HE FIREBRA

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

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VOL. I.

PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY, JULY 28, 1895.

NO. 25

THE FIREBRAND

Published Weekly by FIREBRAND PUBLISHING COMMITTEE. 50 CENTS A YEAR. Communications received in any of the European languages.

Admitted as second class matter at the Portland, Or. Post Office, Feb. 23., 1895.

Address: The Firebrand, P. O. Box 477 Portland, Oregon.

TRUE FREEDOM.

Men whose boast it is that ye Come of fathers brave and free, If there breathe on earth a slave-Are ye truly free and brave? If you do not feel the chain When it works a brother's pain, Are ye not base slaves indeed-Slaves unworthy to be freed?

Is true freedom but to break Fetters for our own dear sake. And with leathern hearts forgot That we owe mankind a debt? No, true freedom is to share All the chains our brothers wear. And with heart and hand to be Earnest to make others free

They are slaves who fear to speak For the fallen and the weak; They are slaves who will not choose Hatred, scoffing, and abuse Rather than in silence shrink From the truth they needs must think; They are slaves who dare not be In the right with two or three.

J. R. LOWELL.

LIBERTY OR DEATH!

"What we want is liberty, and the power in common with our so-called superiors of enjoying the gifts of nature: it is true our wish may not be gratified, but this one thing is certain, I have no right, least of all have I any desire. our attempt to obtain it will end only with our lives."-Robert Kerr(1549).

"Government is the tool, to obtain which avrice and ambition strive; it is the sword with themselves (as comrade W. C. Owen has dhich now this, now that one strikes and hits, and calls it governing. We shall constantly be sibly by thus introducing the subject a distrack and wounded, let who will wield the d, until we have destroyed the weapon it--Dr. S. Englander.

ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM.

For some time it has seemed that we, who call ourselves Anarchist-Communists, should explain to the world our principles, and forever set at rest the question whether we are, or are not authoritarians. This we owe to ourselves, if we would maintain the dignity of a distinct school of economic thought, even more than to those sneering individualists who delight in calling themselves "plumbliners" and those who differ with them, "authoritarians," "State Socialists in disguise," etc. It has long been the custom of this peculiar class of thinkers to ridicule Anarchist-Communists; to misunderstand (or pretend to misunderstand) and to misinterpret the theory of Anarchist-Communism. One of their leading journals, some years ago, even went so far as to declare that Communism under Anarchy was as ridiculous and as impossible as squaring the circle or a white-black man; and the same paper has repeatedly asserted that Anarchy and Communism are antithetical terms, impossible to be harmonized.

To "give the devil his dive," however, we must admit that many "plumbliners" are honest in their criticism of Anarhist-Communism, and that much of their misconception arises from the loose and careless methods of expression of some of our own comrades, and, the imperfectly developed ideas of some others. I have heard self-styled Anarchist-Communists publicly declare that private property must be wiped out by force; that when we have the majority of the people with us we will compel the minority to adopt our ideas, and other equally authoritarian sentiments. The transgression of our individualistic friends arises not so much from their misconception of our doctrine, as from their nnjust conclusion that ALL Anarchist-Communists are invasive. It is to correct these erronious impressions, and to prove the injustice of such aspersions, that we should publicly declare the faith that is within

to speak for any other than myself, or to set up myself as authority upon the ethics of our doctrine. Nevertheless I wish that a few comrades who have ideas on the subject would expr themselves (as comrade W. C. Owen'has do sion and consequent as which will place the ma

What, then, is Anarchist-Communism? And here let it de noted that I use the above term in preference to "communist-anrchism," and for this reason: Anarchy is a principle, and cannot be qualifid. Anarchy means simply freedom; -without rulership. It does not convey a different meaning of freedom to prefix the word collective, or individualistic. But communism is a rule of action-a theory of construction—and can properly be qualified. We can say free (or anarchist,) Communism, which means voluntary Communism, or we can say authoritative (or governmental) Communism. We are voluntary Communists, or Anarchist-Cmmunists, because we believe first in freedom-in Anarchy,-and then in the reconstruction of such a portion of society as desire it on a communistic basis. Hence we are Anarchist. or free, Communists.

