

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.

VOL. V. NO. 45

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1899.

WHOLE NO. 233.

ASPIRATION.

Give me struggle, give me searching,
Give me hope to be and do;
Let the light of the ideal
Keep me patient, fearless, true!

Not for me the pride of conquest,
Not for me to gain the end;
Only let me fight for justice
And the rights of man defend!

Onward see I as in vision
Human greatness, human worth
Rising ever to its zenith,
Bringing joy to all the earth.

'Tis enough to be a helper
In some quiet faithful way;
Though I ne'er may see the fulness
Of the glory of the day.

'Tis enough to be forgotten,
Lost amid the nameless dead,
If humanity may onward
To the good that lies ahead.

Many yet must fall in battle,
Ere the cause we love succeeds—
From our failure cometh triumph
As the grain from perished seeds.

—Victor E. Southworth.

POLITICAL ACTION.

During discussions about the oppressed conditions of the producers, people very often say, "The workingmen have only themselves to blame;—they have the ballot, why don't they use it for their own benefit, instead of supporting trusts, monopolies and the old parties? They should form a great labor party and vote for their own men." And if a German Socialist happens to be near he will add: "Yes, of course, must like in Shermamy de social democratic party."

Let us see. The social democratic party has been in existence in Germany for the last 30 years and what has it accomplished? Has the condition of the toilers improved; have they gained the slightest advantage? They have not, but on the contrary, the party has degenerated from an original revolutionary, uncompromising organization, into a compromising middle class reform party, as one of their own leaders, Bebel, admitted some years ago and Bernstein, one of their great literary lights, has so ably demonstrated in a late book. And what is the reason? Political action!

In order to elect a deputy to the Reichstag, they are anxiously looking for the necessary number of votes, and in order to get these votes they dare not antagonize the conservative element; they have to cater to their prejudices, to compromise with the real questions at issue and use all manner of deception in order to keep the radical demands out of sight when election time is approaching. In this country we had the greenback party and the populist party; the latter sprung into existence only a few years ago; it has had control of several states, and was quite revolutionary in the beginning, but how is it now? Fusion with the old parties was its death-knell and the party as such has fallen into oblivion. The same fate awaits all other reform parties when they enter the slippery ground of politics where corruption is the inevitable result.

I admit, however, that these parties have done a great deal to arouse the people from their sleep and apparent security; they have done immeasurable service in pointing out the evils which beset us and to a great extent the causes thereof; their literature has counteracted and supplanted in a great measure the teachings of the capitalist journals; their lecturers and agitators have penetrated everywhere and carried the new gospel of freedom from the money-power to every one who would listen, and I am glad

to say many a good, honest, revolutionary speech has been made by these workers for the cause of humanity. But as members of a political party, being confined to political methods, they advocate the ballot as a means to redress the wrongs, and there is where the effect of their agitation is counteracted and almost annulled. The latent energy aroused, if directed into the proper channel, that is of resisting oppression, of not submitting to be exploited, which would have at least revolutionized the minds of the workers so that they would rely on their own efforts, is wasted in the effort to throw off their yoke by the ballot, and the close observer cannot fail to notice the fact that the Socialist parties today are in the same reactionary position: the radical element, formerly prominent in the party, is pushed out, the politicians and wire-pullers are pushing themselves to the front, the parties, though only in their infancy, are beginning to become corrupt, and the people are gradually being cheated out of the realization of their hopes.

Anarchists are often accused of having too high a conception of humanity, and it is claimed that in order to live without any restraints men must be angels, but it is just the opposite. The advocates of political action seem to consider their candidates angels, who will not abuse the power and confidence entrusted to them, and expect that their men will act simply as a wheel in a great machine, which is put together to produce certain effects. They forget that government, state, municipality, congress, legislature, etc., are abstract terms, that all of these are composed of human beings, with desires identical to those who are not members of such institutions and consequently act the same, that is every one looks out more or less after his own individual interest, and that is the cause of the failure to accomplish a change for the better through the ballot.

As long as we live under a system of monopoly and exploitation, as long as we recognize legal ownership of natural opportunities, as long as the few are able to enrich themselves at the expense of the many, so long will forms of representation and delegation of power be a failure, and after these causes have been removed we shall need neither delegation nor representation.

"But if the workers have not voted themselves into bondage, how did they come to be in the present deplorable condition?" I am asked, for this is supposed to be a free country. Simply because our forefathers, though proclaiming that all men were born with equal rights, did not grant the opportunities for all men to live free and as equals; they did not remove the cause which produces poverty and oppression from which they fled, but modeled their own institutions with slight alterations after those from which they separated, and thus in the course of time the effect has been the same.

