The Song of the Shirt.

With fingers weary and worn,
With fingers weary and worn,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rage,
She sang the "Song of the Shirt!"

"Work! work! work!"

Till the stars shine through the roof!

The Song of the Shirt.

With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet,
To feel the sky above my head,
Before I knew the song of want.
And the walk that costs a meal!

"Oh! but for one short hour—
A respite from ever more—
No biscuit, bread, or hope,
But only time for grief—
A little sleeping would ease my heart;
But in their hard bed,
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rage.

Flying her needle and thread—
Stitch! stitch! stitch!

In poverty, hunger, and dirt—
In poverty, hunger, and dirt—

Till over the bottom I fall asleep,
And saw them on in a dream—

"Oh, men, with sisters dear—
Oh, men, with mothers and wives!

It is not that you're wearing out,
But because creature's lives!

Stitch!—stitch!—stitch!—
Stitch!—stitch!—stitch!

Seam, and gusset, and hand,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the bottom I fall asleep,

"But why do I talk of death—
Of the despairing of the home—
Can it be that I'm alone?

Because of the facts I keep—
O God! that bread should be so dear,

And flesh and blood, so strange!

Work—work—work—

My labor never flags,
And what are its wages?

A bed of straw
A crumb of bread—

That shattered roof—and this naked floor—
A bed of straw
A crumb of bread—and rag—
A table—
A broken chair—

And what am I to do—
For sometimes falling there—

"Work—work—work—

I seem so like my own—

Work—work—work—

As prisoners work for crime—

Till the heart is sick and the eyes renumbed—

Work—work—work—

In the dull December light—

And work—work—work—

While the winter sun is warm and bright—

The brooding swallows cling—

As if to labor were my only bane—

And twill me with the spring—

As if to labor were my only bane—

Oh! but to breathe the breath

The cowslip and primrose sweet—

With the sky above my head,

For only one short hour—

As if to labor were my only bane—

The grass beneath my feet—

To feel the sky above my head,

And the walk that costs a meal—

Before I knew the song of want—

And the walk that costs a meal—

But only time for grief—

A little sleeping would ease my heart—

But in their hard bed—

My tears must stop, for every drop

Hinders needle and thread!

With fingers weary and worn,

With eyelids heavy and red,

A woman sat, in unwomanly rage.

Flying her needle and thread—

Stitch! stitch! stitch!

In poverty, hunger, and dirt—

And still, with a voice of dolorous pitch—

Would that its tones could resound—

The song this—"Song of the shirt!"—

—Thomas Hood.

War or Submission—Which?

From the beginning of last century, but
more especially from the middle (1864),
strikes have become a powerful weapon in
the struggle between Labor and Capital.
Their number is increasing, their sphere
widening. There have been strikes of some
ten men, there have been strikes of hundreds
of thousands of men. Their economic, social,
and moral influence upon the life of the
working classes all over Europe has been
immense.

In an economic sense all increase in wages
and diminution in hours was obtained by
strike only.

Socially, all the so-called labor legislation
adopted by different parliaments and gov-
ernments in this country, as well as on the
continent, was always imposed upon them by
popular agitation, and well organized and
vigorously conducted strikes.

Morally, they have raised the energy,
courage, and dignity of the individual, and
created a strong feeling of solidarity among
the workers of every nation and country.
And great was the significance of the first
step in this international solidarity.

With what enthusiasm the French,
Belgian, and Swiss workmen speak of the
first financial help sent by the Trade Unions
of this country to Paris during the metal
workers' strike in 1867, or of the help from
Paris and Brussels received by the Geneva
strikers in 1886. From that time down to
the present, this international solidarity has
been growing and spreading all over the
industrial nations of Europe and in the
United States. Now every organized trade
and each thoughtful individual worker fully
understand what a pressing and urgent
duty it is for them to be always ready to
help their fellow workers in the fight against
the tyranny of Capital.

But, on the other hand, the capitalist
classes and employers clearly understood
at once the growing danger to them of these
organized workers with their unions and
their international solidarity. At the very
beginning, during the above-mentioned strikes,
the capitalist press with the Times ahead
began to urge the governments of Europe
to unite against (as was alarmingly ex-
pressed) the "social peril" threatening
the very foundation of the existence of the
governing and capitalist classes. At first
governments seemed disinclined to attack,
prevent, or violently suppress the strikers
and their helpers by means of troops.

Why were the State and the ministers so
tolerant? First of all, they still remem-
bered well the lessons which the oppressed
proletariat had given them in 1848 all over
Europe. They know that popular indigna-
tion can be very easily awakened and di-
rected against them, and they had not the
sharpest disposition to repeat the journeys
of Louis Philippe, Pope Pius IX, or Prince
(afterwards King) Wilhelm of Prussia,
and others.