First we believe in freedom; in the fullest liberty possible for every man, woman and child. We believe it is as wrong for the ninty-nine to coerce and invade the rights of one as it is for the single person to rule the greater number. We are non-invasive, though we may not be non-combative. If one or any number of persons desire to voluntarily contribute to the support of a churh or a school or a state we say they can do so, and should be allowed to exercise that right. But we insist that no church, school or state has a right to tax us without our consent. To the priest as to the politician we say: go your ways, but hands off! If you can find dupes and fools to support you in idleness, that is their business; but you shall have none of our sustenance. We desire nothing but the fullest opportunity to seek happiness each in his or her own way. If you grant us this right you grant us the right of Communism.

We who are Communists believe in the solidarity of mankind. We believe that we should be, in fact as in theory, brothers and sisters. We aspire to a fraternity of interests. Our ideal is the perfect family. This is the ethical side. From a purely utilitarian standpoint we believe we can prove that free Communism is n ore healthful, more economical, more simple and everyway more beneficial and enjoyable than so-called individualism. Yes we even a sert that the sovereignity of the individual is only attainable under Anarchist-Communism, n which system alone the weak and erring prother would be sale from the prison and

styled plumbliners to the contrary, notwithstanding. They are plans of constructive society, as Communism is such a plan. We communists might adopt or reject any of these. Our adoption of them would not make us Anarchists; our rejection of them does not give our critics the right to call us authoritarians.

We believe in self-defense, and in the expropriation of wealth which has been stolen from The monopolists, the capitalists wage a fierce, relentless, unceasing warfare upon us. They rob us of our sustenance; they coerce us to do their bidding; they tax, imprison and hang us. We may retaliate. We have suffered long, but patience, after a time, ceases to be a virtue. We may forcibly take back our stolen products. We may put it out of the power of our rulers to continue their legal depredations. What then? Would such acts be invasive, or authoritarian?

Finally, to deny to non-invasive individuals the fullest liderty of action would be to deny Auarchism. How could we consistently call ourselves Anarchists and seek to prohibit others from the full enjoyment of their freedom? We are Anarchists because we believe in equal freedom; we are Communists because we believe in the reality of human solidarity.

WILLIAM HOLMES. "

AMBIGUITY OF SPEECH.

A correspondent casually mentioned to me his opinion that the reason revolutionists are in no closer communion, is from misunderstanding, caused by not giving the same significance to characters of speech in constant use among

In the numerous definitions for words there are many shades of meanning, and the last ofttimes flatly contradicts the first, so it is no wonder if an altogether different train of thought is started in the minds of listeners or readers from the one intended by the person who is striving to convey to them his ideas concerning the iniquities of our social maelstrom, or to call their special attention to the inexorable natural forces that are of and about us.

Revolutionists are of all degrees of radicalism, and they color the words they use, see, or hear, to suit their various views.

As an extremist. I nearly despair when I go in quest of words to show to those less radical, but very bit as earnest as I, the condition of society as it appears to me.

Dictionaries are compiled by lackeys of the ruling class, and are, of course, conservative.

THE FIREBRAND, some months ago, informed those of its readers who are so unlucky as to be beyond attending distance, that the Firebrand Club discussed, one evening, the merits of Virtue. Comrade Isaak would have non of it, and its conservativness as set forth by Webster makes the term almost worthless to me.

Truth, morality, virtue, and goodness, have been until very recently associated in my mind as synonyms, and if I continue to use them they will signify to me, the best understanding and application by the human ego of nature's es. Apart from the ego, I mean by nature's s, the "inorganic environment," the "evi-ly irresponsidle yet powerful chemico-meat" that comrade Pawson spe

(if I caught his idea). Lies' sin, vice, evil, when I employ the terms, denote the less intelligent conception and use of these same forces. But how are persons who are still "serving God" or some other popular idol, to expand the meaning of the words ultra revolutionists use so as to get at the radicals' sense of

When ideas not commonally accepted are to be presented, it is a decidedly difficult task to accurately express them through our medium, words; but until we discover an instrument more sure, we must blunder along with it as we can. Perhaps it may help us to be more patient with one another, and more attentive to the general bearings of compositions, if we think about how imperfect language is,

VIROQUA DANIELS.

Lake City, Modoc Co., Cal., July 9. 1895.

A. BERKMANN.

In last weak's issue comrade Emma Goldmann called attention to the fact that comrade Berkman's friends are preparing to try and secure a commutation of his sentence.