And since people will not submit to oppression except by consent of the majority, the same means are employed here as in any other country to keep the dupes in ignorance and submission. The church with its numerous branches overshadows the land and in its shade the people have lost sight of the rays of freedom. The press has poisoned the minds of the "free citizens" who gradually have become accustomed to look upon their shackles as badges of liberty, and the public school and Sunday school do the rest to warp the thought of the coming generation into the desired form.

But in spite of it all people are beginning to look at things in a different light, and the consequence is

that the beneficiaries of our system of legal robbery bring forth other means to check the desire for freedom, and that is forcible subjection by armed men, and from this time on their cause is doomed. People are beginning to conceive that they are slaves and crave for a radical change; skirmishes have already been fought here and there, and very soon the great battle of liberation will be upon us. Of course many people dread a violent revolution, but such is inevitable in the course of evolution and we ought to be prepared for the event. Besides those that abhor the coming bloodshed so much, very seldom, if ever, raise their voices against the wholesale slaughter from railroad, marine and mine disasters, brought on by greed, nor does it disturb their peaceful slumber that millions die for want of food, shelter, proper care and recreation, all of which they could enjoy if they were not robbed of the products of their labor. C. D.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Through a mistake we have none of No. 42-230 of *Free Society* left for our file and therefore would request our readers, who can spare this number, to kindly return the same to us.

It has been suggested by some of our active comrades to issue an eight page number for the 11th of November commemoration containing the photos of the murdered victims of government and capitalism and their monument. As this will cause an extra expense, we should ask the groups and other active comrades to send their orders, accompanied with cash, immediately.

While we are anxious to receive short communications on current topics we are obliged, owing to our cramped space, to rule out lengthy articles. Hereafter we shall not publish communications exceeding 2000 words.

According to our German contemporary of Chicago, a policeman happened to meet several Italians on the street who were discussing harmless affairs in their own language. This guardian of "law and order" imagined that these men were plotting a conspiracy and interfered. Not understanding the English language the Italians were scared and started to run, and one of them was killed. The policeman has been charged with manslaughter to soothe the indignation, but "money rules," you know. The chief of police has given his force to understand that every member ought to contribute \$1. for the defense of the murderer, and as that means \$2,500 to begin with and having "influence" behind him, "justice" will evidently be smothered.

Comrade Lucy Parsons was invited to speak on Labor Day in Danville, Ill. Her utterances have utterly displeased the "law-abiding citizens" of Danville, and in order to pacify their indignant masters the labor unions proclaim innocence and have promised to hold "indignation meetings, fix the blame and condemn the act." As long as the labor unions consist of such cowards and fools there is no hope for bettering their condition, for progress is solely due to those who have had the courage to defy laws and resist the robberies of the exploiters. A. I.

Moribund Society and Anarchy by Jean Grave, which has been translated from the French by Voltairine de Cleyre and is now in process of publication by *Free Society* as its next quarterly, is a vivid picture of the two principles struggling for supremacy—conservatism and radicalism. Its arraignment of the social follies and iniquities is so clear and cutting that it cannot help awakening thought among the most indifferent. S. D.

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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.

DECEPTION THE BULWARK OF CHURCH AND STATE.

The Economic League, conducted by the University Association, and located in that mammoth hive of parasites—Mills Building—appears to be the latest move of sky-pilots, who hold their positions solely by guiding the unthinking masses away from freedom. Its circular emphasizes only one paragraph by italics, as follows:

Its sole aim is to seek the truth, to arouse public sentiment in each community to the need of unity of action on public questions, to secure a better administration of our laws, and to furnish the information and help needed that all may exercise intelligently, the rights of American citizenship.

Among its officers are twelve D. D.s—"Doctors of Divinity,"—headed by The Right Reverend Samuel Fallows, D.D., L. L. D.

"To seek the truth," Right Reverend Doctors of Divinity, you, the chief actors in the present screaming farce of life, should get off our backs and eat your bread in the sweat of your own faces, instead of on the sweat of our faces, ugh! you—(fill in the blank according to your individual taste)

"To secure a better administration of our laws," of course meaning those laws which feed the priests and prop the State—as Edwin Arnold so tersely states the vicious relationship between law, priests and state.

