

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. 246

THE REAL THING.

It is not in vaulted ceilings,
Polished manners, costly dress;
It is in the depth of feelings
That such outer things express.

It is not in art æsthetic;
It is not in scholarly lore;
But in nature's sympathetic,
To all beauty adding more.

It is not in hoarded treasure,
Coffers full of shining gold;
It is in the power to measure
Highest use of what we hold.

It is not in social standing,
Nor in fashion's fixed decree;
It's in hearts with love expanding
And in impulse strong and free.

It is not in church and altar,
Lifted eye or bended knee;
It's in hearts that do not falter
And in noble chastity.

It is not in rest eternal
Purchased at another's cost;
It may be in haunts infernal
Showing kindness to the lost.

So find I the real thing ever
Deeper than the passing sight;
Not in forms how grand and ever,
But in love of truth and right.

VICTOR E. SOUTHWORTH.

IN TYRANNOS.

"Wherever tyrants still may dwell,
Attack them early and late;
We've loved enough—alas! too well;
Let's now begin to hate!"

Against tyrants and tyranny! That was the watchword of the enthusiasts of liberty during all ages and in all countries. Whoever enslaves and curtails the liberty of others must be driven off and annihilated if necessary.

Even so today the attack of the headstrong is directed against tyrants and tyranny. They have, however, arrived at the realization of the fact that it is not only upon thrones that tyrants have their abodes, but that the tyranny which is to be eternally fought, attempts to build her blood-immersed altars everywhere.

It is not only the great, the rulers of States and of the world's market that wish to put the yoke upon us; even in our very midst, among those who belong to our own class according to their callings and incomes, heads rise that wish to influence our actions and who are more imperious and more inconsiderate than the absolute ruler who exercises his own discretion regarding life and death, war and peace.

Yes, in our own midst carried and worshipped by ourselves is being raised this great tyrant that is taming all of us; that causes our honor and our disgrace—the tyrant before whom even the haters of princes bend their heads; to whom the very despisers of Mammon even do homage in slavish fear: the almighty, terrible public opinion.

What is public opinion? Is it the outcome of the conviction of an intelligent, justice dealing popular majority? Not so! Is it the uninfluenced judgment that the best and wisest render over the individual? Not at all! Dark and malodorous are most of the wells it springs from. The beer table is its origin; it is manufactured at tea and coffee parties. Old women of both sexes are its god fathers. With singular rapidity it takes possession of the minds of the masses.

The majority is nonsense, says the poet, but the people judge that the majority is wisdom and directly the majority adopts an opinion which is in keeping with its flat, low understanding.

Public opinion—it is a miserable, vile tyrant that would destroy all independent thought, that would

lead the individual by strings like a little child.

Public opinion always howled "crucify! crucify!" whenever an uncommon mind appeared and announced a new idea.

Public opinion at all times opposed true progress and ever pointed to the wisdom of its forefathers who lived happily and peaceably without these remarkable useless innovations.

Public opinion is the cavesson for every aspiring person who wants to paddle his own canoe.

It is much worse than every other tyranny. One might by scratch manage to live without minding the government of his own country, the authorities, laws and police, but public opinion will always interfere with his movements. This thing which strictly taken is naught but gossamer, boosted up by the caprice, ignorance and malice of silly tattlers, is represented as the sacred will of a sound ungullible people. Even the just bow before its authority, and similar to the faithful Catholic whose opposition is silenced by the voice of Rome, the opposition of the Freethinker is cut short when mighty public opinion has pronounced its verdict.

A smart man once said that all German proverbs hit when reversed. If ever this was true it is certainly applicable to the adage: *Vox populi, vox dei.* (The voice of the people is the voice of God.) The masses that are being manipulated and swayed by a republican blatherskite today, by a democratic tomorrow and by a temperance fanatic the day after, are always right, are they? They never are!

The masses whose opinions and convictions ever vacillate—are they to influence my judgment, are they to be allowed to regulate my actions as herolds of public opinion? Verily, I should be fit for the lunatic asylum did I allow people to dictate to me who do not know their own minds.

Public opinion into which the public is persuaded by so-called leading minds which are doing as much damage to the masses as goats in a garden, is the great oppressor of our time and race.

