The Ballad of Splendid Silence,

HOMER R. BARTON, BUNGAY, 1866.

This is the story of Molly and Melly;
And when you have heard it through,
Pray God be not so trial you
As the girl you don’t love to.
And if his doom be upon you,
Then may you love you this:
To fight as a good fight do;
And win a crown like his.
He was strong and brave and happy;
Beloved and loving you;
With eyes that met in trust;
And let his soul be on his tongue.
He fought the spirit for Freedom;
He hated his country’s wrong;
He said the patriots’ song.
He sang the patriot’s song.
With mother and sister and sweetheart
His valiant days went by,
Till Hungary called on her children
To win the crown and to die.
“Goodbye to mother and sister,
And dear as my sweet sweetheart;
I fight for you, you, you for me.
We shall not be apart.”

The woman prayed in the sanctuary,
They prayed when the sky grew dim;
His mother and sister prayed for the close;
His sweetheart for him.
For mother and sister and sweetheart,
But most for the true and the right,
His love and his life in his hope,
And led his men to fight.

Entirely, mounting, and springing,
Night-watch, attack, and defeat;
The ruthless desperate fighting,
The hopeless, relentless retreat.

Birth and death and disaster,
Capture and loss and despair;
And half of a regiment hid in,
And only this man knew where.

Prisoner, fast bound, sore wounded
They brought him home along;
With his body as bruised and broken,
As his soul was aching and strong.

Before the Austrian general:
“Where are your men?” he heard.
He looked blank at his empty face,
And answered never a word.

“Where is your regiment hidden?”
Spared our homes a straight shot.
No! We can and dumb dogs their tongues.
You rebel republic.

They dropped his mother and sister
Into the open hall;
Give up your men—If these women
Are dear to your heart at all?
He turned his eyes on his sister
She answered his silence with speaking,
And straight from the heart spoke she:
“The blood of your country;
They spill your father’s name;
And what is life, without honor,
And what is death, without shame?”

He looked at the mother who bore him,
And her eyes was splendid to see;
He hid them in a bitter tear,
But never a word said he.

“Son of my body, be silent!”
By the living fire brand;
And I shall know how to give them,
Son of my heart, for yet.
He shuffled feet, kept silence;
Without a reproach or cry.
The women were slain before him,
And he stood and he saw them die.
Then they brought his lovely beloved,
Destitute of her heart and eyes;
“Where your men are hidden,”
Or say that your sweethearts die.
She flung her arms about him,
She held his lip in her cheek.
“Speak, for I am in love with you;
Love, for our love’s sake speak!”
His eyes are burning and shining
With the fire that makes the hero;
Christ! walk with him in the furnace,
And strengthen his soul for a space.
So he looked and loathed it,
And his eye grew tender and wet;
Lamented the him and all.
His lips to his lips were set.
“Hello, I am young, I love you!
I am not ready to die.
One word makes us happy for ever
Together, you and I.”

Her arms round him, her face in his things;
His lips his old lips increased;
He suddenly flung his hand from his;
And folded his arms on his breast.
She wept, she shrieked, she struggled;
She cursed him in God’s name,
For the woe of her early dying,
And for that dying’s shame.
And still be stood, and his silence
Like fire was burning through him;
Then the mothers spoke once and were silent;
And she was silent.
They turned to torture him further,
If further might be: in vain!
He held his peace in that three-fold hell,
And he never spoke again.

The end of the uttermost anguish
The soul of the man could bear;
Was the madhouse where tyrants bury
The broken and the despised.

* * * * *
By the heaven denounc’d in her service,
By the hell thorns bared for her sake,
By the years of madness and silence,
By the heart that her enemies break.
By the sword that broke her heart,
By the years of too-early death,
By the passionate self-devotion,
By the absolute perfect faith.

The thousands who know such anguish,
And win such divine renown,
Who have borne them bravely in battle
And won the conquerors crown.

By the storms their children have suffered,
By the lives that their purity gave,
By the death men have died at her altar,
By these shall our Liberty live!

In the all-sounding memory
Of a wrong some day will repay.
Live the brothers who died in all ages.
For the Freedom we live for today!

—E. Kossuth, in Freedom, (London.)

Texas never yet was a great wrong or a great abuse
but what objected to investigation and discussion.—Alighieri.

Free Communism.

My Personal Views of the Principle.

BY WILLIAM HOLLIS.