"That all may exercise intelligently, the rights of American citizenship,"—this simply means voting for someone to mis-represent and govern the voting fools; the question of questions with the elected one being, how much can be "made" out of it, and Labor continues voting and paying all the bills. No intelligent lovers of freedom vote themselves into slavery.

"Rights of American citizenship" shows the narrow-minded, soul contracting influences of theologians, and indeed forms a very black background on which to show up in fine relief the brotherhood of man; it is one of the deep schemes of Church and State to cause national irritation, so that they may have some excuse for the base of their last line of resistance to Freedom—the army. Church, State and soldiers are each a necessity to each other. Those who produce wealth, whatever their nationality, would not fight each other but for the misrepresentations and robberies of governments.

The circular advertises a list of four dozen books for sale, two dozen of which begin their title with the word "Political." Political, relating to government policy, means any management but the truthful one.

The fee for membership of The Economic League is \$3.75, not excessive considering the great church dignitaries who have formulated the scheme, in fact quite an economical figure for the parasites, but extravagantly high for the backbone of the nation—Labor.

Theologians are the greatest enemies of the human race; they know the definition of theology to be the science which treats of the existence, nature, and attributes of God. Science is defined as the knowledge of things reduced to a system. The term "theology" is a falsehood devised by the priesthood who of course predominates among the lexicographers—to obscure the truth which maketh freedom. Each nation has a different God, and each sect in each nation has a different God from any other. These very doctors of divinity, who have arranged this last churchy trick, know also that the following passages are to be found in their God's book: "Canst thou by searching find God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" And Job evidently gave it up. Paul said referring to God, "whom no man hath seen, nor can see," and "His ways are past finding out."

Isaiah is credited with knowing all about God, he had a direct wire to the "Almighty," by which the recorded telephone message was received, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Hello! hello! But he

evidently was never much more enlightened in that direction.

The D. D.s now realize, as they never did before, that "believe or be damned" is losing its power over the toilers on whom they live. The double-damners of body and spirit are learning that the workers at last understand the true conditions to be: think or be damned. They are thinking and they will act soon. Times are about ripe, then probably we shall be able to live as the Sidonians: "Then the five men departed and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure, and (because) there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in anything." Italics are mine.

In the rural districts of England, the clergyman of the established Church, the State Church, is usually also the magistrate, but they do not make a point of preaching from the Laish text, on the contrary, they never mention it.

Many thank Omar Khayyam for thus so clearly expressing the thoughts of those who think:

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but ever more
Came out by the same door wherein I went.

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

Into this Universe, and WHY not knowing
Nor WHENCE, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not WHITHER, willy-nilly blowing.

What, without asking, hither hurried WHENCE?
And, without asking, WHITHER hurried hence?
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!"

The most contemptible class of weak-minded, vain-glorious men are those who delight in such false, hollow titles as Reverend, Right Reverend, Very Reverend, Doctor of Divinity, Doctor of Law and Logic, Lord Bishop, Arch Bishop, Father in God, Pope. D. D. and L. L. D., are sublimely ridiculous, really comic; it appears beyond the possible to imagine a man dilating on all that his divinity has and does accomplish, coolly admitting that this divinity—"who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto"—needs doctoring.

Doctor of Law and Logic; what a combination of two diametrically opposite things! Man-made law is, of all things, the most illogical; or, if God has made men that cannot manage themselves, then that God must be a fool.

The two titles D. D. and L. L. D., are very frequently worn by the same person, as terminal adornment, in place of that natural finish of which evolution has deprived them.

In the name of Law and Logic, will these triple tailed individuals inform the world why divinity created the Filipinos? The clerics prate about truth, but live one continual lie, opposed to natural process or law so-called; their sayings and doings are as inconsistent as the Bible, and as consistent as the Vicar of Bray,—for preferment. No doubt they would say the Filipinos were made to be saved, and America is saving them.

KINGHORN-JONES.

CHEAP TRACTS ON PATRIOTISM.

Since announcing the proposition (which appeared in *Free Society* No 224) to reproduce in tract form the article by A. L. Ballou,—"An Open Letter to a Socialist Friend," we have been asked whether we could not reduce the price to less than 50c. per 100, in order to enable more of the comrades to procure and distribute them.

That depends upon the number of copies ordered. We have learned from experience that there is so little demand for literature intended to free the masses from slavery that to issue anything of that nature with the expectation of finding a ready sale for it, proves to be a disappointment. Usually it lies upon the publisher's shelves until it has turned yellow with age, and the labor devoted to publishing it was so much energy wasted.