In *tyrannos* is the watchword of the truly free even today. But the worst tyranny is being attempted to force upon us by the people among whom we are living and who proclaim as public opinion the mass of stupidity, and the flat and low trash that is their common possession.

Against this tyranny it behooves us to proceed with all the weapons of mind, sarcasm and wit.

For the last fifteen years *Der arme Teufel* has made this issue its battle intrepidly and cheerfully. It will continue it even in this new year of its existence, and its watchword in *tyrannos* will be directed not only against the rulers upon thrones, in presidential chairs, in the offices of large factories and banks, but even against the tyrannizing masses that seek to make the individual the slave of almighty public opinion.—*Der arme Teufel.*

A PEDAGOGIC PRUDE.

I have found in the Los Angeles public schools a woman who is ashamed of her sex. Some time ago a Los Angeles school-boy in getting his "definition lesson" found in Webster's Academic Dictionary that the meaning of heroine was "a female hero." Nothing out of the way about that surely? But when the little fellow presented his definition to the Lady-teacher she amended Webster's Academic by saying that heroine was "a woman hero," that to write it "female" was indecent. Ye gods and little fishes! Since when did our High School dictionaries become indecent? Is not a woman a member of the female sex; and if so, if the thought of sex is indecent to the prurient-minded sexual oversensitivity why should the term woman be

used? The indecency of this pedagogic prude is the indecency of illogical overmodesty. Let us see "where we are at," to use the classic language of an Alabama Cobb. Are we not all, male and female, human animals; or are we but idealized bits of fancy shadowless fabrics of a dream, with no animality at all about us? If we are human animals man is the male and woman is the female of such animality. If the thought of femininity is indecent then the fact itself is indecent, for indecent effects are but productive results from preceding indecent causes. Hence, this dear unadulterated lady of a human is indecent in her femininity of sex because nature made her so. Not only that, but mother Nature herself must be an indecent entity of a principle because of the indecency of sex-differentiation, supposedly brought about by the evolution of nature's laws. It looks very nice to see gentle ladies with pretty noses tip-tilted to the sun and the rosebud lips of youth wreathed in smiles, saying, "I am not a female; I am a woman."

But I beg to leave to ask with the inexorable ugliness of facts staring me in the face, if woman is not a female of the human animal world, what is she? She may be a highly organized order of animal, a pretty animal of beauty and refinement, an animal of style and fashionable society worship, aye, even an animal with a soul, for aught I know, but nevertheless, she is an animal. Oh, woman, woman! You tear tears from my eyes! The woman who is continually prating of her sexhood and animalhood is an abhorrence unto me only exceeded in coarseness by "the superior-minded idealist" who considers sexhood and animality as monstrous indecencies thus convicting facts as indecencies, themselves as prudes, nature as a vulgar harridan and God himself as an omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent vulgarity, the reigning potentate of an eternity of vulgarity. Ye cackling hens of diseased mind searching for the wormlings of vice and the dead dog carrion of filth, when the thought of indecency entered your goody-goody brains the idea of logic made its exit!

JOHN A. MORRIS.

COMRADE JOHN MOST IN SAN FRANCISCO.

Comrade John Most arrived in this city a week ago, and the *Examiner*, "the Monarch of the Dailies," announced his arrival thus:

"Herr Most, the Anarchist exhorter, who has gained disciples for his cause in almost every State in the Union, has just come to this city after a long sojourn in the Eastern States.

"The cause of the Communist-Anarchists is rapidly gaining the attention of the masses, says Herr Most. He believes that the great revolution which is to destroy the evils of our present mode of government is not far distant.

"Our cause is gaining ground; we number hundreds of new recruits daily," said Mr. Most last night. "Our principles, based on common sense and self-evident facts, appeal directly to the oppressed. We wage war against private property, against the State and against the church—a war having for its object their utter annihilation. We struggle for the attainment of a Communist-Anarchistic society—a society in which it is possible to develop individual freedom. We look to a social revolution as the means whereby this goal can be attained. The revolution will be joined by the workers of every country and by them carried to its furthest end, a general popular uprising. This we regard as unavoidable, and we seek to prepare the proletariat for it by word, act and deed.

"Our arguments against a government of the rich, by the rich and for the rich are well known. The State is not an institution for securing the general wellbeing of the people, but a means of defense the rich have set up against the propertyless. The watchword therefore of every consistent champion of freedom must be 'Down with the State.'"

