

# FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

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WHOLE NO. 216.

## THE ORIGINATOR OF THE ANTI-SAVING IDEA.

It is among the familiar experiences of a man who thinks, to find some one else getting credit for ideas which occurred to himself long before. If he charges the other fellow with plagiarism, he almost necessarily makes himself an ass, for most likely his successor in the thought never heard of him; and, granted that he did, there is some meanness in desiring to make discoveries a "close monopoly by patent right." In the majority of cases, too, the claim of priority is set up by some one who neglected to ventilate his own idea, or put it forth in so crude a form that it failed to attract notice. What, then, can the slighted originator do? Generally speaking, nothing, but grin and bear it. I draw the line at this, however: If I can prove that I put the idea forward first, and if the second person whom it hit upon the wing is being praised for spoiling it—then, look out! Especially at the beginning.

"Once, in a golden hour,  
I cast to earth a seed.  
Up there came a flower;  
The people said, a weed.

"Then it grew so tall,  
It wore a crown of light;  
But thieves, from o'er the wall  
Stole the seed by night,  
"Sow'd it far and wide,  
By every town and tower,  
Till all the people cried,  
'Splendid is the flower.'

"Read my little fable:  
He who runs may read;  
Most can raise the flowers now,  
For all have got the seed.

"And some are pretty enough;  
And some are ugly, indeed;  
And now again the people  
Call it but a weed."

I can prove by back numbers of *Free Society*; by my *Comments*, published this last fall; and by my pamphlet *Anarchy* (1886); that I have long had a cinch on this economic aphorism, "A penny saved is twopence wasted."

He who puts away a penny which would buy tobacco, is a penny the richer. But the producers of tobacco are a penny the poorer. They will, therefore, spend a penny the less for shoes, or whatever else our economical friend produces. In the same proportion less shoes will be produced. Thus, for every penny he hogs, production, the only source of wealth, is diminished by exactly twopence.

In the course of thirteen years I have found a few persons—mostly cranks—to approve of my theorem. But generally speaking, the people have called it a weed. Imagine my wrath, to find my mathematical demonstration set forth, with qualifications which spoiled it, in the December *Nineteenth Century*, by Bradley Martin, Jr. I addressed him a criticism, in care of the *Nineteenth Century*, (because I have no notion who he is or where he lives) and had it returned without comment. I sent it on to *Free Society*, which has published it. Next comes F. Spencer Baldwin, in the February *North American Review*, and states the theory a good deal better than Mr. Martin. But this is not the worst. Mr. Baldwin informs us that a school has arisen which takes my view of that much belauded virtue "saving"; and, in a note he particularizes among the masters of this school J. M. Robertson, who, coming nearest to my light of all, has written a book on "The Fallacy of Saving." Mr. Baldwin is Professor of Economy in the Boston University. But otherwise all these gentlemen appear to be as obscure as myself. Their names are not in *Albion* (1892), nor in a Dictionary of American Authors, published by O. F. Adams, as recently as 1897.

If they had improved my theory, I would have rejoiced in their success. But their versions are "poor indeed." The question which interests them is whether rich people do better to spend or save. I assure them cordially that they may set their minds at rest. It makes little odds what parasites do, except get out of

the way. The important truth is that producers enrich each other by spending, and impoverish each other by saving,—contrary, I need not add, to that amusing phase of pig-philosophy which is known as orthodox economy. C. L. JAMES.

## AN OPEN LETTER TO A SOCIALIST FRIEND.

My Dear Friend,—You say, "My ideal government is simply co-operation to secure various beneficial results including freedom from constant individual bondage and the resistance of invasion." In other words, your "ideal government" is no government at all, but a voluntary association of free individuals—my ideal exactly. How can one be free from individual bondage when co-operation is enforced? And if force is not used, "why government at all?" My only conception of government is a power to force people to do that which they otherwise would not do. It is the will of one or more individuals made supreme. It is always the "ideal government" that is to help the weak against the strong, the just against the unjust, etc. But, my dear friend, you must know that whenever a power is made supreme—and unless it is supreme it is useless—"it is thy will, not mine, O Lord."

Hobbs said that the idea of just and unjust had no place until government was formed. The powerful always had and always will have the right to say what is just and what is unjust. Matthew Arnold said right and wrong did not exist until government defined it. Your "ideal government" is all right until organized, until you delegate it power; then, as Hobbs says, a new person is created having sovereign power—a master and all besides slaves. Is your organization to have this power? If not, why organize?

