

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE



READER



**P RINCIPLES, PROPOSITIONS &
D ISCUSSIONS
FOR LAND & FREEDOM**

AN INTRODUCTORY WORD TO THE
‘ANARCHIVE’
“Anarchy is Order!”

*‘I must Create a System or be enslav’d by
another Man’s.*

*I will not Reason & Compare: my business
is to Create’*
(William Blake)

During the 19th century, anarchism has developed as a result of a social current which aims for freedom and happiness. A number of factors since World War I have made this movement, and its ideas, disappear little by little under the dust of history.

After the classical anarchism – of which the Spanish Revolution was one of the last representatives – a ‘new’ kind of resistance was founded in the sixties which claimed to be based (at least partly) on this anarchism. However this resistance is often limited to a few (and even then partly misunderstood) slogans such as ‘Anarchy is order’, ‘Property is theft’,...

Information about anarchism is often hard to come by, monopolised and intellectual; and therefore visibly disappearing. The ‘anarchive’ or ‘anarchist archive’ Anarchy is Order (in short **A.O**) is an attempt to make the **‘principles, propositions and discussions’** of this tradition available again for anyone it concerns. We believe that these texts are part of our own heritage. They don’t belong to publishers, institutes or specialists.

These texts thus have to be available for all anarchists and other people interested. That is one of the conditions to give anarchism a new impulse, to let the ‘new

anarchism' outgrow the slogans. This is what makes this project relevant for us: we must find our roots to be able to renew ourselves. We have to learn from the mistakes of our socialist past. History has shown that a large number of the anarchist ideas remain standing, even during the most recent social-economic developments.

'Anarchy Is Order' does not make profits, everything is spread at the price of printing- and papercosts. This of course creates some limitations for these archives.

Everyone is invited to spread along the information we give . This can be done by copying our leaflets, printing from the CD that is available or copying it, e-mailing the texts ,...Become your own anarchive!!!

(Be aware though of copyright restrictions. We also want to make sure that the anarchist or non-commercial printers, publishers and autors are not being harmed. Our priority on the other hand remains to spread the ideas, not the ownership of them.)

The anarchive offers these texts hoping that values like **freedom, solidarity and direct action** get a new meaning and will be lived again; so that the struggle continues against the

*'demons of flesh and blood, that sway scepters down here;
and the dirty microbes that send us dark diseases and
wish to squash us like horseflies;
and the will- 'o-the-wisp of the saddest ignorance'.*
(L-P. Boon)

The rest depends as much on you as it depends on us.
Don't mourn, Organise!

Comments, questions, criticism,cooperation can be send
to

A.O@advalvas.be

A complete list and updates are available on this
address, new texts are always

welcome!!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

An introductory word to the ‘anarchive’	2
Table of contents	5
Biographies	6
Anarchism & American Traditions	51
Introduction.....	51
Anarchism & American Traditions.....	55
The dominant idea.....	97
The Economic Tendency of Freethought.....	114
Sex Slavery	133
They Who Marry Do Ill	150
In defense of Emma Goldman and the right of expropriation.	165
Francisco Ferrer	180
De Cleyre Bibliography	206
By Voltairine de Cleyre	206
About Voltairine de Cleyre	207

BIOGRAPHIES

Voltairine de Cleyre
BY SHARON PRESLEY

Source: [The Memory Hole](#)

This is Paper 1 of the Libertarian Feminist Heritage Series published by the [Association of Libertarian Feminists](#). It was originally published in Issue 8 of *The Storm!* (Winter 1979).

Emma Goldman called her "the most gifted and brilliant anarchist woman America ever produced." Yet today Voltairine de Cleyre is virtually unknown even among libertarians. She is discussed only briefly in histories of American anarchism and is not even mentioned at all in the more general studies of James Joll, George Woodcock, and Daniel Guerin. Though her writing was both voluminous and powerful, she appears in only one modern anarchist anthology. Only two recent collections of American radical thought include her classic "Anarchism and American Traditions"; and, ironically, neither is primarily anarchist in content.

Voltairine de Cleyre was, in the words of her biographer, Paul Avrich, "A brief comet in the anarchist firmament, blazing out quickly and soon forgotten by all but a small circle of comrades whose love and devotion persisted long after her death." But "her memory," continues Avrich, "possesses the glow of legend."

Born in a small village in Michigan in 1866, Voltairine, plagued all her life by poverty, pain, and ill health, died prematurely at the age of 45 in 1912. The short span of her life, ending before the great events of the 20th century, is, in Avrich's opinion, the major reason why Voltairine de Cleyre has been overlooked, unlike the longer-lived Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman.

The strength of will and independence of mind that so strongly characterized this remarkable woman manifested themselves early in Voltairine's life. Forced into a Catholic convent school as a teenager, she chafed at the stifling, authoritarian atmosphere and was later to speak of the "the white scars on my soul" left by this painful experience. Bruised but unbroken, Voltairine emerged an atheist and soon gravitated toward the flourishing freethinker's movement. Influenced by Clarence Darrow, she flirted briefly with socialism, but her deep-running anti-authoritarian spirit soon rejected it in favor of anarchism.

As with Emma Goldman, the hanging of the Haymarket martyrs made a profound impression on Voltairine and was the major impetus in her turn toward anarchism. In 1888, she threw herself into the anarchist movement, dedicating herself passionately and unceasingly to the cause of liberty for the rest of her life.

Though seldom in the public limelight--unlike Emma Goldman, she shrank from notoriety--Voltairine was a popular speaker and an untiring writer. In spite of financial circumstances that forced her to work long hours, and despite a profoundly unhappy life, which included several near-suicides, and almost fatal assassin's bullet, and a number of ill-fated love affairs, she

authored hundreds of poems, essays, stories, and sketches in her all-too-brief life. Highly praised by her colleagues for the elegance and stylistic beauty of her writing, Voltairine possessed, in Avrich's opinion, "a greater literary talent than any other American anarchist," surpassing even Berkman, Goldman, and Benjamin R. Tucker. Goldman herself believed Voltairine's prose to be distinguished by an "extreme clarity of thought and originality of expression." Unfortunately, only one collection of her writings,--*The Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre*, edited by Berkman and published by *Mother Earth* in 1914--was ever put together, leaving much fine material buried in obscure journals.

Both Voltairine's life and her writings reflect, in Avrich's words, "an extremely complicated individual." Though an atheist, Voltairine had, according to Goldman, a "religious zeal which stamped everything she did...Her whole nature was that of an ascetic." "By living a life of religious-like austerity," says Avrich, "she became a secular nun in the Order of Anarchy." In describing that persistence of will that inspired her, the anarchist poet Sadikichi Hartmann declared, "her whole life seemed to center upon the exaltation over, what she so aptly called, the Dominant Idea. Like an anchorite, she flayed her body to utter more and more lucid and convincing arguments in favor of direct action."

"The Dominant Idea," wrote Emma Goldman in her commemorative essay, *Voltairine de Cleyre*, "was the Lietmotif through Voltairine de Cleyre's remarkable life. Though she was constantly harassed by ill-health, which held her body captive and killed her at the end, the Dominant Idea energized Voltairine to ever greater

intellectual efforts, raised her to the supreme heights of an exalted ideal, and steeled her Will to conquer every handicap in her tortured life."

Yet the ascetic also had the soul of a poet. In her poetry and even in her prose, Voltairine eloquently expressed a passionate love of music, of nature, and of Beauty. "With all her devotion to her social ideals," says Emma, "she had another god--the god of Beauty. Her life was a ceaseless struggle between the two; the ascetic determinedly stifling her longing for beauty, but the poet in her determinedly yearning for it, worshipping it in utter abandonment..."

