enslavement of the state.

If, therefore, the battle cry is raised against all that tends to hold men in slavery, submission and ignorance, we must not fail to exclaim, Down with the Church—down with all creed swindles and priest humbug!

Since, as we have already said, we utterly repudiate private property, and are not contented, as are many so-called "Social Reformers," to patch and cobble at it, our standpoint as communists needs no further explanation.

It is to us perfectly clear that mankind will never attain to a peaceable, and sensible enjoyment of life, until the earth, with all that it affords, and all that human hands have developed from its bounty, is put freely at the disposition of all.

Even now it is incontestable that everything required for the wants of humanity is capable of being furnished with ease, and in such superabundance, as are to-day water, light and air, which all can use gratuitously.

For these reasons we refuse to take pattern from communists of former times, and think it is not necessary to apportion enjoyment to each, according to his performance. Where production has reached a highly developed stage, it is practically impossible to compute how much each individual has contributed, and it does not accord at all fully with justice that those who, owing to a physical or intellectual weakness for which they are not to blame, are less gifted, should fare worse than those who are more generously endowed. And inasmuch as we wish every one to have an unlimited right to enjoyment, the greatest genius, and the most herculean worker, can have no cause for complaint—since to have whatever his natural tastes require is all that anyone can wish for, in order to secure for himself every imaginable happiness. It is only while we are dominated by private property that the ACCUMULATION OF WEALTH has any sense in it and the longing for this has now degenerated into sheer lunacy. In a society, in which enjoyment is free, such longings will be simply impossible.

We have still to scare away that bugaboo of "laziness," which the very people who have never done a useful day's work in their lives, are always, with the most zealous solicitude, anxious to bring up against us.

It is very possible that for a long time to come there will be those whom an inherited taste for consumption, as their only activity, will make anxious to play the part of parasites. But, even then, such an evil would be more tolerable than would be any system of compulsion, of officialism and of the absence of freedom that it entails, together with all those consequences which experience has rendered us familiar with. For the rest, necessity and honor are surely sufficient means of inducement, not to speak of the fact that, even to-day, there can be but very few human beings who do not feel a desire to occupy themselves in one way or another. Much more would be this the case in a society in which not only were all possible opportunities placed at the disposition of each, but every thing would be directed toward awakening in each the consciousness that would be guilty of a wrong-doing if he refused to bear his part in those activities whose results redounded to the well-being, the enjoyment and happiness of all.

The communism that we are struggling to bring

about is therefore a condition of perfect FREEDOM. It recognizes no upper and no lower class; no model by which people must be guided; it is IDENTICAL with that conception of exemption from mastership and servitude that we call ANARCHY.

Inasmuch, however, as all the earlier communistic attempts to establish a complicated industrial State have come to grief, it has been necessary for us to clearly formulate our altogether different ideas as to this matter, and we therefore call ourselves COMMUNIST-ANARCHISTS!

We proclaim the Social Revolution—not because we take any pleasure in savage strife and the shedding of blood, but because it becomes every day clearer to us that, on the one hand, the conditions under which mankind today finds itself are becoming more and more unbearable, and because, on the other hand every attempt to alter or mitigate those conditions meets with a continually harsher, more reckless and more cruel resistance on the part of the ruling class. It is, therefore, certain that people will at last find conditions simply unbearable, that it will come to a contest between them and the propertied minority; and that what, unhappily, cannot be attained peaceably will have to be fought for, sword in hand, viz., the destruction of all those institutions that stand in the way of the development of freedom and equality, of culture and of happiness, and the establishment of those just conditions that are going to be created by Communism and Anarchy.

We support, therefore every popular movement designed to accelerate this struggle and to bring it to the speediest possible conclusion.

We support the workingman in all his present struggles with the possessing class, and we repudiate all palliatives and blinds, such as participating in politics, confidence in laws for the protection of workmen, etc. All our thoughts and acts are directed toward preparing the proletariat for the social revolution, and arming the toiling masses with principles designed to secure for them the fruits of this struggle.

A church-like organization, such as other workingmen's parties have, the Anarchists do not possess. They regard all centralization, with its executive, its officials, its taxes and other state-like institutions, as a thing to be repudiated, since it cripples the individual, destroys his independence of thought and introduces everywhere corruption. We regard the free grouping of individuals and the free federation of groups as sufficient ties for uniting our strength in the struggle for the ends we have in common.

JOIN US! This we say to the workers. Our objects have been already set out briefly and concisely. More particular information can be obtained from our organs, our books and pamphlets, as well as from the speeches and debates at our meetings, admission to which is open to everyone.

Workingmen, awake! Recognize the yoke beneath which you groan, and strive to break it.

Under our banner, under the red flag, the flag of communism and anarchy, the emblem of the Social Revolution, is your proper battle-ground. Flock to it that you may have a clear conception of how you must act to overthrow the existing disorder, and to place in its stead a society of freedom and equality, for this is the task with which you are charged.

Workingmen, of all countries, emancipate yourselves.

