

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. 47.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1898.

WHOLE NO. 183.

PEOPLE, WHOSE FAULT?

(FROM THE GERMAN.)

If these have sought to smite you low,
Yourself have crouched before the blow;
Befooled, to the commands of knaves
Yourself have turned the ears of slaves.

Have they despoiled you at their will?
You bowed your head, submissive still,
While they, for plenty, bitterest need—
For freedom, slavery—decreed.

Their lordship, with your slavery bent,
Is but their right, if you consent;
Have but the will, then you shall see
Your own, the welfare of the free!

—The Worker.

HIS BEQUEST.

(Translated by Dallan Doyle.)

Permit me to address this question to my comrades, though I know full well that I shall not live to have it answered. I believe there are many more comrades who are of my opinion and to whom an answer might do a great deal of good. There is an epidemic among all of us and no one seems to seek means for its extermination. Today I am its victim, tomorrow it will be some one else, and the next day another, and so on without an end. Yet no one pays any attention, we all keep our hands in the pockets and sleep on and on. To ask one a question about the movement is to be confronted with a tale that this is a world of opportunities and that one has no time to think of anything until it reaches his doors. One climbs up the ladder, away from the poisonous atmosphere and laughs at every body else saying to himself: "For all I care, you may all drop dead."

I do not mean to say that no one shall try to earn his living. I do not consider it wrong for one to make use of his superior position to make his own life easier. I do not say that every body shall deny himself all he has and plunge into the movement. But to stay away and do nothing is not manly. Those who can should lend a hand to the struggling toilers, because the toilers themselves lack the intelligence, the ability to arouse their fellow men to that great and gigantic task which requires all of us to provide for it. Were I only able, I think, I would speak and speak forever so my speaking would clear the understanding of the average man and make him see that which a great many cannot and will not see.

But this standing afar and doing nothing, though no doubt the result of circumstances, is itself a circumstance which renders many a man hopeless and drives him to despair. I ask you, how can a man not be hopeless? A man who gave up his family, his friends and all those who were with him from childhood, went into the movement and now, ere the goal is reached, the movement fades away. How many weary drudgeries and bitter disappointments did he bear upon his shoulders? Now he is a man without a family, without a friend, without a mother, sister or brother. In the course he pursued he denied himself everything. Even the love for his wife and children was nought to him in this pursuit to uplift the suffering toilers from their present plane of life. Now he is bound to lay his hands together and, with his head downcast, ask himself, Where am I? What have I accomplished? What shall I do next?

Comrades, from this writing of mine you may think that I am pessimistic, and that I wish to sacrifice myself and throw the blame upon someone else. Let me answer you that such is not the case. I have been in the movement nine years and during that period I have had ample time to think over and observe certain manifestations and draw my conclusions therefrom upon the progress of human life and society in general. Whatever the opinion of other comrades may be, I believe that our efforts were not in vain. I believe progress keeps on its course successfully and gloriously and we have partly been the factors thereof. Of course, progress moves on slowly, but were the factors more energetic, I have no doubt that progress would

have crowned our efforts accordingly, it would have been moving more rapidly toward the ideal social life, toward Anarchy. I am not a theorist and therefore feel myself incompetent to expound Anarchism, in the broad sense of the word, but I shall expound only as I understand it.

I believe that Anarchism is the essence of human life in all its forms. Whether consciously or not, man always strove to attain liberty. Whether in his social or in his individual life, man always aimed at liberty and struggled to attain it at any price. In proportion then as he attained liberty, man has progressed and with the progress of the individual there was a corresponding progress of society. As I said, it may not be very modern, scientific reasoning, but it is good wholesome Anarchistic reasoning to look upon the progress of the individual as a factor which tends to make the progress of society. The wealth of nations should not be measured by the amount of wealth possessed by a few millionaires, but by that which the many millions possess individually. Let me therefore continue with my observations of progress as they have been manifested in New York, on the East side, among the Hebrews.

Only six years ago, I passed Ludlow street and witnessed the savage attack made upon one Rosenberg, (if I remember him aright, he was selling Social Democratic literature at our meetings) for smoking a cigarette on Saturday. Now I have been living with an orthodox family, I cooked my meat without salting it, according to the requirements of orthodoxy, I used the same dishes for meat and for butter, and yet I was neither attacked nor condemned by them. On the contrary, at times they would lend me potatoes, etc., to prepare my meals. Of course, they would not eat what I cooked. Who can tell me that this is not progress? Who can tell me that when a young man and his girl live together as husband and wife without going through all the sacraments of orthodoxy, that there has been no advancement? And when children born of Jewish parents are no longer subjected to the painful operation of being "circumcised," who can tell that there is no progress? And when such people live in a tenement house with 20 orthodox families who are friendly with these radicals, what does this mean if not progress? And when we pass the Jewish centre on the day of fasting and find that the Jewish restaurants are open and that they are filled with all sorts of Jews, eating and drinking without fear of being struck down by a lightning or a stone, what does that mean? My friends I have taken these manifestations, because they are commonly observed and easily understood. There is no back door to these facts. These facts plainly show how far the present is from the past. We are gradually passing away from the old forms of life. We throw away the old traditions and accept new ones. Thus runs progress in general.

