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FREE SOCIETY

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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. 47.

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WHOLE NO. 235.

LAND OF LIBERTY.

Starry banner, waving free,
From the mountains to the sea;
O'er ballot swindles, bonds and shares,
Mortgaged paupers—millionaires;
No kings, no queens, no lords, have we,
O! Mighty land of libertee!

A hundred billion dollars' debt
We owe the dear Rothschilden yet;
Yet we are free, yes, we are free,
From the Rockies to the sea.
Hol! Wave the starry banner high—
It serves to cloak that hoary lie:
No kings, no queens, no lords, have we,
O! Mighty land of libertee!

—Garm.

DIFFERENCES AMONG ANARCHISTS. VI.

The same difference exists in regard to money that exists in regard to commercialism—the two are complementary. "Useful one without the other."

Of all questions the man,ulators of government have, the most essential to maintain the belief that government is necessary, is without doubt the financial question. Our political guns after booming the great question of the tariff until a mystified people begin to hold their ears, take up and fire again the older question of finance—the political boomerang that always returns to be fired again. As certain theological questions partake of the mystery of godliness, money pertakes of the mystery of governmentalism. No two of the average citizens can agree as to what money is. Since Aristotle wrote that money was an invention of man, a medium of exchange, a standard of value and a child of the State, it has been so manipulated by the Shylocks of trade, so bewildered the politicians, that the average citizen has become as uncertain of its position as was the Irishman in locating the flea.

Money was originally an invention of man and originally figured as a medium of exchange. The governor when he came into power, seeing the immense advantage to be gained in regulating and controlling this "medium of exchange", adopted it and made it a "child of the State", a "standard of value," and as such it became a veritable "club" of civilization and has justly and appropriately been designated as "the root of all evil". As a "child of State" and a "standard of value" it has made commercialism possible, rendering to harmless exchange all the tricks of trade. It established usury, with its rent, interest, and profits. When the ancient trader discovered that he might live on trade, himself a non-producer, he saw the necessity of a representative value that he could lay aside as profit. Hence money is not a necessity of trade, but a necessity of profits, and hence rent and interest became a money value. Money as a medium of exchange was comparatively harmless until it became a "child of the State" and was installed as a "standard of value." Invented by man as a medium of exchange, it was a natural product, and would in a natural order have been superseded as civilization advanced by a more economic system of free production and exchange. But the struggle for existence developed a struggle for supremacy, which in time gave birth to the State, which adopts money and installs the non-producer as governor, placing a premium upon idleness and rascality. Whoever now says money means government? They have grown together like the Siamese twins, the life of each is essential to the other's. It is vain for our Anarchist friends to work for free money and free competition, for freedom would be the death of either, like the kite, both are depend-

ent upon the restraining strings of power.

I have no prejudice against money as a medium of exchange, it is only as a "child of the State" and a "standard of value" that I oppose it. Any argument that can be made for a "standard of value"—money,—can be made for a standard of authority—government. The existence of all standards imply authority. The extent of force back of the authority measures the importance and utility of the standard, for never was a standard made except by arbitrary enactment. Our "mutual bank" friends generally advocate a "standard of value," and with their views of debt and enforced contract it is consistent. In fact, I can see no other way they could float and maintain money. Debt, however, is one phase of slavery and I can never reconcile it with my views of Anarchy, although I am in favor of free contract. But I hold that the parties contracting should be free to annul that contract whenever self-interest demands it, and I feel that the individual would not be slow to repudiate an obligation that became oppressive. Our comrades recognize this and hence would maintain at least the machinery of government, viz.: "courts, police and jails," to enable them to enforce what the average men would feel oppressive and unjust.

My Anarchy, with love and sympathy "my only governors," would help a man out of a hole which his unfortunate feet had stumbled into. Certain politicians, notably our State Socialist friends, find fault with our present "standard of value;" they would make the State alone the true standard bearer. But the money value of gold is wholly fictitious, and if government can maintain this value in gold, why not in paper? Still, the people will never accept the government fiat alone as having value. The superstition attending gold will lose its importance when shifted to paper.

