



VOL. II.

PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY, MAY 10, 1896.

No. 14

## THE FIREBRAND

Published Weekly. Communicate in any of the European languages.  
**50 CENTS A YEAR.**

Address all communications, and make money orders payable to THE FIREBRAND, Box 477, Portland, Oregon.

Admitted as second-class matter at Portland, Oregon.

**Anarchy:** A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal; absolute individual liberty.—[Century Dictionary.]

### COMMUNISM VS. STATE SOCIALISM.

Most of the error in the criticisms of Free-Communism, so far as concerns those who are really honest in such criticisms, results from an imperfect conception of the potentialities of freedom, together with the unconscious carrying over into Communism of ideas and forms of reasoning which are the product of, and can only exist under the present form of society. From capitalistic premises men seek to deduce communistic conclusions; their reasoning is thus illegitimate and their conclusions of no account. The greater part of this erroneous criticism, of course, relates to the communistic plan of distribution; and your so-called "scientific" Socialist is generally as vigorous in his contemptuous denunciation of the idea of absolutely free consumption as is the laissez faire individualist. Both alike assert the absolute necessity of some fixed rule for proportioning reward to effort; the only advantage possessed by the Socialist lies in the fact that he recognizes the economic superiority of co-operation and proposes to utilize it for the benefit of the entire social body, basing his rule of distribution on actual service performed,—on what one does instead of what one owns. But, notwithstanding that capitalism is his bete noir, when the Socialist attempts to develop his distribution theory, he becomes enmeshed in the capitalistic net. He adopts for his basis of distribution a strictly capitalistic form, failing to perceive that with the accomplishment of the avowed objects of Socialism this form must necessarily disappear, thus removing the keystone of his whole theory and leaving him between the horns of a dilemma, out of which he must choose either authoritarian Communism or absolutely free consumption. I will briefly indicate this dilemma.

Karl Marx wrote very learnedly and very exhaustively on the subject of value,—the Marxian concept of an absolute value unit is the central point of the whole philosophy of so-called "scientific" Socialism—but all that he wrote doesn't amount to a pinch of snuff, for the simple reason that the phenomenon of value itself is a consequence of slavery, of capitalism, of the very conditions which Socialism assumes to destroy. The socialistic concept of value assumes the existence of an absolute value-form, an exact and unvarying measure, namely, social labor-time. Products have value in exact proportion to the social labor-time employed in their production. Equal quantities of labor-time expended in social production produce values of equal magnitude.

This leaves entirely out of account the various forms of production and the varying utilities of such forms; it makes all labor of equal value, and by logical necessity apportion to each laborer, without regard to the character of his labor,—with the single proviso that it is "socially necessary" labor—equal portions of the social product. That is to say, without any regard to vocation, all persons who labor an equal number of hours must receive equal pay. This begins to look something like Communism, but it isn't; nor is it calculated to be.

Your scientific Socialist imagines himself superior to Communism, but it is his misfortune to be unable to form any conception of Communism save in its authoritarian dress. Having reached this point in the development of his theory the Socialist encounters a snag. His capitalist opponent gets him on the hip by pointing out that such a plan would result in the total destruction of economic motive, and produce chaos in the economic arrangements of the social body. "Under such a rule," says he, "your producers remaining perfectly free to choose their occupations to suit themselves, how would you prevent a rush of laborers into the more congenial and easy occupations, and a dearth of laborers for the exhausting and repugnant ones? How would you prevent a useless accumulation of certain products and an absolute famine of others?" Here is a dilemma for the socialist. He must either adopt authoritarian Communism and decree that the producers must be forced into their places and held there by the strong arm of law, or he must abandon his whole theory of value and adopt free communism as the only solution. The acceptance of either horn, from the standpoint at which the socialist allows himself to be placed by his capitalist opponent, is equally fatal to the theory of "scientific" (sic) Socialism. It is impossible for him to accept either horn, so he compromises the matter by turning his back on the first and attempting to evade the second. He still makes a pretense of clinging to his absolute theory of value, and attempts to remove the inconsistencies of his scheme by decreeing differences in the duration of the labor day for the different occupations, the proportions of labor-time due to the different vocations to be determined by statistics! It requires no very gigantic intellect to be able to perceive that this is a total sacrifice of the socialist theory of value, a complete abandonment of the entire basis of socialist distribution. Labor-time is no longer an absolute measure of value; the socialist is deprived of his absolute rule and driven to empiricism to determine that which the communist rightly apprehends to be indeterminate. In this he lands himself in the same vicious circle as his capitalist opponent. The capitalist economist defines value as "whatever a consumer is willing to pay for an article." The socialist makes merry over this, rightly contending that it is mere tautology, as if one should say "the value of a thing is whatever the thing is worth."