But these changes have had their causes which it might be well to trace and investigate. This might lead us to the discovery of ways and means hastening the final downfall of this wretched system of exploitation, it might place us in a position to hasten the approach of a happier and more glorious individual and social life. As I have already stated these are factors which make progress possible. Those factors are various and their results still more so. You may influence your friend by doing that which he dreaded to do, if the result is satisfactory. Marrying without the church or state may lead to the realization of the uselessness of these institutions. This is propaganda by deed. But this propaganda is too narrow and is not quite so effective as the propaganda which is done through public meetings and publications. These two combined are, in my opinion, the most significant factors which make progress possible. But this propaganda has its good sides and its bad sides as well. When it is carried on truthfully and honestly, without falsehood, sophistry or personal quarrels, its effect is conducive to the progress of knowledge. That leads to a change of social relations, to higher conceptions

and a more progressive society. But if the propaganda is personal and sophistic, when two apparent brothers utilize the hard earned pennies of the laborer to fight each other, progress suffers greatly. The people are then disheartened and hopeless. The movement then falls a sleep and capitalism and greed reign supreme.

For example, who can tell me that the great "yom kipper" demonstrations arranged by the Anarchists, in opposition to the orthodox, have not been the cause of this freedom of thought so common among our people? The propaganda of the Social Democrats that "religion is a private affair" was surely not the cause of this free thought. In Russia where those who spoke lacked the courage to act according to their convictions, fanaticism remained in its full bloom; but it perished when those who thought freely acted freely. No doubt it requires some self-sacrifice to be an effective propagandist; but to be a soldier one must be accustomed to gun powder. To be an agitator, a volunteer in the ranks of the oppressed, one must utilize every opportunity, whether by word, pen, or deed, to extend the ideas of freedom, the ideas of equity. But such men there are few and one feels pretty sore when he finds the crier from the platform acts contrary to his convictions, or when you find that certain comrades try to make some petty excuse for it. When instead of the man willing and ready to act as he preaches even in the face of the cannon, you find him suddenly give way to a foolish woman, an idiotic father-in-law, or a half crazed mother-in-law. It is heart-breaking; but New York has quite a number of them, they are ultra scientific, you know.

Thus our propaganda in general is made the sufferer, because the personal interests take too high a rank among our so-called men of war. If they would only cut part of it out and remember the cause they have taken upon their shoulders, our propaganda would be fruitful and our progress unquestionably great. If you are really in earnest, then whether Social Democrat or Anarchists, get together, discuss your ideas, but don't try to down each other personally. If you are a Socialist then open your columns for all men of ideas, whatever their name. Freedom of speech should not be confined only to those who hold ideas similar to yours. All men should be heard. There is a great deal in that. Listen to your opponent. If he talks sensibly, you may learn something. If he talks nonsense you may learn the ways of a foolish opponent and you will be more effective in combating his case. Go among the people. Be friendly with all honest men. Don't exclude yourself from the rest of the community. Utilize every opportunity to express your opinion whenever that may be. Truth sown broadcast bears fruitful harvests.

Now in conclusion permit me to say a few more words: Comrades!—Can you stand from afar and look upon this miserable system with indifference? Can you keep your hands in your pockets and do nothing? Can you be indifferent at the sight of a father throwing himself through a window while in the act of praying, because he had no means wherewith to support his wife and children? Can you look on and be silent when a mother hangs herself, because she has been deserted by her husband and left penniless with four little ones? Can you listen to the news that a young man committed suicide, because for many months he has been without employment, and perhaps for many days without food or shelter? Can you listen to the news that husbands leave their wives and children and seek refuge in death? I might bring thousands of instances where men and women wander about the streets in our large cities, with nothing to eat or drink, until tired of life, they shift the burden from their shoulders and lay down never to rise again; but I think I have written enough. I cannot write any more—my hands tremble.

No, I do not believe that you are heathen! I believe that your hearts are full of warm blood, and I do not believe that you will always remain indifferent to the ills which afflict the men of toil today. I ask you again, my friends and comrades, be more self-sacrificing and do what you can to hasten the emancipation of mankind from this miserable wretched system of exploitation. I hope that your efforts will not be in vain.

ARTHUR BLOCH.

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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.

The comrades of New York City have now established a free reading room at 1524 Avenue A.

We hope to be able to issue 8 pages for the 11th of November celebration, and groups which intend to distribute Free Society on the occasion should make their orders at once, otherwise we might not be able to supply the demand as has been the case in former years.

The Freethought Society of this city meets every Sunday evening at 1196 Market street, corner sixth (old number, 997). The following subjects will be discussed during the month of October: "Can we have individual freedom under government?"—"What is immorality?"—"Which is more immoral: marriage or free love?"—"What is the most reasonable method of disposing of our dead?"—"What method can we employ to extend freethought to all classes of people?"