We cannot urge our comrades too much to do all in their power to secure the commutation. If the matter is presented honestly and fairly, to the people of Pennsylvania, there can be no doubt but that cens of thousands will sign a petition asking the governor to reduce his sentence, for thousands of disinterested persons, all over the country, regardless of their views on economic questions, expressed regret that he was unsuccessful in his assault on Frick.

Many who are not in sympathy with acts of violence will see the injustice of such a sentence. They will think the sentence too great for such an offence.

Others who are not Anarchists, but who sympathise with downtrodden labor, will help to get his sentence reduced, while all who are stirred by the same spirit of solidarity which animated Berkman, and urged him to put his own life in jeopardy, hoping thereby to relieve the distress of those who, although unknown to him personally, were yet his brothers and sisters, will not hesitate to do all within their power to assist his friends in this commendable enterprise.

If you do not live in Pennsylvania you can send in what money you can spare, to help pay the expenses incurred, while, if you do live in Pennsylvania, you can circulate a petition, collect money, and write to the Governor of the state, and the Judge that sentenced him, pointing out the injustice and cruelty of his sentence, and urging them to take immediate action in

It might be well for the comrades everywhere to write to the Judge, pointing out the injustice he has done Berkman, and the excelent opportunity he has to use his influence in getting Berkman's sentence reduced.

Comrades! we cannot afford to be indifferent in this matter. Let each one do all that he ean, no matter how little it may be. Send all money, until further notice, and all letters intended for the Judge, to Charles Schneider, 82 Hill st. 12th. Ward, Alleghany, Pa., who will see that they are delivered.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

PART II

OWNERSHIP & AUTHORITY VS. ANARCHY & USB.

Concluded this week.

The somber robes of righteousnes and revered statesmanship removed, the Church and State is seen in its true aspect. We then set a wild horde of selfish mortals exerting their vital energies in order to cripple and exploit their unsuspecting brethren. Attracted by the powerful defense, the law and government affords the most dastardly modes of crime, their cupidity is unable to resist such temptation. Acting under the same instinct that dominates the illegal invader, these armed authoritarians first demand their right of plunder, by the negative form of statute law. The civil code, failing of respect, the feature of intimidation usually obtains the desired result. True, millions of blind patriots may bite the dust, yet by such procedure a valuable precedent is established, the beneficient virtue of law is duly recognized and respected, while another patriotic stripe is woven into the national flag of Ownership-Authority. . Then, does not government pension the political end of legality's followers? true, it cannot give relief of itself, not being able to produce; so it exercises its fiat and tax functions.

The present society resolves humanity into two distinct classes, their interest diametrically opposite; what repels one class attracts the other. The function of the producer is to bring forth wealth, and place it at the disposal of privilege-the beneficiaries of ownership and law-which class confiscates and transfers ownership of such under the dignified name of commerce, and oftimes overproduction. When this feature occurs labor takes its much needed vacation, and, were it only allowed access to its so-called surplus, would undoubtedly enjoy its holiday. This is not to be expected from a class, that operates under crime of the blackest hue, with an ancestral history that is soaked in a perfect sea of human blood. The despoilers that are now eating away the vitality of the producers, consuming the daintiest of their productions, causing their fellows to delve for useles trinkets, to devise and support a deadly mechanism in order to supply and defend their abnormal tastes, are pretty orchids to be calling themselves esthetic humanity. Government Mints exist solely by virtue of law; from time immemorial these establishments have stamped a privileged fiat upon a monopolized commodity, to be circulated by the liberal use of powder and superstition, in the interest of the law's manipulators. Governmentalists know full well that only in utilities is real value contained, and that this is always a direct product of nature, else a labor product. They know that the creative function of statute law is privilege based in force; they know that government must itself take before it can return, and that this return never benefits but a portion of the collectivity, upon whom the law encroaches. The feature of adding the legal flat to a monopolized commodity, conveys the deceptive idea of intrinsic value and makes an excellent basis for interest and representative values. Should ownership-authority become at any time seriously threatened, the Dr. Jek-