Secondly, the middle classes, the true plu-
tocracies, had not yet gained their full ascen-
dancy, and the aristocracy with the govern-
mental families were rather pleased to see the
silkweavers, bankers, and employers a little
humiliated by united labor. But capitalism
procured within these last thirty years—on
behalf of general scientific and technical
development—an unprecedented progress, and
definitely converted to its purposes the State
machinery and government, the aristocracy
and the Church. In our days, all are over-
powered by money-grubbers; in their associ-
ations, in their companies we now see dukes
and bishops, lords and generals, members of
parliament and ministers. Everybody is at
the service of capital, is bought and guided
by men like Rhodes, Balfour, and Chamberlain.
All is crushed or assimilated. Only organ-
ized labor, with its continual and interna-
tional solidarity, stands firmly and courage-
ously against it, defying all efforts of fed-
eral employers united in international
trusts. Naturally, the capitalists obliged
both government and parliament to protect
their interests, to fight for their cause. And
we see all over Europe as well as in this
country and in the United States that an
each more or less important case of dispute between Capital and organized Labor, the latter always has to face the State and its whole machinery—army, police, injustice, etc. Not only does the government of every country side with the employers and by its police and soldiers protect their interests, but in some cases, for instance in Italy, soldiers are employed as blacklegs to replace the strikers. Young workers and peasants are forced to infil their compulsory military service in the so-called highly patriotic duty of defending the fatherland against its enemies, against its invaders. So that, by sending them against the workers, the government proves in fact that for it the enemy is the people; at the same time showing cynically that a soldier is nothing else than a tool for killing everybody who is rising against the capitalists, those true masters of the State with all its means and strength.

This union of the photocopy and the government is common not only amongst the nations, but also among the persons. Long times ago, those who possessed the land and capital were the real masters of the State; but the present shameless and brutal condition is of modern date. When capital and labor became conscious that any employers’ federation or the most powerful trust might be unable to resist the workers’ federated unions, it was decided that in future the strikers must be dealt with more carefully. The young workers and peasants knew that every energetic claim from the workers’ side should be suppressed by lead and steel. So we see, especially for the last eight or ten years, the strikers shut in Italy, in Spain, in France, in Belgium, in Germany, and in the United States. It is very important that the people should understand this new phase in the social struggle. They must realize that in every strike they may be obliged to face death at the hands of the army, whether under the different names of militia, Pinkerton, gendarmes, mounted police or regular troops—the fact remains the same, the strikers are no longer to fight for the right to live or to fight for the right to the will of their masters. The recent events of Trieste and Barcelona, Chillon, Pittsburg, Martinique and Peterhead have once again taught this lesson.—Freedom, London, England.

Government or No Government—Which?

VI

The local governments in this country were also transplanted from England. When the English founded the colonies in America, their institutions, such as the townships, the manor, the parish, the borough, the shire, were brought along with them to the New World. The county or shire had lost its original importance, since its government had been taken out of the hands of the shire and transferred to the townships and hundreds, and had been committed to justices of the peace, appointed by the king.

Some of these local governments were given up shortly after. The parish was the most common name for the township area, when the English came to America. The church was the most striking institution in the township. It required a large tax for its support, and constant care to protect its property, of which it has always managed to get the lion’s share.

“Is no other place,” says Macy, “has the township reached so perfect a development, or filled so important a place in the scheme of government as in New England. By transportation to New England new life seems to have been infused into the remnants of the ancient towns which had been preserved in the towns, parishes, and manors of England. The New Englanders were at first left almost entirely to themselves. The passengers of the Mayflower, before the signing of a brief statement, which was to be their guide in founding a new State. In their chosen home they acted much as their ancestors are believed to have acted two or three hundred years ago. Being surrounded by hostile Indians, they built their homes near to their woods, and provided for their own defense. Much of the land was held as common property. The holding of common pasture and common woods by New England towns has survived till recent times. . . . The towns at first possessed all the powers of government. They were regulated by the home authorities, and their government was not restrained by any central government in the colony. The town of Plymouth executed one of its citizens for the crime of murder. The early towns were not set up by a central authority; they organized themselves and carried on war and peace. Groups of families from the older towns would unite with immigrants from England, and build together a new town upon the unoccupied waste. When the central colonial government began to provide for the founding of new towns, they followed the model of those already founded.”

The church played a great part in the life of the New English town, whose first act was to build a church and provide for the support of a minister. In many ways the life of those early settlers—all of them Congregationalists—centered in the church and the minister, who was also the principal instrument in their lives. In some of the colonies only church members had a right to vote.

In its form of government the New England town was a pure democracy. All the townsmen met and they were meeting in order to make laws for the township and provide ways and means for their execution.

ORIGIN OF THE STATES.

Our States were not transplanted from the Old World. Above the shire, in England, stood the king and his ministers, the parliament, and the high courts. But during the century in which colonies were founded here, the English government was in a state of chaos. The king claimed that all power, legislative, executive, and judicial, rested in him; that it was the duty of parliaments and the courts to obey him in governing. And he was perfectly right and consistent in his claims. Was not he the head of the whole government, the highest authority of the whole country? Were not all the people, including the ministers, lords, commoners, and judges his subjects? But parliament claimed that the making of laws was its business, and that it was the duty of the king to observe, obey, and execute the laws of England. The judges, being appointed by the king, were naturally subservient to his will.

And in this unsettled condition of the government at home, the colonists came here with the definite intention of preserving English liberty by founding a free State in the wilderness. Their love of liberty and their devotion to religious convictions for which they had been persecuted at home, combined with a desire to determine the character of government in America.