You say, in a free society the invaded might have the right but lack the power to resist. You seem to have a queer idea of a free society. You seem to think that a free individual is an isolated individual devoid of friends or sympathy. If he is weak he will be a prey to the strong; if slow, be trodden under foot by the quick; if just, be outwitted by the unjust; and so on to the end of the chapter. You ought to realize that a free society is a united society—a natural society—a society where sympathy and love would have full sway. All restriction tends to destroy sympathy and love. If no government assumed the prerogative of defining right and justice, a free society would soon inaugurate a natural justice, a natural right. Natural laws are ever made unavailing by man's laws. You speak of the athlete taking advantage of the cripple. Do you think he would stoop to such meanness had not natural sympathy been prevented by man's ambition to rule his fellows? In a free society that love for humanity which dwells in every heart would see that fair play prevailed.

When an individual is invaded, government must intervene first to decide if it be an invasion, then punish the invader or let him go free. Punishing the invader never helps the invaded. The only benefit the individual derives from government is to "get even" with an enemy. You think it "absurd to place the right of resistance against the power of invasion." But you must understand that all government denies this "right," while powerless to prevent the "power of invasion." A natural society would establish natural right. You also think it equally absurd "that this equal opportunity of Kropotkin and others will right the wrongs of nature in the matter of the strong versus

the weak." Here again is shown your faulty idea of a free society. What you style the "wrongs of nature" is really the "rights of government." A free society would strengthen the weak by curtailing the power of the strong. Kropotkin's "equal opportunity" does not mean that the weak should go to the wall; it means the weak shall have some means to become strong by taking away the power of oppression. Can't you see the strong is made stronger by sovereign power; that government—even an "ideal government"—must be exercised by the strong? It is not nature that makes the strong oppress the weak, but sovereign power. Even wild animals protect their kind. Here I will be met with the assertion that I favor mob rule. Nothing of the kind. Mob rule is the result of government—a reacting abuse, when the people are not educated to rely upon themselves, when there is a power to give them an advantage over their fellows. I was about to say: no power to aid and protect them. But that power would exist in a free society and be real, not a pretense and mockery as now. Sovereign power always gives to a few at the expense of the many.

There are no "rights" and "wrongs" in nature. When society is dominated by government, all rights and wrongs are created for class purposes. In a free society these rights and wrongs would be recognized as an evolution towards true individual happiness. Now, while the free society we advocate is a thing of the future to be evolved by education and agitation, we have numerous incidents to sustain our faith. I will mention one. I have no data of facts at hand, but history has recorded it. In laying out State lines, a strip of land was left out, not included in any State. It was occupied by early settlers and known as "No man's land." They enjoyed an unconscious Anarchy without taxes or officials. One man of a mean disposition thought to take advantage of this state of affairs and refused to pay a just debt. A widow had loaned him money and the time of loan had expired. He sneeringly asked, "What are you going to do about it?" She appealed to her neighbor friends; an impromptu meeting was called and the parties in dispute asked to state their case. It appeared the widow's claim was just. The gentleman was asked to pay it. Again he refused. The meeting went into "executive council" and resolved to do justice. They adjourned to the man's residence, took sufficient of his stock, sold it under the hammer, paid the widow and went home, returning the sneer, "What are you going to do about it?" Was this "mob law?" Strange as it may appear, this incident so alarmed the inhabitants that they petitioned and were admitted into a neighboring state.

In conclusion I ask you to reconsider your ideas of organization. We differ, it appears, in method: you would employ authority to guide and direct; I would trust all to liberty, believing it would establish true equality and fraternity. Proudhon says, society is only organized when entirely free from individual control; that all legislation is as unnecessary as spider-webs in a beehive. I believe the history of civilization, if read aright, will prove that liberty has never failed to advance the cause of right and justice, while restriction has ever proved a stumbling block. We both regard happiness as mankind's highest aim. You would trust in the authority of the "wise" and "good." I would trust to the ego or selfhood of man. You would employ artificial methods, I would trust natural development. Yet, I make no god of nature, knowing that evil is as natural as good. My hope is in the liberty of intelligence, believing it will guide the ship of life into the heaven of happiness.

Yours sincerely,  
A. L. BALLOU.

East Elma, N. Y.

# FREE SOCIETY.

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**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.

## NOTICE.

With the assistance of some active and devoted comrades we have managed to issue the book "The Chicago Martyrs, etc." as the first number of our Quarterly, and have now, in compliance with the request of many of our readers, begun the publication of "Moribund Society and Anarchy" which is to appear as No. 2 of the Quarterly. We intend to issue three thousand copies if the comrades will enable us to do so by sending in their orders and advance payments. We therefore appeal to our comrades everywhere who realize the importance of that literature to the radical propaganda, to assist us to the end that the burden may not be made to rest solely upon a few comrades.

No. 2 of our Quarterly will be printed in much larger type and on better paper, but the price will be the same as that of No. 1. **FREE SOCIETY.**

## NOTE AND COMMENT.

In the article "Almighty Money" in last week's issue, last paragraph, read "workers and shirkers," instead of "workers and strikers!"

News reaches us that comrade Emma Goldman has visited Spring Valley, Ill., and in three successful mass-meetings awakened a great interest in Anarchism among the miners. She is now probably on her way to Seattle, Wash., and will reach this city in about three weeks.

