



THE FIREBRAND

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

Address communications and make money orders payable
 to "The Firebrand", Box 477.

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.

Death of God and Law.

[AIR: "JOHN BROWN."]

In wrath of mighty tempest quakes the world to ruin
 dread:

'Tis the battle-storm of Freedom on the winds of fury
 sped

And the thunder-peat of vengeance for the living and
 the dead

By the death of God and Law!

'Tis the crashing down of Evil 'neath the lightning-
 stroke of doom,

Where the scorching flame is kindled that shall branch
 and root consume,

And the smoke of its perdition shrouds the earth in
 fiery gloom

'Round the death of God and law!

Chorus: 'Mid the lightning and the thunder,

Lo! the bonds are rent asunder!

Hands of hope do deeds of wonder

At the death of God and Law!

All hail the devastation, and the fury, and the wrack,
 And the famine-pangs and rapine, and the carnage
 round the track,

For the Dawning first shall redder where the skies are
 darkest black

'Round the death of God and Law!

Too long our lives were sad with Rule, whose glory is
 the Knave,

Whose throne is Superstition, and whose arm of might
 the slave;

Now Anarchy shall bless us, through the triumph of
 the brave

And the death of God and Law!

In the happiness of Freedom, wealth and art and
 friendship true

Shall arise and dwell among us and forever cheer our
 view,

And the Old shall be forgotten in the beauty of the New
 Since the death of God and Law!

Then onward, fresh in courage, through the famine and
 the fight!

We will crush the ill with daring, we will make our
 weak with might;

We are marching on to Anarchy—the joy of Truth and
 Right,

And the Death of God and Law!

J. A. ANDREWS.

Free Consumption.

COMRADE GREEN wants light on the subject of free
 consumption, and he wants to know how I "pro-
 pose to bring it about?" I don't propose to bring it
 about at all. My contention is that the economic
 condition which I term free consumption is a legic-
 al necessity in a state of Anarchy, and in all serious-
 ness I will say to Comrade Green that his reference
 to Topsy is very pat. "I jes growed" expresses it
 exactly. Free consumption will "just come of its
 own accord," because it is the only rational plan of
 distributive economy for a society of absolutely free
 individuals. There is no royal road to production,
 but it is free when it has reached that condition

where Comrade Green says it "is not—the price being
 labor." When men have reached that condition
 where they can freely produce and freely appropriate
 their own productions they are then in a condition
 to institute a rational system of distribution for pur-
 poses of consumption, and they will do so in accord-
 ance with the phenomenon of value which I have
 pointed out. This "lingering idea that the amount
 produced by the individual should determine the
 amount consumed by the individual" will not have
 much force; it will "linger" to its death, because
 there will be no way to determine the one nor the
 other. Does Comrade Green believe that under free
 production men would be able to consume as much
 as they would naturally produce? If he answers
 "Yes," then he will have established a natural lim-
 itation which will justify the continued existence
 of the concept of value; but I will then ask him to
 furnish proof. If he answers "No" then my con-
 tention is sufficiently established so far as he and I
 are concerned.

The inability of Comrade Green to see the point
 of my argument lies in his erroneous conception of
 value as a strictly natural phenomenon, instead of
 regarding it in its true light as a purely artificial
 appearance, the result of arbitrary limitations, and
 I am glad he instanced the case of fresh air, because
 it furnishes me with just the illustration I wanted.
 It is impossible "to make certain distinctions be-
 tween value and price;" that is, it is impossible to
 make distinctions which will amount to anything,
 because value and price are one and the same thing,
 price being merely the commercial expression of
 value. I am aware that there are many so-called
 economists who institute some rather fine-drawn
 distinctions between value and price, but these
 amount to no more than any other play upon words
 which is calculated merely to confuse men and lead
 them astray in their reasoning processes. There is
 no difference between value and price. When we
 state a price we give expression to value; we could
 do it in no other way. Fresh air has no price be-
 cause it has no value. Fresh air has immense utili-
 ty, but it is not "valuable" at all, as Comrade Green
 says it is. And why has it no value? Because it
 can be procured without labor, some will say. But
 that is not the reason. Fresh air has no value
 simply because it is not subject to arbitrary limita-
 tion. If it were possible to bring about a condition
 of general limitation in the supply of air we should
 soon see the people's supply regulated on commer-
 cial principles; it would assume value which would
 be expressed by a price. A corporation would ob-
 tain a franchise, and the people would be compelled
 to obtain their air through a metre, and pay for it
 the same as they now pay for gas. Perhaps they
 might take it into their heads to rebel against the
 exactions of the corporation lords of the air, after
 those exactions had become unbearable, whereupon
 they might adopt some very wise state-socialistic
 scheme for furnishing the people with air at "cost of
 production"! Then they would imagine themselves
 on the high road to the millennium! Land is no
 more a product of labor than is air, yet it has value,
 solely because of arbitrary limitations upon its use;

