

The Firebrand

OF THE CONQUERORS OF IGNORANCE AND SUPERSTITION.



An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

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Freedom.

Slowly fades the day, and dim and dimmer
Grows the landscape's melancholy sight.
Dying, flames the sun his parting glimmer,
Leaves to thee his realm, O mournful night!

Silence reigns, no sound in wood or meadow,
Lulling music murmurs but the stream,
Life seems faded, a forgotten shadow
That befalls us in a midnight dream.

Wretched shadow! where forever bitter
Sorrow treads upon the blossoms sweet!
Smiling eyes? They are but outward glitter—
Virtue dying at oppressors' feet.

Darker grows the night! But lo! on yonder
Fores'path do I a goddess spy?
Crown of light, like an unearthly wonder,
Round her aspect streaming draws me nigh.

Speak! Who art thou, being that a mortal
Hast enchanted by Elysian spell?
Wilt thou lead me through the dreaded portal
To the regions where thine equals dwell?

Art thou Venus, born from Ocean's water,
Never spurned upon by a feeling swain?
Has Minerva, Zeus' exalted daughter,
From Olympus' height returned again?

Bauteous art thou! Thou art no illusion,
I can touch thee with my mortal hand;
Yet thy features bear a bright diffusion
Of the bliss that crowns thy native land.

Thus I spake in rapture, deeply thrilling,
And her voice rang out in soft reply:
A fantastic swain is ever willing
To retain a shadow, fleeting by.

But mistake me not, I am no vision
Of the erring, long forgotten past;
In the future lies my promised mission—
While a tyrant breathes will it last.

I am Freedom—not a goddess resigning
From a shrouded throne, but plain and mild,
Loving sister, servitude disdaining,
Such is Freedom, simple as a child.

Art thou, then, that long-lost precious jewel
That the Poets in their sonnets sing?
Patient waits the world for its renewal,
Does thy presence such fulfillment bring?

But she waved her head in straight denial:
Credit not the legends of the hearth,
Never has the finger on the dial
Shown the hour of Freedom to this earth.

Foreign am I, though too oft rejected
I withdrew from your deluded kind,
As a Monster, heartless but respected
Rose between me and its grasping mind.

Call it Word of God (deadly illusion!)
Or subjection to a higher will,
Call it faith, (O words of God's confusion!)
Call it freedom, but its serfdom still.

Freedom knows no fawning subjection,
Down with walls of ancient vested right!
Evilspooks, an erring mind's creation,
They must flee where reason throws its light.

Suffer no obedience, and obey not,
Every being sovereign in his part:
Know no master. From this watchword sway not,
Then you'll know oppression's counterpart.

Tyranny must dwarf your brother's action,
Savage force must slay your brethren's deed.

Slave and master falls into his faction,
And oppression must resistance breed.

Freedom can't be given—you must take it,
May such outbreak fill your heart with awe.
Law will not recede, the mind must break it,
Each be to himself his God and Law.

Thus she spake. And while I yet stood gazing,
Listening to the cadence of her voice,
Thus she vanished. Morning bright and bracing
On the eastern sky began to rise.

Wondrous dream, by fantasy created!—
Robbers herald the oncoming day,
Welcome, morning! sad, and yet elated,
Slowly I pursue the homeward way.

HERMAN EICH.

Communist Contentions.*

I AM sorry that I failed to make my position sufficiently clear in the several articles which I have written for The Firebrand, but it is perhaps impossible for one to convey the exact impression desired to the minds of others without going into greater detail than would be possible in contributing to the columns of a journal whose space is so limited as is that of The Firebrand. All that can be attempted is a fairly accurate presentation of general principles, leaving their application to the reader.

So far as I am at present able to judge, your position and mine on the several aspects of scientific Anarchy are the same. If we differ at all, it is in our definition of terms and in our application of principles to social facts, not in our conceptions of the integrity of the principles themselves. For your information I will lay down a few fundamental statements of my position, which will probably aid you to place me properly in the future discussions I may chance to take part in, and which will also enable you to test the logic of any thesis which I may chance to maintain.

1.—I am an Anarchist, with all that the term implies. I utterly repudiate the state, government, authority of all description which emanates from the human will; and I hold myself subject to the dictates only of my own reason and of demonstrated natural facts.