Many of them were men of unusual religious fervor. They would rather die than disobey the laws of their home country, and many of them were convinced that God had destined them to found a new nation. They were not content to rest as persecuted Quakers, persecuted Catholics, and persecuted Puritans; they wanted to found a new nation in America. They rejected the vision of a new land as the New Jerusalem, and they turned their eyes to the New World. The first exiles to America were the Separatists, a group of Puritans who refused to accept the Church of England, and who left England for the New World in 1620. The Pilgrims, as they are called, founded the town of Plymouth in 1620, and the colony of New England in 1628. They were followed by many other groups of Separatists, including the Massachusetts Bay Colony, founded in 1630, and the Rhode Island Colony, founded in 1636. These colonies were founded by groups of Separatists who rejected the authority of the Church of England and sought to establish a new form of government, one that would be more true to their religious beliefs.

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Leon F. Crozquez.

Who was Leon Crozquez? Was he a government official or a government critic? Was he a State Socialist or an Anarchist? Let us see. He was not allowed to make a public statement before election day, and since then we have had but the silence of the man. Who has been heard clip-clopping around the man? But there is no evidence to prove that statement. If it were true it would stand to his credit; for it takes brains to be an Anarchist and understand the philosophy of Anarchism.

Crozquez was an American, the son of Polish parents who came to this country over forty years ago and lived for many years in Cleveland, Ohio; he worked as a wirewreader in a wire mill in Newburgh from 1893 to 1897, during which time his father ran a saloon on Tenth Street, over which there was a room where a Polish section of the Socialist Labor Party held its weekly meetings. Leon Crozquez joined that section, and became an active member of the party. He agitated both in English and Polish; distributed literature where he worked, and thus he made a number of enemies among his fellow workers.

Several German workers, partly owing to Leon’s radical views and partly on account of the difficulty of pronouncing his name, had been long known as "the man."
FREE SOCIETY

Even State Socialists can afford to stand by the truth, and let men fall where they may, for men may change or die, but principles never. Anarchists are not so unfair as to hold the Socialists collectively responsible for the act of Leon Crocklosz, which was the act of an individual. The article would not have been written but for the misrepresentations in speeches delivered immediately after McKinley's assassination by prominent Socialist leaders, published in book form and distributed in order to prejudice the public mind against Anarchists. Truths may be crushed for a while, but it will prevail and villages will come home to roost.

Anarchists believe in dealing fairly with all progressive minds; they have no bone to pick with Simon-pure Socialism, but we are sorry to say that the Socialist leaders in this city and the Socialist party press of the country, have proven themselves false, cowardly, and traitors to one of their own number, to whom they sought to educate against a crime. When likewise amorous slaves to a man who fought and suffered side by side with them; a man who could no longer stand the strain of further exploitation, but with such alacrity and will in his struggle against the oppressors of the world, which have but few parables in history.

Cleveland, Ohio. EMIL SCHUNCK.

The Law and its Horrors

In a former article in Free Society, published about the first of March, I gave a short account of a mode of torture practised on unruly convicts at the State penitentiary at Lansing, Kansas. I wish to make a few more statements relative to the same. My informant is a well known Kansas Free-thinker, and if asked to do so undoubtedly give his name, as he was an officer at the prison several years ago and knows whereof he speaks. In a late letter, my friend in answer to a request for more explicit details in regard to prison torture, writes as follows:

"The 'nurse, virgin' was known as the sweat-box at Lansing. It was kept in the stone house in the prison yard where men received punishment. The box was little larger than a coffin, to allow for bedding when necessary, as men were put in the box in all sorts of weather. The box was made tight like a great chest, except the corner made of slats a few inches apart to let in the air, which blew down like the lid of a trunk. The victim before he was placed in this receptacle had both feet thrust into a leather case called the boot, extending to the knees; both legs were then strapped together. His hands were put inside a leather tube extending to the elbow and strapped tight across his chest. Then the poor wretch is lifted up, laid inside the box and the lid shut down and locked. He is fed bread and water once a day. "There," says my friend, "the man must lie unable to move hand or foot, as he can turn on his face. I will state that this mode of punishment is supposed to be used only on insane incorrigibles. I have no proof that I was at Lansing it was in frequent use, and I knew of one convict who was kept in that box fourteen days. This I know to be true, for I was there at the time. But in regard to the length of time the Negro leader of the lawless band kept therein I cannot state positively. The account was other colored in the Kansas City Daily Times, in October, 1901, and charged that the Negro was kept in the box forty days. The article claimed to have an expose of prison torture at Lansing."

The only comment I care to make further is: this it seems almost incredible to me that a person who is to be imprisoned in such a hell hole, I am convinced that my friend tells the exact truth; but I would rather know that he is a liar than to think that he can be subjected to such torture in this age; and if any man can dispute and prove that there is no such an "infernial machine" at Lansing, the information will be gratefully received. But, as I said in my former article, the sweat-box is a part of the instruments of torture at Lansing to know men are tortured.

If the thing is used only in the case of "insane incorrigibles," where does the legal term come in to that class that we are told the law does not hold for them? and where does the right come in to torture any man or any fellow creature even lower in the scale of life? The right only of might, of brute force, which permits to run the full length of its ferocity.

I have also tried to get additional facts in regard to hanging men for burglary, and reading not long ago that Johnson and Foster, one a white murder and the other a negro, were hanged at Asheville, North Carolina, for burglary, wrote the postmaster for details, and if it were true they hanged men in his State for stealing. I give the substance of his polite reply.

