

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. 25.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SUNDAY, MAY 1, 1898.

WHOLE NO. 161.

THE LEGISLATURE.

Each of them, taken singly, is passably gifted with reason;
Let them assemble—and straight into a blockhead he turns.
—Shiller (translated).

THE LEGISLATOR.

"I am honest," exclaimed the legislator with fervor;
Honest? Well, that may be, but your job is a thief.
—Herman Eich.

ELECTION.

"Here is an honest man that will stand for the rights of the people,
To secure his success pays five dollars a vote."
"What," said Hayseed, "a man who will fight for the cause of the people,
And five dollars besides? There is a bargain, I trow!"
"Hayseed! Lookout! Beware! That man there is an impostor,
Now he is buying your vote but to sell you in time.
Here is the honest man! He pays for your vote not a penny.
But if elected he will stand by your cause to the death."
Hayseed voted for him; this honest man was elected.
And the power he held made him a knave just the same.
Hayseed was striking his breast. He cried: I was duped like a schoolboy.
Had I but taken the five! I could be that much ahead.
—Herman Eich.

1848-1871.

A speech delivered by Peter Kropotkin at the Commune Celebration, 1898.

We are here tonight to commemorate two great events, the 50th anniversary of the Revolution of 1848 in Europe, and the 27th anniversary of the Commune revolution of 1871 at Paris.

We have so often commemorated the 18th of March, so often spoken of this uprising, that he who will consult our papers for the last ten or eleven years will find in the commemoration articles and speeches nearly all that can be said about that great event. A most instructive booklet could be made of these Commune speeches and papers.

I will say, therefore, a few words on the Revolution of 1848.

To begin with, no proper history of that movement has ever been written—not even by Radicals, not even by Socialists.

Up till now all histories of revolutionary movements were written according to the following receipt:—

The misery of the people was great; the people revolted. It was partially successful, but ultimately defeated: there was great bloodshed—quite useless. The people were defeated because they were not organized, were not sufficiently disciplined. They went too far in their demands.

What can be deducted from such books and pamphlets?—Be disciplined! Don't go too far in your demands. Obey your leaders! Make no unsuccessful movement!

Such a view, however, is utterly false in three respects.

False as regards the time before the revolution. False as regards the revolution itself. False as regards its consequences.

Before every revolution times are undoubtedly bad. Popular misery is a source of discontent. But every thing is not bad all round during the years which precede a revolution.

Revolutions have never been and never will be a result of sheer despair. Sudden misery and crises may prevail in the years which precede a revolution,

but these years are also years of hope. It is hope—not despair—which prepares revolutions.

The down-trodden peasants, workers, or nationalities begin to hope in the possibility of a better future. In the name of that hope, agitation spreads amidst the peasants, the workers, the citizens, the down-trodden nationalities.

It was the hope of getting rid of British rule which inspired the Irish a hundred years ago, in 1798. Hope which took hold of the minds in Europe in 1848. Hope which moved the Paris workers in 1871.

Another feature. No revolution falls upon us from the skies. Each of them has been prepared in two ways.

The revolution may be purely political in its course and results—as the March revolution in Berlin was to a great extent. But be it purely political or even purely nationalist—it was a Social, a Socialist, a Communist movement of ideas, a movement in the economical sphere which in every case has prepared it. Masses of people have never been nor will be set into motion on merely political grounds. This is a lesson of history which ought to be impressed upon all those who live under the illusion that the political institutions of a country may be changed, or independence may be won, in the name of political liberty alone. There must be a distinct economical issue in view for the people if you expect that people to act in a revolutionary way. The clearer the issue—the better; but it must be there.

So it was in France in 1789—the abolition of rural and municipal serfdom and of obligations resulting therefrom. So it was in 1848.

The years 1830-1848 were years of a most extensive Socialist propaganda in Western Europe. The number of Socialist and especially Communist books, papers and pamphlets which were circulated during those years in this country (England), and in France was enormous. These books, papers and pamphlets are forgotten, ignored by our generation; this ignorance is the only reason why we hear so much of "scientific Socialism" as being of recent creation, whilst there is not, in the so-called scientific Socialism, one single assertion, general or of detail, which would not have been developed, even more scientifically, and always with more lucidity, in the English and French literature of 1830-1848. Every year we discover in Robert Owen, in Thöropson, in Proudhon and in a mass of writers unearthed but lately, every one of the ideas which are enunciated now as new discoveries, in a less metaphysic garb but in a more scientific shape.

These were wonderful years, when an immense amount of Socialist and Anarchist thought was thrown out into the world, and circulated in scores of thousands of copies.

And these ideas bore their fruit. Not one single revolution has ever broken out in the world without having been prepared by scores of partial outbreaks. Revolutions are not military parades. It is the mass of the people which comes on the scene in a revolution; and masses of people have never been moved except by scores of partial, preliminary outbreaks.

Hundreds of partial peasants' outbreaks took place in France before the people of Paris took the Bastille on July 14, 1789.

Scores of small outbreaks and machine wars took place in this country before '48; and even in down-trodden Germany the little fighting which took place

at Berlin on the 18th of March 1848 was preceded by several outbreaks of weavers and coal miners, only now brought to the memory of our generation by our friend Hauptman.

In France, the reign of Louis-Philippe was an uninterrupted series of political conspiracies of the Blanquists, and of laborers' outbreaks of which the Lyons insurrection broke out with the watchword:—

To live working,
To die fighting!

As to Italy I hardly need mention the countless attempts of Mazzini and his followers to shake off the Austrian yoke and the hundreds of popular outbreaks which took place in the provinces belonging to the Pope or ruled by the Austrians.

The leading feature of the revolution of 1848 was, first of all, that it was European—not merely national. No sooner had it broken out in Rome than it spread to France, to Vienna, to Berlin. It began a new era. It showed that henceforward insurrections may still remain local and national, but that revolutions of any serious moment will henceforward be inter-national. They will spread, like wild fire, to several countries at once. Even insular England was in 1844 on the verge of a revolution, which was only averted by rapid concessions to popular agitation.

Henceforward, revolutions will not be kept back by frontiers. In each country, of course, they will take their own character, but they will be European—not local. At the next revolutionary outburst, Germany, which is now in the state that France was in fifty years ago, will probably make its revolution of 1848; she will try State Socialism in a unitarian, centralized republic. Russia may make her revolution of 1789; but France, owing to the beacon that was planted by the Commune of Paris in 1871, and to the subsequent growth of Communist ideas, will already proceed with the dismemberment of the State, and will try something better than State Socialism: her revolution will bear traces of Anarchist ideas; Spain, and also possibly Italy, will follow her more or less in that new phase of human development.

When we now read the French republican literature of the "forties," we clearly see that for the republican of those times, the republic was not a mere change in the forms of government. People lived then under the illusion that the moment that France would get rid of Kings, and have a national parliament elected by universal suffrage—convinced Equality would come out by itself, through legislation, through the 'Popular Government,' in the 'Popular State'—the Volks-Staat as German Social-Democrats say up to the present date.

The State would put an end to the prevailing misery. The State—that is the National Parliament—would reorganize industry, by aiding the workmen's associations to become the owners of the factories. The State would send "armies" of workers to bring under culture new lands and cultivate them in accordance with science—you know well these fancies, be it only through Marx and Engels' "Communist Manifesto" which remains a sort of bible for the German Social Democrats. Fifty years ago, these illusions were shared in France by nearly all Socialists, as they are now shared in Germany.

Federalist ideas were then repudiated in France as an incarnation of reaction—just as they are now repudiated in Germany. The worship of the Convention of 1793, and the Jacobite Club, which were

represented as having made the Great Revolution, while in reality they were obstacles to whatever really had been achieved in the economic field by the French peasants and workers—the worship of what they described as the dictatorship of the people but what was really a dictatorship of the few against the people, was supreme. Whatever has been done by the people themselves in the country or in the revolutionary municipalities (the taking of the land and the destruction of feudal servitude) was either totally ignored, or represented as the work of paid agents of reaction.

In this state of mind Frenchmen nominated their revolutionary Provisionary Government; in this state of mind they elected a National Assembly.

The disappointment was terrible. No revolution in the facts of real life having taken place in the provinces; no revolution whatever in economical relations having taken place even in Paris, the revolutionary work having been left to a National Representation—this representation became the weapon of the anti-Socialist reaction.

