

The Firebrand

OF THE CONQUEST 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.

Vol. III. No. 13.

PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY, MAY 2, 1897.

Whole No. 117.

Love—True and False.

I NEVER was attached to that great sect
Whose doctrine is, that each one should select
Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,
And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend
To cold oblivion, though it is in the code
Of modern morals, and the beaten road
Which those poor slaves with weary footsteps tread,
Who travel to their home among the lead
By the broad highway of the world, and so
With one chained friend, perhaps a jealous foe,
The dreariest and the longest journey go.
True love in this differs from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away.
Love is like understanding, that grows bright
Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy light,
Imagination! which from earth and sky,
And from the depths of human phantasy,
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors fills,
The universe with glorious beams, and kills
Error, the worm, with many a saw-like arrow
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow
The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,
The life that wears, the spirit that creates
One object, and one form, and builds thereby
A sepulchre for its eternity.
Mind from its object differs most in this:
Evil from good, misery from happiness;
The baser from the nobler; the impure
And frail, from what is clear and must endure.
If you divide suffering and dross, you may
Diminish till it is consumed away.
If you divide pleasure and love and thought,
Each part exceeds the whole; and we know not
How much, where any, yet remains unshared,
Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow spared:
This truth is that deep well, whence sages draw
The unenvied light of hope, the eternal law
By which those lives to whom this world of life
Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife
Tells for the promise of a later birth
The wildness of this elysian earth.

—Percy Bysshe Shelly.

Individualism vs. Communism.

WHILE Mr. John Turner of England was in Denver, in the month of September, 1896, a debate was arranged between that gentleman and Mr. Henry Cohen, of Denver. The discussion took place at the residence of Mrs. Edgerton, the spacious parlors being quite filled with interested listeners, most of whom were students either as beginners or scholars, and all of liberal views. Though the debate lasted until after midnight, the deepest attention was paid to every word by all present. It was admitted to be a remarkable presentation of the two schools of thought—Communism and Individualism—each side putting forth arguments in its favor with a clearness, strength and a close adherence to the subject matter in hand, seldom seen in a debate of this kind.

Mr. L. W. Rogers acted as chairman. Mr. William Holmes reported the speeches stenographically. His notes were afterward written out and submitted to the principles for endorsement; with a few minor changes the following is his transcript. The question for debate was:

Is Anarchist-Communism a better and quicker solution of the economic question than Anarchist-Individualism?

In order to clear away the ground, each speaker gave his view of the position of the other.

Then a short reply from each followed to make corrections. After that each speaker gave an analysis of the present industrial system to show exactly

how they understood the process of exploitation was going on. The discussion proper then followed.

Henry Cohen, opened with his definition of Anarchist-Communism in a ten minutes' talk, as follows:

"The Anarchist-Communist believes that products of labor are not produced by the individual but by society in general. All existing wealth has been produced by all and belongs to all. It should therefore be seized by the community and enjoyed in common.

"Production should be conducted by the commune the members of which would consume in proportion to their needs and desires. The elements entering into the production of an article are so numerous and so complex that to attempt to separate them and apportion to each individual his share is impossible. Take the lead pencil that I hold in my hand, according to their theory the labor of every one has entered into it. It should therefore belong to the community.

"He further says competition is a form of welfare and is detrimental to the race and should be replaced by a mutual helping of one another in industrial relations. By helping one another everyone is benefitted. The present competitive struggle is worse than war because it is unceasing and brings women and children actively into the conflict. For this they would substitute communal production and model society after the plan of the family. To look after one's self is anti-social and only in so far as we are altruistic will society improve."

Turner's definition of Anarchist-Individualism, given in ten minutes, was as follows:

"The Individualists attribute the exploitation of labor to the denial of the use of the land—which they would remedy by a system of occupancy and use in the holding thereof—together with the monopoly in the issue of money. While to them co-operation may be a good, it is not an essential, in solving the problem. This they hope to do by starting mutual banks which are to abolish interest. But they do not tell us how this is to be brought about without resistance to authority. They say property should remain in the hands of the present owners, but they do not tell us what shall be done with it when there are no heirs—or what incentive there would be to the holding of private property if rent, interest and profit had disappeared. The evolution of production and the great increase in productive power are almost ignored, though these have completely changed the economic outlook. If they attempted to resist the payment of rent they would put themselves in the position of revolutionists at once, while the question of economic rent would have to be dealt with to ensure equity. The system developed by Proudhon fifty years ago applied fairly well to the peasantry of France of that time, but is out of date now. It must be shown how the laborer who has no property is to be benefitted by the mutual bank."

Turner, continuing, criticised Cohen's definition of Anarchist-Communism, as follows:

"There is not much to take exception to in Friend Cohen's definition of Anarchist-Communism. He is mistaken when he says all people produced the lead pencil. Commodities are produced by all useful laborers either of the present or the past, and it is therefore impossible to say where individual ownership begins or ends. When we say the competitive system is bad, we mean it relatively, because we think something

better will take its place. Cohen says, "in so far as we are altruistic, society will improve," but it is to intelligent self-interest that we look, believing that this will lead society to adopt Communism because of its inherent economic benefits."

Cohen then criticised Turner as follows:

"Friend Turner has correctly stated our position regarding land tenure. We do not ignore economic rent; we recognize its existence, but to us it is not a bugaboo. If economic rent is to be considered, and opportunities are to be equalized, the doctrine must be carried to its logical conclusion. If all men have an equal right to all land, the bananas in Central America grow for the Esquimaux as well as for the Central American and the former, who may spend a whole day in catching a fish, while the latter has gathered many bunches of bananas, must be made to share. In other words nearly one-half the bananas must be taken from the Central American and sent to the Esquimaux. The Individualist not being bothered with this problem need find no solution. To him the equality that comes from liberty is enough, and no more is necessary."

Cohen gave the following analysis of present conditions:

"When a man wants to go into business of any kind, the first thing he does is to convert whatever form of wealth he possesses, (if it is not already in that form) into money. With this money he buys the plant, the raw material, and pays the laborers he employs. When the product is finished it is sold for money, and it starts on its way to the consumer passing it may be through hundreds of hands, and each time it changes hands it is for money. It is a motion of products in one direction and money coming to meet them, they constantly and continuously pass each other. Which has more power in the market? And which is it that robs labor? If I take this pencil and try to sell it, some time may elapse before I can do so, but if I take five cents I can buy one as soon as I reach a store. Can Friend Turner explain to us why this process is so slow in one direction and so rapid in the other? Were the process equally rapid both ways would not the problem be solved? When I say money does the robbing I do mean that holders of other kinds of capital do not. They exploit labor far more than the money lender does, but their power to do this is based and rests entirely on the fact that money bears interest.

"The profit system' of which we hear so much, and which is supposed to rest on the private ownership of the tools of production, is a taking phrase, but it has no meaning. The return to the business man or manufacturer in the general run of business, that is in the absence of some particular privilege like a patent or a tariff, after he pays for the use of land is interest and insurance. The rate of interest depends upon the restrictions on credit and note-issuing.

"Going into business at present is risky. There is the constant danger of failure; the risk involved must be paid for in addition to the current rate of interest, and this payment I call insurance. Business is uncertain and products cannot be sold, because labor only receives a fraction of the product it produces as wages. Were interest and rent abolished the wages of labor would be the full product. There would be no uncertainty in business, consequently no payment for risk necessary. Profit is therefore only a vagary of the imagination."

Turner then replied:

"Cohen's proposition is that a man generally obtains money to start business. In reality he generally has a bank account, or credit, which is legal value, and has not the actual cash. He says if a man can make 6 per cent. in business, he will go into business; and if he can make more in banking, he will go into banking. I should say generally, he goes into what he understands. The method of exploitation today is either that of the landlords who hold land out of use by the aid of the law till someone will pay them for the privilege of using it, or—the capitalists who, monopolizing the means of production and distribution (as necessary in modern methods of production as land itself) can curtail or inflate the output to gain profit—guided by the clumsy competitive methods of today—upon the world's market. Out of this profit—this value created by labor but held back by the capitalist after having paid the competitive wage to the workers—he is willing to pay interest to the banker for the use of borrowed capital, rent to the landlord for permission to use the land upon which his industry is carried on, and taxes to the government to secure him in the balance of his plunder. All that he is entitled to as an organizer of labor (according to the competitive theory) is what he got in the open labor market as manager for someone—all over that is sheer robbery through the power of monopoly of the means of production. In the retail business, by a rapid turning over of his capital, the distributive business man frequently averages a gross profit of 20 per cent. a week. There must always be a certain amount of wealth reserved for the purpose of assisting future production. It is this that we think should be held in common. We do not desire to abolish competition by compulsion in capitalistic conditions, but believe it will be abandoned by the workpeople as soon as they have destroyed monopoly and are free to associate together for production and distribution. We do not think it a good thing in itself, and while we prefer it to statute law as a means of settling economic disputes, regard it as free men to physical warfare—something to be resorted to only as a last resource. We therefore discourage it as a bad principle and hope to replace it by reason guided by equity. We do not think the workers will want to renew competitive conditions under freedom. By mutual agreement they can arrive at an equilibrium. The power of the capitalist is not in his owning so much money, but in his legal right to rob the workpeople of the result of their labor. This claim we wish the workers to repudiate and then an equilibrium will easily be realized."