"No, we do not hang people for stealing in North Carolina; but this State has a law, and many other States a similar law, that if a person attempts to burgle or dwell house any building where there is a person sleeps, it is a capital offense. Johnson and Foster were hanged here at the date you mention. The crime for which they met their end was as follows: They went into a store where the clerk slept. A fight took place, the clerk was badly wounded, but recovered. Both robbers also received gash wounds at the time. No sympathy was felt for them, unless one especially bore a very bad reputation."

Just tell it is a more heinous offense to rob a man in his house, than in the open field, or to rob him in the store where a clerk sleeps, than in the barn where no one sleeps, is one of these mysterious dispensations of the law, but frequently illustrates in a terrible manner the ignominy of punishment practised upon unfortunate criminals in the name of justice. In Georgia, New Hampshire, and New Jersey, it is a capital offense to rob in a private house or any building used as sleeping quarters. In Missouri, it is grand larceny to steal even an article from a dwelling house, if a man is found inside the private grounds of a residence. The reason exists that one man should have his rights broken with a club and dragged to the end of a rope, for doing precisely that for which a brother thief in some other State does get a jail term or a fair trial? None, as I can see, but to find any reason in law pertaining to thieves, or human rights, would be a mere fourth of a century ago.
It seems if the workers had as much common sense as that, and refused to be exploited by him, he would have had to do this long ago.

And now John D. Rockefeller, Jr., rises to state that Jesus did not mean what he said when he stated that a rich man could not enter the kingdom of heaven—except that the eye of a needle on a camel's back. Some preachers agree with him. Of course, these worshippers of gold will explain away anything; but perhaps the young man will find that gold will not curb the keeper of St. Peter's gate. But who knows? Maybe an alderman or a legislator has the job.

James F. Morton, Jr., of Discount, is a good example of what may be termed the "intolerable toleration." He hardly ever tells us anything without first exhorting us to receive it in a tolerant spirit, and saying that he will be as tolerant as he can which qualification is certainly necessary, and that we all should be intolerably tolerant by intolerant tolerance. He reaches the climax in Discount of April 26. Here he tells us to have "courtesy and respect" for the "honest" bankers, manufacturers, ticket agents, judges, and jurymen. Altho' he has yet omitted the hangman, a marshal is sometimes quite synonomous with that gentleman, so that the chain is quite complete already. All this in the name of "courtesy." Disgusting humanism could go no further.

Because a hangman believes he is doing his "official duty," is that reason for us to respect and "tolerate" him? Or because a lawyer, judge, or jurymen takes the first steps of the way, because the hangman logically stands for the same reason, do we owe him respect and toleration? Because the Russian czar considers he has "legal" duty to express rebellion, and decorates with his own hand an official who ordered women stripped and dragged through the streets by the hair, do I owe him any respect or regard? Because King Hamburc, if he thought it his "official duty" to send a hundred thousand soldiers to Milan with an offer of more, as his "official dignity" had been snubbed by the city council, do I owe him any respect? All this seems to me that he was probably sincere, his environment making any other view impossible? If Morton can show me any difference between the first and last of these, I would like to hear him do so. Altho' I know that Free Society is not free from sins, either of "commission or omission," I hope it may be spared from such "tolerance."

Abe Isak Jr.

Current Comment.

Some of the pencil pushers of the Socialist parties never weary of assuring that the workingman who refuses to vote the Socialist ticket is as much a scab as the one who takes the place of his brother worker when on strike. This has become one of the platitude of political Socialism, but it lacks several degrees of being true. It is born of the arrogance of political intolerance, that assumes that whoever does not vote for the Socialist is a traitor, fool or a knave.

Brutality and barbarism, that would dispose an army of Boxers, and shock the ethical nature of cannibals feasting on babies, are the standards of this campaign. The industry that can conscientiously write the word "barbarism" in a newspaper could invent. Yet the American people with profound indifference, raise no protest, and silently approve this infamy, and continue to generate such rascals as Roosevelt and other political pirates, who carry on and are responsible for these inhuman crimes, perpetrated in the name of war and Christian civilization. Damn such civilization, and everlasting shame upon its official and uniformed exponents.

The Anarchists of Germany are to hold a congress May 18, at which the chief topic of discussion will be the general strike. The general strike idea is just becoming the rallying point of the international Anarchist movement, or, at least, of that part of it that is really and distinctly revolutionary. The general strike, the real import of which is so little understood, will be the vanguard of the Social Revolution, which in turn, is the harbinger of Anarchy. Three cheers for Anarchy, Social Revolution, and the General Strike.

Rumors of peace seem to have a greater charm for the British ear than rumors of war, just at present. John Bull is becoming dimly conscious of the fact that, in his innu-grabbing exploits in South Africa, he grabbed a hot potato, one of Boer balking, and he is beginning to make more wry faces than a pig with its tail under the gate. The world empire business, as practiced by England and America in South Africa and the Philippines, seems to have slipped its trolley, and the jingo brand of patriotism, in consequence, is a little lop-sided just now. Those saintly exponents of Christian civilisation who praise the British Empire because it has a mission to bring Christian civilization and with a Knapp cannon, and who have established a close connection between prayer and gun-power, are experiencing that tired feeling so graphically described in the patent medicine circular. Here's health to the Boers and Filipinos! May they continue to shoot and shoot with improved aim.