"Whereunto is money good?" It is good for the governor, for by its manipulation he is enabled to maintain his supremacy, to gather his revenue by indirect taxation, to so pluck the geese that they will not cry. It is good for the non-producer; it enables him to live upon the labor of others. It is good for the priest; it enables him to keep his flock in poverty and therefore ignorant and superstitious, teaching them that duty demands the surrender of their surplus dollars to their heavenly guide.

"God delights to see his teachers
Dressed in robes of richer hue."

It is good for the speculator; it enables him to add to or subtract from the value of all commodities, to buy cheap and sell dear. It is good for the monopolist; it enables him to completely corner the products of the people. It is good for the politician, it affords him a good field in which to work his jaw. He can always spring his ringing speeches on "finance" to his wondering and awestruck audience. It matters not what particular hobby he mounts,— "hard money," "soft money," "government money," or "the money of the people;" "the gold standard," "the silver standard," or the two combined—"bimetallism;"—he never wants facts or statistics. Great is the mystery of money. A. L. BALLOU.

POLITICAL ACTION.

The time is approaching when the "sovereign citizen" can exercise his franchise in choosing who shall rule over him. Schemes, plots, counterplots, bribery, promises and "influence" will be in order from now on until next election time.

Many well meaning and conscientious people hope for relief from the present conditions through

political action. Is there any ground for such hope? Have we any reason to believe that relief can be obtained by such methods?

The old man described in Dickens' Old Curiosity Shop always lost at cards, but always thought that he would win next time. Reformers have constantly failed of their purpose through political action, but still continue to believe that they will succeed "next time." The case is analogous. The old man could not win, for he knew not the tricks of the card shark. Neither can the reformer accomplish his purpose, for he is unacquainted with the tricks of the politician. Should he become aware of the futility of political action without adopting the methods of the politician, he will either quit trying to accomplish anything through politics, or sink to the level of the schemer and corruptionist, thus disqualifying himself from accomplishing anything of a reformatory character.

The revolutionist may think: "Capture the government and hold the infernal machine still until the people take possession of the earth," as G. C. Clemens puts it; but can a revolutionist with courage enough to "hold the infernal machine still" be elected? If the people are revolutionary enough to elect a full set of revolutionary officers they are unquestionably revolutionary enough to take possession without running the risk of electing some men who can be bought, bribed, cajoled, or scared into acting as other officers do.

Governments, since their earliest inception, have always been the protectors of the privileged classes and the oppressors of the wealth producers. Never, in all the history of the world, can an instance be pointed out of government being anything else than organized force, bent upon plundering the useful people in the name of tribute, tithes and taxes. Government is organized tyranny, systemized so as to make its power the more potent, and its designs the more irresistible. Many guileless individuals, seeing the tremendous power of government, think to turn this power into production rather than to destruction; into blessing rather than harm, forgetting that its very organization makes such things impossible. As well might they try to induce the hyena to lead a useful and sociable life or try to gather oranges from the cactus.

Wendell Phillips tells us:

"Government commenced in usurpation and oppression; liberty and civilization, at present, are nothing else than the fragments of rights which the scaffold and stake have wrung from the strong hands of the usurpers. Every step in progress the world has made has been from scaffold to scaffold, and from stake to stake. It would hardly be exaggeration to say, that all the great truths relating to society and government have first been heard in solemn protest of murdered patriotism, or the loud cries of crushed and starved labor. The law has always been wrong. Government began in tyranny and force, began in the feudalism of the soldier and bigotry of priest; and the ideas of justice and humanity have been fighting their way like a thunderstorm against the organized selfishness of human nature. It is no argument to my mind, therefore, that the old social fabric is against us."

This statement is undoubtedly correct. That being the case, what hope can any candid thinker have of gaining better conditions through political action?

To support government, is to aid tyranny; to become a part of it, is to join hands with organized murder.

Political action is for the ignorant, the deluded, and the knave.
—Henry Addis.

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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.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Commencing Sunday, October 8, the comrades of Boston will hold regular meetings every fortnight at 10 o'clock a. m. in Caledonia Building, 45 Elliot street. Those wishing to attend the meetings, or to join the group, should inquire for the "Educational Club."

The main witness against the policemen who recently maliciously killed an innocent Italian in Chicago, has been shot by an "unknown person." It is a very suspicious "accident," but the "guardians of life and property" are spotless, of course.

