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

VOL. I.

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DIVISIMM OF SPOILS.

THE subject mainly attended to by slaves of the lower grades (pardon! "free laborers") is the price they must pay for every act of their lives. Small wonder, under such eircumstances, that they should reckon penalties as part and parcel of their existence; and it is not at all surprising that they should with difficulty comprehend that price does double duty for the monopolist: it sops up, as a sponge, the spoils of industry, and surpasses the cat-o-nine-tails in its facility for driving "dependents" to their appointed drudgery.

The excommunication of price from our exchange system, as proposed by Anarchist-Communists, puzzles alike the authoritarian and the Individualist-Anarchist. They fear the imposition of the lazy, the incapables, and the greedy will prove interdictory to equitable distribution of the proceeds of labor. As if it were possible to transcend the unfairnes of our distributive processes, with our never-resting toiler starving in street. cellar or garret, because, forsooth, he is a "poor manager", and to offset this, the excellent "management" of the busy idler insures to him the dantiest care and culture!

It struck me as a little singular that an English Individualist and a California Governmentalist should have both chosen, recently, to demonstrate their objections to free Communism by bringing to the front a supposable case of occupancy by one man of a potato patch, and the occupancy by another man of an adjoining lot of land of like dimensions, fertility, etc. Said they both, in substance: One man may work hard and produces an abundent crop of potatoes; the man over the fence plants young trees, raises flowers, or more likely still, simply loafs. Now if these two men have an equal right can exceed the horror -by inference- of

to those potatoes, where is there anything just about it?

The Englishman assumed a greater aggressiveness for his shirk than did the Californian for his. He proceeded with his lazy man to the field, and, without leave or license from the man of thrifty inclinations began to dig the potatoes and fill his sack with them! "Total depravity" with a vengence! And are we to conclude from the picture thus presented to us that natural "bums" are the predominating ingredients of our society, and that they will be carried over and dumped into the new organization, unchanged? Must we acknowledge the least desirable attributes found in man, bound down under a system of unwilling servitude, to be all there is of human na-

An essential element in the mixture composing the institutions of Church and State, is the "total depravity" precept (and example). We may repudiate church ceremonies but hold tenaciously to the depravity portion of its teachings, and that invisible cord will bind us to the State. We may turn, later on, in disgust from governmental perquisites and perogatives, also, but even yet there is fastened to us with bulldog grip, a distrust of our own integrity and good manners-no! distrust of the other fellow's! It amounts to the same thing, though, as want of faith in ourselves, for the person we discredit is as suspicious of our characteristics as we are of his. Is not this inherited epidemic disease of doubt a phantom? And if it be attacked by truth and common sense, may it not be put to flight?

The democratic dogma of equality, and the commercial tenet of emoluments in preportion to ability, are fit confederates of the church doctrine of depravity. If one idea does not succeed in tying his man down, another takes the job. Amongst them they pretty effectually overpower the strugling masses, bent on disenthrallment. Conjointly they intimidate. They are more forceful in subjugation than all the armies and their artilery accompaniments on the globe, with the detective and police organizations, jails and gallows, thrown in. What

the disastrous consequences sure to follow in the train of the abandonment of old cus-

"Equality before the law," or before anything else, is there any such a thing? We, of America, have harped on "equality" for more than a hundred years. It has become second nature to us, so that those of us who have discarded the idea of equality use the term occasionally from mere habit.

What we want is not equality of opportunities, nor equal division of spoil; we want UNRESTRICTED opportunities, FREE access to the land, ENTIRE LIBERTY of association, and sufficient products for ALL OUR USES.

Two men are, perhaps, nearly equal in mechanical ability, but their other faculties and senses may be as dissimilar as are the general habits and blossoms of potato and pansey plants. If they could agree to work together and should divide the work as nearly equal as is practicable, must they, on that account, be compelled to accept an equal share of bread and books? Would no other allowance of aids to animal life or mental developement be equitable or desir-

Again, two men are endowed with corresponding tastes and tendencies, but one excells the other at manual labor in the ratio of four to one; will society promote its own wellbeing and growth if it deny the weaker or less tactful man the means wherewith to satisfy his intellectual or other cravings?