But how stands the case with the Socialist? He starts out with the firm assumption of an absolute

measure of value, and plants himself, as on a solid rock, on the declaration: "the value of a thing is the quantity of labor (measured in time) required to produce it." He is next driven by the necessities of his argument into seeking a standard by which to measure labor itself. In other words, after adopting labor as a measure for the value of products, he finds himself as far away from his goal as ever, because he lacks a standard for the measurement of the value of labor; and he is finally driven to this pitiable tautology: "The value of labor is whatever labor is worth." He starts out very boldly to hew out a line for himself, but after travelling around the same vicious circle as the bourgeois economist he brings up on top of that old economic chestnut, "supply and demand!"

Now, where is the trouble? The trouble is in attempting to measure value at all, in attempting to carry a capitalistic form over into a social synthesis where it has no place. In nature there is no such thing as value, and in a free society it would be absolutely non-existent. In even such a society as Socialism contemplates, where every individual would have enough, and would be relieved from the fear of want, value must utterly disappear. Value is merely a conception which gives expression to the power of authority to limit the means of life of a people, to deprive them of opportunities to satisfy their wants. It is a measure of slavery. It is a concept which can be formed by the mind only under slavish conditions. This is no mere wild assertion; it is a fact which has been demonstrated by the bourgeois economists themselves, and the laws of value are well known to all our commercial magnates, who act upon them every day of their lives. In order that value may attach itself to anything whatever its quantity must be limited to less than is actually needed. When the limitation is removed and supply is allowed to become co-extensive with effective demand, value at once disappears. It was a practical demonstration of this law of value that first started Fourier to investigate the social problem. When a clerk in a mercantile establishment he was compelled to superintend the destruction of a large quantity of rice, his employers being driven to this means of limitation in order to sustain the value of rice.

I said that the law of value had been stated by bourgeois economy itself. The scientific statement is: the value of a commodity is a function of the quantity available, and will fall to zero when supply outruns demand so far as to make the final increment of supply useless, or not wanted.—See "Theory of Political Economy," by W. S. Jevons. It is a very simple matter to cause the disappearance of value. Just allow the people to produce up to the limit of their needs, and let them retain their natural power to consume, and value at once goes glimmering. Socialism assumes to do this; therefore, Socialism destroys its own basis of distribution. There is only one workable rule of distribution for a free society, and that is, absolutely free consumption, such as Anarchist-Communism proposes. There is no sentiment about this conclusion; it's pure science.

W. P. BORLAND.

Bay City, Mich.

## NOTE AND COMMENT.

WHILE it must be admitted that the average support of government is an unreasoning allegiance, it is none the less true that when a reason is offered it is that the supporter wants all the benefit he can get out of the institution. For instance; take the adherents of the different political parties: one thinks that under a tariff he will get more benefit, while another thinks free trade, free silver, or something else, will be best for his interests. It is true that the average supporter gets little and pays much; but it must be remembered that there is a class that pays nothing and gets all. It is this class that teaches the people that whether they get the special benefit of tariff, free trade, etc., for which they vote, they do get that which is invaluable—protection of life and property—and are, hence, the gainers. Not being logical, they do not see that the boasted protection is just what they don't get. Still they see that under this arrangement some people are vastly benefitted, and they support the thing in the hope of becoming one of the favored few. It is the special province of the text book and school teacher to kindle and keep alive this hope in the youthful breast.

THERE are some reasons why the hope that commercialists will eventually become logical enough to abandon government will never be realized. Logic is hardly a characteristic of Commercialism. Still in the matter of government the logic is clear: the easiest way to wealth or affluence is to control (govern) the actions and products of others. The method of control, whether by owning the bodies, controlling the minds, or through a network of laws, is of no consequence. The fundamental error is in the premise that the greatest good lies in the possession of great wealth.

How any one could mistake the highest expression of greed, or the commercial spirit, for the moving cause of the grasping desire to own the earth and all its inhabitants so frequently manifested, is more than I can comprehend. The removal of government would not destroy greed; it would simply take away a means to an end. He is a sad student of Anarchism who would accuse it of so illogical a proposition as that the destruction of the government is the end of greed. And he is a short-sighted Anarchist who finds no fault with Commercialism itself, but only with this particular means of accomplishing its end.

THE latest manifestation of the military madness with which the governments of the age are afflicted is the adoption of an automatic gun capable of firing 400 shots per minute. But one man is required to each gun, and in the description it is suggested that the gunners can set up and start their machines and retire for dinner, leaving them to do their deadly work until the cartridges give out. The bluntest intellect will see the absurdity of the idea. Imagine two lines of automatic guns each firing at the other at the rate of 400 shots per minute, while the two armies are engaged in draw-poker in a place of safety! Yet this is in keeping with the absurdity of warfare, and is perhaps as good a way as any for governments to fulfill their mission—that of wasting the substance of their subjects.

