

THE FIREBRAND

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

VOL. I.

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THE FIREBRAND

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THE OLD IDEAL: POSSESSION.

I HAVE a knife, Panchita,

Have a care!

Who was the gallant overnight

Below your window there?

—Myriam Daniell.

THE NEW IDEAL: FREEDOM.

NAY, blush not, Nita, do not hang your head;
Your body is your soul's own instrument,
As his is his alone, and mine is mine;
You, hate nor love can touch till you consent,
Awhile we dreamed we loved; that dream is dead;

Together our Life's music jars; in fine,
You find in him I last night saw you with
Some notes that make your notes more great
and blythe.

I wish you well; mistakes too oft become
Fatal, eternal errors through false laws,
And rob hearstrings of harmony for some,
But we, invincible, shall mould a cause.

And may we still be friends? The world says No,
But I affirm we shall; to limit love
Is hopeless; can man control the sea,
Or make monopoly of skies above,
Or into selfish breast direct sole flow
Of Nature's influence? Immensity
Defies possession. Men sate anger in
Bloodshed when slaves escape, break violin
That will not any longer play their tune,
So it may make no melody again;
Well, I say to you, be gay as June,
Perform your symphony, the world shall gain.

—Myriam Daniell.

FROM a Boston correspondent we learn of the probability of the comrades in that city undertaking a monthly publication. We shall rejoice at its appearance. If it could be made a weekly, though, it would be more than four times as effective.

IS COMMUNISM COMPATIBLE WITH LIBERTY?

OBSERVING that you print in your issue of July 14, a recent contribution that I made to a symposium on Anarchist-Communism, I venture a few more lines, with a view to promoting discussion. So many Socialistic propositions are now before the public, and are antagonized so bitterly by Anarchists in their distrust and detestation of all forms of Paternalism, that it surely becomes important for them to make up their minds whether or no they can retain their own Communistic position. For my part, though a great admirer of Bakounine, Kropotkin, Reclus, Jean Grave, etc., I have found myself steadily drifting away from Communism, just as I had been compelled to drift away from State Socialism, influenced partly by Benj. R. Tucker's "Instead of a Book" and other works that he recommends.

I submit one passage that seems to me very weighty. It is from Josiah Warren's "True Civilization," page 60, Tucker's edition, and runs as follows:

"The experience of all the world has shown that the business of such combinations cannot be conducted by the whole of its members, but that or one a few must be set apart to lead and manage the business of the combination; to these power must be delegated just in proportion to the amount of business committed to their charge. These constitute the government of the combination, and to this government all must yield their INDIVIDUAL SOVEREIGNTY, or the combination cannot move one step. If their persons, their responsibilities, and all their interests are involved in the combination, as in communities of common property, all these must be entirely under the control of the government, whose judgment or will is the rule for all the governed, and the natural liberty or sovereignty of every member is entirely annihilated, and the government is as strong, as absolute, as a government can be made, while the members are rendered as weak and dependent on the governing few as they can be rendered, and, consequently, their liberty and security are reduced to the lowest practicable degree."

This passage seems to me to hit Communism pretty hard, but I cannot see my way round it.

W. C. OWEN.

THE WAY ROUND.

IN this discussion the only task before us is to determine what Communism is. If the passage quoted by Comrade Owen "hits" Communism, then the term Communism is a mis-

nomer, for if it means anything it contemplates the equality, in all social respects, of all men. Now if, as the quoted passage suggests, one or a few men are placed over the rest to command or direct, there is at once an end of equality, and, therefore, of Communism. If a number of people hold their land and the products of their labor in common, but are directed by one or a few heads, there is a Limited Commune, just as England is a Limited Monarchy. Of this class are the Shaker and other communities.

Parenthetically, I may say that the so-called Paris Commune was successful so long as it was a Commune; but that it ceased to be a Commune when it delegated authority to a few, and from that day and from that cause it was a failure.

So, I lay down this proposition: Communism cannot exist by direction, or government; its fundamental condition is Anarchy.