land never assumes value until those limitations
 make their appearance, yet the utility of land
 is scarcely, if any, inferior to that of air, and as a
 general condition the value of land much exceeds
 the value of those utilities which are the product of
 labor, and which are said to possess value solely be-
 cause they are the products of labor. If the people
 were allowed to produce up to the limit of their
 needs no product of labor would possess value, be-
 cause the value of each product would be certainly
 determined by the economic law of final utility,
 which says that the value of the final increment of
 the supply of a commodity determines the value of
 the whole stock, and if people were allowed to pro-
 duce up to the limit of their needs there would al-
 ways be a final increment which would be without
 value. But it may be said that the people do pro-
 duce to the limit of their needs, but this is not true,
 notwithstanding the cry about overproduction. The
 people produce, not for their own needs, but
 for the needs of capital, and capital is insatiable—
 its needs are illimitable. And notwithstanding the
 insatiable character of capital it has hard work, so
 perfect has our system of production become, and
 so vast are its potentialities, to preserve conditions
 of value which will answer to its needs.—Profits—
 except in those cases where it is aided by natural
 obstructions, or closely organized monopolies; and
 even the best organized monopolies have to periodi-
 cally shut down their works and curtail, or limit,
 production so as to hold value up to what they call
 "cost of production." It is this scientific certainty
 of the disappearance of the value-form as soon as all
 obstructions and limitations on production are
 swept away that makes the dream of the Individ-
 ualist-Anarchist, of conducting the distributive
 economy of the Anarchist society on commercial
 principles, so absolutely chimerical.

This is free consumption: In a state of freedom
 where men produce freely, and freely appropriate
 the produce of their labor, they must, because de-
 prived of the present artificial and arbitrary value-
 form, freely exchange with each other the various
 products of their industry without money and with-
 out price. How does comrade Green like it? As a
 transition measure, or as a means of arriving at
 this necessary condition of freedom, comrade
 Green's idea of operating industries at cost, thus
 eliminating profit by means of competition, is ethi-
 cally and economically sound (the Labor Ex-
 change is also an excellent transition measure), but
 the moment this idea has assumed the magnitude of
 a general condition its commercial base is destroyed,
 and it cannot be longer acted upon without insti-
 tuting arbitrary regulations which must violate
 the fundamental conditions of freedom. With the
 destruction of capitalist profit, and so the dis-
 appearance of capitalist needs, must disappear the
 commercial forms which correspond with the con-
 dition.

W. P. BORLAND.

THE right to labor is a natural right. It is not the pro-
 duct of any governmental action. Governments do not
 create rights, they create privileges, which are some-
 times erroneously termed rights.—[Los Angeles Herald.

A Restatement.

I PROTEST that I am not trying to work off any "trick criticism" or "trick with a hole in it", but am honestly trying to find out something. I may be stupid, but I am honest.

Mr. Morris says: "I deny that teeth are the cause of tooth-ache, and call for proof. If it were so people who have teeth would have tooth-ache constantly."

Parallel statement: I deny that government is the sole cause of crime, and call for the proof. If it were all people who live under government would commit crime continually.

But my proposition was not that all who have teeth must have tooth-ache, but that all who have tooth-ache must have teeth. I offer that not as something that can be proved, but as axiomatic. Now, if it can be made plain-to me, or even probable, that there cannot or will not be any crime where there is no government (just as there will be no teeth-ache where there are no teeth), I am henceforth an Anarchist.

Now if "history furnishes the proof called for by Mr. Priestley, both of the possibility of society without the State and the fact that such society is more conducive to human happiness than the present," I honestly confess myself entirely ignorant of such history and will be truly grateful to any one who will tell me where to find it. I am now on the very brink of becoming an Anarchist. What I want to know is where and when and how the society existed that had no government and consequently no crime.