In vain the people of Paris tried to impress more advanced ideas upon that body. Once in power it organized the middle-class volunteers, and while it relegated the two Socialist members of the Provisional Government—Louis Blanc and Albert—to a Ministry or Committee of Reforms in the Luxembourg palace, it lost no time in organizing the military power which was to be used to crush a possible outbreak.

Louis Blanc and Albert, supported by a committee of workers, had to face the insoluble problem of organizing State production. Isolated as they were from the masses, which alone could have given the inspiration for a revolutionary change in the ways and means of production, they soon were driven to simply organize relief-works. Unemployed from all provinces rushed in scores of thousands to Paris. Revolutionists would have seen in the mass of the best workers of Paris the element for taking possession—de facto, irrespective of the sanction of the Chamber—of all that was necessary for living and producing, to vivre en travaillant (to live working), as the Lyons weavers said. But the State Socialist Louis Blanc—a worshipper of order and discipline—gradually dropped into relief-works for unemployed and into State's aid to co-operative societies, while the government adroitly sent its own man (Thomas) to render even these relief-works as unpopular as possible.

The workers of Paris, on the proclamation of the Republic, had sent a deputation to the government "to offer three months of misery to the service of the Republic." They hoped that something would be made for them in the meantime. But when the government felt itself strong enough, it discharged the relief-works' brigades, and ordered part of them to be marched to Algeria.

"The alarm-bell began to ring on the tower of St. Sulpice, calling the proletarians to arms," as Herzen wrote. Barricades grew up; General Cavaignac reconnoitred the position. The fight began. The proletarians fought with the energy of despair; but the troops, gorged with brandy, excited against the "robbers," fought this time and, after a bloody fight which lasted for three days, the proletarians were defeated.

Massacres and transportations by the thousand began. Men, women and children were shot by the hundred. A dark, gloomy night set over Europe. A wild, black reaction began. Even Socialist ideas were wiped out of the minds of the next generation. We began re-building that glorious building like men who come to the buried site of an old city and begin to build a new one, almost unconscious of the treasures of architecture buried under the loam and rubbish accumulated above them.

—Another unsuccessful revolution! the wise-ones say.

But there is no such thing as an unsuccessful revolution! We were told all sort of nonsense about that revolution. But here we are now,

several hundred thousand in Europe and America, commemorating today that revolution, inspiring us with its ideals, with its heroism, and how many hundreds of young ones amongst us will take tonight the silent oath to live for it, and to die for it.

And then, how many men fell in the street battle in Berlin?—Not a hundred. Much less than the Russian youth lost within the last twenty years. And what was the result?—Serfdom was done away with in Germany. After 1848, it could be withheld no longer. Personal servitude was abolished and, by the way, a blow was given to absolute rule.

In Italy, where pre-revolutionary movements were far more important, the result was infinitely greater. The rule of the Pope and Church over large populations was done away with. But do you know what the rule of the priest meant? Read Lily's article in the last-number of the Nineteenth Century. Inquisition reigned in full, up to the revolution in the Pope's State. For a blasphemous word the tortures of the Church, strapado and fire, were applied. Why! even in Switzerland, in the German cantons which had not been touched by the Great French Revolution of the last century, physical torture—the thumb-screw—was officially recognized as a necessary part of the preliminary inquest. And I will ask the Russians who may be in this hall—how many more years serfdom would have lasted in Russia, if our best men—Herzen and Bakunin—had not lived through the revolution of 1848 and taken in it a lively part? if a whole generation—"the men of the forties"—had not grown up out of that revolution from which our next generation—the Tshernyshevskis, the Mikkailoffs, the Dobroluboffs—drew their inspiration?

That revolution has changed the very face of Europe—the way of thinking itself on the Continent. And they—the formalists—talk of unsuccessful revolutions!

But new ideas had to germinate in order to make Communism realizable. Before '48, Communism too much appealed to sentiment, to brotherly feelings, to moral principles. It required a Proudhon to come forward and to say: I don't ask you to love your brothers—you won't: you hate those whom you exploit. I ask you to count. I speak to you in the name of arithmetic, and prove to you by arithmetic that your system is wrong—an idea still fuller developed, as you know, by Marx.

And it required again a Proudhon to come forward with his General Idea of the Revolution of the XIX Century and his Federative Principle, and analyzing that revolution of '48, to prove that it must have failed because it undertook the impossible—to make the social revolution through a governing body.

The social revolution is an economic revolution, and not a political one; he proved it must attack the system of property, not the system of elections. And when the self-government question came under discussion, he exclaimed and proved: "The Commune will be all or she will be nothing."

This was what the Commune of Paris of '71 attempted to realize.

At that time when the Jacobinist centralization ideas revived and made a fearful havoc even within the International Workingmen's Association—everyone paying a tribute to them, the Paris workers made a new step and planted a new banner in the revolutionary movement: the Commune!

The Commune, supreme in its entire economical and political life. The Commune becoming all, after having so long been nothing, nothing but a parcel of the State.

"Let every other part of France do as they like: call in a king if they believe still in his divine powers. Let them support any Church and all Churches they like—we, Paris, don't want to be governed by them—nor do we pretend to govern them!"

This principle was so new that even in the advanced camp of the Socialists it was not understood. And

yet, it was the principle of the revolution of the communes in the twelfth century which was now proclaimed by the workers of Paris, and was to become henceforward the watchword of the Social revolution.

Why should Paris, Lyons, St. Etienne be kept back in their progress towards Communism by the backward stay of the populations of Brittany and Western France altogether. Why should it be dragged backwards, obey a king whom you believe in, give up our children to the priest, and never make a move in the Communist direction, only for the sake of belonging to the same State as you!

To exchange with you our produce; to federate with you for building a railway or a canal; or for repulsing a common enemy—well and good! But why should we obey the rulers whom you choose still to impose upon yourselves? We are strong enough to live by ourselves!

This was the new principle which proclaimed the people of Paris on the 18th of March in 1871. A principle so little understood at that time that for years after the Commune we, Anarchists, had to sustain the most bitter polemics—and have partly still—against the leaders of Social-Democracy who treated us as fools for expressing such ideas. Even now, how many will not see that this was the fundamental idea of the March uprising of Paris—so admirably well worded in the proclamation of the Committee of the National Guard.

The conditions in which the Commune was proclaimed—with German armies at its door, after a crushing national defeat—and with the mistake of a centralized power for Paris which was made at the outset, the Commune could not live long enough to pass from the principle it had proclaimed to its application. Quite a forest of State prejudices had to be cleared in Paris itself; they had to be weeded out of the hearts of the very best men who gave themselves heart and soul to the movement, before the principle could produce what it was worth.

The Commune lived but seventeen days, and a fortnight after its proclamation the Versailles government already began to massacre all prisoners whom its soldiers could occasionally lay hands on, in the battle or by treachery.

A desperate fight against the "Prussians of Versailles" absorbing all the thoughts of the population, it necessarily brought into prominence men of a military turn of mind in preference to those who saw the salvation of the Commune in sweeping Communist measures for the masses.

Some such measures were taken, nevertheless, and the general approval they met with on behalf of the toilers of Paris only proved how much more popular the Commune would have been had she resorted to measures of that sort from the outset. But the Socialist movement was so young yet! It only began to revive within the last three or four years to '71.

But that wild beast Gallifet who has on his own conscience—if he has any, which I doubt—the massacre of at least some ten thousand men, women and children, this "sword" of France which is still alive, understood perfectly well the filiation between 1848 and 1871. When he ordered the massacre of columns of prisoners—of workers, of course—he always ordered the "grey beards" to be shot first. "They have seen June '48," he said.

I will not speak of these massacres. You must read them yourselves.

And now, looking upon the 27 years which we have lived since, I see two things; a revolution which would try to establish State Socialism in France, by means of a central government, as it was done in '48, is no more possible. No such attempt will be made. The next revolution in France, whose date no one can foresee, will break out in many centres at once. It will start with the proclamation of Communes, each of which will try to find its own solution for the Social Question. The same in Spain, and very much the same in Italy.

As to the growth of Socialist and Anarchist ideas, you know it. They spread everywhere, penetrate in all classes of society, pervade European thought. And more and more the idea which we are preaching becomes generally accepted. The Social Revolution must begin with organizing Consumption, not Production. Well-being must be secured for every inhabitant of the territory, and production must be regulated in accordance with the needs of consumption, not vice versa.

These are the conquests which we owe to our fathers of 1848, to our predecessors of 1871.—Freedom, London.

THE ITALIAN PEASANTS' REVOLUTION.