To one who still has the Commercial idea, and proposes to carry it over into Communism, the notion comes naturally enough that "the business of such combinations cannot be conducted by the whole of its members." That is to say, to one who has the Commercial idea Communism is an impossibility; and it is perfectly natural for a Commercialist who has imagined himself a Communist to find himself drifting away from Communism.

Under Commercialism the supreme idea is "business." No consideration is given to man as an individual; he is only thought of commercially—his business possibilities only are taken account of. The business man does not stop to analyze his intentions. If he did he would find that in the proposition to manage a business is wrapped up a proposition to tyrannize over men and to buy and sell them if possible.

If this is true—and I think no one who has given the matter any thought will deny it—is it not plain that here is where the governmental idea takes root, and that we have the full flower of Commercialism, with its trickery, deceit and humbuggery, in government, and in the so-called Republic? And is it not plain that the commercial idea must be rooted out before we can have liberty? for the essence of Commercialism is exploitation. To carry over into Anarchism the commercial idea is to carry over the germs of disease and dissolution.

Proposition: Anarchism and Commercialism are utterly incompatible.

So, then, the doing away with government really means the extirpation of Commercialism. Under Anarchism nothing is to be superior to the individual. Nothing is to be contemplated

that involves the subjugation of man to man in the slightest degree.

So far as I can see, the Communist contends no further. He only demands this opportunity to live his own life in his own way; to hold as close relationship with congenial persons, and as distant with those that are uncongenial, as he chooses. True, he does not see why men should trouble themselves with money, banks and bankers, unless they hoped by such intricate means to get a little more than they give (seeds of Commercialism); but he has no notion of attempting to interfere with those who desire them so long as he is free to avoid them. He thinks that under such a system those who were engaged in productive occupations would have to feed the banker, the "protective associations," etc., etc., without receiving any benefit. In his opinion, when opportunities are free a man will have neither need nor desire to put the products of his labor under lock and key and guard it with "voluntary police," at such great inconvenience and expense. You will not easily convince him that men are natural thieves, and prefer that way of getting a living when they could produce it more easily and be able to look their fellow men in the face.

The most ably edited capitalist paper on the Pacific Coast says, in a recent editorial, that "our present civilization is based on property," and quoting Proudhon's "Property is robbery," admits that there is of necessity much inequality and injustice under such a system. It is true, and the Communist recognizes the fact that the future and better society must leave the property idea behind. That must be a civilization based on humanity. And when there is no property there will be no money, no banks, no "protective associations," no "voluntary police," no juries, nor any other authoritarian or governmental functionary.

J. H. MORRIS.

CLIPPINGS AND COMMENTS.

It is related that a certain king in Greece, in ancient times, once caught a mouse in his hand. The mouse, not liking its confinement, vigorously bit the hand of the king, who, in his pain, threw the mouse down. The little animal, of course, regained its liberty. Turning to his courtiers the king remarked: "If so contemptible a thing as a mouse, by showing proper spirit, can regain its liberty, why should a whole people submit to be enslaved by tyranny?"—[Ex.]

That little mouse was not civilized, stupefied by the fraudulent suffrage scheme, or the "step by step" theory, don't you see? It did not know that it had to wait for a "saviour," a "leader," or that it could vote itself out of its confinement. Learn from that little animal, dear people!

If up to date the sunlight had been monopolized and charged for at so much per ray, there could be found plenty of fools who would say it was all right, though they lived in darkness for lack of means to pay light rent. This of course looks ridiculous and impossible, but aren't the fools doing and saying similar things about the land?—[Ex.]

ANARCHIST-COMMUNISM.

ANARCHY: Absence of either brutish or Jesuitical supervision or dominion of man over man; universal individual freedom.

COMMUNISM: Voluntary co-operation in production and distribution; fellowship; solidarity.

Anarchism and Communism are so closely allied that to me the connection of the terms seems mere repetition. Unless the life of an absolute hermit is acted out, there cannot be Anarchism without the attachment of Communism; and Communism, as I understand it, includes Anarchism. When we revolt against and ignore all man-made restrictions, we will have Anarchism, and man will be free to choose or to refuse to employ any faculty he discovers he possesses; he will be at liberty to use or to let alone every natural force he discovers about him. He will not apply these forces so as to damage or destroy another, for as long as injury is done to another, our social organism is cursed with impromptu or customary man-made restrictions. With social intercourse communism or slavery begins.

