

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.

NEW SERIES NO. 19.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 1898.

WHOLE NO. 155.

A TRIUMPH OF OVER.

By JOHN HAY.

A squad of regular infantry
In the Commune's closing days,
Had captured a crowd of rebels
By the wall of Pere la Chaise;
There were desperate men—wild women
And dark-eyed, handsome girls
And one little boy with a peachdown cheek
And yellow clustering curls.

The Captain seized the little wail
And said, "What dost thou here?"
"Sapristee, Citizen Captain, I'm a Communist,
my dear."

"Very well, then you die with the others!"
"Very well, that's my affair,
But first let me take to my mother
Who lives by the wine shop there,
My father's watch. You see it;
A gay old thing, is it not?
It would please the old lady to have it;
Then I'll come back here and be shot."

"That's last we shall see of him,"
The grizzled Captain grinned
As the little man skimmed down the hill
Like a swallow down the wind,
For the joy of the old had lost its zest
In the glut of those awful days,
And death writhed gorged like a greedy snake
From the Arch to Pere la Chaise.

But before the last platoon had fired,
The child's shrill voice was heard;
"Houp la! The old girl made such a row,
I feared I should break my word."
Against the bullet pitted wall
He took his place with the rest;
A button was lost from the ragged blouse
Which showed his soft white breast.

"Now blaze away, my children!
With your little one, two, three!"
The chassepots tore the stout young heart
And saved society.

ONE MORE.

"Emil F. Ruedebusch, the genial author of 'The Old and the New Ideal,' was convicted before federal Judge Seaman of the crime of having sent obscene literature through the United States mail. The judge impressed upon the jurors that it is not a question whether the book is a moral philosophical treatise but simply whether its contents are indecent. The session of the jurors only lasted a few minutes; they realized after the judge's address that Ruedebusch must be convicted."

"The prosecuting attorney took especial pains to point to the sacred foundations of religion and christianity which, he asserted, had been grossly attacked by the book in question. The arguments of the defendant were like Greek to the jurors. These dispensers of justice never realized in the least the real point at issue; they convicted the accused without knowing his intentions and motives, which certainly ought to have been considered as the cause of the book 'The Old and the New Ideal'; without understanding that the problem considered by Ruedebusch is of utmost importance to our time, and that the sacred foundations of religion and christianity, as far as they concern the problem at all, have proven entirely inadequate in this matter. But brazen ignorance and its natural mad ally intolerance are rampant and hold sway in the so-called courts of justice in this country, and thus Ruedebusch was found guilty as charged."

Thus and in a similar manner is public opinion being ventilated by the progressive press of this country regarding the judicial violence and oppression being used against the editors of progressive papers in general, and against the philosopher and author Emil F. Ruedebusch in particular.

This is a horrible picture; a picture by whose drastic reality the hollowness of our boasted enlightened age and of the vaunted intelligence of the American people as the freest nation on earth is exposed in all its hideous ugliness. On one side we see those

wretched institutions based upon a system of morality at war with nature and becoming a menace to society, registering their trophies in the vast number of unfortunates that are condemned to conclude their poor lives in penal institutions and insane asylums; on the other side we behold the purest and noblest of the nation engaged in bitter warfare against this mad society, enthusiastically expending their knowledge, ability and their lives in their efforts to elevate the race out of its moral slums; out of the labyrinth of concentrated ignorance and imperfection into human dignity. Between them stands the State whose pretended mission is the moral and mental advancement of the nation and the protection of the faithful; the State in the shape of ignorant postal inspectors who by their stupid interference harass and worry and render extremely difficult the grand work of the pioneers of true civilization.

I said, the ignorant postal inspectors, in order to be charitable with them, for if those gentlemen really knew the meaning of the word "obscene," they would hardly prosecute anyone in a case like the one in question, involving the State in unjustifiable and unnecessary expense and proving incapable for the offices they are filling. Obscene literature is that the sense and contents of which lower human dignity; which ridicules the human body, its organism and functions and makes light of the same. I have carefully read and studied "The Old and the New Ideal" and the treatises and discussions published on this subject in The Firebrand, the mailing of which caused the arrest of the publishers; and I can attest to the deeply philosophic and scientific tenor of these writings which did not permit of the least suspicion of obscenity, except with people whose own minds are tainted with obscenity, for according to the old saying "to the pure all things are pure" and to the filthy all things are filthy.

The scientific discussion of social institutions like marriage is perfectly legal. It is the height of sarcasm and impudence to declare sacred an institution that daily experience proves to be nothing but an instrument of legalized prostitution and rape; an institution that is productive of innumerable sensational lawsuits, divorce-scandals and murders; an institution that causes trouble, silent grief, martyrdom and wretchedness among millions of couples, of which in many instances no one hears but the next door neighbors—the marriage institution!

Very well, then, it was this very subject, this social ulcer that was discussed in the book of Ruedebusch and in The Firebrand. The foundation of marriage presumably being love, but in reality economical considerations, the authors of the publications in question were obliged to go into the particulars of this important subject. The prosecuting attorney in the Ruedebusch case, when basing his arguments upon the foundations of the christian religion, very correctly judged the intellectual standard of the jurors, for none but a lot of prejudiced ignoramuses could have condemned the defendant upon such arguments. The old testament says expressly that god made man in his own image and approved of his work. An organism created and approved by a god could certainly not be so very bad in its workings that its very mention would constitute a crime against the State! But everything irrational is possible in this age of hypocrisy and prudery.

Moses thus philosophized in his foundation to the christian religion regarding shame: "And they—Adam and Eve—were naked and knew not shame." The supposed creator of these naked bodies is not infuriated here, but when the sinning couple partakes food of the tree of knowledge and fails to properly digest it, thus misunderstanding the glorious creation of their lord, their bodies, and becoming ashamed of them, then his wrath broke loose and he damned them.

The prosecuting attorney in The Firebrand case who urged the jury to bring in a verdict of guilty against the defendants in consideration of the chastity of their

own children, ought to be aware of the fact that many a father who sat in judgement over similar cases, saw his son or daughter go to the insane asylum because of the unnatural gratification of their sexual desires—the very evil the eradication of which was the noble object of the defendants.

It is by no means my intention to convert prosecuting attorneys, for their social standing would render such a task futile; but I should like to remind the heads of families who are not indifferent to the fate of their posterity, not to be swayed by blind prejudice in case they are ever to serve as jurors in similar cases, but to consider their case impartially and from every conceivable point of view, before rendering a verdict.

The accused is entitled to an intelligent jury; the jurors in cases like this ought therefore to be examined by the attorneys in regard to their intellectual qualifications. Everyone of the gentlemen of the jury in this case ought to have been asked separately for a definition of the term "obscene"; then only it could have been determined how many of them were capable for the responsible duties they assumed.

The newspaper writers—no matter of what political complexion—ought for their own safety enter a vigorous protest against this abridgement of the liberty of the press guaranteed by the constitution of the United States, for it may be only a question of a short time when the verdict of today will be turned as a precedent against themselves. According to the present verdict any caricature in newspapers, as used so frequently during election campaigns, may be made the pretext for the imprisonment of an editor. Rumors have it that instructions to that effect have already been given at Washington.

RICHARD NUSSBAUM.

MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP.

I.

Some men who propagate that scheme as a remedy for the existing evils which afflict the entire civilized world, are ignorant. I know of others who are simply political labor fakirs. But there are some who are neither; what shall we think of them? Shall we doubt their sincerity or shall we attribute it simply to their blindness? I am not sure I can assign the proper cause of it, when I see men, apparently intelligent, fighting the existing institutions with all their might, finally suggesting municipal ownership as the cure of monopoly, the cancer of the body politics. That a man like B. O. Flower, the former editor of the Arena, should plainly refuse to see his own contradictions when he picks out flaws in the existing monopolies, and then suggests a greater and far more dangerous monopoly as a remedy of the former, is something which might cast a shadow of doubt upon the sincerity of what he says. That he should, as he did in the February number of the Arena, after plainly stating that "monopoly in money, monopoly in transportation, monopoly in all public utilities, whether national, State, or municipal—is the concrete representation of despotism in its latest role, against which all reformers, all friends of liberty, freedom and justice should write"—suggest the creation of a monopoly by government as a remedy, is more than absurd. Besides, had we been under the impression that Mr. B. O. Flower is not aware of the fact that government itself consists of men who in their nature are just as greedy as the ordinary monopolists are, we might have taken the trouble to enlighten him on that point, and there his scheme would have been knocked in the head. But we were not under that impression. We know

Mr. B. O. Flower too well, and he has more than once told us of what a set of corruptionists the government is made. In that very same article, "The Corporations against the People," Mr. B. O. Flower expressly tells us that corporations are not only the product of government, but that they now are the creators of government. He tells us, for example: "The corporations have enslaved our nations; having been tolerated, they have gained a firm foothold in the government." He even goes so far as to say that the very essence upon which the theoretical governmentalists might have his hope of "good government," namely public opinion, that even that is not only controlled, but formed by corporations.