Another fresh and frolicsome female, who would a missionary be, proposes to imitate the notorious "Miss Stone," and to launch into fame and trouble by going into the wilds of Syria, to proselytize a savage people, who hate Christians worse than a politician does the truth. The people of Christendom, who spent a few hundred dollars to send Miss Stone to the heathen of Bulgaria, and paid several thousand to get her back again (which was a good deal more than she is actually worth), had better go after this wandering miss with an injunction, else there will be another of these cases, and dollars for the benefit of the poor heathen.

As the Bulgarian brigands found Miss Stone as easy as a gold brick scheme, it is fair to conjecture that they will appreciate a good thing when it comes their way. Now that the heathens have discovered that there...
is really something in the missionary business. They may be expected to warm up somewhat on the subject of the Christian religion. They will not object to the church's attempt to 'capture the world for Christ,' so long as they can capture its female missionaries, and so get ahead as the exchequer of Christendom. The missionaries really appear to do some good for the heathen.

The editor of the 'Appeal to Reason' states in his paper that government as it will exist under Socialism, will have no legislative powers, but will simply exist as the agent for transacting the public business. I suspect, however, that, by the term government, Mr. Wayland meant the officials. He would have the legislative power intact, to be exercised by the majority. He honors the majority in the wisdom of the majority under the Socialistic State, but I notice that he lacks respect for the majority that rules at present. He evidently expects one dose of his political Socialistic purgative pills to make every little nigger in the land a scholar and philosopher and supply the majority with brains made to order. Wayland is an optimist.

The universal unrest that manifests itself in Barcelon riots and the Socialist disturbance in Belgium of the past few weeks, may be a sign of prosperity and social order, but I doubt it. The army of wealth and the army of want face each other across ramparts of the social order, and, in spite of the time-server's siren serenade, sooner or later there will be powder burned, whether good comes of it or not. Modern society's Madam Pompadours may yet be interested spectators of the deluge they so readily invoke.

We are a great nation, we Americans,—great in gall and gold and grain. Having annexed ourselves to the white man's burden, we have set out to civilize and Christianize the Filipinos, and are doing it with the Maxim rifle and Gatling gun. We are sprinkling them with Papal bull, with Provo, with Religion, bombs and Bibles, and incidentally covering ourselves with honor and martial glory. For example, the American commander issued a general order to his gallant soldiers to kill every Filipino over twelve years of age. This is teaching the Bible by practice as well as precept, for it is carrying out God's injunction to the army of Moses, which, in a similar invasion of a heathen country, was told to spare alive nothing that breathed. American newspaper denunciations of General Weyler's barbarities in Cuba would be interesting reading today, in the light of our military achievements in the East India archipelago.

I presume that Kate Austin considers the French Revolution, the American revolution, the abolition of chateau slavery, the Reformation, etc., all failures, not worth, as to result, the cost of effort, simply because they did not achieve the ultimate, and were the result of the blind action of the masses, directed by intelligent leadership. Let us have confidence in the logic of human events.

R. W.

PRBB SOCIETY.

Echoes from Europe.

Under the head line "Enlightened Republican Government," the Russian monthly Svobodnoy Shro (Free Word), in London, writes anent the labor troubles in Paris:—March 2, on the streets of Paris—the capital of a "free" republic—several thousand workmen gathered together in order to demonstrate publicly that lack of employment had brought them and their families down to starvation and beggary. The local authorities ordered the police to attack the workers, who were clubbed in a most terrible and brutal manner. After a few days they were tried—nont the criminal police—but the beaten workers, many of whom were sent to the penitentiary, among whom there were also four Russian Socialists, who had been caught in the crowd. Other Russians who were at the time in Paris, claim that the brutality of the police was extreme inhuman and aggravating that the brutal outrages perpetrated a year previous by the Russian government in St. Petersburg, and what was more strange yet, that the French government, to express its surprise at the police atrocities, took the occurrence quite indifferently, as a matter of course.

"It is to be wished that such events, like the police outrages perpetrated upon the French workers, are made known to the world through their comrades, the Russian workmen; for in Russia people who still believe that the conditions of the poor can be improved by a change of government, often circulate the alarming but entirely unfounded ideas, namely, that other nations have achieved freedom long ago. In reality in all countries, no matter what form of government there may be, the rich dominate and exploit the poor; and when the poor workers, being brought to despair, attempt to call public attention to their unbearable condition, the governments always proceed as they did with the starving and suffering toilers in Paris. It is about time to disillusion the people of the possibility of a 'good government,' and to understand that all government,—be it autocratic, a constitution, or even a republic as we are, chosen by the people,—ever becomes the oppressor of the working people. And in this, the governments of the different countries always support each other. 'One hand washes the other!' "Princes and emperors rule over the people, but among them it shall not be thus," said Christ. And indeed, the salvation of the working people from oppression and exploitation does not consist in the changing of governments, but solely in the refusal to recognize any kind of human power, and obey nothing but our own conscience innate in us all."

The refusal to serve in the army are becoming more and more frequent in Europe. In France a young man, Graslen, was sent to the penitentiary for a year because he flatly refused to be trained to murder his fellow men. Characteristic is the testimony given in court by his employer. "He has been a good Christian," he said the good Christian employer. "He always carried the gospel with him, and preached humanitarian and religious ideas among his fellow workers, and besides, this goodhearted youth even managed to help the poor families of fellow workers from his little earnings. In short, I think Graslen was a little demented." Stranger, indeed, that a young man should refuse to kill, advocate humanitarian ideas, and even help his fellow workers! And the poor young man was perfectly thunder-struck at such sentiments—refusing to be a legalized and professional martyrizer. "Where would we be," he exclaimed, "if everybody was left free to obey only his religious and philanthropic convictions? Assuredly very soon we would have no army."