Hardly a day passes, but news is received from one or more places, mostly from Sicily, that the inhabitants have rallied and stormed and taken or attempted to take city halls. But there are no more collisions reported with the armed forces. In Carricatti the peasants captured the cereals by force in order to prevent their being exported, and the soldiers acquiesced. From Northern Italy the provinces of Ferrara and Ravenna; from Central Italy the province of Rome; and from Southern Italy Apulia, Calabria and Sicily are continually reported to be in revolt caused by high taxes here and high prices of breadstuffs there and by starvation and lack of employment. But the application of the hitherto so much favored means of subjugation—guns and arrests—seems to have been abandoned.

A political acquaintance of mine who although an ultra conservative is not entirely prejudiced by his party's affiliations, returned from Sicily, his home, to Mayland. Interviewed by me regarding the situation upon the island, he told me a very melancholy story which he closed with the following remarks: "In Sicily a universal outbreak of a fearful catastrophe is unavoidable. The masses of the people are starving, the middle class is ruined and the so-called rich are also threatened ruin. To this is added the fearful hatred of the people against all authorities who, of course, are doing everything in their power to deserve such hatred. The organs of the authorities are cruel, rotten and corrupt."

With few exceptions this picture of the situation will apply to the largest part of Italy which consists mostly of agriculturists. But the condition of the industrial workers is somewhat different. Particularly in Mayland the working class has as yet suffered but little from the rise of prices in breadstuffs. Labor in general is plentiful and thus the worker stands the slight rise of prices of bread comparatively easy. Therefore the organization and agitation here is not marked by great excitement. But it looks vastly different with the provinces exclusively depending upon agriculture and which compose nine-tenths of the population of Italy. In Germany and Austria the revolution of 1848 accomplished the overthrow of the feudal system for the peasantry. In Italy, however, the revolution between the years of 1848 to 1866 was followed only by political changes. The Italian peasant is still waiting for the abolition of the feudal system. And this will presumably be the foundation of the next great movement which is already being felt in the air. —Chicagoer Arbeiter Zeitung.

MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP.

VI.

Government, then, as we have seen, is probably the most potent element in the creation of monopoly. It is powerful enough to enact arbitrary rules and regulations to satisfy the requirements of the hour. Its authority is unlimited. Its laws must be obeyed, and to own the government is to own the power to rob and plunder all the people of the land. Nothing is wrong that finds a place upon the statute. Nothing is right which the government, through its legislative, judiciary or executive functions, pronounces to be wrong. Hence the meek submission of so many millions of civilized beings to a protective tariff, a measure carefully calculated to restrict competition and to enable a few men to control an otherwise unlimited industry.

But the protective tariff is not all. There are other ways in which the government is the perpetrator in chief of all the unfair accumulations of wealth at the cost of the life-blood of so many millions of people. I shall not stop to consider the evil of monopoly in money. Neither shall I stop to illustrate how the government in making a certain metal the only medium of exchange renders all except the owners of that metal totally helpless. This would bring us to the consideration of the evils of specie currency, a question which will be considered in a separate series of articles. I shall, however, call attention to the privileges granted to certain corporations, so as to show who is to blame, the corporations or the government.

Take for instance the gas light companies. A certain millionaire, through bribery and other influences, gets the legislature to grant him a charter, say an exclusive right to manufacture gas. By means of that charter that one or many millionaires, as the case may be, are permitted to manufacture gas to illuminate the streets and the dwellings in a certain city or

town. No one else is allowed to go into the same business. The industry is in the hands of those to whom the legislature saw fit to grant the privilege. Now, the people need gas. They must buy it from that corporation. Who then makes the price of that gas? Of course, the corporation. Does the corporation have any doubt about being in a position to supply all the gas consumed in the place where it is the only producer? Why, certainly not. The people must have gas, and there being no other gas producers, they will have to come to the only corporation.

Thus, then, a few men come to own an industry which, if not for the government, they could never own. They are enabled to make their own prices of gas, and the people must pay. They treat their customers unfairly, and the customers must stand it. They accumulate millions, and the people cannot help themselves. Whose fault is it?

Only last year a company offered to supply the city of New York with gas at 60 cents a thousand cubic feet. The same company promised to reduce the price to somewhere near 40 cents after five years. But they were not given a chance to manufacture gas, and the people of New York are still paying one dollar and twenty cents per thousand.

There was a great fight in the legislature. Some men made their reputation on fighting for the "dollar gas bill" as they call it. It was a hard battle and finally the company reduced five cents. What an absurd battle! A company asks to be allowed to sell gas at half the price, and the government flatly refuses; then the government makes a fight to reduce five cents. Are the people so stupid? Do the people really believe that governments are here to protect the interests of all? Can the people thus be fooled? When the government first creates a monopoly, a monopoly which charges three times the price for that which it manufactures, and then, instead of destroying that monopoly by opening competition, fights its own creature to reduce five cents, are the people so blind, so stupid as to imagine that the government is their friend? And if the people are so stupid, what about our reformers? Does Mr. Flower really believe that the corporation could charge \$1.25 a thousand for gas that can be reproduced and sold at 60 cents, had not the government, the so-called government "of the people," been in the way preventing other men from manufacturing and selling the same gas much cheaper?

Mr. Flower tells us of the enormous prices that we have to pay for gaslight; but I ask, who is to blame for it? Who, if not the government, is the power which prevents another company from producing gas? Who, if not the government, could retain the ownership of a few pipes, lying upon my premises and for which no rent is being paid? Why, companies are now giving away fixtures, far more valuable than a few pipes, and those who trade with them for a certain time, become the owners of those fixtures. Do you mean to say that gas pipes would still belong to the gas manufacturers, after the consumers of gas have paid so many millions of dollars for them?

But the government is here with its unlimited power. It permits one to rob the other, but it prevents the robbed from resisting. The government stands in the way. We would only have been paying 40 cents for the gas we are now paying \$1.20 for but for the government which stands with its army, its police force and prisons ready to assist the robbers and shoot down those who resist, those who would not consent to be robbed even in the name of the law.

We are not forced to pay the price for gas as required by the gas company, but the opposition is prevented from selling it cheaper. We are at liberty to pay and use gas or not, to pay and stay without gas. It's the same as the cat that fell into the pound and was still at liberty to get wet or not as it chose. We are also at liberty to live upon the land and pay rent, or get off the land and not pay. It is a glorious kind of liberty. But that is the only kind of liberty that is given. Real liberty must be taken.

DALLAN DOYLE.

NOTE ON SEX.

To all Comrades:

Why all these differing opinions on the importance of the discussion of the sex question? Does it not indicate that people are all at sea on the subject; that they have not settled upon any definite plan; and that they are trying to reach an understanding? This is what seems to me. And, just as in every other discussion, we have the extremists on both sides, one set

horrified at the mention of such an unpopular subject and trying to discourage any agitation at all; and the other contending that all other reforms wait upon that. Then the mass of the comrades fall into line on one side or the other of these extremes and assume a partisan attitude well calculated to prevent their reaching any satisfactory conclusion.

When such a condition exists it is time to tackle it in a thorough and painstaking way and clear it up, if possible. There is no question which affects humanity the discussion of which is not timely and proper. This was the thought in my mind when I prepared the pamphlet, "Mating or Marrying, Which?" that is to make No. 5 of FREE SOCIETY series. Whether I have succeeded in accomplishing my object or not, others must judge and not I. But I have convinced myself, if not others, that while freedom in sex relations is all important in an ideal society, it can never be attained, to any considerable extent, until economic freedom is first achieved. The reason, and the only reason for the marriage relation, as it exists today, is to bolster up the present system of private property. Change that and the relations of the sexes would change of themselves without any agitation. I sincerely hope that I have pointed out some, at least, of the factors which must be taken into account; and I invite comrades to take it up where I have left off and see if we cannot reach a better conclusion.

W. H. VAN ORNUM.

THE FOLLY OF WORSHIP, OR THE CURSE OF GODISM.

I should like to republish the above pamphlet, and if I can get sufficient encouragement will do so. Single copies 10 cents. By the dozen or hundred from three to five cents. If I can I should like to issue 10,000. In that case I could let them go much cheaper and not suffer loss. Who will help me? Address me in care of FREE SOCIETY.

LOIS WAISBROOKER.

WHAT OF THE ST. LOUIS CONVENTION?

If the United Labor and Reform Convention to be held in St. Louis on May 2. has no more radical program to carry out than that outlined in the call, it will, like other "reform" conventions which have preceded it, prove a flat failure. Labor and reform organizations had better save their money for local propaganda and future possible contingencies than waste it in sending delegates several hundred miles to make speeches and pass resolutions. After the aspiring orators have been heard and the body has many times "resolved," what benefit will it all be to the disinherited class? What will have been accomplished? How much nearer will the common people be to economic emancipation?