If two or more persons combine their knowledge and muscular powers for mutual benefits, that is Communism; if authority is assumed by one or a number of those interested and is submitted to by the remainder, and access is granted to the results of their efforts in proportion to the degrees of authority exercised, then we have slavery of a more or less servile character.

Mankind has common and inalienable rights to live upon, to cultivate and to travel over the earth; also to gather its spontaneous fruits.

Every human being has a right to as much land as he can occupy and use (there is plenty for all), and that, too, without the payment, directly or indirectly, of any tribute or increase whatsoever, call the tribute tithes, tax, rent, profit from increase of value, interest on note or mortgage, profit on exchange of products, profit on labor whether slave or free.

Although popularly ratified, "vested rights" in lands, make a clean sweep of them from the claims made to religious or political despots' domains to the private individual's titles to town lots, are artificial rights, pure humbuggery. Slavery is inseparable from land ownership. This the cramped and impoverished working people have not suspected, for they have been persistently taught that chattel bondmen were slaves, while all other toilers, no matter how poverty-stricken they might be, were "free laborers." The poor man is the rich man's slave; don't forget that. The transfer of inhabited or habitable land, by conquest, sale or inheritance, is equivalent to the conveyance of the dwellers or prospective dwellers upon it. The same ill condition accompanies the buying and selling of movable commodities essential to life or progress, the supply of which can, by hook or by crook, be monopolized. No one has or can ever have a right to possess more land or wares than he has use for. An individual is unable to produce, unassisted, any article in quantities to make it an object. I challenge any reader to try it.

In communistic association, the tools, land, etc., with which and upon which the labor is performed, is the joint stock of the persons engaged in the industry. If for any reason, dis-

greement, disability or death, the combination is broken up, the rightful claim of the company to the means of production ceases, and the plant is given up without compensation or ceremony to the new hands undertaking the production. A man working by himself, as he could do should he choose to, has a right to possess the required utensils.

In the prospective communistic society the producers and exchangers of products will perform their respective functions for mutual convenience and comfort, not for profit or to "get the best of some one." Therefore, the superfluous raw or manufactured goods will be sent to those requesting them, handicraftsmen will accommodate their fellows wishing their services, etc., without exactions in the shape of prices, or, "I worked so many minutes for you; you must minister to me the same length of time."

Desire will regulate manufactures, for if free to construct what they want, the populace will soon find out what they care most for, and will proceed accordingly. There will be no occasion for a Sullivan to "hold up" a less muscular inhabitant for his watch, for he can procure a brand new one by a simple request!

If we understand Communism to mean fellowship, solidarity, there will be no quarrel about the amount of work or substance that shall fall to the lot of each member of the commune.

Our present society is a mixture of more or less qualified persons, chronic invalids, cripples, imbeciles, lunatics, and what not, the inevitable outcome of the society's ignorance and institutions. Regeneration from centuries of individual and social wrongdoing cannot be affected instantly, and the organization in operation, whether the old one or a new one, must carry the load of the wholly incapacitated. They, the partially dependent, and the constitutional shirks (our conditions have bred the latter, too) may need a larger amount of goods and care than the most gifted producers: shall we deny it them because they are deficient or delinquent producing machines? The defective units hinder the advance of the entire combination, therefore better conditions must be striven for to promote a stronger individual growth.

Do to all others as you would be done by; that is Anarchist-Communism, and when that ideal is lived there will be in the associations of men no religious or political rulers to pry, prod or prey; no commercial pirates before whom the masses will tremble at the order, "Pass over our profits"; no employers, no bosses, no hirelings, no sex domination; there will be voluntary exchange and donations of favors— "Each for all and all for each."

It is improbable that the acceptance of the theory of Anarchist-Communism and an attempt to adopt it will occur, the world over, in one decade.

Should the bonds be sufficiently loosened for all to make a choice between untrammelled action and voluntary adherence to church, state and commercial association, those who chose the mastership of the trinity or of one of the three, are not free, are not Anarchists; for, "So far as a man thinks, he is free," and Anarchy is unconditionally separated from the master, even if his restrictions are chosen.