No less than 54 new battleships are at present built for the United States navy for the interests of capitalism, and the hypnotized producers are forced to pay the bill. Such is the benefit of government.

The internal quarrels of the Socialists in this country ought to convince every intelligent member of the respective factions that despotism and tyranny, such as has never afflicted mankind before, is the ultimate aim of governmental Socialism. Arbitrary methods reign supreme; free speech in defense of accused members is denied, and slander is the predominating argument against unwelcome though honest members. But why lament when such is the inevitable outcome in every political party.

Since Cuba has been freed by the "benevolent" Uncle Sam, the Cuban workingmen have quickly realized that the change of masters has not lightened their burden, and so they have again taken up the battle to improve their conditions. So far only frequent strikes have been their method of combatting exploitation, but lately they have been considering the advisability of again taking up arms to free labor from capitalism and monopoly. A general strike is impending and 12,000 men are already out, but General Ludlow intimates that the strike will be suppressed by military force. Fortunately "American freedom" has not lulled the Cuban workers to sleep and there is hope that they will not be locked up in "bullpens" without being rescued by their fellow-workers.

How much more gratifying is the spirit of the Cuban workers than the servility of American wage-slaves! The former are at least vigilant while the latter seem to be rendered inactive by the sleep of crawling slaves. Over 300 men are still confined, like beasts, in bullpens in Coeur de Alene, without the slightest evidence against them, and nothing is done by organized labor to protest against this outrage. The members of the F. of L., when reproached with their inactivity in behalf of the Idaho miners, excuse their indifference by pointing out that the miners are not members of the F. of L. Oh, ye cowards and hypocrites; is that the spirit of solidarity and fraternity ye boast so much of?

We are in receipt of an extensive report of comrade Pietro Ravaggi's propaganda among the Italians in St. Louis and suburbs, which we cannot publish for want of space. He met, as usually, with much difficulties in securing halls for meetings on account of bigotry and prejudice, but the writer is satisfied that the efforts to spread our ideas have not been made in vain and the seed sown will bear fruit, for wherever he had the opportunity to speak he did not fail to arouse enthusiasm and a desire for more knowledge regarding Anarchism.

How difficult it is to spread liberal ideas among the priest-ridden Italians may be learned from the fact that some families, who were courageous and hospitable enough to shelter comrade Pietro Gori, over two years ago, were boycotted and compelled to leave the respective towns. Comrade Ravaggi is now lecturing in Spring Valley, Ill., and other mining towns.

The American government is for once prevented from

uttering hypocritical phrases. The Boers in Africa expect sympathy from "the freest country of the globe" in their efforts to maintain independence, but the blood spilt in the Philippines closes the mouths of our "benevolent" rulers. Capitalistic rascality and cupidity is behind both the American and English governments.

A "PATRIOTIC" VOLUNTEER.

A friend of *Free Society* handed us a letter from Manila, dated August 8, from which we take the following interesting extracts, showing the sentiments of a soldier who, wanting a better occupation, fights and risks his life for \$15 per month:

"Over two weeks ago I finally decided to re-enlist for two years further service in the Philippines. As you are probably aware such convictions as I have would lead me to strongly sympathize with the efforts of Aguinaldo and his followers to establish government of the Filipinos, for the Filipinos, by the Filipinos. Being on the spot for the past nine months or so, I can see things at first hand, and therefore realize far more vividly than the most vehement anti-imperialist in America the monstrous cruelty and abominable tyranny of crushing these natives under the iron heel of military despotism. I could fill pages with accounts of actual daily occurrences which surpass in barbarity any outrage perpetrated by the Spanish guerillas in the darkest days of Butcher Weyler's rule. But I have long since concluded that convictions and principles resemble the vermiform appendix. In some far distant past they may have been of benefit—today, like that rudimentary organ, they merely cause dyspepsia and annoyance.

"As my military career as a humble private approached its prospective termination, I did not find that I was inundated with mail from capitalists, corporations or those controlling vast aggregations of wealth offering me lucrative positions. In fact I began to fear that, owing no doubt to prevailing financial conditions, on my return to civil life I might experience some difficulty in obtaining food, raiment and nocturnal repose in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." I thought of the many times I would vainly yearn for the glittering pile of "auro" which at fairly regular intervals this beneficent government bestows upon her stalwart defenders. Fired by such patriotic impulses I rushed to the recruiting quarters and for a further period of two years was sworn in to uphold the Stars and Stripes 'neath tropic skies.