The plutocrats laugh to scorn such puerile manifestations of discontent. They heed the fiery orations of weak-kneed leaders and the "powerful" resolutions of hysterical gatherings, unaccompanied, as they always are, by action, as they do the rustling wind. The only thing that will make our capitalistic masters squirm is action—intelligent, determined, radical action.

The St. Louis convention has it in its power, by adopting an aggressive radical plan of action, to force plutocracy to show its hand. It might add a memorable page to history. It might take such action as would quickly lead to the downfall of the whole monopoly-cursed system. It might materially aid in ushering in a new civilization. Will it do it? The boldest of its delegates might write their names in the book of fame. Will they intelligently use the opportunity?

How? By issuing a new Declaration of Independence to the people of this country; by calling upon the people to ignore and to throw off their present form of government and to provide new means for their safety and welfare. An address should be sent out calling for a national, congressional convention, suggesting measures for such convention to consider, which of course should be of a radical nature. This would be a convention with a purpose. Those signing such a manifesto to the people would immortalize themselves.

But there seems not the least likelihood of such action being taken. The most radical thing suggested in the call is direct legislation, and the convention will most likely merit the sarcastic fling with which G. C. Clemens characterized the St. Louis conference of last August: "The tamest aggregation of wild animals that ever gathered to listen to speeches and to pass resolutions."

WM. HOLMES.

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Anarchy.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal: absolute individual liberty.—Century Dictionary.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Comrade Lucy E. Parsons is now on a lecturing tour in Pennsylvania as our readers will see on page eight. She has been lecturing in Pittsburg, but the announcement reached us too late for last week's issue.

Last Sunday Comrade Emma Goldman arrived in this city, and four meetings were preliminarily arranged before we went to press. From what we have heard in conversation with her we expect a great success from her meetings as she is one of the most advanced comrades and is well posted on all questions of social relationship.

Dr. J. H. Greer kindly donated five copies of his splendid work "A Physician in the House" to help Free Society along, and two weeks ago when our purse was utterly exhausted a good genius brought us four customers for the book, and so we were again saved from being drowned. There is nothing like having "faith in the Lord."

The comrades of Philadelphia sent us twenty dollars (proceeds from a ball) to pay the bill for paper and presswork of the pamphlet "Anarchist Morality." This gift helped us considerably, and we extend our heartiest thanks to all the donors, and also to the comrades in Chicago who sent us the amount which is receipted in the "Propaganda Fund."

War is declared! The Cubans will be free! Yes, war is declared, but the Cubans will not be any more free than they were under Spanish rule, and only deluded ignoramuses can believe for a moment that the object of the United States government is to free the Cubans. It is the mortgage, the bonds that must be secured. "If Gomez takes the island, what will become of the mortgage?" asked the dictator Elkins, in Washington, and that is the whole secret of our millionaires' patriotism. The mortgage consists of the little sum of \$400,000,000 Spanish-Cuban bonds which are secured by the revenues of Cuba, and if the Cubans had become free, their bonds would be worthless. Through the interference of this government the Cubans will be made responsible for the payment of these bonds, and the poor workers of Cuba and this country will pay the bill.

Speaking of the reawakening of Solidarity, Voltairine de Cleyre says in the London Freedom: "Personally I have little faith in papers dependent upon groups of contributors; for either the policy of the paper is too much modified by the groups (which is moral suicide), or the groups refuse their support if the policy is steadfast, original, and uncompromising enough to disregard them. The former is the fate of most of the reform papers I see, the latter that of the few exceptions—notably the Alarm of D. D. Lum. It would be well if some one could suggest a clear passage between this Scylla and Charybdis." This is an unwarranted accusation. The contents of The Firebrand or Free Society have never been modified by the groups of contributors. We have persistently disregarded the demands to ignore the sex question, etc., and still the various groups have liberally contributed toward the propaganda fund.

Referring to the article "Evolution and Sociology," which we reprinted in last week's issue, the Tocsin says:

"The Communistic Anarchists hope to attain, without the aid of the State, the same objects which those who call themselves Socialists, and are popularly known as Socialists, hope to attain by means of the State. The ideal of the C.-A's is indeed the ideal of voluntary co-operation, instead of that compulsory co-operation which so many labor reformers think is essential in order to properly equip man for the

perfect freedom of the true co-operative commonwealth.

"Much as the immediate aims of The Tocsin platform the aims of the C.-A's, one must recognize the importance of their position, and, both from the educational point of view and from that of justice, must accord them a hearing. Besides, the part their powerful spokesmen, such as Bakunin, Kropotkin, Elisee Reclus and Louise Michel have taken in preserving the sanity of democratic thinkers, and the noble fight for the liberty of the press, for which the editors of their organ, The Firebrand, are now undergoing legal persecution, entitle them to have their say in any truly democratic paper.

"The paper here printed will, it is hoped, give some slight indication of their views, and the fact that it is by a Queensland doctor, and was read before our most authoritative scientific body, makes its appearance in an Australian paper the more appropriate."

"Talking about the beauties of Anarchism—of freedom! Why, you Anarchists are just as tyrannical and bigoted as any of the State Socialists." With these words, Mary, our co-worker, was approached the other day by a State Socialist.

"What is the matter?" she inquired.

"Well, a girl who is working for an Anarchist and is keeping house with him, went to the theatre with our girl the other night without having asked his permission, and now he threatens to discharge her. Is that practising freedom?"

"When you were thrown off the platform by a so-called Socialist, she replied, did such act diminish the beauties of Socialism? Certainly not! It simply shows a lack of intelligence and proves that those parties are guilty of the tyranny which they pretend to combat." The State Socialist saw the point.

Bro. Isaak, in a foot note in No. 22 asks, "Why have any medium of exchange at all?" This is a pertinent question and calls for an answer, which is not hard to find. Granting all he says as to its arbitrary character, it still performs a very necessary function just now. The necessity for a medium of exchange comes from our system of private property. It is an outgrowth of it. So long as every person or family keeps his or its possessions separate from all others; and, in order to prevent its being wasted away, insists upon obtaining value for value for everything rendered or service performed, just so long will a medium of exchange be needed. Under a communistic system of society where each shall serve the others according to his ability and shall enjoy according to his needs, there will be no occasion for money, but that is not yet. When those who believe in Communism shall practice Communism they can abolish the necessity for money among themselves; but they will need it in their dealings with outside barbarians, or something that will perform the same function. It is not only a present necessity but it will be found a very effective bridge to carry us over to a better system which is yet to come."

Another valued contributor to the columns of Free Society, says, "Co-operative colonies cannot be made a success," which is a very curious statement to make. How is it possible for anyone to know what cannot be done, even if they have never been a success? But they have, in thousands of cases. Would an inventor working out a difficult problem in mechanics, after one or two trials, throw down his tools in disgust and exclaim that it never could be done? If so, he would make little headway. He may try a hundred experiments before he succeeds in doing what he is trying for; and yet every experiment will be a success. Each one will demonstrate whether or not that particular way will accomplish his end. But co-operative colonies have not been confined to negative results. They have scored the most positive successes of anything in this world. In the first place, it is not necessary to go away into the country to start a co-operative colony. Every co-operative society, even in the city, is a colony; and always succeeds just in proportion to the purity of its co-operation. In other words, its success depends upon its keeping out every element which is not co-operative from its organization. And the perfection of co-operation is Communism.

There is a wonderful amount of discussion as to what the Single Tax would or would not do. For me, I am unable to see how anyone can safely predict anything of something which has never been tried and which, so far as anyone can see, has not the slightest

I referred to a condition of freedom, and not to a period of reconstruction.

chance of ever being tried. The Single Tax depends upon its success as a political measure; and yet, it is a notorious fact that no reform is ever established by politics. Politics is only the art of hoodwinking the people, and maintaining a supremacy over them. It is a scheming for advantage. But reform consists in destroying advantage. Reform is the exact opposite of politics. Those who are in possession of advantage—of privileges—own the government and dominate every political party with absolute certainty. They furnish the money to elect the politicians to office with the distinct understanding that they are to get what they want. Are they going to commit hari kari by letting those whom they selected pass and execute laws which will take away their privileges? Not much!

W. H. VAN ORNUM.

A PARABLE OF TODAY.

Dedicated to Piece-meal Reformers.