When it was believed that "the sole power rests with the people" and that "the Legislature, the Judiciary, and the Executive act but as their proxies and are at all times accountable to them," it might have been, though erroneous, at least consistent to say that the government would enact such laws as would please the majority of the people of the land. Now, don't run away with the idea that this would be an administration of justice; not by a long shot; it would simply be logical at least, since it cannot be true, to imagine that the will of the majority would prevail. Again, so far as we are concerned, the will of the majority is just as tyrannical if it invades the liberty of the minority, as the will of the minority which invades the liberty of the majority. To us tyranny is tyranny, whether enforced by one or by all but one. But it might facilitate Mr. B. O. Flower's argument. Since he insists that the corporations consist of but a handful and the proletarians are in the majority, a fallacy common to all goody, goody government reformers, from Karl Marx to B. O. Flower, then, of course, had he maintained that the people, say the majority, are personified in the government, he might have at least been logical in maintaining that the government can and will work for the people and against the corporations, say for the majority and against the minority. But when he concedes that the government itself is made by corporations, that the corporations own "the great opinion-forming agencies of the age," what becomes of his suggestion that municipal ownership shall be summoned to abolish monopoly?

If municipal government is the creature of corporations, suppose it were possible to influence it to take control of that which is today owned by corporations, where would the people come in? Does Mr. Flower for a moment imagine there is a difference between my doing a thing, and the doing of the same thing by one who is under my control and does the thing just as I want him to do? Does he imagine that there is any difference between the Czar of Russia and those whom he appoints to office?

I don't think Mr. Flower would take the trouble to point out the difference between my doing a thing and one who does the same thing as I want him to do it. But, as I said, Mr. Flower makes some astonishing contradictions in that article of his, simply because he is for government and against government at the same time. He is for and against government because he fails to see the truth of the words of Edmund Burke, "Tell me not of bad government; it's government itself that is bad."

DALLAN DOYLE.

A NEW FABLE.

Once, in a faraway land, long ago, the people were all engaged in a great race. Some time in the past, a few great men—many of the people believed they were gods—had established this race, offering as prizes great piles of gold and luxuries. These were placed on a high rugged mountain and whoever reached them first, might possess them.

There were rushing streams, great rocks, deep ravines and almost impenetrable thickets to be crossed. It mattered not how the top was gained, so that it

was gained. If one were strong enough to fling his competitors at his feet and make of their bodies a step on which to gain greater heights, it was considered perfectly right. If one could push aside a brother, and take his vantage ground, well and good; or if by fraud and faithless promises, one could climb on the shoulders of the others to gain a coveted point, it was only a part of the game; every means was allowable, except flinging rocks at those who had gained the highest places.

But very strangely for such a race, some of the runners were weighted with heavy chains and balls about their feet as well as burdens tied to their backs. A few were aided by small balloons and wonderful staves, which seemed endowed with the spring and energy of life. Naturally these few had little trouble in climbing far beyond the rest.

And what made this unfair arrangement seem more strange, was the fact that at the foot of the mountain lay a deep, dark gulch, which seemed bottomless. If a man stumbled, if he began to fall backward, there was little hope for him; unless by some wonderful good fortune, he could grasp some object and thus check his downward course, he was sure to fall down, down into the darkness where he was heard of no more. Hundreds stumbled under their weights and burdens, struggled desperately for a time, to be at last swallowed up in the terrible chasm.

The victories were few, and their rewards were such that they seldom remembered the numbers struggling, fainting and falling on the mountain side, by whose help many of them had achieved their victory. Sometimes heavy groans reached their ears from the depths below, and low rumblings and quiverings of the ground whereon they stood, disturbed their peace of mind. But they drank and rioted in luxury only the more and forgot all else.

After a while a few of the weighted climbers began to think. They had discovered that there was plenty at the top for all of them; and that out of the mountain itself they could easily bring more of the precious prizes. They began to talk to the others. They showed them how by working together and assisting, instead of fighting each other, they could level the rugged piles of rocks, bridge the chasms and cut paths through the forests and reach the top in a body. The others began to listen. The few at the top heard the murmur of voices and began to grow uneasy, for they wished to own all the prizes themselves, though they could not use them all.

The voices went on. Some of the first to whisper the new idea were reviled by their comrades and at times were even set upon and hurled to death below. But others took their places and the thought grew. At last it prevailed with most of them and they commenced joyfully to work together. No one was pushed aside; no one was allowed to fall to the bottom; gladly they formed lines, and attacking parties, and the barriers fairly melted away before their mighty strength; and each felt a new love for the other, never experienced before.

And a bright light broke from the skies where great black clouds were rolling away. And the mountain itself became beautiful in their eyes.

MAY HUNTLEY.

MENTAL WORK IN TRADES-UNIONS.

One of the greatest obstacles in the way of the success of American conscious labor movements is their tendency to be carried on upon a purely commercial basis, as a business policy between employers and employees.

This shallow conception of the economic struggle has naturally led to a wrong idea of the whole labor movement. The characteristic feature of this movement is the idea of the emancipation of the working class from the domination of capitalism, from the despotism of private property and the wage-system. This idea forms the backbone of the movement; without it the actions of the movement resolve themselves into a maze of incoherent experiments, which, if successful in the sense of the workers, may effect a momentary relief here and there, which is however insignificant in consideration of the end to be attained, the liberation of the proletariat from the fetters of wage-slavery.

The consciousness that this aim can never be reached within the present economic system; that the producing class will remain dependent, de-

spoiled and oppressed in every conceivable manner as long as the wage-system and the usurpation of the proceeds of labor and production continues; this consciousness is the very thing that is necessary to lend the labor movement in its entirety as well as in its single handed detached actions that inspiration and force requisite for the victorious termination of this great struggle.

But this consciousness has often been lacking in the trades-union movement. Instead of fostering it, it has not infrequently been systematically suppressed by demagogical leaders who on account of their "deals" with the enemies of the proletariat had an interest in obliterating these contrasts, and to oppose this consciousness bitterly with all available means wherever it cropped out.

However, this neglect must and shall be made up for by the trades-unions who, as the natural allies of all the various combinations of working people, are destined to widen the mental horizon of their individual members, particularly upon the field of knowledge regarding the solidarity of the labor movement.

Upon this line much work is yet to be done by the American trades-union movement which must be accomplished in spite of all existing obstacles, if their battles are to be more successful, their advances more energetic, and if they desire to hasten the downfall of the capitalistic citadel.

—Chicago Arbeiter-Zeitung.

THE FALLACIES OF STATE SOCIALISM.

As another victim of the strike I am tempted to point out to the author of the article in No. 7 of the Litho-Gazette, who signs himself, "A Victim of the Strike," the above title and that, being a victim of the strike, it does not necessarily follow that this fact should derange my reasoning powers to such a degree as to become a State Socialist.

In the first place, revolutions are never made and no amount of organized intelligence can bring them about. Revolutions always have and will be the violent uncontrollable uprising of the people against despotism. Let me assure you, my poor deluded State Socialist friend that, when the laboring classes once understand that no emancipation or good is to be expected from any political body, and that every political party is bound to end in corruption, and that government in any form is simply used to oppress the people, then there will be no chance after the revolution for any corruption-breeding political party or Napoleonic labor leader to rule or mislead the people as it is now, and would be in the military utopia of State Socialism.

Social progress allows no limitations nor fence in any party program or else it results in stagnation and ends in reaction. Therefore no limitations in regard to ultimate objects of social progress can be laid down, as it would be fatal to progress itself; nor can a definite program or platform be followed, as new ideas spring up every day, and rules laid down today may be outlived to-morrow.

Mankind needs freedom from capitalistic exploitation, freedom from governmental burdens, freedom from industrial slavery and religious hypocrisy, and, last but not least, freedom from private property; in short, mankind needs absolute liberty!