Cohen made a ten-minute rejoinder as follows:

"It makes no difference whether a manufacturer has a bank account or credit. Capital must pass through the money form, and this makes the money question important. The 20 per cent gross profit a week of the retail dealer when he figures up his books at the end of the year, shrinks to a very small sum. The characteristic feature of society is not the large sum that any one has, but the general poverty of all. The average wealth of Great Britain and the United States is about \$1,000 per capita. With the tools and the methods of the present day, it should be an easy matter for a man to produce one dollar of values in one hour. In one thousand hours he could produce his per capita, and yet it has taken a thousand generations to accumulate this mite. Why is there so little? The payments for interest, rent and insurance are so much waste, not only are they an unnecessary expenditure, but they act as a positive check to production, and limit it. The accumulation through interest has already been described. How insurance has been collected can best be shown by an illustration. Suppose during a certain period of time—say twenty-five years—100 men have gone into the drug business; a few have become rich; a number have made a fair return on their investment, others have lost money and either retired or were forced into bankruptcy. After deducting the current rate of interest and rent paid, the balance is insurance. Those who are rich and got more than the interest rate, received, so to speak, what those who became bankrupt lost. I challenge Turner to show any factor in the sum robbed from labor outside of rent, interest and insurance. I claim there is none. Which system is the easiest of attainment: the one which would expropriate all the holders of wealth, or the one which only opposes the owners of money which are only one one-hundredth part of the total wealth owners? And from whom we do not arouse even the one-one-hundredth part of the antagonism because we do not wish to seize

even this small fraction, but only to take away its power of increase—not by doing anything to it, except to bring it under the influence of competition. Why is it necessary to confiscate capital when through mutual banking the capitalist will be forced to give us the use of his capital at zero per annum. Communists are simply wasting time when they talk of expropriation. It is neither wise nor necessary. The competition they complain of is that between laborers. Let that same competition be applied to the holders of capital and the price of capital will fall, as labor has, to the cost of replacing it. This bids up the price of labor to its natural wage—its full product."

Turner then said:

"If, as Mr. Cohen says, the profit of the retail business man after paying rent and taxes is compensation for risk, I will only say the compensation is very heavy in some cases and 'covers a multitude of sins,' while in others the risk is all that is got as compensation for a lifetime of skill and energy, with bankruptcy as a bonus. How is it that from the mutualist we hear so much in favor of the small capitalist and so little about the propertyless worker? All business, we know, is based on estimates; but what are business estimates worth today, based as they must be on competitive values fluctuating from day to day like the odds on a horse race? Still, some make fortunes and others lose all, even with equal ability and skill at work. This, however, can hardly be considered a condition of equity. Cohen said if a man can borrow money at 6 per cent. the profits of business would fall to that amount—now it is plus compensation for risk. The fact is he cannot borrow money—unless he has security—even from the mutual bank. He must have some property before he can borrow, and he will have to give that property as security for credit. Besides Cohen must show how the mutual bank, even, would reduce interest to zero. We don't believe it would to those with poor security, and it is just those who require the most assistance. If land is free to use, and capital free to all through the mutual bank—no advantage coming to landlord or capitalist as such for owning either—where is the necessity or benefit of private ownership of property when we can get nothing out of the owning? Property only has value—as property—where it enables its owner to exploit labor. If this goes, the very reason for the existence of private property goes with it. There is no incentive to maintain it. Free use is common use—Communism. We welcome mutualism because it leads to Communism, but by an inverted method. A rose by another name will smell as sweet, however. Cohen says no one competes but the laborer, which is not correct. The capitalists also compete, especially the smaller ones compete one another out of existence. Two per cent. is the bank rate of interest in London today. The Liberator Building Society went to smash for millions in attempting to pay 5 per cent. Economic rent is no bugaboo to the Communist—they are the only ones who can deal with that problem without the aid of State government—it is, however, a bugaboo to the private property people. We do not say that the Esquimaux should share with the Central American, but we do say that the Central American has no right to bar out the Esquimaux."

Cohen speaks as follows:

"The mutual bank will not lend money at a higher rate of interest to those who offer poor security; it will only lend to those who can offer good security—actual property. It is not necessary that everybody borrow money and engage in business. When enough money has been borrowed to employ those who are now idle, all laborers being employed and having no one to compete for their places, can make their own terms. There is enough capital today to employ all laborers. The different tools and machines needed are idle in the warehouses. They must be mobilized, and that can only be done through the organization of credit on a sound basis and furnished gratuitously. But when the use of credit and capital come down to zero it does not mean that capital has lost its exchange value. That depends on the repugnance to labor, and while that may be reduced under better conditions, there will always be a repugnance to labor. I do not mean that the capitalist will give his capital to the laborer, but the only condition under which he will be able to hire him will be to make him an equitable partner. The capitalist will have to work himself; his capital will no longer bring him an increase."

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today, no matter how good his security might be, it would be nearer 3 times 2. Interest is always low after a period of hard times, confidence having disappeared, everybody is afraid to invest, and money goes begging. If the Liberator Building Society paid 5 per cent., it is evident that it got a still higher rate. The particular rate of interest, whether it is 4, 6 or 8, makes no difference in the long run. At a low rate the process is a little longer, that is all—the power of interest to absorb, even at a low rate, is quicker than production. Interest continues to absorb until bankruptcy steps in as a leveller, and at a high rate the levelling process takes place a little oftener—that's all."

Mr. Turner:

"Cohen says all owners of property should organize mutual credit and mutual banks. This is well enough for those who have property, but the question is what are people who have no property to do? Those with property are well protected today and the facilities for converting property into money are fairly easy, though it is quite true the different sections of the capitalist class rob one another in almost every process of production and distribution as well as in banking and the issue of money. But it is not in the internecine robbery of this class that we are interested but it is about the people without property. It is those who are compelled to sell their labor to the owners of property to live, that we are most concerned. People get rich (properly) today through private ownership of land and capital and the capitalistic processes of production and distribution and are well able to take care of themselves. Cohen says that the products can be bought when people are employed and that the mutual bank will make conditions of employment possible. Assuming that the mutual bank will make conditions better for those who join it and receive its benefits—it is for the propertyed classes and not the propertyless that the benefits will go. Cohen has not shown how the people without credit or property will be improved. Instead of running the mutual bank for 3 per cent. as you say the cost of property holders of running the bank would often be greater than the difference that would have to be paid to borrow money from the bank of today say between 5 per cent. and 3 per cent. which is 2 per cent. The distributive co-operators have been a failure in London where they came in competition with experienced shopkeepers with large capital while in country towns they have been a success and have no doubt been a benefit to the members. I expect it would be the same in the banking business even if the tax on the issuing of money was removed. Besides, is the mutualist going to wait until he can convert the government to abolish the tax? There is this to be remembered too! If as friend Cohen says, competition between property owners will compel them to give its use to the laborers free its value as security would have disappeared. Take this table, if I can have its use for nothing why will I trouble myself to produce it? I contend if mutual banking will do what the mutualists claim, it will only result in bringing products to the same place that Communists want them. There will be no incentive for the capitalist to own the table in the absence of interest, and he cannot make profit by sales as people will not buy if they can get the table for nothing. True the intrinsic value will not disappear or its use value, but its exchange value will. With respect to the question of the Esquimaux and the Central American, the latter will invite the former to co-operate with him on the land or in the production of commodities and will share with him in the natural opportunities presented, together with the results of their joint labor. Competition between them will be rendered unnecessary."