Mr. Hyde part—government—and withdraws its metallic currency to a safer environment, or more strongly fortified government. Its fiat being repudiated is unable to exchange itself for the sinews of war and is left without commodity or representative functions. The interests of the beneficiaries of all governments are idenical at bottom, being unitedby a common bond, the love of plunder; under this deceptive metamorphosis they can the better control the situation until the feverish period is ended and the struggling victims cowed down. Place ownership-authoritarians alone with their intrinsic values and ownership claims, removed completely from labor products, and they would soon discover that authority cannot create wealth; its mandate simply intimmidates producers, and monopolizes their heritage and products. Money can simply purchase and transfer ownership claims; if wealth is not contingent, or if the producers are not willing to exchange with such a useles agent of robbery, and cannot be forced to do so, then the fiat ever remains worthless to the holder thereof. Its commodity value, a labor product, is howevar intact if it contains essential worth. Intrinsic value can only be measured from the standpoint of human enjoyment; anything that can support life and cater to this essential want is a utility, and life is ever dependent upon such for organic existence. That which can be dispensed with, which injures one portion of humanity to benefit another, is a useless factor. Should it be claimed that fiat, non-existent value, supplies relatively the place of human confidence in the collectivity, were this true, were it not the truth that authority itself is what causes loss of confidence, this would but show that humanity at one time was a worthless grasping phenomenon, with little conception of the relations or object of life. This of itself would have little bearing on present humanity, and certainly could not make a commodity change its color or quality. Should it be claimed that money is a labor token, that represents the enslaved relation of the producers to the ownership-authoritarians, it would probably be a correct definition. Were the disinherited to arise, repudiate their chains, and capitalist society's claims, were they to repudiate rent, interest and taxes, and take their products without recognizing ownership-authority, or the legal function of their inventionmoney, they would then discover the real purpose of church and state. Once the producers, or a sufficient portion of them, discover that competition is a myth, that the dice of opportunity is loaded, so to speak; when once labor decides to strike capital, it must be a decisive blow; else, the ownership-authoritarians will burst the religio-military cloud and drop humanity into chaotic darkness. Their treasure vaults will unlock the powder magazine, and with a war center established, the soul of liberty and despotism, of labor and capital, will then be tried with fire. This, proletiares, is the situation confronting labor, the result of blind faith in omnipotence and human authority, is what statesmen and priests do for the producers. This is the much boasted age of religion and government.

Let religious stricken toilers compare .the icture with the producers fallen angels,

yll side of capital immediately forecloses on its Church and State—Capitalist Society—the devil, with repudiation and revolution as their savior. "We trust in God" is the foul motto inscribed upon the institutions and mediums with which Society levies tribute. The prevalent God idea is that of an omnipotent creative power, originating the eternal universe out of nothingness. This pitiful idea is reflected through the present system, arbitrary power supposably being endowed with creative functions; the superstitious church scriptures and the code of legality, thus becomes the embodied letter of this spirit, as expressed through human authority of past and present ages: Ownership is, however, the foundation of the human authoritarians creative powers. Government's mechanical body enforces such decrees while ever resisting the followers of its deadly opponent—equity. These two in one and one in three powers constitute the trinity of of the christian Godhead; the creator and savior of Capitalist Society. No wonder that to sin against the holy ghost-authorityis to incur the everlasting hatred of the Godhead. This spirit is the prime supporter of their hellish system, yet the holy ghost would fall prostrate were Labor to seize the State and explode the combustables thereof, amongst Capitalist Society, and its sites of religious and temporal power.

While Society lies wrapped in these privileg ed mantles, it need never fear want or exposure; its heaven is, indeed, secure while ownership-authority exists. Even though ownership is irretrievably linked to government, even though life and liberty is crushed thereby, yet the producers will not perceive these conclusive facts.

Society has completed the deadly work that primitive savages commenced. Religion has not failed in its foul mission; the Church has preached the gospel of duty, of belief in and non-resistance to authority; granted the priv ilege of the control of the mind, rest assured, it will succeed in its deadly task; it will not cease adapting the proletaires reason to superstition and authority, until the reasoning faculties are completely stupified, leaving the individuality null and void. Should reason yet struggle from its slumber, rest assured the State will enwrap it in the mantle of patriotism, else, failing in this, Society will either embrace and draw it into the privileged fold or ostracize and hound it. How thoroughly capitalistic governmentalists accomplish their diabolical work, is painfully visible when with rifled cannon rifling its stomach for ages, the blind moloch of productive Labor still instinctively staggers in wake of its stupendous demi-gods -Church and State.