In Anarchist-Communist association, individuals are not expected to dicker with individuals in the matter of exchange. A person, if he work alone, donates his surplus to society, and society says to him, "Take from our storehouse what you wish to make use of, 'without money and without price'." Voluntary union of productive abilities can not occur among idlers!

Although in the conglomerate mass of human beings there are a number, under present conditions, so unfortunate as to be devaid of energy, that "tired feeling" is not a crime they can truthfully be convicted of being responsible for. For:

"All grow just as they must; For plants and men alike spring up From circumstance's dust."

Absence of energy is a disease of brain or body, or both, and deserves the same leniency granted to other diseases.

Now, as to the supposition of the two men and the potatoes; if Communism were the order of the day, the man who raised the tubers would take, or permit someone else to take, the surplus of his crop to the community cellars, where he would select what he wanted of other edibles stored there, or, may be, he would go to warehouses where he could pick among other styles of goods for something suited to his wants. He might remain supremely indifferent about what persons procured the potatoes he advanced.

It be would easier and more agreeable for the loafer over the fence to go to the public stere-house to obtain articles for his table, than to spend his muscle laboriously digging potatoes.

Were the neighbor not a loafer, but engaged in toil which was unremunerative at the moment, ordinary horse sense and mediocre manners would tide them over all imaginary difficulties. The Communist will wish to accord to others the right he claims for himself; the right to judge of his own ability, endurance, and deserts. With that feeling uppermost in society, division of spoil can hardly fail to be equitable.

VIROQUA DANIELS.

MOWBRAY'S CHICAGO LECTURES.

From what we can learn by the Chicago newspapers and the meager reports sent in by comrades, it would seem that while Comrade Mowbray was delivering speeches that were far from rabid, so mild, in fact, that the newspapers poked fun at them as milk-and-water, the police officials were so scared, or so anxious to be notorious, that the captains, and one inspector, accompanied by from thirty to one hundred "picked men", were present "to prevent incendiary remarks".

Inspector Schaak stopped him in his speech at Belmont Park, although there was a free discussion and a number of opponents on the ground to combat his ideas. The Social Democrats opposed his associating Anarchist-Communism with Socialism. After some parley and much sign of displeasure on the part of the crowd because of the interruption, he was allowed to go on, scoring the police sharply as he continued.

At Nash -Hall there was quite a number of police officers present, and although the meeting was quiet the distribution of copies of THE FIREBRAND by Comrade Bodendieck caused quite a sensational report to appear in next morning's Record. When the meeting had adjourned, the Chronicle tells us, Police Captain Larsen turned in a report, "All is well; send the men to their posts." The seargent sitting at his desk turned suddenly pale, and with a tremor in his voice said to the lieutenant, "The captain says all is hell; send the officers at once." Twenty men had been held in reserve at the station. They crowded into the patrol wagon and were hurried away at a "riot-call" rate to the scene of the supposed trouble!

At Turner Hall just as he began his talk two officers interrupted him, telling him to "stick close to what is right and correct". There was so little of the sensational or remarkable in his

speech that little notice is taken of it. But the "Bobbies" had to be brave, of course.

Commenting on his right to speak, the Tribone says:

Our free speech is for American citizens, or foreigners who intend to become American citizens and have declared they will obey the laws and are attached to the principles of the constitution. Prowlers like Mowbray are not under our ægis of free speech.

Compare this with the definition of free speech by John A. Andrews, governor of Massachusetts during the late war:

The right to think, to know and to utter, as John Milton said, is the dearest of all liberties. Without this right there can be no liberty to any people; with it there can be no slavery. I care not for the truth or error of the opinions held or uttered, nor for the wisdom of the words or the time of their attempted expression, when I consider this question of fundamental significance, this great right which must first be secured before free society can be said to stand on any foundation, but only on temporary or capricious props. Rich or poor, white or black, great or small, wise or foolish, in season or out of season, in the right or in the wrong, whosever will speak let him speak, and whosever will speak let him speak, and whosever will hear let him hear. And let no one pretend to the prerogative of judging another's liberty. In this respect there is, and there can be, no superiority of persons or privileges, nor the slightest pretext for any.

I recommend a careful study of this definition of free speech to plutocratic papers and police generally.

HENRY ADDIS.