I want to state my ideas about Anarchist or Free Communism; what it is; what it contemplates; how it is to come about, and why I think it is simpler yet more philosophical, more scientific and more equitable than Anarchist or Free Commercialism (better known as Tuckerian Anarchism), which advocates the natural bank, competition, private property, and complicity and use of landed which insist that natural rights cannot exist; that there can be no rights except such as are acquired by contract, and that in the absence of contract all is the right only.

While this article is not intended as a challenge to my Free Commercialist friends, and while I have no particular desire at this time to enter into a controversy with anyone as to the relative excellence of one school over another, I yet recognize the possibility of it being criticized and assailed by those who do not accept my premises or conclusions. I may or may not reply to such critcis and assailants. I can promise nothing except this: if it is made clear to me that any of my statements or arguments are wrong or misleading I will willingly make amends and correct the errors.

In order that there may be no misunderstanding, and to clear away all possible grounds of contention as to matters having little or no bearing upon the main question, I deem it best to make certain explicit statements as to my use of terms, and instances upon certain forms. It will be noticed that I use the first personal pronoun singular. I do this because I wish it distinctly understood that it is my views I am stating, and that I propose to be held responsible alone for my own views. This is an elucidation of my principles and my ideas. That others may and do believe identically the same, or whether there is or is not a school of economics teaching the same ideas, is not to the purpose here, and smart critics must not overbalance my arguments with statements that the Communists claim so and so, that the Anarchist-Communists are illogical because Holmes says so and so.

In this article I shall also use the terms Free Communist, Free Commercialist, in preference to Anarchists-Communist and Anarchist-Individualist; partly because it will save labor, partly to avoid possible tautology, and partly because the prevalence of the word “Individualist” in one term and its absence in the other conveys the impression that Free Communists are not Individualists, which I maintain is far from the truth. I have already defined Free Commercialism, so that if readers misconstrue the term they alone are responsible. Further on I shall also define Free Communism. If any one object to these definitions they must remember that they are mine, and I alone should be held responsible for them.

This, it will be noticed, is an explanation of principles and doctrine and cannot be answered by an account of the doings or sayings of individuals.
It makes not the slightest difference, in the discussion, whether Huxley is an authoritarian or not; it matters not what Kropotkine wrote several years ago; Morris' or Koch's opinion on the question of private property could no figure here. Prospective conflagrations here and now would not empty visible space (and their own time) in a long dissertation upon the alleged inconsistencies of so-called Free Communitarians.

If this article was intended as the opening argument in an extended controversy (which it is not) I should find it difficult to discuss Free Communitarian with persons who either是从 ignorance or deliberate malice deny the term, (Teutic) or the school to which it applies (Tandy and Gilmore) make no distinction between these adherents (Cohn and Fulton). The first named has declared, in his paper, Liberty, that the term Anarchist- (Free) Communitarian is as absurd and as impossible as a white-black man or a square circle. Tandy in Age of Thought has said "I am not aware that there is a school of libertarians calling themselves Anarchist-Communists. I know of a cult of State Socialists who have degraded Anarchism by joining its name with Communism. I do not even know what the members recognize as an anarchist or a communist, other than, perhaps, a willful, Ignorantly misrepresent and ridicule its teachings, would be an exceedingly difficult and perhaps most unprofitable undertaking for me, since the article is intended as an explanation of what I consider to be the principles, methods and aims of Free Communism as a recognized factor in economic or social institutions, not as a description of a philosophy begging for recognition. I shall insist that my critics shall so consider it.

And now, the ground being cleared for unstructured consideration of our subject, the inquiry naturally arises: What is Free Communism? In a general sense, after much thought, I believe I can say in a summary sentence that given in my "Bases of Anarchy," which is: "The doctrine of the abolition of the State, and that all the affairs of man should be managed by voluntary associations. In a more particular sense I would define it as the doctrine of the abolition of monopoly and special privileges, in the absence of which not only rent, interest, profit and compulsory taxation would disappear, but price and value (exchange value) which depend on monopoly, would vanish also, leaving Communism the highest utility. I am aware that this definition is open to objections, but those, I believe can only refer to its phrasology and perhaps incompleteness; not to any incorrect statement or fundamental error. I maintain this with the assurance that our Free Communist friends will decidedly disagree with the statement that in the absence of monopoly, price and value would disappear. For them to admit that would be to abandon management of their possessions, industrious and honest people who do not own property by mortgaging their credit. First. Labor will receive its natural wages—its entire product. Such profits as might be actually independent. He will not work for another unless he receives more than he could earn by working for himself. Instead of, as now, a hundred laborers competing for the same piece of work, the production of many would be employed competing for the services of a single laborer.