THE "exposition" lunacy, known to sensible people as the advertising fake, shows no signs of abatement. Chicago had her World's Fair sell, San Francisco her Midwinter land boom, and now Omaha wants a trans-Mississippi blow-out. So successful are these "shows" in filling the pockets of railroad magnates, lodging house keepers and speculators in general that probably no town aspiring to up-to-dateness will escape this particular form of swindling and robbery.

ONE of the results of a social system in which one element must live at the expense of another is seen in the present situation in Alaska. With the opening of spring transportation companies began booming Alaskan gold fields and all sorts of vessels were put on the run to accommodate the rush. The result is that already there is starvation in the boasted El Dorado, and it is said that unless help

is sent the sufferers death on a large scale must follow. Still the booming advertisements appear, and still there are those who from sheer necessity of doing something, since there is nothing in prospect here for them but misery, will continue to overcrowd Alaska.

STUPIDITY is not confined by national boundaries. The Bavarians and the Hollanders are so insane or so childish as to submit to the "law of succession" which in the one case gives them a mad man and in the other an infant for sovereign; the "enlightened" Americans are in fact so befuddled as to "choose" for their chief magistrate one who resembles nothing so much as a beer barrel.

CONGRESS has discovered a "barbarous law" on the statute books of the District of Columbia and is in consequence very much agitated. The law is that fathers may dispose of children by will without the consent of the mother. Of course this august body is not expected to discover that the real wrong, whether barbarous or civilized, is in the disposition of a person without his own consent; but seeing that its session is long drawn out for purely political i. e., partisan—purposes, and it must have something at which to pass the time, there is no telling what wonderful things it may stumble upon.

## DO WE IGNORE THE PRACTICAL?

This is essentially a practical work-a-day world. It seems necessary to keep up the humdrum of our daily occupations; to produce, distribute, exchange and consume, in all the multifarious forms of such activities, in order that we may keep abreast of this existence we call life. Even we radicals, filled as we are with lofty aspirations of a new era, dreamers and enthusiasts as we are known to be—even we must dig and delve and hew, often in the literal sweat of our brows, for means to sustain the material ego. For the bread and butter question is the problem with us all.

To be sure, constituted as we are, creatures of environments! in the making of which each individual is but an infinitesimal factor, we cannot help the thoughts and fancies which crowd into our turbid brains, nor keep back the words which stamp us select among mankind. We have an ideal. A rare and beautiful picture of terrestrial beatitude is ever before us. We dream of mortal happiness; of delights compared with which the glories of the christian's heaven are but gaudy trifles. We aspire, and there is no limit to our aspirations.

And so, those of us who see clearly the destiny of man, and who are blessed with gifts to voice our thoughts and feelings, give full reign, with tongue and pen, to our burning fancies. We gather about us others, who have been touched with the same mystic word of sympathy, and form a band of closest fraternity, all silently pledged, by a common dream of rejuvenated humanity, to work for the realization of our ideal. We write, we preach, we strew papers and tracts, we buttonhole our friends, we hold forth morning, noon and night, in and out of season, we gather in small and great numbers; we labor, we suffer, we die for this ideal—this ideal which stamps us vile radicals and disturbers that we are, the very salt of the earth.

We look upon our work, and it is good. Seed sown in common soil brings certain harvest. And all are chosen who accept the grand teachings of liberty and solidarity. Encouraged by our success, undaunted by the sneers or threats of our enemies, we redouble our efforts, our hopes and fears fluctuating with our daily experiences. Our dreams become more real; our fancies more vivid; our hope more intense.

And yet, dream and hope and fancy as we may, the realization is still a long way off; our beautiful earthly paradise is still in the clouds, our picture still remains a picture. We are forced back continually to our practical workaday world; to a daily consideration of the great bread and butter problem; to the swamps and quagmires of human hideousness and treachery. We must live, therefore we must bend to the necessity of daily occupation.

But though we be dreamers, may we not at the

same time be workers, and harmonize one with the other? Shall we talk, write and sing of human brotherhood and put not into operation activities which have a practical bearing upon our ideal? Can we not, by taking advantage of the means at our disposal, commence right now to build up our new civilization? Ought we, because we have placed our ideal on a lofty pinnacle, to wait for time to bring us extraordinary facilities to reach it? Should we ignore practical steps, or sluer at less idealistic efforts to attain grand results?

I believe in the practicable, provided the underlying principle is true. I believe we should not ignore small things. If I can, without inconsistency with those principles which form the base of Anarchism, aid a movement which promises immediate and beneficial results I will assist that movement. If I see a medium for an early realization of my ideal, I will embrace it. I will be true to the principles which make for liberty and solidarity. I will aim for the lofty beacon which has been the light of my path for fifteen years: but I will not ignore the practical.

Looking about us we see many devoted men and women, through the medium of a practical organization, engaged in the ennobling work of rescuing poor, deluded humanity from the deadly embrace of monopoly. In so far as their principles do not antagonize ours, can we not affiliate with them?

WM. HOLMES.