The proposers of the third subject evidently consider marriage and free love both immoral. What next?

Referring to the German emperor's remark that the country had no other enemies to fear but the Anarchists and Socialists, the editor of the German Socialist daily of this city says: "Who are the internal enemies? Assuredly not the Anarchists, for they have dwindled down into a little group." As I do not believe that the editor made this untrue statement maliciously, it would be interesting to know upon what authority he bases the claim that the Anarchists in Germany are decreasing. Or did the editor substitute his desire for the reality?

Anent the assassination of the Austrian empress the daily Call assailing the Anarchists says: "They must not be confused with the Socialists, who teach virtue and benevolence and peace and abhor bloodshed." The editor of the New Charter is delighted with the recognition and discrimination, but I cannot forbear to call Mr. Wilkins' attention to the fact that there is usually something rotten in Denmark when our enemies praise us.

The daily press has discovered that Italy is not only "a hot-bed of Anarchy," but that "there is even an Anarchist state within its borders," located on a little island on the Tunisian shore called La Galite and that "the people there live according to Anarchistic ideals. They live and die, are born and get married without notice to any civil authority, without priests, ministers, judges or even physicians; they recognize no law, pay no taxes and have no chief or any form of government. They live in common from the yield of the soil and the catch of the fishermen." So far so good, but they have also found that once upon a time a murder has been committed there on account of jealousy and that the criminal would have escaped punishment if the government had not happened to hear of the case. That, of course is sufficient reason to denounce the Anarchists, and the logic of these representatives of "law and order" is that these islanders ought to be exterminated because they would not commit another crime by hanging the criminal.

"I am sincerely glad," Emperor of Germany telegraphed, "to be able to congratulate you for the splendid victory of Ondurman, which at last avenges poor Gordon's death." When Lucchesi killed one woman to avenge the sufferings and deaths of millions Willie condemned all the Anarchists as the enemies of society and felt quite indignant about the affair, but when one of his clique slaughters thousands of men and hundreds of innocent women and children to avenge the death of one, then he is "sincerely glad." Such is "christian morality" today.

"Thrilled by the cruelty of the deed," says the Social Democratic Herald, "Europe is asking the one question: How can society protect itself against

Anarchism? The answer to this question is simple enough: Society must abolish industrial Anarchy." Pray, Mr. Edwards, you know better. There can be no industrial Anarchy—freedom in industry—so long as monopoly and government reign supreme. Under "industrial Anarchy" people would have the freedom to utilize all the means of industry and the productivity of labor supply all human wants in such abundance that the term poverty will be eliminated from our vocabulary. Not industrial Anarchy, but laws and monopoly must be abolished.

The world moves notwithstanding the assertion of some pessimists that society is doomed to degeneracy and abject slavery. The recent event in Switzerland and the consequent discussions in the weekly papers relating to the deed and Anarchism, have clearly shown that our ideas have penetrated the minds of the people to a far greater extent than any one of us presumed. Only five years ago Anarchists were in a body condemned when Caserio assassinated Carnot, but at present some of our exchanges simply find fault with Lucchesi for killing a "harmless woman," adding at the same time that the killing of a tyrant is justifiable and is but a natural phenomenon under present infernal conditions. These discussions also refute the assertion of some Anarchists that the deed of Lucchesi was of no avail. What else would have prompted the reform press, and even the dailies, to discuss the merits and demerits of Anarchism to the extent it now occurs? Among the 150 exchanges we receive there are but a few which have published the act simply as news without comment, the majority of them commented more or less intelligently and favorably to the Anarchists. As a sample of the current view we publish in another column two clippings typical of the sentiment expressed in the discussions about the event.

The assertion of The American that the "most grievous injustice perpetrated by man toward man is just where the restraint of government is slightest or government exercises no restraint at all," is extremely naive if not absurd. I challenge The American to point out a single instance where and when the government has ever protected the poor against the rich. The fact is that the government always promotes the interests of the rich and ferociously opposes the most moderate demands of the producers of all the luxuries the rich enjoy. I will admit, however, that "the way to kill off Anarchism is to make of government the instrument of justice, to show that government serves not to despoil the people, but protect them against despoilment," is the only effective measure, but as the proposition of a "just government" belongs to the nursery tale, Anarchism will spread its wings in spite of ignorant opposition and governmental persecution.

Justice Holmes, of Massachusetts, recently said: "There is nothing but the merest guesswork upon which to base the claim that the entire criminal law does not create more crime than it prevents." Further investigation will probably convince Justice Holmes that laws are the greatest promoters of all crimes.

The police authorities of this state are alarmed about the fact "that so many people are in sympathy with escaping criminals." Two weeks ago a convict escaped from St. Quentin and although a reward of \$100 had been offered for his recapture, the guards met with much opposition by the people. An officer stated that 50 per cent of the people he had seen declared that they would aid the prisoner should he come to them. It is dawning upon the people that the real criminals are not in the prisons and the "prominent citizens" are terror-stricken that the watch-words "law and order" are losing their magic power.