"At times ardent patriotism glows so fiercely within me—my friends declare they can smell it on my breath. This was one of the occasions.

"Today we received a cheering reassuring report which seems to be fairly well authenticated. The 36th Inf., a regiment formed like this out of volunteers now in the Philippines willing to re-enlist, was rushed to the front. They were met with a hearty welcome from the insurgents. A large force of "insurrectos" succeeded in flanking a detachment of our men who only succeeded in cutting their way back to the main body after heavy loss—36 killed and 45 wounded. Probably the rigid presscensorship will prevent the news of this leaking out. It's a pleasant prospect for us.

"I have not seen C. S. . . since your letter came, so have not been able to ask him whether he believes that "all governments derive their just power from the consent of those governed." I believe, though, that in one of his letters to Bro. Johnson, which was published in *Living Issues*, he said we were teaching the Filipinos "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of large armies and navies." Those are about his sentiments and they pretty well fit the facts. Government always has rested and always will rest on brute force and brute force alone. Government and consent are two mutually incompatible terms, and the phrase in the Declaration of Independence in which they are used together is, if properly and logically analyzed, merely meaningless jargon. To be governed plainly implies, if the English language has any meaning, that you are compelled to do something you do not wish to do, or leave undone something you wish to do, as the case may be, which is simply: you are coerced. Now, how in the name of reason, sense or logic, can you be coerced and consent at one and the same time?

"Now, Anarchy as I take it, simply means living without authority—that and nothing more. In other words, doing just as I please. The real Anarchist realizes that so long as the mass of people are fools they will always bow their heads for some one to

plant his feet on their necks. The average man especially those who prate of freedom loudly, is a slave and from the very nature of things must infallibly be a slave to the end of the chapter. As long as the slaves adhere to religion, morality, government, law, patriotism—names of a few of the idols mankind have set on pedestals and grovelled before for ages,—all efforts to ameliorate the conditions of life of the average wage slave are fore doomed to failure from the start.

"With the mass of humanity drive one superstition out of their head and they will cling to another equally absurd. Many alleged Freethinkers who boast of their emancipation from christian dogmas, are as bigoted as any religionist on the subject of ethics. They entirely fail to see that there is no such thing as morality. What you do or leave undone in that line is simply a matter of individual taste, properly calling for neither commendation nor condemnation.

"One thing I like about army life is its brutal frankness in discipline. There is never any question about a given action being good or bad, moral or immoral—only, can you do such a thing with impunity, and, if not, is the penalty sufficient to deter you."

SEX FREEDOM.

"I am not going to be married by a minister or priest," excitedly exclaimed a female participant in a recent discussion of the S. F. Freethought Association, deeming herself up-to-date in advanced thought. Yet—the same good woman would undoubtedly consider it an insult to her "moral" character did any one dare to impute that she would become sexually associated with some man without the interference of a magistrate. But what's the difference? The one gets his authority from the government while the other gets it from the lord—both frauds unworthy of the support of rational people.

The association of two beings of the opposite sex is the outcome of certain natural laws, in obedience to the demand of some parts of the human body, and its gratification is just as rational as the workings of the functions of any other parts of the human body. Its satisfaction is no injury to nor in any wise physically depends upon any persons outside of the both parties directly concerned and should therefore not be made the occasion for interference by any other individual or body. They should be left alone to attend to their business of this character as they would be in the ministering to the wants of their stomachs or other parts of their anatomies.

Preachers and magistrates can neither improve upon nor deteriorate the act of nature by hypocritically turning their eyes skywards or cityhallwards and charging a fee therefore; they are simply humbugs and impostors who would not be tolerated for a moment did the people of the stripe of our above mentioned "freethinker" friend but realize the villainous position of the church-and-state meddlers as well as their own miserable, ridiculous and humiliating position.