Another manifestation of Voltairine's complex nature was her ability to be both rational and compassionate, a combination that Benjamin Tucker, like some modern-day individualist anarchists, thought led to inconsistency and ambivalence. Voltairine didn't see it that way. "I think it has been the great mistake of our people, especially our American Anarchists represented by Benjamin R. Tucker, to disclaim sentiment," she declared. In her essay "Why I am an Anarchist," she wrote, "It is to men and women of feeling that I speak...Not to the shallow egotist who holds himself apart and with the phariseeism of intellectuality, exclaims, 'I am more just than thou'; but to those whose every fiber of being is vibrating with emotion as aspen leaves quiver in the breath of Storm! To those whose hearts swell with a great pity at the pitiful toil of women, the weariness of young children, the handcuffed helplessness of strong men!"

But Voltairine was no emotional sentimentalist, wanting in serious arguments. Though Tucker became

increasingly skeptical of her talents, most of her associates considered her a brilliant thinker. Marcus Graham, editor of *Man!*, called her "the most thoughtful woman anarchist of this century," while George Brown, the anarchist orator, declared her "the most intellectual woman I ever met." Joseph Kucera, her last lover, praised her logical, analytic mind. Avrich himself, a careful historian not given to undue praise, concludes that she was a "first-rate intellect."

Voltairine's political stance in the anarchist spectrum was no less well understood. Avrich dispels the myth created by the erroneous claims of Rudolf Rocker and Emma Goldman that Voltairine became a communist anarchist. In 1907, points out Avrich, Voltairine replied to Emma's claim, saying, "I am not now and never have been at any time a Communist." Beginning as a Tuckerite individualist, Voltairine turned in the 1890s to the mutualism of Dyer Lum. But she eventually grew to the conclusion that neither individualism nor collectivism nor even mutualism was entirely satisfactory. "I am an Anarchist, simply, without economic labels attached," she was finally to declare.

Unhyphenated anarchism or "anarchism without adjectives" had other adherents as well--Errico Malatesta, Max Nettlau, and Lum among them. These advocates of non-sectarian anarchism tried to promote tolerance for different economic views within the movement, believing that economic preferences would vary according to individual tastes and that no one person or group had the only correct solution. "There is nothing un-Anarchistic about any of [these systems]," declared Voltairine, "until the element of compulsion enters and obliges unwilling persons to remain in a

community whose economic arrangements they do not agree to."

Voltairine's plea for tolerance and cooperation among the anarchist schools strikes a modern note, making us realize how little things have changed. Factionalism rages yet, with fervent apostles still all too eager to read the other side (whether "anarcho-capitalist" or "anarcho-communist") out of the anarchist fold. The notion that the pluralistic anarchist societies envisioned by people like Voltairine de Cleyre might in fact be the most realistic expectation about human nature seems even most lost on anarchists today than in her time.

Probably Voltairine's best-known intellectual contribution is the often-reprinted essay "Anarchism and American Traditions," in which she shows how the ideas of anarchism follow naturally from the premises on which the American Revolution was based. The Revolutionary Republicans, she says, "took their starting point for deriving a minimum of government upon the same sociological ground that the modern Anarhcist derives the no-government theory; viz., that equal liberty is the political ideal." But the anarchist, unlike the revolutionary republicans, she goes on to point out, cannot accept the premise of majority rule. All governments, regardless of their form, say the anarchists, will always be manipulated by a small minority. She then goes on to cite other similarities between the ideas of the anarchists and the republicans, including the belief in local initiative and independent action. "This then was the American Tradition," she writes, "that private enterprise manages better all that to which it is equal. Anarchism declares that private enterprise, whether

individual or cooperative, is equal to all the undertakings of society."

Another of Voltairine's special concerns was the issue of sexual equality. In a time when the law treated women like chattel, "Voltairine de Cleyre's whole life," says Avrich, "was a revolt against this system of male domination which, like every other form of tyranny and exploitation, ran contrary to her anarchistic spirit." That such a brilliant, unusual woman would be a feminist is no surprise. "Let every woman ask herself," cried Voltairine, "Why am I the slave of Man? Why is my brain said not to be equal of his brain? Why is my work not paid equally with his? Why must my body be controlled by my husband? Why may he take my children away from me? Will them away while yet unborn? Let every woman ask." "There are two reasons why," Voltairine answered in her essay, "Sex Slavery," "and these ultimately reducible to a single principle--the authoritarian supreme power GOD-idea, and its two instruments--the Church--that is, the priests--and the State--that is, the legislators...These two things, the mind domination of the Church and the body domination of the State, are the causes of Sex Slavery."

These themes of sexual equality and feminism provided the subjects of frequent lectures and speeches in Voltairine's years of activity, including topics like "Sex Slavery," "Love in Freedom," "The Case of Woman vs. Orthodoxy," and "Those Who Marry Do Ill."

The subject of marriage was one of Voltairine's favorite topics. Though she valued love, she totally rejected formal marriage, considering it "the sanction for all manner of bestialities" and the married woman "a

bonded slave." Her own unfortunate experiences with most of her lovers, who, even without the ties of formal marriage, treated her as sex object and servant, convinced Voltairine that even living with a man was to be avoided. When she learned that Willaim Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft (her heroine) had lived in separate apartments even though they were lovers, she was delighted. "Every individual should have a room or rooms for *himself exclusively*," she wrote to her mother, "never subject to the intrusive familiarities of our present 'family life'...To me, any dependence, any thing which destroys the complete selfhood of the individual, is in the line of slavery and destroys the pure spontaneity of love."

Not surprisingly for that day, Voltairine's bad experiences with the traditionalism of her lovers was a misfortune she shared with Emma Goldman. Though totally different in personality--"Voltairine differed from Emma as poetry differed from prose," says Avrich--the lives of the two women had curious parallels. Most of their lovers turned out to be disappointingly conventional in matters of sex roles but there was in each woman's life at least one lover who was not of this traditionalist stripe. Each loved a man who was her intellectual equal and who treated *her* as an equal--for Voltairine, it was Dyer Lum; for Emma, Alexander Berkman. But, sadly, both women lost these men as lovers. Lum committed suicide in 1893 and Berkman's 14 years in prison left psychological scars that changed the nature of his physical relationship with Emma, if not their emotional one.

But in other matters, Voltairine and Emma had little in common. In fact, they quickly took a personal dislike to

each other. Voltairine thought Emma flamboyant, self-indulgent, unattractive, and dumpy; Emma considered Voltairine ascetic and lacking in personal charm. Emma claimed that "physical beauty and feminine attraction were withheld from her," another myth that Avrich shows to be false. In truth, most of Voltairine's comrades, both men and women, found her beautiful, elegant, and charming. The photos of Voltairine included in Avrich's biography testify to the truth of these views--pictured is a delicate woman with a soft, mysterious beauty that was in sharp contrast to Emma's earthy robustness. Emma, a friend once pointed out, was not above jealousy.

Yet, in spite of their personal differences, Emma and Voltairine respected each other intellectually. For her part, Voltairine publicly defended Emma on several occasions, including the passionate plea "In Defense of Emma Goldman and Free Speech," which Emma notes in her commemoration of Voltairine. In that essay, Emma pays eloquent tribute to Voltairine. She writes, "a wonderful spirit...born in some obscure town in the state of Michigan, and who lived in poverty all her life, but who by sheer force of will pulled herself out of a living grave, cleared her mind from the darkness of superstition--turned her face to the sun, perceived a great ideal and determinedly carried it to every corner of her native land...The American soil sometimes does bring forth exquisite plants."