Th. Carlyle says: "No revolution ever rises above the intellectual level of those who make it, and little is gained where one false notion supplants another, but we must some day, at last and forever, cross the lines between nonsense and common sense, and on that day we shall pass from class paternalism to human brotherhood in accordance with the nature of things and our growing knowledge of it; from political government to industrial association, from competition in individualism to individuality in co-operation, from war and despotism in any form to peace and liberty."

Now, does "A Victim of the Strike" believe all this can be found in the State Socialist hunting ground for political bosses? The Socialistic Labor Party organs are eternally prating about "no compromise, etc.," but after their declaration of ideas and beliefs they come down to this: "In the meantime," etc., "we submit the following demands," etc. These "demands" have been submitted for years, and still capital laughs in their faces and buys their valiant voters;

and such effective POLITICAL ACTION is their idolized PEACEFUL EVOLUTION.

Brother "Victim of the Strike," you were very unfortunate in quoting your authority "Carl Marx." When he said, "workmen of all countries, unite," he did not mean to form a political party and supplant your old masters by new ones elected from among yourselves, but meant a united action against capitalism!

Here is another quotation from your authority; in his Communist Manifesto, written 1847 and published 1848, Marx says: POLITICAL POWER IN THE EXACT SENSE OF THE WORD, IS THE POWER OF ONE CLASS TO SUPPRESS ANOTHER," and you State Socialists propagate to-day the very same thing, which your own admitted authority CONDEMNED FIFTY YEARS AGO. Does it not strike you that instead of being ahead of time you are fifty years at least behind it?

The old political parties never have been true to their promises; at every election period they catered for the vote of their friend, the poor workman, promising him all seven heavens at once; and when in power, doing nothing but the bidding of capitalism.

It must be remembered that powerful corrupt institutions and environments demoralize the man. Place even the best man in a position where HIS WILL prevails over that of others, he will invariably misuse this power.

You want instances where Socialist representatives betrayed their principles? What about the German Social Democratic Leaders? When in the hunger riots a few years ago in Berlin, Liebknecht and accomplices called all those desparation-driven proletaires who participated in it "Lumpenproletariat" (ragamuffins) and continually labels all those who overstep the limitations "agents provocateurs and lawless Anarchists." And do not De Leon and Co. swing the party whip over you unmercifully and give themselves the censorship over all your party organs? I can give more instances, but space does not permit. No, no, my friend, don't expect that State Socialism or the Socialist Labor Alliance will be the "non plus ultra" remedy for existing evils. Let me tell you: UNITE AND FIGHT, but don't let your ORGANIZED INTELLIGENCE fall into the trap of ARBITRATION, which seems to be a catchword now among Trade Unions, as the folly of the present striking miners shows. Alas, how inconsistent workmen are; they denounce and fight against the middleman, and yet when it comes to the settlement of a strike, they themselves shout for this parasitical middleman and call him ARBITRATOR. Our motto should be:

"We don't want either God or Master,
And will be neither knave nor slave!"

Let us act accordingly.—Rud. Streit, in Litho-Gazette.

WHEREFORE?

At work, hastily running through a great heap of "exchanges" in search of anything available for "copy," my eye fell upon the words, "The State, by Ernest H. Crosby." I read the first sentence:

"They talked much of the state—the State."

That settled it. I had to read that article. Forgetting work I read:

"I had never seen the State and I asked them to picture it to me, as my gross mind could not follow their subtle language when they spoke of it."

"Then they told me to think of it as of a beautiful goddess, enthroned and sceptred, benignly caring for her children."

"But for some reason I was not satisfied."

"And once upon a time as I was lying awake at night and thinking, I had, as it were, a vision."

"And I seemed to see a barren ridge of sand beneath a lurid sky:

"And lo, against the sky stood out in bold relief a black scaffold and gallows tree, and from the end of its gaunt arm hung limp and motionless a shadowy, empty noose."

"And a voice whispered in my ear, 'Behold the State incarnate!'"

"And as I looked aghast, the desert became thickly peopled, and all the countless throng did obeisance to the gibbet:

"And they that were clad in rich raiment bowed down the lowest of all."

The words held me. I could no more have passed with the mental comment "unavailable" than I could have flown. I felt that thrill that told me I was following a master mind. At the mention of the gallows, a great shudder shook me.

I read on, hurriedly, the graphic, life-like (and death-like) description of an execution upon that gallows:

"The sheriff is reading his warrant to the condemned man in his cell."

"He stammers and hesitates and his voice is husky."

"The executioner takes off his victim's collar and unbuttons his shirt, while the unhappy man smooths down his new black coat with twitching fingers, and watches the sheriff's fat hands and wonders whether he can get his gold ring off his little finger or not."

"Now his hands are tied behind him and the procession moves."

"There is the doctor, the soldier of life, turned deserter and serving in the army of death."

"There is the priest, holding out hopes in an undertone of another world where the inhabitants are less inhuman than in this."

"There are the correspondents of the press, eager for any news that will sell."

"The majesty of the law leads and brings up the rear—the sheriff and his deputies, the attorneys and the police."

"All that is respected in the community is represented here."

"They have congregated like vultures scenting carrion from afar."

"The doomed man has braced himself for a supreme effort, but his knees are unsteady, his underlip quivers and his face is livid."

"In these last weeks he has died a thousand deaths and his mind has suffered every kind of torment."

"How often he has gone through this scene, before, and yet how different it is—so much more trivial and usual, and yet so much more dreadful."

"The ordinary words, 'Good morning,' and 'Thank you' sound like a foreign language, and still the day strangely resembles other days."

"As we turn a corner in the jail-yard and the frightful hanging-machine appears, he averts his eyes and stumbles and nearly falls."

"At last he is in place, the black cap is pulled over his face and the noose adjusted."

"The sheriff drops his handkerchief, the floor gives way with a creak—there is a sickening jerk, and the rope stretches taut:

"Then after some minutes of convulsive struggle that seem like years, all is quiet."

"The doctor comes forward and feels the dying man's pulse."

"He nods his head and the little crowd disperses, while four men lower the body into a box."

"There was not one man in that company but felt that something awful was happening which ought not to happen—"

"Not one who did not know that the punishment was infinitely more devilish than the crime—"

"Not one, who at the bottom of his heart believed in his right or anyone else's to dispose of the life of his fellow-man and trifle with the mystery of death."

"Yet with inexorable precision they went on to the end."

"Even the felon himself accepted the inevitable, and never in all his talks with his confessor did he think of asking how forgiveness and love of neighbors and enemies was consistent with all this."

"What was it that urged him relentlessly on?"

"When the sheriff's little boy climbs on his knee in the evening and hides his face against the breast of his coat and says, 'Father, why did you do it?' what will he answer?"

"Was it fate and destiny, or divine justice?"

"Or was it not rather a poor, human make-shift for these—a necessity, a justice of the imagination?"

"Don't cry, my child: you cannot understand now, but I am a servant of the State and must do as the State directs."

"The State?"

"Ah! thus it is that men conjure up spectres out of nothingness, and name them, and cast their sins upon them, and fall down and worship them."

He is a poor man who does not weep with the child and question, 'Why? Ah! echoed I as I read the last sentence; here we have the true valuation of the State—a spectre conjured out of nothingness, indeed! Not the State, but men, in the service of a spectre, a myth, an imagined shadow, took a life upon the gallows."

But to the conclusion. Surely, here is a humanitarian, who is done with myths and make-believe. Surely here is one who will rebel with me at the idea of setting up anything to have dominion over man after we have succeeded in tearing down that hideous gal-

lows-tree. My pulse beat high with hope. How I should have liked to grasp the hand of this comrade. But, alas!

"I feel the force stirring within me, which in time will reform the world."

"It does not push or obtrude, but I am conscious of it drawing gently and irresistibly at my vitals."

"And I see that I am attracted, so I begin unaccountably to attract others."

"I draw them and they in turn draw me and we recognize a tendency to group ourselves anew."

"Get in touch with the great central magnet and you will yourself become a magnet:"

"And as more and more of us find our bearings and exert our powers, gradually the new world will take shape."

"We become indeed legislators of the divine law receiving it from God himself in the mount, and human laws shrivel and dry up before us."

"And I asked the force within my soul, 'Who art thou?'"

"And it answered and said: 'I am Love, the Lord of Heaven, and I would be called Love, the Lord of Earth."

"I am the mightiest of all the Heavenly hosts and I am come to create the State that is to be."

What! the spectre again?—The State? And all the other superstitions that have haunted and harassed man from his barbarous, animal state? The heavenly hosts?—God? Nay; in their service the gallows first stood—the fagot first blazed! Try not to ennoble the cause of man by appealing to the superstitions of his infancy."