Comrade Most lectured Wednesday at the Metropolitan Temple and Thursday at the Turk Street Temple, a full account of which meetings will be given next week.

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.

SAN FRANCISCO ILLUSTRATES ANARCHY.

Government makes war—wholesale murder,—robs the soldiers of proper food, neglects them in sickness, turns them out of the Presidio barracks blind, wounds unhealed, helpless—not caring a damson if they live or die. The Red Cross Society takes charge of governmental wrecks, restores them to health and strength, and further, finds positions for them to earn an honorable living, a matter so unimportant from the governmental standpoint: that government would not know how to take the first step in such a direction.

A voluntary association of merchants see that those discharged government soldiers who need employment shall have work provided for them.

Government taxes the people against their will to provide funds for the purposes of keeping the streets in good order; government officials steal the money and consequently the streets disgrace the inhabitants. The Merchants' Association, by voluntary subscription, keeps the streets in as creditable a condition as the remaining government cobbles permit.

The members of the Merchants' Association now make an excellent suggestion for the prosperity of the city; they propose to make it a free port. This would double the maritime business of San Francisco. The plan is to add \$300,000 annually to the taxes, instead of taxing the shipping to that extent. Why not take one more Anarchistic step forward, and circulate a form for voluntary subscriptions to this amount? It would readily be obtained from the business and professional men for such a proposition; doubtless they would look upon it as a good investment, with ample security for paying returns.

Any one searching carefully for the causes or sources of the good and the evil—god and devil, if some readers may prefer those terms—in society, will find the good result from free action, the evil from governmental force. Free action brings contentment, force produces resentment.

The Red Cross Society, and the Merchants' Association, are illustrations of what Anarchists desire as the basis of society, which would soon culminate in their ideal—free production and free consumption.

The worthy merchants who form the association would doubtless feel shocked at, and resent, the term Anarchist, if applied to them, because it has been the aim of all politicians and the venal press to use the word in exactly the opposite sense to its correct meaning. From a humanitarian, loving, just standpoint it is infinitely nobler than that of either president, king, queen, emperor, czar, general, admiral, captain, soldier, policeman, or moral policeman, usually termed parson.

San Francisco stands alone among all the large cities of America who can proudly declare she is not bonded! This fully atones for a multitude of sins. The mayor has had this purpose of bonding the people in sight ever since he secured the office, and who will say it was the greatest inducement of the situation? He knows his money and that of his friends cannot find a safer investment.

Labor, be wise, you have most to say and all to pay! Not a nickel's worth of gold need be used in the proposed improvements; it only makes Labor pay ten times over for the works carried out. This is government's specific purpose. Defeat the bond proposition, and if the city will have the improvements—most laudable—let them give us another lesson in Anarchy by issuing non-interest bearing scrips;—ten million dollars of such paper in circulation would give the 1899 prosperity fits! Nothing but government stands in the way of such sensible proceeding. KINGHORN-JONES.

DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE LAW.

On December 11 one of the court halls of Chicago witnessed a repetition of the scene still in the memory of all our readers and others, when a man summoned to sit as a juror renounced the "right of

man" to sit in judgment over a fellow-being. And here are the details of the case:

DENIES THE RIGHTS OF LAW.

Soren D. Thorson, Who Has Not Yet "Christened" Himself, Presents His Theories to Judge Carter.

Soren D. Thorson, a venieman, told Judge Carter yesterday that he would be useless as a juror because he did not believe that the law of the land had any right to settle disputes between man and man.

"Man should obey the natural law and preserve his own rights and not infringe on the rights of others," he said. "Obedience to the law of nature, which is the law of God, will do away with all need of the interference of man's laws."

"If you do not believe in the law by what right do you hold your property?" asked the judge.

"I pay taxes."

"What do you call yourself?"

"I have not christened myself yet. I am going to leave this country and renounce my allegiance."

"You are dismissed from the panel," said Judge Carter. "And if you are looking for a country where there are no laws to hamper you I am afraid you will have to journey to the Antarctic regions."

Thorson is a native of Sweden and lives at 619 North Hoynes avenue.—Chicago Tribune.