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE: ANARCHIST WITHOUT ADJECTIVES

by Sara Baase

(*Truth Seeker* (Volume 120 No. 5)

If you try to name the great anarchists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Emma Goldman, Peter Kropotkin, Joseph Proudhon, and Benjamin Tucker may come to mind. Voltairine de Cleyre (1866- 1912) is not well known today. She was a freethinker, an anarchist, and a feminist. She toured the country as a speaker and she wrote poems, stories, and essays. She knew and worked with many of the more well-known radicals. The purpose of this article is to introduce de Cleyre and some of her excellent writings.

Voltairine de Cleyre was born to a poor family and was sent off to a convent at age 13 to be educated. She hated it. She was taught to repeat religious statements even if she did not believe them. She made a significant moral decision: She would not lie, even if it meant she would be damned. (This decision, made in innocence and fear, reminded me of Huck Finn's decision to protect Jim, the runaway slave, even if he went to hell for it. In each case, the child decided to do what he or she knew instinctively was right even if punished for it. The irony is that the punishment was damnation threatened by the church, the institution that is supposed to teach the child to do right.)

When Voltairine emerged from the convent at age 17, she totally rejected religious dogma and hypocrisy. She

was a freethinker, without ever having "seen a book or heard a word to help" her.

During the next 15 years, de Cleyre embraced and then abandoned many variants of anarchist philosophies. It was as if she were trying on garment after garment, trying to find one that fit. None fit quite right, so ultimately, she fashioned her own. Here is a brief summary of the development of her views. Throughout, her anti-authoritarianism and her dedication to liberty were constant.

De Cleyre began lecturing on freethought soon after leaving the convent. At 19, she spoke on Thomas Paine's lifework at a Paine Memorial convention, and heard Clarence Darrow speak on socialism. She embraced socialism for six weeks until she discovered anarchism. Emma Goldman said her "inherent love of liberty could not make peace with the state-ridden notions of socialism." She then discovered Benjamin Tucker, the individualist anarchist editor and publisher of *Liberty*, the main anarchist newsletter from 1881 to 1908. The individualist anarchists held that the "essential institutions of Commercialism are in themselves good, and are rendered vicious merely by the interference by the State." De Cleyre later disagreed with the economic views of the individualists and became a mutualist anarchist. She saw mutualism, under which free federations of the workers would obviate the necessity of an employer, as a synthesis of socialism and individualism. She became a pacifist and opposed prisons. Having forsaken hypocrisy, she declined to prosecute a man who tried to assassinate her.

De Cleyre's pacifism led her to reject mutualism. She commented that "Socialism and Communism both demand a degree of joint effort and administration which would beget more regulation than is wholly consistent with ideal Anarchism; Individualism and Mutualism, resting upon property, involve a development of the private policeman not at all compatible with my notion of freedom."

What was left? Simply anarchism "anarchism without adjectives," as the Spanish anarchist Fernando Tarrida del Marmol put it when calling for greater tolerance among the various anarchist factions. One of de Cleyre's best essays is "Anarchism" published in 1901. In it she defines anarchism as freedom from compulsion. She recognizes that an anarchist must adopt some view of economics. In this lovely essay, she describes the distinctive views of the four major economic subcategories of anarchists: communist, socialist, individualist, and mutualist and shows why each might have developed when and where it did. She argues that the particulars depend more on history and culture than abstract rational derivation. Individualism, for example, was a good fit in a society without a history of class conflict, where the worker of today could be the employer tomorrow, where the country's motto was "The Lord helps him who helps himself." De Cleyre saw that "there is nothing unanarchistic about any of them until the element of compulsion enters and obliges unwilling persons to remain in a community whose economic arrangements they do not agree to." Like Tarrida, she encouraged tolerance among anarchists, even including the Christian anarchists.

De Cleyre also encouraged tolerance of a variety of methods of achieving liberty. Just as libertarians today argue about whether resources should be spent on electoral campaigns or educational projects, the anarchists at the turn of the century argued about peaceful methods versus confrontational tactics. De Cleyre wrote that "all methods are to individual capacity and decision," i.e., that we should use our own skills to do what we are good at, and choose methods that we are comfortable with. She described and applauded several prominent examples. Tolstoy, the "Christian, non-resistant, artist" used his talent as a writer to "paint pictures of society as it is, . . . , to preach the end of government through the repudiation of all military force." John Most, fierce and bitter from years in prison, used his fiery tongue to denounce the ruling classes. Benjamin Tucker, cool and critical, believed passive resistance most effective, but was ready to change when he thought it wise. Peter Kropotkin hailed the uprisings of the workers and believed in revolution with his whole soul. Even those who chose assassination of oppressive and cruel government officials she defended. She saw them as gentle in their daily lives, lofty in their ideals, driven to acts of violence by the corruption and injustice they saw. She wrote

Ask a method? Do you ask Spring her method? Which is more necessary, the sunshine or the rain? They are contradictory yes; they destroy each other yes, but from this destruction the flowers result.

Each choose that method that expresses your selfhood best, and condemn no other man because he expresses his Self otherwise.

I do not agree with de Cleyre in all particulars, but her argument for tolerance is an important one for those with radical views who often spend more time arguing with their friends than criticizing the enemies of liberty.

De Cleyre's essay "Anarchism and American Traditions" attempts to show how anarchist and anti-authoritarian the founders of this country were. The essay includes a powerful attack on government control of education. She probably exaggerated the anarchist leanings of the founders, but her style and the quotes she selected make delightful reading for modern anarchists. The arguments she presents on education are as valid and relevant today as they were in the late 18th century and in 1908 when she wrote her article. She laments the fact that children in the public schools are taught the battles of the American Revolution, but not its ideals.

De Cleyre writes that the founders "took their starting point for deriving a minimum of government upon the same sociological ground that the modern Anarchist derives the no-government theory; viz., that equal liberty is the political ideal." She quotes (more fully than I do here) Thomas Jefferson's wonderful passage

Societies exist under three forms, sufficiently distinguishable. 1. Without government 2. Under government wherein the will of every one has a just influence 3. Under government of force....

It is a problem not clear in my mind that the first condition is not the best.

(Jefferson goes on to say he believes anarchism inconsistent with a large population.)

After describing the founders' views of the purpose of education, and gracefully but sharply criticizing the political ideas taught in government schools, she concludes with

If the believers in liberty wish the principles of liberty taught, let them never intrust that instruction to any government; for the nature of government is to become a thing apart, an institution existing for its own sake, preying upon the people, and teaching whatever will tend to keep it secure in its seat.

There is much more of Voltairine de Cleyre's life and work to explore. I recommend the following sources.

SOURCES

Paul Avrich An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre (Princeton University Press, 1978)

Alexander Berkman (editor), Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre (Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1914)

Wendy McElroy, Freedom, Feminism and the State (Cato Institute, 1982)

Any information in this article pertaining to legal or medical matters is not to be construed as professional advice. Copyrights remain the property of the authors.