Ernest, my boy, you talk of the State—the State. You picture it as something holy, created by love. But the others also saw something divinely fair in the State. You and I saw but the gallows. They, too, talk of love and the law of God. We see but the principle of robbery."

Alas! Ernest, that you should have tumbled back into the ditch!

J. H. M.

For San Francisco.

The International Labor Association will give a ball, March 26, at the Vorwärts Turner Hall, 310 O'Farrell St., at 8 o'clock p. m., for the benefit of the radical press. Admission 25 cents, Ladies free. All in favor of a radical press are cordially invited.

For St. Louis.

Emma Goldman will lecture in English at the Light Stone Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 5. and 6. of April 8 o'clock p. m., and Friday, April 8., in the same hall in German.

For Philadelphia.

A grand Commune Celebration under the auspices of group K. of L. and the Ladies, Liberal League will take place on Friday evening, March 25, at the Christian Str. Hall, cor. 8th and Christian Sts.

Comrade Lucy Parsons from Chicago will speak in English, Comrade Kayser in German and Comrade Weinberg in Jewish.

FOR CHICAGO.

Concert and ball of The International Group, Saturday, April 9, 1898, at 12th St. Turner Hall near Halsted St., for the benefit of FREE SOCIETY and the Berkman Fund. Comrade Emma Goldman will deliver an address. All comrades interested in our movement are earnestly requested to make this testimonial a financial success. THE INTERNATIONAL GROUP.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Allegheny, Pa.

February 19, 1898.

The committee which is assisting H. Bauer in distributing prizes has resolved to postpone this work until April 2, 1898, for the reason that most of the tickets are still outstanding.

Those having received tickets are kindly requested to settle and to return those not sold before March 29, 1898.

The Committee:

P. HAIBERT.

H. GORDON.

C. NOLD.

A. FRY.

P. SCHLIPP.

L. RUOFF.

FREE SOCIETY

FORMERLY "THE FIREBRAND."

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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.

THE RIGHT OF FREE PRESS.

All Anarchists are supposed to be staunch upholders of the freedom of the press, and if they are logical they must be. As an Anarchist I deny the right of anyone to dictate what I may or may not print and deliver to all who may wish to read.

Many who are not Anarchists take the same stand, and while they favor government for special purposes they oppose governmental interference in the question of what may or may not be printed and circulated.

This is a paramount issue, and is coming more and more into prominence. The party of reaction is doing its utmost to destroy the freedom of the press, and establish a supervision of current literature "for the public good." A few intrepid souls are now, and have been battling against this judicial encroachment. Moses Harman has tussled with authorities on this most vital question, and still continues the war for free press.

Last fall the publishers of The Firebrand were arrested, and are now being annoyed and persecuted by the U. S. officials for no other purpose than that of breaking down the paper and curtailing the opposition to their encroachment upon the freedom of the press. We must expect to fight these relics of the past barbarism, and to have them after us until the right of free press is so firmly established and their power so foreshortened that they can no longer do us harm.

It is painfully and mournfully discouraging when we are in the midst of a severe conflict with the reactionists, to have one of our own champions lay down the defense and concede the very contention we have been fighting so hard, but such a spectacle we have lately seen.

Comrade Lucy Parsons, it seems, has not outgrown the silly sentimentalism taught her as a girl, and saw fit to denounce some of the utterances that have at times appeared in The Firebrand, characterizing them as dirty, whereupon Comrade A. Isaak, in Free Society of Feb. 6th, said:

"If she [Comrade L. Parsons] is right, then the authorities were right in prosecuting the publishers of The Firebrand."

Oh, ye great gods and little fishes! I cannot see what weird spell or enchantment Comrade Isaak could have been under when he penned and published those lines.* It cannot be possible that he meant what he said. If so he should quit contending for free press and join Homer in a search for a "true moral standard" and advocate the prohibition of everything that does not conform to that standard.

For my part, I contend that if every page of The Firebrand contained "dirty" articles, and it was as vile, corrupting, degrading, debauching rot as the District Attorney tried "to make the jury believe it was, we still had a right to print, publish and deliver it to all who might want it, and as long as the government monopolizes the mail-service, we had a right to use that means of distribution.

This is the only tenable ground for the advocates of free press to take, and it should never be forsaken by anyone claiming to be in favor of absolute individual liberty!

There is no stable standard of what is moral or immoral, pure or dirty, and to admit the officials are right in prosecuting the publishers of "dirty" articles, books, papers or other literature is to give up the fight for free press and put an irresponsible and incalculably dangerous power in the hands of the officials.

What harm can "dirty" reading do to those who will not read it? Can putrid meat hurt the one who refuses to eat it?

It is not a question of dirt or no dirt, it is a ques-

* I thought it would be understood as a matter of course that I meant to say, according to LAW they would have a right to prosecute us, and I think all radicals ought to be as eager to have the law repudiated as they are in fighting the effects of it.

A. I.

tion of freedom of the press or the denial of that freedom, and I, for one, stand pat for freedom; Freedom with a big F!!

Heywood, Bennet and Harman maintained the freedom of the press and suffered for so doing. Comrades Pope, Isaak and myself are now suffering for the self-same cause; I know that Comrade Pope is firm in his defiance of official interference, and I feel quite sure that Comrade Isaak made a "slip" in the quoted statement, and did not really mean that he favored official intermeddling. If he does really favor prosecution of those who publish "dirty" papers, let him bring forth his reasons for believing that the authorities would be right in prosecuting such publishers.

It is to be regretted that such a sentence appeared in FREE SOCIETY, for the comrades everywhere are looking to it to take the place of The Firebrand as the uncompromising foe of official interference, and the champion of untrammelled liberty. Not only that. The enemy would ask no better admission from us, and would gladly use all such admissions they can get to prove to the jury that, according to our own statements, we should be prosecuted, if the articles indicted are dirty, and then proceed to prove them dirty.

I hope Comrade Isaak will explain his utterance, and declare himself uncompromisingly in favor of free press, and that Comrade Parsons will learn that in freedom alone is safety.

There is no definite standard as to what is clean or dirty in literature, nor can there ever be, because people's tastes differ, and for this reason all censorship of the press is worse than folly, and all admissions that such censorship, or interference, is right, are extremely foolish.

HENRY ADDIS.

THINGS AND THOUGHTS.

"A new type-setting machine has been invented in England, which needs no experienced operator to run it; a boy can do the work," says a late dispatch. Another machine has been invented, which, attended by a boy, will turn out forty thousand preserving cans a day. The machine and the boy will do the work of eighty good mechanics. Soon our boys will be able to do all the work necessary and we old folks can take a walk into the woods or be arrested for vagrancy. There is one hope, however: The increase of labor saving machinery will force even the conservative workman to the conclusion that the means of production must be appropriated and utilized for the general welfare.

"Expropriation!" some would-be radicals will cry out, "that would be a forcible ejection and not compatible with Anarchism." Let us see. If a thief appropriates certain products necessary to our subsistence, what means are we to employ to have him return them? Persuasion? But if the thief would not be persuaded? Nobody would blame us for resorting to force in this instance. That is the position of the workers today. The privileged class is the thief. The monopolists cannot be persuaded to return the means of production which they forcibly appropriate right along, by which they deprive the workers of the necessities of life and keep them in abject slavery; consequently there is only one way left: to take what has been stolen from the producers. And this would only mean to take possession of things which legitimately belong to the producers.

The New Time, a would-be Socialist magazine, which sometimes contains very clever articles on sociology, falls in line with the patriots and howls for war. Says the editor: "The United States should proceed to spend not less than \$1,000,000,000 in coast defenses and in the construction of a navy. It should issue greenbacks for this purpose. On this work several hundred thousand men would find employment." Who will pay the bill, Mr. Adams? Did it ever strike you that the parasite whom you pretend to fight, never creates anything and that the poor producer, from whom the lifeblood is nearly drawn out already, has to pay the billions that you would like to see expended, to protect—whom? The workers? To protect nobody, but to give our millionaires the opportunity

to increase their millions. The worker has no enemy except the money power and ignorance.

"Several hundred thousand men may find employment in the construction of a navy," says this blind leader. But how about the thousands that may lose their lives? Will there be any capitalists among them, or will they not be all workers? How about the cripples, the widows and the orphans? Who is to support them, the capitalists or the workers?

If this is the "new time" that is to be ushered in, and such as this blind man the parties to do it, then it were time to weep!