In Russia sixteen families were exiled to Siberia for disseminating the teachings of Jesus Christ and refusing military service. The idea of passive resistance is also spreading in Finland—a mode of rebellion which alarms the government greatly. Nearly one half of the communities have refused to elect the obligatory members for the conscription committees ("uppbaknings")". The governors are enraged and threaten to impose a heavy fine upon the stubborn communities, but the latter have so far paid very little attention to the instructions of the government and the governor.

If the people want to arm, it would be an easy problem for the government, but to deal with whole communities who will neither fight nor obey is a puzzling problem. It is no novelty to a power which is used to emphasize and dramatize its "arguments" with rifles and sashes. Even Austria has its troubles with these "fanatics," as those are called who try to obey the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." Seven young men are held in prison awaiting trial. Besides, a young artist, Groser, has recently been arrested for the same reason.

According to dispatches the immense strike in Belgium, in which 400,000 workers had laid down their tools, has abruptly been declared off. The failure was complete, and disgraceful to those who so maliciously and wantonly played with the sincerity and aspirations of the duped workers. It is at present impossible to give detailed account of this phase of the struggle, but certain is that the Socialist leaders are to a great extent to blame for the vicious sacrifice of lives and the freedom of those imprisoned in order to gratify their political schemes and play a political game. We all know that the Socialist leaders threatened a general strike, a revolution, if universal suffrage was not granted by the government. In order to gain greater prestige in their demands, which were justified as long as they believed in the efficiency of the ballot, they did not hesitate to compromise with the Liberals. But the latter collapsed when things began to assume a serious character, and the consequence was that the Socialist leaders also became frightened—and retreated. And now they have the audacity to claim that the strike was provoked by the government in order to crush it. It is only a few weeks that IGLESIAS, the Socialist leader in Spain, expressed great irritation at the "Anarchists" pillaging and destroying; and ILARION, the Socialist leader in Barcelona, and so we are anxiously waiting for his comment on the Belgian strike.
A Thousand Dollar Shot

A few weeks ago a newspaper announced that a parasite who believes in "law and order," and who lives on the sweat of the toilers, would be willing to give $1,000 to have a good shot at an Anarchist. Now, where is this vicious and generous "wolf in sheep's clothing" going to get the money? What does he (Senator Hawley) do for a living? Does he till the soil? Does he work in a coal mine? Does he make shoes or clothes? Does he do any useful work that will be a help and blessing to humanity? No! Then where does he get the $1,000 from? He would willingly give to have a shot at an individual who believes in freedom—Anarchist?

Senator Hawley is a man who is supposed to help his fellow creatures to make laws to protect life and property, but is the senator or his laws protective in his willingness to shoot a liberty-loving man? Mr. Hawley is a fair type of the supporters of vicious laws and social disharmony.

I have no doubt all the law mongers, political shysters, and hypocritical religious bigots (dergery) throughout the country would give $1,000 without thinking to have a shot at an Anarchist. If Senator Hawley would give a $1,000 for a shot at an Anarchist, how much would he give for a shot at a Socialist, or a Single Taxer, or a Trade Unionist? One Anarchist has invited his inviter to an Anarchist to a good shot for free charge. But why go to Philadelphia when he, if he will but open his eyes, can find lots of Anarchists in Washington?

The spirit of discontent and revolt is growing; the vicious and cowardly government which Senator Hawley wortely represents, is and has been paying thousands and millions of dollars to shoot the freedom-loving and discontented Filipinos. The government of the State of Illinois paid thousands of dollars in order to hang four Anarchists fourteen years ago. Yes, our dear United States pays millions of dollars annually to shoot strikers who dare ask for a little liberty; and let Mr. Hawley remember that notwithstanding all, these Anarchists that the governments of the world have killed, are members of the ideal to which Anarchists stand is extinguished yet. Whatever Senator Hawley may give $1,000 to shoot Peter Kropotkin, or Leo Tolstoy, or Thomas Jefferson, or Thomas Paine! Would he shoot all those who have written and expressed Anarchistic sentiment, among whom are Emerson, Buckle, Herbert Spencer, William Ellery Channing, Ibsen, Hawthorne, Goldsmith, and even Jesus, and many others?

Those who are keeping pace with history and are closely observing the social unrest the world, can easily perceive the spirit of discontent and revolt that is prevalent everywhere and rampant in the governments of the world are standing on their last legs; they are drawing their last breath. The peace on earth and good will among men, which was proclaimed by a young executive called Jesus, is near at hand. The good time which the philosophers have prophesied and poets sung is approaching.

Toilers of the world, if you want freedom, peace, and justice, withdraw your support from these monstrous, powerful governments which oppress and rob you, and which pay millions of dollars to shoot you for daring to demand a little more pay. Do not support the army and navy; the idle rich parasites guard their plunder themselves, or else let them work for their own living. Be ready to defend yourself from such bloodthirsty hyenas as Senator Hawley. H. L. Mencken said, "Self-defense must be conceded at any time."