Voltairine de Cleyre - a biographical sketch

Chris Crass

<http://burn.ucsd.edu/%7Emai/Welcome.html>

http://burn.ucsd.edu/%7Emai/afem_kiosk.html

Voltairine de Cleyre was born on November 17, 1866 in Leslie, Michigan. She was named after the philosopher Voltaire who her father admired for his 'free thought' beliefs on such subjects as religion. Voltairine's family lived in "extreme and unrelieved poverty" as described in Paul Avrich's biography, An American Anarchist. While the material conditions of her childhood were impoverished she was raised in a family that was connected to strong intellectual and political tendencies in American society. The family was tied to the Abolitionist struggle against slavery on her mother's side. Her maternal grandfather not only held abolitionist politics but participated in the Underground Railroad that helped fugitive slaves escape to Canada. Her father had immigrated from France and brought artisan socialist and free thought convictions with him. One of Voltairine's two sisters commented "Our mother was a remarkable woman. Father was a brilliant man. It is no wonder Voltai was a genius." The family however was to suffer greatly under the tremendous burden of poverty. While her father worked long hours for little pay, and her mother did sewing work in the home, the children remained "underfed" and "bodily weak" according to Voltairine's sister Addie. Addie further mentions that she believes that the poverty of their childhood helped develop Voltairine's radicalism and "the deep sympathy

and understanding that she had for poverty in others". Economic poverty also impacted the parents in the family. Avrich writes that economic difficulties contributed to the growing friction between Voltairine's mother and father and the two eventually separated.

Voltairine went to school in a convent for three and a half years, during her high school education. She had been living with her father, who decided that the convent would both cure her laziness and give her the manners necessary to survive. While it seems highly contradictory for her anti-clerical free thought father to send his daughter to a Catholic school, Avrich puts the decision into a more sympathetic perspective. Avrich argues that her father was terrible frustrated by the economic situation facing him, and did not want Voltairine to experience the same poverty throughout her life. Her father hoped that the convent would give her the skills necessary to make it economically. Voltairine's experience in the convent did much to shape her life. Avrich explains that while it did teach her various skills such as French and the piano, it also pushed her rebellious spirit in an anti-authoritarian direction.

In her essay, "The Making of an Anarchist", she explains the impact and lasting influence of the convent upon her thinking. "I struggled my way out at last and was a freethinker when I left the institution, three years later, though I had never seen a book or heard a word to help me in my loneliness. It had been like the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and there are white scars on my soul yet, where Ignorance and Superstition burnt me with their hellfire in those stifling days. Am I blasphemous? It is their word, not mine. Besides the battle of my young days all others have been easy, for whatever was

without, within my own Will was supreme. It has owed no allegiance, and never shall; it has moved steadily in one direction, the knowledge and assertion of its own liberty, with all the responsibility falling thereon. This, I am sure, is the ultimate reason for my acceptance of Anarchism..."

Upon leaving the convent Voltairine went to work offering private lessons in music, French, and fancy penmanship. Thus begins, as Avrich points out, her life-long career in private teaching by which she supported herself until her death. Voltairine also began her vocation as a public lecturer and writer. Having left the convent, she went to work escaping the authoritarian influences of the church through her participation in the growing free thought movement, which was, according to feminist author Wendy McElroy, an "anti-clerical, anti-Christian movement which sought to separate the church and state in order to leave religious matters to the conscience and reasoning ability to the individual involved". Avrich writes, "Voltaire threw her energies into the free thought movement. She was in fact to remain a lifelong secularists and anti-Catholic, writing for free thought periodicals and lecturing before free thought organizations... For between the anarchist and free thought movements there was a close and long-standing affinity. Both shared a common anti-authoritarian viewpoint and common tradition of secularist radicalism." It was through her involvement in the free thought movement that Voltairine discovered anarchism - as was a common development for many anarchists at this time, most notably among native-born American anarchists. In 1886, Voltairine began to write for and then soon became the editor of a weekly free thought newspaper, *The Progressive Age*. At this time she also

began to travel the lecture circuit around Grand Rapids Michigan, where she was living, and other Michigan towns delivering speeches on Religion, Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft (who was one of her heroes), and free thought generally. She was soon giving lectures in Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston. She also made frequent tours on behalf of the American Secular Society throughout Ohio and Pennsylvania. She addressed rationalist groups, liberal clubs, and free thought associations. Her reputation as a speaker spread, and many found her lectures to be "richly studded with original thought", as anarchist/feminist Emma Goldman commented. In addition to her lecture tours, which were growing throughout the East and Middle West, she was contributing articles and poems to many of the leading secularist publications in the country.

In December of 1887, Voltairine was to begin expanding her ideas and beliefs into areas of economic and political liberty. It began when she heard a lecture on socialism presented by Clarence Darrow. Writing about the lecture in the publication, *Truth-Seeker*, shortly thereafter she noted, "It was my first introduction to any plan for bettering the condition of the working-classes which furnished some explanation of the course of economic development, and I ran to it as one who has been turning about in darkness runs to the light." Before December ended Voltairine declared herself a socialist. She was drawn to the anti-capitalist message of socialism and the cry for working class struggle against the current economic order. However, as Emma Goldman explained, her "inherent love of liberty could not make peace with the state-ridden notions of socialism". Voltairine found herself hard pressed to defend socialism in debates with anarchists. Additionally, one of the most important

events in American anarchism had just taken place, and it was to have a powerful effect on her life's work. On November 11th, 1887, four anarchists were hung by the State of Illinois. These anarchists were to be known as the Haymarket Martyrs, and their imprisonment, farcical trial and execution galvanized support around the world and gained a wide audience for their radical political and economic ideas of a society without bosses, landlords, and politicians.

In May of 1886, when Voltairine first heard the news of these anarchists' arrest, she proclaimed, "let them hang". Voltairine found herself momentarily caught up in the anti-anarchist, anti-union and anti-immigrant sentiment that made headlines throughout the country on May 5th, the day after the Haymarket Tragedy which was to make history. On May 1st, 1886, a general strike took place in cities around the United States. Hundreds of thousands of working class people took to the streets in massive marches demanding the eight-hour work day as an immediate reform in the economy. For years a growing eight-hour work day movement had been growing in the industrial centers of the country. The city at the forefront of this movement was Chicago, and in Chicago the movement was largely led and organized by anarchists. The capitalist press denounced the movement, and the bosses feared the growing power of the workers' organizations. On May 3rd, 1886, the Chicago police opened fire on striking workers and killed and wounded several people. Anarchist organizers called for a protest rally the next day. On May 4th a meeting of workers was held at Haymarket Square where several hundred listened to radical unionist speakers. The police surrounded the area and declared it an unlawful assemble. The police stormed the workers' rally and from

the side of the workers came a bomb that killed one officer and wounded others. The police immediately conducted illegal raids on anarchist homes and offices and arrested and questioned hundreds of people. Eight men were singled out as the leaders and were found guilty of the police murder regardless if they were even present at the rally. International support was rallied, and the anarchists issued appeals and statements from prison that were circulated around the world. Two men were committed to life sentences, one to a fifteen year sentence, one who had been sentenced to hang committed suicide in prison refusing to allow the state to take his life, and four men were hung on the scaffolds, November 11, 1887. Voltairine came to quickly regret her initial response to the Chicago anarchists imprisonment, and shortly after their execution she announced her dedication to the cause of anarchism and human liberation. Thus began her life-long passion to the cause of anarchism. She went to work studying the ideas, concepts, and philosophies of anarchist thought. Avrich writes that the Haymarket martyrs were the chief factor in her conversion to anarchism. It was the "specific occasion which ripened tendencies to definition" writes de Cleyre.