Cohen was accorded 15 minutes; he began by reading several pages from Greene's "Mutual Banking." He then said:

"I will illustrate how the plan would work in Denver. The wealth of this city is, according to the assessors, \$120,000,000.00. Let us say there are 1,000 idle men here. If a mutual bank were formed by people owning two out of the one hundred and twenty millions, it would put a million dollars into circulation. This million could buy enough capital to set these thousand men to work. The new industries formed could only get customers by selling cheaper than the others. This they could easily do because the rate of interest they pay is zero. The others who paid 7 per cent would have to meet the cut in prices, and would have to start other mutual banks. The first bank took

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"Cohen says all owners of property should organize mutual credit and mutual banks. This is well enough for those who have property, but the question is what are people who have no property to do? Those with property are well protected today and the facilities for converting property into money are fairly easy, though it is quite true the different sections of the capitalist class rob one another in almost every process of production and distribution as well as in banking and the issue of money. But it is not in the interminable robbery of this class that we are interested but it is about the people without property. It is those who are compelled to sell their labor to the owners of property to live, that we are most concerned. People get rich (properly) today through private ownership of land and capital and the capitalistic processes of production and distribution and are well able to take care of themselves. Cohen says that the products can be bought when people are employed and that the mutual bank will make conditions of employment possible. Assuming that the mutual bank will make conditions better for those who join it and receive its benefits—it is for the propertyless classes and not the propertyless that the benefits will go. Cohen has not shown how the people without credit or property will be improved. Instead of running the mutual bank for 1 per cent. as you say the cost of property holders of running the bank would often be greater than the difference that would have to be paid to borrow money from the bank of today say between 5 per cent. and 3 per cent. which is 2 per cent. The distributive co-operators have been a failure in London where they came in competition with experienced shopkeepers with large capital while in country towns they have been a success and have no doubt been a benefit to the members. I expect it would be the same in the banking business even if the tax on the issuing of money was removed. Besides, is the mutualist going to wait until he can convert the government to abolish the tax? There is this to be remembered too! If as friend Cohen says, competition between property owners will compel them to give its use to the laborers free its value as security would have disappeared. Take this table, if I can have its use for nothing why will I trouble myself to produce it? I contend if mutual banking will do what the mutualists claim, it will only result in bringing products to the same place that Communists want them. There will be no incentive for the capitalist to own the table in the absence of interest, and he cannot make profit by sales as people will not buy if they can get the table for nothing. True the intrinsic value will not disappear or its use value, but its exchange value will. With respect to the question of the Esquimaux and the Central American, the latter will invite the former to co-operate with him on the land or in the production of commodities and will share with him in the natural opportunities presented, together with the results of their joint labor. Competition between them will be rendered unnecessary."

Cohen was accorded 15 minutes; he began by reading several pages from Greene's "Mutual Banking." He then said:

"I will illustrate how the plan would work in Denver. The wealth of this city is, according to the assessors, \$120,000,000.00. Let us say there are 1,000 idle men here. If a mutual bank were formed by people owning two out of the one hundred and twenty millions, it would put a million dollars into circulation. This million could buy enough capital to set these thousand men to work. The new industries formed could only get customers by selling cheaper than the others. This they could easily do because the rate of interest they pay is zero. The others who paid 7 per cent would have to meet the cut in prices, and would have to start other mutual banks. The first bank took

all the idle laborers out of the market and thus shut off all further competition between the workers, and in putting products on the market cheaper than they were before, compelled everybody else to do the same, and thus raised the wages of every workman in the city, since a decrease in the price of goods is a raise in wages. If the competition of this million dollars has only effected a slight reduction of interest—say to 6 per cent.—another bank would soon come into the field with another million dollars. After they would get the capital they would look about them for laborers, but these being all employed they could only get them by offering them higher wages, this done they could only get customers by again cutting prices, which is again a raise in wages. This process would continue until wages absorbed the full product; and this would happen long before one-tenth of the wealth of the city would be monetized. The other nine-tenths would be in reserve at all times to increase competition among employes, to say nothing of the great increase in wealth which the better conditions would make possible, and which would be left in the possession of those who produced it. There is no such thing as 'interest at the mutual bank;' the one-half of one per cent. is the cost of running the bank; it is for the payment of wages to clerks, the expense of printing the notes, etc. The present methods of facilitating exchange among bankers have done much to cheapen this item of expense, and it will be reduced much further. The restrictions will be removed when people understand them; we do not hope to convert the government. I am glad that my friend Turner realizes how revolutionary our plans are—it is a compliment we seldom get from Communists. We hope to abolish restrictions by passive resistance; our program is one that can be carried out by those means. But whether active or passive we can achieve results very much more quickly and easily than the Communists can."

Turner assigned 15 minutes:

"I must still insist that in the elucidation of mutual banking the proletariat is omitted. Cohen has not shown how it would settle matters! He has still left the labor problem unsolved! He has not shown how wages are to be raised much less how the laborer is to get the full result of his labor. He is assuming and asserting, nothing more! He is assuming that those who work for the mutual bank in the production of commodities will not displace those who are not at present working for the capitalist and that they are all organized and are able to maintain and even raise wages. I must equally assume that they are not all organized and that they must cut wages. The fact is he has not got down to the heart of the problem where property has centered in the hands of the few and big masses of workpeople are under their control. The intelligent organized workpeople, and generally speak those that are organized are more intelligent than those that are not, are looking to the time when they will control the capital they use in common, in the same way as they control the funds of their organizations in common for the benefit of all their members. It is only the small owners of property who are likely to desire the mutual bank, in the vain hope that it may preserve their present position. The large farmer who employs labor, is well to do, and has a balance at his bank upon which he receives interest is not likely to become very active in trying to start a mutual bank—he has no use for it. It is the men who have pushed forward into the wilderness who remain poor, working with their families upon their preemption, who have borrowed money upon this security and have to pay interest upon it that are likely to be interested in having mutual banks started. But often, nay almost always they are hoping for the time to come when they will be in the position of the well-to-do man and be receiving instead of paying interest. This is why most small proprietors are so conservative and on the contrary why the proletariat is always more or less revolutionary. The great factor in exploitation is profit, all that surplus held by the capitalists after paying wages to the producers of it, out of which he pays rent, interest, insurance and taxes. By the way I think we ought to have a definition of insurance from Cohen! The next step in industrial evolution is not likely to come by small capitalists working on economic lines in a spirit of philanthropy. It is more likely to be the absolute repudiation of the claims of the exploiters by the workpeople and that is what we call the revolution. We Communists want the workpeople to repudiate."

Cohen then said:

"To the Communist it is always a question of the large capitalist as against the small one, but can they not see that when the rate of increase is zero it will make no difference whether the capitalist is a large one or a small one? A million times zero is no more than a hundred times zero. The colossal fortunes, of which so much is said, is often mere talk. Col. North, "the nitrate king" who died recently, was said to be the richest man in the world, and his fortune was estimated at one hundred millions of dollars. When his affairs were looked into, the fortune was something over two millions of dollars. Another case of recent occurrence in the closing up of Stewart's store in New York a few weeks ago. It is just twenty years since A. T. Stewart died; his fortune was also estimated by some to be one hundred millions, while others said it was not more than twenty millions. One thing, however, is certain—he was the richest and most powerful merchant in New York at that time. This fortune, with the two immense stores so well established, ought, according to the Communist's theory, make the possessor thereof all powerful. Five years after Stewart's death, one store closed, and now the other follows. Why did they fail, and why did the capital diminish? Because Stewart's business talent was lacking. That is precisely what would happen under Communism—the incentive and the methods under which wealth is produced will be gone and changed and the whole scheme will fall to pieces. I have every reason to believe that it will fail. But how about Individualism? It proposes no change whatever in production or exchange of goods as far as ownership, buying or selling are concerned. Private property would be left in the hands of those who now have it. That men will produce wealth under private ownership we know; that they will do so under Communism is not so clear: in fact, every approach to common property made in the past has been a dismal failure, except between people who practiced Communism because of a deep religious conviction that it was right. This feeling, Anarchist-Communists cannot expect to appeal to, and the complicated system of modern production, which Communists never fail to dwell upon, would make it a failure even among the religious."

