

# THE FIREBRAND

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

VOL. I.

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No 17.

## THE FIREBRAND

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### Epigrammatical.

I

Dost thou lament oppression?  
Thou fain wouldst embrace thy freedom?  
Free of illusions thy mind;  
There has oppression its root.

II

Freedom thou cravest?  
I hear to God thee plaintively crying;  
Suppliant, fool on thy knees!  
Can a beggar be free?

III

Wouldst thou fulfill thy desires?  
Enjoy thy general birthright?  
Claim no more than thy needs;  
Then thou canst gather thy dues.

Hermann Eich.

### LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND FRATERNITY.

THE Editor of the "Liberty Review" means by liberty something very different from what we understand by that word.

He believes in those possessing power, cunning, and position, being free to use these for their own benefit, irrespective of the results to those who happen to be without them.

He possibly may be sorry for them, but thinks it their duty to accept the position in which providence or fate has placed them.

He quotes Moncreu Conway with approbation for saying he has no sympathy with the popular cry, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and that those who use it have not the faintest conception of what they really mean; that those who fancy these words have any related meaning are summarily dismissed with the dogmatic statement that they "are really and essentially very different," "that social equality cannot co-exist with liberty."

And why, think you? Because "people are unequal in abilities and advantages, and if free will seek the best society available to them; will associate with those who can exchange advantages; develop

their superiorities with those congenial, not with inferiors." Thus "legal equality is steadily attained. social equality or fraternity in any similar sense cannot exist in a free community."

The Editor says: "Here we have the assertion of an unpalatable truth to ultra-democrats."

We admit the fact of personal inequality, nay, we rejoice in this fact, and never expect to alter it, and do not want to. But we have the desire for the best society, for associates with whom we might exchange advantages, develop our superiorities, even develop our inequalities. We still realize that at present this is only open to the few, we are determined to give it to all as a right. And how can it be done, except by the social power limiting the individually powerful and cunning from dominating their less well equipped associates?

We hold that personal inequality teaches us the need of social equality. And the present system of privileged classes, made legal by those in power, must be broken by communal social power, which when organized, will destroy the power of the present organized tyranny of the few over the many.

Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity are essentially the same in meaning. Brothers are in relation to their parent, who is their superior. Men are equal, so children, when come to man's estate, are equal to their parents, they become free of parental control. So we desire and intend to grow out of servitude to our masters, and are determined to be free.

This can only be, when the social power destroys individual or class rule.

Personal inequality, then, is the true basis upon which social equality is built. The patent evils of privileged inequality are the cause producing the desire for social equality. By this alone is liberty for all possible.

Liberty, London.

### MOULDERS.

THE contention of comrade ADDIS, in his article headed "Moulds," that Anarchists should have no moulds, but ideals only, is not quite correct to my view, and his definition does not coincide with my own. He says: "The ideal which a person holds, is simply a conception of what we would like to be, and which we try to be, while the mould is a conception of what we think some one else ought to be."

All of us who are striving for freedom are aware that it is impossible to accomplish our object except by the consent or actual help

of our fellowman. We have our ideal of what we would like to be, but recognizing the fact, that our fellowman does not permit us to realize our ideal, we use every means within our command to mould their ideas so that they may harmonize with our own. And again we have a conception of what some one else ought to be, otherwise we would make no effort whatever to convert them to our way of thinking, and therefore have according to comrade ADDIS's definition—"moulds."

Why should the powers that be, persecute us all over the world, except it be, that they recognize us as the most powerful moulders of the opinions of men.

And it is quite right for Anarchists to criticize each other, because only through criticism, that is of hearing the opinions of others, can we arrive at a true understanding of the question at issue. Whenever we do not criticize each other any more, we can than safely be accused of being willing to form a trust to exploit our fellowman, like the leaders of the socialists are doing.

Criticism, even if it is a little acrimonious, is good for every one of us, it prevents us from having the big head and thinking we are "as wise as Solomon" and get mad when it is shown that we are not quite as far advanced. In short: criticism, which comrade Addis in his article calls moulds, is the spice of our work, the vital force of our propaganda, it prevents us from getting rusty, from throwing about phrases without investigation, it is bound to keep us always in the front rank. We invite criticism in order to find the vulnerable points in our arguments. And if a person desires to live a "grand and noble life", whatever that may be criticism will not interfere with it.