VIROQUA DANIELS.

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.

IV.

"EVERYONE, I dare say, is in a better frame of mind since partaking of the generous lunch prepared for us by our sisters," said Ellis, "and I will discuss the question, how we get along with the other half of humanity, commonly called women.

"I will try to express myself plainly, so that everyone can understand what I mean, and I hope those who differ with me will not be offended.

"Woman in our city and under the system I have proposed to you is as free in every particular as her brother man. She has an equal and inalienable right to the use of all the necessities of life. She does not depend on the good will of a person or set of persons for her living any more; this is assured her beyond a shadow of doubt. She can simply help herself to what she needs.

"And again, all authority of man over man being abolished, she can satisfy all her wants in a way which best tends to promote her happiness. For this reason have her sexual relations with man undergone a complete change. Formerly we distinguished between marriage and prostitution, legitimate and illegitimate children, cohabitation sanctioned by law and lewd cohabitation, and society recognized two sets of morals—one for man and another for woman. While man could satisfy his sexual desires in a way not sanctioned by law without losing caste, or the respect of society, woman could not do so. She was ostracised. Of course, property was back of it. A man did not like to support the children of other men, or let them inherit his property. Besides that, woman herself was looked upon, to a great extent, as a piece of property.

"All this has been changed. Motherhood is no disgrace any more. The children are assured of a living. Woman need not enter into a contract with man any more, be it under the name of marriage or prostitution, to barter her sexual charms for the means of support.

"In short, the fulfillment of the sexual desire is as free from restraint as the fulfillment of any other desire. Love is the only consideration, or that which tends to promote happiness. Man and woman associate and have intercourse as long as it is agreeable to both parties.

"The offspring of these unions, being all love children, will give us a generation of people as much superior to those now living as a healthy, well developed person is to an idiot or cripple. Love children being the exception in our former society, distinguished themselves from those begotten in a compulsory union. Many, I may say the most of the people who were above the average of the mass of humanity were the children of love.

"Sexual crimes, whether committed under cover of the law or outside of it, have entirely disappeared. As starving persons will gorge themselves when they have an opportunity to fill their stomachs, so it is with sexual starvation as well. Our sexual wants, if not satisfied, produce disease; and just as hurtful is excess. All this has disappeared. No woman need live as an 'old maid,' and no man as a 'bachelor,' except voluntarily. Of course our former society has produced abnormal characters, but they

will soon pass away.

"I will not dwell any longer on the horrors of forced intercourse, or the evil effects it used to produce; but let us turn to love.

"Love, or the desire to be happy and make others happy, is the essence of life. Without love life is a dreary struggle. Even the so-called lower orders of life appreciate love. Look at our domesticated animals—how a dog loves to be petted, how he tries to please his master, how all animals crave for a kind word or treatment. How much more so man!

"We may love books and art, and our fellow man in a general way, but the supreme delight of man, that which gives him the greatest happiness, is the love of a being of the opposite sex—to love and be loved in return excels all the other pleasures of life. It is the sum and substance of all happiness. It surrounds even the most commonplace actions with a halo, to which many of us have looked back with regret. Love stimulates us mentally and physically; it permeates our whole being. It quickens our intellect and gives new and unwonted vigor to our bodies. It brings the best qualities in us to the surface. 'All the world loves a lover' is an old saying and a true one; and a lover loves all the world is equally true.

"To surround the source and force of life with obstacles to dam it up and lead it into man-made channels, to further their base interests, is the most damnable crime of which our former civilization was guilty. On this account alone it deserved to be overthrown and utterly annihilated. What greater pain could man endure than that of unrequited love? The ancients have given us various descriptions of hells; they have pictured them with all the tortures their minds could conceive; but none have even hinted at the pains and tortures of mind and body brought about by unrequited love.