D. PRIESTLEY.

Mr. Priestley's restatement is of no avail. Government may vary in intensity, and he is a poor student of any history who has not observed that crime (violation of law) varies in proportion. I think it was Pentecost who told the story of a lawyer in an eastern city who pointed out to a lay friend that nearly every ordinary act was contrary to law, and that he would have to be possessed of several ordinary lives to serve in jail the time fixed by law as punishment for the crimes committed in one day. I am satisfied that if Mr. Priestley, though I never expect to meet a more peaceable man nor one less liable willingly to invade the liberty of others, suffered the penalty for all his crimes he would never be out of jail more than twenty-four hours at a time. Non-invasive "crimes" comprise at least nine-tenths of the list. These the abolition of the State would do away with. But I am called upon to sustain a position I have never assumed, that is, that the simple discarding of the State will put an end to crime (invasion). Whether crime can exist without the State or not, the State cannot exist without crime (invasion). But what I did claim, that society can exist without the State, is easily established. Crime bears direct relation to economic conditions—that is, invasion is always in inverse ratio to plenty and security. I think Mr. Priestley will agree with me that with access to natural opportunities we could produce abundantly, and that the only security lies in the freedom of opportunity. History fails to furnish evidence of a government that has not violated both these conditions.

Mr. Priestley's contention that society is impossible without the State suggests the Christians' argument that if religion, the fear of God and hell, were removed it meant the destruction of society, that without that restraining influence robbery, rapine and murder would be the delight of mankind. Mr. Priestley is one of those against whom this cry was made, and if he had been called upon to furnish historical evidence that society could exist without gods and devils he would have had a harder task than he has set for me.

It seems Mr. Priestley is unacquainted with the history of his own country. In the early days that history is, to some extent, one of Anarchistic society. See "Virginia First and last", Littell's Living Age, April 8, 1865; Government Analyzed, chapter 7. Emerson in his Miscellanies says:

I am glad to see that the terror at disunion and Anarchy is disappearing. Massachusetts in its heroic days had no government—was an Anarchy. Every man stood on his own feet, was his own governor, and there was no breach of peace from Cape Cod to Mount Hoo-sac. The Saxon man, when he is well awake, is not a pirate, but a citizen, all made of hooks and eyes, and links himself naturally to his brothers as bees link themselves together in a loyal swarm.

R. T. Walsh, writing in the Youth's Companion, some four years ago, telling of his travels in the Caucasus, speaks of the Cossacks thus:

All Cossacks inhabit towns and villages, some of which are prosperous as well as populous communities. They retain the principle of co-operation in trades and inherit the custom of ownership of land in common and have equal access, so far as practicable, to all the productive wealth of the community. . . . Among these people crime is almost unknown. They are too far from civilization to be tainted by the vices that mark its progress among the large cities of the world.

Has my friend read of social conditions among the Esquimaux and other peoples less "civilized" perhaps than ourselves, but evidently far happier? See Firebrand No. 15. Has he read Buckle? Even the Bible (if its history may be considered authentic) of which I have always considered Mr. Priestley a student, records cases of Anarchic society.

I do not point to these instances as models of my ideal society, but as indications of our possibilities.

J. H. M.

Comrade Holmes Explains.

Concerning my article published in No. 14 of The Firebrand under the caption, "Do we Ignore the Practical?" Comrade Addis, "in behalf of our readers," asks me to be more definite. I cannot imagine that the readers of The Firebrand share the interest of our esteemed comrade. Nevertheless, as I am personally appealed to, I will briefly explain.

By ignoring the practical I meant honest efforts to solve the industrial problem not strictly laid down in the program of Anarchist-Communism. Perhaps Comrade Addis does not know any Anarchists who repudiate or sneer at and condemn any and every attempt to better the condition of suffering humanity not so circumscribed. I do.

I chose the personal pronoun "we" not because I have failed to be practical, but out of deference to my comrades. I might have called my article "an address to impractical Anarchists" and lectured them in the second person. I preferred to be more polite, even without consulting them beforehand. Besides, my article was not meant as an impertinent scolding, but rather as kindly and, as I look at it, needed advice.

I believe that every Anarchist who can be should be something more. He should make his influence felt in some bona fide organization which aims to right the wrongs of labor. Such organizations are numerous. Were I a mechanic I should be a trades unionist; years ago I was a Knight of Labor. At present I am not available for either of these organizations, and finding in the Labor Exchange practical, working association very much to my liking—because very much in harmony with my principles as an Anarchist—I have cast my lot with them. This is the name of the organization I referred to.

WM. HOLMES.

Labor Exchange and Anarchism.

THE basis and foundation cornerstone of Anarchism is equal freedom; and it will be found that the same is true of the Labor Exchange. It is a conceded fact by Anarchists that a larger or smaller number of people left perfectly free to shift and manage for themselves in a new or old country will gather in neighborhoods and form associations because of the necessity of mutual protection and benefit. The history of all races, as well as the present civilization, shows that people have voluntarily organized associations for the benefit of the members. The Labor Exchange is one of these, but more comprehensive than any simple benefit association, because it is based upon the principle of equal freedom, and has just as few rules and regulations as is possible to have and embody the principle of association and organization.