Is Anarchy dead? Take heart, good men; there is a new era dawning upon us! Let us have more of this new type of Norseman. A. A.

VARIETISM.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Vigilance not only toward the foe but even unto the friend. For it is a friend that is to be raked over the coals this time—and a staunch friend at that.

Der arme Teufel, the most brilliant and ablest German radical paper in America and perhaps in the world, from which Free Society occasionally delights in translating some bright articles, one of which is found elsewhere in this issue, published an editorial in No. 782, November 25, under the heading "The Love of the Free." The writer disposes admirably of some of the popular misconceptions of "free love" and states the correct idea of that most beautiful ideal, until he runs across the snag of varietism. Here it is where he stumbles. He says: "The cautious and frightened novice may contend that liberty (in love) will degenerate into licentiousness and that the irresistible impulse for a change will drive the man from one woman to another and the woman from one man to another. Ah! How well these people know themselves, these dignified supporters of the society of today! How they ever and always consider the low propensities of the human being! How they take the bad tendencies in man as the only criterion of his actions!"

I emphatically resent our friend's imputation that a man's or woman's desire for variety is "degeneracy," or that it is "low" or "bad."

Our friend has evidently still to overcome the popular superstition that there is anything extraordinary attaching to the sex relations—the last touch of bourgeois morality.

The sex act is the effect of the functions of some bodily organs, a perfectly natural act. There is nothing high or low, noble or ignoble about it. If a person takes some nourishing, palatable food, he may be benefited thereby and enjoy it, but no sane person would even dream of considering such an act "high" or "low," "noble" or "ignoble." If any one get some refreshing sleep it is likewise; so when he breathes the air, etc., etc. All of these acts are the operations of the functions of certain organs. No fuss is made over them; why, pray, is there such a fuss made over the functions of the sex organs? The author of the article in question realizes this fact vaguely and seeks to dissipate popular errors upon that subject—until he gets at varietism; and here he suddenly seems to draw the line. But why? If there be nothing moral or immoral about the free association with one person of the opposite sex, why does the same natural act become objectionable when extended to more than one? If it be no third party's business with what one man or woman a person associates, why does it become their affair with how many and how frequently they do so associate? And if, moreover, as our friend makes the imaginary objector say an "irresistible impulse forces" one into the association with more than one parties of the opposite sex, where is our friend's basis for an objection? Cruel indeed were it, nay inhuman, to pre-

vent that person from enjoying full and unrestricted liberty to satisfy the promptings of his or her natural desires to the utmost extent!

There is but one limitation to the fullest enjoyment of liberty in varietism as well as otherwise, namely the unwillingness of the opposite sex. In that event—that is when coercion is attempted—it becomes the affair and basis for interference of outsiders when their protection is solicited, otherwise it is nobody else's business.

Moreover, from a scientific, pathological standpoint varietism is even highly recommended. S. D.

SOWING THE SEED.

I.

"As a school of thought, as expounders of iconoclastic teachings, we battle against worship in all its shapes and forms. No mortal, no matter how lofty his ideas, how beneficial his deeds to his fellow men, or how encouraging and elevating his aspirations may have been during his stay among the living—shall ever become an object of worship among us who follow Anarchy as a guiding line on our route towards freedom." Such has, from time to time, been the undercurrent of a certain portion of the contributions scattered through the periodicals of all lands and tongues where an Anarchist press is to be found.

Yet, with all this profession of purity from the contamination known as hero-worship, we have still remained human; nay, having allied ourselves to that class of rebels against the existing order of things of their time whose clamors have breathed the whiffs of life through the long chain of battles for freedom in all the past ages, we have avoided taking artifice into our service, and have, on the contrary, always remained in the past and shall try to remain open in the future to those influences of life which stamp indelibly on our brain certain events to the exclusion of many others of a similar nature. In short, we have not shut ourselves up within ourselves, but let healthy emotion play as mightily and impelling a role in our actions as well as unsentimental reason, and thus have escaped becoming Dry-as-Dusts, a class of pseudo-wizards who babble incessantly of the workings of evolution while reclining themselves in their arm-chairs and casting furtive glances in the direction of the shelves overburdened with the works of those savants who gave birth to and nursed into life the New Child which threatens to become a soporific agent to be enjoined by all the weary spirits presumably engaged in furthering the growth of the new life.