In fact this "let alone policy", advocated by comrade Addis, is just the very thing the priests and plutes desire.

B. Slabs.

The stomach has more rights than even the brain, for it is the stomach that sustains the whole structure.—P. KROPOTKIN.



## SOCIALISM OR PRIVILEGE?

At the recent congress of German Social Democrats, some of the working-men delegates proposed that the salary of the writers and journalists of the party should not exceed \$15 per week. These good workers thought that a weekly wage of about \$15 would be more than sufficient for socialist employees in a country like Germany, where men work for 12, 14, or even 16 and 18 hours a day, where the great bulk of producers earn less than 50 cents a day, and where even those employed on the most remunerative kinds of work in the large towns never get more than about \$7.50 a week.

But this was the opinion of simple workmen, of those accustomed to rough labor and humble ways of life. Such was by no means the opinion of those fine gentlemen—the deputies, speakers, writers, and official agitators of the party—who live the better for the miserable pay of the German worker. Corrupted by all vices of the bourgeoisie the members of this new aristocracy, self-styled socialist, consider it beneath their dignity to work on the journals of the party for \$15 a week. "If you do not give more than \$15 our writers will desert us; they will go over to the bourgeoisie." So spoke Bebel. Strange argument; droll as coming from socialists! Hitherto we had always thought that men are socialists by conviction, and that the fundamental principles of socialism require that the producer be not exploited, and that when this producer is a member of the party a truly fraternal solidarity should be practised with regard to him, which is something different from the fraternity of republican democrats. At any rate, we socialists of the "ignorant" school consider that every man's work should be recompensed equally, and that to distinguish as to the kind of work has been the method defended and preached by the bourgeoisie and by partisans of privilege. But the social democrats, with Herr Engels at their head, proclaim loudly and in all languages that, "scientific socialism" has been invented by themselves, and is their monopoly. According to their socialism, it is needful to create a class of elect persons for the masses to take care of, while depriving themselves of necessities of life, sometimes even of bread.

In his day, in 1848, Proudhon, despite the unheard of success of his journal, only took for his work as editor the same remuneration as each compositor or other work in the printing office; to wit, five francs. But then Proudhon was ignorant; so say the social democrats. So be it. None the less, all humanity holds in veneration the memory of Socrates, of Epaminondas, of the carpenter of Galilee, of the Abbe Gregory, and of many others who, like Proudhon, refused a life of riches and privileges, and contented themselves with very little. These, too, were strangers to the world of "scientific socialism", but the ignorant people consider these men very good and very honest.

"We exploit nobody," replies Herr Liebknecht; "my journal brings in more than 30,000 marks (\$7,500) a year." That is perhaps why the office pays him such honor, perhaps it is also why he hands the publisher 7,500

marks (\$1,875) a year. (In Switzerland ministers only get \$1,500.)

Well, if a man's journal brings in so much it is a proof that he sells it for more than the amount needed to cover its expenses.

So much is clear. But is it, after all, socialist to sell it to the members of the party for more than it costs? The Russian Socialists publish a paper of which they give four copies for one penny. The Paris Anarchists publish pamphlets gratuitously whenever they took more than was wanted for the expenses of *La Revolté*, whose chief editor took—not \$1,750, not even \$15 a week, but only \$5 a week.

True, the Russian Socialists are as yet but little versed in scientific socialism; as to the Anarchists—oh! we are notorious for our ignorance of the science of Messrs. Engels, Liebknecht, Bebel, and others.

In my capacity of ignoramus I warn the exploited that history shows us that power, privileges, and class distinctions have been established little by little; an honorary and temporary distinction becomes, with time and custom, hereditary, and always finds self interested men ready to defend privilege and slavery in the name of science, just as in our day the bourgeois corruption of socialist ideas is called scientific. —[W. T., in *Liberty*, London.]