THE PINAL REVOLUTION.

I have received your paper, and it gives me pleasure to tell you I am glad to see our principles represented in every language and in every land. Our numbers are increasing all the time and I think we can safely say the future is ours and the near future, too. The present situation can last but a short time. Industrialism is rapidly reducing us to trampism; some say half the people are unemployed, and the papers give us occasional reports of the skirmish of the disinherited. Three hundred riots of that kind preceded the French Revolution, when all at once the same spirit broke over all the land, nay, over all Europe. But now we have a more difficult task before us. The question is no more to get rid of one set of masters and replace them with another set. No! we propose to keep our freedom, and the next revolution will be the last one if we realize our full

I think as you do in regard to Owen's idea. The masses have neither the time nor means to read extensive works. Papers like yours and small pamphlets in which the ideas are plainly and fully set forth are accessible to them and will do the work of propaganda which is indispensable to our success.

I don't believe we can avoid a bloody conflict, but I am in favor of giving our principles practical trials in order to propagate them and hasten the downfall of the present order; also, to show to the world that we are practical and do all in our power to solve the question peaceably. Charles Levy.

Chas. L. Bodendieck, 1140 Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, Ill., is agent for The Firebrand, and authorized to collect and receipt for the same.

THE PIREBRAND SYMPOSIUM.

I HAVE read the Symposium in THE FIRE-BBAND with interest, and would like to say a word in it myself. But as I would not be admitted, and do not pose as a Communist-Anarchist, I can not enter that precinct. I am for liberty first of all, and then for whatever seems best for the individual. But believing in the gregarious nature of human beings, I can but cherish the firmest faith that once free, man will unite in closer, more fraternal associations than ever before; that production will be so easy, so prolific and people will be so certain of plenty for all their lives, that property-the things necessary to life and the enjoyment of it-will practically lose its financial value, and every body will be welcome to what they need. As we freely offer matches, toothpicks, pins, now, to whoever needs them, because they are plentiful and nobody dreams of hoading them away, or gaining power over fellow beings by monopolizing them. This will be natural, voluntary Communism, and I do not imagine any Communist-Anarchist would try to enforce any other kind of Communism.

On the other hand, as I understand it, no Individualist-Anarchist would prevent people from organizing into communistic groups, from rendering all their property common among themselves, or from making any kind of arrangements regarding production and distribution they chose, providing people who did not wish to live communally were not forced to do so, and their equal rights and opportunities to live and produce as they pleased, were not involved.

Now I cannot see any difference, economically speaking, between a Communist-Anarchist who advocates voluntary association on a communistic basis, but who would not force any one to live that sort of life, and an Induvidualist-Anarchist who believes in liberty and would not prevent the organization of any number of voluntary communistic societies. The results would be the same; it is liberty of the individual to choose for himself first and foremost, in both cases. The real difference is a mere matter of belief. The Communist believes a communistic method of living would add to the happiness of the individual, and greatly secure his future liberty. The Individualist does not hold to such a belief-does not really commit himself as to what the future organization of society under freedom may be, but unhesitatingly casts out every suggestion that might invade the liberty of the individual, and contends that, according to the law of equal freedom, a man must not be prevented from owning and keeping what he produces if he wishes to do so. Their theories of mutual banks, juries, private police, etc., are merely suggestions of what might be best under freedom—plans to be logically discussed—they are not parts of the principle of Anarchy. And no Anarchist, Communist or otherwise, would prevent such organizations certainly, as long as the non-invasive individual was not coerced.

LIZZIE M. HOLMES.

COMMENT.

It is a stunner to me for Sister Holmes to assert that what she might write on the questions discussed in the symposium would not be admitted. We invited all who wished to contribute, and had no idea of excluding any one. Such an assumption amounts to an accusation of unfairness on our part.

The next sentence contains exactly the argument advanced by most of the contributors to the symposium, and is exactly what Anarchist-Communists claim; that is, given freedom of production and exchange, and the necessities and comforts of life would become so abundant that the ownership idea would become obsolete.

Anarchist-Communists do not propose to enforce anything. If they did they would not be Anarchists. Their Communism is simply their ideal form of association, to be entered into voluntarily. No other proposition is made by them, and the charge of authoritarianism is pure assumption advanced by the "plumbliners".