The white-washing force of the beef commission is at an end at last, and the result is as we predicted: the commissioners have "earned" thousands of dollars and the dear people foot the bill.

The "peaceable solution" of the labor problem is making admirable progress. The recent shooting of the miners in Pana, Ill., the readiness of the troops in Buffalo, N. Y., to shoot the long-shoremen, and the shooting and dynamiting in Cour d'Alenc—are all signs of "peaceful evolution."

The Italian revolutionary committee in London announces through the press that Italy is at the verge of another uprising and claims that the people have the support of 10,000 soldiers of the Italian army. The impression prevails in Italy that liberty can only be secured by force of arms. A. I.

## TO THE FILIPINOS.

Brave fighters in a cause forlorn!

The living protest of a race not wholly eaten by corruption—

Against the foul and bloody horde of finance kings and gold bugs seeking wealth even in the rotting, starving flesh of woman and of child;

That Mammon's horde, whose vile putrescent lust for that which human ills have ever sprung,

Thrice cursed gold!

Has made fair earth a blasted waste of smoky desolation; has downed strong men till men they ceased to be and only slaves to cogs and cranks and flying shuttles.

Fight on, brave men!

Better, flushed with the red heat of freedom's battle, to be carried to a warrior's doom,

Than live the dog's life of a modern slave, debarred from love and sunshine, joy and hope,

In falsehood steeped.

And seeking only that he may not die, but keep his craven form to blight the sun.

Sheffield, England.

ALF. BARTON.

## THE DANGEROUS CLASSES.

(The following lecture was delivered before the Denver (Colo.) branch of the Social Democratic Party.)

How to locate and specify the dangerous classes is something of a riddle, because almost everybody belongs to a dangerous class from the point of view of some others.

The man whom I would regard as dangerous would be very likely to return the compliment. On the basis of unbridled competition, with every man looking for his own exclusive interests, we are all more or less dangerous to each other.

There have been, however, some men and classes of men who have enjoyed the distinction of being "dangerous" in the extreme.

Every great and noble man almost whose name and work have outlived his own age, has been regarded by his contemporaries as dangerous.

There was no one in old Athens whom the authorities and professional politicians feared and hated so much as they feared and hated Socrates. Socrates was a dangerous man—a sort of ancient Socialist and Anarchist. He had to be put out of the way to insure the safety of the municipal and ecclesiastical machinery.

Galileo, Savonarola, Martin Luther and a hundred others of that same stripe were dangerous men from the point of view of all easy-going conservatives.

King George number three considered George Washington and the revolutionists of 1776 as a dangerous class and sent his armies to punish them.

From the point of view of the vested slave interests of the south, Wendell Phillips, Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Parker, John Brown and Abraham Lincoln were a mighty dangerous class.

Even Jesus Christ was unsafe. The authorities could not trust him. He had to be watched. He could not be relied upon to think as other people thought, and do as other people did, and so they put him out of the way—"dropped him from the list," made him an outcast, and nailed him to the cross with only two thieves to share his tortures.

There have been a good many such men, and it will be a dark outlook for the world when we have no more men who are "dangerous" to the customs and institutions by which the people of every generation are enslaved.

You see, it depends a good deal on how you look at it as to who is dangerous. Rockefeller and his ilk and Eugene V. Debs and his ilk could not agree in this matter. They are dangerous to each other. There is an irrepressible conflict between darkness and daylight, between justice and robbery, between the money-glutton and the Socialist.

The Anarchists are the dangerous people *par excellence*, until you come to know them and can appreciate the sublimity of their conceptions of liberty and self-control.

Any man who is able-bodied, willing to work and unable to get work, and who goes hungry where food is in abundance, ought to be "dangerous" or he deserves to starve.

Any man whose moral sense and intelligence are outraged by any one of the many miserable makeshifts which are called "laws;" any man who finds himself forced to choose between doing what is legally allowed but is morally wrong and what is "illegal" but right, ought to be dangerous.

In the face of all conventional hypocrisy let every true man and woman bear the cross of social contempt and glory in being counted "dangerous."

How else can any injustice be overthrown? Or how else can the life of the race be lifted to higher levels?

I believe in people who have to be dealt with seriously, who have force and convictions and who will not be silenced. I believe in that sort of dangerous people. I believe in the people of whom Emerson warned us when he said: "Beware when God almighty lets loose a thinker on this planet."

Society is a yoke of sleepy oxen and needs an occasional gadfly.

Some dangerous people are dangerous only to those who never think or act beyond the most narrow limits—who wear by a "creed" they do not understand and are afraid of such unusual mental effort as is involved in an honest doubt.

Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, Huxley and Tyndall were supposed to be dangerous until some sly "divines" accomplished the feat of harmonizing science and the scriptures.