Others, perhaps, have had a similar experience, and though, as Mr. Blynton says, we are greatly in need of cheap tracts that we can scatter broadcast, they are never published. Perhaps the reason is that the publishers who could supply them at the lowest price find it does not pay, and those who would be willing to issue them at cost are in such straitened circumstances as to make it next to impossible.

When we made that announcement we had ventured to concede that perhaps we might dispose of 500 copies, but up to date have not received a single order. A few have written that they would take from 50c. to \$1. worth at 10c. for 50 copies, but that would scarcely pay half the cost of publication. The composition alone would come to nearly \$2, the press work, folding and pasting would be worth at least \$1, at "scab" wages, and twice that sum at union prices. Then there is the cost of paper, and the postage for mailing which would be no less than 50c. at the lowest estimate, making \$3, in all. 500 copies at 50c. per 100 would be only \$2.50, \$1. less than cost of getting out so small an edition, yet our comrades think our price is rather high.

For less than \$2. additional we could issue 1000 copies, and if our comrades can dispose of them we can furnish them at the following rates: 100 for 30c., 50 for 15c., and 25 for 10c. These prices are less than cost, but since the comrades are buying them for propaganda purposes, we stand the balance. One and two cent postage stamps will be accepted for orders for 1000 copies or less. Address J. A. Gillie, 864½ Howard St., San Francisco, Cal.

In addition to Ballou's "Open Letter," the article by Lizzie M. Holmes on "Work in the Future," "The Patriotic Howl" by N. C. Mathews, and "A Woman's Protest and Appeal," by Miss L. A. Mint, we believe would do effective work if circulated during the patriotic craze now raging from Main to California.

We should like to hear from all the comrades who would like to circulate any of these, especially "A Woman's Protest and Appeal." Judging from the hero worship lavished on our murderers in army uniform by our women everywhere there never was a time when the mothers, wives and sisters of this "land of the free (?) and the home of the brave"(?) needed education as they need it now.

Here, in California, the Native Daughters of the Golden West, as reported by the *Saturday Examiner*, August 12, "are bringing every influence to bear on authorities at Washington to prevent one of the three armored cruisers now under construction from being christened with the name of the "Golden State", and are clamoring to have the name California "bestowed only on a first class battle-ship,"—showing their desire to encourage and revel in the bloodshed and butchery of war by insisting on possessing the most destructive engines of death.

At Winfield, Kan., according to the *Examiner* Magazine of August 20, there exists a young women's club, called the "Kansas Girls' Bachelor Club," organized for the purpose of catching men for husbands who had fought with the Twentieth Kansas Volunteers. Every girl desiring to join must promise to marry no one but a soldier, and to use every favorable means to captivate one of them when these "gallant fellows" return. Here we have another species of patriotic insanity, and every forlorn bachelor desiring to win a wife has only to join the volunteers and become a heartless butcher, to captivate the love of one of these fair maidens.

If hereditary environment cuts any figure and the number of our women who are worshippers of soldiers keeps on increasing, our next generation will be savages and cannibals, devouring one another like ravenous wild beasts. What the world needs today more than patriots and heroes of our bloody battle-fields is the heroism of sympathy, humanity and love which desires to protect and preserve human life, rather than indulge in the slaughtering and butchering of our fellow-men. One would naturally think that the mothers, wives and sweethearts of the men who risk their lives in battle would be the last to encourage the horrors of war, but when American mothers, representing the highest type of civilization of the world, attempt to clothe their prattling babes in patriotic renown and glory by contributing dimes in their name to the Souvenir-Cup for Admiral Dewey it fills us with despondency and makes us tremble for the future.

Nearly 50,000 dimes were collected by the San Francisco *Examiner*, to be melted into a cup to be presented to Admiral Dewey, most of them being coaxed from innocent little children scarcely old enough to know that any body was mean enough to induce them to part with a dime in the interest of a scheme which is nothing but a sham.

One little boy only six years of age, kept the wood-box filled for two whole weeks for his mother, to earn the dime he sent for Dewey, and a little orphan girl who supports herself by "going errands, setting the table and tending a baby," concludes her letter with

"God bless the navy," and thinks that when she is a woman it will give her pleasure to say, "My hard-earned dime helped to make the loving cup for our great hero, Dewey."