Turner finished as follows:

"Ever if interest should disappear in the sense now understood profit might still be in existence even greater than at present. If rent too went it does not mean that the worker is emancipated. Thus a railway company may own the freehold of the land belonging to it and pay no rent, it may pay off the debentures given for borrowed money but the railway workers may not be a cent better off for that. The shareholder will receive more profit as dividend upon his share now that the plunder is not shared with the landlord and usurer, that is all. Again take a large cab proprietor of London, he may own the freehold of his stables and yard, besides the horses and cabs and may have a large balance at his bank instead of having to borrow any capital. Are the cabmen any the less exploited because he does not pay interest, rent or even insurance? Not a bit. If people can have the free use of railways and cabs, will the shareholders of railways frame their certificates for pictures, or the proprietors of cabyards their title-deeds just to have the fun of seeing they own them—some may, but I fancy most of them when they realize what it really means will light the fire with them. As I have maintained all along the free use of property will do away with the incentive to own it. It is impossible for usnfruct to become the permanent principle of production without it drifting into Communism: Permeate the property holders with the principles of mutualism by all means, we will look after the propertyless workpeople. The masses of capital now used in production are so enormous—the legal right to plunder is so great that if only 1/2 per cent should be the rate of interest it is enough to make the holder of capital want to maintain existing institutions, and even if it went altogether it would only force them into direct production or business of some sort making the position of the small capitalist harder than ever. It has not been shown clearly however that the mutual banks will set all the unemployed at work. To set half of them at work will not materially better conditions. If however it should succeed in doing what its advocates claim, it would destroy itself in giving birth to the new conditions."

After this the arguments were informal, and questions were asked of the debaters by the listeners, which were answered. Perhaps some finer points were then brought out and made clearer

than in the debate proper, but these could not be recorded.

LIZZIE M. HOLMES.

The Police a Bomb-Thrower.

In Madrid, the capitol of Spain, in January 1894 a trial took place against two so-called Anarchists; one a Frenchman named Desbatz, and the other Ferrira, a Portuguese. They were accused of having made preparations to throw a bomb in the parliament. The trail brought out the fact that these two foreigners were urged or bribed to do this deed by the Spanish police agent, Munoz. It happened according to the principle: the little criminals are hanged and the great ones get offices and dignity—that the police agent had to appear before the jury. He admitted to having intimidated these men, because his superiors had promised him that he would not be accused of any crime.

Munoz, himself, had laid out the plans for the bomb-throwing for these men and then delivered his duped victims to the police. He, too, along with his victims was sentenced to seven years imprisonment. It can be seen that the Spanish government, which has some very talented officers, has made some progress. At that time only an attempt was made, and now it comes to a deed. Apparently the Anarchist movement has in the meantime grown considerably, as the criminal Spanish government does not use such means without cause. The movement will grow still more dangerous in spite of it.—[Sozialist, Berlin.

The Letter-Box.

A. M., Edison, Wash.—Comrade Wellenbrock is in Portland at present, but the doctors can't agree so far, as to his disease.

C. P., Philad. Iphila, Pa.—Don't worry that you can't send money; your efforts are very much appreciated anyway, and wish we had more workers like you.

G. S., Los Angeles, Cal.—The address is: Robert Reitzel, 675-McDougal Ave., Detroit, Mich. It is an eight page weekly, about the size of The Firebrand. Price \$2.50 per year.

C. F., New York City.—Yes, as soon as we will have money enough to buy some more type and sufficient paper we will commence to issue pamphlets. The first issue will probably be "The Speeches before the Court," of our murdered Comrades.

H. P., Brooklyn, N. Y.—I don't think it was a joke when the writer of that article advised Mr. Byington to print his own books and you to make your own tools in case other people should have no desire for such. It was simply given as a "way out," but Ch. Doering, with whom I have spoken about the subject is very well aware that under freedom every useful article will be abundantly produced. A very skilled mechanic told me the other week that he would be best pleased if he could make fine instruments such as astronomers and other men of science use. "Nowadays," he added, "I can't make such instruments as good and neat as I would like to, because I could not earn enough to sustain life." You ought to know that an artist ceases to be an artist as soon as he has to work per order or for money.

E. F. M., Mayville, Wis.—You just expressed our own opinion when you said, "I care as much for Anarchy in general as I do for what I term freedom in love, but it is my firm conviction that no real success in the former will be possible before the latter is understood and accepted," and that is just why we will not exclude anything essential in regard to the sex question. The superstitious views which many Anarchists still hold on this question make their married and unmarried lives miserable for the present and I hold that we should enjoy as much happiness and pleasure as possible under existing conditions thereby defying laws and customs, and not simply console ourselves with the haven to come. And how few Anarchists are there that will talk about the sex question in the presence of their children, or that will tell them that they ought not to be ashamed of their nude bodies. Thanks for your present!

E. T., Oak Park Ill.—A "Plumb line Anarchist" should properly be called a Tuckerite, but in The Firebrand they are usually mentioned as the "so-called individualists." They cannot comprehend or see anything in regard to the social question, except they have their plumb lines (Tucker and Victor Yarros) as guides. You may argue as you please, if it is not endorsed by Mr. Tucker or Yarros you are of course wrong. But your articles will be welcome anyway, although I don't believe you will enjoy the discussion. It is as one reader of The Firebrand said: "I have found out that life is too short to waste time in arguing with the 'Plumb-liners.'" The debate between Turner and Cohen in this issue will convince you that it is useless to argue with a man like Cohen, and that they do not intend to abolish wage slavery and consequently misrepresent Anarchism or freedom. On the other hand, the question is not whether they will permit us to live our own life and vice versa, but whether our or their theory constitutes freedom, that is the real question at issue. A. I.

Comrades!

We, the Anarchists of Philadelphia, have organized a club, under the name "New Generation," for the purpose of educating ourselves and others. We therefore appeal to all comrades, and to all those who are Lovers of Progress to send to our reading room as much literature as possible, and also Books. Hoping that our appeal will not be a voice in the desert we remain, Yours for Liberty.

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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

NOTICE!

UNTIL further notice we will get our mail at Sellwood, Oregon, instead of Box 94, Portland, and we request all friends to take notice of this change. Exchanges will please change our address on their mailing galleys and lists.

When Right Prevails.

WHEN this land of slavery awakes
And, unchained, Liberty takes
Unto herself the cause of Right;
When no longer is gag'd by might
The cause of Justice and of Truth;
And marts of law—now without ruth—
Cease their selling for yellow gold
Freedom of young and life of old;
When each man his own life shall rule,
Nor deem his fellow as all fool;
When Statutes no more worshipped
And Justice is then revered,
Senates no more hold for an hour
Almost regal glory and power,
Then our land shall indeed be free—
Our safest guide, fair Liberty:
—Zadnak the Dreamer.

Caserio, Why he Killed Carnot.

We have received several letters from new subscribers, asking us why Caserio killed the president of France, and we think that his speech, made before the jury, will satisfy our readers more than any answer we could give:

"Gentlemen of the Jury,—I do not propose to make a defence, but only an explanation of my deed."

"Since my early youth I began to learn that the present society is badly organized, so badly that every day many wretched men commit suicide, leaving wife and children in the most terrible distress.

"Workers, by thousands, seek for work and cannot find it. Poor families beg for food, and shiver with cold: they suffer the greatest misery; the little ones ask their miserable mothers for food and the mothers cannot give them, because they have nothing. The few things which the home contained have already been sold or pawned. All they can do is to beg alms, and often they are arrested as vagabonds.

"I went away from my native place because I was frequently moved to tears at seeing little girls of eight or ten years old obliged to work fifteen hours a day for the paltry pay of 20 centimes [not quite four cents]. Young women of eighteen or twenty years old also work fifteen hours a day for a mockery of remuneration. And that happens not only to my fellow-countrymen, but to all the workers, who await the whole day long for a crust of bread, while their labor produces wealth in abundance. The workers are obliged to live under the most wretched conditions, and their food consists of a little bread, a few spoonfuls of rice, and water; so that by the time they are thirty or forty years old they are exhausted, and go to die in the hospitals. Besides, in consequence of bad food and overwork, these unhappy creatures are, by hundreds, devoured by pellagra—a disease that, in my country, attacks, as the physicians say, those who are badly fed and lead a life of toil and privation.

"I observed that there are a great many people who are hungry, and many children who suffer, whilst bread and clothes abound in the towns. I saw many and large shops full of clothing and woollen stuffs, and I saw also warehouses full of wheat and Indian corn, suitable for those who are in want. And, on the other hand, I saw thousands

of people who do not work, who produce nothing and live on the labor of others; who spend every day thousands of francs for their amusement; who debauch the daughters of the workers; who own dwellings of forty or fifty rooms, twenty or thirty horses, many servants; in a word, all the pleasures of life.

"Alas! how much I suffered seeing this vile society so badly organized!