## AT SHORT RANGE.

SOME people want a law for everything; they talk much of the "law of kindness." There is no such law. Kindness is voluntary and has in view the mutual pleasure of the actor and the recipient. When an act that otherwise would be one of kindness is performed of necessity or upon authority, no pleasure results. Even those generally customary lose the element of kindness in becoming so. Giving presents at stated times becomes a mere formality, and to a highly organized person is positively distasteful. In this as in everything in life, our acts depend upon the individual organism, and laws rules or customs produce only discord and never pleasure.

MANY people feel indebted to those who are kind to them, and thereby much of the pleasure that should result to both parties from a kind act is lost, for debt is a certain destroyer of happiness. Not infrequently persons do acts which they call kindness, with the calculation of placing a debt upon the recipient. They are hypocrites. When it is understood that an act of kindness is prompted by a desire to increase personal pleasure, the idea of indebtedness so often connected therewith will disappear and the mutual pleasure will be increased.

A FOOL laughs at a wise man, but a wise man never laughs at a fool.

EACH individual, being organized differently from every other, has peculiarities. Being inherent, the individual has a right to them. I have a right to be myself, and my peculiarities being a part of me, I do not propose to try to regulate

them according to the wishes of other people. The wise man recognizes this right; the fool only laughs.

My not desiring to associate with some people is no indication that I disrespect them or consider myself above them. To associate with some people adds to my pleasure; the peculiarities of others make association painful to me. Their right to be peculiar is just equalled by my right to choose my associates according to mutual pleasure.

To continue an unpleasant association on the grounds of duty or formality is the height of absurdity. This applies to social, friendship, family and every other relation in life.

Nothing in nature is immoral or degrading. A thorough knowledge of all the organs of the human body and their functions is beneficial to a sound mind. The idea that young people should not study sex functions and relations is the result of wrong teaching. The mind that sees immorality in such a study but sees the reflection of itself, as in a mirror. Ignorance or a wrong idea of sex relations produces immorality; for the right use of a power is normal and a wrong use immoral. The only reason all do not sufficiently understand sex functions to make only proper use of them is because of false teachings. The beasts and the birds are our superiors in that respect. Ignorance itself never protected virtue, and knowledge never produced vice.

POLITICS is the business of the propertied class, because it is by governing that they accumulate. It is the business of the propertyless to get bread, and if they had not to yield political opinion to the possessors in order to be permitted to eat, government can occupy but their passing thought, their odd moments. Thus it is that property always has and always will rule; thus it is that property occupies a higher place, in all political systems, than human life, liberty and happiness. Thus it is that liberty and property are incompatible—the one the deadly enemy of the other. Property is government; and government negates liberty.

J. H. MORRIS.

## THE MAJORITY SUPERSTITION.

"THE man of the world despises Catholics for taking their religious opinions on trust, and being the slaves of tradition. . . . He laughs at them for their superstitious awe of the Church. As if his own inward awe of the Greater Number were one whit less of a superstition! He mocks their deference of the past. As if his own absorbing deference to the present were on quite better bottomed or a jot more respectable. The modern emancipation will profit us very little if the STATUS QUO is to be fastened round our necks with the despotic authority of a heavenly dispensation, and if in the stead of ancient Scriptures we are to accept the plenary inspiration of Majorities."—JOHN MORLEY.



## UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE.

Continued from No. 16.

LET us consider briefly how the body of men known as a legislature is brought together, and how it acts. Loosing sight of minor differences due to peculiarity of country or party interests, which do not really affect the system, each state is divided into as many electoral districts as there are wanted representatives in the chamber. Each citizen possessing the suffrage votes for one candidate, and he who receives the greatest number of votes becomes deputy for the district. Consequently, putting aside the fact that women are generally without a vote (notwithstanding that they have as many rights and interests as men) and disregarding the numerous expedients by which it is contrived to disfranchise a large proportion even of the male population, it is already evident that an important section of the electorate—that which has made choice of the defeated candidates, is completely without representation on account of a multiplicity of candidates this may be the position of the majority of electors.