Once upon a time a throng of brave people were traveling along a rough and dangerous road. They were forced to remove a great many obstacles, but their clumsy methods of doing so, caused the falling of many others which had to be dealt with in their turn. The people were journeying toward a land that was bright and beautiful, where they hoped freedom and leisure awaited them to enjoy and learn all they desired.

Finally they came to a narrow pass, where great, rugged rocks towered on every side, even directly across the pathway. There were a few small fissures here and there, and one immediately in front of them seemed large enough for them to possibly squeeze through. A brilliant light shone through and they felt that just beyond lay the beautiful land they wished to reach. A great discussion arose as to how they should proceed.

Now all the people were carrying treasures which would be doubly precious in that golden land toward which they were journeying. These were labeled "freedom of action," "freedom of speech," "freedom of thought," "equal rights to nature's resources," "free exchange," "full products of toil," etc. Many of the leaders urged that if they would divest themselves of nearly everything they carried, they might be able to push their way through. If they could save one little bit of the treasures, and get through at all, it would be better than for all of them to fail entirely. Little by little they might come back and get their treasures and bear them through. Then they began to argue as to what should be left. Some said "free land" must be dropped as one particular rock grew awfully hard and antagonistic when it approached. "Freedom" of any kind was especially obnoxious to the rocks, excepting a sort of vague and undefined quality that meant nothing in particular; all specific kinds they urged, ought to be left behind. "Full product of labor" should not be brought anywhere near; and a real money reform it would never do to try to carry through.

Only let them get through by hook or by crook though all their cherished treasures should be dropped, was the advice of the many leaders. They insisted on so much being dropped, that the people stood nearly naked leaving behind them nearly everything that could make life dear and sweet. And still they could not pass the mighty barriers.

A young, vigorous faction with voices that rang loud and clear above the confusion, urged that they attack the rocks themselves, blow them into fragments, and open a wide, clear road over which all might pass and carry with them all their treasures, all that would make life worth living.

Their words were scouted as impracticable, incendiary, fanatical, absurd. But the voices never ceased ringing, while the poor people still strove to squeeze through, bringing down fresh rocks upon their heads with every effort.

The turmoil is still raging and the rocks are still impassable; while they exist, they have always the power of creating new barriers wherever one is partially removed.

MAY HUNTLEY.

EMMA GOLDMAN IN DENVER.

Our comrade, Emma Goldman can now say of Denver what Caesar said of Britain: "I came, I saw, I conquered." The success of our energetic, pugnacious little comrade in her work of propaganda here must be deemed quite remarkable when the difficulties are taken into consideration. A week ago there were less

than half a dozen Anarchist-Communists here, and the prospects for successful agitation on such radical lines were not encouraging. In fact it was not without forebodings of failure that preparations were made for several lectures by our comrade. This is considered the coldest town (in a social and intellectual sense) in the country. Myron Reed, the reform preacher here, says "It is colder than a warmed over iceberg." Although there has been a branch of the Social Democracy for nine months, and other mediums of agitation for a much longer period, it has been difficult to arouse more than a passing interest in the people in radical questions. When it was proposed, therefore, to storm the city with a flood of Anarchist-Communist eloquence, people rubbed their eyes and gasped.

Our comrade delivered five addresses here last week, and every meeting was a success. In fact it was a surprise to everybody. Arrangements were made before she came for interviews in the leading daily papers, so that she was well advertised, and her well deserved fame as a forceful, eloquent speaker did the rest. Two nights she spoke at the Trades Assembly hall, and both times it was completely filled. Her address on "Patriotism" before the local branch of the Social Democracy was a splendid effort, and won merited commendation. Sunday evening she lectured on "Charity" under the auspices of the Denver Educational club, a society composed almost entirely of Jewish young men and women.

It is impossible in a short article to give even adequate synopses of Comrade Goldman's able addresses. Her style is forceful, her speeches replete with anecdotes and humor, bristling with sharp and effective points, and her language good. Her replies to critics and questioners were particularly effective, and never failed to capture her audiences.

It is too soon as yet to predict results; but this much is certain: the doctrine of Anarchism has received an impetus here which must produce good fruit. People have said to me "If this is Anarchy then I am an Anarchist." Several dollars' worth of literature was sold, and its perusal will generate ideas which in a short time must influence the radical movement of this city.

It is a great pity that we cannot have a dozen lecturers constantly in the field. The truths of Anarchism are needed not only to leaven the great conservative lump, but as a corrective for authoritarian dogmas put forth by social agitators of other schools.

WM. HOLMES.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

A body of Japan engineers lately visited the Bonin Islands, which are scattered near Formosa. To their great astonishment they found on these islands a colony of foreigners consisting of Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, Scandinavians and Americans, who peaceably lived on this prolific land, under a beautiful sky—free from taxes—under Anarchy. Only some whose deportment manifested a higher education enjoyed a greater respect, but otherwise there was no government whatsoever. "But alas," says an exchange, "this paradise is lost as the engineers have concluded to establish there a station for steamship companies, and thus will these refugees against their will be afflicted with 'civilization.'"

Under the heading of "A Southern Utopia" the Washington Post publishes the following:

"There is a village in my state," said Mr. E. W. Capers, at the Raleigh, "that has no semblance of government, though it has a population of 2,500 souls."

"It is Greentown, quite a manufacturing center, and withal one of the most law-abiding and moral communities in the state. The town marshal resigned some months ago on account of having nothing to do, since which time the people have got along without a peace-officer."

"The place was never incorporated as a city and has no mayor or council. Since its earliest day it has been governed by five trustees, a clerk, treasurer and marshal completing the official roster. Not long since three of the trustees moved out of that jurisdiction, and the remaining members have been unable to transact any business since for want of a quorum, so that nothing can be done until new trustees can be elected in April."

"The citizens are not worrying over the situation, and a majority are inclined to think they could get along indefinitely without any form of government."

Speaking of the gold regions of Alaska, a correspondent of the Examiner says:

"I found a community in which there is order without law; where men are indifferently honest without

fear of the policeman, and property is secure without title. Practically speaking there is for commercial purposes no law in Alaska. There is no such thing as property outside of mining claims. There is no collateral, and it is impossible to secure a debt. There is a bank at Skaguay, but it makes no loans, and its only business is exchange and the small charge made for safe keeping of deposits. In this regard the towns of Dyce and Skaguay are unique and remarkable. Imagine an American community of from 6,000 to 8,000 people with hundreds of houses and places of business in which there is not a single book debt and no mortgage on any man's home."

According to the Melbourne Tocsin, a number of men, mainly Anarchist-Communists, have decided to cast off the chains of wage-slavery altogether, and try to get a living by hunting and fishing about the Murray. Their manifesto reads thus:

MANIFESTO OF THE AUSTRAL PHILOSOPHICAL SAVAGES.

MURRAY RIVER TRIBE.

Comrades, why should you lead a life of a mere physical prostitute, soliciting servitude from those who are no better than yourselves. Nature intended that you should be free, and to that end planted in your breasts an instinctive love of liberty, hence your repugnance to authority. Now, we do not wish to persuade you to join us, knowing full well that anything man may do to be effective must needs be done through conviction. When men have the courage of their convictions they will need no leaders, and then actions will have more spontaneity. We merely wish to point out to you the fact that it is possible for men and women who are tired of the shams, conventionalities, and slavery of civilization to lead a life of comparative freedom in Australia. A brutal commercial and industrial system has destroyed much of the native game, but there are still many good hunting and fishing grounds on the principal rivers, where the expenditure of one-half the ingenuity and energy you now display in trying to eke out an existence under the capitalistic yoke would gain you a comfortable living. If you are in earnest in your desire for liberty you will act upon this hint, and individually or in company with kindred spirits put this suggestion into practice, and become a—Philosophic Savage.

One of their number devotes himself to missionary work among the benighted civilizees, and is at present in Melbourne. So is the Federal Convention. Thus extremes meet. He prescribes simplicity for freedom; they are devising an elaborate and complicated guarantee of a more perfect slavery.—Tocsin.

So we see on the one side that even the upholders of "law and order" are compelled to concede that people can get along more nicely without a government than under it, and on the other side we see the tendency—a strong desire to emancipate themselves from wage-slavery and tyranny. A. I.

PEPPERY POT.

Live to enjoy and enjoy to live.

An ounce of originality is worth a pound of imitation.

An enterprising firm offers to give valuable hints to persons wishing to become successful writers. For further information address Shortcut and Clearpoint, this office.