The Naval Committee of Congress has recommended the purchase of \$1,000,000 worth of smokeless gunpowder, and many more millions for the purpose of wholesale murder, and the poor workingmen are, under existing conditions, forced to pay the bill without having given their consent to make the purchase. Just while I was writing these lines, the tax collector entered our composing room, informing us that he would be around again in a few weeks to collect taxes. Just think of the outrage! taxing the poor for the use of a bed, a chair, some type, etc. If we refuse to pay the tax imposed upon us, our furniture will be sold and we can sleep and sit on the floor. Government is the worst kind of a thief.

A. I.

Lines from Comrade A. J. POPE.

I see in article No. 4 of FREE SOCIETY, under the heading of "Some Sarcasms," credited to New Dispensation, these words: "One of them, A. J. Pope, can't be induced to leave the jail." This is not the truth. I cannot be made to sign a bond, admitting that the United States has the right to govern me and control me, and that I have not the inalienable right to self-control, self-development, and the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness. They keep me in jail by mere brute force. On the 1st of November 1897 C. Doring came to me and said: "I have just seen Schnabel, [who has my case in charge] he sent for me and wanted to know if you could or would give bail." "I think not, said I." "Then will you sign a bond for your own recognizance?" I said, "I think I will." The next day, whilst C. L. Penhallow, H. Addis and I were talking about my going out, the jailer opened my door and said: "There, Pope, go with this man, get your liberty and sleep at your own home to-night." At first I was startled; but we packed my things and carried them out into the office and we went first to Schnabel with whom we had some talk. Then I went to the United States Commissioner McKee, and saw him write "A. J. Pope" and "two hundred dollars" on a printed bond. He handed it to me, saying "Sign it." I took it up, read the paragraph containing, A. J. Pope and two hundred dollars, over twice and threw it down saying "I will not sign that." He then said, "I have reduced your bail from \$2,000 to \$200." I said I do not owe the United States \$200 for my appearance and I will not sign it. What! Sacrifice a principle—the right of self-government that has sustained me and made me happy these fifty or more years? No, never! I will stay in jail until the flesh drops off my bones first. I know you have the power to put a rope around my neck and separate me from my body, as you frequently do, but you cannot make me sign such a thing as that." He then said: "Take him back again to jail."

Does that look as if I could not be induced to leave the jail? They waited one day to see if I would recant and sign a bond, but as I did not, the jailer took me from corridor 1 and put me in a cell with a solid iron door with a peep-hole seven inches by ten inches in it, and it closed excepting to put in my food twice daily, etc. Opposite the door is a large window with double 1-inch iron bars three inches apart and double woven iron screens and glass in it, and in front of it is a high board fence, so I could see no one, only when the jailer chose and only the tops of the trees, houses and the sky. I was told to quit writing. All my mail that came into the jailer's hands was opened. Once, when I put out four letters through this peep-hole for Addis to mail, the jailer took them and gave them to the United States officials, by their order, he said. All these things I had to endure before I was even indicted. Does this look as if I cannot be induced to go out of jail?

On the 1st of March 1898 I was taken up into Court and Prosecuting Attorney Hall told Judge C. B. Bellinger that he wanted me sentenced. The Judge, after reading a paper given him by Hall, said to me, "Stand up! Owing to your age and feebleness and long imprisonment, I will make the sentence as light as I can. You are sentenced to four months' imprisonment in the county jail and fined \$1.00." I was then taken back to jail.

Addis and Isaac were granted a new trial, but the day for it will not be get until the United States grand jury meets again; they may meet any time between June and December, the Deputy Attorney Schnabel told me.

I am in good health and spirits and hope to be out of this jail on or before the first of July 1898. I am well treated by the jailer, who is as well qualified a man for that situation as is commonly found. I am now getting my vegetarian diet, but more fruit would not be refused. The food is as good as most of the common people get and plenty of it. The jail is near the center of Portland and in the basement of a fine building, where the courts are held; it has many visitors and is kept in very nice condition; has gas and electric lights, is steam heated and well ventilated and as comfortable as it can be for the purpose intended; my friends have furnished me with a good woolen mattress. With the blankets furnished by the jailer and Addis I have a reasonably good bed and rest and sleep well and arise refreshed. As my life for the past fifty years has been devoted to the advocacy of the happiness of my fellow-beings, according to my best knowledge, I feel no condemnation in my own mind; so I am at peace and reconciled to my lot. But just as soon as my prison doors are opened for me, I will gladly, cheerfully and joyfully walk out and once more enjoy the sun light, pure air, etc., and provide for myself and not have others taxed to support me. When my time expires, I shall have been an inmate of a jail ten months, and that for proclaiming that all should have liberty and be allowed the pursuit of happiness. With kind regards to the group and its many readers, I am your Pantarchist friend,

ABNER J. POPE,

March 4th, 1898.

Portland, Ore.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

According to the Social Economist the Christian Socialist Lynch and Comrade Clemencic will have a joint debate in the near future on Anarchist-Communism vs. Christian Socialism at the Metropolitan Temple.

Comrade Emma Goldman will give a series of lectures in Chicago. See particulars on page 8.

"Etievant, the Anarchist, who recently killed a Paris policeman and wounded two others, has found out a use for lawyers. Having refused to defend himself or employ a lawyer, the Court assigned one to take charge of the defence. Etievant would have nothing to do with him, declaring that he wished to be condemned to death, till the lawyer explained that a jury could bring in a verdict involving capital punishment unless a defence was made; whereupon Etievant accepted his services."—Boston Transcript.

Our Comrades Jensen, Moeller and Glaob, in Denmark, are to be released from prison after a confinement of seventeen months. In connection with this information the Copenhagen comrades, who desire soon to resume the publication of their organ "Proletaren," are asking for financial assistance. Since the suspension of that paper, the only anarchistic organ for Denmark, Sweden and Norway, the Scandinavian movement with the exception of Christiana has been nearly at a standstill. The propaganda is now to be taken up with renewed activity. There is, however, only a small group of comrades here, therefore comrades everywhere, particularly those of Scandinavian descent, are asked for aid to enable the continuance of the paper. All communications and contributions are to be addressed to Ch. Rasmussen, Snedkersvend, Copenhagen.—Fredricksberg, 2011 Mathildevej.

We quote the following from a Pittsburg paper:

"Emma Goldman of New York, the courageous promulgator of Anarchism in this country, delivered a lecture in the English language at the Odd Fellow's

Hall. Her subject was "Patriotism." The meeting was characterized by exemplary order, and the audience listened with great attention to the interesting dissertation of the lecturer. She said: "The workers of this country can well spare the love of this country, for America belongs to the capitalists—to the oppressors and despoilers of the working classes. It is not patriotism but love of liberty that enthralls the workers. Therefore the expression of patriotic sentiments ought to be left for the rich. The workers have enough to do to attend to their own business, that is to get an honest living; and with the efforts to counteract the tendency of their complete enslavement they are having their hands full. The world is the workers' country and to do good is their religion."

"If a man or woman to-day should attempt to follow the precepts of Jesus Christ—to do as He did—he would not be crucified for the simple reason that crucifixion is not the mode of execution in this enlightened nineteenth century. He would be hung to the nearest lamp-post."

"Emma Goldman is the author of the words," says the reporter of the Pittsburg Leader, and he seems to be surprised that she looks like a human being. He says:

"Miss Goldman does not look at all the vicious being she is pictured. You would not judge from her personal appearance that she carried bombs about her clothes or that she is capable of the incendiary utterances which have marked her platform career. On the contrary she is rather prepossessing than otherwise, and as she converses her face lights up with intelligent ardor. Indeed, the chances are ninety-nine in a hundred that a stranger asked to guess what and who she was would tell you she is a schoolteacher or a woman whose mind runs in progressive channels."

A while ago a reader of the Social Democrat argued that, if the restrictions be eliminated from the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, it would reduce the amount of intoxication. A prohibitionist comes back at him and says that the history of facts speaks otherwise. He says:

About fifty years ago in England a measure was passed in parliament to remove all tax and license from beer and ale, with the object of weaning away the popular appetite from more fiery beverages by supplying these milder intoxicants abundantly. Sydney Smith and the Duke of Wellington were among its earnest advocates. The Duke declared, when the bill was passed, that it was the greatest of his victories. Sydney Smith prophesied that it would exorcise the demon of drunkenness from the British Isles. What resulted? In a few weeks the bill had to be repealed, and Sydney Smith wrote: "The sovereign people is beastly drunk."