## Comment.

In behalf of our readers I ask comrade Holmes to be definite. When you say "we" who do you mean? You may have failed to be practical, or you may not. The same is true with others. But I cannot admit that any Anarchist may write "we" and include anyone with whom he has not consulted on the subject. What is the name of the organization referred to? H. A.

## PATRIOTISM.

No fallacy inheres, in the human mind, equal to that engrafted in human selfishness; drawing its sustenance from the rank and foul soils of prejudice, and sectional hatred and tintured with a liberal dash of that scientific breeder of dissention known as religion.

It is held, by its votaries, that patriotism is a virtue. This can only be true of the term in its primitive and narrow meaning which is "straining, stretching and extending." For it strains good sense, stretches justice (on the "bed of Procrustes" known as our courts) and extends prejudices till nations crumble and fall and new patriotisms rise like a foul miasma from the stench and ruins. It cannot be a virtue, for virtue is infinite, it has no bounds, no meets, and the moment it is restricted it ceases to be a virtue and becomes a mere opinion,—of more or less extent, of greater or less utility. Patriotism is not a virtue, for virtues are exact and defined; while patriotism is a shifting bar of sand which a convincing diplomat or the fortunes of war may change.

Narrow thinking people say, "Webster, who is a standard authority, I would have you know, says 'Patriotism is love of one's country, not one word about hatred of any sort or of narrowness.'" Dictionary worshippers are not any more worthy of scientific notice than Bible maniacs or "nickle library shocker" fiends. It is the place of lexicographers to put down, literally tabulate all meanings of a term and the province of narrow thinkers to select the portion which suits their whim, prejudice or purpose and throw it at another's head with: "There, dodge that authority, if you can." If these narrow thinkers would read the prefaces, introductions and keys to the books they blindly worship, they would see that the colloquial meaning of today, may in many instances be the exact antipodes of the original meaning. But the average narrow thinker knows nothing of etymology; and philology to them is a never acquired art. Scientists, polemic reasoners, and clear thinkers generally do not go to a book (the province of which is but to give epigrammatic outlines of a word's meaning) for a full understanding of a virtue, system or attribute; but diligently read, volumes even, of those whom the world calls "authorities" or "specialists," i. e. men who have spent their lives, and usually under the best circumstances—toward attaining their end—in the special study which constitutes their life work.

Among those who have made mankind and its relation to one another, a study, Herbert Spencer stands well to the head. Speaking of patriotism, he says:

"Patriotism is nationally what egotism is individually," a not very flattering or desirable national attribute, surely. And what a foolish, purblind egotism it is! What an ignorant man it must take to make a "true patriot." How easily he can be mistaken or fooled (unless he works at patriotism as a profession) by the shifting lines of boundary. How is he to know if he travels (and a true patriot seldom does,—postulating that "my country is good enough for me you know") when to turn the spigot on his barrel of patriotism at the right moment so that none shall flow on unhallowed soil. Suppose no custom officer is there to tell him when to weep for the country left and curse the country found. But there is a place where a patriot can never be mistaken, and that is at sea, to put it in the form of a paradox, when he's literally at sea he is not "at sea." He knows that, at eight maritime leagues from land he need not "work" at his patriotism (even here he must rely on the captain to tell him the exact place patriotism ends and indifference begins. In fact a patriot is in no case a person of self dependence, he is a shadow, an echo), his active patriotism can be switched off only to be shunted back as a happy reminiscence, or as a vulgar and offensive, stereotype comparison to disgust his hosts and put more opprobrium on the country he professes to love.

Patriotism, again, is a virtue with degrees! Think of truth with degrees. For a consistent patriot must love his precinct (even if the vilest in town) first and most his city next; his congressional district as being better than others, then his state, geographical subdivisions of country and then his entire country more than all! If his country acquires (steals) more territory, his patriotism must swell to meet the new demand (and it always does, though he hated it before) and if it loses any he must still love the land, and hate its inhabitants (because they are no longer compatriots) and dwell on their inferiority.

Patriotism always reminds me of a Polish settler, I once knew. He understood nothing of woodcraft and was settled (by an unscrupulous "cruiser") on a very hilly and rocky piece of land, while next to him were two or three very desirable claims. He took me over his land one day, and expatiated on its desirability and value. I saw that he did not know that he had passed his boundaries. I called his attention to the fact, and he was almost ready to murder me for my kindness. No, no, "he screamed, 'this'n mine lan', see him no gotten rocks like 'n Steve's (a hated neighbor) its alla level 'n nice." We went to where he thought his north line ran, the ground there was, on the whole, better than that over which we had passed, but he could not find words enough to depreciate it and prove its worthlessness. In the mean time a settler "took up" the land we had passed over and had it re-surveyed and the Polander found what poor land he really had. Did he admit it? Not a bit of it, he was a consistent patriot. When he saw me again, he took me over his rocky hillside and was as eloquent as he had been in describing the really good land he thought his before, but now he called it all the vile names and found more fault with it than he had lavished praise before.