"War, unless . . ." has been the interesting news the gullible public has been fed upon for the last few weeks. Now it is "war declared" and next will be some other beautiful illustration of our "civilization." Newspapers sell like hotcakes and the "dear people" enjoy the prospects of seeing a wholesale prize-fight. But the prize in this case will go to the bondholders instead of to the combatants.

A ukase has been issued in the public schools to make the school children attend a parade of the poor idiotic slaves who allow themselves to be used as catapaws for bondholders and to be sent to slaughter other innocent human beings, and perhaps be slaughtered themselves. To instill the spirit of wholesale murder into the tender minds and hearts of children is called "patriotism" and "civilization." Fie!

"The first cause" is an irrational phrase which unfortunately some of the most radical writers thoughtlessly use. A "first cause" is just as unthinkable as a last one. The human mind is incapable of conceiving of a stoppage or beginning or suspension of the process of action and formation of the forces in the universe at any one thing. The idea of a first cause is just as illogical as that of a god from which it derives its origin.

"Have you read so and so?" is the tiresome question propounded by many people who wish to impress others with their own knowledge. The reading of a whole library does not necessarily make a person wiser. It is the proper digestion and application of what has been read that makes wisdom. There are many educated fools as well as uneducated sages. Common sense, power of observation, independent thought and application of one's own powers: labor, exertion, creation, origination, often develop more knowledge and ability than the mere machine-like copying and aping of others' thoughts and ideas. The question of the future will not be "Have you read so and so," but, "Do you understand, or what do you think of such and such an idea, theory, or principle."

Radicalism is by no means a passport for coarseness, rudeness, vulgarity and boisterousness. Nor are gentleness and refinement a breach of radicalism. Radicalism implies the reign of reason. Reason dictates that conduct toward one's fellow-beings which is calculated to be most pleasing and harmonious, inoffensive, non-invasive. There is a vast amount of space between a bowing and scraping French dancing master and a rude, obtrusive boor.

The "higher law" is a new fad that has taken possession of the progressive writer and agitator. Presumably it is the ethical "law" that is meant. Yet ethics themselves change in the course of evolution. Hence where's the "law?" It is neither the higher nor the lower law, but the principle of expediency, or that which is best and wisest under given conditions that is the correct and safe guide to harmony.

That love or association between the sexes which comes through the blending of the mind and body is indeed the most perfect, the most idealistic, the most beautiful and enjoyable—the climax of human happiness, and certainly cannot help being eagerly sought for and preferred by truly refined and cultured people. Yet is the love finding expression in mere physical contact by no means to be condemned, for this as well as the other kind is a gratification of human desire, prompted by man's constitution, and, while tastes may differ with regard to either kind of association selected, neither of them can be reasonably condemned because both kinds are natural.

As a matter of fact out of a hundred associations there may not be five formed as a result of mental attraction; most of them are physical.

The only kind of association to be condemned is that entered into without any attraction at all—prostitution—and that kind or the parties entering it are rather to be pitied than condemned, for they themselves are the greatest sufferers thereby.

To assert that anyone writes "rubbish" or to call a writer a "fool" or a "fraud" or use epithets is of course no sound method of reasoning or proclaiming and vindicating a truth or a principle, and it is perhaps not exactly in good taste. But it is certainly no invasion and does by no means constitute an infringement upon the principle of individual liberty. On the contrary it is an application of that very principle, for as Wendell Phillips said, liberty does not consist in the freedom of saying that only which pleases, but even that which is most displeasing. If an idea expressed is rational it will find acceptance in spite of its rough garb; if it is irrational it will fall dead upon the ear of the wise, garb and all.

Herbert Spencer is certainly a great man and a scholar; but this time a little man and a no-scholar will venture to "take him up." When Spencer said: "Matter, motion and force are but symbols of the unknown Reality," something must have been wrong with his liver. For how can a Reality, a fact, be unknown, or how can anything that is unknown be a Reality? Evidently there is a discrepancy here somewhere.

If an assertion or idea is to be supported by proofs and demonstration before being accepted as a fact—with which proposition I thoroughly agree—then the burden of proof and demonstration rests with the person who proclaims the existence of a soul. Until that person gives sufficient proof and demonstration of the existence of such a soul his position will not only not be unassailable but it will be very much assailable, and until that time all of us poor mortals must remain soulless corporations. S. D.

SEEKING KNOWLEDGE.

Only lately have I become acquainted with Anarchist literature, and while I fully agree with its principles I cannot see how Anarchism or a condition of freedom will ever be realized if we fail to practice our ideas as far as it seems expedient to the individual engaged in the propaganda by deed and theory. This question has puzzled my mind ever since I noticed that some of the readers of Free Society are, to my mind, of the erroneous opinion that we cannot even operate under the present system, and advise us to wait and prepare for the coming revolution.

It seems to me the comrades confound a rebellion with revolution. We had a rebellion in this country over a hundred years ago, but it did not revolutionize society or the prevailing conditions—it was simply a change of masters. A revolution means a change of conditions, a conflict between the "Old and the New Ideal." Now, how will this change or conflict ever come about if we bid not defiance to existing laws, customs and tyranny in any form? It may be replied that the rebellion will be a defiance of existing institutions, but I contend that a general conflict—the climax—will not occur if individuals do not begin to act in accordance with their ideas. Christianity would never have conquered the Roman empire if the followers of Christ had waited for a general revolution. At first they were cruelly persecuted, but the more they were persecuted the more rapidly their number increased until they conquered the government. True, the feudal system was overthrown during the climax of the revolution in France, but the peasants had in some parts of France driven the landlords off their land and taken possession of it long before the revolution became general. Not before the individual tries to free himself will society attempt to do it collectively.

If Anarchists co-operate, work without a "boss" and by so doing live cheaper and better, they have improved their condition; and if I ignore laws, customs and the moral code and am a resistant I have freed myself to the extent I ignore and defy them. Take the Ruskin colony for instance. The members have liberated themselves from wage-slavery, and their children receive an education which is in accordance with the views and aims of the parents, while our children are inculcated with superstitions and prejudices of all sorts in the public schools. Besides the colony has a means of propaganda, the Coming Nation, which does not have to appeal for funds. True, there is an authoritarian spirit in the colony that we Anarchists do not approve of and would not be able to endure, but that is due to the lack of knowledge and desire for freedom and not to co-operation itself.

A friend writes me that some comrades in Chicago attempted some time ago to better their condition by living in a communistic community, "and," says he, "it was a success economically, but it failed on account of jealousy," etc., and concludes that it is impossible to improve our condition under the present system. Now, the very fact that the attempt was economically a success refutes the objection, and as the failure is described to jealousy it simply shows that the participants were not Anarchists—they had not revolutionized their own minds yet. Anarchists will not interfere with each other's love affairs. If it is possible through co-operation to improve our well-being economically, and the freedom to choose our associates is preserved, I see no reason why those who are tired of hunting a job, or otherwise anxious to enjoy the company of independent thinking people, should not be able to colonize on land or in the cities and thereby propagate our ideal by deed and theory.

Am I right or wrong? I hope Comrade Pfuetzner or others will enlighten me on this so very important question.

A STUDENT.

A LETTER ON LOVE.

Valley of Indecision.

My Dear Felix:

For you are very dear to me and your last letter dated from Loveland was very welcome.

You want to know "what this love is that brings us such delightful emotions." Do you understand, my Felix, that love cannot be analyzed? that, though it seems tangible, a more intangible emotion never existed?

You say my "loveliness touched your feelings," now, when I lose my youthful beauty and have grown plain and even homely, will love come to me just the same? Will the love be as sweet, as full of pleasure as now? Please, dear Felix, be honest with me and answer a

few questions: If "love is an emotion which springs from physical pleasure," if "physical pleasure" is the basis of love, and from some unforseen cause the ability to give this pleasure is taken from me, must I go loveless the rest of my days? Can I not expect the tender regard of my male friends?

I agree entirely with what you say regarding our "savage ancestors," but do not agree in placing the responsibility of "the child" on the woman. You say "it is the affair of the free woman; she will undoubtedly solve it to her own enlightened well-being." Ah, how easy it is to drop the subject there! Answer me now, Felix. Suppose after the child comes, you cease to love me. I, being the mother, must attend to the child. I have endured the long months of anxiety, the closing hours of sickness and agony. The child has come—the fruit of love. The beauty and loveliness which first attracted you, has disappeared; your love has gone—and I have not yet solved the question to my "own enlightened well-being." But—the child—is—here.