When I was a boy, the Rev. Mr. Olmstead, a lovely old Baptist minister, remonstrated with me against

reading the essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson and the writings of Herbert Spencer, because they were "dangerous." And in the theological seminary where I was carpentered over into something else than a man, we had none of the books that dealt with the opposite side of the question—because they were "dangerous."

On the same grounds, and for the same reasons, some eminent people are arguing against our American public school system. They say it is a mistake to teach the common people. It creates so much unrest and discontent. It is "dangerous" for everybody to have an education. The poor must not be lifted out of that station which was assigned to them by an all-wise providence.

For my part, I count as really dangerous any one who deliberately stands in the way of true progress; any one who makes life less comfortable for others; any one who regards the commonwealth with less interest than he bestows upon his private concerns. Life is not a pig-trough, and men should be more than wolves. Those who without reserve give themselves to competition, whose business it is to trade upon the necessities of others, who toil only to gain from others' toil, who have but the one ambition to make money—these are the dangerous class.

Dangerous beyond all others are the people who can sit down and enjoy the labors of an over-burdened and under-paid toiler; the people who treat humane energy as a mere commodity, and give as little to get as much of it as they can.

Dangerous, I say, beyond all others are the people who waste what other people need—the money-gluttons who are never satisfied, "who join house to house and field to field till there is no place for others that they may be alone in the midst of the earth." With the old prophet Isaiah I cry: "Woe upon them!"

They are the dead-heads of the world, who want to side and will not pull, who take chief places at the feast of life and then refuse to pay the bill. They are not all millionaires, but they would all like to be. The evil of this class consists in their absolute inability to keep within bounds. They never know when they have enough. Without regard to the effect of their transactions upon other people, they demand an opportunity to double up, and to many times double up their already superfluous wealth. They have no other ambition than to appropriate as much of the common goods of life to their own advantage as they can lay hands on. To become the masters of the markets of the world; to make men marvel at and admire them and their success; to be on top and at the head—this is their mania.

They are dangerous because they are insane—bitten by the mad dog of avarice—greed-driven until their very name is a contagion.

The victims of this wretched madness are apt to be found everywhere, and America and American institutions are being speedily consumed in the rage for trade and speculation that a few who are rich may grow richer.

The vocation of every man is to serve others in return for the service of others. We are all, by nature and in reason, a joint stock company. The very existence of a healthy social organism demands the most faithful and the freest interchange of service.

He who will not play according to the rules of the game; he who takes an unfair advantage; who makes a gain from other people's losses, is truly "dangerous," and should be treated to a course of straight-jacket and the scourge.

The possession of money beyond one's own honest earning is to harbor stolen goods. The man who goes after the public armed with special privileges purchased from tricky legislators, is a robber. Treat him, then, as though he were caught with a sand-bag and a burglar's kit.

Under the present social regime the most dangerous thing you can put into a man's hand is money. It is a poison without an antidote. It will go where dynamite cannot reach and with a far worse irreparable and ruinous effect.

There is no law, no court, no chamber of legislation, no bench of justice, no administrative cabinet that cannot be corrupted with money. Only have enough of it in the hands of men who want more, and where is there a human power that can withstand its cursed influence?

Talk about your dangerous classes as if a gang of petty highwaymen armed with guns, or a crowd of excited dynamiters under a red flag, were to be compared with the men who can never be convicted and punished for any crime so long as they have the money to bribe the officials.

The light is dangerous to those who love darkness. The new cry for justice and equality is dangerous to those who delight in the advantages which they have secured through injustice and inequality.

Free speech and free speakers are dangerous to those who do not want to have their teachings disputed.

Henry George, Edward Bellamy and Myron Reed were dangerous men—thank God!

There is need in the world for the men who "think clear and speak straight;" whose words are more than cannon balls or bombs, who make it lively for the political thieves and the ecclesiastical humbugs. The more of these dangerous people we have the better.

There is no social disgrace for a millionaire. His evil deeds are all right-edged and diamond-studded. He never lacks a lackey. He is the freest of freebooters. There are no laws that he cannot have enacted or repealed to suit his whim.

If a millionaire is ever a good man he deserves unlimited praise, for it is in his power to surrender himself to every form of evil and be exempt from any human tribunal.

The meanest excuse for the enjoyment and control of an unreasonable amount of money that I have ever heard was that of John Rockefeller, who is reported to have said that God himself had made him the administrator of such vast fortunes. It would seem that money, then, has power to corrupt even the infinite. For not God, nor any one else, has a moral right to ordain one man to be a millionaire while a million men are ordained to be paupers. No one has a right to superfluities at all while so many suffer for the barest necessities.

But what are we going to do about it? That's the question. What to do—all this talk is empty and foolish if it ends in talk. The trouble is, we are too fond of the sound of our own voices and too slow to make decided and determined action.

How are we going to overcome this insane madness for more and ever more money? If this inordinate and unscrupulous lust after money is the great evil and danger of the world—as I most firmly believe—what are we going to do to put a stop to it?