Like many other anarchists of this time period, the Haymarket anarchists weighed heavy on the thoughts, emotions, and commitment of Voltairine de Cleyre throughout her life. The anniversary of the Haymarket Martyrs' execution was always marked by commemoration ceremonies in various cities across the world, with most taking place in the United States. The ceremonies would not only pay tribute to the Haymarket Martyrs' and the anarchist principles for which they died, but it was also a time of renewal to keep on fighting and

organizing. The ceremonies were generally held in lecture halls and speakers would rail against past and current injustices and praise the acts of resistance and movements for social change. Voltairine was a regular fixture of these annual ceremonies, usually traveling to the commemorations held in Chicago. Many found her speeches at these ceremonies to be among her most impassioned and inspiring. She spoke alongside many of the most renown anarchists of the time: Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, and Lucy Parsons who was married to Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons and was one of the most tireless organizers in the movement. The annual commemorations remained an important event in Voltairine's life up until her death. She attended these ceremonies sometimes in the midst of deep depression and/or illness to find relief and inspiration. When she passed away on June 20th, 1912, she was buried in Waldheim Cemetery in Chicago next to her martyred comrades and her body lays close to the monument that was built to pay tribute to the Haymarket anarchists' sacrifice. Many other anarchists and radicals were buried here as well, including Emma Goldman and Lucy Parsons.

"The year 1888 marked a turning point in Voltairine de Cleyre's life," writes Avrich. "Not only was it the year in which she became an anarchist and wrote her first anarchist essays. It was also the year in which, while on the lecture circuit, she met the three men who played the most critical roles in her life: T. Hamilton Garside, with whom she fell passionately in love; James B. Elliott, by whom she had her only child; and Dyer D. Lum, with whom her relationship, being intellectual and moral as well as physical, transcended those with Garside and Elliott, yet ended, like the others, in tragedy."

Garside was also a lecturer on social struggle, and while Voltairine at the age of twenty-one fell in love, she was soon devastated by his eventual rejection of her - as many of her poems during this time reflect. Garside's importance rests largely in his contribution to Voltairine's depression, feelings of isolation, and the development of her feminist thought on male and female relationships and the position of women in society as sex objects.

Dyer Lum's relationship with Voltairine had a profound influence on her political development and they built an "unshakable" friendship according to Avrich. Lum was twenty-seven years older than Voltairine and had experienced much. He had been an abolitionist and volunteered to fight in the Civil War with the intention of ending slavery. He was a close associate of many of the Haymarket martyr's and had worked alongside them in their organizing efforts. He was also a prolific writer and he and Voltairine collaborated on a lengthy social and philosophical anarchist novel that was unfortunately never published and has since been lost. They also collaborated in the elaboration of their politics. At the time there was intense debate and hostility between various ideological wings of the anarchist movement. There were the individualist anarchists that maintained a deep hostility to the state and any centralized organization and believed in personal liberty and held to the belief in private ownership of property: property as defined as the right of people to their own labor. There were the socialist and communist anarchists that organized for the end of the state, capitalism, and denounced private property as an institution that enslaved people to bosses and landlords. There were various schools of thought on how anarchist economics

should be developed, and intense debate over strategies that should be employed in the making of a new society. Voltairine and Dyer Lum wrote extensively for publications representing all of these perspectives and they pushed forward a theory of anarchism without adjectives. They argued for, anarchism as a struggle against authoritarianism and domination that would allow room for various experiments with economic structuring of life. One of Voltairine's most popular essay, "Anarchism", outlined her thinking on this subject. She argued for greater tolerance in the anarchist movement for different ideas and she put forward a strong case demonstrating the important features of the various economic schools of thought and their common struggle for human liberty and egalitarianism. She also extended her framework of toleration to the Christian Anarchism of Tolstoy and many others at the time who had been criticized by the atheists in the movement. That she embraced the christian anarchists of the movement points to her own ability to have tolerance, as she was a major free thought and secularist writer and lecturer at the time.

While she and Lum shared many of the same beliefs, Avrich points out that they also had debates on vital issues, "for example, the position of women as it is and as it should be" and he notes that Voltairine took a "more pronounced view" than Lum on what was frequently referred to at the time as "the woman question". They also debated the role of violence in making social change. Lum believed that revolution would inevitably involve a violent struggle between the working class and the employing class and his participation in the Civil War to 'end slavery' as he believed was but one example of the unfortunate violence that accompanies social

transformation. Voltairine held to a non-violent belief in social change, but also held a deep sympathy and understanding for those who used violent methods. She was critical, but understanding of the various assassinations committed by anarchists during the turn of the century. When President McKinley was shot by Leon Czolgosz, she explained that it was the violence of capitalism and economic inequity that pushed people to use violence.

Voltairine's commitment to non-violence and sympathy for those who used violence was put to the test later in her life. As has already been mentioned Voltairine supported herself through private lessons. Most of these lessons centered around teaching english to Jewish workers and families, with whom she had tremendous respect and worked with frequently. Towards the end of 1902 one of her former students, Herman Helcher, who suffered mental illnesses attempted to assassinate her. She was on her way to teach when Helcher walked up to her and fired a pistol point blank into her chest. When she fell to the ground two more bullets were fired into her back. She managed to run a block before collapsing. One of her other students, a doctor, immediately found her and called an ambulance. She was in critical condition and many feared that she would not survive. Within a few days she began to recover and her condition stabilized. What she did next shocked many, infuriated some, and gained her respect far and wide. In keeping with her belief that capitalism and authoritarianism corrupt people and push them to the use of violence, she "in accordance with the teachings of Tolstoy, the doctrine of returning good for evil" (Avrich p.174) refused to identify Helcher as her assailant or to press any charges against him. She then wrote a letter

that was published by the daily paper of Philadelphia, where she was living at the time. The letter read:

"The boy who, they say, shot me is crazy. Lack of proper food and healthy labor made him so. He ought to be put in an asylum. It would be an outrage against civilization if he were sent to jail for an act which was the product of a diseased brain."

"...I have no resentment towards the man. If society were so constituted as to allow every man, woman and child to lead a normal life there would be no violence in this world. It fills me with horror to think the brutal acts done in the name of government. Every act of violence finds its echo in another act of violence. The policeman's club breeds criminals."

"Contrary to public understanding, Anarchism means 'peace on earth, good will to men'. Acts of violence done in the name of Anarchy are caused by men and women who forget to be philosophers - teachers of the people - because their physical and mental suffering drive them to desperation."

Upon recovery Voltairine began speaking throughout Philadelphia on subjects such as "Crime and Punishment" and on prison reform and abolition. She continued to work for clemency for Helcher. Avrich writes that "Voltairine de Cleyre's speech was widely covered in the Philadelphia press." The local press, who had been strongly anti-anarchist, softened their tone when reporting on Voltairine, and she even became something of a celebrity as her act had gained admirers from even the most critical of people.

Voltairine and Dyer Lum's relationship ended within five years. As Avrich already pointed out the tragedy that runs throughout Voltairine's love relationships, Lum committed suicide in 1893. Lum had been experiencing severe depression, something that Voltairine herself was no stranger to. Voltairine herself had come close to suicide on several occasions as a result of terrible depression and illness. Voltairine's health was severely effected by the economic poverty that she lived in throughout her life. While she was able to pull herself out, or had help from others to escape depression, Lum was unable to.