Several years of personal acquaintance and correspondence with Individualist-Anarchists, scattered from Oregon to France, as well as a careful reading of their literature, has convinced me that they are as close sticklers for their schemes of ownership, competition, protective associations, etc., as State Socialists are for municipal ownership, state control, etc. And the fact that they persistently refuse to recognize Communists, or any one who does not accept their schemes of reconstruction, as Anarchists, is satisfactory proof that they make those theories the test of Anarchism.

As Anarchists, we are willing for others to live their own lives in the manner they wish; as Communists, we wish to live communistically, and believe Communism will eventually become the universal social system. What may be beyond that we can form no conception. HENRY ADDIS.

CALIFORNIA PROSPERITY.

To the men looking for work, to the men with small means, we would say, "Keep away from California."

Meyer since the first settlement of the State have conditions been so desperate as at present.

Even during the summer season, the busiest time of the year, there were at lowest computation no less than 10,000 unemployed in the City of San Francisco alone, while the rest of the State was in equally as bad a condition. Suicides occur almost daily; the starvation and misery of large numbers of people is frightful, and the condition the coming winter will be horrible in the extreme. White women, to save themselves from starvation, are working in Chinese factories at rates refused by Chinese workmen: and in the face of such a horrible state of affairs, employers have systematically violated the law prohibiting the importation of alien laborers under contract and have flooded the State with Japanese laborers who have monopolized a large amount of the fruit picking,

gardening and farm work.

Numbers of productive plants that have been running for years have been shut down and the employes turned adrift.

employes turned adrift.

Farms are foreclosed by the hundreds, and crops fre piling up without a market in sight. To enter into all the details of the situation would disclose such a state of misery, depravity and crime as would affright the stoatest heart. We can only warn people to stay away from California because the outlook is glossy and desperate in the extreme.—[Living Issues.

NOTES AND CRITICISMS.

I cannot help wondering why Comrade Holmes should worry about the impropriety of the pig in the parlor so long as men must live in pig pens:

At Croyden, the other day, two families, consisting of seventeen persons, were found living in a stable. Two of the women were hourly expecting their confinement, and by the time of the arrival of the parish doctor one of them had already given birth to twins, who, with the mother, have since died. The other woman was persuaded to go to the infirmary, where she had only been half an hour before giving birth to her child.

A man named Finkelstein, living in Back Churchlane, Whitechapel, was summoned for overcrowding workshops in his premises. From the evidence of the sanitary inspector it appear ed that the front parlor was used as a butcher's shop; the back parlor was a sausage factory; the lower part, a kitchen ten by fifteen feet, was used not only for cooking but as a tailor's shop, and under the bench where five tailors sat at work a goat and ducks were kept. This was a sample, said the inspector of the condition of things all over the district.—[The Torch.

COMMERCIALISM blights whatever it touches. The noted Russian sculptor, Autokolsky, discussing the decline of French painting, gives commercialism as one of the main causes:

As soon as an art dealer perceives a new talent he hastens to make terms with the artist and take him under his wing. He guarantees the artist a steady, respectable income, and de-mands that he shall work exclusively for his He guarantees firm. Thus the artist finds himself in a golden cage, under strict discipline. Occasionally the divine spark is lighted within him and he ardently aspires to express that which fills and agitates his soul, but the dealer is ever present with his protests and doubts. "Who wants it?" "no one will buy it." -And the poor artist gives up his high plans, and produces artist gives up his man plans, and product things his dealer's customers will buy. Gradually he loses all originality and spontaniety, and his ideas become poor and colorless.

Sculpture, says this writer, is in a much better way in France, because in less demand and hence not yet monopolized by "dealers".

THERE is more or less agitation of the question as to whether Anarchists shall attempt to gain admission to the "workers' congress" next year in London. Though this congress is supposed to represent the workers of every shade of political and economic, opinion At seems the Social Democrats, being especially apt in political jugglery, have gained control; and not only was Anarchist Merlino expelled at the last ion, but it is now openly given out that delegates opposed to political action will not be admitted. The English Anarchists are raising a great cry over the matter, and insist that, as the congress is "universal" in name, Anarchists should endeavor to make it so in fact. Com-rade Kropotkin, writing in Liberty, London, takes this ground, and says Anarchists could not, of course, object to the holding of a Social Democratic congress, but since it is announced as a Universal Workers' Congress, there is no reason why workmen's groups plus Social Democrts should be admitted and not trade unions plus Social Democrats plus Anarchists and plus socialists of all schools.