Legalized marriage as well as all other restrictions upon the sex relations are a shameful imposition upon human beings. There is a natural limitation to sex-relationship—it is the law of repulsion; wherever and whenever it sets in, relations should and undoubtedly would stop were it not for the impudent meddlers of Church and State which are responsible for prostitution. But wherever attraction exists people should enjoy the liberty of free association and indulgence to the extent of their wishes, unmolested by parasite preachers and magistrates.

S. D.

SPYING THE ANARCHISTS.

The September number of the *Cosmopolitan* contains an article on the "Inner Organization of the French Spy System" by I. Saint-Just, former chief of the French Secret Service. He says in France the political spies number between 700—800 (men and women) in all walks of life, and that there are about 2000 anti-Anarchist spies in France and abroad. He also claims that Andrieux, when at the head of the police, "paid the expenses of a Socialist paper published by the celebrated Louise Michel of Communistic fame, in order to make the Anarchists fight among themselves. "But," he adds, "I do not believe Louise Michel ever suspected that the generous contributor, who used to send her money and an occasional editorial, was no other than the chief of police himself." He further asserts that *Pere Peinard*, the leading Anarchist paper in Paris, is in the same position. Then he tells his

readers that "the anti-Anarchist brigade has important branches in Barcelona, Rome, Liverpool and London,"—and..... "the anti-Anarchist secret police with its ramifications is connected with the secret political police all over France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Holland, Belgium, and even the United States."

The author writes, of course, for good pay, and it seems that the deluded public is ever eager to read sensational stories about the Anarchists, even if they are obvious lies. To complete his slander he again refers to the Communards of Paris, 1871 as "the liberated convicts, thieves, and criminals of all sorts, who composed the majority of the communistic forces." What a recommendation for these "criminals" when we consider the fact that the individual has never been safer in Paris than during the reign of the Commune, and that prostitutes and gamblers emigrated to Versailles, where the government had its headquarters!

That the Anarchist movement is closely watched we all know, for since the Socialists have become harmless, it is the Anarchists who threaten to disturb the legal robbers in their game of prey.

So far from doing any injury the spy system, thus, seems to be a benefit to the Anarchist movement, for if it contributes the sinews of war—the means for the publication of our literature—it is certainly to that extent our best ally, and we should by no means go into mourning if the San Francisco spies paid part of *Free Society's* publication expenses. Of course we should, for obvious reasons, prefer to have them do it in the same delicate manner in which they proceeded, as is claimed at least, in France, that is without betraying their identity to us. We guarantee that we can keep out of trouble as well as our French comrades have done under the circumstances.

As to their public characterization of the Anarchists as "bloodthirsty beasts," of course we understand that they have to do something to earn their filthy lucre; but the public are beginning to understand by this time on what side of the house the "bloodthirsty beasts" are. A. B.

PEPPERY POT.

The American government has been trying to stare off an internal revolution by sending part of her dissatisfied unemployed—"surplus" population—to murder inoffensive Filipinos, and England is attempting to copy this plan by carrying the war into Africa to murder the inoffensive Boers. Look out masters! You are playing Napoleon's game; Napoleon had some brains under his hat—and even to him it proved a boomerang. History repeats itself!

Although the sympathy of radicals as to the present difficulties between England and the Boer republic will be on the side of the latter, there are some points in Chamberlain's ultimatum exposing a most detestable state of affairs in the Boer republic. No. 2, 3, and 4 of the ultimatum demand the abolition of legislation against foreigners, autonomy to the Raad and removal of all religious disabilities. Judging from that, that country, in spite of calling itself a republic, has not even yet adopted the simplest pretenses of bourgeois republics, namely hospitality to foreigners, home rule and religious tolerance. I say pretenses, for in reality they do not exist, for our anti-Chinese legislation and the frequent interference of our federal government with state rights and the anti-Semitic movement of our sister republic France, have long since convinced us that our republics and professions are but shams. But then—the Boers ought to, at least, be ahead of us.

"The revolutionists are marching upon Venezuela." What, if they get there? If they fail, the old government will remain in power; if they succeed, a new government will get into power—both engines of oppression—protecting monopoly in fleecing labor. That's all.