THE ANARCHIST.

Too many of our well-meaning people are mistaken on what is termed an Anarchist. To be short in our explanation we will say that they are a very peaceably disposed and kind-hearted people who are trying to elevate the condition of humanity by persistently and earnestly teaching the masses better and grander theories by which we may raise to a more complete civilization without war, starvation or unnecessary suffering of any kind. We are personally acquainted with quite a number of persons who delight in being called Anarchists. Of course these are not the rich thieves and oppressors who hire cheap slaves—called "patriots"—to use fire, powder or bombs, for the purpose of destroying life and property in order to intimidate the

masses and prevent the reformers from enlightening the people on their constitutional rights which might result in free speech, free press and a free people with equal rights before the law. How comes this simple misunderstanding in regard to what constitutes honest Anarchists? Through our own experience we became convinced that as we become enlightened we will better appreciate the object and efforts of true Anarchists, who want nothing unjustly and would harm no one intentionally. They wish everybody as well as themselves to have full liberty and equality without fear, force or favor.—Progressive Thought.

FROM OUR EXCHANGES.

It is little more than a year since Canovas, Premier of Spain was shot down and killed by an avowed Anarchist. Now again is Europe shocked and startled by the assassination of Elizabeth, Empress of Austria, also the work of an avowed Anarchist. And again do we hear of pour parlars for a systematic international ferreting out of Anarchists, a hounding of all Anarchist societies a treating of all Anarchists as criminals whether guilty of criminal act or not, simply assuming that the act of being an Anarchist is a crime for which men should be deprived of their liberty.

Thus it is deemed crowned heads and rulers would be protected; thus as a fact would their lives be more endangered for any such treatment of Anarchists and simply drive the non-militant Anarchists to violence. Attacks on crowned heads can be invited by acts of injustice, they cannot be prevented by injustice.

Those who advocate this wholesale persecution, condemnation of Anarchists for the acts of one or two seem to labor under the impression that every Anarchist is an assassin, that no one can be an Anarchist and not an assassin at heart. No view could be more mistaken. The average Anarchist is the dreamer of a perfect state where all men will live as brothers, where there will be no restraint of law, where there will be perfect individual liberty, where it will be the pleasure of all men to do that which will profit themselves and society, where happiness and bliss will reign. He believes that the way to attain this state is to do away with all government, that the restraints of government meant to make men respect the rights of their fellows, bring out that which is bad in man not which is good, incite him to break those restraints and trespass on the rights of others, not live as becomes a christian man. They say treat a man as a man and he will act as a man, and so the Anarchist urges that governments and the restraints and the costs thereof be abolished, that men be individually charged with keeping order, that they be made to understand that they are responsible to themselves alone for their conduct, that they are free to live by the precepts of justice and honor and equity and prosper or not as they choose, that thus thrown upon their honor they will choose to live as good men should and traverse the paths of uprightness not of evil. This is what the ordinary, non-militant Anarchist believes, he builds in his mind's eye a perfect state, he is a Utopian, he is not an assassin, a well wisher not a hater of his fellow-man.

To treat all who hold to such belief as criminals would be a grievous blunder. The Anarchist who believes in the tenets of his party as above set forth sees the injustice of man toward his fellow-man and he deems that government is the root of injustice, that the very laws meant to guard against the perpetration of injustice are the breeders of injustice, for, he says, man cannot be beaten into living a life of justice; he can be led by love and appeal to his manhood to lead such life and government and restraint of law squelch and stifle, do not bring out his finer qualities. And so the argument of the Anarchist for the doing away with government, the argument that do away with government and there will be more justice, less despoilment of men by others than now, more justice less injustice.

Such is the theory of Anarchism or no government. It rests on profound faith in the perfection of man. And this faith is misplaced, for men are not perfect, they are not above temptation, they are much given to despoiling their fellow-men when they have a chance. True, the Anarchists answers that we do not know that men would not be perfect and superior to temptation if given conditions of perfect freedom in which to live, that government and the restraints of government weaken men, weaken their sense of justice and equity and right. And true it is that we do not of a fact know but that men would be perfect if there were no restraints to their liberty of action established

by government. But this we do know. We know that in directions where the government exercises no restraint the temptation of the rich to despoil the poor, the mighty to despoil the weak, is strong and yielded to; we know there is most grievous injustice perpetrated by man toward man just where the restraints of government is slightest or government exercises no restraint at all. Therefore it is that the ground premise being faulty the theory is wrong.