It follows, then, that production must increase enormously. As wages are maintained by receiving one big wagel or salary for labor, he can, and will probably command more and more capital, and thus enhance the general productive power and further augment production itself. Again, the establishment of a workmen's cooperative union will greatly swell the ranks of actual producers and co-operative enterprises, which would admit of the fullest division of labor and the use of most approved appliances, will again multiply the productive capacity of society a hundred fold. This fact of immense augmentation of production being admitted—and surely no one will have the hardihood to dispute it—it must be admitted also, that the cost of production will be enormously and constantly decreased, that price and value will continually tend to diminish in like ratio, and that there can be no doubt that the process until the final consummation. Here, then, logically following out the line of argument supported by the Free Commercialist, we have the very conditions which they deny, and Free Commercialist can only stand by his, which the consumption would keep pace with the capacity for production is to me unthinkable. And this brings me to a consideration of another view of the subject under discussion.

About the Convention

No definite information can yet be given about the proposed convention for the 1st of January. We have not yet had any inquiry to comrades throughout the country, and have received very few encouraging answers. Many have not yet answered, and it would seem desirable that the nature of the case demands to be put in progress.

A meeting was held in New York for the purpose of discussing the advisability of a General Convention, but we have not yet heard the result. Much will, depending upon the conclusion reached by the committee in fact the committee feels disposed to leave it all to the collective will of the New York comrades. As soon as we learn the opinion reached at this meeting we will act. The Socialist commerce through the country and harmonious hope will be in a few days, and so there will be ample time for all to get ready and send delegates, should the decision be favorable.

Opposition has come from where it has been expected, and the reason is as we have presupposed, i.e. the amount of money that would necessarily be expended. It is stated that important questions could be discussed through the papers. This is a tacit avowal that there are no important questions to be discussed, since we see very few of them in the papers. However, we can and we will discuss this subject here, as our present object is to furnish information concerning the Convention.

All wishing to give information or advice can do so through The Firebrand, or by writing to us.

The Committee

Address: Flora Sturrow
260 Worcester St., New Haven, Conn.

Note and Comment

Now is the time for the workingmen to join the militia. Mark Hanna will soon be dictator and the workingman will in all probability be called out to suppress strikes. We should, therefore, vote the poor man's ticket, won't it? A spectacle more edifying than elegant.

* * * * *

COMRADE MORRITZ writes us from Baltimore that Emma Goldman spoke there on the 11th, 12th and 15th of this month, and the collections amounted to $22.70; expenses $9.70; $80 were sent to Gordon, leaving $50.00 cash on hand. All of this is for the Berkman rescue fund.

It is amusing to hear men, who loudly proclaim themselves anti-monopolists, go on spending their money on railroad, telephones, telegraphs, the issue of money and so on. Without the aid of the government railways, telegraphs, telephones, and money, monopolies could not exist.

* * * * *

We are informed that many Anarchists got excited in the last election and thus swelled the total vote. If all these were cast in opposition to railroad, telegraph and telephone, the falling off of the total vote would, I am inclined to think, be sufficient to alarm the politicians. It is a consumption devoutly to be wished for.

* * * * *

There are organizations which were started for the purpose of educating and helping the wage earners and labor unions. They have now outlived their usefulness and are now the time for them to turn their attention to the economic struggle. On this ground we can combat the oppression more effectively.

* * * * *

GENERAL MILES wants the army increased, and says it will not be a menace to the wage workers, but he knows he lies. Armies have always been maintained —
"To preserve the peace and security of the nation" while leaving the control of the proceedings, and will never be maintained for any other purpose.

"When the railroadmen were on strike three-fourths of the men were negroes and two-thirds were white," say the other day, "but damn them; they voted for McKinley, and if they strike again I'll join the militia myself to kill them." Thus you see, workingmen, what you may expect. If the strike is not made the McKinleyites would have talked the same. Yet we are told that all men are free to vote as they please.

For the last two elections, covering a period of six years, the falling off of the vote cast has attracted considerable attention. In the campaign just past every consideration of four-page headlines, and the position of the parties, and the large number of voters in this state. A campaign can be carried out by the city people. Such things as the city folks want and are not produced by them, can, in like manner be sent in by the rush

The use of money can be reduced to a minimum interest will fall in proportion. The surplus being less, the money will wane and when the revolution has removed the necessity for taxes—therefore removing the last necessity for money—any social order can then grow up in which money will cease to exist, but all goods will be freely and fully supplied.