It is not as if we had to deal with a small minority—a few disordered people. This dangerous class cannot be confined within the limits of Wall street or on Capitol Hill. It does not consist of those only who already are the money masters; but it consists far more of that greater number of men and women who rest not day or night in their "dreams of avarice."

Even the ranks of Socialism have been invaded with this inhuman epidemic. We have among us a great many who look to Socialism to make them rich. Socialism can never make any headway in the world so long as our hatred of the rich proceeds from a mad wish to be rich ourselves.

Put away from your hearts all avarice, all expectation of a soft and luxurious life. Dream not of a treasure to be unearthed, of a fortune easily acquired, of a day to come when we shall live without work. Throw egotism and self-indulgence to the winds.

If the curse of the purse is to be lifted from the shoulders of the toiling millions, we must have the courage to scorn the allurements of an easy-going life.

We will never cure the millionaire craze by making every man a millionaire. In a world of madmen some men should be sane.

Prof. Agassiz said he was so busy with his scientific investigations that he had no time to get rich. That's the sort of spirit we need. We want men and women who can give heart and mind to other questions beside the question of simple and component interest.

Let's try to get ourselves set right on this money question. Let us examine and then re-examine the standards of value which are so much exalted in the world today.

What is the criterion of real wealth? What constitutes good fortune? Whom ought we to envy? Is the possession of money in any amount, however vast, an evidence of a man's worth? Is the ability to buy another man's life and labors a desirable and praiseworthy condition? Do the foundations of health and happiness rest upon money?

Not a bit of it. All health that is real and all happiness depend upon right relations between the mind and the body of man. Life is a simple, natural, easy thing, if it were not so complicated and demoralized by a stupid civilization. We have made life worse by death by our false valuations. We have made a god out of some glittering clay, and the human heart is broken and submissive before its golden Moloch.

I am here today to declare to you in the name of

right, reason, and good sense, that our modern civilization is a self-imposed curse; that we are spending our lives for that which feeds us not, and toil for what can never satisfy. What can cheap calico and rapid transit do to make life more worth living? How much more are we getting out of life—I mean the average man and the average life—than was enjoyed even by our pre-historic ancestors? Who cares about the marvelous discoveries and inventions of this remarkable age if men are not thereby wiser in head and kinder in heart?

It is a world of stucco in men as well as in buildings—a cheap plaster world—a world of force turned into a world of crafty trade.

"Property, property, property—that's what the people say: Property, property, property—center and center away."

There have been other civilizations on this earth, and they have taken the road to ruin—they have divided the world into debtors and creditors, into slave and master, into the man who works and the man who lives on the man who works.

Our civilization is on the same road and is certain to meet with the same disaster. The Niagara of revolution will follow the madness of greedy and selfish injustice.

The ultimate civilization will abolish money—will do away with these bits of fraudulent silver and gold by which one man exacts the labors of other men, and for the sake of which we all do so many things we would never dream of doing otherwise.

Let us begin now to revolutionize in our thoughts and in our conduct the standards of value. Let us cultivate and exercise ability to withstand this avaricious frenzy of a sordid world.

Let us show that it is worth while to live and to earn our own living, and to find our enjoyment in the world of beauty which is for all, and which costs no red blood and no cold despair to have and to use.

Make it an honor to be wisely simple and moderate in life. Make it a social distinction to live without ostentation, without parade, without foolish display. Let us hold up to ridicule this strutting, swaggering, gushing idiocy of fine clothes and fine manners. To be gentle, not genteel; to be frank, not polite; to enjoy and create beauty, not to follow a senseless fashion; to have real pleasure in natural things, and not to try to astonish and outshine our neighbors.

Let something like this be our ideal. Begin now to live as if there were no other values in life to be compared with what is simple, real and in harmony with our natural human instincts and impulses.

Let us exalt simplicity of life, wise simplicity of life, wise industry and intelligent moderation. Let us have all manner of natural and reasonable pleasures, but always in such a way as to never grow weary of any enjoyment.

While we are waiting and working for the great social transformations, the economic and political revolutions which must come sooner or later, let us learn to treat the vanities and follies of the wealthy and the would-be wealthy with the contempt they deserve. Let us be content with being an honest, plain people, a natural, simple people, uncorrupted by the glint and tinkle of this golden lure.

There is no other way to control this dangerous class—these money gluttons—than to make it a disgrace for a man to live on the labor of his fellow men.

But somebody steps up here and says in reply that I am talking in a language far-fetched and poetic; that I am advocating impracticable ideals; that it is all good in theory but it won't work. I hear them say, "We are all human, and we want all we can get." They tell me that it is not natural not to want money and luxury; that no reform can succeed that does not appeal to the natural greed of man.