2.—Because I am an Anarchist, I am a Communist with all that the term implies in the anarchistic sense. I hold that, only in the communistic society is true Anarchy possible of attainment; until we have reached Communism we have not yet reached Anarchy; the terms are identical and interchangeable. Like yourself, I can admit of no compromise between the idea of so-called Individualist-Anarchism and that of Anarchist-Communism; that is, of course, considering the Individualist idea in the form in which it is at present being presented,—as an ultimate theory. The individualists (so-called) are not true Anarchists. They are merely the pioneers of Anarchy. They are simply blazing the way to Anarchy. They retain the vice of property and authority with reference to their administration of the most vitally important category of social endeavor. The untenableness of their

* As is apparent in the opening sentences, this article is in reply to a private letter, and is published by permission.

position will finally become patent to the veriest tyro in anarchoistic philosophy.

3.—In the words of Proudhon, "Property is robbery." There can be no such thing as property in a state of Anarchy, because whoever exercises the right of property is an invader of the rights and liberties of others—he is a robber. Mr. Byington asks me to state what property is. I shall probably take the first opportunity to furnish Mr. Byington with the information desired, and I shall do so somewhat as follows: The right of property is the right which constitutes the essential nature of legally recognized ownership, of reaping the fruits of the productive exploitation of natural opportunities, or material wealth of any description, without exercising the functions of use and possession; the right, in short, which enables one to enjoy the fruit of the labor of others without in any manner contributing to the result of such labor. The proprietor, as such, merely receives tribute from those who labor, either with hand or brain, for not exercising towards them his legally recognized right of exclusion. His tribute—rent, interest, profit—expresses the right of limitation on the production and consumption of wealth which the law has endowed him with, and is pure robbery. It enables one, for instance, to reap the benefit of the labor of a multitude in the wheat fields of California or Argentina, or in the gold and diamond fields of Africa, while perchance dwelling in London or New York, and without having ever even seen the properties from which such tribute is drawn. It limits and represses the activities and aspirations of humanity on every hand, and in its last analysis, as Proudhon has clearly shown, it is an impossible right. Now, this right to enjoy without exercising the functions of use or possession constitutes the essential nature of property, it is really all there is to the right of property, and it requires the whole power of the state for its maintenance.

4.—From property and the limitations established in the attempt to realize its impossible right springs, first, value; and, next, competition, as a means of realizing such value in the several categories—rent, interest, profit,—in which it appears. Whenever the right of property is not exercised, as between the several members of a single family, for instance, there is never a thought of value, and competition in the economic sense never makes its appearance. These two manifestations, which are but separate manifestations of the same force, property, in the absence of property cannot appear. They are incongruous and absurd, they are, in short, unthinkable in such a connection.

5.—The right of use and possession is a natural right,—and I am not concerned with any metaphysical disquisition a la Huxley, Ritchie and a host of other scientists, about the nature of natural rights and whether or not such rights really do exist—to be freely exercised by each and every human being, to the full extent of their aptitudes and capacity for enjoyment, and commensurate with each one's needs, as determined by himself. With the right of property abolished, the exercise of the

right of use and possession means absolute, unbounded, unrestricted liberty for each individual. The attempt of the human intellect to set limits to liberty, the attempt to qualify it in some way, to establish degrees, or set bounds to it by introducing the word "equal," to say that men shall have equal but not absolute liberty, to say that each man's liberty shall be limited by the equal liberty of every other man, is merely a nonsensical play upon words; it means nothing further than that, the persons using these qualifying phrases have not yet arrived at a true conception of liberty—they are not yet Anarchists. There can be no such thing as a limited or qualified liberty in the sense in which the idea is presented, that is, in the sense that it is capable of being measured by the human intellect, or of having its boundaries defined by a consensus of human opinion. The limits to liberty have been established by nature. They exist in the nature of things. Such limits are not restrictions; they do not press upon one, and are felt no more than are other natural facts with which men are surrounded and to which their lives must conform, because they are set at the extreme boundary of each one's aptitudes and capacity, at a point where it is simply impossible for him to go further along the line of his wants and aspirations. The limit to liberty lies in the constitution of each individual by himself. When man has exercised his use and possession to the extreme limit of his needs, and capacities for satisfying them, he has reached the limit of his liberty, and he cannot go beyond that point without trenching on the right, and so the liberty, of other men. To enable him to get beyond his limitations, and so permit him to trench upon the liberty of others, he must claim and exercise a right of property; the right of property is the only thing that makes him bigger than nature intended he should be, and so gives him the power of invasion which the individualists talk about so much. When there is no right of property, but only a right of use and possession, each man must keep within the limits of his nature, and there can be no such thing as a conflict of liberty.