On the other hand, such of the voters as have been victorious at the polls have as a rule had to make numerous concessions of principle and policy in order to have a representative at all, and even then, must be content to accept merely the least unsatisfactory, and make up their minds with a wry mouth to accommodate themselves to a bad bargain. Besides at best the citizen can only be inadequately represented by a single deputy in an assembly which is usually composed of several hundreds of members, so that far from having guaranteed his interests in any way he merely subjected them to the will or caprice of a body, each member of which champions certain special requirements, and all of whom collectively represent nothing in particular.

Likewise if we take it for granted that the preponderating body of the members represents certain ideas and interests dear to the individual elector, it is again a matter of course that, as the laws are never passed unanimously, the majority which makes the law and appoints the fate of the country only represents the fraction of a fraction of the population.

If we examine all the processes of accommodation, alteration, reduction, amendment so-called, and compromise, through which a bill must pass before it becomes a law, if we count the concessions and transactions into which a deputy must enter before he can arrive at a co-operative understanding with his colleagues, the thousand considerations of party that must be hospitably entertained, all foreign to the true intent of the proposed legal enactment, but which yet have a determining influence on the vote of the chamber, we shall come to the conclusion that ultimately the measure under consideration will fully meet nobody's wishes or ideas. Add to this that it has further to run the gauntlet of a second chamber or senate, where additional modifications and changes will undoubtedly be proposed, and it will be evident that after it has received the royal or presidential sanction the legislative bantling will with difficulty be recognised by its parents. The electoral areas being strictly territorial, and the inhabitants of each district having but one representative qualified to do everything, it may happen that the interests or opinions of a merely local majority may be made to override and set at nought more important interests, that are widespread rather than local, but which will have no voice because they do not command the services of a special representative.

So it happens that circumstances affecting a particular locality or a particular corporation may be sat

urp (in every sense of the phrase) by strangers to the locality and aliens to the corporation, who do not understand, and still less care for the interests on which with a light heart they adjudicate, without mandate or authority from the people concerned. Ireland, for instance, is ruled by a parliament in which the Irish are in a minority, but the laws of which it must obey, just as the Ulsterman would be under the dominion of the other provinces of Ireland if there were a parliament sitting in Dublin. In all democratic countries, so-called, the laws which regulate the mines and navigation are made by people who are neither miners nor sailors, and as a general rule, every social problem is submitted in parliament to those who do not understand it, and decide haphazard by men who have no interests in its correct and permanent solution.

Under these circumstances members of parliament, removed out of touch with the people, careless of its needs, powerless to satisfy them even if they wished, finally concentrate their attention upon themselves, and endeavour, as Proudhon says, "to strengthen and increase their own power, constantly to obtain additional privileges and grants, and finally thoroughly to emancipate themselves from popular control; the inevitable issue of power delegated by the people." ("System of Economical Contradictions.")—ERRICO MALATESTA, in Liberty, London.

## Correspondence.

MR. A. ISAAC: With genuine pleasure I read your criticism of my book, "Free Man-kind in love and Marriage" in No. 13 of THE FIREBRAND. To many readers it may appear as if you had brought quite a number of very serious and important objections to my theory, but to every close observer it will soon be apparent, that your criticism does not apply so much to what I wrote, as to what I left out and should have added.—I will state, that, with a few exceptions of minor importance, I heartily agree with your additions.

You ask: "May not this principle be applied to all phases of social life? Without reserve I answer: Yes!—and I defy anybody to find a single sentence in my book to contradict this."

There certainly is a good deal of truth in it if you say, that "Family life will stand and fall with the present exploitive system," but you are very much mistaken, if you think that this means about the same as to say, that there could be no freedom in love under the present economical conditions. I claim to prove to the people, that, if they free themselves from all the absurd superstitions in regard to love and marriage, freedom in love, even at the present time, will not endanger anything, which they can reasonably consider of value for their happiness. What I term the "marriage of the free" is simply intimate co-operation, association of interests with one human being for the purpose of establishing the "home" and the family. I am far from putting this as an idea,—it is in reality a purely economical institution, that will stand and fall with the present economical conditions. When society in general will be more homelike, then their will be but little or no demand for the

small and narrow home, which at present still offers considerable advantages.