The third man that Voltairine met in 1888 was James B. Elliot. Elliot was an organizer in the free though movement, and when the Friendship Liberal League invited Voltairine to lecture for them in Philadelphia the two met. Voltairine was to remain most of her adult life in Philadelphia from 1889-1910. Soon after moving to Philadelphia she began a relationship with Elliot that was short-lived . However during their short relationship, Voltairine became pregnant. On June 12, 1890, Harry de Cleyre was born. Harry was to be Voltairine's only child. Voltairine had no intentions of being a mother and did not want to raise a child. Avrich writes that "neither physically nor emotionally nor yet financially was she able to cope with the responsibility of motherhood". Harry was raised by his father in Philadelphia, and while there was little contact between Harry and Voltairine, her son maintained an enormous amount of love, respect and admiration for his mother throughout his life. Infact, Harry took his mother's name not his father's and later in life named his first daughter Voltairine.

In Philadelphia Voltairine spent much of her time teaching and she continued to write and lecture frequently. In Philadelphia she helped organize the lecture series of the Ladies' Liberal League, which was a free thought organization that she helped found in 1892. The League featured lectures on sex, prohibition, crime, socialism and anarchism. She also helped form the Social Science Club, an anarchist reading and discussion group. She wrote frequently for the most prominent anarchist and free thought newspapers and magazines, and organized open-air meetings that attracted hundreds to hear speeches by anarchists and radical unionists from around the country. She arranged meetings, collected funds for propaganda, distributed literature, and dozens of other tasks necessary to maintain and build a movement. In 1905 Voltairine and several friends started the Radical Library, which, as she explained, was to provide radical literature to workers for little pay and maintain hours that allowed working people access. Much of this work was done alongside other women active in the Philadelphia anarchist movement - most notably, Natasha Notkin, Perle McLeod and her close friend Mary Hansen.

Voltairine de Cleyre made two trips to Europe during this time. As a speaker who had traveled the country many times and as an organizer hosting international speakers, Voltairine had come to know many radicals in Europe. With the encouragement and support from anarchists in England, she made her trips to Europe. When she was in Europe she delivered dozens of lectures on "The History of Anarchism in America", "The Economic Phase of Anarchism", "The Woman Question", and "Anarchism and the Labor Question". While she was there she also established ties within the

international movement. While staying in England she met with comrades from Russia, Spain and France in addition to numerous contacts and friends she made in England. Upon returning to the United States she began writing a section called "American Notes" for the anarchist newspaper, Freedom, which came out of London. She also began one of her first translation projects. She translated the French anarchist Jean Grave's book into english. Throughout her life she translated poems and articles from Yiddish into English and she translated the anarchist educator Francisco Ferrer's book The Modern School from Spanish into English. The english translation of The Modern School book helped build the Modern School movement in the United States that in the early 1900's created dozens of schools which experimented with anarchist education and collective learning.

During the years of 1890-1910 Voltairine de Cleyre was one of the most popular and most respected anarchists in the country, and amongst anarchists internationally - her writings were translated into Danish, Swedish, Italian, Russian, Yiddish, Chinese, German, Czech and Spanish. She was also one of the most radical feminists of her day, and she along with other anarchist women pushed for fundamental change on "the Woman Question". In a lecture at the Ladies Liberal League in 1895 she stated the sex question "is more intensely important to us than any other, because of the interdict which generally rests upon it, because of its immediate bearing upon our daily life, because of the stupendous mystery of it and the awful consequences of ignorance of it." Over the years she delivered lectures on "Sex Slavery", "Love in Freedom", "Those Who Marry Do Ill", and the "Case of Women vs. Orthodoxy". She also spoke frequently about

and wrote poems and articles about Mary Wollstonecraft who she considered to be a pioneering voice for women's equality among english speaking people. Avrich writes that her "whole life was a revolt against this system of male domination which like every form of tyranny and exploitation ran contrary to her anarchistic spirit." Voltairine declared "Let every woman ask herself, Why am I the slave of Man? Why is my brain said not to be equal of his brain? Why is my work not paid equally with his? Why must my body be controlled by my husband, giving me in exchange what he deems fit?" Avrich notes that "Much of this outrage was plainly rooted in Voltairine's own experience, in her treatment by most of the men in her life... as a sex object, breeder, and domestic servant."

In her own life she tried to practice the feminist principles that she was advocating. She spoke repeatedly about women maintaining a room of their own, to maintain autonomy and independence. Though she had a hard time making the money to pay rent, she maintained a room of her own and even while involved in relationships kept separate quarters. While she was intensely involved with Dyer Lum earlier in her life the two lived separately and she looked upon this as an important aspect of their relationship. She worked hard to raise consciousness through her lectures, essays, poems, discussion groups, and living example. Voltairine often spoke of a moral revolution that would change not only social arrangements of oppression but also social relationships that are based on oppression.

In an essay called "Let Our Mothers Show the Way" from the book Reinventing Anarchy, Again, Elaine

Leeder analyzes the importance of anarchist women in the development of anarchist thought.

Leeder writes, "Anarchist women believed that changes in society had to occur in the economic and political spheres but their emphasis was also on the personal and psychological dimensions of life. They believed that changes in the personal aspects of life, such as families, children, sex, should be viewed as political activity. This is a new dimension that was added to anarchist theory by the women at the turn of the century." Leeder points out that anarchist women "helped bring the domestic sphere of life within the anarchist tradition" thus they "built upon" the largely male defined anarchist tradition.

The struggle for sexual equality in society generally and in the anarchist movement particularly was carried out by many different women, but the two that made the deepest impressions were Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman. Emma Goldman was arguably the most widely known and notorious anarchist in the United States. There were many similarities between these two women. They had each been strongly effected by the Haymarket Martyrs execution, they each traveled widely lecturing and organizing, and they each were frequent contributors to radical publications. They each fought for women's liberation in society and within the ranks of the movement.

In an essay on Voltairine by Sharon Presley, another commonality is discussed. Presley writes, "Not surprising for that day, Voltairine's bad experiences with the traditionalism of her lovers was a misfortune she shared with Emma Goldman. ...Most of their lovers turned out to be disappointingly conventional in matters

of sex roles". While Emma and Voltairine shared many of the same politics and passions, they developed personal differences that kept them at odds with one another for most of Voltairine's life. According to Presley, Voltairine thought Emma to be "flamboyant, self-indulgent, unattractive, and dumpy." Emma in turn thought Voltairine lacked in personal charm and in physical beauty and feminine attraction.

Voltairine and Emma were able to put their personal differences aside on several occasions and eventually built a supportive relationship. Emma came to Voltairine's aid when she was sick and Voltairine publicly defended Emma when she had been repeatedly arrested while giving speeches at rallies of the unemployed during the economic recession of 1908. Voltairine issued an essay "In Defense of Emma Goldman and Free Speech". When Emma Goldman started her publication, Mother Earth, Voltairine immediately became a regular contributor and strong supporter. After Voltairine's death, Mother Earth published a commemorative issue on the life and work of de Cleyre.

Finding herself in a deep depression and plagued by illness, Voltairine moved to Chicago in 1910. She continued to lecture and write, but also maintained her pessimism for the future and doubt as to the value of her own contribution to the struggle for human liberation. "During the spring of 1911, at the moment of her deepest despair, Voltairine's spirits were lifted by the swelling revolution in Mexico, and especially by the activities of Ricardo Flores Magon, the foremost Mexican anarchist of the time," writes Avrich. Voltairine and other anarchists went to work raising funds to aid the

revolution and began lecturing on the events taking place and their importance in the international struggle. Flores Magon edited the anarchist newspaper *Regeneracion*, which was popular not only in Mexico but also in Mexican-American communities throughout the Southwest. Voltairine became the paper's Chicago correspondent and distributor and helped form a solidarity group to build support and raise funds. In the last year of her life she wrote her powerful essay, "Direct Action" and vocally supported the militant unionists of the Industrial Workers of the World. After suffering several weeks of severely weakened health, Voltairine died on June 20th, 1912. According to Avrich, two thousand attended the funeral at Waldheim cemetery where she was buried next to the Haymarket martyr's.