Now, in the first place, I fail to see why those who are opposed to political methods should meddle in an institution that is politically con-

ducted; and if they do enter into the contest with the Social Democrats and are beaten and thrown out of the window, I fail to see that they have any cause for complaint. In the second place, it seems to me that if the successful faction chooses to call the congress "universal" while excluding certain schools, it is not incumbent on the Anarchists to correct the error; and that, since it is Social Democratic in fact, the sensible thing to do is to stay away and let them call it what they will. Why should we waste time and means going up to this congress only to be excluded? The propaganda fund is small enough, and, in my opinion, that is a poor way to propagandize. However, those choosing this method are welcome to it, but for my part I cannot be represented. And, really, I cannot repress a smile at the thought of an Anarchist clamoring, credentials in hand, for admission to a parliamentary body.

SAN PRANCISCO NEWS LETTER.

I have arrived, seen and heard, and it has conquered all previous desire for occupancy and use of any portion of San Francisco. I shall emerge this evening from one of the hottest commercial centers, one of the most cold-blooded scenes of competitivism, and contest the S. P. Railroad Company's right of exploitation of the sons of toil. The objective point has now resolved itself into Old Mexico.

I of course visited the "dumps", saw the huts of the disinherited, saw both domestic and imported automata flying their patriotic emblems while rooting amongst the refuse of a pampered Democracy for the fires to sustain such life, such liberty! I am of the opinion that San Francisco needs but one thing, "Firebranding"; of course omitting Sutroism, its parks, conservatories and museums, its profitmaking and petty "exclusion designs". But enough of grasping philanthropy and passive pauperism - one feels like incinerating both. When the disease reaches its worst stage fire is really the best disinfectant.

Kier Hardy and Frank Smith are here. The Socialits seem stronger and more energetic than in Portland. Hardy and Smith addressed the French Section Saturday, Sept. 28. The room, Lafayette Hall, presented a martial appearance -stacks of arms, "old pattern", were ranged on either side; portraits of Carnot, Napoleon and other demagogues adorned the walls. The audience numbered about forty, principally French Socialists. Hardy and Smith spoke in a revolutionary vein, probably inspired by their "comrades in arms". Hardy exclaimed that Socialists had a duty to perform should statesmen incite and plunge the different nations' toiler into a mock warfare to preserve property and support their declining prestige. In this event private property should be smitten openly with all the force available. Of course Socialists would not abolish property, but simply transfer it to the prohibitive custody of the Socialistic State. Hardie believed in peace with honor(!)—this open revolt to be precipitated only as a last resort. Strange what elastic properties "honor" takes on when the M. P. distinction is gained and personal discemfort can be avoided by palliative compromise. I understand the French Section was at one time drilling for the fray, but that the governor veto-

ed the fad. Perhaps the comrades will yet discover a more effective method of warfare, one requiring less "authority" in the details of its administering.

Hardy and Smith addressed the American Section the following evening at Metropolitan Temple. Representatives of the various trades unions were invited and were out seemingly in full force. The Temple, a large building, was crowded. "Merrie England" sold like hot cakes. Hardy and Smith made interesting addresses. Smith is especially absorbing and very incisive in delivery. He said he was a Socialist and a Christian. He was especially severe against orthodoxy, its creeds and dogmas. Hardy attempted to harmonize State Socialism with individual freedom. In order to show a tendency to a development and expression of a diversity of natural promptings under Socialism, he carefully avoided all reference to State administration, seeming to suggest that, like Anarchism, Socialism was a voluntary agreement proposition, a co-operation for mutual benefits.

A young Socialist, not aware of my Anarchistic proclivities, confided to me the statement that Anarchists could not hold meetings in San Francisco: that, not believing in the enslaving doctrine of authority, any "State so-called Socialist" could arise thereat and, under pretense of being imbued with Anarchistic philosophy, monopolize and bring discredit alike upon the meeting and upon Anarchism. And of such is the kingdom of Socialism. Where Authority Where Liberty. breathes the State lives. breathes Anarchy lives and Authority and Property-Government and Robbery-repose. JOHN PAWSON.