On the line of equal freedom, every member of this association is free to believe, work or agitate in any way he chooses, and any number of the members are at liberty to organize branch associations, which receive charters from the central association, and formulate any set of rules, by-laws or regulations they may agree upon, thus carrying out the principle

of Anarchism. The Labor Exchange in a very simple manner meets the necessity for some kind of check or draft as a medium of exchange. Some will say that the movement is all right, but the government will interfere and finally put a stop to it, and argue that the government must be abolished before it can be successful; but I think this movement the biggest sledge hammer that can be used to knock government out and thus prevent a bloody revolution, for it teaches the people, in a practical, business way, that they can get along without legal tender money or the help of the government in any way, and it also teaches local self-government on the lines of equal freedom and voluntary co-operation. When people see that they can be independent of the government they will the more readily stop voting and supporting it.

A. C. GREEN.

Wants to Know.

J. P. Anderson, Toledo, Wash., subscribes and asks the following questions:

- (1) When was Anarchy first advocated?
- (2) From what nation did it spring?
- (3) What is the strength of the Anarchists in Europe and in America?
- (4) Do you advocate free love?

(1-2) All rebellion, or resistance to tyranny, in all ages has been Anarchistic in tendency. But Anarchism as a social theory was first advocated by Josiah Warren, an American, about fifty years ago, and P. J. Proudhon, a Frenchman, a few years later. Anarchist-Communism, as a distinctive movement, originated with Michael Bakounine, a Russian. Read "Bases of Anarchy".

(3) It is impossible to answer this question, since the movement is not a political party and there is no way of "counting noses". There are published about one hundred Anarchist papers, daily, weekly and monthly, in all languages, in Europe, North and South America and Australia. It is claimed that "La Clameur", a Paris daily, has 100,000 subscribers, and two French weeklies report 20,000 each.

(4) Yes, necessarily. Anarchy means without government, and free love means unrestricted love. Restriction is government. Our philosophy makes no exception in the relations of the sexes. Restriction here is no less baneful than in the other relations of life.

J. H. M.

More Questions.

We find these two questions in The Rebel:

- (1) Can an Anarchist-Socialist take part in present society, in any measure at all, in the organization and administration of communal or parochial affairs?
- (2) Can he exert himself to obtain the immediate and progressive abolition of present evils?

(1) Not consistently. Organization and administration are purely authoritarian, and are, of course, not consistent with voluntarism.

(2) He cannot consistently do otherwise. The question does not include the matter of methods, on which there is a great variety of opinion.

Brother and Sister.

It is one of the peculiarities of London that some of its most elegant streets border on lanes and thoroughfares where poverty and vice have their home. Some years ago, whilst trying to reach the Alhambra, by a short cut, I and my brother Charles, whom I had accidentally met, found ourselves unexpectedly in a district where both the houses and the appearance of the inhabitants were by no means prepossessing. In the midst of the labyrinth of courts and narrow streets was a small square, surrounded by low but comparatively respectable looking houses. When half way through it our attention was attracted by a struggle between a small, badly dressed boy of about twelve years of age, and a somewhat younger girl whose clothes had also seen their best days. The boy had seized the girl by the hair, and belabored her back with his fist. She struggled as well as she could, but was not able to do much against her stronger opponent. Suddenly she escaped from his grasp, and ran, screaming loudly, in our direction. When she reached us she clung to me like a frightened dove, and tried to conceal herself under my overcoat. At the same time she im-

plored us to save her from her persecutor. My brother raised his stick with the intention of chastising the boy, who had stopped a few steps in front of us and, with clenched fist, continued to utter threats against his victim. At this moment I felt something moving in my pocket and, catching hold of it, I grasped the hand of the girl, who already had grasped my purse. Immediately I became conscious of the trick the two had been trying to play on us.

We were so disgusted at the way the girl had behaved toward us that, in spite of her pleading, we were determined to give her in charge, even if the time wasted at the station should make us lose the performance at the theatre. We had taken her about a hundred yards toward the station when she ceased to cry and implored us in a soft, pleasant voice to take her to a house close by, where, as she said, she had left her little brother, a baby about a year and a half old. She said she wished to say goodbye to him and leave him in charge of some neighbors who would take care of him in case we really intended to lock her up. I objected at first, thinking she intended to set a fresh trap for us; but she begged so earnestly that we gave way, and, followed by a crowd of working people who had in the meantime collected, entered the place pointed out by the girl.