In 1914 Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman published the Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre which was described as "an arsenal of knowledge for the student and soldier of freedom".

LITERATURE REVIEW, PAUL AVRICH, AND ANARCHIST HISTORIOGRAPHY

My understanding of Voltairine de Cleyre's life comes largely from Paul Avrich's book *An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre*. I had read a collection of her essays several years ago, and reread them along with two others that I found. I was able to find two brief biographical sketches of Voltairine on an anarchist-feminist webpage on the internet. The biographical essays were written by Sharon Presley and Saara Basse.

My essay owes much to the research done by Paul Avrich who has been the foremost historian on anarchism in the United States. His biography on Voltairine was his first of six books [to date] on American anarchism. While I have found Avrich's work to be extremely valuable and insightful, I am also awaiting the writings by others that bring new ideas and radical perspectives to the study of history. Avrich outlines his method of historiography in the introduction of Voltairine's biography. In writing about the history of anarchism, Avrich looks at major figures and explores their lives, thoughts, activities, and the impact that they had on the movement and society. Reading about Voltairine's life - her struggles, her passion, and her ideas - has taught me much about this important figure in anarchist and feminist history. What I would love to read after having read this book, is one that looks at the anarchist and feminist movements from a people's history perspective. This is a perspective that looks at the many different people, organizations, and communities involved in making the movements viable and alive. I would like to know more about the many different groups that existed, periodicals that came out, and campaigns that were organized. I want to know more about all of the people that organized the hundreds of events that Voltairine spoke at. I want to know more about the internal dynamics and structures of the movements and how it managed to survive and expand. The book that represents this decentralist and grassroots people's history approach to historiography is Charles Payne's *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*. While looking at important figures, the communities and the movement remain the central figures in the books impressive analysis. Payne states that when we focus our

attention on the big speeches and big marches (or big personalities) of a movement, we overlook the day-to-day organizing that is often tedious, slow and hard work. However, it is the everyday organizing that gives the speeches and marches their meaning and significance, according to Payne. I agree entirely.

Avrich has began the process of recovering history and has provided some of the most fascinating books on anarchist history. It is the responsibility now of others to take up this project of not only recovering lost history, but interpreting and making sense of the past from radical perspectives that will help us understand histories of social change so that we can be more effective in our own struggles in the present and future.

For example, in the book by Avrich and the two short biographical essays, all of them mention the hostility between Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman. This hostility kept these two powerful women at odds with each other for a good part of Voltairine's life. While Avrich provides details about why they disliked one another, the other two only mention the nasty comments each made about the other's personal charm, unattractive physical appearances, and personality styles. What I would like to see is an analysis of how gender roles, sexism, and male domination contributed to the hostility between these two anarchist/feminists who struggled for so many of the same reasons and with so much passion. I believe that Voltairine and Emma had mutual hostility for another largely because of internalized sexism that positions women against one another and that this was in large part, because the anarchist movement at the time was overwhelmingly male dominated and only limited space was provided for women. Limited space, in terms

of public recognition, credit for work, and movement wide respect. Voltairine and Emma were pitted against one another in a struggle over scarce social resources allowed to women in a patriarchal society and movement. Both Emma and Voltairine had to fight to make women's issues heard in the movement, and constantly found themselves challenging sexist attitudes and patterns of behavior in their comrades and lovers and in society generally. The struggle against sexism and male domination remains a central feature of the contemporary anarchist movement. As Voltairine had to force anarchist men to recognize the importance of the "women's question", anarchist women today have written articles, organized workshops, held meetings, and protested sexism in the movement. In San Francisco, a Women's Discussion Group was formed by and for activist women. The group was initiated by anarchist women to create a forum for activists to share experiences and learn from one other in an attempt to not only challenge male domination, but also to address the impact sexism has on relationships between women. Food Not Bombs activist Johnna Bossuot was one of the founders of the discussion group and she explained that it was formed so that women could begin to improve dynamics between one another and build support to simultaneous confront power inequality in the activist community and in society in general. The impact of sexism and male domination on women's relationships is an issue that needs to be addressed more. The ways that men can actively challenge patriarchy and work in solidarity with women against sexism is an issue that needs to be explored more frequently and in more depth. One of the shortcomings that I found in Avrich's book was the lack of attention paid to Voltairine's relationships with other women, while they were

mentioned and referred to, none of her close relationships with women were explored in detail.

The literature that I was able to read that was actually written by de Cleyre was brilliant. I only wish that her many other essays and articles could be collected and published. Unfortunately many have been lost, including her autobiography.

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE, FEMINISM, AND LESSONS IN EGALITARIANIST POLITICS.

What can we learn from Voltairine's life and from the ideas that she put forward? While Voltairine helped establish many key ideas and concepts of anarchist and feminist thought from 1890-1910, it is the responsibility of radicals today to learn from our past while also looking for more information and different perspectives to expand our analysis and activities.

When Voltairine was speaking on marriage, sex inequality, women's autonomy, and the ending of class exploitation, the mainstream feminist movement at the time was organizing to secure the vote for white women: Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton were the foremost representatives of the suffrage movement. While the mainstream feminist movement spoke out against a number of issues effecting women, they looked upon the vote as a significant tool to use in the struggle for equality. What the suffrage movement struggled for was entrance into the formal political sphere of bourgeois democracy. When they spoke of equality, it was the status of rights held by white men that was

viewed as the goal. At the time Black feminists and Black women's clubs also protested demanding suffrage for Black as well as white women. Black women were also organizing against racial violence and exploitation in a white supremacist society. While white suffragists wanted equality of rights with white men, Black women struggled for equality of rights for Black women and men in a race and class based society.

Voltairine and other anarchist feminists of this time fell somewhere between these two currents of feminist movement. Voltairine, Emma Goldman, and others lashed out at the suffrage movement as a struggle that would fail to accomplish its goals of equality. Look at the working men who have the vote now, they said, have they secured any better standing in society as a result of their vote - have they managed to escape the poverty and exploitation that dominates their lives. Voltairine theorized on the need to apply direct action in the struggle for egalitarianism. While the reformers hope to one day elect a representative that will one day pass a law to improve working conditions - the radicals organize in the workplaces and strike for immediate gains. Direct action is the path to social change she argued, as it not only works to achieve improved conditions it also empowers people to take control of their lives. Voltairine also criticized the suffragists for their acceptance of capitalism and the state. As long as class exploitation and authoritarianism exist then political equality is of little meaning. While critical of the white suffragists, the Black feminists could have also been critical of the largely white anarchist movement. While anarchists were fiercely opposed to slavery, they failed, for the most part, to develop a systematic understanding of race, slavery, colonialism, and white

supremacy in the United States and how these factors contributed to the development of class relations and capitalism generally. Voltairine de Cleyre, and other anarchists, made reference to the horrors of slavery and the dispossessing of land from the indigenous population, but, in general, these history shaping factors were not included in the shaping of anarchist theories and struggles at the turn of the century. Many today critique the failure of the contemporary anarchist movement to seriously analyze white supremacy, white skin privilege, colonialism, and race generally. African-American anarchists have been at the forefront of not only developing anarchist theories of white supremacy, but also pushing the larger movement to seriously address these issues. Voltairine was critical of the suffragists and argued for the abolition of capitalism and hierarchical relationships, but she nevertheless thought in terms of white society.