Religion and government are the foes of science, and their unjust threats and foolish laws have filled the world with hatred and crime, and the countless victims that have died in defense of their honest convictions cannot be forever quenched until the last vestige of religion and government shall have faded away from the earth, and every dogmatic claim and falsehood of the Church has been exploded; until the clergy—the laughing-stock of science, the obstacles of progress, the preachers and inventors of hell—shall take their supplies beneath their arms and wrapping the shattered fragments of their forgotten creed, shall take their place among the relics of antiquity. —James Myres

The Essential Spirit of Reform

(Continued from last week.)

The state of things which has been so inadequately described is called Christian civilization, a perversion of language little removed from blasphemy. It is confusedly asserted to be the product of the working of natural law, to arise out of the right of every man to do the best for himself in the rivalries and competitions of life. Yet is it Christianity that every man doing the best for himself shall involve the trampling down of his fellows? To term our present society natural is sadly ludicrous. The general prevalence of Christianity, there may be some ground to believe, would do away with all poverty, suffering, ignorance, yet these admittedly prevail to a frightful extent among peoples to whom Christianity has long been preached, while their absence among peoples looked upon as equally ripe in the scale of progress is attested upon by credible observables. Can it be truly progress which, whatever changes are introduced in its course, brings into prominence such evil conditions? In civilization millions come into the world forestalled of opportunity, millions make the start in life with a handicap the effect of which can be overcome only by the development of remarkable abilities and tremendous effort, while a few thousands of every generation are born to advantages and position, including power to command a trained corps of professional servants to assert the justice and property of these arrogances, consolidate it and multiply privileges and share in their advantages. Even with the perversion of ideas to which all are so accustomed, it is still naturally repulsive to reason about the community. As millions come into the world, there is one merchandise, one slave, one master; for every infant that is ever born, there is a father and a mother to whom he contributes nothing whatever to the world, should represent power over the lives and toil and labor of hundreds, even thousands—not as a hereditary rule, but rather as the tribunal-laying power called wealth.

It is not the purpose of this writing to present in detail any specific scheme of reform, but merely to consider the subject in its broadest aspect, to outline the state of society aimed at by reformers of every shade and phase. No rational view contemplates an attempt to level all physical and mental distinctions, nor even any social distinctions upon a rigid basis of human identity. To do so would be to render it worthy the apprehension it so often receives. Equality of strength, equality of intellect, equality of energy, quality of ambition, equal capacity for enjoyment of works of art, the developments of science, and the refinements of mental culture can never be. Nevertheless reform looks for a levelling up and not a levelling down. It seeks compromise between these possibilities and that it cannot be truly said to think of benefiting any one more than another. It conveys primarily the destruction of everything that gives rise to anxiety and distress in relation to material welfare, and this proposition applies as well to the rich as to the poor under the social disorder which now prevails. While under its reign destitution and degradation would disappear from the scene, every man would be accompanied by all worldly ambition, the desire to "get ahead" of one's fellows by the accumulation of worldly goods, avidity for social rank founded on social distinctions, a consciousness of loss of status, following loss of possessions.

Little observation and reflection are needed to convince us that wealth and the distinction which it is accomplishing is the source of the distress and unhappiness. Desires expand in greater ratio than the attainment of means. Few are the first rank of wealth and all below suffer from want by just as much as they realize. A man in a hundred is a social aristocrat, a man in a thousand is a social outcast. In the fact that the tribute-laying power depends to a great extent upon purely artificial property, and that the acquisition of wealth does not consist in production to any considerable extent, but in snatching from others the strata constantly wandered in the fevered struggles of the desperate game called business. The success of one in many instances means simply loss to another.
FREE SOCIETY.

ing in wealth and rank but that affluence which is the cause of his poverty. He envies the rich those pleasures to which they are so accustomed that they have lost all relish for them. What then does man want to be as happy as he can be? Certainly the first requisite is present subsistence and, if he thinks of the future, the well-founded hope of continued enjoyment of the same.

The meaning for independence is one of the first instincts of every right-minded and honorable man; independence is desired above all things as a condition of development in which the nearest approach to perfect happiness. The enjoyment of this primitive right with a moral certainty of competent subsistence is a much higher assurance of felicity than the possession of wealth as a member of a distinguished class, carrying with it servitude to prejudices and fashions constantly reminding of the loss of liberty. Independence in the sense in which it is here proposed does not mean the ability to live entirely apart from others, but the attainment of a status in which everyone may deal with others on equal terms, asking nothing except in return for the trouble and the time involved in contributing to the welfare of the other party; obliged to accept no favors with servile gratitude; and conscious of complete ability to reciprocate as occasion may require.

The realm of every effort looking a single step beyond the mere momentary gratification of passion or appetite is independence as here depicted, and connected with it is the idea of an unlimited power to produce anything for the benefit of oneself and others. The chief reason that man envies the rich is that he is not sure of the kind of independence which the rich have, the kind of independence which the rich have, the kind of independence which the rich have.

Living independently in the world under existing conditions does not depend upon the power to do useful service, nor upon the disposition to do so, nor even upon the fact that some ancestor has done useful service. The only security for a comfortable living at ease, aside from inherited fortune, is the possession and exercise of a faculty entirely outside of useful service. It is the faculty of accumulation, not the absence of accumulation, not the accumulation of innumerable vast resources which are reckoned among the greatest of the earth. This faculty often exists in connection with small capacity for production, and large capacity for consumption. It is associated with entire lack of accumulation. Accumulation frequently marks disregard of the rights and welfare of others in a greater or lesser degree. The result of the exercise of this faculty (as it is called) is not the development of the independence which is desired, but it is far from true independence.