Three other little girls up in Angels Camp sold plums and earned a dime apiece, and one little girl from Santa Cruz, Cal. stole her dime from her mother's purse. One little fellow and his sister, down at Santa Barbara, saved strawberry boxes and sold them to get their dimes, and another twelve-year old boy and his sister, of Vacaville, worked in an orchard to earn the dimes they sent. But the little fellow who takes the prize for precocity and patriotism and who must surely have the most enthusiastic, patriotic mother of the world, is Lester B. Lowe, of Bath, Cal., aged seven-teen months.

We were wondering whether the thought ever occurred to his mother that the dime her son contributed without knowing that he did it, to the "Loving Cup" for Dewey was a link contributed to the chain which would some day enslave all but few of the worshipers of Dewey, our great hero. We should like to be able to send this article to each and all of those young patriots and ask them to preserve it, and after they have grown to the age of man and womanhood, have them write to us and tell us how they are enjoying paying the indebtedness imposed upon them by the schemers who were working on their patriotism to support the heroes of war.

Over \$50,000 were uselessly expended on a patriotic display in San Francisco alone, to say nothing of other cities, while in every hamlet in the land, men, women, and children may be suffering and dying for the necessities of life. Yet the very people who are suffering these privations will contribute their last dime to the "loving cup" for Dewey, while any number of others paid as high as \$2. for a seat to see the "grand procession." With such an epidemic of patriotic insanity raging in our midst our field for propaganda work is certainly unlimited.

J. A. G.

HUMANITY'S GREATEST CURSE.

A goodly number of progressive people gathered last Sunday evening at the Freethought Hall, 1133 Mission St., to listen to Kate DePeatt's address upon and the ensuing discussion of the question, "Is not religion the greatest curse of humanity?" It goes without saying that Miss DePeatt made a powerful and eloquent plea for freethought and certainly acquitted herself most creditably of the task undertaken so far as the simple advocacy of freethought is concerned. Anyone who had occasion to hear her must admit that she is possessed of a thorough knowledge of religious history and a wonderfully retentive memory. But after all to advocate freethought is one thing and to prove that religion is the greatest curse of humanity is quite another. It is not therefore with a view of detracting from the justly deserved recognition of Miss DePeatt's talent and services in behalf of freethought, but in justice to the subject in hand that the following suggestions are ventured:

Miss DePeatt answered the question in the affirmative and sought to substantiate her position by a recital of all the bloodshed, villany and horrors committed in the name of religion in all ages past as well as during the present.

That religion is an unmitigated evil; that it is based upon a superstition unworthy of rational human beings; that it has led to many atrocities and barbarities in past ages; and that even now occasionally an atavistic tendency of that kind crops out, is a fact. But that it is the greatest evil extant and responsible for the present misery and wretchedness of the human race, is sheer exaggeration. Public opinion has advanced to such a degree upon this point today that although the deistic superstition—the basis of religion—still holds sway to a large extent, it would be a matter of next to impossibility for any set of religious fanatics to do any more serious damage, as is evidenced by the abortive anti-semitic movements in various countries. Thus while superstition still remains harmful to the minds of those unfortunate, undeveloped people who still embrace it, it certainly has lost its former sting—invasiveness. To that extent, then, it has become harmless. More than that, there has been a reversion of sentiment among a great many religious people in the last few years which has resulted in their espousal of the cause of the weak and oppressed as against the strong and oppressing, as is evidenced in the organization of the Society for applied Christianity, the advocacy of Christian Socialism, etc.

There are perhaps half a dozen religious exchanges coming to *Free Society* devoted to that cause. On the other hand there is an evil far greater and far more disastrous in its direct and indirect effects upon humanity; one which according to the great French scientist, Elisee Reclus, demands the sacrifice of ten millions of human beings annually;—it is the power of the State—Government—which by its protection and fostering of monopolies engenders the poverty, misery and degradation of the masses of all countries. What a dwarf, indeed, is religion alongside of that giant! And yet Miss DePeatt exclaims, "Choose ye now between the Church and State!" and makes an appeal to the freethinkers to participate in the campaign against the exemption of church property from taxation, as if the very life of the nation depended upon it. As a matter of fact all the taxes that churches are exempted from paying—and which, no rational being denies, ought to be paid if the principle of taxation in itself be just at all which it is not—all these taxes would dwindle into insignificance when compared with the billions of which the people are being robbed by the State directly by taxes and indirectly by Interest, Rent and Profit.

"He that taketh my purse, taketh my life," says Shakespeare. The Church is a great evil, indeed, and ought to be buried beyond resurrection, but alongside of the State it is like a lamb beside a lion.