If a bill were passed in the legislature to the effect that all the half-starved people in this country could help themselves in a well-stocked boarding house, most of them would very likely suffer from a violent colic, and according to the logic of the prohibitionist the bill would have to be repealed in order to prevent colics.

The community in which I was born and raised owned a distillery and every member of the village was at liberty to take home as much liquor as he had use for; and yet drunkenness and poverty were unknown there. But with the growth of industry and accumulation of wealth exploitation began its work. The distillery was sold to an enterprising church member, and after a few years poverty and drunkenness were the order of the day.

A. I.

"We are approaching a conflict that can not be avoided. On one side is a banner inscribed 'Industrial slavery,' by capitalists, on the other the inscription 'Industrial liberty,' by the people."—Father Ducey.

Father Ducey is getting to be very much of a calamity howler, and if he is not careful he will be discharged by his boss in Rome. "Such talk as his," says an exchange, "breeds Anarchy."

A capitalist sheet, the Chicago Journal, which is fabricating sentiment for wholesale murder (called "war" by the christian nations), invites letters from workmen expressing opinion on the subject of war. "Among the many letters published was one which must have escaped the vigilance of the editor," says the Social Democrat. The letter reads thus:

Chicago, Feb. 23,—To the Editor:—Being rendered speechless almost by your wanting common people's idea in regard to the freeing of Cuba, I

frankly state that as one of the common class I care not. I have fighting enough here to battle for my daily bread. On one condition I would take part in the battle; that is, that the moneyed men march in front, then their sons. I will be third, as I have nothing to lose. I certainly will not protect them. An American Born.

A new magazine is to be started in Denver, Colo., the directors being Myron W. Reed, Edward Bellamy, W. S. Neal, Eugene Debs, Edward Boyce, Paul Tynor, James Hogan and H. C. Childs. When we happened to see the names of Debs and Bellamy in the concern we expected to find a radical program laid out for this magazine, but alas, the report winds up thus: "The politics of the paper, according to Mr. Reed, will be Bryanism and free silver." What next?

LABOR EXCHANGE FREE SOCIETY.

We are in receipt of a communication from Bro. J. Alfred Kinghorn-Jones who is by this time well-known to our readers through his interesting contributions and his vigorous attacks upon the Church and other shams of society. He proposes a plan for the formation of an association of radicals for industrial purposes with the Labor check as a medium of exchange.

Being cramped for space we regret our inability to publish the details of the plan and would advise those of our readers who desire further information to communicate with Bro. Kinghorn-Jones, whose address is 22½ Geary st.

After disposing of the details of his plan for the proposed association Bro. Kinghorn-Jones thus concludes his article:

Members admitted without fees of any kind; any coin, or property, deposited with the Association will be placed to the credit of the member, and a Labor check, or checks of such denominations as requested, be issued as a receipt; these receipts or Labor checks will be currency among the members of the Association.

Persons having such things as land, houses, warehouses, stores, tools, machinery, raw material, manufactured articles, household goods (new or second hand) on their hands unremunerative and unsaleable on account of the deplorable and intensely wicked lack of money, and willing to deposit them with the Association for Labor or time checks, so that the idle may be set to work, send by mail a list of such things and prices to the undersigned.

The Labor or time checks will be available as a medium of exchange as soon as issued.

The Association cannot incur any debts payable in "legal tender," nor can they mortgage their property. They can manufacture and conduct all business at 8 per cent less than any other combine who base their transactions on the interest drawing gold standard, and what is more important, they will retain all they produce, as soon as the Association acquires the use of some portion of our inheritance (land.)

The Association will thus be augmenting the medium of exchange to the amount of the checks issued—those depositing the legal tender will not be depriving themselves of the means of living, if a sufficient number of varied industries unite to form the present Association—but on the contrary they will be gaining the freedom of owning all the products of their Labor, so far as it is used in connection with their Association, by cutting out the item of interest, which includes of course rent and profit.

Those possessed of firearms and ammunition are requested to notify same, on becoming members.

It is imperative that some decisive, manly step be taken to regain the use of the land, by the abolition of landlordism.

The deceptive, avaricious, hypocritical Salvation colony plan of getting back to the land is as disgraceful to the promoters on account of its slavish inception, as it is to the dupes on account of their intense stupidity in becoming slaves to grow beets for a millionaire.

Any action for freedom is better than servile submission to a more debased triumvirate than has ever been recorded in history—for such are Hanna, McKinley and Gage.

Will readers endorse this plan, or kindly offer some, more practical, for immediate adoption; any remarks will show a desire for better conditions; let us act; "after centuries of fleeting words, the chains are stronger than ever."

J. ALFRED KINGHORN-JONES.

ANARCHIST MORALITY.

—BY—

PETER KROPOTKIN.

CHAPTER I.

The history of human thought recalls the swinging of a pendulum which takes centuries to swing. After a long period of slumber comes a moment of awakening. Then thought frees herself from the chains with which those interested—rulers, lawyers, clerics—have carefully enwound her.

She shatters the chains. She subjects to severe criticism all that has been taught her, and lays bare the emptiness of the religious, political, legal and social prejudices amidst which she has vegetated. She starts research in new paths, enriches our knowledge with new discoveries, creates new sciences.

But the inveterate enemies of thought—the government, the lawgiver and the priest—soon recover from their defeat. By degrees they gather together their scattered forces, and remodel their faith and their code of laws to adapt them to the new needs. Then, profiting by the servility of thought and of character, which they themselves have so effectually cultivated, profiting too, by the momentary disorganization of society, taking advantage of the laziness of some, the greed of others, the best hopes (above all the best hopes) of many, they softly creep back to their work by first of all taking possession of childhood through education.

A child's spirit is weak. It is easy to coerce it by fear. This they do. They make the child timid, and then they talk to him of the torments of hell. They conjure up before him the sufferings of the condemned, the vengeance of an implacable god. The next minute they will be chattering of the horrors of revolution, and using some excess of the revolutionists to make the child "a friend of order." The priest accustoms the child to the idea of law, to make it obey better what he calls the "divine law," and the lawyer prates of divine law, that the civil law may be the better obeyed.

And by that habit of submission, with which we are only too familiar, the thought of the next generation retains this religious twist, which is at once servile and authoritative; for authority and servility walk ever hand in hand.

During these slumbrous interludes, morals are rarely discussed. Religious practices and judicial hypocrisy take their place. Folks do not criticize, they let themselves be drawn by habit or indifference. They do not put themselves out for or against the established morality. They do their best to make their actions appear to accord with their professions. And the moral level of society sinks lower and lower. Folks reach the morals of Rome in the Decadence, of the "Ancien Régime," of the end of the supremacy of the middle classes.

All that was good, great, generous or independent in man, little by little becomes moss-grown; rusts like a disused knife. A lie becomes a virtue, a platitude a duty. To enrich oneself, to seize one's opportunities, to exhaust one's intelligence, zeal and energy, no matter how, become the watchwords of the comfortable classes, as well as of the crowd of poor folks whose ideal is to appear bourgeois. Then the degradation of the ruler and of the judge, of the clergy and of the more or less comfortable classes becomes so revolting that the pendulum begins to swing the other way.

Little by little, youth frees itself. It flings overboard its prejudices, and it begins to criticize. Thought re-awakens, at first among the few; but insensibly the awakening reaches the majority. The impulse is given, the revolution follows.

And each time the question of morality comes up again. "Why should I follow the principles of this hypocritical morality?" asks the brain, released from religious terrors. "Why should any morality be obligatory?"

Then folks try to account for the moral sentiment that they meet at every turn without having explained it to themselves. And they will never explain it so long as they believe it a privilege of human nature, so long as they do not descend to animals, plants and rocks to understand it. They seek the answer, however, in the science of the hour.

And, if we may venture to say so, the more the basis of conventional morality, or rather of the hypocrisy that fills its place, is sapped, the more the moral plane of society is raised. It is above all at such times, precisely when folks are criticizing and denying it, that moral sentiment makes the most progress; it is then that it grows, that it is raised and refined.

This came to pass in the eighteenth century. As long ago as 1723, Mandeville, the anonymous writer who scandalized England with his "Fable of the Bees" and the commentaries he added to it, boldly attacked the social hypocrisy known under the name of morality. He showed how so-called moral customs are only a hypocritical mask, how the passions folks think to master by the current code of morals take, on the contrary, a much worse direction on account of the very restriction of this code. Like Fourier, he asked for the passions that free scope, without which they degenerate into vices; and paying in this wise a tribute to the want of zoological knowledge in his time, that is to say, ignoring the morality of animals, he explained the origin of moral ideas by the interested flattery of parents and governing classes.