A Reply

To educate the public I find it best to repeat my thoughts down as they come to me and find out what good there is in them I like to have them published; and if they are of any value to anyone else so much the better. This is what I have done in this paper.

Mr. Bache's letter to the Times is a paper full of the same unanswerable arguments and of the same type as his previous paper, and in the same spirit. I don't think that the argument about the people's rights to the means of exchange is so strong that it can be made use of by the people. I do not deny the arbitrary power of a medium of exchange, but I deny that the mortgagee has a right to the money that he gets. This is a principle that I must hold to, or it would be impossible to make a revolution.

There is another argument that is not so strong, and that is the argument about the money that is not being used. This is a matter that I must hold to, or it would be impossible to make a revolution. Every reform movement has some propositions of an educational nature. For instance, Henry George's land tax did educate the people in the direction of free land. The mutual banking scheme advocated by Westrup, and later on by Van Ossom, has tended to educate the people upon the money question, so does Coxey's non-interest bearing bond proposition. Now, the inauguration of any of these propositions would create a revolution from above, and so will Anarchist-Communism. But there is a difference between the latter and the former. While there is hope among the people in their present state of mentality to gain something from the first three propositions (I forgot the name of the silver agitation, which makes this four), these not being as radical as the other, and as they appear to be a law of rationality and are not a law of change, which considering things as they are is not the case with Anarchist-Communism. This latter is more of a religion, for the understanding of which a universal knowledge is required. A man can only understand it as he understands the law of faith, and is able to comprehend its bearing upon every walk of life, since it upsets all that we have learned about the present order of government and economy.

Long as the powers that be, dominate the places of learning for the children, there is, in my humble judgment, very little chance for progress with Anarchist-Communism. It appears to me that what is now taught in school is, emphatically in the opposite direction from Socialism. Nor should one be favorable to Anarchist-Communism; and by the same token, one must be un-
Observations

Unites thecaption "The Kaddish" in No. 38. Bylon- ington. He is said to have been both feet, but after one got started in that line one finds it just reverse. Would we have only emotional and sentimental articles they would likely have been better "taken" by any new reader, but it would take them in that case more than thirty years to understand Abraham. I have met people who had been reading "Der Arme Jude" for eleven years and knew just about as much of Abraham as a dog about a holiday.

Corespondence.

To The Firebrand.

For some time I have been receiving the Firebrand and while not quite liking it I find much in it to admire and gainfully enjoy reading. I would be glad to subscribe if I had the means but I have not. However I may differ from you in opinion as to the means, I am in full sympathy with you in the object to be gained—such liberty as will everlasting will be sufficient to the merciful purposes of the individual and through the individual to the race. It is a work much in your work. But the labor of life is hard for the most of us and unnecessarily so if we could only see the right way to make it easier.

But such difference of thought keeps us from using all of the means.

Elise Cole Wilson.

Clippings and Comments.

There have been so many different times during the last three or four years appeared in different rooms of papers a statement to the effect that the proportion of the wealth produced by the United States is producing on the average about $10.00 per day. The above statement has been the subject of much discussion by the monopolists. As far as I can tell by any who receive no benefit from that source.

The story of the Chicago .

See "The Two Books last named are slightly damaged, but available.

Mrs. Walshebrook's Books.

My Country Past.

$1.00

My Country Present.

$1.00

The American Book of Trivia.

$1.00

See Religion.

$1.00

The Family Table Book.

$1.00

The Biographical Dictionary of the World's greatest Men. issued under the personal supervision of Mrs. Walshebrook and edited by her. The two most recent volumes are entitled "The True Story of the World's greatest Men." Being a history of the world's greatest men and their achievements. The total number of volumes now in print is over one hundred.

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Other Books on Sex Relation.

Diana, a Perich-Psycho-Biological Essay on Sexual Relations.

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$1.00

ADVERTISEMENTS.

International Group of Free Thinkers meets at 64 Washington Square, New York City, every Monday at 9:30 a.m.

Independent Theatre (Fred Hankey) will be opened in Tremont Hall, 849 North Market Street, New York. The one act play of "The satin shoe" by Mrs. M. E. W. Dietrich will be presented. The proceeds of the play will be given to the U.S. Woman's Suffrage Association.

The "Famous White" or "White" goal is a beautiful white goal. We recommend its use for all games of skill and dexterity. It is made of wood and is guaranteed to last for years. The "White" goal is approved by the ruling bodies of the sport and is the only approved goal of its kind in use anywhere. It is manufactured by the White Manufacturing Company, Newark, N.J.

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