Lack of space prevents the review of Miss DePeatt's otherwise very able address, yet a few erroneous notions were expressed therein which it might be well to ventilate. She pointed to wars as being the outcome of religion. This might have been the case in some instances in former ages, but religion has ceased to be the animus of modern wars. We have another superstition that has superseded religion long since—it is the fetish of patriotism. In its service human beings are now engaged to murder each other. Certainly the present savage war waged by this country against a small, innocent, inoffensive race—the Filipinos—can not be said to have had its origin in religion. Patriotism was its ostensible and the Moloch commercialism its real cause. Indeed there are many so-called freethinkers who have enlisted in this present war, and if all indications are not erroneous, Miss DePeatt herself might have participated therein had not her anatomy prevented it.

Again, Miss DePeatt alluded to the supposed former grandeur and freedom of Rome as compared with its present degeneracy which latter she attributed to the reign of religion. This is a popular error. Rome never has been truly free. She has produced some noble characters, but to make these isolated characters the representatives of Rome would be like making Ingersoll a representative of this country.

Miss DePeatt is undoubtedly a talented woman and is doing a great deal toward dissipating religious superstition, which is laudable, but she should wake up and look about her. Freethought is being remodeled to suit the demands of the times; it is assuming larger proportions; its scope is widening. No modern freethought lecturer or agitator can be successful to any reasonable degree without embracing economics and politics. The poor old god is getting so feeble that it does not require much more effort to kick him overboard anyhow. The attention of young and able talents like Miss DePeatt ought now to be turned to a more vital and important cause—the social question, which is the paramount question. And it is the noblest cause by far, for people can live and even enjoy comparative happiness in spite of their religion, and to many of them this hallucination even affords a degree of comfort; they can cheat their intellects. But they cannot cheat their stomachs. Poverty is the most destructive agency known. Hence Poverty and not Religion is the greatest curse and its abolition the noblest task.

The question to be discussed by the Freethought Society next Sunday is, "How can the freethinkers of San Francisco extend the influence of freethought," to be opened by T. R. Simpson.

S. D.

PROPAGANDA IN SPRING VALLEY, ILL.

For several years this mining town has been cultivated with the ideas of freedom, but never before has Anarchism achieved such victory over organized authority and ignorance as on last Labor Day.

The comrades of this town being all miners, were ever vigilant not to be swallowed up by pure, simple Trades-Unionism, but to propagate Anarchism on all occasions, and for this reason we gladly accepted the

invitation of the miners' union to join the parade and picnic of Labor Day, with the provision, however, that comrade Emma Goldman would be one of the speakers.

On the morning of September 4, all the comrades and sympathizers marched out, headed by comrade Emma Goldman with the red flag and an Italian band. The red flag, the symbol of freedom, excited the union miners, who feast on 72½ cents a day, and refused to march with us and so we marched alone to the picnic grounds where we hoisted the red flag on the platform. After the Socialist speaker had lectured on "Evolution and Scientific Socialism,"—a speech which the miners neither understood nor appreciated,—Emma Goldman stepped on the platform near the red flag and hurled fiery words against ignorance and superstition and kept the miners spell-bound for 20 minutes, and when she concluded with the following words, "Not until colors and races have ceased to battle against each other, not until the ideas of freedom will embrace all mankind, not until all will have equal opportunities to enjoy the blue skies, the golden rays of the sun, the sweet perfumes of the flowers and the charming music of the birds, will our fight end!" the enthusiasm of the listeners indicated that she had not spoken in vain.

But the merriment of the picnic was disturbed by the impertinent attempt of the union musicians to tear the red flag down, in which they would have succeeded if the comrades had not declared that anyone who would dare to interfere with their liberty and rights would have his neck broken. The musicians then refused to play, but the red flag floated until 11 o'clock at night, when all went home with hopes for a better future.

On the 5th the Italian, French, and German comrades had their own picnic where comrade Goldman was requested to "baptize" 19 Anarchist children. Unlike priests and preachers she did that in our own peculiar way, giving the mothers and fathers of the children a sound talk on the freedom of the women and mothers, and the necessity of the unhampered development of the child. Our men and women were badly in need of such instructions, especially the women who, although bravely standing by the men in the movement, are nearly all ignorant as to their own rights and the freedom of the sexes.