"The meeting broke up in a row, revolvers were drawn, many persons seriously injured, and a prominent citizen wounded. "Anarchist meeting of course?" No, bless your heart, the Indiana Legislature, which opened with prayer, adjourned in this wise.—[H. V. Hetzel, in Justice.

Literature.

FREE MEN IN LOVE AND MATRIMONY; ESSAY TO MAKE MANKIND HAPPIER AND BETTER. By E. F. RUEDEBUSH, Mayville, Wis. Price 75; cents bound \$1.25.

THIS book, written in German, has lately made its appearance. It champions free love and untrammelled sexual intercourse. The definition of love is the plainest and best I ever read. Fearlessly and with well directed blows it strikes at compulsory marriage with its morals, customs and usage. The author concludes correctly that the so-called crimes in marriage and those which originate in sexual passion are but the result of sexual non-satisfaction, that in unhindered sexual intercourse all these trespasses and crimes would disappear.

In the same work I find the term "shame" used. To-day it is understood to express a feeling of shyness, a disinclination to show or produce publicly that which is considered ugly, abominable or unæsthetic. Appropriately it is said: "Through many centuries pains have been taken to represent everything sexual or sexually animating as low, base, ugly and unæsthetic, but natural instinct has resolutely, though it is to be regretted, mostly in secrecy, opposed this view. It is no wonder then, that soon an abnormal confusedness entered into the conception of the beautiful," etc.

After annihilation of these terrible contrasts free men will no longer consider as evil such objects which treat of sexual relation, be it in art, literature or amusement, nudity will no longer be offensive and the beautiful will be doubly appreciated.

The children are thought of. It is shown to be noxious to them if they are mystified by fallacious tales instead of being freely informed of the origin of man and the sexual function, as they will necessarily conceive the idea that the sexual function is repulsive and besmirching.

We can heartily recommend this book to all our German readers. Yet I do not agree with everything said in the book, a fact that must not be kept silent. The author, not free from conventional prejudices, seems to suppose that compulsory matrimony is exclusively the result of church morals; he means to introduce "free love" into our present commercial piratical system. Therefore he says in the beginning that speaking of "free men" and "free society" he means people who have gained full freedom only in sexual life and all connections between man and woman. He seems to assume that our present system of exploitation is unavertable and this fact gives the treatise a forced appearance.

Logic compels him in consequence to defend family life, i. e., common interest in support and rearing of children will prompt man and woman to live together as lifelong friends (I deny this) but otherwise they will be entirely free to satisfy their desires where greatest enjoyment may be found. Through family life the author thinks to exempt the state from support of the children, and also to preserve the advantages which this mode of life grants to-day. He thinks that by being conservative in this respect his teachings will meet with greater success than those of former expounders.

This, however, is not so. I dispute that mankind in general will be happier in the preservation of family life. While we are forced to live in economic dependence while we have a state, or while we are slaves, happiness will have misery for a constant companion or counterpart, or to express it more correctly, happiness will be but illusory. But exterminate the salutary property beast and the sexual question and the love question will be decided, i. e., free.

"Free sexual life from all coercion, and mankind will be better and nobler."—Page 47. Correct. But may not this principle be applied to all phases of social life. Free mankind from all statutes wielded by authority, free them from economic dependence which are the causes of indigence and poverty, and murder and theft will surely cease to exist. The author admits this when he says: In freedom the causes will disappear which now prompt men to commit so-called crimes.

The author thinks it would be less difficult to introduce free love than to solve the social question, but on this point he errs astoundingly. Family life and compulsory marriage are but ingredients, essential parts of the exploitive system, they stand with the latter and fall with it.

Simple conception and lack of understanding in regard to the labor question is conclusively shown in the chapter: The Social Question, where the author says that sexual liberty would make the solution of the labor question less difficult if the poor would adhere to the Malthusian theory, i. e., beget children then only, when they are sure of a competency for them. With what right has privileged society to gobble up this earth. With what right reveal these monopolists and force the laborers to starve. Are respective laws more sacred than those concerning compulsory matrimony? Give the workingman the opportunity to labor, free the means of production, and he will easily produce sufficiently for all children that may be begotten.

If to-day privileged society have less children than the poor, would not free mankind be enabled to guard against this "evil" in general. In free society knowledge will be common, and sickly people will beget no children which may prove preventive enough, as hie author admits on another page. He disproves the idiotic Malthusian theory, when he says: There are neither too many nor too few people in the world. It is but a question of finding the proper place for each, and free men will provide for that in seeking their highest possible happiness."

And has not the poorest woman of to-day a right to feel the joys of motherhood? Page 62 says: "A superb world where every child at its entrance is greeted with ecstatic joy as the long-yearned-for jewel, where every woman sees in it with genuine pride the sweet reward of her courageous suffering. Well, if it is to be spoken of as a question of right at all, the producing woman or the wife as the producer has a right to this joy and the wife of the rich man should use preventives, because she and her children are parasites. And simply revolting is the suggestion that young, strong males of the poor class should be used as "breeding stallions." Many highly cultured, feeble women will recognize that they want this physical strength and force in order to beget progeny, and the short intimate intercourse of the two extremes thereby necessitated, would be but furthering for both parts, and often highly advantageous. If we free this relation from all contempt, if we do not demand that on account of this intimacy two should be each other's for life, with body and soul, why not cancel class distinction in order to destroy contempt.