But these little minds are not fair citations, you may say, in so doing you beg the question for no truly great man ever indorsed patriotism and nearly all have spoken against it.

Perhaps you may quote Webster as one of the great men who was patriotic. It is true he said: "Our country, may she always be right, but our country, right or wrong." In reply Herbert Spencer wrote: "Whoever entertains such an opinion, has not the moral equilibrium of feeling required for dealing scientifically with social phenomena." If any country projects an immoral policy or upholds one, could a just man, one who loved humanity condone his country in the wrong?

But just, great and good men are not patriots in a general or limited sense. Voltaire, Paine and Hugo spoke against it and strongly. Hugo saying, substantially, that it takes a selfish, treacherous and unstable man to be a patriot. Tolstoy, who spent many years in war said: "When I think of all the evils I have endured and seen, arising from national animosities, I see that it is all due to that great imposture, love of one's native land."

Where is the patriot who does not believe himself brave, consistent and wise, still Macaulay sums him up in this way: "An exclusive attachment to a particular society, though a natural and under certain restrictions, a useful sentiment, implies no extraordinary attainments of wisdom or virtue."

Our most persistent and inconsistent advocates of patriotism are the christians, yet James Ledom \*) says:

"A proclaimed virtue should in our day draw some support from the teachings of christianity; but in patriotism one looks for it in vain." In fact christianity appealed to the world with power, because it broke down the partition between Jew and Gentile, and proclaimed that God had made all men of one blood to dwell on earth, and that all were brothers. This thought clashes with patriotism, and when accepted as Christian teachings should be, raises a barrier to patriotism, for men of one blood, brethren—should have no jealousies or animosities toward each other." He further says: "Greatness too, knows no national lines." The world claims the great men of all nations; their place of nativity is mere accident. Goodness is apart from sectionalism." To quote Spencer again, "The moral law is cosmopolite, and no respecter of nationalities, and between men who are the antipodes of each other in locality or any thing else, there must exist a balance of rights as though they were next door neighbors."

It is axiomatic that to appreciate greatness one must contain at least the germs of it, himself. Hence if a man lays a claim to patriotism and at the same time worships greatness he is inconsistent if not hypocritical. For according to his theory or creed a man must be a compatriot in order to be great, a thing more flattering to him than a great man or nation. Great men have no limiting horizon of caste or country, their mental horizon is not represented by an iron pillar, or a stone pile on land, by marine leagues on water or by red, green or blue lines on a map. Their source of inspiration and greatness is as boundless as either and as free. This was epitomized by Thomas Paine, when he said "The world is my country, to do good is my religion." And he actualized this as far as hampering environment could allow when he drafted the Declaration of Independence and sacrificed every thing for an ideal republic.

Another thing, and one of vital importance, is that patriotism is always seized upon as an excuse to commit every breach of human conduct, every act of unwonted cruelty in war, and every mean act the patriot is capable of toward a "foreigner" in peace. Then this same fetich, patriotism, is put forth as justification of the crime committed and should a trial or investigation be ordered, this plea, of course exonerates the inquisitor, who is euphemistically called a "patriot," because he is tried by creatures of government, creatures of the Moloch whose very blood and tissue is patriotism.

Instances in proof of this is confined to no people, country or time, or even epoch, the crimes of patriotism are nearly an equal unit with the individual wrongs of war. Mc. Carthey, the historian, speaking of the Mutiny in India (In which patriotic Hindoos tried to regain a stolen country and "patriotic" Englishmen eclipsed savages in atrocity) says; "For a time it seemed a question of patriotism which would propose the most savage and sanguinary measures of revenge."

History is defiled and strung to-gether with similar evidence of the practice of this peculiar "virtue."

We have news papers, schools and even whole libraries for the avowed purpose of perpetuating patriotism. Its platitudes are forced parrot like from infants in our public schools, mouthed in our senate and from the stump; and thundered from the pulpits by servants of a God supposed to be universal. Sectional love with its antithesis, sectional hatred, and the added growth of patriotism means the decay of justice and the death of liberty.

MAURITZ S. LIDEN.

\*) A christian writer in the North American Review.

#### CRIME AND PUNISHMENT.

The object of my previous article was to point out that Anarchy does not of necessity imply non-resistance. I attempted to prove that although we are busily engaged in destroying the cause of murder, rape and robbery, we would not be scrupulous about using whatever means wisdom might dictate, in order to exterminate crime. Of course, crime being a very broad term, it is not sufficiently definite to say that Anarchists oppose crime when the very practice of Anarchy is a violation of "Statute Law" and therefore, criminal. It therefore becomes necessary to state clearly what Anarchists understand by the word crime, in order to justify my position.