The rich are in many cases the most dependent creatures, glorifying too in their dependence, relying upon swarms of servants, unable to stoop in the labor of necessity. The power to provide in any degree for their own necessities. But they have acquired or inherited power over the labor of others under established conditions of inequality. The services commanded are yielded up on compulsion, in fact, because of a means of living, must share in the distribution of the tribute laid by the "independent." This is not freedom of exchange.

Why should there not be real independence for all? It cannot be truthfully denied that there is in the world an abundance of all material goods to afford provision of food, clothing, means of shelter, and the satisfaction of every need of the mortal frame, or if not so production may be increased indefinitely to the supply of every deficiency. Why may not there be such a readjustment of our methods of production as well if it is required for the solution of the problem—that the streams of abundance now obstructed and diverted to individual aggrandizement may reach all and every individual, so that the energies of mind and body relieved from the demands by which they are now cramped to incessant toil merely to supply bodily necessities, will be free for culture in every direction, to the world as a whole as if all were good. Is it not a reproach and a shame on our boasted civilization that its existence has solved the problem of distribution, which even in this day receives a degree of attention so little proportioned to its importance?

The view that to end the prevalent system of preying on one's fellows, to extinguish the possibility of acquiring and perpetuating wealth, is a perfectly good view of human nature even as it has been developed under these conditions. Man naturally rejoices in the felicity of those about him, not alone those to whom he is bound by the closest ties of association and affection, but all with whom he comes in contact. But if the so-called polite society is the supposed equality of condition of those of whom it is made up, the absence of care and solicitude. Would not these and all others who have enjoyed a degree of happiness now be in the same position as if all were good? The lives of the humane, even those comfortably situated in the ordinary sense, are embittered by the sorrow and distress constantly forced upon their notice. Why may not the idea of happiness for all find hospitable entertainment? Is it inherently repulsive? If the supply of man's common wants in abundance was assured, would not mechanical invention, the cultivation of literature, art, philosophy, the development of science, the investigation of the most fertile field of nature's workings—pursued for the purpose of the pleasure and the pursuit of pleasure—be completely available for the pleasure and improvement of others—still afford scope for effort and opportunity for distinction which none would envy, being founded on individual worth, not as too often in the present state of things, on false and insincere motives? That confers no credit, rather the contrary? While the removal of motives for wrong-doing would tend to elevate the general level of sentiment and conduct, there would still be a limitless field of development in the nature of moral character.

Those who cry out against the destruction of "vested rights," against robbing widows and orphans of accumulated savings or of investments from which they have never derived, seem to imagine only a "dividing up" among those at some given time in existence, after which everything is to go on as before; simply an overturning, elevating masses by the process of calling them up from below. Shallow as this idea is, it is apparently the only one they are able to conceive. But if the change is not a complete wiping out of the material distinctions which now exist, if in taking away the tribute-laying power that pertains to certain classes there is given in compensation assurance of maintenance in ease and comfort free from the harassing cares that inheres in poverty, then it is in taking away the power of handing down to descendants accumulated estates there is bestowed a confidence that whatever comes, the hardness and cruelty of the world are things of the past, that innocence and helplessness are supreme claims upon tenderness and consideration; that while everyone is expected to make some contribution to the general welfare, none are burdened by the exhausting duties of supporting the useless and the evil; that the labors devoted to individual aggrandizement are to find ample scope in moral, intellectual, and cathartic cultivation, then it would seem at least these objections cannot be altogether without reply.

The response, "This can never be," has no relevancy to the presentation of the subject at this time. It is not intended to show that it can be, but only to show what it is that is immediately comprehensible. Suffice it to say that there have been exalted souls in every age of the world who believed it possible. Philosophers have dwelt upon it, poets have sung of it, many have spent their lives in endeavoring to realize for it. To discredit it is to declare the teachings of Christ impracticable, and the effort to propagate his doctrines without hope, for it is Christianity indeed, and has been the only answer to all present agitations. The purpose of this writing has been only to exhort as clearly as possible the central thought of all reform, not to expose any schemes for bringing this object about, but to state that what has been stated in brief is beyond question what is aimed at by every imaginable scheme of social reform now demanding attention, including those of Socialists, Communists, Single Taxers, nationalists, and every other shade or sect akin, even those who call themselves Anarchists, for the connection of reckless violence with the theory of society intelligently known as Anarchy is as gross a mistake as any other false impression in relation to social reform.

To bring about the state of things herein depicted but two things are required: to convince a sufficient number that it is possible, and to instill in the mind of the people that it will be happier under such conditions.

ALDEN S. HEILING.

Government is a quarter in which liberty is not nor cannot be preserved. If we are wanting to ourselves, and unattentive to our great interest in this respect, it is the height of folly and unreasonableness to expect that government will be tolerant and for us.—Matthiæ.
FOR CHICAGO.

The Young Men's Club meets every Saturday evening, 8 p.m., 332 S. Morgan St., where subjects pertaining to the social problem are discussed. Friends of liberty are cordially invited. April 25, A. Isaiah will speak on "Why I am an Anarchist."

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BEND ORDERS TO FREE SOCIETY.

MORIBUND SOCIETY AND ANARCHY.

Translated from the French of JEAN GRAYE

BY VOLTAIRE DE CLAYERY.

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