But enough. In conclusion I would advise the author to follow his own suggestion: Do like the rational physician, "seek for the causes and try to remove them," and he soon will speak up for freedom from all restraint, i. e., social anarchy as he now speaks up for free love. For every anarchist agrees with him: There is but one aim for us: happiness on earth. That which brings us nearer to this end we call "good," and that which destroys it is "bad" in our eyes.

A. ISAAC.

WANTED—A workingman desires a young woman as companion. Intelligence and good looks the only requisites. All communications strictly confidential. Address, "Free," care Firebrand.

The First Spiritual Society meets: G. A. R. Hall, First and Taylor sts, as follows: Conference, 11 a. m. Lyceum, 12:30. Lecture and tests 7-15 p. m. every Sunday. Everybody is invited.

The Letter-Box.

J. P., City.—Why didn't we comment on N. P. Thompson's article? Lack of time prevented us. Certainly our paper is devoted to the abolition of wages or wage-slavery; neither do we believe in "true reform" or "sufficient wages," but some of our readers don't seem to grasp it.

R. T., City.—You want us to say something in favor of the Co-operative Commonwealth, because you think it will relieve the unemployed. We do not think so; if it relieve a few idle men, so it "relieves" the plutocrats from uneasiness. If they could get rid of all the unemployed in such an easy manner, they would praise the "Lord" and fasten the chains to their slaves so much more securely. Have indulgence for a little while and you will see the result.

D. P., Newberg, Or.—We are surprised to see that you have not read any other history except that of America. The communards of Paris took possession of the city in 1871 the 17th of March, and not 100 years ago. It is not very broadminded to call people a "mob," who attempted to improve their condition in a way not prescribed by philosophers and critics.

M. A. S., Boston.—Our best greetings and thanks for your effort to get subscribers for THE FIREBRAND.

Mrs. S. A. P., Philadelphia.—As long as we are able to issue, we send THE FIREBRAND willingly to anybody who likes to read it, even if he cannot pay for it.

A. A., Meriden, Conn.—We agree with you, but the consolidation of both papers depends on the supporters of "Solidarity." Could you send us a copy of "Why we are Anarchists"?

J. G. R., Littleton, Iowa.—You are alright, and we wish we had a million of your kind.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

A business meeting in the interest of THE FIREBRAND will be held at the Firebrand Club, 189 1/2 Third st., on Thursday evening, April the 25. All who are interested in the paper and in its work are urgently invited to be present, as matters of great importance to the propaganda will be discussed.

RADICALISM IN TACOMA.

There is a strong under current of radicalism in Tacoma, although it does not come to the surface as much as in Portland. Public free discussion meetings are not as numerous as in Portland and the work of propaganda is going on and radical sentiment permeating all stratas of society. The Rev. Wm. Martin, of the Free church, who lectured on Profit Sharing in the Unitarian church, Portland, last February a year ago, is preaching rationalism in religion while Comrade Clemencic is pushing the propaganda of anarchy among the workmen.

Suiciding was all the go last week, two plutocrats and one Burgeois killing themselves. Trades unionism is dead and nearly all forms of leadership a thing of the past. The "Universal Brotherhood of Man," and a Trades Council composed of a few delegates from defunct trades unions are the only labor organizations that pretend to have an existence at present.

The U. B. M. is a secret society "for educational purposes," they say, but it is supposed to be a social-democratic movement.

Playcard and dodger advertising are not taxed here as in Portland so it is easy to let the public know of meetings.

Monday evening we held a meeting in Economy hall. It was quite stormy and so no women and only about fifty men were present. The meeting proceeded without president or other officer. I explained the plan and purpose of the labor exchange and invited discussion. Comrade Clemencic started the discussion in a rousing speech, and was followed by a number of others, most of which favored the plan. It being the first meeting in Tacoma without officers, some surprise was expressed, but many declared themselves pleased with the freedom thus allowed to all. Altogether it was quite an interesting

meeting and all went away declaring themselves well pleased. Thursday evening we will hold another meeting at the same place, and a lively time is expected.

H. A.

THE FIREBRAND

Is published by a voluntary association of a few individuals whose means consist almost wholly of brains and muscle. It is not a close corporation; we want all the help we can get—brain, brawn and cash. Two or three of us have contributed nearly all the mechanical work, and we know of but one or two who have made a persistent effort to extend the circulation. Up to date the subscriptions have a little more than met the necessary cash outlay, and we have got along very nicely until the last two weeks, when we had to hire help. It is now the busy season, and some of those who have been giving their time to the paper can do so no more; so it is necessary to make up the deficit by the greater activity of others.

In order that we may know just where we are at, all who are willing to contribute will be given an opportunity to sign for a certain amount per week. There are two or three printers in the city who are in sympathy with the paper, and they might sign for so many hours work, instead of cash, which may be done at their own convenience, including evenings and Sundays.

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