6.—At this point I may assert that, I am a thorough, uncompromising individualist, in the sense in which we are all individualists, that is, in the only sense in which the term has any real meaning: namely, I hold it to be the right of each individual to use and possess natural opportunities to the full limit of his capacity for using untrammelled and without question or interference by any other individual in the universe. He cannot be coerced; his destiny cannot be tampered with in any manner; he is his own sovereign.

7.—On this basis we may take account of social needs and institutions of men, and deduce the form of association which the satisfaction of their individual needs is likely to lead them to assume. Remembering that property no longer exists, and that, with the disappearance of its forms of manifestation there is absolutely no further motive to support industrial competition—competition is always an effort to realize some form of property right, and without the right the effort could not be—and remembering that it is natural for men to take the easiest method for the satisfaction of their desires, then it is perfectly rational to assume that men will adopt such forms of economic association as will most readily and effectually conduce to the satisfaction of their individual wants. The vast economies and satisfactions that are possible to be enjoyed by the individual through associated effort and division of labor will be universally desired. And as, because of the absence of property, these cannot be enjoyed by the individual in their value form, but only in their use form, the scheme of association will infallibly be the one best calculated to realize the use form. This scheme is undoubtedly and indisputably Communism. I thus conceive Communism to be merely a form of economic association, freely entered into by free individuals as the best and most rational economic scheme imaginable for the satisfaction of their wants. Instead of a restriction on the liberty of individuals it is rather an extension of liberty, or rather, a widening of its boundaries, by

introducing a balance of capacities and aptitudes for labor, and allowing even the highest capacities to realize greater satisfaction and more facile composition of wants than would be otherwise possible. At this point it becomes the logical, the only possible ultimate form of anarchistic association. It springs into being naturally and spontaneously on the abolition of the state, property, and all that the term implies, and so the recognition of full, unrestricted and complete individual liberty. Free competition is impossible, because competition always implies a property basis, is, in fact, only an effort to realize a property right, and property is the negation of freedom. You will then wonder at my use of the term in No. 24 of The Firebrand. When I said that I used the term from an Anarchist standpoint, I would have been more correct, and less liable to misapprehension, if I had said, from the Individualist-Anarchist standpoint; that was what I meant to say. My effort was to indicate a line of thought along the evolutionary hypothesis which would tend to show the untenableness of the Individualist position. Conceding, thus, the theoretical soundness of their main contention it is possible to show, by a logical application of a thesis which they accept themselves as sound, that the development of their scheme must be to land them into monopoly, the complement, or other side of their initial force, because neither competition nor monopoly can exist without the existence of both together: and monopoly of course, is only the manifestation of property, or privilege. With their competition they may destroy the present capitalist monopoly, but only to establish what might be termed Anarchist Monopoly and that, of course, is a contradiction in terms.

The soundness of my position was virtually conceded by Fulton, in a personal letter which I had from him some time ago, the following extract from which I quote:

"Competition will be out of place in Anarchy, as the competitors would only ruin themselves. But there would be the possibility of competition in order to destroy the possibility of monopoly in any line: or if a monopoly or one system should grow out of any function, to let the possibility of competition guard it from becoming exorbitant in its charges."

As monopoly is not possible without property, the above quotation is equivalent to admission that the so-called Individualist-Anarchists are not Anarchists at all. Of course it is possible to kill monopoly by competition, just as it is possible to kill competition by monopoly; but both terms imply a right of property which is inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Anarchy. Under true Anarchy there could arise neither possibility, and the admission of such possibility is a virtual surrender of the whole anarchistic contention. The individualists, then, so far as they retain this property form, are not Anarchists. The trouble with the Individualists is, their notion of Communism is antiquated. They have not improved a hair's breadth on Proudhon's thesis, and his thesis is essentially unsound. The Communism which he condemned, and which he placed at the opposite pole from property, saying that property is the robbery of the weak for the benefit of the strong while Communism is the robbery of the strong for the benefit of the weak, was naught but Fourierism and St. Simonism. This is the sort of Communism he criticises, and he nowhere gives evidence of having any conception of any other sort of Communism. In attempting to establish a correct principle on the assumed equilibrium of the principles which he placed in opposition to each other, he made a lamentable hotch-potch of sound philosophy and social science, which he denominated Anarchy, and his followers to this day have copied his errors as well as his truths. They have not advanced an inch. Assuming the correctness of his line of reasoning, assuming that the true social principle is to be found between the two principles which he condemns, then that middle principle can be naught else than Free-Communism, which admits none of the evils either of property or authoritarian communism.