One among the events spoken of above is undoubtedly the tragedy that took place on Nov. 11, 1887, in this city. And not only have the names of the men—who, by a "coincidence of incidents," became the cynosure for an amazed world which looked on with bated breath at the bloody deed—engrafted themselves in our breasts, but the place itself that suffered the shame remained ever since a watch-word to those engaged in the dissemination of the ideas aimed at by the enemy twelve years ago. Of a truth, Chicago became a New Mecca.

And while it is true that for all these years our propaganda here was as good as dead, there can be no denying of the fact that the innate hope of every living comrade the wide world over was to discover the first sprouts of a renewed propaganda on the spot where the hybrid bourgeoisie of America has feasted in one of her bloodiest orgies of the century, the blot on "their history" for all time to come.

To those unfamiliar with local conditions let it here be said that certain "peculiarities," if not causes, in the past, and, not entirely dead in the present, have been of a nature which excluded systematic propaganda. A recounting of the many reasons that have contributed to all that would mean a claim on the limited space of Free Society, and then it may make bad blood and this be far from the one penning these lines.

A single successful attempt, one standing out in bold relief, to sow the seeds among outsiders has been the visit paid to Chicago by our English comrade, John Turner, in the spring of 1896, and his name is still remembered here by all those who came within the reach of his voice.

From the aforesaid it will be plain to the reader that even so insignificant a fact as a few lectures by an outspoken Anarchist marks an era in a desert like Chicago.

In response to an invitation by the Martyr's Memorial Association to speak at this year's commemoration meeting, Comrade Voltairine de Cleyre made her appearance in Chicago.

The readers of Free Society are by this time already familiar with the contents of her address on that evening and its effect on a portion of the audience.

Seizing the opportunity of Comrade de Cleyre's visit a few of us have arranged with several bodies in the city and one in the neighborhood for a lecture to be delivered by our guest before each of them.

The first address of the series was on "Expansion to Bursting," delivered before the Social Science Club, on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 12.

It was the opening date of the winter lecture-course to be given under the auspices of the club, and taking into consideration the fact of there having been two big and from three to four small assemblages of seekers for a door of escape from the "Slough of Despond," simultaneously with the one at the Social Science Club, the attendance may be called a fair one. The lecture was followed by a few remarks of several hearers. What regards the substance and character of the lecture I shall pass in silence for want of space.

On the night of Nov. 13 a murky sky poured down its watery contents in torrents that drenched the unlucky pedestrian who did not possess the required "nickel" to pay his tithe to the street-car monopolist to the marrow of his (the pedestrian's and not monopolist's) bones, while wading through the muddy streets of the "dirty city" towards the Hull House, where our comrade was to deliver her second lecture, entitled "The Poetry of Reform."

It did require enthusiasm on the part of those assembled at the fort of Miss Jane Adams and who defied the elements.

In numbers it was a small gathering. The pitter-patter of the rain-drops on the window-panes continually reminded the auditors how uncomfortable it was on the outside and ringing a dumb praise of their courage for having appeared at all even though in slight numbers.

As this lecture may escape the eye of the readers of Free Society I shall attempt to give a succinct summary of it as it affected the correspondent.

Comrade de Cleyre in her capacity of a teacher, and one with a fine ear and herself not a stranger to the visits of that still undefinable and inscrutable but nevertheless evident and palpable caller, termed by some "the poet's inspiration" and laughed at by the poets themselves, Comrade de Cleyre, I say, endowed with the gifts just mentioned, has made a discovery, if it pleases you to call it so, namely, that the poetry of reform, the English iconoclastic poetry, with a few praiseworthy exceptions, does not deserve the name of poetry at all.

With an elaborate array of lingual and sound requirements in hand which the characteristics of the telling effects produced upon the ear and to be found among the works of the real English poets, serving the lecturer as the touch-stone, so to speak, for all poetry to be probed by, our comrade succeeded in convincing the hearers of just what she desired.

Space being too precious and the substance of the lecture teeming with points of technique in verse-writing it would, I feel, be rather out of place to elucidate here any further on the width and breadth, as well as depth, of the subject as treated by the lecturer.