The *Appeal to Reason* feels outraged at some of the plutocrats' statement that government does not rest upon the consent of all, but upon that of some of the governed. Yet this is not only a fact, but the only redeeming feature of our sad state of affairs. It is a fact because government, even in its mildest form, is a usurpation of the functions of the people to attend to their own business, and, among a number of 70,000,000 there are a great many intelligent people who would not submit to such usurpation, were it not for the physical force—clubs, guns and cannons—whereby they are kept in subjugation. It is the only redeeming

feature because the consent to be governed—coerced—is the consent of the slave, and the fact that only some consent, that is that not all are slaves, furnishes justification for the hope that some day the libertarian dissenters will outnumber the slavish consenters and throw off their yoke.

In Chicago a few days since a crowd of colored men endangered the life of and intended to lynch a detective for hunting down and surrendering to the authorities one of their race who, according to the press dispatches, was supposed to have committed some crime, but escaped and had for years since lived an honest life with his family. The dispatch says: "It seemed to them (the sympathizers) too great an injustice to uncover the man's past and break up his home after years of faultless conduct."

The chances are that the offender's crime consisted in a simple violation of some stupid man-made law and that the violation of such law had been caused by our vicious social system, which is criminal itself, and therefore breeds and fosters crime. What our colored brethren should do is to study and analyze our present vicious, crime-breeding social or rather unsocial system and assist us in abolishing it entirely and in establishing just conditions under which people could live and prosper without being driven into crime.

The Pan-Presbyterian alliance is holding a ten days congress at Washington. Wonder, how many barefooted fatherless little orphans will be running around at Washington after a year or so, for some good must come out of the congress, you know.

From Trinidad, Colo., comes the news that an attempt has been made by some swindling company to oust some settlers from the Maxwell lands for which these settlers have held titles for many years. According to latest dispatches the swindlers procured warrants for the arrest of the settlers. The government, which is always on the side of the oppressors and robbers, sent out a lot of sheriffs to serve warrants upon the settlers. The settlers, however, are well organized and prepared for the case and defied the sheriffs. They met them at a certain distance from their lands and gave them the privilege to send some deputies for the purpose of serving their warrants, but warned them not to approach any closer or to do anything else. The sheriffs have put up a temporary tent near the land and are awaiting further orders from Denver.

This is a repetition of the Mussle Slough case, and it would seem as if the settlers might have profited by the experience of the Mussle Slough settlers and learned how to proceed.

THE DEVIL.

If His Satanic Majesty were endowed with the attribute of omnipresence that believers claim for his counterpart—god, he would have been filled with a mixture of delight and dismay last Sunday evening at the Freethought meeting, 1133 Mission St., and if he be not omnipresent his ears must have rung that evening at the rate of sixty miles an hour, for he certainly received a very thorough overhauling. The subject "If the devil should die, what would become of the priests and preachers?" brought out an unusually good audience, and all the baldheaded and bewiskered men as well as bewigged and retooled women who had either a spite against or predilection for the devil, took the stand to testify.

T. R. Simpson, the opening speaker, gave the devil his due; it was a cold reception for the devil, but a rather warm one for the priests and preachers whom he roasted in his inimitable, pleasant, philosophical style. S. H. Tarr took a good whack at the two P's—priests and preachers—who he thought were in league with and receiving a commission from the devil. He gave an imitation of a Kentucky revival meeting which kept the audience "aroin." One little woman who had just been enjoying the gentle embraces of Morpheus, suddenly being aroused by the familiar revival proceedings, almost forgot the last degree—of freethought—she had taken and was ready to participate, and it was the hardest task her husband ever had to keep her on her seat until she realized the situation. Kate DePeatt thought if the devil died, his whole family would appear at his funeral and the job of getting rid of them would keep us mighty busy. She cautioned the freethinkers against riding hobby-horses and extorted them as well as the audience generally to get out of the rut and take up all other

matters pertaining to the welfare of the human race. A. I. was the only person who had a good word to say for the poor devil. He said the devil was the only fellow who made the world at all tolerable and explained the original meaning of the devil—Lucifer—to be "the light-bearer"; that it was he who stirred human beings to thought, investigation and progress; that it would be a sorry day, indeed, if Lucifer were to die, that then the profession of the two P's would flourish more than ever.

A number of other speakers participated in the discussion whose utterances tended to make the meeting real lively and interesting.