As long as we imagine man apart from human society, that is as long as we think of an isolated person, alone on an island, we can say that he has, comparatively speaking, absolute freedom of conduct; but, as soon as another man makes his appearance on that island,

absolute freedom of conduct becomes impossible, and the freedom of one man ends where the freedom of the other one begins.

And so in passing from the life of an isolated individual to that of an individual in Society we find that the absolute freedom of one individual together with the absolute freedom of another individual becomes impossible. Here arises a limit which every man either voluntary obeys or is made to obey by the rest of the community. That limit is the law of equal freedom, the fundamental principle of Anarchism. Under Anarchy each man has a right to do all he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of other men. Now remember, inasmuch as Anarchy means unrestricted liberty of conduct of each man, provided the conduct is of such a nature that it does not invade the equal liberty of others, it certainly is in perfect accord with Anarchy to regard any violation of that principle criminal. Hence, it is aggression, in whatever shape or form it may appear, that I call crime.

\* \* \*

Now as to punishment. It is not exactly punishment, in the popular acceptation of the word, that I mean. Punishment I call it in the absence of another term. It is simply letting one bear the consequence of his conduct, which is no more than the inevitable reaction entailed by a man's action. If a man runs a pin into his finger, pain follows. If he does it again, there is again the same result; and so on perpetually. In all his dealings with inorganic nature man finds this unswerving persistence, "which listens to no excuse and from which there is no appeal." It is thus however that men learn to be extremely careful not to transgress the laws of nature. It is by experimentally gained knowledge of natural consequences that men and women are checked when they go wrong. The efficiency of letting one bear the consequences of his own deeds is made obviously the fact where mankind have acted according to the nature of things, the results achieved are marvelous. When each man had to stand the consequences of his own misdeeds he tried to avoid bad conduct to the utmost of his abilities. As for instance, a man who comes too late to the depot misses his train and bears the consequence. A man who comes to late to theatre gets a back seat and thus again meekly submits to the penalties if so we may call it of his own bad deed. Hence, in the first case as well as in the second men are very careful not to go wrong.

Under a system of Anarchy it will probably be the same. Every one will have to meet the inevitable reaction of his own action. He will thus be checked either by the influence of reason, the influence of attraction, the influence of education, the influence of public opinion, the influence of good prospects or by that of the preservation of his own person, from attacking others by violating the law of equal freedom.

\* \* \*

Well, and as to whether punishment (in the sense of necessary results of aggression) is in itself aggression, I must say that I beg to differ with you, comrade Isaak. Even though when we could use force to secure our liberty it would not be aggression. If you intend to use force when you are attacked, and not use any force when you are not attacked, then you are just as much a non-resistant as I am. In this case you are just as non-resistant as any one who punishes invasion. Nobody will resist when he is not attacked. A man who obeys the laws of nature will not meet with painful results. Nobody intends to enforce a contract which is never violated. It is the man who breaks the contract of equal freedom and attacks me, that I wish to punish, by making him pay the penalty, so to speak, of his misdeed. With a man who comes to kill me it is not a question of contract, but of force. It is a question whether I should be non-resistant and consent to be killed, or I should resist and refuse to be killed. And the fact that we are revolutionists, and when bound by monopoly and government to give up the products of our toil, are not scrupulous about using even force to secure the products of our toil, shows clearly that we are not non-resistant. When we are confronted with a question whether we shall leave land and the implements of production in the hands of the monopolists and continue to be robbed, or take back from the monopolists what, though stolen from us, gives them the power to exploit us, we certainly prefer the latter, and do not cease to be Anarchists for all that.

H. A. KOCH.

#### REPLY.

The above definition of crime—aggression—is all right, and as punishment of man by man necessitates

aggression, punishment is crime, and if crime must be punished there can be no end to crime.

In Anarchist propaganda we cannot imagine man isolated from his fellows. In such a condition there could be no social problems to solve. Viewing things as they are, I demand freedom from all forms of intermeddling and aggression, and as punishment is aggression I must oppose punishment. This does not postulate non-resistance, for resistance to aggression is not punishment but defense.

If a man "runs a pin into his finger" he has not violated a law of nature, nor yet is he punished. The pin enters his finger as a result the pressure bearing against it, and the pain is caused by disturbed nerve action. There being no intention on the part of nature to hurt the man, I cannot see how pain that is caused by the disturbance of normal nerve action can be called punishment. If "a man comes too late to the theatre" he simply takes the seat he can get with the money he has, but I cannot see any resemblance between that and punishment. It the man who came too late to the theatre was fined or imprisoned or whipped, that would be punishment.

All must obey the laws of nature or work miracles. It is impossible for me to conceive of anyone violating natural law, for everything that happens is in accordance with natural law; nothing can happen and not be.

I cannot see how allowing a man to "pay the penalty of his misdeeds" can properly be called punishment, any more than allowing him to enjoy the fruits of his labor can be called punishment. It is not allowing, but inflicting that I call punishment. Self defense is always justifiable, but punishment never.