In order to seize the opportunity of Emma Goldman's visit we decided to hold among others one meeting on the public square. The mayor, who by the way is the "boss" of one of the great mines here, was notified and willingly gave his consent. But the next day, just two hours before the meeting, he sent word that the meeting could not be held on the square. We did not abide by his orders, however, and when the time arrived we all marched to the square in a body. There the mayor, surrounded by a strong police force, intended to prevent us from holding the meeting, but Comrade Goldman told him that if he wanted to withdraw his consent by lies and cowardice he could do so, but she would speak anyway; and if trouble should occur he would be responsible for it, and then she mounted the platform in front of the largest audience Spring Valley has ever seen. She lectured on "The aim of humanity." The mayor made himself ridiculous by trying to disturb the meeting and threatening to arrest the speaker if she would not be careful in her utterances. She calmly replied that it would not be the first time she was arrested and that she would prefer a cell to a seat at the table with such a man as the mayor. In short, "instead of Bill's squelching Emma, Emma squelched Bill," says one of our local papers with sarcasm.

On the 6th she spoke before a crowded house on "The development of Trades-Unionism," urging the comrades to join forces with the union for the purpose of bringing life into the sleepy trade unionist ranks. On the 7th her subject was "Charity."

The newspapers of our town and Chicago, being maddened by the cowardice of our mayor, denounced and slandered Emma Goldman, but they can neither refute her arguments nor deny her statements in regard to existing conditions. We were victorious this time over tyranny and invasion, and Anarchism is the topic of the town.

Keep up the fight for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, comrades.

JOSEPH CORNA.

MODERN DEFINITIONS.

Sweater—one who never sweats but gets other people to do it.

Manufacturer—somebody who gets paid for what other people manufacture and reluctantly pays them a wage out of the proceeds.

Contractor—one who contracts other people's wages by putting part of them in his own pocket.—Ex.

233

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CAN RELIGIOUS OR BIBLE TRUTHS BE DEMONSTRATED?

The following paper was read by S. H. Tarr before the San Francisco Free-thought Society:

I wondered when I read this question if any or all of the audience saw the little joker in the question when they voted on it. It is there and is the same old chestnut found in most questions of the sort, as this question proves. It starts out on the basis that what is found in the Bible is true; of that, from the christian standpoint there is not, nor can be any doubt; the only doubt entertained by the good christian is that the skull of the average agnostic may be too thick to have such truths demonstrated to them.

This question, as we see, does not read, "Are there any truths, religious or otherwise, in the Bible which can be proven by authority outside of said Bible?" I have always found in all arguments I ever had with christians, that they propose to prove everything by assuming. They say, "Of course it is true; how can it be otherwise when God himself revealed it to man?" Then they think you very blasphemous if you venture to doubt their knowledge of God. You must not only believe in a God, but you must in their God, the old cruel Jehovah.

You must not only believe in a God, but you must believe that said God, thought out a very remarkable plan. He concluded he wanted a rest and so according to the story he had himself transplanted into a woman.

It seems from the story that he was not transplanted the usual way of mankind, but as it were just naturally "jumped" in. Of course it is a funny kind of a story, but as Sam Jones says, "We must believe it, not because our common sense tells us to, but because it is in the Bible," or as Dr. York says, "Take your medicine, if it does make your reason sick."

Now, I for one do not take the Bible as my guide for truth, decency or morality. All the good the Bible teaches was known to the human family long before it was written, and the vile trash found in it, we can do without. I claim that there is no proof of the Munchhausen stories found in the Bible outside of the Bible itself, which is no proof.

But the christian always meets any argument you may advance by saying "Oh! but you do not understand what it means; you must let a God fearing man like myself give you the correct meaning." When I ask him how he is to understand the meaning when the English it is written in does not say so, he tells you that he gets his intuition from God. Or if you pin him down, he falls back on the old story of wrong translation. This to me is silly, for if this great God wanted his will revealed in the English language, he would have made man translate right; if he could not do that, he is not a very powerful God.

Now, for the sake of showing up some of the absurdities in this book, let us see what it does prove, provided it be true.

It means white when it says black. It is wrong to discuss this book from a different standpoint than any other book under fire. If it be claimed to be a wrong translation, I ask the person claiming so, if he understands the Hebrew tongue; if not, then he has no right to say it is a wrong translation; and if he does understand it, then why doesn't he

burn up the present Bible and give us a new translation, and not let us be eternally damned for not believing what he acknowledges God did not say. I propose here to demonstrate a few things the Bible does prove, provided it be true.

If the Bible stories be true, what do they prove? They prove that God thinks it all right for a man to get rich on the prostitution of his wife's body. See Gen. XII-2v. After Abraham gets rich by saying that his wife is his sister, God does not punish either him or his wife but does punish the innocent victim of Abraham's perfidy. So this shows that God is a good deal like our modern judges: He punishes the innocent and lets the guilty go free.