Is it just to leave the most important problem unsolved? Ah, it was easy for you to tell me what love was, how it originated, what caused it. But when you speak of the inevitable consequences of that love, how very easily you say "the free woman will solve that."

Ah! Felix, Felix! I want something more than glittering generalities! All unknown to you I have studied this question of free love, and can see that man is falling into the same habit which his forefathers, aye, and all men have ever possessed, viz: placing the responsibility upon the woman.

I agree with you that love is free. It cannot be bound even by the golden tress you praise so highly. But life is not all a summer day. Every day brings us nearer old age; old age is the fell destroyer of beauty and passion. What then, my Felix? What then?

Affectionately, ARAMINTA.

Various Voices.

S. E. Montana—Dear Friends: I see you are in need of funds again. My intention has been to contribute \$2.00 per month, but lately money has been a little scarce.

While I don't think I have any right to criticize your methods, yet this suggestion is so mild it will not give offense I hope. Viz:

I would give those readers that are behind in their subscriptions a fair warning and unless they made a remittance of part of the amount due I should discontinue their paper.

It must certainly cost something for each paper sent out, thereby increasing the deficit. I feel sure anyone having the interest of the cause at heart surely can raise 50 cents.

I hope you will accept this in the spirit in which it is tendered.

♦ ♦ ♦

F. Schuman, New York City—In No. 5 of your paper you offered space for the defenders of the S. L. P. to express their opinions, and you added that none of the papers belonging to the S. L. P., would, or dared to make a similar offer.

Directly upon reading this I wrote to "Arbeideren" (The Workman) a social democratic paper in the Danish language, published in Chicago, and party organ of the S. L. P. I drew the attention of that paper to your offer and proposed to debate and defend Anarchist-Communism versus State Socialism in its columns. The "Arbeideren" took up my challenge and has up till now more than fulfilled its promise, having given me more space than at first promised.

As no defender of the S. L. P. has as yet taken advantage of your offer and thereby attempted to show us Anarchist-Communists wherein we are wrong; and as I believe that "Arbeideren" is the only S. L. P. paper that has, as a result of your offer, given us space for discussion, I wish you to bring these facts before your readers.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

"THE COUNTRY OF THE FUTURE."

The mention in your paper of a late lecture by H. C. B. Cowell recalls to my mind a little sheet published some years ago in San Francisco, which had the disturbing title of L'Enfant Terrible and was edited by Mr. Cowell and a Mrs. Clara Dixon Davidson, I believe.

The "Infant" was so very "Terrible" and cried so obstreperously against all restraints, that the public believing it to be a little imp of devilish heredity, refused to properly nourish it, and wailing its perverse heart, broken, it soon passed away.

For myself I received much pleasure from reading the few copies that came in my way, and one contained an article descriptive of a happy country—The Country of the Future—which I liked so much I have preserved

it till now, and will transcribe it for your columns, subjoining in conclusion some reflections upon it.

"There is a country called The Future, which is very beautiful; and very happy are its inhabitants.

"There every one does as he or she pleases, for few please to do hurtful things.

"The land is very fertile, and each one uses as much as he is able; and there is abundance to spare.

"The houses are many and scattered over the country. Most of them are small, and but few of them alike in size or appearance.

"Of dress there is much variety, for people dress to please themselves, to suit their occupations, their tastes and their physiques. There is no distinctive male or female dress. No one desires to know of what sex strangers are. People do not dress to hide their bodies, for they are not ashamed of being men or women.

"Great privacy prevails in the homes. Persons are not offended if their friends do not wish to entertain them every time they call. There no one can be insulted and few are injured. But every one is very sensitive lest some other should construe any of his or her words to mean a command, or any of his or her actions to mean a restraint upon others' harmless actions.

"Parents never demand obedience of their children; they reason with them; they tell them their experience and leave them free to act, so that children are very self-possessed and self-restrained. The most intelligent parents are sometimes much troubled because they have to restrain their offspring while very young; and so they make use of every means in their power to make the time of restraint as short as possible.

"Almost every man and woman has a separate home, and some children have their own homes, and all, except infants, their own rooms. Some do not live with either of their parents, but with some other person or persons whom they prefer. This freedom of the child to live with anyone willing to house him or her, makes parents very kind to their children.

"Women are self-supporting, also most children over ten years old.

"Men are guests at the houses of the women; sometimes for hours only, sometimes for days, sometimes for months, sometimes for years; but always guests. And likewise the women are guests at the houses of the men. So they become fathers and mothers.

"Everyone consciously seeks his or her happiness, and nearly everyone finds it in his or her peculiar way. No one blames another for not going his or her way. No one blames another for not having the same colored eyes as he or she has.

"In that country they like or dislike qualities. Essentials of persons or things please or displease them; neither age nor relationship, nor position is a factor in their judgments.

"They are not a moral people; they are under no obligations to each other, but they are a healthy people, a happy people, a wealthy people and a peaceful people.

"All this is the Country of the Future—the dwelling place of rational beings."—L'Enfant Terrible" Jan. 1892.

COMMENT.

"The Country of the Future" will please, I think, the readers of Free Society who believe in liberty, who think it a natural product that would spring up everywhere and be enjoyed and give happiness, if it were not for laws and governments.

Unfortunately this is not true; liberty is something which can only exist under the regulation of laws and in a highly cultured state of society in which the discipline and influence of education have brought the individual members into agreement on most of the relations and affairs of life—or as to what is right or wrong—so that they can move freely in their affairs without giving offense to each other.

In the "Country of the Future" it is said the people are happy because they do as they please. And this is correct: to do as one pleases is necessary to happiness.

The writer, however, explains that few do hurtful things—it is the country of "rational beings."

In this is implied that it is not doing as they please in an unqualified way that brings the happiness, but doing as they please in a rational way.

In the "Country of the Future" then must be established a rational order of human conduct, an order in which acts are considered hurtful or the contrary, according to a criterion or standard which is called rational.

Now, rational has a meaning and was doubtless used by the writer in a definite sense.

And what is this meaning—what is rational?

In his very interesting work "Dynamic Sociology" Mr. Lester F. Ward gives a definition of great clearness—"the rationality of action depends not on the power of a being to reason, but on the correspondence of mental deduction with objective reality."

An insane man may reason, but he reasons through a perceptivity which presents objects to the consciousness under a form in which they do not really exist.

Similarly an ignorant man may reason, but he reasons from the data of insufficient knowledge, and the images presented to the consideration of his reason are as unreal as those formed in the brain of a madman.

To reason rationally, to be a rational being, it is necessary to know—to have exact knowledge about the subjects reasoned upon; then the reasoning is rational, and the reasoner a rational being.

In the "Country of the Future," the writer says: "parents are very much troubled because they have to restrain their children while very young," so they reason with them, tell them their experience, and leave them free to act.

But before hearing this experience and being reasoned with—taught to reason—the children are restrained. Liberty follows as the result of the knowledge and exercise of reason. The child once fitted out with the experience of the parent is set free, but not before.

Liberty thus comes into being, not as a natural growth, like the hair or the stature, but as a bestowal, bestowed by the parents. It is a human creation something artificial and prevised; it depends upon the disposition of the children to be so guided by the experience of their parents as not to do hurtful things.

The writer is evidently mistaken when he affirms that the people of the "Country of the Future" are not a moral people; that they are not under any obligations to each other. It is plain that they are under obligations not to do "hurtful acts."

And what are these hurtful acts?—the children learn what they are from the experience of their parents.

But the experience of a single pair of parents is very limited. What do a man and woman know of themselves alone? almost nothing, shut away from the experience of all other parents, the experience of the race.

Judging alone, the individual who sees the sun rise in the East believes that it has passed around the globe and has come up out of the sea. If the children of the "Country of the Future" so reason from the experience of parents as to know and refrain from hurtful acts, then in that country the experience of parents must have been combined into commendable form, and this no doubt is a system of general education.

If, as affirmed, they are rational beings, that education must instruct them in realities; and the parents themselves in the course of a long period of evolution must have arrived at a point in experience which enables them to distinguish realities from delusions.

Only from one cause can human action be rational—"the mental deduction corresponding with the objective reality." Only when experience has made possible this rationality, can human beings be free.

Jesus recognized this. He declared, "after me shall come the spirit of Truth (Reality) and the Truth shall make you free."

It seems positive that in the "Country of the Future" is established an education founded on realities, for the writer says: "They like or dislike qualities (realities). Essentials of things please or displease them."

Among other lessons from reality education seems to have taught them that individuality—separate personality—is a good thing. Each person has a separate home or habitation, and men and women visit each other in their homes as they like, "and so children are born."