So far as the efforts of the Individualists to destroy any of the manifestations of property right, such as profit, interest, etc., is concerned, by means of mutual banking, labor exchange and such like schemes, I have

no objection to them, and freely concede that they are theoretically sound, and as far as they go are forces of good. And I have no objection to take part in them, but as an Anarchist I do not feel bound to do so, and when they are presented in the guise of ultimate adjustments I must object to their validity.

W. P. BORLAND.

John Turner in Chicago.

NEVER in the history of the labor movement in this city has an Anarchist made such a favorable impression or received such instant and considerate recognition as that made by John Turner. Most of the newspapers treated him, ostensibly, with the deference due to one of their largest subscribers, while the others refrained from mentioning his name at all, realizing probably that the "Schoolmaster is abroad," and the campaign of education is on, knowing that they could not afford to arouse interest in Anarchy or Anarchists, while the common people are in a receptive mood and restless and discontented.

In the midst of the "dog days" with the thermometer higher than ever known in the memory of the "oldest inhabitant" John Turner accomplished an artistic social, moral, and financial success, which is indeed gratifying, especially so to the Labor Church, which had charge of Turner while in Chicago. This church is an anomaly amongst Churches. So heterodox is it, that it is a church without a God, a bible or a steeple, with the motto: The Brotherhood of man and the solidarity of labor; believing in rescuing the body of man from hell while on earth, leaving the problematical future to the care of orthodox Churches. In fact it is a Meeting Place for the proletariat to study political, social, economic and industrial problems, from the standpoint of workingmen. John Turner spoke twice before this body, his subjects being, "Church and State twin enemies of the people", and "Evolution and Theology". The hall was packed almost to suffocation on both occasions.

Turner spoke twenty-four times during the eighteen days he was in the city, besides running up to Racine, Wis., to speak before the radicals of that town.

The thanks of all sympathisers, especially the Chicago comrades, is due to the following organizations for their financial support. Brewers and Malsters Union, Bicycle Workers Union No 2, German Typo Union No 9, German Printers Union No 275, Beer Barrel Coopers Union, Bakers Executive Board, Metal Workers Union No. 1, German Debating Club. Turner spoke before the following bodies, for one hour or more on some phase of the labor problem, being received with respectable attention and interest. He has been asked by several Unions to again address them when he returns East:

The Central Labor Union, The Labor Congress, Building Trades Council, Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers, Bricklayers and Stone Masons Union, Woodworkers Union No. 67, Journeymen Tailors No. 5, Horse Shoers Union No. 4, Carpenters Unions Nos. 1 and 10, Metal Polishers Union No. 6. He also lectured before the radical wing of the Populist Party, The Hall House Social Settlement Group, the Chicago Commons, and The Self Culture Society. He also lectured at Desplaines, a "dead to the world" village a few miles out of Chicago. A Lecture before the Single Tax club on Anarchist-Communism was one of the most edifying, enjoyable meetings of the series.

It was soul-soothing to hear a single taxer confess publicly that he had learned something, and that from a despised Anarchist. Providence ordained that all their shining lights should be absent on this the banner night of the season, as the Chicago Chronicle said it was the biggest crowd the single tax club had seen inside its rooms in many moons.

We tried our utmost to induce the political socialists to come out of their shells and debate with Turner, offering to pay all expenses and guarantee fair treatment. Challenges equched in parliamentary and courteous language were sent to all the leaders of this school of politicians and erstwhile economic revolutionists. "Tommy" Morgan, the sagamor of them all, whose only fault is that he stops thinking when he hears the word Anarchist, refused to entertain the idea, though the motive was laudable, as we merely wanted a debate between such well known representatives for the purpose of arousing interest along these lines. Mrs. Florence Kelly, the most erudite Karl Marx socialist in town, also declined to debate, although she taught the intolerant and vicious Dan DeLeonies a grand lesson in courtesy and good breeding by inviting Turner to

dinner, which he accepted in the spirit in which it was given. Paul Ehrman, the right bower of Morgan and statistician (?) of the local S. L. P., whose word is law, also declined without thanks. Wilson Becker, national organizer of the S. L. P., was in town, but he, too, declined to debate.

Through the courtesy of the Building Trades Council we were granted the privilege of using their hall for a debate between John Turner and John Z. White, the high priest and demigod of the local disciples of Henry George. In the vulgar parlance of the "Bowery boy," Turner "didn't do a thing" to White, and to judge from the expressions of many present White did not scintillate so brilliantly as on former occasions. Realizing this, was probably the reason when closing, after running out of argument, he wrapped himself up in the Stars and Stripes, and finished in a whirlwind of words, denouncing Turner for advocating revolution and discontent, although revolution was not mentioned, but grasping the fact that he was hopelessly beaten he launched forth with his harangue to catch the pharisees, sadducees and scribes who sympathized with him, and sat down amidst applause from the gallery.