The producers worship and die like oxen for the very beasts that mutilate and devour them; that ever stand usurping their birthrights, their liberties, while ever threatening to storm the remnant of their miserable existence. Yet the formidable body of Church and State could be easily broken. Let the spirit of superiority be subdued; let producers cure themselves of race and religious feuds, of the false sense of duty to costum, code and creed. The present ownership environment will then soon be torn down and out of the ruins will arise interdependent human solidarity-Anarchy and Useultimatum to Capital, so-called, should be, we

demand, the recognition of liberty, the free use of lifes environment. Will you voluntarily expropriate and abolish government? Will you allow another step to be taken in human evclution? Will you allow the present savage Iplane to give place to the fitted for for survival the human plane?

This should be the peremptory demand of the producers, the creators of the present prolific environment. Humanity is treading near the chasm of death; voluntary surrender will usher in solidarity and avert internecine revolution. Environment is new ripe for the appearance of another bloodthirsty set of Alexanders, else the dawn of liberty. It is either a voluntary reconstruction, else a violent conflict. Chattel slavery upon the present line of production is a myth. It is a case of solve the riddle of the sphinx, else die. Society, your answer or your life?

JOHN PAWSON.

END.

CLIPPINGS AND COMMENTS.

One of our comrades recently had a private discussion with an "advanced" Social-Democrat, and the latter emphatically denied that the Social-Democrats believed in having laws, or any other compulsory regulations; and that the only difference between Anarchists and Social-Democrats was their tactics in gaining freedom. The following is clipped from "The People," New York, the mouth-piece of the Socialist Labor Party in this country, and shows very clearly that they believe in laws, administrated "for the benefit of the people," which is in itselself an absurdity.

"Gov. Clark of Arkansas tells a half truth when he savs:

"There is no law. There are rules accepted as laws, but these are so complex in principle as to render the law a myth. Ninty per cent. of appealed cases could be decided either way' and lawyers on the bench are frequently divided on the question of what is the law.""

"This is true enough when we look at the law in so far as it affects capitalists in the wrangles they are wont to fall into as a result of their mutual rascalities. When it comes to be an issue between capitalist and capitalist, there certainly the law is a very elastic thing. But when the issue is between capitalist on the one hand and workingmen on the other, then the law works with a rigidity that is wonderful to behold. In such cases there is no doubt among the judges how the case should be.

The moral of the story is here for Whing and Tory, that the law is, to-day, a very dreadful reality-for the workers, and that it will continue to be so until the workers wrench it from the hands of the class that now usurp it, and administer it for the benefit of the people."

It has always been and is also claimed today that laws were and are "administered for the benefit of the people." And experience has proven already that Social Democrats are just as bad executors of laws as anybody dise.

Many people ignorantly confound Socialism

with Communism, free love and even with Anarchy. . . . Others oppose co-operative movements asserting it will destroy individual effort.

Socialism does not seek to destroy or invade the privacy of the home. Indeed it is the only system by which the privacy and sacred happiness of the home can be maintained at all.

Socialism does not seek to destroy individualism. On the other hand it is the only system under which a pure and high type of the individual can be developed.

Socialism does not demand a division of property. It is the only system that declares that every human being, man or woman, shall be the sole owner of his or her productions, and offers full protection in such ownership.

Socialism does not seek to destroy individual enterprise. Far from it. Indeed, it says to all men Thou shalt not exploit thy neighbors labor but shall live by the sweat of thine own brow only. If a man will not work neither shall he

In short Socialism, as defined in Encyclopedia Brittannica, latest edition, is "identical with the feachings of Jesus Christ."—Aberdeen Star.

The above clipping shows the writer to be one of those, who ignorant of the history and full import of Socialism, presume to tell others what Socialism is. "The Socialist," a paper just started in San Francisco, is trying to make clear what it means by Socialism, makes use of the same expressions as the above, thus showing that a number of self-styled Socialists have adopted the collectivist unsocialistic social theories of Lawrence Gronlund.

It is not ignorantly that people "confound Socialism with Communism, free love and Anarchism, for St. Simon, Fourier, Robert Owen and others, the founders of the shool of thought which they called Socialism, were all Communists, advocaters of free love and advocated the final abolition of the state—Anarchy.