This is in accordance with reality—the real feeling of intelligent people. Men and women like to approach each other freely, and it is not a hurtful act, as is now supposed. The education of reality has recognized this and protects it in the "Country of the Future." No one there can give up or bind his or her personality to another's; each must always have a separate home and be free to receive a guest or be one. And so in the relations of the sexes the people are consistently rational beings.

All this, these delightful freedoms, must have come from education, a peculiar education, the education in objective reality; a very different education from that of the "Country of the Present," which is not in its statement of social experience founded on reality—which is

founded on first impressions, on conceptions of social relations; of sexual relations, generated in the ignorant experience of the barbarous people of the past, and especially from the barbarian belief in ghosts or spirits—and that the ghosts know what is right and wrong.

When we have the education of Reality, then the "Country of the Future" may be here.

J. W. GASKINE.

"TIMELY QUESTIONS."

When I answered Comrade Bodendyke's "A Call for Action" I little thought that it would stir up further controversy. I intended my remarks to apply to conditions in Chicago and not in general. Not knowing that it would stir up cooing doves as far away as Washington it was written as mirroring our surroundings. But I think that the arguments presented are applicable to the whole field. I hope Comrade Hopkinson will again peruse all the articles of Bodendyke's, his, and my own, and compare his questions; then he will see what I am driving at.

He questions (1) "Do you live anywhere near your ideal now?" Certainly not, else I would not agitate to arouse my fellowmen to wipe away the prevailing system. (2) "Would you be any farther from it in a colony, or in a co-operative effort in the city?" Not necessarily, but I would be in greater danger in the colony to become a pessimist. In the city we have not the free raw materials which you have to a certain extent. We need dollars and cents to buy with. Even you must have them, but to a less extent, the farther you move from the centers, and we haven't them.

(3) "Do you not have to work under this dominant system for a living, and, as well, for what you give to the propaganda?" Yes, but the yeast is only powerful between foreign substances, even in small quantities, but not when carefully packed away on the shelves of the grocery in great quantities. It is not so much the giving to the propaganda as to propagate.

(4) "And if there is any advantage in co-operative effort, would you not, as a worker in a community, have that much more to give to the propaganda?" I question this, because the only time there is effective propaganda in a colony scheme is at the inception of the undertaking. At the beginning there is always considerable agitation in the cities, like, for instance, the cases of Freeland in Africa, Topolobampo and Kaweah; but others that started like Ruskin and Firebrand group, for propaganda purposes only, were successful until they attempted the impossible by trying to reconcile themselves with all the obstructing influences that hedge them about. In trying to be practical, it is like a man running around hungry trying to get work and not saying anything to anyone about his condition—he will starve in such an attempt to get work; while, if he makes himself heard he immediately arouses the sympathies of his hearers. There is more propaganda in that than in silent endeavor. And that is the final of all community effort, at best—a hard lesson, but it seems that we must go through it all over and over again.

(5) "If you are a wage worker now, are you not governed just that much more than if you were financially independent?" Yes, but you will have to show me how to get something for nothing, something else except to start out and live the life of a hermit in the backwoods on wild foods and nuts, and cover myself with the skins of wild animals that I slay. But how can I propagate my ideals to the outsiders if I have no money to communicate with them? Thus situated, my voice goes out only to be returned by the echo from the woods. (Where get you raw materials to work upon and to whom sell if not to monopolists?) This is an erroneous quotation of one of my sentences. Look at it again, and find your error.

(6 and 7) "Why either buy or sell? Why be a market slave?" That is the gordian knot to be dissolved. But you can't do it if you go as far away from them as you can. Stay right there; get your battle axe sharpened and cut it. It is only the twists and turns of priests and politicians that coiled it up and makes it look so terrible to the one blinded by them. If you cut one strain it all falls to naught. The comrade asserts that "industrial freedom can be attained now," but fails to furnish proof for the statement. To me it is plain even if you would start a colony on the Yukon river or in the vicinity of the North Pole itself, the tax gatherer of this system will follow as sure as he knows that you are there, to levy a toll upon you. And you must either fight or be exterminated. But why not stay right to the centers where we have a chance to

arouse the sympathies of our kind? Show up the hollowness of the whole system in its ugly nakedness and not only educate but to imbue them with the spirit of resistance against the outrages committed upon us all. To do this we need literature, centers of agitation in every large city in the land, and especially in Chicago, but not cockroach shops, mis-called "communities" "colonies," or what not.

My motto is: "Educate, agitate, fight the lion in its den and conquer by all means or be slain in the attempt. It is better to be corpse than a slave."

Chicago, Ill.

CLEMENS PFUEZNER.

CRITICISM CRITICIZED.

J. W. Gaskine, the iconoclastic freethinker and free-lover, in his criticism of "The Country of the Future," to be found elsewhere in this issue, says: "Liberty is something which can only exist under the regulation of laws." Evidently our friend does not realize the contradiction implied in this assertion. Laws—even in the freest governments and under most idealistic conditions—are enacted by the rule of majorities; majority rule means minority subjugation; subjugation is not liberty; it is its very antithesis: authority—tyranny.

Another inconsistency is implied in his assertion "To do as one pleases is necessary to happiness." But how can one governed or subjugated (one of the minority who is ruled by the majority—made laws as just explained) "do as he pleases?"

Friend Gaskine says: "The writer is evidently mistaken when he affirms that the people of the Country of the Future are not a moral people; that they are not under any obligations to each other. It is plain that they are under obligations not to do 'hurtful acts'." Now, the author of the Country of the Future never mentions the term obligations in connection with the hurtful acts, but distinctively says: "There every one does as he or she pleases, for few please to do hurtful things."

Friend Gaskine is himself evidently mistaken here. There is a vast difference between pleasing to do a thing and being under obligations to do that thing. The former is a voluntary act while the latter is a compulsory act, and it is exactly the absence of that feature of compulsion, and the substitution of the principle of voluntarism or freedom that makes the Country of the Future superior to the Country of the Present.

Let Friend Gaskine remember that it is this very feature of enforced morality and compulsion which is the backbone of Comstock, about whom he said in the last issue of Free Society that if he were in Ruessbush's place he would "put his (Comstock's) head in chancery and hammer it till he had earned his enforced lodging in a jail."

Moral: Laws, government the cause; head-hammering, inharmony, war the effect.

No laws, no government—no inharmony, no war—but Peace.

Again, He pleads for rationalism and in the same breath calls for a criterion or standard of human conduct. What a woeful contradiction! Standards of human conduct have ever shifted. The standard of human conduct of today is vastly different from that of a thousand years ago, and who shall say that it will be perfect a thousand years hence?

Friend Gaskine says: "The experience of a single pair of parents is very limited. What do a man and woman know of themselves? Almost nothing, shut away from the experience of all other parents, the experience of the race!" Beautiful! But how does this correspond with his criterion or standard of human conduct, unless he uses the term race in the narrow meaning of the present generation? And if so, why not extend the experience to other generations as well, to be consistent?

Why indeed should there be a criterion or standard of human conduct at all? It is standards that have kept human beings in the narrow mental confines of today; it is standards that have created those castes and creeds that Friend Gaskine so vigorously and admirably opposes in churches, religious restrictions upon human affection, etc. etc.; it is standards that have dwarfed and enslaved man's mind and body to the lamentable degree found in today; it is standards that have retarded intellectual and industrial progress; it is standards that have staved off true, genuine civilization; it is standards that are suppressing that which is most beautiful in man—his individuality, his originality; it is standards that are making "a mere automaton, a machine of the human frame" as Percy Shelley says.

Lester F. Ward may be right and he may be wrong. Jesus Christ may have been right and he may have been wrong. J. W. Gaskine may be right and he may be wrong. In the words of Nellie M. Jerauld: "Who is to be the judge? Who is to say when we are sane, when we are normal? How many have been imprisoned, yes even put to death for a seemingly insane act which proved in after time to be the workings of an active, sane mind!"

The only rational principle for the safe guidance of society is non-invasion. Let every one judge for himself and be responsible to his fellow being for his breach of this principle.

Laws and standards of human conduct are incompatible with the idea of growth—of evolution. Away with them! They are blocks in the way of progress which is attainable only through perfect Liberty. S. D.

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Ribbon may have observed the eagles, and ought also have stated that they are happy and contented with carcass or carion all their lifetime while we enjoy variety of food. The eagles look all alike and have consequently no choice, but it would be tiring to our cultivated eyes even to look at a Venus all the time. See?

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