In reply to our courteous and friendly invitations a mass meeting was held by the political Socialists. Advertisements were put in the papers, at \$2 per insertion, for seven or eight days, denouncing Turner for daring to disturb the equanimity of the Socialists by preaching Anarchy to the people and to the trades unionists. Right here it might be well to add that Turner created more interest and stir amongst Trades Unions in two weeks, than the political Socialists have done in a decade. The mass meeting was composed of Socialists and curiosity seekers who heard such blatant spouters as Wilson Becker and Barney Becker, the henchmen and lickspittles of De Leon, asperse the character and motives of Turner and Anarchists in general, although no opportunity was given to reply. "Anarchists," said this fellow Berlin, "are spies and tools of the capitalists." Turner is in the pay of Gompers and the American Federation of Labor, Turner having been imported by Gompers for the purpose of misleading the trades unionists, and to persuade them to abstain from politics," etc., etc. Thus he went on juggling with the truth, doubtless unconscious of how colossal a liar he was, and how easily he could have been refuted had they the courage to hold an open meeting. Turner had a meeting arranged weeks before so was unable to be present.

The last mass meeting we held previous to the departure of Turner for Omaha, we invited these aforesaid political Socialists to prove their assertion upon this occasion, but they retreated to their holes clutching their little ballot with fear and trembling, abashed and disgusted with the phenomenal success made by an Anarchist, in spite of their malicious opposition. Taken all in all, the visit of Turner was a feast for the gods; it was a feast of reason and a flow of soul" which will live long in the memory of many of the comrades in this city.

ICCNOCLAST MALFEW.

Mr. Byington Agrees.

I AGREE to what Comrade Addis says in commenting on my article in The Firebrand of Aug. 2, that "the struggle is not a purely economic one; it is social as well." I would even add that in my mind the economic side is the less important. What I meant by saying "the decisive struggle must come on economic lines" was this: if we can get free from laws restricting business we shall have comparatively little trouble with those affecting morality; but to get rid of all legal restrictions in the moral sphere would help us very little toward getting rid of restrictions on business, except only as it helped us form the habit of not caring for the State. On this last account, of course, as well as for the direct gain that is in it, it is important to liberate ourselves from laws outside the economic sphere.

I agree also to Comrade Morris' words, "It seems to me that to narrow Anarchist propaganda to opposition of special laws would be unwise, because of the danger of losing sight of the real aim of Anarchism. . . . Government, the thing itself, and not merely some special act thereof, is what we have to oppose." I hope Comrade Morris will repeat this as often I or anybody else say anything that can be understood as implying the contrary, for I regard it as a highly important truth which some of us are too apt to forget. But what I had said was intended as a discussion not of our policy in propaganda

by word, but of the possibilities of Anarchistic action while the present general economic conditions continue. Such action, of course, cannot be carried so far as to set the State aside altogether at once, though we might come nearer to that than some of us think; but if we must begin by setting aside part of the laws, it is certainly worth while to see if we agree as to what laws are the stronghold of government's power against us.

I have no plan of campaign; I am trying to get a clear idea of the conditions under which we have to fight, and to see whether others agree with me. I do not know, for instance, whether it will be practically important to know whether the national or state government is our most dangerous oppressor; if we should want to know that, the question I have raised would be helpful. I started with the idea that the economic oppression came mostly from the United States, other oppression from the individual States; but in making out my list of economic oppressions I concluded that State and Nation were pretty evenly balanced in that regard.

Another important question is what particular parts of government do most to maintain the public feeling that government is necessary. It seems to me that the money question has a disproportionate influence in that direction, because of the widespread conviction that money is of supreme importance and that the government stamp is what makes money. For this reason I think we can hardly set too high a value on Labor Exchange organization, which sets men to furnishing their own money without looking to the government, and thereby getting a better quality of money than the government furnishes. In my judgement no Anarchist is practical and up to date unless he is posted on the Labor Exchange; and the best way I know for getting posted is to take the "New Charter," 169 W. San Fernando St., San Jose, Cal., which is 50c. a year or three months on trial for 10c.

Let me say in conclusion that I think the last half of Addis' article already referred to, containing instances of successful disregard of government and suggestions of definite things that might be done, in that line, is hard to beat for practical value in a small space. I hope any one who can give more of the same sort will do so.

S. T. BYINGTON.

Another Victim.

HERMAN EICH, the rag-picker poet, is no more.