HENRY ADDIS.

#### THE MOVEMENT IN LOS ANGELES.

Comrade Pietro Gori has been in this city the past two weeks, doing propaganda work among the French and Italian people, chiefly the Italians. He delivered several speeches to the Italians during his stay, and succeeded in organizing an Italian Group.

Three French comrades, Le Braun, Conti and Slatr succeeded in getting together a large meeting in Turn Hall, the largest in town. Comrade Gori was billed to deliver two addresses, and notwithstanding the fact it was generally known that he would speak only in Italian and French, and not in English, for the reason that he does not speak English sufficiently well to address the public, yet a large number of his auditors were persons who do not understand the language he spoke, yet strange to say, all remained to the last. If applause is a token of approval, his French and Italian listeners most heartily approved what he said. At the close of the address he yielded the platform to a French gentleman who is very earnest in his advocacy of State Socialism, and opposition to Anarchism, but the audience was with Gori and for Liberty. Although they gave attention to the advocate of State Socialism, but few of the listeners applauded.

From here comrade Gori went to Kansas City, Mo., and from there he intends going to St. Louis, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Philadelphia and perhaps New York, then to London to attend the International Labor Congress. After spending some time in Italy he intends going to South America, after which he expects to return to the United States. He is an eloquent orator, and full of the vigor and enthusiasm that goes with youth.

His advent has stimulated the Anarchist movement in this city. The French comrades are looking forward with much hope to the arrival on this coast of Louise Michel.

They intend to have her come here if possible. Can any one, through THE FIREBRAND, tell them when she is expected to arrive in the U. S., and at what point they can get in communication with her.

The Trades Unions held a local conference here recently, the purpose of the conference was "politics or no politics." Politics prevailed. A platform calling for the referendum, government ownership of railroads, telegraphs and other public utilities, postal savings banks, and the issuance by the government of gold, silver and paper money on a parity was adopted. A committee was appointed to present this platform to the local conventions of the different political parties, the labor conference pledging the vote of the Unions to the party that adopts, or comes nearest adopting, the platform. The local section of the Socialist Labor Party sent representatives to the conference, but they were excluded. At a subsequent continued meeting of the conference a resolution calling for state employment

for the unemployed was offered but tabled.

The local branch of the Labor Exchange has established a grocery store which is doing a brisk business. A boot and shoe factory has been erected and is about ready to begin operations. And—the thing is so ludicrous it almost takes one's breath away—a jewelry store has been established. Yes, the Labor Exchange is governed by a Board of Directors who decline flattering offers of opening up enterprises that would put idle labor to work, but take up with the idea of going into the jewelry business.

It does "seem strange that none of the comrades were interested enough to send word of comrade Turner's arrival, and his intended work and plans." Come, this will never do. Such indifference can never bring success.

ORANGE BLOSSOMS.

Los Angeles, California.

#### The Letter-Box.

F. N., London, England—Pamphlets and books have been sent.

L. H. Jersey City.—The amount you sent in is credited in No. 12.

A. T., New York City.—We hope you received THE FIREBRAND in the meantime.

M. L., Chicago, Ill.—The pamphlets were sent and if you didn't receive them in the meantime, please inform us about it.

E. C. M., Plano, Cal.—The 20 cents placed to your credit. Your interest is encouraging. Send in your article whenever you like.

H. A., Boston, Mass.—Your name has been on our list since July the first, but the subscription was never paid. Our best greetings.

J. B., Wier City, Kansas—Don't despair, comrade, the time is fast approaching when the "sheep" are liable to become wolves, and then the oppressors will howl and gnash their teeth.

R. J. B., Spring Valley, Ill.—Pamphlets are sent, but as "Anarchist Morality" was not on hand we sent "The True Aim of Anarchism" instead. We hope to get the former soon, from London.

Those of our comrades who have any German literature to spare, will confer a favor on our comrade Viroqua Daniels, Lake City, Modoc Co., California, by sending it to her. She desires it for propaganda among her German neighbors.

A. L. BALLOU, Porterville, N. Y.—The columns of THE FIREBRAND are open to you to criticize any thing that appears in it. Why not use it in criticizing its contents instead of sending your criticisms to another paper.

ORANGE BLOSSOMS, Los Angeles, Cal.—Send in the names of all you think at all likely to be interested in THE FIREBRAND, and we will gladly do the extra work of sending them the paper, for a few weeks. If they show no interest in a reasonable time we will be drop them from our list.

E. H. FULTON, Columbus Junction, Iowa—In reply to your "Open Letter" comrade Liden informs us that he did not intend to criticize your noble efforts, but only to make some suggestions for the improvement of LIBERTY LIBRARY. He knows what it is to suffer—be live on potatoes ALONE—while getting out a radical magazine—"Freedom."