Right here I want to point out to you a second class of dangerous men. I would describe them as the people who are content to take things as they are. They call themselves "practical people." They believe in the bridge that carries them safe over, and once over themselves, they never turn back to see about repairs or reconstruction. "It's good enough as it is," is their idea. Their lot in life is comfortable. By some lucky turn of the wheel they are on top. And they don't know and they don't care to know "how the other half lives."

There is a great mass of easy-going people who take the world as they find it, and go sauntering to their graves with no idea of improvement. Children of today, all they ask is to keep in the procession.

A great man once asked, "How much better is a man than a sheep?" Many men are no better. The ways of the world are sheep paths. We follow in one

another's tracks. We are so submissive, so innocent, so imitative, so amiable, so indifferent.

The crowd is against all reform. They do not want to be disturbed. Just pet them, pander to them, tell them smooth things, praise them; and then you can shear them to your heart's content. Oh, this sheepish conservatism! This thinking as other people think and doing as other people do! This living a borrowed life!

I say that it is dangerous to the highest interests of humanity for people to live in a herd, to think in a herd, to be always so many cattle. The instinct of the crowd is a dangerous instinct. The crowd is so childish, so unthoughtful, so easily manipulated, so ready to go after any man's "hip, hip, hurrah." The crowd will do anything that the crowd will do. "We'll go with the boys." If you say so it must be so, whether it is so or not. The blind leading the blind—such is the crowd.

Our priests and our politicians understand the psychology of crowds. This appeal to the majority is an appeal to selfish interests and low motives. Only offer a sufficient inducement—a heaven of unadulterated pleasure in the sweet bye and bye, or a new appropriation of the public money for some local gratification, and the people are with you.

Dangerous men, I call them, these men who make use of the crowd; who utilize for their personal aggrandizement this dead weight of the mass. We find in every profession men and women who to command the attention and the support of the crowd will do and say things which they cannot do or say with their whole heart.

They have invented a whole vocabulary with which to extenuate their crime. The cunning of these adroit caterers to the populace is called "tact." They speak of prudence as a virtue and call the grossest moral cowardice by that name. To be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," is the acme of their professional ambition.

The world has never gained anything at the hands of these intellectual and moral jugglers. Progress has been sidetracked and switched into wrong directions by the sly makeshifts of people who have been too cowardly to speak the whole truth. Christian ministers and educators, politicians, judges, journalists and writers, everywhere are to be found who play with principles to suit the place and the moment. The agility of these time servers and place-hunters is most remarkable. They have the idea that you must please the people at all hazards. They regard the common sense of the majority as an inviolable criterion. "The people, my dear," when, as a matter of fact, the crowd is never right, and but slowly getting right. As a matter of fact no crowd has ever advocated or defended a single noble cause or a single great reform. The crowd will follow where the loaves and fishes are to be had. The crowd seeks after a sign.

The crowd want to be amused and entertained with an exhibition of miracles. The crowd will strew the roadway with palm branches and cry Hosanna! Hosanna! one day; and on the next will shout "Crucify him! Crucify him!" To be a popular idol for a day it is almost necessary to be such a man as future days will execrate; while to be a popular idol in days to come, it is almost necessary to be such a man as the world will execrate today.

I say to you that we have around us a dangerous class of people who are always preaching patience and tact, who want us to be content with things as they are; who tell us about the beautiful graces of submission and resignation; who assure us that our present losses and sufferings are to work out for us a far more exceeding weight of glory. There is nothing quite so smooth as the oily utterances of these men who cry "Peace, peace," where there is no peace.

They are all the more dangerous because they will say to the people only what the people are ready to hear and applaud, while as a matter of fact the people are deaf, dumb and blind to what is for their own permanent interest. This leads me to my final classification. The people themselves, the people in mass, are a dangerous class. The people, as a people, are their own worst enemies. The soul of the people is great, but they know it not. Human dignity, the first of man as man, is immeasurable, but they have bartered it away—to be comfortable, to satisfy material needs, to make a show of life, to eat, drink and be merry—this is their pitiable and paltry satisfaction. The people are content to be a crowd; to admire and be admired; to look up to somebody and to look down on somebody. They deceive themselves with false valuations; they borrow from each other their ideas; they change and interchange ready-made opinions;



they flock to the polling-booth or to the chapel merely from the instinct to flock. Principles, political ideas, religious standards, ethical criterions are manufactured by a popular vote, by a show of hands; and the out-voted are made heretics, exiles, criminals only because they are in the minority. The people, consciously or unconsciously, regulate in almost every iota the thoughts, desires and moral conceptions of each several and separate life.

The idea of liberty is as far from the crowd as the east from the west. People who habitually act and think from an external initiative become incapable of self-government. How can we look for greatness of soul or beauty of life from men and women who have such a slavish regard for each other's favorable opinion! This willing servitude in small things renders the personality incapable in the day of great things. The man is lost in the men, like the proverbial forest, where, for the density of the wood, you could not see the trees. People are too anxious to count as one, to have a vote, to belong to a party, to join hands; and this not so much in political and commercial affairs as in matters of daily social and ethical conduct. People stand in each other's way and trample over each other until society becomes a virtual stampede. This is what I mean when I say "the people, as a people, are their own worst enemies."