But because Anarchism would lead to the trampling of the strong upon the weak, not to general happiness and bliss, is no reason to deny a hearing to the preceptors of Anarchism. To do so would be an effectual means of causing Anarchism to spread. Therefore, to make war upon all Anarchists as if they were bands of criminals will be a terrible blunder for those who wish to crush out Anarchism. To make such war would be but to further impress Anarchists with the belief that all law is unjust, and as such should be abolished. What is more, such a war, impressing many Anarchists with the utter hopelessness of advancing their views by peaceful means, must incline many to violence, not only for the promotion of a principle but for revenge. The way to kill off Anarchism is to make of government the instrument of justice, to show that government serves not to despoil the people, but to protect them against despoilment. Keep government upon such field and Anarchism will not grow for very want of food, of promising ground from which to gather recruits. Let there be rule of nations in the interest of the rulers and Anarchism will prosper, let there be rule in the interest of the people and Anarchism will languish.

While it is a fact that when the well informed Anarchist speaks of an Anarchistic state he has in mind an ideal state in which all men will live as brothers, and that he does not believe that the securing of such an ideal state is to be advanced by the assassination of present-day rulers, it is also a fact that there is a certain coterie of Anarchists of diseased brain who believe that the ends of Anarchy can be promoted by assassination. And in common estimate all Anarchists are associated with these and hence regarded as would-be assassins. Hence the desire to treat all Anarchists as criminals, the mere fact of being an Anarchist being held to be sufficiently condemnatory. But if governments fall into a mistake born of so regarding Anarchists, consider all Anarchists as alike and proceed to treat them as outcasts, the result will be the perpetration of injustice towards many such as will react to the injury of those seeking to crush Anarchism.

It was by one of the aimless coterie of Anarchists who seek to promote Anarchism but hurt the cause they espouse by indiscriminate assassination that the Empress of Austria was assassinated in Geneva. There was absolutely no reason to pick her out for assassination save that she held by birth and marriage exalted position. Though one of the crowned heads of Europe, she had no political power, no influence over European politics, no part in the ruling of the Austrian-Hungarian empire. She was no more than an ordinary, unrefined woman, with an empress's crown upon her head. And because of the wearing of that crown, and nothing else, she has been stricken down.—The American.

The red flag is waving again. With one blow the assassin pierced the vitals of an empire. Empress Elizabeth of Austria has been fatally stabbed with the stiletto in the hand of an Italian Anarchist, at Geneva, Switzerland, and once more Europe is thrown into a fever of excitement, while crowned heads are in fear and in mourning. Why should nations be more concerned over the death of the Empress of Austria than the death of an ordinary individual? Because the circle of her influence is greater: lines of mental force from millions of people center in kings, queens, and emperors; that is the basis of their support and their satisfaction. Disturb a center, and a whole system is thrown into agitation; assassins realize this, and strike their blows where they are felt. We work on this plan also; we might talk about the details of the world's economic affairs and accomplish nothing. Aim at the central roots of fallacy and of evil, and destroy all dependent upon the centers of power. Direct the strokes at the real heart of disease, rather than symptoms. The world is corrupt; everything is out of order. We cannot place them in order piece by piece, but we can touch the button that will send electro-magnetic currents throughout the world and impulse humanity to move in harmony. We are

striking at the center; we are fighting the devil, who has the entire world psychologized. An effective blow at his satanic majesty will deliver the world from his powers. Assassinate the devil!—Flaming Sword.

THE LOAFERS MUST GO!

"The vice at the root of the present system is that it is almost impossible to get anything through the legislature unless there is money in it for somebody. Public interests are observed by individual aims. In a word, legislators are dishonest. By means of the referendum, the people propose to resume in part the power now delegated to the legislature."

The above is an excerpt from an "Examiner" editorial of September 17, under the caption: "The Value of the Referendum." The Examiner is the leading Democratic journal on the Pacific coast and one of the most prominent organs of the Democratic party in the United States. An admission of this character from such an enemy is gratifying and significant. It shows that the public contempt for the boddling legislative bodies is assuming such alarming proportion that it becomes necessary to make some concessions as a bait to the voter; therefore some of the minor reform measures are resorted to, to give the public a little taffy. But ere long the Examiner is liable to find out that the taffy is losing its charm.

Industry—labor is the only element that creates and upholds society, and, as Thomas Paine so admirably shows in his "Rights of Man," governments are not only indispensable to society, but they are an actual hindrance to its normal development. It is government that fosters and protects the monopolization of land and the medium of exchange which are mainly responsible for all the misery extant.

The workers of the world are coming to realize that legislators and government officials of all kinds so far from adding to the store of wealth created by them (the workers) diminish it to an outrageous extent without rendering an equivalent therefore and oppress and enslave labor besides; that, in a word, they are but robbers and worthless loafers in broadcloth. It is beginning to dawn upon the workers that they are able to attend to their own business of carrying on the world's industries without having the pack of loafers over them to rob and enslave them.

The referendum is but a refined scheme for perpetrating the regime of the loafers. The awakening intelligence of the workers is the deathknell of the referendum and the whole damnable engine of robbery and slavery—government. S. D.

BLIND ALLIES.