"Many times I said to myself: 'Those who amassed the first fortune are the cause of the present social inequalities.'

"When I was a child, I was taught to love my native land; but when I saw thousands of workers obliged to quit their country and leave their children and their parents in utter destitution I said to myself: 'The fatherland does not exist for the poor workers; our country is the whole world.' Those who preach the love of country do so because they have in that country their personal interest, their well-being; as the bird defends its nest because it feels comfortable in it.

"I believed in God; but when I saw so great an inequality between men, I acknowledged that it was not God who created man; but man who created God. And I discovered that those who want their property to be respected have an interest in preaching the existence of paradise and hell, and in keeping the people in ignorance.

"On account of all this I became an Anarchist.

"On the 1st of May, 1891, when the workers of the whole world demanded a holiday, the governments, republican as well as monarchical, answered with rifles and prisons; many workers were killed or wounded, and many more of them were sent to prison.

"Since that year I have been an Anarchist, because I have ascertained that the Anarchist ideal is consistent with my own feeling. Amongst Anarchists alone have I found good and sincere men, who know how to fight for the sake of the workers.

"I also began to do Anarchist propaganda, and did not delay in passing on to action. I have not been long in France, but in this short time I have seen that all governments are alike. I have seen the poor miners of the North, who struck because they did not earn enough to support their families, and after more than three months of struggle they were forced by hunger to return to work on the old terms: but the Government did not care at all for these thousands of workers, because it was engaged in preparing festivals for the Franco-Russian alliance in Paris, Toulon and Marseilles.

"It was said that millions of francs must be obtained by new taxes for these festivities; and the men who have sold their conscience to the bourgeoisie—that is to say, the journalists—wrote many articles in order to demonstrate that the alliance between France and Russia would be very profitable for the workers. And yet we poor workers are always in the same wretched condition, and have to pay the expenses of the festivities of governments. Still, when we ask work and bread, we are shot down, as were the miners of the North, the peasants of Sicily, and many others.

"Not long ago, Vaillant threw a bomb in the Chamber of Deputies to protest against the present system of society. He killed no one, only wounded some persons; yet the bourgeois justice sentenced him to death. And not satisfied with the condemnation of the guilty man, they began to pursue the Anarchists and arrest not only those who had known Vaillant, but even those who had merely been present at any Anarchist lecture.

"The Government did not think of their wives and children. It did not consider that the men kept in prison were not the only ones who suffered, and that their little ones cried for bread. Bourgeois justice did not trouble itself about these innocent ones, who do not yet know what society is. It is no fault of theirs that their fathers are in prison: they only want to eat.

"The Government went on searching private houses, opening private letters, forbidding lectures and meetings, and practicing the most infamous oppressions against us.

"Even now, hundreds of Anarchists are arrested for having written an article in a newspaper or for having expressed an opinion in public.

"Why, if the governments use against us guns, chains and prisons, should we Anarchists, who have to defend our lives, remain skulking at home? Should we renounce our idea, which is the truth? No; on the contrary, we will answer those government with dynamite, bombs, and daggers.

"In one word, we must do all we can to destroy the bourgeoisie and the governments.

"Emile Henry threw a bomb in a restaurant; I avenged myself with a poniard.

"Gentlemen of the Jury, you are the representative of bourgeois society; if you want my head take it; but do not believe that in so doing you will stop the Anarchist propaganda. Take care, for men reap what they have sown.

"The governments have begun to make martyrs; they have garrotted in Xeres, hanged in Chicago, shot in Barcelona, guillotined in Paris. The last words of the victims pronounced in the moment of their execution were: 'Death to the bourgeoisie!'

"These words have crossed the seas and the mountains; they have penetrated into the towns, into the villages, into the homes of millions of workers.

"The workers, until now, have suffered themselves to be led by ambitious men, who try to rule them by means of associations, trade unions, syndicates and other impostures, in order to be elected as Deputies or Councillors and to live without working.

"But now, at last, it is recognized that only the violent Revolution against the bourgeois system can help the workers.

"When the Revolution has taken place, the workers will no longer commit suicide through misery; they will suffer no more by years and years of imprisonment; they will be hanged, shot, garrotted, guillotined no more. For the bourgeoisie, the kings, the presidents, the ministers, the senators, the deputies, the judges of assize courts and police magistrates will have perished beneath the people's barricade in the blaze of the Social Revolution!"

—[Anarchy on Trial.

Law and Marriage.

"THOMAS ROWE, just sent to the penitentiary from Sherman, Texas, is said to have sixteen living wives, all of whom were married inside of seven years. He said that he had no special objection to any of them only that he became tired of them. Most of the women have children by him, there being three sets of twins among them. He claims that no woman has ever refused to marry him."

If love be naught but sexual coition then Mr. Rowe has had all the freedom that he could ever possess, whether under the present form of government, or no government to interfere with his movements.

If marriage means only to secure a license and pay a fee to the officiating officer then, again, Mr. Rowe has had perfect freedom from any restraining influences, in preventing him from marrying sixteen times. What more freedom could Anarchy give, than this Mr. Rowe has exercised?

"No woman has ever refused to marry him:" A charmed man, or a power to fascinate all women that fell under his sway! What is this power possessed by Mr. Rowe which, when exercised, brings to his arms any woman? Is not this the occult force from which springs the conduct of sex relations? Is it not possible to discover that coition is not love nor the cause of love, but an effect, and can not be a cause? Have not all who favor this freedom of promiscuity any where, basing their arguments on the premise that coition is love, gone astray from truth?

Love is a magnetic attraction between the sexes and when uninfluenced by mercenary or lustful ends,

which latter influenced Mr. R. in his sex career, it pulls all men and women together who go together at all in a natural way.

"He became tired of them." Any amount of men that way today; doubtless there are many women. But, why tire of them? It is but saying they do not attract any more. Why this non-attraction? The sex relation is a magnetic relation and is governed by the same principles which govern what is called magnetism.

All the women were negative to Mr. R. consequently it became an easy matter to get their consent to a marriage. A species of hypnotism is always operated in sex relationships. If Mr. R. had not "tired" of his first sex partner, the other fifteen, would never have known him. He "tired" of all of them. What is the scientific rationale of this phenomenon? The magnetic flow is from the positive to the negative; so long as this flow is in equilibrium satisfaction in sex relationship is sure to be had; but when this balance is destroyed then begins disease and discord, or discontent, and longing for something felt to be wanted. Mr. R. constantly discharged his positive magnetism and in time, the negative magnetism of the women, instead of being received by Mr. R. was appropriated by fetal life; hence Mr. R. felt his loss and had no love as some would say, hence sought more of this kind of love by seeking fresh and green pastures elsewhere; thousands have done likewise and none objected—unless discovered!

Now why is not this love an enduring element? Easily solved. Magnetic attractions, or want of them, act in accord with the principles controlling electricity or magnetism. To assume that these ever varying states of human magnetism is love is to build on sand; for freedom or no freedom from governmental interference, will not change magnetic principles. "Love laughs at locksmiths," yes, magnetic attractions care nothing for human laws, governments, bolts or bars, or death itself.

The road to secure the highest happiness in the sex relationship, is found in a knowledge of magnetism as controlling these sex relations. Freedom, or non-interference by laws, or interference, has not progressed or checked experimentation and observation in the study of these magnetic phenomena of the sexes. What is needed is the dissemination of the facts and an application of them as they concern human happiness and advancement. It is true, government has stepped forward and checked the sex career of Mr. R. but has R. or the law makers, or those who wish no laws, made any scientific deductions from his experiences, that will put the feet of all searchers for truth on solid rock? I fear not. There is a double form of attraction necessary to constitute enduring sex association. The reproductive magnetism generally predominates in the male, consequently men as a rule, consider the end of sex association to be centered in coition. All their arguments and views will be saturated with this conception of what is called love. On the other hand, woman becomes passive to this positive reproductive magnetism of the male and her married life proves a disappointment as soon as the male companion "tires," that is, ceases to feed her with his positive magnetism. The key to married happiness, enduring association, is found in a reciprocal exchange of magnetism between the sexes so that neither one gains or loses at the expense of the other. It is occult economics and not a question of government. In this view sex-relationship is not a governmental question; nor an economic one, in the sense of economics, but it is an occult question to be solved by the scientist. Is it not being surely and slowly solved, government or no government?

L. EMERICK.

Things and Thoughts.