"To be chained to a person by the shackles of law or custom, whom we disliked, and being unable to associate with the one we loved, for whom our whole being craved, was a torture which only those who have experienced it can conceive. People in former times very often accused the then existing society with the injustice of the few living in pleasure and the many in squalor, but the inability to exercise the most beneficial of all desires, the desire to love and be loved, was the most damnable of all. Where is the wise man who will dare to make laws for love? It comes and goes like the wind. At a certain time in life a certain person of the opposite sex is our necessary complement, and at another period another person. Let the units of humanity, men and women, be as free as the atoms of which the universe is composed to attract and repel each other, for only then can we be happy.

"There are persons who wilfully or ignorantly confound free love with debauchery. They seem to think that women will be ravished if there is no law to protect them. Let them not worry themselves. Government, law, authority produced debauchery.

"Woman is the equal of man with us. She is his companion. And man is the equal companion of woman. They complete each other.

"Of course, immediately after the obstacles and restraints of this life force, love, was removed it was turbulent, like the waters rushing

over a dyke; but in a short time it has found its equilibrium and flows along like a placid stream.

"But you wanted to know about the relations between the sexes. I will tell you. There are no husbands and no wives any more. There are only sweethearts and lovers. And before I close I invite you all to the city—we will give a great festival in your honor, and then you can see for yourselves how happy we are.

"Sisters and brothers, I thank you for the attention you have given me, and may you soon follow our example is my heartfelt wish for all of you."

EZEKIEL SLABS.

ALTRURIAN DISCONTINUED.

THE ALTRURIAN, to be properly conducted and be of any use whatever, should have an income sufficient to sustain an 8-page weekly at least, and this would require the labor of two or three persons. I am pleased to state that the receipts so far have exceeded cash outlay, but this is almost wholly due to the sale of books; subscriptions, alone, would hardly equal the cost of blank paper for a reasonable number of sample copies. A fair trial in placing papers in the hands of those who are blinded by the ignis fatuus of political reform and are charmed with the iridescent dream that revolutions come from above and not from below, plainly shows that a paper of this character cannot long exist in a rural district if dependent on mail subscriptions. It is only in the larger cities, where voluntary contributions are made by clubs that one can be sustained. The business of book publishing and selling will be continued by me, but THE ALTRURIAN suspends with this issue; the unexpired subscriptions are to be fulfilled by THE FIREBRAND, a weekly paper of similar character, and having many clever literary contributors. Although Americans continually chant of freedom, independence, liberty, and so forth, they do not mean it; for once put the matter to them directly and nearly every one will begin by making reservations until the idea is destroyed. Let us all, then, who love freedom without regard for priests, politicians or masters, concentrate our efforts in upbuilding THE FIREBRAND, which now has the sad distinction of being the only paper printed in the English language in this nation that is devoted to the cause of freedom from external masters.—[The Altrurian.

NOTICE!

The receipt of copies of THE FIREBRAND when you have not ordered it, is an invitation to subscribe. If you want the paper and can send us 5 or 10 cents, or more, we will be glad. If you can not send us any money, but want the paper, let us know and you shall have it just the same. All we ask is that you try to get us a subscriber or two. If you do not want it, and will not hand it to some one who does, please inform us; we cannot afford to send it where it is not wanted.

Comrades, agitate for THE FIREBRAND!

NOTES AND CRITICISMS.

THE Paterson, N. J., group is entitled to the credit of being awake and active. Besides issuing an Italian paper, *La Questione Sociale*, THE FIREBRAND has just received ten dollars from them.

OTTO WETSTEIN, the man who has sold a lot of ordinary watches at high prices as souvenirs to Infidels, would have Spiritual mediums penitentiaries for practicing fraud. Still he never wearies of denouncing the Christians for punishing his style of people for heresy. He denies the existence of God and the infallibility of the Church, but sets himself up as a criterion and would enforce his opinions by the same means as the Christians used against Infidels!

In 1850, according to a government statistician's report, the amount of wealth produced was \$8,000,000,000, the per centage held by the producers was 62%, while non-producers got 38% per cent. These percentages increased on the capitalists' side and decreased on the workers' side, until in 1890 the amount of production was \$61,500,000,000, with only 17 per cent. in the pockets of labor and 83 in the coffers of idlers. This shows how rapidly "peaceful evolution" is bringing about better conditions.