In the corner of the passage, below the staircase, we found a small boy carefully wrapped up in some old blankets, who, as soon as he saw his sister, stretched out his hands toward her and demonstrated his delight at seeing her in various other ways. Some freshly-gathered flowers, evidently stolen from some garden in the vicinity, decorated his bed cover. Our small prisoner lifted the child up and covered it with kisses, while we didn't quite know what to make of the whole affair. Just then the door opened, and two of the laborers who had been following us, forced the boy who had been a party to the trick played upon us into the room. "Here is the scamp!" said one. "We had lots of trouble to catch him."

The boy gave us a vicious look, but took no further notice of us. Turning to the baby and patting it affectionately on the cheek, he put a small piece of dry bread and one of the little dolls one buys for a penny in the street into his hands; then he silently kissed his sister—our prisoner—and wiped the tears from her eyes. My brother, who is a lawyer, and whose professional instincts here asserted themselves, interrupted this scene for the purpose of searching the pockets of the boy.

A bent nail which might serve for a pick-lock, some sheets of paper scribbled over in an unpracticed hand, and a geographical primer, were all he found. The three children began to interest me. I asked the oldest one in not an unfriendly tone, what had made him and his sister attempt to deceive us so wickedly. "We must work to earn our living," he answered, looking savagely at me. "We have no parents to take care of us. My sister and myself have to do whatever we can to get food for ourselves and our little Bob. We had nothing to eat yesterday. This piece of bread—pointing to the piece he had given to his little brother—was all we had left." Smiling insolently at me, he added, "We have been lucky more than once."

The proprietor of the house, a comfortable looking tradesman, who had attentively watched the whole scene, now addressed us with a discontented expression. "You had better leave the children alone, sir," he said; "they are good children, who wouldn't do any wrong. I have watched them for the last week. Every day they come here and leave their little brother under the staircase, and I must say the way they look after him is truly affecting. I wish the rich people"—and here he looked at us—"loved their children half as much as that boy and girl love their little brother."

The girl, whose hand I had kept all this while in mine, encouraged by his remarks, now begged me to give something to her elder brother. "Look how thin he is," she said; "he starves himself to get food for me and our little Bob. He's a dear boy." In spite of my brother's disapproving frown, I offered the boy a sixpence, but he refused the gift with an impudent gesture and told me proudly that he didn't beg. "What," I exclaimed astonished, "you are too proud to beg, and yet you steal and cheat!"

"I try to earn my own living," he replied; "every one must do so in his own fashion. But let me go—first you want to give me in charge, and now you offer money. I've enough of it!"

"The boy is quite right," said a voice. It was that of the laborer who had been most zealous in his pursuit of the boy. By this time brother had got tired of the

discussion. He again took hold of the boy, intending to take him to the station, and told me to follow him with the girl. Immediately an uproar arose around us. "We won't have it!" "It is a shame to lock up such children!" were some of the cries we heard on all sides.

Losing his temper, my brother indignantly inquired: "Why show mercy to such wicked thieves?" A short silence followed this question, but was almost immediately broken by the laborer who had already defended the boy, and who, coming close to my brother, exclaimed in an angry voice:

"You are rich; you know nothing about it."

Surrounded on all sides, we were obliged to let our prisoners go. While I was still hesitating what to do I observed how a ragged sailor, who had got hold of the boy, offered him a sixpence.

"Well, Jack," he said to him, "you won't mind taking it from me?"

The boy thanked him smilingly and put the money into his pocket. On the other side of us the little girl held a sort of court in the midst of a crowd of rough but by no means evil looking men. "Still so young and already so clever!" was one of the cries of admiration I heard. We saw that we were no longer wanted. I picked up my purse, which had dropped on the floor, where it lay without being disturbed by any one, and followed my brother quickly into the open air.

He turned as soon as we had reached the street and exclaimed quite indignantly: "What is the meaning of it all? Do you understand it?"

"Quite well," I replied; "It is a piece of the social question."

Note and Comment.

APPROPOS of Comrade Holmes' explanation, I wish to say that what he calls the practical I should certainly term the impractical. The reason for this is that I believe those "honest efforts" have proven and will prove failures so far as a solution of the social problem is concerned. For myself, I cannot consistently belong to an organization, because the principle of voluntarism is entirely absent or so small as to amount to nothing practically. If I cannot consent to majority rule in politics, how can I countenance it in a labor organization? I should consider the person who can do so something less, rather than something more, than an Anarchist. However, I am something of a utilitarian in practice, and would go a considerable way out of my theoretical road if convinced that I should gain by it. The Labor Exchange appears to me the least objectionable of popular palliatives, and I have no reason to place any obstruction in its way. I believe that every Anarchist will better his own condition in whatever way seems to him best, and I am perfectly willing that every one should choose his own road; but I should be very sorry to see THE FIREBRAND given over to a discussion of these matters, because there are a hundred papers given to that discussion already to one given to the discussion of the only practical solution of the social problem—Anarchy.