Any close observer of Anarchists and their particular hobbies cannot fail to see how far removed they are from their ideals yet. It is surprising to see how easy they run amuck. Besides they all claim they are for freedom, but if you tickle their particular penchant, you have them all arrayed against each other. What is the cause of it? It can only be that they are in blind allies, where one as well as the other gets into from off the highway to freedom, and tries to call the others to his side. And if they do not respond, they are accused of not being Anarchists at all. Now, you can find the free lover arrayed against the one who cannot see anything worth while in it and who is still a monogamist; the co-operator against the one who tries to prove it cannot be practiced so long as this system lasts: the political abstainer to the one who still does use the ballot once in awhile, and you can hear and read the bitter accusations that are circulated against each other.

One will not write for a paper that has such immoral persons at its head, and tries to prevent others from doing so by sending letters all over the land. The other would not write for a paper that has only woodchoppers at its head. Another would not have anybody who mixes in politics at all to address a circle of Anarchists. And still another would keep shy of the one who does not want to bring Anarchism about at any cost, and should the bones of our hundredth generation be moldering in the grave, and so on. It is hard to say what little niche we could not find to set ourselves in and try to prove the one who would not keep our company as faulty, if not rotten to the core. How long we will keep at this way I do not know, but I do know as long as this spirit dominates we will make slow headway at best.

The sooner we find out ourselves we will know that none of us are perfect. We all have peculiarities of our own, and if we are going to accomplish anything

we will have to put up with each other. Let the one who believes in free love practice it and write on the subject as much as he pleases. The one who thinks woodchoppers cannot write should do it himself and educate them, but not abstain for fear a dot over the i be lost.

The one who believes in communal groups should practice it and prove its failure again. And the one who still dabbles in politics—go ahead until he is entirely disgusted or succumbs in the mire. But let us not fall asleep because we see only the faults of others and not our own.

In conclusion, I call upon all to consider that none are perfect Anarchists yet, and couldn't be if they wanted to. We have to clean out the Augean stables yet. We need you all, and badly, too. Put your quibbling aside and help us accomplish our purpose.

We need much discussion to clear our own conception of things, but more than anything else we need propaganda. Let us get at it. Let us tune up our fiddle and start a dance where we trample upon monopoly and our own little bickerings, and reach our goal—Anarchy. Which of you will stay aside and by doing so help foster the present archy?

CLEMENS PFUETZNER.

WHAT IS CHASTITY?

In the company of a few friends not long since one remarked that no two persons held exactly the same idea as to the meaning of words. As proof of this she mentioned a common word (I forget what it was) and each one was asked to give the meaning. Sure enough, no two gave the same definition and some were widely unlike. Early education (or the want of it) environment, the point of view, experience—all had modified its meaning in the mind of each. The word "obscenity" is having a great run in the courts in behalf of Anthony Comstock and all shades of liberals, educators and Anarchists. It is to be hoped a good dictionary definition may be evolved, but it is doubtful the case will still be remanded to the people, the angle of the moral standard individually. There seems, also to be a wide range for the definition of the word chastity.

Whether from guessing or knowing, experience or the want of it, writers are discussing "normal" and "abnormal" conditions and symptoms often to the mystification of every day folks who are enquirers and seekers of truth that they may progress "toward plain living and high thinking." Some years ago an earnest woman in a small village in this state, enlisting a few other earnest ones, formed a "womans club" for mutual aid in culture. One day a paper was read before the club on Chastity in Wedlock, an innovation in boldness of thought and expression, the writer holding that marriage gave us no licence to lust, that mutual desire should be the only basis for sexual interchange and that no child was really legitimate except when begotten in love and desire for its conception. The paper was well received and ordered printed. It was published in The Alpha and copied into the Queen Bee where on a journey it met the eye of its author's husband and raised a storm at home. The husband held the view (as most husbands do or did then), that there could be no such thing as sexual excess in the married state; that all was "lawful" whether "mutual" or not and that it was very "immodest" to speak of such things in public—(though abuses in private had been provided for in the marriage ceremony.) The wife never retracted and calmly went on with her own emancipation as many have done before and since.

To my mind chastity is consistent with the natural, moderate use of the sexual functions in health, whether a priest or magistrate has given his sanction or not. (Where did the priest or magistrate procure his licence to give other people leave except from somebody back of him who had no more right than he?) For me love which permeates the whole life and warms every faculty must preside; but I see that others who have no such "high-flown notions" are equally "pure" and earnest from their standpoint. To me, no man or woman is chaste who merely refrains against the will from physical union, while desire and envy run riot in the imagination; yet if they have reached no higher ideal, can we blame? No, but kindly enlighten as opportunity offers. A so-called prostitute may, for reasons and circumstances unknown to her scoffers, lead a chaste life under my definition of chastity; while men and women in married lust or brutal oppression may live in, what I would call most revolting prostitution. I smile at their self

satisfaction in "holy wedlock" while others still further advanced in knowledge smile at me. One of the writers in Free Society some months ago says: "If chastity be a definable virtue, it consists in abstinence from prohibited sexual intercourse." "If not," he continues, "it is a tendency to condemn and avoid sexual intercourse as far as possible." That is the idea: This writer then speaks of the wife as one respected because "supported by a man to whose lust she administers," but the two minorities outside of this favored state—marriage—are the "beggery old maids" and the prostitutes "kept in common by the men not yet ready to marry."