No worse danger threatens the future than that the people, as a people, will swallow Socialism as blindly, as thoughtlessly, and from as mean motives as have actuated them in their headlong adoption of other new ideas in the past.

I am afraid of the crowd, the irresponsible mass, the mob. The great political crimes of history, the great moral and religious atrocities of history have always had the support of the crowd. Duped by some sudden enthusiasm men have gone together into new conditions for which they have had no adequate preparation. How easily can the most exalted ideas and ideals be degraded into a mere fashion or fad! It was a sorry day for Christianity when it became the popular idolatry of the Roman empire. It was a sorry day for the great Protestant reformation when it gained official State support and became itself as tyrannical as the corrupt institutions it had previously denounced. It was a sorry day for the divine idea of Democracy, of self-government, when the man as a free citizen became an exultant member of a triumphant and arrogant party.

And it will be a sorry day for Socialism when the new life of industrial equality and economic freedom is thrust upon a world of people who have no individual strength or wisdom to use, as they should be used, the greater liberties of which we dream. The great temptation is the beaten track; the great tyrant is the crowd; the great misfortune is self-distrust, self-ignorance, self-neglect.

What the people need is liberty for the expression—each man of the best that is in him. The danger is not that man will make mistakes, but that he will make nothing. Emptiness of life is the great mistake. Let humanity stumble, and lose its way at times; only do not let it be indifferent. Do not let it go on with no magnificent goal in view. I would not have life a feast for the belly merely, but a feast for the soul. I would have men more than machines, more even than that great productive and distributive machine which we call Socialism. I would have men so great of mind and so pure of heart as to reduce political and economic questions to that subordinate place in life which they deserve. What would you think of an army that did nothing but hang about the provisioning department; that went out only on foraging expeditions? Our physical appetites are too much with us; our love of display, our vanity, our desire for admiration is too much with us. We are too much of a crowd. We want to agree to be agreeable too much. It is not good for man to live so much on the outside, to be so interested in the surface of life. The level crowd is not so good as the lonely height. I do not want Socialism that will abolish all differences and distinctions. I do not want a condition wherein each man will travel in a path made for him by other men. I do not want all men to agree as to what each man must do and be. I do not want more things for each man, but more freedom from the tyranny of things for all men.

The great mission of Socialism is to liberate man from the tyranny of men, to put material considerations under our feet, where they belong, and to give wings to the human intellect. When no man will be allowed to stand in the way of another man's develop-

ment, but when all do the necessary work to make possible for each the largest and finest realization of his own being; then, and only then, will I be satisfied with the world.

Liberty and a people capable of liberty—a wise people and a just liberty—is the great need of the world. And we who stand in the way of its complete satisfaction are the enemies of humanity—the dangerous classes.

VICTOR E. SOUTHWORTH.

#### NOTES.

*Free Society's* readers will be interested in the following passage from a personal letter from a missionary in Natal, South Africa:

"The natives now are full of the independent spirit (a good spirit when kept in moderation and bounds) and all over South Africa the spirit of faction and rebellion is rife in the churches. There is some political significance to the movement also."

A fault in most social agitators is that they do not sufficiently recognize the importance of the still uncivilized races. If a man does not count China and Africa in his plans for the next century, his plans will be upset. This movement of the Zulus to break away from their missionary teachers in church government, as well as from their English political lords, is a sign that they have force in themselves—if they only knew what point to strike at.

*Free Society* No 213 reviews favorably a compilation of the "Blue Laws of Connecticut." In mentioning these it ought always to be stated that they were forged by Rev. Samuel Peters, whose History of Connecticut also says that the current of the Connecticut River is so violent in one place that a crowbar cannot be made to penetrate the water. To say that these laws were actually in force in Connecticut, or that people were burned as witches in New England, or any such well-known forgeries and errors, will help no cause in the long run. Lies are bound to grow ridiculous in the end.

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

#### THINKS PROFIT IS THE CAUSE.

Kinghorn-Jones is mistaken; it is not the gold nor any other standard that robs the producer; it is profit, which takes all it can get and returns as little as possible to keep the working mule in physical condition to produce more.

Now, let us adopt the standard of time to base the production and compensation on. Suppose ten hours to constitute a day's work, and \$2.50 a day's wage, or 25 cents an hour. Everyone will admit that to be a good wage; but if a man produce \$10.00 worth or even \$7.00 worth, he is robbed all the same even without a metal standard. It is not the use of money but greed for profit which brings about the present conditions. After a readjustment of conditions the results of a new system are not so perceptible until a certain stage is reached; then the work of destruction proceeds with tremendous rapidity and without possibility of its arrest; it must then destroy itself. Only by eliminating profit mongering in any form from the new system to be inaugurated can we expect to make it lasting.