The subject for next Sunday's discussion will be: "Mating or Marrying; which?" to be opened by Dr. F. Wetzel. S. D.

IS LIBERTY LICENCE.

"The clarifying lens of Socialism has been put upon the chaos of Anarchism, with its license instead of liberty."

"Amid the reeking crimes inside and outside of legal sex relations, Socialism throws its beacon light that we may ever remember life is not long enough for the ever changing relations of domestic happiness—and, too, that death is not quick enough to cover with sack cloth and ashes the false semblance of love."

Two extracts from a letter published in the New York *People*, the S. L. P. organ, from the pen of Martha M. Avery, whom I had the pleasure of meeting two years ago, and who impressed me as a woman capable of at least fairness.

To say that Anarchism is license instead of liberty is to place a halo of questionable color and density around the Socialists.

I'm yet to find a Socialist who will argue the sex question as a question and not throw it with all other issues in the pot—of economics.

If liberty as we preach it means license to our opponents, all I can say is that their method of reasoning is indeed decidedly questionable.

To the average Socialist, sex freedom must mean license at that rate; if it does—if it means license—I for one am at a loss to understand why we have such a large and intelligent following.

I once read that "the proof of the truth of a doctrine is its faculty of adopting itself to all human developments," and if the idea of sex freedom has not done that—I am greatly mistaken.

"Mrs. Avery says 'life is not long enough,' etc.; if life is but a day's duration, let that day be spent in an intelligent search for happiness which is the ambition of the race, no matter if that day necessitates a constant change.

The "false semblance of love" proposition makes my indignation rise almost beyond the bound of reason. Such gross injustice from any one posing as a radical, who is endeavoring to make all men equal—whether or no—smacks of air of unfairness. The one motive of humanity is to attain happiness and the monogamic crank who would limit the range of endeavor toward the goal is either grossly ignorant or incapable of fairness at all.

Economic equality of the Socialist stripe will, she avers, guarantee sex equality or as it, Mrs. Avery says, would make slaves then voluntary. Even then there will be a prevalence of ignorance which we Anarchists are endeavoring to educate away.

Mrs. Avery is capable of a broader scope of reasoning, but she, like all the rest of our Socialist opponents, is so blinded by prejudice as to render her an unworthy foe, an incapable teacher.

License and liberty, Mrs. Avery, are not synonymous; the liberty to do and act in accordance with my desire, without thereby injuring any one else, is Anarchy—liberty; license can have no room, no standing against a slogan like that.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox said it took two to make a stare. It also takes two or more to make license a possibility and the intelligence the Anarchist seeks to maintain and teach will never encourage license of Mrs. Avery's stripe to thrive.

Liberty can not endure where limitations exist and Socialism is seeking such limitations. B. Bruks.

Free Reading Room, New York.

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Information given to comrades.

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A SOLDIER'S PRAYER.

The piece of earth found below was sent home to his sweetheart in this state by a soldier from the Philippines. The fact of its appearing printed upon the left top-corner of a letter sheet is evidence of its general circulation. Discontent being the mother of progress, it is to be hoped from the tenor of the "prayer" that their bitter experience will lead some of these young men to a realization of the brutality of the calling they have chosen as well as to a determination at the first possible opportunity to turn their attention to the cause of peace and progress instead of war and retrogression.

THE "PRAYER"

Uncle Sam is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie on the hard ground. He leadeth me across the parade ground. He restoreth my breath with a short rest and then taketh me a whist' thro' the timber for his own sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no Spaniard (Filipino), for Thou art with me; Thy gun and Thy bayonet will protect me. Thou usest me as a breastwork in the presence of Thine enemy. Thou fillest me with hard-tack and a cheap grade of bacon. My cup runneth short. Surely, hunger and thirst shall follow me all the days of my enlistment, and I shall stay in this dam-p tent 'or the next two years. Amen!

THE INGERSOLL CONTROVERSY.

In reply to A.I.'s remarks on my letter in *Free Society* of August 27, I will say this:

As I have not claimed that Ingersoll was a spotless angel it is not necessary for me now to prove that he was perfect in every respect. Ingersoll was not a faultless man, but his merits have far outweighed his faults, and this is all that can be said of the best man that ever lived.