I have heard, incidentally, many times that it is the married men who support houses of ill-fame; that two thirds of their patrons are from the ranks of married libertines, men unhappily mated or sex-gluttons, who can be "better accommodated than with a wife." With them, perhaps, "chastity" is a joke.

Fort Collins, Colo. ALBINA WASHBURN.

"THE CHARITY THAT IS NOT CHARITY" PROPOSITION.

In support of Lizzie Holmes' article, I must complement her on her able stand; knowing her position on the economic question, I am glad she took issue with that one argument.

I have met the same attack from the same source—a lady who is a consistent Individualist. Their standpoint seems to me to be primitive, carrying out the Darwinian theory with a vengeance—yes, that may be desirable by all means; but under a better economic condition, eventually the sick would of necessity die out; all our ailments are but the results of a cause, that cause being the unhealthy economic condition.

To be rid of them, to chloroform the sick, because they are a burden and a drawback, means if we go back we must chloroform the cause, and we could continue to go back until the whole race would become extinct.

They hold that a weak person must detract; granted, but if I have a relative who is not up to the average, he is yet dear to me. If I must chloroform him, it means that every one else must do the same; if I refused, then every one else has some one to keep, and we again come to the point of social dependence. Our Individualist friends deny that we are a social product, forgetting seemingly, that even under a different regime we would be dependent for our sociability and happiness unindividualistic association. We can't get out of the world, we live in it and are of it. The feeling of and for mankind, is a benefactor; it is only a form of the first laws, self-preservation and reproduction.

If we say physical assistance is a drawback and narrowing to a degree, why limit it? Why not ridicule mental assistance? But our friends say that any mental experience is broadening, I fail to grasp why one is and the other is not. It seems to me that the chloroform proposition is a hasty and inexcusable one.

If we resolve it back we reach this position: We are here, products of unhealthy conditions. Eventually better conditions will bring about better effects, being all products we should strive for better conditions. Some one starves that others may be better developed; but good was in them, if we do not see it in them it may come out in their offspring. We have destroyed something that would have done the world good.

It seems to me a desire to have everything to be had and to give absolutely nothing for it. Are we going back to primitive times or are we progressing? Savages were idealistic in that respect, but progressing was not their forte. Sabe? B. F. BRUCK.

FROM ABROAD.

The hangman Bruendel of Berlin solemnized a jubilee. He has had the "honor" of murdering two hundred individuals in the name of "law and order."

The following inscription embellishes the main entrance of Rothschild's palace in Frankfurt: "The beloved Lord does not allow evil to enter herein." It is said Rothschild enters his house through a back door.

A peasant in Germany put his ticket into the ballot-box with the following words written on it: "You are naught, you know nothing, and to vote for you is a crime." He evidently does not belong to the species called voting cattle.

A workman in Breslau, Germany, shot his wife and four children and then committed suicide. In a

note left he says: "I rather kill my family than to see wife and children slowly starving to death." The hypocritical press sheds tears and is indignant about the cruelty of an uncultured man. But the press forgets to tell its readers that the infernal system it glorifies cripples and murders thousands of men, women and children every day, and that it is this very system which made this man a murderer of his own family.

According to a report of the English courts 241 individuals have been sentenced during the last year to corporal punishment, receiving 6469 lashes. Still England is called "the land of the pious and the hearth of humanity."

A revolution is feared in Portugal and the reserves have been called out. The cannon is the only argument of the oppressors. Riots are reported from the famine districts in Russia. The mortality of children has increased from 19 to 47 per cent. Military has been ordered to the districts. The hungry will as usually be fed with bullets. How long will people endure such brutality?

The Italian parliament, consisting of cowards and rascals, has by a large majority of voters surrendered four of its Socialist members to the court-martial. This is the most disgraceful act a parliament ever has perpetrated. And in the face of such outrages the Social Democrats of Italy have issued a manifesto declaring that they are not revolutionists and never will participate in revolutionary uprisings. At the same time the Anarchists are distributing a leaflet declaring that they will continue as before to combat tyranny and oppression in every form in spite of all persecutions and tortures. Bravo, comrades!

Comrade Pietro Gori is successfully exploding fossilized ideas in Argentina. In Buenos Aires he lectured in a theatre to a full house. The capitalist press observes the policy of silence.

"In many cases the hero is a species of assassin. The peoples begin to comprehend that increasing the magnitude of a crime cannot be its diminution; that, if to kill is a crime, to kill much cannot be a glory; that Te Deums do not count for much in this matter; that homicide is homicide; that bloodshed is bloodshed; that it serves nothing to call ones self Caesar or Napoleon, and that in the eyes of the eternal God the figure of a murderer is not changed because instead of a gallows' cap, there is placed upon his head an emperors crown."—Victor Hugo.

"No human laws are of any validity if contrary to the laws of nature; and such of them that are valid derive all their force and their authority mediately or immediately from this original."—Blackstone.