We know the vigorous criticism of moral ideas begun later by the Scotch philosophers and the Encyclopedists. We know the Anarchists of 1790, and we know with whom the higher development of moral feeling is to be found; among the law-abiding, the patriots, the Jacobins who babbled of obligation and of the moral sanction of the "Supreme Being," or among the Hebertist atheists who denied, like Guyan, both obligation and moral sanction.

"Why should I be moral?"—this was the question that confronted the rationalists of the XII. century, the philosophers of the XVI. century, the philosophers and revolutionaries of the XVIII. century. Later on this question came back again among the English utilitarians (Bentham and Mill), among the German materialists, such as Buchner, among the Russian Nihilists of 1860-70, and to that young founder of Anarchist ethics (the moral science of societies)—Guyan, dead alas! too soon. Finally, this is the question which at this hour confronts the young Anarchists of today.

Why indeed?

Thirty years ago, the youth of Russia were passionately agitated by this very question. "I will be immoral!" a young Nihilist came and said to his friend, thus translating into action the thoughts that gave him no rest. "I will be immoral, and why should I not? Because the bible wills it? But the bible is only a collection of Babylonian and Hebrew traditions, traditions collected and put together like the Homeric poems, or as is being done still with Basque poems and Mongolian legends. Must I then go back to the state of mind of the half-civilized peoples of the East?"

"Must I be moral because Kant tells me of a categorical imperative, of a mysterious command which comes to me from the depths of my own being, and bids me be moral? But why should this 'categorical imperative' exercise a greater authority over my actions than that other imperative, which at times may command me to get drunk? A word, nothing but a word, like the words 'Providence' or 'Destiny,' invented to conceal our ignorance."

"Or perhaps I am to be moral to oblige Bentham, who wants me to believe that I shall be happier if I drown to save a passer by, who has fallen into the river, than if I watched him drown?"

"Or perhaps because such has been my education? Because my mother taught me morality? Shall I then go and kneel down in a church, honor the queen, bow before the judge I know for a scoundrel, simply because our mothers, our good ignorant mothers, have taught us such a pack of nonsense?"

"I am prejudiced—like everyone else. I will try to rid myself of prejudice! Even though immorality be distasteful, I will yet force myself to be immoral, as when I was a boy I forced myself to give up fearing the dark, the churchyard, ghosts and dead people—all of which I had been taught to fear."

"I will be immoral to snare a weapon abused by religion; I will do it, were it only to protest against the hypocrisy imposed on us in the name of a word to which the name morality has been given!"

Such was the way in which the youth of Russia reasoned when they broke with old-world prejudices, and unfurled this banner of Nihilist or rather of Anarchist philosophy: To bend the knee to no authority whatsoever, however respected, to accept no principle so long as it is unestablished by reason.

Need we add, that after pitching into the waste-paper basket the teaching of their fathers, and burning all systems of morality, the Nihilist youth developed in their midst a nucleus of moral customs, infinitely superior to aught that their fathers had practiced under the control of the "Gospel," of the "Conscience," of the "Categorical Imperative," or of the "Recognized Advantage" of the utilitarian. But before answering the question, "Why am I to be moral?" let us see if the question is well put, let us analyse the motives of human action.

CHAPTER II.

When our ancestors wished to account for what led men to act in one way or another, they did so in a very simple fashion: Down to the present day, certain Catholic images may be seen that represent this explanation. A man is going on his way, and, without being in the least aware of it, carries a devil on his left shoulder, and an angel on his right. The devil prompts him to do evil, the angel tries to keep him back. And if the angel gets the best of it and the man remains virtuous, three other angels catch him up and carry him to heaven. In this way everything is explained wondrously well.

Old Russian nurses, full of such lore, will tell you never to put a child to bed without unbuttoning the collar of its shirt. A warm spot at the bottom of the neck should be left bare, where the guardian angel may nestle. Otherwise, the devil will worry the child even in its sleep.

These artless conceptions are passing away. But though the old words disappear, the essential idea remains the same.

Well brought up folks no longer believe in the devil; but, as their ideas are no more rational than those of our nurses, they do but disguise devil and angel under a pedantic wordiness, honored with the name of philosophy. They do not say "devil" now-a-days, but the "flesh" or "the passions." The "angel" is replaced by the words "conscience" or "soul," by "reflection of the thought of a divine creator" or the "Great Architect," as the Free-Masons say. But man's action is still represented as the result of a struggle between two hostile elements. And a man is always considered virtuous just in the degree to which one of these two elements—the soul or conscience—is victorious over the other—the flesh or passions.

It is easy to understand the astonishment of our great-grandfathers when the English philosophers, and later, the Encyclopedists, began to affirm, in opposition to these primitive ideas, that the devil and the angel had nothing to do with human action, but that all acts of man, good or bad, useful or baneful, arise from a single motive: the lust for pleasure.

The whole religious confraternity, and, above all, the numerous sects of the pharisees shouted "Immorality." They covered the thinkers with insult, they excommunicated them. And when later on, in the course of this century, the same ideas were again taken up by Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Tchernischevsky, and a host of others, and when these thinkers began to affirm and prove that Egoism, or the lust for pleasure, is the true motive of all our actions, the maledictions redoubled. The books were banned by a conspiracy of silence; the authors were treated as dunces.

And yet what can be more true than the assertion they made?

Here is a man who snatches its last mouthful of bread from a child. Every one agrees in saying that he is a horrible egoist, that he is guided solely by self-love.

But now here is another man, whom every one agrees to recognize as virtuous. He shares his last bit of bread with the hungry, and strips off his coat to clothe the naked. And the moralists, sticking to their religious jargon, hasten to say that this man carries the love of his neighbor to the point of self-abnegation, that he obeys a wholly different passion from that of the egoists. And yet, with a little

reflection, we soon discover that, however great the difference between the two actions in their result for humanity, the motive has still been the same. It is the quest of pleasure. If the man who gives away his last shirt found no pleasure in doing so, he would not do it. If he found pleasure in taking bread from a child he would do that; but this is distasteful to him, he finds pleasure in giving, and so he gives. If it were not inconvenient to cause confusion by employing in a new sense words that have a recognized meaning, it might be said that in both cases the men acted under the impulse of their egoism. Some have actually said this, to give prominence to the thought, and precision to the idea, by presenting it in a form that strikes the imagination, and at the same time to destroy the myth which asserts that these two acts have two different motives. They have the same motive, the quest of pleasure, or the avoidance of pain, which comes to the same thing.

Take, for example, the worst of scoundrels; a Thiers, who massacres 35,000 Parisians, or an assassin, who butchers a whole family in order that he may wallow in debauchery. They do it because, for the moment, the desire of glory or of money gains in their minds the upper hand of every other desire. Even pity and compassion are extinguished for the moment by this other desire, this other thirst. They act almost automatically to satisfy a craving of their nature. Or again, putting aside the stronger passions, take the petty man who deceives his friends, who lies at every step to get out of somebody the price of a pot of beer, from sheer love of brag, or from cunning. Take the employer who cheats his workmen to buy jewels for his wife or his mistress. Take any petty scoundrel you like. He again only obeys an impulse; he seeks the satisfaction of a craving, or he seeks to escape what would give him trouble.

We are almost ashamed to compare such petty scoundrels with one who sacrifices his whole existence to free the oppressed, and, like a Russian Nihilist, mounts the scaffold; so vastly different for humanity are the results of these two lives; so much do we feel ourselves drawn toward the one and repelled by the other.

And yet were you to talk to such a martyr, to the woman who is about to be hanged; even just as she nears the gallows, she would tell you that she would not exchange either her life—of a wild beast hunted by the hounds of the Czar—or her death for the life of the petty scoundrel who lives on the pence stolen from his work-people. In her life, in the struggle against monstrous might, she finds her highest joys. Every thing else, outside the struggle, all the little joys of the bourgeois and his little troubles seem so contemptible, so tiresome, so pitiable! "You do not live, you vegetate," she would reply; "I have lived."

We are speaking, of course, of the deliberate, conscious acts of men, reserving for the present what we have to say about that immense series of unconscious, all but mechanical acts, which occupy so large a portion of our life. Well! In his deliberate, conscious acts man always seeks what will give him pleasure.