No colony, co-operative enterprise or labor exchange can expect to live and prosper if it retain the present system or any of its parts in the exchange of products.

All we have to do to make money (in its present sense) harmless is to use it right or not at all: not to accept nor render any profit—then all the bugaboo about money standards will lose its terror.

How could Rockefeller or any other fellow accumulate wealth, even by a gold standard, if there were no fools who accept in return less than they render?

E. F. ROTSCHKE.

#### THE EDELSTADT PUBLICATION FUND.

Undoubtedly the most brilliant affair, both from a financial and social standpoint, was the Russian

theatrical and ball given for the benefit of the Edelstadt Publication Fund under the auspices of the Edelstadt Memorial Society on the 15th of April at Wicker Park Hall, Chicago.

The object of the above named society is to issue a complete edition of the works of the poet. Many of the Russian poems have never been published, and others are scattered in various Russian papers and in manuscripts among his friends. An effort will be made to have Kropotkin write a biographical preface to the book.

The society calls upon comrades in other cities to arrange similar socials for the benefit of the fund so that the book may be issued as soon as possible.

418 W. Division St.,

EMILE EDELSTADT.

Chicago, Ill.

#### ATTENTION!

That the field of the oral propaganda of Anarchism may not become fallow, comrade Voltairine de Cleyre of Philadelphia will start on the 15th of June or thereabouts on a three months' lecturing tour westward. Meetings are being arranged for her already in Pennsylvania, and from the 1st till the 16th (inclusive) she is to stay in St. Louis where the Workingmen's Self-educational Club has taken the initiative in arranging meetings for her.

There are plenty of private parks and tents in the United States, wherein and under which addressing audiences during the warm season is made possible, and all those who are anxious to have the "Word" rung will not be slow in grasping the opportunity and arrange meetings.

It is desirable that all the dates be fixed before our comrade's first move. Prospective workers will therefore communicate with Voltairine de Cleyre immediately upon reading this. Her address is 620 N. 8th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

To those not familiar with comrade Voltairine de Cleyre's range of information it may here be added that the scope of her lectures embraces Free-thought in the broadest sense of the word, sociology, the labor movement, etc. COURT NORMAN.

#### RECEIPTS.

Week ending May 13.

Valet, Broadbelt, Staller, Ryan, Notkin, Kuhn, Klein, each \$1. Cummings, Motte, each 75. Frenzel, Liveshitz, Auth, Krapohl, Haliback, Thomas, Halstein, Cornfield, Gartman, Moore, Portar, Zimmerman, Seider, Goldhaber, Deardorf, Mandelbaum, Jerly, Pocker, Koppen, Valain, Huneke, Smith, Schuster, Williams, Nelson, Hamersmark, each 50c. Triloff, Otto, Brown, Dublin, Schlichteimer, Banowitz, Aulman, Shisaid, Aronberg, Hanna, Novack, Bender, Baldrige, Rosenthal, McCaleb, each 25 cents. Dobransky, Seigle, Brownstein, each 10c.

#### The Letter-Box.

M. Seklew, Bradford, England.—If you can explain the difference between an altruist hangman and an egoist hangman, it may dawn upon my humble mind what you mean when you say: "Formerly altruist Anarchist—now egoist Anarchist." I think "formerly confused—now rattled" would be a more appropriate appendix to your signature. *Serpienti sat.*

J. A. Shaw, Ventura, Cal.—To the "well balanced mind" the word Anarchy is the most appropriate term to define its ideal, i. e., no government or authority in any form, while the term "Intelligent Order" is but a relative term and does not mean anything. We see cause and effect manifesting themselves in the universe, but those that assert that "Intelligent order is the order of the universe" know very little of it. If order signifies harmony there is often great disorder in the universe. Anarchy cannot be brought about unless we repudiate all authority and act accordingly.

N. C. M., Wichita, Kans.—Your article will appear next week. Thanks. Nearly every Sunday night I find occasion to point out to the so-called Freethinkers that they are fighting God and the Bible, but tenaciously cling to the abominable customs and perverted morality that resulted from the belief in God and "His Word."

O. F., San Jose, Cal.—You will have received the books by this time. The book "Moribund Society and Anarchy" will be printed in much larger type and on better paper, but the price will be the same. Comrade Emma Goldman has by this time left Chicago for Tacoma, Seattle, whence she will go to Portland and San Francisco. We expect her in about three weeks.

J. W. T. Morris, Summerland, Cal.—You are not the first subscriber who has *Free Society* discontinued because we do not endorse Spiritualism, but this fact does not annoy us in the least. We would rather suspend the paper than to endorse a belief which is as absurd as the belief in a supreme being. Not the skeptics, but those who claim to know without being able to substantiate their belief are concealed.