A.I.'s "freely conceded" that he had no direct evidence of Ingersoll's dishonesty and evidently abandons the charge that Ingersoll was dishonest because he made speeches for McKinley and the gold standard; but he forms this syllogism: He cannot conceive of such a thing as a successful lawyer being honest; "a large percentage of cases accepted by lawyers are necessarily known to them to be based upon dishonesty;" "a man who defends a dishonest case thereby of necessity becomes dishonest himself," and therefore Ingersoll was dishonest.

With due respect to A. I., I must say that this argument proves too much and therefore proves nothing. Should we all accept such arguments as evidence, I do not know of any man who could not be convicted of some crime. Suppose that a governmentalist should say: "I cannot conceive of such a thing as an Anarchist being thoroughly honest or rational. No society can exist without a well-regulated government, and all honest and sensible men know it. Moreover, Anarchists are known to have committed atrocious crimes. A. I. is an Anarchist, and therefore he is either a scoundrel or an idiot,"—what would A. I. say in reply to such reasoning?

A. I. "still insists that Ingersoll loved the dollars more than humanity." Well, if such was the case, Ingersoll would have saved "the dollars," but the fact that he gave away the most of his earn-

ings proves that A. I.'s judgment is not always correct. It is not true that you could not hear Ingersoll unless you paid him "a dollar," but suppose that Ingersoll's charges were uniformly a dollar per head, what of it? No one was obliged to pay him even a penny, and the thousands of people who attended his lectures have not complained of the "exorbitant charge". As to the case of the "Chicago martyrs," very likely that "friend Coolidge would have acted differently" and would not have demanded an "exorbitant charge," but I have not heard Ingersoll's side of the story, and have no right to sit in judgment upon him.

A. I. says: "The assertion that Ingersoll died poor is amusing indeed, when we read of his beautiful residences, the tracts of land he possessed in the South, and that his life was insured for \$100,000, the premium upon which is almost enough to support a poor man's family." I fear that A. I. "reads" with one eye closed. If he had both eyes open, he would have known that, although Ingersoll lived in beautiful houses and, some years ago, owned a ranch in New Mexico, he had no "residences" of his own and, at the time of his death, "no tracts of land in the South." He left only a few thousand dollars' worth of personal property. How much his life was insured for I do not know; neither does A. I. It is said that the insurance was about \$50,000 or less. A. I. may still find my statement "amusing" and say that this cannot be called poverty. Well, a few thousand dollars would be riches for A. I. or for your humble servant, but for Ingersoll it certainly was poverty. If Ingersoll had saved his earnings, he might have died a millionaire, and so I say that in spite of his faults and shortcomings he was a good man, and it is not fair that we should throw stones at him. "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

New York. CYRUS W. COOLIDGE.

The Letter-Box.

D. L., New London, Conn.—"Green-back" stamps and cuttings received. Thanks. The "demands" of the S. L. P. have very little resemblance with the original demands of the Socialists, and if Karl Marx could see their platforms he would turn over in his grave. But that is not surprising; the Socialists as a political party are anxious to increase their votes and consequently make concessions and compromises which seal their fate.

F. D., Astoria, Ore.—Whether Vanderbilt was "a bad or a good man" I do not know and do not care to know, but I do know that he was a parasite, a vampire, and that his millions are stained with the tears and sufferings of those he robbed of their products. No man can become a millionaire unless he robs others of their labor.

Dr. C. N., Boston.—The poem "The Ballot" was published in *Free Society* only recently. Thanks for the dialies.

K.-J., City.—I do not know whether there has been made an attempt to re-establish the "Bank of the People." As a remedy such banks, as proposed by Proudhon, are a failure from the beginning. The poverty-stricken can give no security and consequently obtain no money, and those that are able to furnish security are thus enabled to exploit the less favored. Article appears next week and think it is a splendid idea.

A. M. S., New York.—The figures 350 on the wrapper of your paper signify that your subscription expires with that number, and as the current number is 235, you have paid for 115 issues in advance.

F. D., Paterson, N. J.—The retail price of "Moribund Society and Anarchy" is 25 cents for paper cover and 75 cents for bound copies. Yes, "Direct Action vs. Legislation" is a splendid pamphlet for propaganda work, especially among the believers in political action.

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