One man gets drunk, and every day lowers himself to the condition of a brute, because he seeks in liquor the nervous excitement that he cannot obtain from his own nervous system. Another does not get drunk; he takes no liquor, even though he finds it pleasant, because he wants to keep the freshness of his thoughts and the plenitude of his powers, that he may be able to taste other pleasures which he prefers to drink. But how does he act if not like the judge of good living who, after glancing at the menu of an elaborate dinner, rejects one dish that he likes very well to eat his fill of another that he likes better?

Whatever he does, man seeks a pleasure or shuns a pain.

When a woman deprives herself of her last piece of bread to give it to the first comer, when she takes off her own scanty rags to cover another woman who is cold, while she herself shivers on the deck of a vessel, she does so because she would suffer infinitely more in seeing a hungry man, or a woman starved with cold, than in shivering, or feeling hungry, herself. She escapes a pain of which only those who have felt it know the intensity.

When the Australian quoted by Guyan, wastes away beneath the idea that he has not yet avenged his kinsman's death; when he grows thin and pale, a prey to the consciousness of his cowardice, and does not return to life till he has done the deed of vengeance, he performs this action, a heroic one sometimes, to free himself of a feeling which possesses him, to regain that inward peace, which is the highest of pleasures.

When a troop of monkeys has seen one of its members fall in consequence of a hunter's shot, and comes to besiege his tent and claim the body, despite the threatening gun; when at length the elder of the band goes right in, first threatens the hunter, then implores him, and finally, by his lamentations, induces him to give up the corpse, which the groaning troop carry off into the forest, these monkeys obey a feeling of compassion stronger than all considerations of personal security. This feeling in them exceeds all others. Life itself loses its attraction for them whilst they are not sure whether they can restore life to their comrade or not. This feeling becomes so oppressive that the poor brutes do everything to get quit of it.

When the ants rush by thousands into the flames of a burning ant hill, which that evil beast, man, has set on fire, and perish by hundreds to rescue their larvae, they again obey a craving to save their offspring. They risk everything for the sake of bringing away the larvae that they have brought up with more care than many women bestow on their children.

Finally, when an infusorian escapes a too powerful ray of heat, and goes in search of a tepid ray, or when a plant turns its flowers toward the sun, or closes up its leaves at the approach of night, these beings still obey the need of shunning pain and seeking pleasure; just like the ant, the monkey, the Australian, and the martyred Christian or Anarchist.

To seek pleasure, to avoid pain, is the general line of action (some would say, law) of the organic world.

Without this quest of the agreeable, life itself would be impossible. Organisms would disintegrate, life cease.

Thus whatever a man's actions and line of conduct may be, he does what he does in obedience to a craving of his nature. The most repulsive actions, no less

than actions which are indifferent or most attractive, are all equally dictated by a need of the individual who performs them. Let him act as he may, the individual acts as he does because he finds a pleasure in it, or avoids, or thinks he avoids, a pain.

Here we have a well established fact. Here we have the essence of what has been called the egoistic theory.

Very well, are we any better off for having reached this general conclusion?

Yes, certainly we are. We have conquered a truth, and destroyed a prejudice which lies at the root of all prejudices. All materialist philosophy in its relation to man is implied in this conclusion. But does it follow that all the actions of the individual are indifferent, as some have hastened to conclude? This is what we have now to see.

CHAPTER III.

We have seen that men's actions (their deliberate and conscious actions, for we will speak afterward of unconscious habits) all have the same origin. Those that are called virtuous and those that are designated as vicious, great devotions and petty knaveries, acts that attract and acts that repel, all spring from a common source. All are performed in answer to some need of the individual's nature. All have for their end the quest of pleasure, the desire to avoid pain.

We have seen this in the last chapter, which is but a very succinct summary of a mass of facts that might be brought forward in support of this view.

It is easy to understand how this explanation makes those still imbued with religious principles cry out. It leaves no room for the supernatural; it throws over the idea of an immortal soul. If man only acts in obedience to the needs of his nature, if he is, so to say, but a "conscious automaton," what becomes of the immortal soul? What of immortality, that last refuge of those who have known too few pleasures and too many sufferings, and who dream of finding some compensation in another world?

It is easy to understand how folks who have grown up in prejudice and with but little confidence in science, which has so often deceived them, folks who are led by feeling rather than thought, reject an explanation which takes from them their last hope.

But what are we to say of those revolutionists who, from the last century down to our own day, each time they have heard for the first time of a natural explanation of human actions (the egoistic theory, if you like), hasten to draw from it the same conclusion as that young Nihilist we were speaking of, and eagerly cry: "Down with morality!"

What are we to say of those who, on being persuaded that man only acts in one way or another in answer to a need of his nature, hasten to conclude that all his actions are indifferent; that there is no longer either good or evil, that to save a drowning man at the risk of one's life or to drown a man for the sake of his watch are two equally worthy acts; that the martyr dying on the scaffold after laboring for the freedom of mankind and the petty scoundrel stealing from his comrades are one as worthy as the other—as both are seeking to please themselves.

If they further added that there must be no good and evil odors; neither perfume of the rose nor stink of assa foetida, because both are nothing but vibrations of molecules; that there must be no good and bad tastes, because the bitterness of quinine and the sweetness of the guava are also nothing but molecular vibrations; that there is neither physical beauty nor physical ugliness, neither intelligence nor imbecility, because beauty and ugliness, intelligence and imbecility are again but the results of chemical and physical vibration operating within the cells of the organism; if they added this, we might say they were raving, but that at least they possessed a madman's logic.

But as they do not say this, what must we conclude?

Our answer is simple. Mandeville, who reasoned in this way in 1724 in his "Fable of the Bees," the Russian Nihilist of 1890-70, and some Parisian Anarchists of our day reason thus, because all unconsciously they are still sticking fast in the mire of prejudice, the prejudice of their christian education. However, atheistic, however materialistic, however anarchistic they believe themselves, they are reasoning exactly as the Fathers of the Church or the founders of Buddhism reasoned.

This, in effect, is what those worthy elders used to say: "An action will be good if it represents a victory of the soul over the flesh; it will be evil if the flesh has overcome the soul; if neither, then it will be indifferent. Only by this can we judge if the action be good or bad." And our young friends go on repeating after the Christian and Buddhist fathers: "Only by this can we judge if the action is good or bad."

The Fathers of the Church said: "Behold the beasts; they have no immortal soul; their actions are performed simply in answer to the needs of their nature; this is why there can be neither good nor evil actions amongst beasts; all are indifferent; and this is why for beasts there is neither heaven nor hell, neither reward nor punishment." And our young friends take up the refrain of St. Augustine and Ockham, and go on saying: "Man is but a beast, his acts are simply performed in answer to the needs of nature; this is why there can be neither good nor evil actions amongst men. All actions are indifferent."

It is still this accursed idea of punishment and penalties that comes athwart the reason; it is still this absurd legacy from religious instruction, teaching that an act is good if it springs from a supernatural inspiration, and indifferent if the supernatural origin is wanting. It is the same old idea, even amongst those who laugh at it the loudest; the angel on the right shoulder and the devil on the left. "Drive away the devil and the angel, and I cannot tell you if such and such an action is good or bad for I do not know of any other test to judge it by."

The parson is everlastingly there with his devil and his angel, and all the materialistic varnish does not suffice to hide him. And, what is still worse, the magistrate is everlastingly there too, with his award of the lash for one and his civil recompense for another, and even the principles of Anarchism are not enough to uproot the ideas of punishment and reward.

Well now, we want neither parson nor magistrate. And we say simply: Does assa foetida stink? Does the snake bite me? Does the liar deceive me? And the plant, the reptile, and the man are obeying a need of their natures? So be it! Well, I, for my part, also obey a need of my nature in hating the plant that stinks, the reptile that kills with its venom, and the man who is still more venomous than the animal. And I shall act in consequence, without addressing myself for that purpose either to the devil, with whom I have not the honor of being acquainted, or to the magistrate, whom I detest even more than the snake. I, and all those who share my antipathies, also obey the needs of our natures. And we shall see which of the two has reason, and therefore force, on his side.

This is what we are going to see, and by this very investigation we shall discover that if the Saint Augustines had no other basis whereon to distinguish between good and evil, the animal world have another which is still more efficacious. The animal world in general, from insects to men, know perfectly what is good and what is bad, without consulting bible or philosophy. And if it be thus, the cause is still in the needs of their nature; in the preservation of the race, and, therefore, in the greatest possible sum of happiness for each individual.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)

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