I FAIL to see any evidence of fear of the State, which a writer in another column seems to have discovered. It is not fear, but adverse conditions that stand in the way of the present realization of our ideal society. This has been explained many times in these columns. It will be a great favor if "G." will inform us how people are to form a joint stock company who have nothing but their labor to subscribe and no opportunity to exercise that. But since "opportunity is the fruit of profit," perhaps he can tell us of some simple way to become possessed of a little profit with which to secure the opportunity.

If "opportunity is the fruit of profit," why should we organize for the destruction of profit? Should we not rather try to get hold of profit, for the "fruit" is what we want. Opportunity is all we are demanding. If we cut down an apple tree we will surely gather no fruit from it. If we destroy profit do we not as certainly destroy the fruit thereof, whatever it may be? It is a strange theory that we must destroy the cause in order to secure the effect.

PROFIT is the result of monopolization of opportunity. With freedom of opportunity profit will disappear, because if free to produce, people would not pay more than the cost of production! but because we are not free to satisfy our wants by production we must pay a

profit to those who are in possession of the natural opportunities. A recognition of this fact and the part the State plays in the maintenance of these conditions, is the undercurrent of thought which "G." mistakes for fear of the State.

PERHAPS our friend will also explain why a law that interferes with nobody's liberty is "an abomination," and why we should associate and co-operate to annul it. So far as I am concerned, any set of men may formulate all the laws possible of conception so long as no restraint is imposed. The very fact that he proposes to work some scheme to annul the laws is evidence enough of a feeling of restraint on his part. Whether his particular plan for annulling the abominable laws, or in escaping the restraint imposed by them, will be a success remains to be seen; but I predict that he will find monopoly of opportunity so thoroughly entrenched that he will not be able to "buck" it. J. H. M.

The Bigoted Freethinker.

No one I hope will accuse me of being a friend of the Christian Church or a foe of Ingersoll, Putnam and other noted freethinkers, but when I hear of a man who "will not subscribe to any paper that will dare say anything against any freethought lecturer, whoever that may be," I am ready to exclaim: "From such freethought and such freethinkers good Lord deliver us!" A freethinker as a fetish-worshiper is a very pitiful sight. It is bad enough to have an infallible pope,—must we also have an infallible Ingersoll or an infallible Putnam? I have the honor of knowing personally Ingersoll, Putnam and many others of our freethought lecturers and writers. They are good, brave and honest men who wage war against the errors of the past and want a better future; but are we under obligation to conceal their faults and limitations? Must we worship them as divinities and reject everything which they do not approve or do not understand?

To oppose the church, to free the mind of man from the yoke of ancient dogmas is well enough, but is this the end of freethought? Is it worth our while to thresh old theological straw and to ignore at the same time other questions which are of more importance than any religious or anti-religious ism? To me freethought stands for something higher than mere opposition to orthodox Christianity. A freethinker should be a free man; he should be bound to no creed; he should have courage enough to accept truth wherever he finds it; he should be broad and many-sided; he should not harp on one string; he should know that a mere denial of the sacredness of the Bible and of the existence of Jehovah is not a matter of which one should be particularly proud; he should know that to emancipate man from economic slavery is, to say the least, as important as to free the mind from theological superstition; and, lastly, he should know that the "Christian" who believes in the church dogmas, but who works along humanitarian lines is of more value to the world than the "freethinker" who scolds the church and worships Ingersoll, but who does nothing for humanity.

To be sure, the church is not dead yet; orthodoxy is still flourishing, and in small orthodox communities an honest freethinker does not find life very pleasant. For this reason the freethought agitation should not be dropped, but we cannot afford to spend all our time in fighting the church. We have other important work on hand and our efforts must not be confined to one subject only. If we do not fight slavery in every form, we have no right to call ourselves freethinkers and reformers and to boast of our humanitarian ideas.

CYRUS W. COOLIDGE.

Why Fear the State?

I have read the various copies of THE FIREBRAND sent me with considerable interest, and always find something in its columns to stimulate thought—which is more than can be said of most reform papers.

I presume, however, that I am not yet a very good Anarchist, for I sense an undercurrent of thought running through most of the articles published, with which I am not familiar, nor can I assign its "raison d'être". I refer to the feeling of restraint imposed, or supposed to be imposed, by the State, which is constantly given expression to by many of your correspondents. It mystifies me somewhat. Possibly it is a thing of foreign extraction, and not yet acclimated.

mated, or it may be innocence, pure and simple, on my part.