Readers will remember the note in number 28 saying that Comrade Eich had started on a propaganda tour to the east, without money or transportation. This hazardous attempt proved his end. At Rock Springs, Wyo., Aug. 21, in consequence of his having no money and his attempt to get the small value of a ride to the east from the railroad company which has robbed him and his like to the extent of millions, he was ordered off the train while in motion by a brakeman, and in his attempt to comply he fell, was caught by the wheels and brained. Thus ended the life of a man to whom happiness was a stranger and whose pleasures were few and meager.

He was a German Jew about 32 years old. In this city he followed the calling of junkman. He was not one to be suspected of a symphathetic or tender nature, or of ability to express his inmost sensations in the language of the poet. But his contributions to The Firebrand speak volumes for the aesthetic nature and active brain hidden under so rugged an outward form. That he was sensitive, the following verses, from "A Dirge," published some time ago in The Firebrand, called forth by "the fiercely-waging brother-strife," shows:

"With wild despair it fills my heart:
The dreams of youth are cold and blighted;
The child of hope is laid to rest
With morning tapers lighted.

Bright colors of the waxing spring,
Why seek you still this breast forsaken?
Let blossoms bloom, let swallows sing—
My joy they cannot waken.

Would that fierce winter might abide!
Would that the earth might burst asunder!
Would that into the chasm wide
Both life and struggle thunder!

And for him earth has burst asunder and life, which was a struggle, has thundered into the wide chasm. And shall we conclude that it was unwelcome?

Before starting on his last journey, our comrade left in care of The Firebrand all his effects, which consist of a small collection of his verses, many of which have appeared in The Firebrand, a drama entitled "The

Curse of Poverty," a short story or two, letters, a photograph of a sister—nothing more. He was alone in the world—let his own verses say why:

CONSOLATION.

Foolish heart, why art thou beating
With ecstatic glee?
Nought is mine beyond the greeting
From afar she sent to me!

I must end this wild emotion,
And subdue this pain,
For beyond the rolling ocean
I must ever long in vain.

I must stay, and, ever sighing,
Bear my woeful lot,
While my love is vainly spying
For the ship that cometh not.

And I dream, and see her weeping,
Thinking of the past;
When despair is o'er me creeping,
Love, I know will ever last.

In this issue is reprinted one of his best poems, which has been somewhat revised since its original publication. Others may reappear later.

J. H. M.

What is Absolute Liberty?

I AM not ready to condemn the principles of Anarchy as long as I don't fully understand them. I am in favor of any movement that will be the greatest benefit to the greatest number, and for a better and higher standard of civilization.

I understand that you advocate "absolute liberty" and "liberty of opportunity." Now this, per se, is entirely too meager from which to get the idea how equality and justice, or equal human rights, from a purely moral stand-point, can be maintained, or how human life can be protected from criminals without a certain code of civil laws, which, of course, cannot guarantee absolute liberty to any individual without making him an autocrat over others. If every person could be taught to strictly observe the principles of Morality, to do right, i. e., to do to others as we would have them do to us, and not to do to others that which we would not have them do to us, so that every one would be inclined to do so—voluntarily pleased to do—then we could all enjoy absolutely liberty, i. e., we would enjoy all the liberty we desire, which is to regard every person's rights and liberty the same as our own and having no desire for any liberty that would injure, harm or interfere with the proper rights and liberties of others, we might then call it "absolute liberty" or "liberty of opportunity." But when will that day come? Are these the principles that the society of Anarchists advocate? If so, then it is grand, but not practical, per se, for all individuals.

Now for example, there is no individual property except the clothes we wear and all are entitled to all they need; it may be claimed that there would be no desire for robbing or stealing and thus wipe out the crime of stealing, but what is to prevent offenses of some kind through which one man (justly or unjustly) may kill another person, what is to be done with him? Let him go at large, with absolute liberty, unharmed? Will you kindly enlighten me on these points? How will you deal with violent crimes?

J. D. BECK

If we look upon the "greatest benefit" as merely a matter of the possession of wealth, then the "greatest benefit to the greatest number" might mean the abject poverty of the smaller number. There is no semblance of justice in the proposition, therefore. We must deny at once the right of the majority to rule, because there is no essential difference between the "greatest benefit to greatest number" and the "greatest good to the king." If human rights exist they exist with the individual, not in the mass. Right does not rest upon opinion, but upon existence. That is to say, my right to the benefits of natural opportunities does not depend upon my being of the majority's opinion, and the rulership of the majority is no less the right of might than is the rulership of the emperor.