But should these lines strike the eye of the poet or litterateur who may misconstrue the idea as outlined by the lecturer, according to this report, as though she were aiming at making prescriptions how to "manufacture" real poetry, let me tell these people: "do not be disturbed," she did nothing of the kind.

Among the various societies who at the present day discuss the social problem in this city there are hardly any who can boast of a real non-partisan platform. Wherever you turn you are faced by the unpleasant fact of partiality towards one's own brethren in faith during the discussions following lectures, not to mention those, like the State Socialists, for instance, who would not have any other subject but their patent panacea, duly bottled and labeled, discussed upon their rostrum.

The more pleasing it is to notice the impartiality and tolerance practiced by the men in charge of the Chicago Commons: Dr. Graham Taylor and J. P. Gavitt, who personify the only exception from the rule and upon whose platform, on Tuesday nights of every week, a debator may be sure to meet with fair and impartial treatment, regardless of the views he or she may hold. This is the only body upon whose platform the principle of free speech is not being violated.

No wonder then that the lecture on "The Evils of Impersonal Rule," delivered by Comrade de Cleyre on

Nov. 14, in the Commons, has drawn a big crowd, taxing the house to its fullest capacity.

The lecture was received with much approbation. The animated discussion following it, demonstrated clearly how little Socialism, not that stuff that is being dispensed by governmental democrats with a Socialistic tinge about them, but the real unadulterated free Socialism, is at this moment understood in America.

The "gentleman" of the "freak variety" whose heart bleeds at the thought of what may become of the poor capitalist should the Anarchists carry the day and he of the perverted heart and head who loathes the Socialist and Anarchist were not wanting.

"All" were present. Still "peace and good will" prevailed and possibly, if not probably, a new and clear though found entrance into a head that was thought invulnerable against the attacks of sound reasoning.

ANN ATCHLEE.

Chicago, Ill.

AN OPEN LETTER.

Three weeks ago a man by the name of Richards lectured on free love before the section of the S. L. P. in this town. When I entered the hall he said the Anarchists were doing much good in criticising the marriage system and he agreed with them that there can be no free manhood until there is free womanhood. He then stated that Anarchist principles, as given in the book "Moribund Society and Anarchy" (which I gave him) were the best theories that can be produced by human thought, but he could not understand how we would arrange our economical affairs without government, and he "would like to ask the gentleman Anarchist who just came in (pointing to me) to explain the difficulties." After his lecture I asked permission to answer the speaker's questions. I tried the best I could to defend our position by reason and argument. When the discussion was over some of the members shook hands with me and invited me to come every Sunday as they were anxious to hear both sides. But there is one member, Adam Marx, who did not like such tolerance. He claimed that the Anarchists were trying to break up their section, and that all the splits and quarrels that occurred in the S. L. P. were the work of the Anarchists.

The following Sunday I attended their meeting and after the discussion Adam Marx arose from his seat and told me that the section had held a meeting in which it had been decided by majority vote that no Anarchist should be allowed to propagate Anarchism because we were preaching force, violence, and defying law and order, being therefore a "dangerous lot," and having an Anarchist in their midst might provoke suspicion upon their own members.

When I asked him to point out in which of our writings violence was advocated, he did not answer. I then asked him if he could prove that the Anarchists were paid spies by the government and capitalists to corrupt every social movement, as he had stated to me in a private conversation, and he answered in the affirmative before all the members.

Now, I appeal to the section of the S. L. P. through the columns of Free Society to ask their member Adam Marx, residing in New London, Conn., to state and prove openly in letter who are the Anarchists that are paid by the government as spies. Should he fail to do so I declare him publicly as a mean, contemptible coward and defamer.

D. LEVINSON.

New London, Conn.

ANOTHER HUMBUG.

Everything clings to the skirts of labor nowadays and attempts to ride into affluence upon its back. One of the latest speculators of this category is the notorious Cyrus W. Teed, who started his adventures in this city a number of years ago and then emigrated with his sect to Chicago. He claims to have made the discovery that our system of astronomy is wrong and that we are living WITHIN instead of UPON our globe. He bases his discovery upon the bible like many other cranks, and has built up a new religion which he calls "Koreshanity." He has started a church which he denominates "Heaven."