If the Bible be true, what does it show? It shows the power of God to make one man grow old in years while another man in the same length of time does not. See Gen. XI-27-32 and XII 4v: When Abraham was born his father was 70 years old. When Abraham's father dies he was 205 and Abraham was 75. How is it that the father gained 135 years in age while the son only gained 75? Surely the ways of God are past finding out.

If the Bible be true what does it prove? It proves that this great Jehovah of the Christians is rather a weak individual. It took him all night to throw Jacob, and he only succeeded at daylight by a foul in breaking Jacob's hip. I will venture to say that Muldoon could throw him.

If the Bible be true, then God encouraged theft. See Ex. XII-35v: God told the Jews to borrow of the Egyptians, and of course it was theft or at the best obtaining things under false pretences, as God knew he was going to take them away from Egypt. Oh, but isn't he nice! Don't you love his character?

If the Bible be true, then God is a liar. See Ex. xxxiii: Moses spake to God face to face. iv: No man shall see God and live. 20; Ex xxiv, 9-11. Which of these stories is true? One surely must be a lie.

If the Bible be true, then is slavery right and Thomas Paine wrong. Time does not permit me to give all the places in the Bible which uphold slavery, so I will confine myself to one: Lev. xxv. In this age, does the world believe God or Paine on this question? As they do not agree one or the other must be wrong.

If the Bible be true then the belief in witches is right: Ex. xxii-18v. Christians, are you aware what this belief has done? How many have been tortured and murdered in order to carry out the command of God? "Thou shalt not suffer witches to live." If you do not know, read history.

If the Bible be true, then where tonight is the glorious Ingersoll? Ingersoll, the man who never did a mean act; Ingersoll, the loving father, the kind husband, the lover of liberty, the hater of oppressor and friend of the oppressed; Ingersoll, who was for liberty while Christ was for slavery: "I came not to destroy but to fulfil the law." Ingersoll was for extending mercy to all regardless of belief, while Christ extended mercy to those who believed regardless of what mean acts they might have done. Ingersoll was always just in his judgment, Christ very unjust. Note the Fig-Tree story. Christians, you may play upon words, you may wriggle, you may assume, assume, and assume, but you cannot get free from the conclusion that the words "believe and be saved, believe not and be damned!" if true, have sent the noble Ingersoll to the eternal suffering of hell, while Durant, the fiend and murderer, the Secretary of the Christian Endeavorers,

is now sitting on the right hand of Jesus or lolling on the bosom of Abraham in eternal bliss, which bliss is further increased by seeing such glorious characters as Paine, Voltair, Ingersoll, etc., suffering in damnation. How does this picture please you? Does it not give you an exalted idea of the goodness of the Christians' God? Let me give you a few words found in a Methodist book: "Well might the sun in darkness hide its face for God the great Jehovah died."

Why in the name of all that is merciful and good, did the christians ever bring the old deific monster to life again? Why did they not let him sleep in oblivion? However, owing to science and the good common sense of the people, he is being slowly crushed to death, never to be again brought back to curse the earth with religious craze. So mote it be.

The Letter-Box.

H. W., Cincinnati.—M. O. received. Will send you the list. Thanks.

C. N., St. Louis, Mo.—"Greenback" for books received. Greetings.

M. C., City.—"The Ruskin Colony" moved to Duke, Ga., where the colonists purchased 800 acres of land and buildings.

W. L. Sinton, Chicago, Ill.—*Teapot Philosophy* was given notice several weeks ago, but we have none of the numbers to spare.

R. G., Chicago, Ill.—*Morbund Society and Anarchy* will be sent in about three weeks. Thanks for remittance.

M. C., City.—Comrade Emma Goldman will lecture in Pittsburg, Pa. and vicinity from September 21 till October 1. Her address is care H. Gordon, 707 Wylie Ave., Pittsburg, Pa.

M. G., Osceola Mills, Pa.—Yes, we believe in evolution, but there is no force in nature which evolves society. Man himself is the maker of his evolution, just as man was the creator of his god, which was always in accord with his intelligence. So if a Socialist tells you that evolution will solve the social question independent of man, he does not know what he is talking about. If for instance the minds of mankind in general should be infected with State Socialism, we should have drifted to greater tyranny. The State Socialist will call such development "evolution," but in reality it is retrogression.

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