Anarchism, then, is not a movement for the greatest good of the greatest number, but the greatest good for all, with the opportunity for each to choose for himself what is and what is not good.

Equality of opportunity is absolute liberty. To make one the autocrat over others is not guaranteeing absolute liberty, but conferring the power of subjugation. One term is the opposite of the other. One principle cannot be attained by the practice of the other.

As to the "principles of morality," they have nothing to do with liberty, but so-called moral teach-

ings exist only for the purpose of upholding a system of exploitation. In the absence of exploitation there can be no need of "moral precepts." A thorough grounding of the idea of liberty in the mind will uproot the last vestige of the "moral code."

But to fully grasp the subject one must understand something of human motive and the causes of those acts which are called crimes. It is necessary to know that theft is the result of monopoly, the property system; so called sexual crimes and abuses are the result of improper sex relations, based on the property idea; and murder is undoubtedly an outgrowth of property in wealth and our sex relations. Now, when we understand that property can only exist under some form of government, we are in a fair way to solve the criminal problem. The subject, however, is too vast for anything but this simple outline in a single article, and a clear understanding can only be gained by a thorough study.

But if the idea is grand it certainly is worthy of careful study, and I recommend to friend Beck a continued reading of The Firebrand and other Anarchist literature. If we are correct in our analysis of the causes of so-called crime, we undoubtedly have a better remedy than "morality," heavens and hells, gallows and prisons. J. H. M.

Louise Michel Coming.

We take pleasure in announcing that in the interest of propaganda we have been able to induce our fearless comrade, Louise Michel, to make a trip through North America. She consents the more readily as she thinks now more than ever propaganda is needed, since the authoritarianism shown by the international congress. She will be accompanied by her inseparable friend, Charlotte Vauville, who is necessary to her on account of her advanced age and the care she must have during the long journey.

We urge that our comrade's tour be well advertised, in order to make her propaganda as effective as possible. We also solicit donations of money to defray the expenses, as the means in our possession are very limited. Donations should be addressed to Pietro Gori, 112 High St., Islington N. London, England. Responses should be made at once, as the departure is expected to take place by the 15th of September.

We thank you in advance for your solidarity, and beg to remain yours very truly.

PIETRO GORI.
JEAN FRANCIS MARAT.

Note and Comment.

ORDERS for the "Life of Albert R. Parsons" and his book on Anarchism should be withheld until further notice, as the home of Lucy E. Parsons, where the books were in stock, was recently destroyed by fire. She informs us that some damaged copies may be had a little later.

We call attention to "A Plea for the New Woman," by May Collins, in our book list, which was noticed in these columns a few weeks since. Miss Collins is a progressive young woman of ability, as her essay shows, twenty-five copies of which she has kindly donated for the benefit of The Firebrand.

Waterloo, Or., may supply a "striking example" of how a town can get along without a municipal government. A man there was fined \$15 and costs for not putting out a flag when a child of a visitor was ill in his house with measles. He appeared to the Circuit Court and won his costs of \$58 against the town. To avoid payment all the officials resigned, so that the town is without a government. There are some municipalities here notably San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose—that might be better without any government than such as they have. If Waterloo should get along all right, we would like to see the experiment tried.—The Star, San Francisco.

The editor of the Star is a constant advocate of the Single Tax and government ownership of "natural" monopolies, but of late has published quite a number of strongly anarchistic comments. Good, brother Barry, come right on and join force with those who are striving for complete emancipation.

To oppose these crimes and criminals is ANARCHY! To teach the people that these royal families must be deposed is ANARCHY! To show the people that the monopolies must be taken out of the hands of despots, to render them harmless, and made public property to be used for the benefit of all people, is ANARCHY! To teach the people their rights and how to get them peacefully is ANARCHY. To oppose a rule of monopolies by bribing public officials, is ANARCHY.

Well, if these be ANARCHY, then welcome ANARCHY.—(Appeal to Reason.

The above is a part of a comment on the attitude of Harper's Weekly on the present presidential campaign, and some statements in the same paper concerning how nearly the governments of great cities are run by and in the interest of street railway and other corporations. In this comment the editor uses the words royal, monarchial and despotic in the true sense, and where he used to misuse the word Anarchist. We are glad to note the change of the Appeal to Reason. Perhaps our criticism of his misuse of the word, and the fact that some of his readers discontinued their subscription on that account had something to do with it. H. A.

"We do not wish to govern men directly, but to administer affairs, for we can control men's actions more effectually indirectly by controlling the industries of the nation," said a prominent S. L. P. leader to me recently. Now all of you who think social-democracy a step toward anarchy just bear that in mind. The Socialist leaders expect to control you more completely than your political bosses do now."