His "Heaven"—truly his, for he is the jealous god there—is at his home into which he allures a lot of weakminded, confiding women and inexperienced youths from whom he coaxes away their wealth to carry on his "heaven" and then keeps

them abject slaves and gives them a taste of the warm region situated in the opposite direction of "heaven."

Did Cyrus only confine his operations to this business, everything would be well so far as this hairpin is concerned. But since the people of Chicago who had at first grown indignant over and made opposition to the existence of a harem in their midst finally let up, as they always do with good movements they start, Cyrus has grown ambitious and has launched out in the enterprise of a publication which he baptized by the gruesome title of "Flaming Sword." In this flame he expounds his new "science," the principal object of which is, of course, to gain new dupes for his "heaven"—new sheep to shear. Even that might have been passed in silence in a world that proverbially "wants to be humbugged," but he makes bold to grapple with the socio-industrial question and make it a means for the advancement of his heavenly aspirations. Not only that, but he has the hardihood to quote and misrepresent people who have done noble work in the cause of industrial emancipation.

In one of the last issues of his humbug publication—in which he assumes the name "Koreshe" for reasons that are best known to himself, but may be surmised by others—he comments upon some views expressed by Carroll D. Wright, U. S. Labor Commissioner and statistician upon the labor question. He makes it appear as if Wright had despaired of the possibility of ever settling the industrial problem and offers as a remedy his own patent humbug of Koreshanity, "the only solution of the great world problems."

Now, if this "heaven"ly mountebank, this polygamist in disguise, were honest he would have stated the fact that Wright did not despair of EVER seeing the industrial problem solved, but he considered it very far off in the future, which is plainly evident from the phrase: "...the question will never be solved until man has arisen to a higher plane of intelligence, when he shall know enough to solve the question which confront capital and labor," a quotation which I take from Teed's own humbug paper.

It is true, Wright condemns all palliatives, such as strikes, boycotts, etc., and recommends—if Teed's paper may be relied upon as not having twisted Wright's statement to suit his own purpose—the "decent treatment" of the workers by their employers. But this is only a sort of temporary affair until the workers shall have grown wise enough to settle the question radically, that is by changing the very bases of institutions. And who that has studied the question thoroughly and from personal observation could fail to agree with Wright on the latter proposition?

Perhaps some of the young and hotheaded friends may become impatient over Wright's suggestion to look for "decent treatment" by their employers. Perhaps they are ready to "do and die" in futile and sacrificial attempts to lead their unripe fellowworkers out of Egypt. Such spirit of course admirable, but if actions are to be judged by their results, they would be rather insignificant.

It cannot by any manner of arguments be denied that whatever methods of accomplishment be used, the proper solution of the industrial problem lies far in the future and cannot be hoped for even by the most sanguine until at least a considerable number of the workers is sufficiently enlightened to understand the basic principles upon which a true society must be founded.

There is no doubt that Carroll D. Wright is just as eager for the settlement of the social problem now as he ever was; but he probably realizes with most of thinking people that the most effective propaganda that can be made at present is education and agitation.

S. D.

"In the twentieth century, war will be dead, the scaffold will be dead, hatred will be dead, the frontier will be dead: men will live!"—Victor Hugo.

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The number printed or written on the wrapper of your paper shows that your subscription has been paid up to that number.

HE FELT THE STING.

Editors *Free Society*.—S. D. of your staff comments on the conduct of a number of Individualists, myself among the number. After wondering whether a new era is coming, he tells us it is after dinner and being, therefore, in an exceptionally good and forgiving mood, he can hardly be less liberal than to call it an era of freaks.

I have wondered to what one could attribute the variable nature of the vapors of the *Firebrand's* and *Free Society's* staff, and had almost concluded it was something clear outside of the realm of causation, but here is the confession that the character of the "pithets" is determined by—dinner.

Of course no one ever considered them brain emanations, and one can easily believe them to be gastric rather than psychic.

The word "freak," coming from a man who is the acknowledged clown of this school, is dangerously like the inmate of an asylum who assures you that everybody is crazy but himself.

Over two years ago a discussion between Mr. Turner and myself appeared in the *Firebrand*. Several Communists assured me that they owed me a reply. Among these were the most prominent members of that school, but no answer has been attempted, and now comes a personal attack. While S. D. reflects on the *LAW*, he apes the dirty pettifogger whose motto is—"when you have no argument abuse the opposition counsel." From a source so stupid that it does not know the teachings of its own school, so cowardly that it dare not repel an attack, so dishonest that it pretends it is useless to argue with opponents, comes a criticism of character.