THOUGH life is short the great sociologic truths are as eternal as the universe. They gain in strength with each passing day. So it sometimes seems (as it probably is) a waste of time to worry over the acts of some of the lickspittles who call themselves "reformers," but whose contemptible cowardice is as disgusting as it is little and mean. Where it is not that they so easily mislead the unthinking who, sickened of present conditions, might soon be shown what is

necessary to free themselves but that the palliators get hold of them and induce them to work for a lot of quack remedies—were it not for this we could well afford to ignore the fakirs. For their spirit and nature is craven, and when Truth sheds her dazzling rays unhindered abroad these bats will retire blinking to their corners, there to be forgotten—remembered only as dung that was necessary to enrich the roots of the plant of Liberty. Liberty—the very word must make these cravens shiver to their inmost fibers. The true, bold and courageous revolutionist will live forever in the minds of the freemen of the morrow, as one belonging to the vanguard of Freedom; and, though he may be not individually honored by coming ages, he will still be remembered as an atom of which the glorious whole of progress was composed, a thread in the cloth of true civilization—and without that thread the cloth would never have been complete. And when we realize all this, we feel as though we could ignore the existence of these apologist and statisticians who can trust neither themselves, nor anyone else, to be just and equitable without law to force them to be so.

In my little town is a little creek—that is, it is usually little—which got its back up the other day and became a rushing river, booming along at 12 or 15 miles an hour. That little creek was more powerful than the United States government and set aside all postal regulations, and refused to allow a branch of the star route to star. Our worthy postmaster—a student of Kropotkin, and one who has often listened to his teacher's voice—was willing to admit that "only science can beat Nature." But I can't concede even this, as science can at most but utilize the forces of Nature—or such of them as it has discovered.

FEDERAL barons in former ages levied blackmail and allegiance from people for giving them protection from further robbery upon their part. Government today does the same, but with this sharp difference: The lords of old made some pretence of fulfilling their contracts, while governments never do as much. On the contrary the owners of governments continually devise new plans for plundering their victims to the last penny in their purses, the last drop in their veins. Of these two, honor to the bandit chieftains.

In a recent issue of a Cleveland (Ohio) paper I find these two statements:

"We have no patience with apologists or conservatives who putter around with quack nostrums and would put patches on a rotten system."

"Where all workers a unit in not working more than eight hours a day, would not the unemployed find temporary relief?"

Eh! Which of them goes? They don't harmonize a little bit, Bro. Hayes. They resemble the platform of the S. L. P., and the sweeping declarations of the party jugglers. But as to that question propounded, I want to say, I doubt it very much. Organized labor talks of eight hours when it knows that with the present advanced stage of machine production—even under the present wasteful lack of system and order—an universal eight hour day would not employ all the willing hands, and until all are employed, labor will have little voice in the matter of wages. The trouble with labor in regard to adopting a shorter work day is that it lacks more than mere members—it lacks the courage to demand its rights, and even in the way of a palliative the eight hour day would not do. A six hour day would be much nearer the mark, but granting that organized labor may secure a general eight hour day, it will not do so until to secure the result it aims at, a six hour day will be absolutely imperative, and its palliative will be a mockery. Then they would begin to agitate (or vegetate) for a six or seven hour day while the sufferings of the people would be even greater than they now are.

In another part of the same issue of the same paper appears this, which shows signs of evolution:

"It is more sensible to band together and smash a few things and make a noise to arouse attention than to retire to some obscure corner to starve."

So far, very well; but our friend has not yet struck the final solution. That is only an expedient, a last resort—a solution never. Force, violence, do not make a truth; the truth is there to be discovered and applied—it is equity, which covers Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—three words which compose the complete code and statute book of the universal laws of nature, the great creator and controller of life.

A recent letter from "Sam Fonogra" may help our

comrade out some. He says: "Its' the empty stomach works the brain—when there is any brain to work—failing brain we have an explosion of physical force and a continuance of despotism." Right to the point and well put, ain't it?

"The great antagonist of intolerance is not humanity but knowledge. . . . There is no instance on record of an ignorant man who, having good intentions and supreme power to enforce them, has not done far more evil than good." (Buckle's History of Civilization.)

Now, Buckle, in writing that history had a habit of speaking from proven facts, and if facts proved the assertion given above, then I ask, wherein will permanent good result from an explosion that is purely physical? No, there must be a mental explosion that will shatter superstitions and gods throughout the world, ere the brotherhood of man can be an actuality. It may be that physical force must accompany it; if so, the people necessary to do the work will be on hand—and perform their work. But the present generations of slaves show no aptitude for the work, so why prod them? You "can't make a silk purse out of a pig's ear."

ZADNAK THE DREAMER.

The Revolutionist And His Pretended Followers.

THERE was once a man (so we read in an ancient book, but whether he was a historical person or a fictitious character is a question which does not concern us)—there was once a man who was not a slave to conventionalism and conservatism. He thought for himself and expressed his views in very emphatic language. He denounced the hypocrites and the heartlessness of his contemporaries. He had very little respect for the conventional religion of his time. He condemned very severely those whose religion consisted in observing meaningless forms and ceremonies. He wanted men to be not "professors" of religion, but doers of good deeds. He wanted to humanize the individual; he wanted to kill the spirit of selfishness and to make men think of the sufferings and sorrows of their fellow-men. He wanted men to be charitable, but he wanted them to be quiet about it and not boast of their charities. He did not tell them to establish Simon ben Halevi hospitals or Abraham ben Eleazar colleges. He said: "When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men."

He believed in man more than in customs and institutions. He did not employ spies to arrest and punish Sabbath breakers. On the contrary, he was a Sabbath breaker himself. He said that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. He believed in the existence of God, but he was of the opinion that man's duties and obligations to his fellow men are of more importance than his duties to God. He said: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath sought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

He was not a preacher in a rich and fashionable church. He instructed the multitude, he preached sermons, but he never said: "Now, dearly beloved brethren, let us take up a collection." He was poor and he mingled with the poor. He did not cater to the rich; he did not quote texts in justification of their robberies. He drove the money-changers out of the temple and, on another occasion, he said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

He was a believer in progress; he was a revolutionist. He did not believe in crying "Peace!" He did not tell his hearers that their country and their institutions were the best on the face of the earth; he did not advise them to have confidence in their rulers and to support their government. On the contrary, he said that his mission was to bring the sword. He evidently understood that without a struggle progress is impossible, and that in order to get better conditions men must fight for their ideas. He did not tell children that they must obey their parents and ask no questions. He believed that when children have opinions which may benefit mankind, they need not stop to consider the opinions of their parents. He did not look upon a war of ideas as an evil to be shunned. He did not advise any one to acquiesce for the sake of peace.

He was absolutely honest and unbribable. When the spirit of evil offered him the kingdoms of the world as a bribe, he said: "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

And what has become of that extraordinary man? He was put to death. And why? Because it is customary for people to stone their prophets. The man was crucified, but his name became immortal. His adherents have increased very rapidly, and today his followers are counted by the millions. They are very enthusiastic; they extol to heaven the name of their master, and they preach his gospel all over the world. But outside of this what are they doing? Are they practicing the precepts of their master? As followers of the great revolutionist, if they have not as yet succeeded in establishing just conditions, they surely must be aggressive revolutionists, still fighting for right and justice. But as a matter of fact, they are not doing anything of the kind. The majority of them are very "respectable" people and the opposite of what their master was. They hate poverty, they love comfort and they strive to get as much of the good things of the world as they possibly can. Their master told them not to judge, not to resist evil, and to love their enemies, but let anyone try to take anything which they consider their own, and he is arrested, judged and sent to prison. As to loving their enemies, not very many of them love even their friends.—[Cyrus W. Coolidge, in Free Thought Magazine.]

The Theory of Heredity.

NO BRANCH of the evolution philosophy has received more attention than heredity, and no scientific theory has been oftener used than this one for the purpose of explaining social phenomena, and yet, as Prof. Ritchie has well said, "a great part of the prevalent opinion about heredity seems to be only mythology or fiction masquerading as science."

It is this doctrine of heredity which forms the basis for the stock arguments of the sex reformers of the Harman school. While not denying the influence of environment on morals and the formation of character, they seem inclined to consider such influence of very secondary importance, and boldly advance the proposition that our social and economic evil are practically irremediable except we begin at the "creatory," to use Harman's phrase, and secure well born human material to work with. Harman is more concerned about the "quality" of the children which shall be born than he is about their "quantity" or the circumstances with which they may have to contend after they are born.