ONE-HOSS Editor WAYLAND was bounced by the colony he brought together while publishing the *Coming Nation*. It appears that Wayland wanted others to work co-operatively while he took in the money; or preach socialism and practice individualism. This is the colony side of the flare-up—"Old-Hoss" is yet to hear from.—The Altruist.

This is a demonstration to either side, that in State Socialism the incentive to rob and fight is not prevented, and that Anarchist-Communism is the only remedy, but we fear that they are "too smart" to comprehend it.

A LITTLE OFF.

EDWARDS MARSHALL, London, writes in the *Post Intelligencer*, Seattle, an article about the growth of Socialism in England, and has among others the following passage:

"Anarchy is apparently dead in London. Of course there are Anarchists here, and it may be that they will throw more bombs and get themselves hanged as other Anarchists have done before them, but anarchy as a cult is dead. As an occasional insanity it is likely to turn up anywhere at any time. But such outbreaks will not last longer than the few seconds which it will take the bombs which will be born of them to explode. This was plainly shown down in Soho, a district where many foreigners live, and which was for a long time the Anarchist headquarters. This district resembles the Anarchist district of New York in general make-up of inhabitants. But not long ago the population made such a mob onslaught

upon the Autonomist Club there that the Anarchists who were within were forced to flee for their lives, and have been afraid to go back even to get their furniture. The police will not in future have to suppress the Anarchists of London. The public, apparently, will attend to that."

This correspondent certainly is not very well acquainted with the facts. There are four Anarchist papers issued in London, and, according to late private advices, there is an average of twelve public meetings held every Sunday. Anarchism is far from being dead in London, and an onslaught by the mob, very likely stirred up by some disgruntled State Socialist, will not kill the cause. The abolitionists were persecuted by an ignorant and misled populace, but the cause of abolition was not checked nor were its advocates less courageous and zealous. Anarchy will yet triumph, in spite of all the obstacles thrown in its way.

The Letter-Box.

CH. B., Chicago, Ill.—No. 16 will be sent to the new subscribers with the present number. Couldn't you recommend somebody for South Chicago? Our best greetings.

B. D., New Bedford, Mass.—Thanks. THE FIREBRAND will be sent. Would it not be good for our cause to circulate "L'Ami des Ouvriers" among the Frenchmen?

A. L. B., Cleveland, O.—One hundred copies will be sent. Letter follows:

W. S. A., Palmer, Mass.—All back numbers are sent. Suit yourselves about the price.

M. D., Paterson, N. J.—If all our comrades were as active as your group, THE FIREBRAND would very soon stand on a solid basis and enlarge its form. Twenty-five copies will be sent weekly, and we hope it will increase the number of our readers.

A. A., Meriden, Conn.—We would, with pleasure, have fulfilled *Solidarity's* unexpired subscription list, but only last week received the same from Comrade Emma Goldmann. Letter will follow.

STRIKE AT PATERSON.

THE ribbon weavers of Frank & Dugan are on strike for a fifteen per cent. advance. If the strikers do not return to work next Tuesday the manufacturers threaten a general lock-out. Business is good at present, but, as everywhere, the bosses want all the profits. And they have the police and the militia to help them along.

Paterson, N. J., Aug. 2.

REPORTER.

NOTICE.

ON or about the 15th. of August comrade Charles Milford Mowbray will start out for an agitation tour. He will visit all the principle cities of the country with the object of addressing the laboring masses, whose hardships grow with the advance of our civilization. He will

devote a part of his time to organizing groups, thus leaving after him men and women who will spread the ideas and principles of Anarchist-Communism. There are too many of those who feel the pressure of capitalism and greed to expect anything but success, from this enterprise. Let every comrade do his duty and success will crown our way. All those groups wishing to engage Mowbray will kindly communicate with the Secretary at once.

Mowbray is willing to visit all towns or cities, the groups of which will bear their share of the necessary expenses.

With best wishes for the cause, we remain,
THE BOSTON GROUP,
Henry A. Koch, Secretary.
16 Hanover Street, Boston, Mass.

ANARCHIST JOURNALS.

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