While I have no love for restraint of any description, and much less for restraint imposed by the State or Church—much the same thing—I am unable to see wherein precisely the United States government materially interferes with our liberty of action. I say materially advisedly, for it goes without saying that we have laws that are an abomination, but that we cannot virtually annul them by intelligent association and co-operation I fail to see.

On the spiritual side of life we have the utmost freedom and can think, and usually express our thoughts, as we please, while on the material side of the house the whole trouble seems to be that some have more opportunity, and therefore more "profit", than others—and it is essential to note that "profit" begets and sustains opportunity. In other words, some get and others don't get. I presume that if production and distribution were on an equitable basis we should never hear of Anarchists, Socialists, Populists or any other kind of ists, unless indeed it were Prohibitionists, for I do think they love the law a little too well to lie of prosperity.

Now, if opportunity be the fruit of "profit", as I claim, are we not still at liberty to associate for the destruction of "profit" (something for nothing) and thus secure opportunity? And, as labor produces all wealth, is it not merely a question of organization? If we cannot organize, on whom must we lay the blame? Our ignorance, surely.

As liberty lovers we have nothing to do with the individual. He may go on paying "profit", interest, dividends and rent, if he chooses, and continue to succumb to the inevitable; but as to the organizations which demand profit, they are ours whenever we organize for their destruction, and to that end I fail to see where the State interposes serious obstacles. We still have the privilege of forming joint-stock companies and if we wish to operate them at cost, who is to say nay?

Possibly some of your correspondents will be good enough to throw a little light on this extraordinary fear of the State.

The Speeches.

SOME time ago Addis made an appeal for a fund to print 200,000 copies of the speeches of the Chicago Anarchists, evidently thinking I could get them out at 1½ cents a copy as that is the price he said they would cost. About \$3.25 have been subscribed for them. This money I hold subject to the order of the senders, as the blank paper to print one copy of the speeches (182 pp.) would cost me 8 cents—to say nothing of ink, staples, cover, etc., and I cannot work for 6¼ cents less than nothing. I may print the speeches; and they will cost 15 cents per copy at least. E. H. FULTON, Publisher Liberty Library.

Wants an Organization.

WHILE investigating the present social system we find everything upside down. What is called law and order is the most abominable disorder. What is really right is opposed by the rulers and even by most of their slaves, and wrong is protected by millions of armed ruffians. The whole human race is at the mercy of a few rascals. The clergy are quite successful yet in scaring the ignorant with a devil or a god. The daily press does its utmost to keep the robbed and deceived in political and religious superstitions. We read daily of crimes and their punishment, but they don't explain the causes of these crimes. They know what they are doing; their whole aim is to get rich at the expense of the working people, who are deceived from youth to old age and die in a hovel, hospital, prison, poorhouse or some other charitable hell.

How can we abolish such a horrible system? This question is answered in different ways by people of different opinions. The leaders of the Socialist Labor Party do all they can to make the working people believe they can emancipate themselves by voting them into office. The Populists think they can bring about satisfactory conditions by having their own coin factory—by changing the currency. Others believe the eight-hour day would bring great relief, and a large number are satisfied with prevailing conditions. They are both patriotic and idiotic, willing to live in misery in this

world in the hope of going to an everlasting paradise hereafter.

All reformers say we are not sufficiently educated for a change. The working people are too poor, too deeply sunk in misery to do much thinking. Millions are out of work and only think of how to get something to eat and a place to sleep. Millions are afraid to express their opinions lest they might be discharged. No work means no bread nowadays.

I have an idea that by forming an international voluntary organization, by having voluntary committees in all the large cities to receive the names of all those dissatisfied with present conditions and report to the people the increase in the membership, it would encourage the more timid to join, and cause excitement and discussion, and possibly a general strike. Then we would have a grand opportunity to show the people the road to freedom, and when once they have enjoyed liberty they will cling to us and never surrender it again.

P. SMITH.

Ballou Comprehends.