You ask: "Has not the poorest woman of to day a right to feel the joys of motherhood?" Certainly she has, but I object to having it FORCED upon her as is done to-day! If I should ever write about the economical conditions I would ask the question: Why should she be so poor? and I believe I would answer it to your perfect satisfaction.

You were not quite free from superstition when you wrote that sentence about the strong males of the poor class. Serious reflections will soon show you that there is not the least reason, why these suggestions should appear "revolting" to a free man, even if some one should choose to use such a coarse expression as "breeding stallion" in the interpretation. This expression is not at all appropriate, as it implies subordination to the will of a master. This latter is the only part of the meaning, which could appear revolting to a free man and this can not possibly be understood from my article.

In writing the book I resolved to stick close to the subject. I am almost convinced already, that it would have been better if I had at least alluded a little more clearly and forcibly to the fact, that revolution of our economical conditions should of course go hand in hand with the fight for sexual freedom.

After reading this you can probably imagine, that your closing advice caused a pleasant smile of satisfaction, on my part. I have already reached that standpoint, which you predict for me. As the study of our horrible sexual conditions led me with magic force to the appreciation of the value of liberty in general, I hope and believe, that it may also be the stepping stone to true social knowledge for many others, who are indifferent as long as only the economical conditions are spoken of.

EMIL F. RUEDEBUSCH.

COMMENT:—Mr. Ruedebusch is about right; my criticism did not so much apply to what was written, as to what was left out. But at the same time I intended to show the impossibility of being free men and women in our present state of society. Had the author added, that free love and real happiness in general, could only exist in an absolutely free society, he would not only have met less criticism, but his book would be much more valuable for propaganda.

I have experienced during several years in teaching free love, that even liberal minded people will have an abundance of reasonable objections, until you explain to them that we must be free from all statutes, codes, etc., and society must be reorganized; that we must have a society in which everybody is independent, and wherein the question of existence is entirely settled. Then they only will ask you: "Can it, or will it, ever be realized?"

I admit that even in our present system men and women, who are free from superstitions, can increase their happiness to a certain extent, by following their inclinations in



love and other enjoyments of life. But, as I said, only to a certain extent, because they have under all circumstances to take the existing laws, their situation of existence, etc., in consideration. Men and women who have courage enough to take up the struggle with the existing superstitions and prejudices, and act as free people in spite of the laws and the moral code, will through such examples propagate the desire for freedom more than anything else, but the dependent, the poor will more or less suffer for it. And than people will not act so freely, until they comprehend that our whole social system is wrong.

As to the "strong males of the poor class," I hold still the same objections, i. e. as long as we have a poor and a rich class. As long as there is a chance to misuse freedom, just so long will it be done; poor girls and women will be abused by rich men, and "highly cultivated and feeble women" will consider it as a disgrace to associate with a poor man.

Of course, the rich can be free from all superstitions and prejudices, they can have a desire for general freedom, but when they reach that state of knowledge, they will fall in line with the poor to combat oppression; they will associate with the poor; they will sacrifice the greatest part of their wealth by distributing radical literature and supporting the press of the oppressed, because they would be unhappy by being indifferent, or rather they would be forced to be in line with the disinherited. But I am sorry to say, such cases have been very rare exceptions so far.

A. Isaak.

### "THE FIREBRAND."

You shining little "FIREBRAND"  
You ought to be in every hand,  
To burn the rubbish, priests have made,  
And end their selfish vicious trade.

They scare the weak by preaching hell,  
And make them slaves to their old bell;  
Then for their dimes and dollars call,  
For that, to them, is over all—  
To lazy far' to till the soil.

Keep your fire burning bright,  
Consume all evil—save the right.

J. HACKER.

Vineland, N. J., May, 14 1895.

### "Mr. Fitch."

"BEWARE OF THE POLITICIAN AND OFFICESEEKER," was the admonition given to his hearers in an attempt to be eloquent at a populist mass-meeting last year by Mr. Fitch.

And if Mr. Fitch was correct then he must be of the same views to-day, and if he is, then the same rule applies to him.