The above, copied from a contributor to the Firebrand, is about as silly a piece of economic cackle as could be devised. Any man, or set of men, advocating indirect control of men, are not Socialists.

All true Socialists wish the people to rule themselves, and this they will have to do through organization. I would like to ask the writer of the above to show us how a railroad could be operated without organization.—(The White Slave.

The S. L. P. leader referred to in the above is, I think he is, the most influential and prominent Socialist on the Pacific coast. General Kelly, now of Omaha, knows him well. I have talked with many other leaders in the S. L. P., De Leon amongst them, and find the idea of domination a common affliction to them all. And does it not stand to reason that when the means of production and distribution are in the possession of the government, the co-operative commonwealth, that those in office have it within their power to compel any and every one to do as they dictate under pain or starvation?

As to the operation of a railroad without organization, it depends on what the questioner means by organization. The bees make honey, and we complete division of labor, and a thoroughly systematic mode of procedure, and that with out any organization. Are we less intelligent than the bees?

If every man who wishes to work at railroading comes to the nearest round house, and when they are all there they arrange the work by agreement, each one doing his part because he prefers that particular work, what need is there of organization? There is none. H. A.

We have received a copy of "Proudhon, and his Bank of the People", a series of newspaper articles in defense of Proudhon and his theories, written in 1849, by Charles A. Dana, at present intensely plutocratic editor of the New York "Sun", published in pamphlet form by Benj. R. Tucker, New York. This raking up of evidence of his radicalism in his younger (and perhaps he would add foolish) days will no doubt be somewhat galling to the most rabid of "plute" editors. But Mr. Dana is not the only editor who advocates the interests of the monopolist class well-knowing that they proceed contrary to all reason and the best interests of humanity.

A NEW Anarchist journal, "The Alarm," has made its appearance in London. Comrade Quinn appears to be the editor and our occasional correspondent, Will Banham, business manager. It appears also that the "Associated Anarchists" are backing the venture. It is published weekly, neat in appearance, and a credit to the cause in all respects, and we extend to it a cordial welcome to the field. J. H. M.

The Letter Box.

A. T., New York City.—You'll find U. credited in last week's issue.

B. M. W., Chicago.—Thanks for Comrade Turner's photo—it fills a "long-felt want". Thanks also for the report.

C. C., Paterson, N. J.—We are just at present crowded with manuscripts, and yours will receive attention in due time. We have not even had time to look it through yet.

M. D., Paterson, N. J.—We have read the stuff in "The People" to which you refer. Don't worry, comrade, such attacks do not hurt us, and they are not worthy of our attention.

D. E. S., Santa Ana, Cal.—As long as you like the paper and as long as it is sent to you, take it and read it and ask no questions. The work of education is slow, to be sure, but honest thought and voluntary endeavor are world-movers, and there is still ground for hope.

A. J. P., New York.—It is proposed to make the

paper double the present size—that is, eight pages of the present size. This we consider the ideal size for a paper of The Firebrand's character. The present size is too small to allow any latitude in the treatment of subjects; on the other hand, in case of a big paper the tendency is to verbosity in order to fill space. We hope to strike the happy medium. As to principles, however, we are not seeking medium ground.

Receipts.

Carno, \$2.00. Augustin, \$1.50. C. S., \$1.00. Turletti, Pope, Haiman, Schroeder, Norton, S. Rubenstein, Harris, Mandell, Bonoff, J. Rubenstein, Swanson, Winnen, Hoffman, Boss, Barrow, each 50c. Tannenbaum, 10c.

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RECEIVED, for the purpose of buying a printing press for THE FIREBRAND, as follows:

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We send out each week large numbers of sample copies, and for this purpose we ask friends to send names of persons likely to be interested. The receipt of a sample copy has no other significance than the hope of interesting you and securing your assistance in the work. The subscription price is nominally fifty cents a year, though in reality it is voluntary, for many friends pay more than the subscription price, and we send it to all who desire it, even if they feel able to pay only a few cents or nothing at all. If you receive the paper without having ordered it, do not hesitate to accept and read it, as no bills are ever sent out.

Taxidermy.

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE FIREBRAND.—For the benefit of this paper, I will send instructions for mounting and preserving any sized bird, from a hummer to an eagle without skinning, to any one sending twenty-five cents to The Firebrand and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to me.

P. S.—After receiving it, if your conscience troubles you for receiving so much for so little you can remit something to sender. Address: ED GORE, Warren, Minn.

THE FIREBRAND'S AGENTS.

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