I EXTEND my hand if the definition of Communism be such as held by Comrade Borland—a purely economical arrangement—"so as to secure the most perfect satisfaction of individual wants," wholly devoid of any authoritative head and "leaves men to associate themselves together in obedience to the immutable laws of the universe and the dictates of their natural social instincts," why shake; I am a Communist, and following Comrade Addis I would "concede that if the word possession is recognized in the sense in which he uses it, I do not wish to claim any property at all. I simply tried to show my opposition to any compulsion or interference by the community and my right to hold my personal belongings against all comers." If Communism means "voluntary co-operation in production; fellowship; solidarity," why, again I say I am a Communist. If "Communism not only does not propose any organization in any form but is utterly incompatible with the idea of organization," why, I shall certainly acknowledge my "ignorance of Communism." If my "proposed association" under Individualism "is no more and no less than the whole communistic proposition," why, I say to Comrade Morris, here is my hand; I am as much of a Communist as you are an Individualist. To the editor who suggests my using the columns of THE FIREBRAND to criticize its contents I would say, does not the calling out of the excellent article by Comrade Borland fully establish the wisdom of my proceedings? I am hard at work selling my labor to the farmers round about in the hope of reducing the slavery of debt and my thinking cap is not well adjusted. Just as soon as can find time and ideas I will endeavor to set myself right before your readers. A. L. BALLOU.

The Letter-Box.

W. S. A., Palmer, Mass.—Nearly all newspapers furnish sample copies on application. Did it occur to you that we would be out postage in complying with requests for copies of our exchanges, or did you think we were running a national bank and could afford it?

C. P., Philadelphia.—Thanks for the money—at least we suppose, from a comparison of the handwriting on the envelope with yours, that it is from you. No letter accompanied the money, and if we should be right in this guess it is no sign of infallibility.

EMMA GOLDMAN, New York.—Concerning the report, "Eastern and European Propaganda," in No. 16, your name did not appear because you did not sign the article. A letter accompanying the report was signed, but at the end of the latter instead of a signature there was a peculiar mark; by which combination of circumstances any editor would have understood that your name was not to appear. The preliminary statement that you would volunteer an occasional report because no one else seemed inclined to do so was omitted, not because we did not want your reports, but because we did not want others to wait for a nameless person to report matters of which, so far as they could know, that person might be entirely ignorant, and in which case no report at all would be the result. It was a matter of regret with us that your name was withheld, but supposed you had reasons for it. We would be glad to announce you as New York correspondent, and other well-known comrades as correspondents from other cities; then the comrades could report to you and we would get all the news in proper order and succinct form.

Receipts.

Plège, \$1.00. Kimball, Pyburn, each 50c. Mrs. de Meschin, 30c.

Printing-Press Fund.

RECEIVED, for the purpose of buying a printing press for THE FIREBRAND, as follows:

J. H. Morris.....\$5.00
Henry Addis.....5.00
Chas. Doering.....5.00

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.

Agents for THE FIREBRAND.

Charles L. Bodendieck, 1140 Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, Ill.
C. C. Schmidt, 412 South. 13th Str., Omaha, Neb.
I. Rudash, 162 Norfolk street, New York City.
G. Lang, 29 Grape Street, Buffalo, N. Y.
L. Rabotnik, 731 Plover St., Philadelphia, Pa.

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE FIREBRAND.—For the benefit of this paper I will send instructions for mounting and preserving any sized bird, from a hummer to an Eagle, without skinning, to any one sending 25 cents to THE FIREBRAND and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to
ED. GORE, Warren, Minn.
P. S.—After receiving it, if your conscience troubles you for receiving so much for so little you can remit something to the sender. E. G.

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 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
The Wage System " "	5c
Expropriation " "	5c
Anarchist Morality " "	5c
A Dialogue, by L. S. Bevington	5c
Fundamentals in Reform, by W. H. Van Ornum	5c
A Talk about Anarchist-Communism, Malatesta	5c
Anarchy " "	5c
Revolutionary Studies	5c
Anarchy on Trial	2c
An Anarchist Manifesto	25c
A Sex Revolution, by Lois Waisbrocker	5c
Anything More, My Lord?	10c
Wants and Their Gratification; H. Addis	15c
A Secret and Confidential Address, by Gavroche	5c
Revolution, a lecture by S. H. Gordon	5c
Fundamentals in Reform, by W. H. Van Ornum	5c

LIBERTY LIBRARY MONTHLY

E. H. FULTON PUBLISHER
Columbus Junction, Iowa.

SUBSCRIPTION 50 CTS. PER YEAR.
WITH THE FIREBRAND, 80 CENTS A 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. 3 contains 16 pages of solid reading matter and is one of the best pamphlets for missionary work extant. No. 4 contains 44 pages and is the cheapest edition of "God and the State" ever issued. No. 5 contains two important essays: "The Commune of Paris," by Peter Kropotkin, and "An Anarchist on Anarchy," by Elisee Reclus. No. 6 contains The true Aim of Anarchism, by E. Steinle. These numbers contain 16 pages, and are excellent to lend the prejudiced. They are uniform in style, neatly bound, artistic title page, and sold at 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.