Mr. Fitch has turned to be a politician. He has become a socialist, joined the nationalists, has be-

come the oracle of the Central Labor Council, high priest of the secular church and casts seductive glances into the Anarchist camp, where he is not wanted.

He has become an office-seeker, as he has acknowledged to be a candidate for the coming term for State Printer on the populist ticket next year. Therefore if he told you last year to beware of the politician and office-seeker, you should heed his advice, and whenever he poses as a friend of the laboring classes especially as a populist, remember he is speaking as a politician and an office-seeker. It would, however, be advisable and very interesting for the populists of this state to know, before they will nominate or even listen to Mr. Fitch's supplication for the position of state printer, which we hope he is not seeking for the boodle there is in it, why Mr. Fitch made such sudden exit from Kansas, and whether his real estate transactions were the cause of it? We had some respect for Mr. Fitch before,—now we have none at all.

Sol. Smith.

## The Letter-Box.

H. E., N. Y. Comrade Addis has been on a lecture tour through the Sound country, expect him back every day.

Out readers will excuse the delay in issuing of the paper. Moving our office and sickness has prevented us, from getting the FIREBRAND out on time.

H. J., Oakland. No, we had no first of May demonstration in the city this year. But the revolutionary sentiment is spreading among the people just the same.

S. W., London. Glad to hear of the progress of the anarchist movement in England. Things are rather quiet here, but no telling what may happen in the near future.

G. B., Van Couver. Sister Squires is in California, agitating in her usual energetic manner for the cooperative commonwealth. She believes in bunting the unemployed, so as to be handy in time of need.

N. B., City. You write, that our paper has destroyed your marital happiness. Glad to hear it, then happiness, which depends on the subjugation of our fellowman and in this case fellowwoman ought to be destroyed. Consider and treat your wife as your companion, your equal in any and all respects, and in case she really likes you your happiness will return doublefold, being based on harmony.

## Anything More My Lord?

By LOIS Waisebrook.

Dealing with the population question and the use of contracepts. Extracts:

"Has not the miner's wife as good a right to be a mother as the wife of the millionaire? Certainly she has, and a moral right to enough of the world's wealth to make her comfortable as a mother, but after having robbed her of this right, it is no proposed that it be made the basis of still further robbery. When women's place and work, together with the higher uses of sex come to be rightly understood, no protective mother will lack any possible comfort."

"What we need to do is to develop ourselves, to unfold and round out our own natures, to surround ourselves with all that tends to do this, and this not for the sake of children, but because of the love of so doing, and we need to take no thought, to have no fear that our children will not follow the law if like is producing like."

Price 10 cents, at this office.

## THE MORAL FRONTIER.

"Why do you kill me? What do you not live on the other side of the water? My friend, if you lived on this side I should be an assassin, and it would be unjust to kill you; but since you live on the other side I am a brave man, and it is just.—B. PASCAL.

## 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.

### THE COMMITTEE.

LUCIFER THE, LIGHTBEARER, stands for light against darkness; for freedom against slavery; for freethought, free speech, free press, free mails, free land, free currency, free trade, free manhood, and—above all—free womanhood and motherhood.

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• THE TORCH, 127, Ossulton St., London, N.W.

FREEDOM, 7, Lamb's Conduit St., London, W.C.

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LES TEMPS NOUVEAUX, J. Grave, 140, Rue Mouffetard, Paris.

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ALL comrades who publish newspapers, reviews, pamphlets, songs, or any literature with reference to Anarchism and socialism, are requested to send at least one copy to Mr. A. HAMON, 132 Avenue de Cliche, Paris, France, who intends to use them for sociological study.

SOLIDARITY, the fearless and energetic advocate of Anarchist/Communism, is again being published in New York at 50 East First street. Price 60 cents per year. Send all money to R. Edelmann, Arlington, New Jersey.

We have received the prospectus of a new book entitled "The Common Good vs. Private Property," by W. H. Van Ornum, the well-known economic writer. It gives a history of competition and co operation from the ancient village communities down to our present economic system, now in transition to a better one. The author invites advance subscriptions so as to enable him to control the price of the book.—The Cincinnati.

## DEATH TO MONOPOLY: LIFE

### TO LABOR.

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