I have no quarrel with sex reformers of this school, as their attitude in demanding the abolition of the conventional marriage rite and claiming full freedom for the sexes in their love relations is entirely acceptable to me; but I cannot help thinking that they lay a trifle too much stress on their argument, and seem inclined to push things a little further than the science of heredity will warrant. Much of their talk, in short, is "only mythology or fiction masquerading as science."

Degeneration enters into the evolutionist theory as well as progress; and this negative factor demands our attention quite as much as does any positive factor of evolution. In his excellent little lecture on degeneracy, Prof. C. L. James says:

The stock farmer and the nursery gardener select for breeding those animals and plants best suited to their purposes, thus making a 2:40 trotter out of a common horse, or a pansy out of a Johnny-jump-up. But, as Virgil says in his First Georgic, it is like pulling a boat up stream—if an oar breaks or slips out of the row lock the current sweeps all down again immediately. The posterity of the blooded horse become again the original scrub, and the self-sown pansies turn to Johnny-jump-ups, unless reared under conditions of cultivation."

Thus we have no surety that the well born individuals whom we have taken such infinite pains to secure will be very well acting individuals after all, unless they are placed under proper conditions to cultivate the qualities we desire them to exhibit. A well born child, if placed in an improper environment and forced to grow up amid improper associations, cannot help but become tainted, and he is likely to find his birth of but little use to him in the end; but one who is poorly born may entirely over-

come the disadvantages of his birth if placed under proper conditions of development after birth. This would seem to indicate that the "creatory" is not the only logical place to begin the reform business. Indeed, I am much inclined to think that a great deal of this talk about the "creatory" is pure nonsense; we know a mighty sight less about the "creatory" than we assume to know, and much is taken for granted which is not susceptible of proof. On the question of heredity I am inclined to accept Ritchie's view:

"It seems very doubtful whether, accept in fairy tales or romances, the child brought up away from its parents and in complete ignorance of them (for this also is essential to a fair experiment) would present any of their moral characteristics in a definite form.

May we say that a certain amount of psychical energy is inherited, but the direction it takes is mostly determined by circumstances?—though we must admit that it may be of a kind that more readily takes to certain occupations than to others. Individuals start with inherited tendencies or capacities, not with fully formed habits. An energetic or an apathetic temperament, a cool or a nervous temperament is transmitted; but it seems very doubtful how far mere inheritance goes beyond that, apart from the external influences in early life, which generally act along with it."

No positive statement regarding social phenomena can be founded on such a flimsy foundation as the mere doctrine of heredity affords us at the present day. Those psychical qualities which are capable of transmission from parents to children, and which are transmitted, are mere blind forces which are liable to operate in any direction, just as the conditions into which they are introduced may happen to impel them. Here, as in the physical realm, motion follows the lines of least resistance, and it invariably carries the individual along with it.

W. P. BORLAND.

Note and Comment.

If any of our readers have a copy of No. 34, Vol. II, of the date September 27, 1896, which they can spare, we would be much obliged if they would send it in, as we need it to complete a volume for a library.

A COMRADE writes us that he can furnish us with pen portraits, or pictures, ready to be used in The Firebrand, or as frontispieces on pamphlets, if we can have them engraved. If any of our readers are able and willing to engrave a picture for us occasionally, we can make The Firebrand illustrated—occasionally at least—and add much to its attractiveness.

Die Freie Gesellschaft, an Anarchist journal in the Hebrew language, has started publication again. All comrades interested in its publication should address Harris Mindlin, 202 E. Broadway, New York City. Subscription price \$1.00 per year, single copies 10 cents.

WE request our comrades in Europe to send pamphlets and other literature to us by MAIL. We recently received a consignment of three dollars worth of pamphlets, and the expense on them was as follows: prepaid freight \$1.65; import duties, storage, etc., \$1.49; due at time of delivery to us 30 cents; in all \$3.44. From this it can be seen that it don't pay to send literature by freight. We have received lots of pamphlets by mail in small bundles, and there was no expense after they started.

A COMRADE in New York writes us that a young man told her, quite bitterly, that he had paid for The Firebrand, but had never received it. On further inquiry it was found that he had paid \$1.00 to H. M. Kelly, formerly of Boston, and neither this name nor the money has been sent in to us. Other cases of similar character have been reported. H. M. Kelly has never been authorized to collect for The Firebrand, nor has he ever sent in any paid subscriptions.

How dealing in religion affects mens honesty can be judged by the following:

"The editor of the American Newspaper Directory further says that the circulation statements furnished by the publishers of the religious papers are, as a

whole, less honest, less truthful and more calculated to deceive than are those that come from the average lay journals."

But why should they not lie? they are working for "God" he can surely overlook so slight an offence when they work so hard for him.

THE sense and justice of the postal department, the "model socialistic institution," can be seen from the following, taken from the Fourth Estate:

"A few days ago the Arkansas Gazette offered a \$5 gold piece to the scholar in any public school in the State who, before the end of the month, should send in the shortest and best answer to the question: "What is news?"

The announcement of this offer, the Gazette is now informed, violates the lottery law, and papers containing it cannot pass through the mails. An appeal to the Postmaster-General has been taken, but meanwhile publication of the announcement has been suspended."

What might we expect if the State Socialists had control, and undertook to put their "regulation" theories into practice?

A FRIEND of The Firebrand lately made a little propaganda tour through the coal regions in Pennsylvania, hoping to get some subscribers. He says among other things:

"The people were very anxious to read The Firebrand, but poverty prevented them from subscribing. The prevailing want and distress among the coal miners is hardly describable. They only work two or three days a week, the wages not even averaging one dollar a day. From this amount they have to pay from four to six dollars house rent (hog pens) a month. Besides, they have to buy everything from the company's stores and pay from 30 to 50 per cent. more than in other stores. If they don't buy in these stores they are discharged." We are sorry our friend did not send in the names of those that are anxious to read Anarchist literature. The only way out for these miners is to take possession of the mines and work for themselves instead of a lot of parasites.

SOME of the business men and other citizens of Spokane have recently received letters from parties in other states saying that glowing reports are abroad in those sections which give the impression that Spokane is having a building boom, and that there are not enough men here to do the work. Some of those letters have been shown to members of organized labor, who deemed it their duty to bring the matter before their fellow workers of other localities, and hence passed the following resolutions:

"Whereas, It has come to the notice of the trades council that reports are being circulated broadcast throughout the country of a scarcity of laborers and mechanics of all kinds in this city, and that extraordinary high wages are being offered for their services; and,

"Whereas, It is known to the trades council that the real state of affairs is largely exaggerated by these reports, and that they are circulated to flood the local labor market, and thereby depress a rate of wages, now only sufficient to furnish the indispensable necessities of life; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That the trades council of Spokane deems it its duty to inform the workers elsewhere of the following facts: That while this section of the country enjoys for the present a period of prosperity, and while there is considerable demand for help of various kinds here, yet the local supply is quite adequate to meet all demands that may be made upon it at present or in the near future; and that the workmen of Spokane as represented through the trades council, hereby warn their fellow workers elsewhere against all alluring advertisements in order to spare them inevitable loss and disappointment."

Spokane, April 13, 1897.—Labor papers please copy.—[Freeman's Labor Journal.]

Correspondence.

FORMING A GROUP.

I send a mite to help along. Will be able to send more shortly. I want to see you succeed, for you are doing an excellent work, and will do as much as possible to aid you here. I hope to get easier shortly and be less occupied with my own affairs, then I shall be able to do more for the cause. I will make an effort to collect some money for you, and hope to form a group here; if you wish to do so you may publish my

name among your agents. I deplore the attitude of those so-called Anarchists who seek to place fetters on free discussion in the Firebrand.

W. P. BORLAND.

Bay City Mich.

AGREES WITH ZADNAK.

Majority rule by Henry Addis splended. Zadnak the Dreamer's reference to Coxe and Carl Brown is right, because I think the Dreamer comprehends Coxe's good roads bill as being an awful damage to property holders, under majority rule. Also his Swiss referendum bill. Take Maryland alone and a referendum idea might answer. But in the vast and diversified interests in climatic and sectional localities, more or less antagonistical to each other, it would be impractical in the United States.

Coxey undoubtedly, like many others, means well, but in my opinion he can not comprehend what he is talking about farther than his desire for money, with no regard to how he can get it. Only so he gets it.

His insignificance seems to be his protection. Well, many a fool thinks he is a statesman. "Let 'im rip" the higher up the pole he gets the more he can be seen.