#### A YOUNG WORKER.

My mind and eyes are turned towards THE FIREBRAND and the comrades. I am glad to see you so active, let me try too. I suppose comrade Mathilda C. Wilkins will wake up some of her neighbors, I myself am at work yet; but comrade Mathilda acts much better than I do.

Yes, some people used to be afraid of Anarchists, 'spose there's many people who are afraid yet. But why? Do you know? Sure they don't know themselves. What is the use of workingmen being afraid of each other? There is no sense in that.

Maybe there are many brave people afraid of Anarchists, but I don't know so. Anarchists don't hurt the brave people, nor workingmen. If I was in the place of the workers, I'd rather be afraid of capitalists. But some scabs rather fall on knees before them, and lick their shoes, act as a dog, when his master gives him a bit of meat. They are sure blind. The capitalists don't care for such dogs, they have plenty of dogs without them. They speak to them kindly on one side, and kill them on the other. Who gave them power to hang our heroes in '87—no one! they took it themselves. Well, what are they doing so? More gold in their barrels; might to rob the poor people; more might to hang our comrades. Today they own the heavens and the earth.

I think all people have the same power: then let us act the same. Anarchists mustn't be hanged. The capitalists ought to have been hanged long ago. But let's wait till the time comes, then we may burn them, just like our brave FIREBRAND burns the cobwebs.

The women may try too! Why not? Comrade Matilda and others: we may try to help our comrades, knowing that we are helping ourselves too.

EMMA T. HAAS.

#### A Raffle.

The Labor Educating Society in Allegheny City Pa., has arranged a raffle of a "fine Gold Watch, Lamp, Clock and several other articles," for the benefit of "The Firebrand." Tickets 10c., for sale by A. Frey, 78 Pike street, Allegheny City, Pa.

The Rebel, Liberty Library, and The Firebrand have decided to offer the three publications at \$1.00 per year. No subscriptions taken for less than one year. Application may be made to the office of either of the papers.

#### RECEIPTS.

Brandschain for subscribers, \$1.00, Wolfing, Axt, Austin, Wilkes, Fox, Schneider, Ayland each 50c. Levitzky, Mechanis, each 25c. Miles, 20c. Green, 10 cents.

#### SAMPLE COPIES.

We sent out large numbers of sample copies, and if you are receiving the paper without ordering it, it is an invitation to investigate our principles. If you want the paper, let us know and you shall have it, and you may send in such amount on your subscription as you can afford. If you can't pay for it and want to read it, you shall have it anyhow. If you get the paper and don't want it, please be kind enough to have it stopped. If you have been getting the paper without paying for it, and can afford to send us some money, please do so, as we are sadly in need of it.

Labor Exchange Certificates, "Labor Tender" or other paper that will procure the necessities of life, will be received in payment for subscription. We also accept all kinds of farm products.

#### FIREBRAND LIBRARY.

Bases of Anarchism; Historical, Philosophical and Economical, by Wm. Holmes	5c
God and the State, by Bakounin	5c
The Commune of Paris, by Kropotkin and An	
Anarchist on Anarchy, by Reclus, both in one	5c
The true aim of Anarchism, by E. Steinle	5c
Revolutionary Government, by P. Kropotkin	5c
Anarchist-Communism, " "	5c
A Talk about Anarchist-Communism, Malatesta	5c
Anarchy on Trial	5c
Economics of Anarchy; a study of the industrial type, by Dyer D. Lum	
A Key Rev. ution, by Lois Waisbroker	25c
Anything More, My Lord?	5c
Wants and Their Gratification; H. Addis	10c
A Secret and Confidential Address, by Gavroche	15c
Revolution, a lecture by S. H. Gordon	5c

## LIBERTY LIBRARY MONTHLY

E. H. FULTON PUBLISHER

Columbus Junction, Iowa.

SUBSCRIPTION 50 CTS. PER YEAR.

In this Library Mr. Fulton brings out one or more volumes of anarchist literature every month. It is printed on fine book paper, in new clear type, and is a model of neatness and artistic skill. No. 1 contains Wm. Holmes' "BASES OF ANARCHY: Historical, Philosophical and Economical." No. 2 contains "God and the State," by Michael Bakounine. No. 1 contains 16 pages of solid reading matter and is one of the best pamphlets for missionary work extant. No. 2 contains 44 pages and is the cheapest edition of "God and the State" ever issued. No. 3 contains two important essays: "The Commune of Paris," by Elisee Reclus, and "An Anarchist on Anarchy," by Elisee Reclus. No. 4 contains The true Aim of Anarchism, by E. Steinle. These numbers contain 16 pages, are uniform in style, neatly bound, artistic title page, and sold at the remarkably low figure of 5 cents per copy, or 2 1/2 cents each in lots of ten or more; 100 copies or more at 2 cents each. No better means of propaganda is to be found. Orders received at this office.

THE "office" of THE FIREBRAND: North Mt. Tabor Car Line, Center Addition North Mount Tabor.