How can "a pure and high type of the individual" be developed where there is any attempt to coerce love? How can you have individud development where the state is dictator and the individual not free, even to express his or her love? Individual development and state sovereignity are incompatable—they cannot exist together. If Socialism does not "seek to destroy individual enterprise, why do they constantly demand "government ewnership of all the means of production and distribution"? "Individual enterprise," as we know it, is the foundation of the exploitation of labor

Admitting that Socialism is "identical with the teachings of Jesus Christ," then Socialism is Communism and can have nothing to do with politics or governments, for Jesus Christ taught not of government ownership or civil laws, but of voluntary association, the holding of things in common and no ruler save—"edr father who art in heaven."

But Socialism as now advocated by such papers as the Star and the Socialist is a hog—pog mess of "government ownership" and "individual euterprise." This shows the degrading effect of compromising to catch votes which is always connected with political action.

When Christianity fell into the hands of "Leaders" it was compromised by the priest, mixed with pagan ideas and ceremonies until

an institution far from what Jesus and the aposteles eyer dreamed of, was built up.

 Socialism, under the Leadership of Marx, Engels, Gounlound and others, is repeating the history of Christianity on account of the same cause—compromise to make converts.

THREE hundred expert track-layers have just completed the connection and laid the track on the new Big Four bridge between Jeffersonville, Ind., and Louisvile. The bridge cost \$2,000,000 and not less than one hundred lives.

The above is a press dispatch appearing in the daily papers of this week. It reads like a general's dispatch—brief, but bloody. And so the war for wealth goes on, and human beings are ruthlessly butchered because the employing corporation will not make use of the safety appliances and methods which civilization provides for the protection of the lives and limbs of the workers.—Ex.

The Letter-Box.

UNCALLED GUEST, CITY.—We are glad to receive such reports direct from Russia, but why don't you sign your name?

L. B., SHEBOYGAN, WIS.—Please write us which backnumbers you did not receive, and we will send such with pleasure. The "Volksblatt" is at hand, but we fail to see the tendency of it.

J, and L. L., SHELBY, MICH.—Please yourself; comrades, we are satisfied (that your hearts are with us.

M. L. YANETON, OR.—Thanks. We received you card too late to meet you.

J. RUDASH, N. Y.—Money Order for \$1.00 received. Glad to hear of the new paper, Freie Geselschaft, and hope our Hebrew comrades will support it handsomly.

PREIE WACHT, PHILADELPHIA.—We propose to suit ourselve and make propaganda as we see fit. The comrades in the West are not used to being bossed.

H. A. K. ROSTON, MASS.—Your check received in due time. Suit yourself as to the amount to send. We have not heard from the Bostod Group.

W. H., LA YETA, COLO.—We are as annoyed by the typographical errors as anybody, but when a person puts in 16 to 18 hours per day, and has to read his own setting, typographical perfection is out of question.

C. B. TRESCOTT, CITY.—We have a letter for you, call and get it.

C. W. P., BRIDGEPORT, CONN,—THE FIRE-BREAND will be sent as directed.

FOR NEWS.

We request the comrades everywhere to send in reports, in any language, of all industrial straggles, all work of propaganda, and of everything indicating the growth of the revolutionary spirit in your locality.

By so doing you can asist in making THE FIREBRAND a newsy paper, one which all the comrades will enjoy as a link connecting all parts of the country.

LUCIFER THE LIGHTBEARET, 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.

Published at 116 E. Fourth street, Topeka, Kansas. With The Firebrand \$ 1 25 per year.

THE ALTRURIAN, a weekly paper, devoted to absolute freedom of mind and dody, Published by F. H. FULTON, Columbus Junction, Iowa. With THEFIREBRAND 50 cents a year.

ANARCHCIST JOURNALS.

THE TOECH, 127, Ossulton St., London, NW FREEDOM, 7, Lamb's Conduit Street, London. W.C.

LIBERTY, 7, Beadon Road, Hammersmith London, W.

THE ANARCHIST, D. J. Nicoll, Broomhall St. Sheffield.

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FREIHEIT, John Mueller, P. O. Box No. 346 New York City.

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DIE FACKEL OF VORBOTE, both No. 28-30 S. Market St., Chicago, Ill.

DIE ZUKUNFT. Semi-monthly, 75cts. per year. Send subscriptions to Wenzel Kubesh, IV, Shoenburgstrashe 5, 3. Stock, Vienna, Austria. Exchanges and publications to Alfred Sanfileben, Zurich, Oberstruss, Stupferstr, 1. Switzerland.

Courades, agitate for THE FIREBRAND!