ADDISON R. TITUS.

Dayton Ohio.

TO FREE LOVERS.

In an article in The Firebrand an "Open Letter to E. F. Ruedebusch," the writer says: "The majority of women are diseased and not able to work hard after they have borne from three to four children." If that be so the women in self-defense should refuse to bear children. Personally I believe that it is the conditions under which their sexual life is lived rather than childbirth that causes disease.

Now, as to the support of children, it is a superstition to think that it must be taught as a duty; it is a decided pleasure and the man who will hold sexual relationship with the intention of leaving the responsibility entirely on the woman is as much an emasculated man as though he was incapable of aiding in impregnation. That man who can be truly proud of his manhood is the man who can show his capability and pride in the appropriation, appreciation and responsibility in the realm of love; and the cowardice of the husband of Mrs. B. should be known among free-loving women and he would find his variety very much curtailed. He tells his wife she has the same freedom; will he please tell us why she has any more right to support the children than he? Personally I would not desire as a sexual partner anyone who had ever neglected a child. There is something deficient in their love nature and we ought to have the best! This man seems to think that "love is only in the sex act." Confining love to those limits I blame no one for opposing "free lovers," but from close observations of the private lives of avowed "free lovers" I must say they bear their responsibilities better than the average married man, where the wife often takes in work, or is helped by her mother, sister or worse still, often, yes very often, sells her favors to other men, the husband pretending he knows nothing of it.

This so-called "free lover" tells his wife she ought to be smart. What was the matter with him that he could not be smart and protect her from pregnancy? He has a great abundance of impudence to write to her he loves her yet. His love is of such poor quality, I should think she could exercise her right of natural selection and find a purer, nobler lover. If she is so good as to fight the battle for the children, I think she would be a very desirable lover, one to be proud of, one you'd wish to impart joy to in place of expecting sacrifice from. Mrs. B. you have met the wrong man! I am sure the right one is some where, and I wish you would meet him soon.

You say you lived together, but soon you were compelled to get married. Why? How did it help you? Don't you see that it was getting married that gave him the right to your body? Otherwise he would have had to be the smart party if he desired you. Then he says he practices "free love" when he has money. He therefore pays other women for sexual favors; why don't he try to imagine you are not his wife and pay you and so help to support the burden. Of course I believe you would not sell yourself for money, but he really under the pretense of "love" has had you much cheaper. He had no right, and has no right now, to claim to be a free lover, when he has put such fetters upon you or when he pays money to some unfortunate woman who is driven to sell herself. No woman could

take money for sexual love (sympathy), and without sympathy existing I cannot see that sexual relations are any more beneficial than masturbation. People may have a better nervous system, but their sympathetic nature is starved, and the very women whom they rave over one time they plan to brand and persecute at another time. Look at the women who are termed prostitutes or abandoned women. Abandoned by whom? By just such men as your husband! They want what they call variety; they grow surfeited and demand the youngest and tenderest for their wild orgies, then, when disgusted with it, they make some woman "respectable" by paying the state or the church for teaching her wifely submission is different from, and purer than sexual submission where they don't get their exemption money!

Men like your husband blame women for their lack of desire to love men, but they will go to one woman and tell her how superior she seems to other women: how other women have been so forward in showing their passionate natures, and when their flattery has done its work and the woman believes he truly respects her, he tells her his ardent protestations to her are the result of deep reverence, he simply adds one more to his so-called variety, and while writing to her that he still loves her, he is busy advertising her as not being a pure woman. * How often do men come and tell you, "don't make a friend of so and so, men know she is gay and your good name will be endangered." Oh, I tell you, it is the finest pleasure to burn and expose these men to themselves, but they simply wonder how you know so much. They don't know of our Sexual Education Society, which is fast making it impossible for men to keep us women merely for sexual pleasure, while that should be a self-respecting sympathetic association.

Men, themselves, are not happy under the present system, but they are still under the superstition of the past and never until women receive sexual education can happiness come. Then we women will not call one woman a "respectable wife," and another an "abandoned character" for living through a certain life, and we will not respect or love a man who uses our sisters as a relief society, comparing the necessity of the sex act to the relief from constipation.

P. A. S.

There is in the above a sentiment expressed that we so often find in the contributions of Lucifer, i. e. that the woman are nearly all angels, although without wings, and that the men are brutes and rascals—at least the greatest number of them.

That is "jumping to conclusions" which are neither based on facts nor experiences, but are simple prejudiced and partial "observations." If the comrade would have used the word "society" instead of "man" or "men" for condemnations I would have nothing to say, but when the man alone is held responsible for all misery and unhappiness in sex relations, without taking conditions into considerations, then I must protest.

Woman are not any more sublime in love affairs than men. We see just as many men committing suicide on account of being deceived, etc. by their sweethearts as woman who commit suicide for the same reason. Only when they have "gone to for" is the woman the suffering party. Not because her love affections were more sublime, but simply because she is aware that society will ostracize and condemn her alone. Many women have told me that they never would have married the man "if he had not gone too far already." And not the men but the women strike the hardest blows at their "fallen" sisters.

Furthermore how do we know that Mrs. B.'s husband married her simply for the sake of having a right to her body? He might have been just as sincere a lover as his co-partner, but government—society—compelled them to marry and the result was misery and unhappiness. Even if they had not been legally married would the result have been different? No! Under existing conditions she would have been just as much a slave on account of her little children. But if both of them had had correct ideas on sex relations before they had to marry, they probably would still live together and mutually support each other, even if their relation

* How do you know the man referred to is doing it? Such imaginary accusations should never be made in a sincere discussion. A. I.

had not been as congenial as desired. But in their ignorance of this subject, the belief that as long as they lived together they ought not love any body else, they live a miserable life.

It is not only the "invasion of seduction" by men that is at fault, but society as a whole. On the other hand, is it not the mother, the women, that raises both boys and girls and implants all those superstitious ideas into them that we complain of?

Nether women nor men deceive and leave each other for the sake of hurting the other; both of them are seeking happiness and pleasure, but on account of our ignorance and the present moral code and prevailing conditions, the outcome is misery and suffering.

A. I.

Propaganda Fund.

We are in receipt of No. 83 of the Twentieth Century Library—National Ownership of Railways by Chas. H. Vail. It contains 47 pages, is printed on medium paper, in clear type: price 15 cents. It is published by the Humboldt Library, 64 Fifth Ave., New York City.

The author tries to prove the necessity and advantages of national ownership of railroads, but he lacks the very essential foundation of a justification, or a valid argument for the necessity for government. A justification of the national government is necessary before any argument for its ownership can be valid.

Propaganda Fund.

Arbeiterbildungs-Verein, Pittsburg, Pa., \$5.00. Pfuetzner, \$3.70. Carno, \$3.00. Ruedebusch, \$2.50. Ziska, \$1.50. Hirschfeld \$1.00. Plege, 75c. Ronge, Rustel, Lincoln, 8 hneider, Hatman, Netrvall, Fink, Frantz, Mayrowitz, Goldberg, each 70c. Parsons, Edelstalt, each 30c. Sturgis, Jones, Africka Unknown, Gutes, Maennerchor, Schreider, Busold, each 25c. Jackson, 20c. Dodge, 5c.

Wellenbrock's Relief Fund.

Headquarters, San Francisco, \$4.55. Eastman, 10c. The Comrade is at present in The Home of The Firebrand and is in a critical condition, but there is hope of his recovery.

Special Announcement!

The publication of The Firebrand is carried on by a few individuals, aided by a number of radicals everywhere, for the purpose of spreading radical ideas. We have no organization, no constitution, by-laws, rules, officers or dues. Each works at what he or she is most competent to do. The Firebrand has no editor in the ordinary sense, and we invite everyone who has anything to say to send in their "copy."

Those engaged in the work of getting the paper out have no other means of support than the receipts for the paper, as it keeps them busy to do the work necessary to its publication, and most of the contributors to its support are poor, therefore we appeal to all who can to contribute what they can to the propaganda fund, thus helping to increase the circulation of The Firebrand, by making it possible for us to distribute a larger number of free copies. All donations and subscriptions are accounted for in the propaganda fund.

We accept anything we can use in payment for subscription. Any one wanting the paper can have it sent to them regularly by writing for it. If you can pay nothing now, we will credit you. If you are disabled, or otherwise prevented from paying for the paper you can have it free. We gladly accept any contribution to the propaganda fund, from a 1 cent stamp up, or anything to eat or wear.

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