No, there is no new era upon us, nor will there ever be if *Free Society* can help it.

HENRY COHEN.

REPLY.

I regret friend Cohen's ill humor, and am almost forced to the conclusion that he, too, needs a good dinner to make him goodnatured. If he can live and do any thinking without dinners, he is of a species of lawyers that has so far been unknown to me.

It appears the study of "law" has not added much to the keenness of our friend's reasoning or else he would realize that much of the cause of our whole struggle is of a "gastric" nature. We are fighting government partly because it protects and fosters monopolies that deprive us of our chances for good dinners.

As for the tweedledum and tweedledee between friend Cohen and friend Turner I had nothing to do with the *Firebrand* at that time, and am not concerned about his experience with it. Certainly I did not dream of showing hostility to friend Cohen, for I always entertained a good opinion of his sincerity, but I could not help noticing with regret the apparent inconsistency in his adopting a profession which is the foundation of the principles he and all of us disavow. It is true, we are all more or less inconsistent and, from the very nature of things, are obliged to be unless we prefer to commit suicide. We all, for instance, use the U. S. mails; many of us live upon profits, and some of us even upon interests and rents; nay, some of us occasionally engage in regular gambling. All of this is explainable from the fact that we are

part and parcel of a machine which controls our actions largely. Yet, while it is impossible for us to shape our actions altogether, it seems there is just enough room to steer clear of rocks sometimes. Of course, I will not presume to judge friend Cohen's position; it may be that there was nothing left to save him from perdition outside of the legal profession. Yet if there was any possibility at all for him to escape this humiliation, I consider it is to be regretted that he embraced that profession. I say "humiliation," and I say it guardedly, for the laws are the foundation of our misery and it seems the height of inconsistency for a man who has been identified with the advance-guard of the movement for progress and whose principal point of attack has been the law, to adopt the practice—and in that way the indirect perpetuation of it—as his profession. It is regrettable, too, from the fact that such an inconsistent act, coming from a man who has been considered in advance of the masses, is discouraging to the progressive element which is wont to draw encouragement and inspiration from the advance-guard.

H. Cohen speaks of me, it appears, as belonging to a certain school and appears to have in mind the school which advocates the establishment of "mutual banking" in the ideal condition of society. I wish to say to him that I recognize no school outside of that of *Anarchism plain and simple*. I stand for individual liberty. I want to see the restrictions of government lifted. That done—and by that time most likely my burnt ashes will have served to produce another generation of themasses—I want to see preserved themasses' liberty to either go into mutual banking or Communism whichever they may prefer. Both systems in my estimation are all right, provided they are voluntarily entered into and carried on; both, however, equally wrong if compulsorily maintained. If friend Cohen means to intimate by his reference to my school that Individualism precludes the scrutinizing of people's actions so long as they are non-invasive, I beg to differ. I hold that we are entitled not only to scrutinize, but even to criticize people's actions, particularly when those actions are inexcusably incompatible with a movement they have chosen to prominently identify themselves with. I consider there is no harm in criticism. If the criticism is unjust it can be shown to be so by contrary evidence, and if just, it is certainly deserved. However, right here is Cohen's weakness. He elects to charge me or somebody or bodies with disinclination to argument, while he himself—although being a lawyer—offers nothing but abuse and vituperation.

By the way, are Cohen's assertions that "no one ever considered them (my vapors) brain emanations," and that I am the "acknowledged clown" of his (my) school perfectly gratuitous, for neither I nor anyone else ever saw an inference at such an opinion in print before except by the spookists.

It is true, friend Cohen's sarcastic treatment of the dinner question tends to place him in that camp, yet I am inclined to strongly doubt that if he gave up his dinners and his food entirely, any "vapors" or anything else could ever "emanate" from him, for even lawyers are, alas! subject to the same physical laws as other "clowns." However, I am sure that friend Cohen really takes just as little stock in spooks as I do, and I hope and trust that he has not graduated so far in his profession as to make common cause with that element simply in order to pluck victory from apparent inevitable defeat.

S. D.

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