Sau Francisco, Oct. 1, 1865.

SOCIALIST PATRNESS.

A FEW weeks ago we printed a letter from a comrade in Pensylvania in which he described the unfair treatment of himself by an organizer of the Socialist Labor Party. Under date of September 13, a letter from Coalgate, I. T., a coalmining town in the Choctaw Nation; a letter comes to us telling of a controversy between Comrade Henry Evertz and a State Socialist, Ambrose Sullon. Evertz and Sullon had an argument on the respective merits of Socialism and Anarchism, and Sullon felt himself so badly beaten in the argument that he resorted to physical force. Not content with that, he went to the superintendent of the Coalgate Coal Co. and told him that Evertz and Paul Dulongpont had organized an Anarchist group of over a hundred members. When, afterward, Everts asked for work for a comrade, the superintendent told him he had no work for his sort of people and that he was discharged and had to leave town at once. Comrade Everts replied that he would not go until he got ready and without a reason for his discharge. Sullon, the would-be ouster of the Anarchists, has skipped.

It may be argued that such instances only prove the meanness of the individuals, but the fact that the leaders of the S. L. P. are largely that kind of men is sufficient to drive all lovers of fairness away from the party.

The Letter-Box.

L. R. P., Arena, Wis.-Copy of THE FIRE-BRAND containing review of "Free Men in Love and Marriage" has been sent you. Hope you will be able to read the book.

I. W. E. Club, Waterbury, Conn. - Because of delay in issuing The Firebrand, we omitted your anouncement of the meeting to be held October 6th. Our best wishes for success.

R. W., Dallas, Tex.—Your letter, as well as "A Vision of Anarchy", exhibits remarkable zeal and energy for a sick man. We need more of your kind. Best regards to yourself and the

F. F., Tampa, Fla.-We don't begrudge El Esclavo any amount you might contribute: only keep the ball rolling, is all we ask. Yes, there are hot times ahead, and the hotter we make the propaganda now the less danger there is of overheating and breaking down in the final struggle.

C. L. B., Chicago, Ill.-Certainly, matter pertaining to the cause is always welcome, whether original or selected. We receive already as much as we can publish, but we want the best, and the more we have to select from the more likely are we to get it. No. 30 is exhausted, and we must again urge friends to send in surplus back numbers.

To OUR READERS-The delay in issuing THE FIREBRAND, replying to correspondents, and any error or oversight in complying with requests for sample and extra copies-in short, any and all shortcomings on our part-is due to the fact that we were away picking hops nearly four weeks, and since returning have had to move, and some letters or orders may have been mislayed in the confusion. Next week we hope to be out on time and from that time forward all things will be kept in order.

C. L., Chicago, Ill.-We realize the need of pamphleteering, but do not place the pamphlet above the paper. True, the ideas as presented in the paper are more or less fragmentary, but it is a regular, weekly calling people's attention to these ideas and arousing their interest in them. This creates the demand for the pam-phlet, the complete exposition of the idea. By means of the paper we are in touch with propa gandists all over the world, and if now we had the means of putting out pamphlets, the propa-ganda would go forward. Lack of means alone holds us back

M. M., Buffalo, N. Y.-We are very glad the German comrades are begining to feel some confidence in the English propaganda movement and show their willingness to help it along. We who are engaged directly on THE FIREBRALD will do all we can to merit their confidence and support. For the information of these and other comrades we would say that since June 1st no one has received any com-pensation for their labor on THE FIREBRAND, but since that time we have purchased type etc., amounting to over \$50, on which there is still a debt of \$11. When this is paid The FIREBRAND will own its own plant, except the press, and so long as sufficient money comes in to pay for paper and press work and we can manage by some means to obtain the necessities of life, its continuation is assured.

ATTENTION.

The interests of the revolutionary propaganda in a new field, requires the co-operation, time and services of a bright young woman who is loyal to the caus. Satisfactory terms will be made with the right party regarding salery, etc. Address L. E. 28, 77 East 4th. St. Box 8, New York, N. Y.

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