Few would believe that Blackstone was "another Anarchist."

AN APPEAL FOR PAMPHLETS AND BOOKS.

From personal experience I know that the few books dealing with Anarchism, Communism and the sex question are read extensively in the New York Public Library. Lack of funds prevents the director to make the collection as large as he wishes to. He expressed to me his readiness to add to it any and every book or pamphlet which would be given to the library.

This library does not put any restriction upon readers of the most radical literature, and I would like to appeal to all comrades for the donation of any book or pamphlet in our literature which they can spare.

Packages should be sent to the New York Public Library, Lafayette Place, New York, or to me personally.

50 First street, New York.

RECEIPTS.

Week ending September 24.
International Maennerchor, Brooklyn, \$1.35.
Italian Group, New London, Conn., 70c.
Johnston, Phuetzner, Shalithun, each \$1.
Price, Merakergaard, Hannon, Landeck, Hassel, Lessman, Raymond, Levitzky, each 50c. Cravello, 30c.
Rauers, Muesmacher, Toebe, Logsmann, Hoefner, Livshitz, each 20c.
Dobransky, Zookowich, Selgie, each 10c.

Various Voices.

K. S., Boston, Mass.—Sunday, September 18, comrade Emma Goldman lectured here on "Charity" and the many unfamiliar faces in the audience were proof that the interest in Anarchistic ideas is fully alive, a fact which astonished our Social Democratic friends, one of whom said to me in the morning before the lec-

ture: "Oh, you Anarchists are played out." Thus he judged because we had not been active since people's minds were stunned by our capitalistic sheets and the average toiler howled with the wolv: "Down with Spain!"

The Socialist Labor Party in this city have repeatedly failed to hold successful public meetings, owing to their unfair discussions and tyrannical bridling of free speech, and we are serving them with good examples. The questions asked were promptly answered by our comrade and every questioner was left at liberty to turn his question into an address whenever he desired to do so. Liberty at home is the first step to Anarchy.

Tuesday evening, September 20, Comrade Goldman delivered an address on Authority vs. Liberty in Lynn, Mass. This was the first time the shoe city had Anarchism preached within its "walls." The audience, although not large, was very enthusiastic. The seed has been sown and, we hope, will grow.

A. A. Raymond, Fondulac, Wis.—Enclosed find draft for 50 cents for which please send me Free Society for another year.

I was born 1815 and received first instructions when 10 or 12 years old in the Presbyterian Sunday school. Since I was 15 years old I have opposed an angry God, an infinite devil and endless hell, and the Christian slave power.

I believe the Anarchists are increasing faster than the Abolitionists did forty or fifty years ago. The trouble is that there are too many christian Anarchists among you, but I believe by perseverance you will be victorious.

F. H. Worden, Lynn, Mass.—By the way, I am interested, as well as others, as to why you reject articles on "occult forces" so-called. I am slightly interested in the subject and would like to see a criticism from A. I.'s pen.

[I cannot see how any one can criticize anything he knows nothing about, anything that is hidden—occult, and it is for this reason that we reject articles on Spiritualism. Our aim is to combat and not to cultivate superstition; to abolish the monopolization of the necessities of life and to free ourselves from the tyranny of government and pernicious social customs, and when this is accomplished people will have leisure time to "investigate the spiritual world." A. I.]

O. Frenzel, San Jose, Cal.—Enclosed find 30 cents for which send me some copies of No. 45 of Free Society, containing the article about the "Killing of the Empress of Austria."

I am sorry I cannot spend \$30 instead of 30 cents for propaganda work at present, but if every comrade would do as much every month or week, Free Society would soon be on a good footing. I have received the pamphlets ordered three weeks ago, but I have not seen the 50 cents credited in the receipts.

Comrade S. D. is right when he says that workingmen spend too much money in saloons. I am not a temperance man, but I think it does more good to spend the money for the propaganda than in too many drinks.

[We do not acknowledge money received for books or pamphlets in the paper. A. I.]

E. D. Hunt, Ventura, Cal.—Enclosed find money order for 50 cents. Please send me one copy each of your pamphlets as far as published, and the balance in such other pamphlets as you may select from your list.

I have no objections to the reduced size of Free Society: we can't expect to have a large paper published while we are surrounded by this robber system. It is well that we have a paper at all to sow seed with.

We hold meetings at the Labor Exchange Depository every Sunday afternoon—the attendants are mostly Socialists, but they show signs of progressing and I think we will be able to remove the scales from their eyes in time. They are in favor of reform, but I tell them that it is not reform that is needed; what we do need is an ECONOMIC REVOLUTION. People have been trying to reform or patch up the rotten places as they have been discovered for thousands of years, in both Church and State, and the result has been utterly futile. Had either been examined with X rays light of the present time they would both be found completely rotten to the very core, and a useless appendage to society.

We are making this branch a "propaganda by deed" to show the people here that neither State nor religion is necessary, and that both are a hindrance to the production and distribution of the needs of humanity.