The contemporary feminist movement has experienced tremendous debate about the failure of white women to acknowledge race, about the need to understand the intersectionality of systems of power, privilege and exploitation. Women of color feminists over the past thirty years have produced an enormous amount of literature analyzing race, class, gender, and power.

bell hooks, in her essay, *Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory*, writes "white women who dominate feminist discourse today rarely question whether or not their perspective on women's reality is true to the lived experiences of women as a collective group. Nor are they aware of the extent to which their perspectives reflect race and class biases..."

Voltairine de Cleyre wrote about and lectured on the need to abolish marriage and the nuclear family as institutions which made women slaves. Voltairine spoke of the need for women to find a room of their own so as to maintain their autonomy. She also spoke about the right of women to satisfy themselves sexually through free love relationships in which women maintained the right to begin and terminate relationships as they wished. When she was speaking on marriage, the family, and sex, the dominate model of womanhood centered around submissiveness to the husband, sexual chastity until marriage and then only for the sake of reproduction, and duty to the family. However this was the model of white womanhood during the Victorian age, not for womanhood generally. For example, during slavery and under white supremacy generally, the Black family was torn apart, women were forced to labor under the same conditions of men regardless of so-called "femininity", men did not have sanctioned authority over women, children or themselves for that matter. Slavery destroyed long term relationships between Black people, and further generated deformed notions of Black sexuality used to control the Black community: the Black woman whore and the Black male rapist figure prominently in the white imagination. As a result of these collective experiences, Black women feminists at the turn of the century were advocating for strong families and marriages. In her essay, *Our Mother's Grief: Racial Ethnic Women and the Maintenance of Families*, Bonnie Thorton Dill looks at the histories of African-Americans, Chinese Sojourners, and Chicanos and concludes that "Reproductive labor for Afro-American, Chinese-American, Mexican-American women in the nineteenth century centered on the struggle to maintain family units in the face of a variety of cultural assaults. Treated

primarily as individual units of labor rather than as members of family groups, these women labored to maintain, sustain, stabilize, and reproduce their families while working in both the public(productive) and private(reproductive) spheres".

While Voltairine was familiar with the experiences of white working class women in the United States and the effects of patriarchy and sexism in their lives, she was largely unaware of, or atleast wrote little about, the lives of women of color. The reason it is important to look at the development of her ideas, is because she and other radical women like Emma Goldman have contributed greatly to the foundation on which feminist theory and movement of the last thirty years has grown. Her ideas on direct action, birth control, sexual relationships, marriage, the family, the need for autonomous space in living arrangements, and belief in egalitarianism found expression in many of the writings of women involved in the resurgence of feminist movement in the 60s, 70's and into today. In her book "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale", Maria Mies writes of the emerging Women's Liberation movement of the last thirty years and describes the development of "body politics". "By speaking openly about their most intimate relations with men, their sexuality, their experiences with menstruation, pregnancy, childcare, their relationship to their own bodies, the lack of knowledge about their own bodies, their problems with contraception etc. the women began to socialize and thus politicize their most intimate, individual and atomized experiences." Reading this I am reminded of the statement made by Elaine Leeder that anarchist women at the turn of the century, like Voltairine, brought the domestic sphere of life within the anarchist tradition and politicized many of the same

issues outlined by Mies. Mies also makes another claim that strongly connects Voltairine to contemporary feminism. Mies writes "the feminist movement is basically an anarchist movement which does not want to replace one (male) power elite by another (female) power elite, but which wants to build up a non-hierarchical, non-centralized society where no elite lives on exploitation and dominance over others". The critique of authority and domination alongside the anarchist analysis of a free society that was put forward relentlessly by Voltairine throughout her life has contributed to the egalitarianist politics of the feminist movement today.

While many of the ideas and theories developed by Voltairine and other anarchist women have benefited feminist movement, the universalizing of white women's experience as that of women generally has also continued. As bell hooks mentioned, much of mainstream feminism is being written from a white (and middle to upper class) bias that marginalizes or ignores women of color and working class/poor women's experiences and ideas. I believe that if Voltairine was alive today she would be on the forefront of the struggle within both feminist and anarchist movements to develop analysis that looks at the intersection of race, class and gender and she would agitate for direct action to bring about radical change.

I have looked at the debates, discussions, tensions, and struggles within feminism, not because I believe that these issues are only relevant to feminism, but rather that it is within feminist writings and movement that I have found the most sophisticated, radical, practical and

inspiring analysis of power relations and the struggle for egalitarianism.

Voltairine de Cleyre remains an important figure in the anarchist and feminist tradition, and her life and work continues to inspire many. Social Justice activist, Heather Whitney, who recently read Voltairine's biography explained that "the need for anarcha-feminist argument is as important today as it was in the 19th century. To me it seems absolutely necessary to analyze class when talking about the dynamics of power and our goals towards liberation. When I read about Voltairine de Cleyre I was righteously impressed with her outspoken views on women's rights and class dynamics. She spoke truth to issues of women's health and reproductive freedom as being essential... she may have been made an anarchist by Haymarket, but she was a feminist by birth".

The life and work of Voltairine de Cleyre along with the lessons that we can learn from her example challenge and inspire us to keep organizing, theorizing, and dreaming of a liberatory society based on the principles of cooperation, mutual aid, egalitarianism, and anarchist-feminism.

VOLTAIRINE DE CLYRE BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Avrich, Paul. An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre. Princeton University Press, 1978.
- Baase, Sara. *Voltairine de Cleyre: Anarchist without Adjectives*, essay from Anarcha-

Feminism [webpage](#) on internet.
http://burn.ucsd.edu/%7Emai/afem_kiosk.html

- De Cleyre, Voltairine. *Anarchism*, essay from Selected Works by Voltairine de Cleyre ed. Alexander Berkman. Mother Earth Publishing, 1914.
- De Cleyre, Voltairine. *Anarchism and American Tradition*, essay from Selected Works by Voltairine de Cleyre ed. Alexander Berkman. Mother Earth Publishing, 1914.
- De Cleyre, Voltairine. *Anarchism in Literature*, essay from Selected Works by Voltairine de Cleyre ed. Alexander Berkman. Mother Earth Publishing, 1914.
- De Cleyre, Voltairine. *Direct Action*, essay from Anarcha-Feminism [webpage](#) on internet.
http://burn.ucsd.edu/%7Emai/afem_kiosk.html
- De Cleyre, Voltairine. *The Dominant Ideal*, essay from Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre ed. Alexander Berkman. Mother Earth Publishing, 1914.
- De Cleyre, Voltairine. *The Economic Tendency of Freethought*, essay from Association of Libertarian Feminists webpage on internet.
- De Cleyre, Voltairine. *Making of an Anarchist, The*, essay from Selected Worls by Voltairine de Cleyre ed. Alexander Berkman. Mother Earth Publishing, 1914.
- Dill, Bonnie Thornton. *Our Mothers' Grief: Racial Ethnic Women and the Maintenance of Families*, essay from Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology ed. Margaret L. Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins. Wadsworth Press, 1995.
- hooks, bell. *Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory* essay from Words of Fire: an Anthology

- of African-American Feminist Thought ed.
Beverly Guy-Sheftall. The New Press, 1995.
- Leeder, Elaine. *Let Our Mothers Show The Way*, essay from Reinventing Anarchy Again ed. Howard J. Ehrlich. AK Pres, 1996.
 - MacLachlan, Colin M. Anarchism and the Mexican Revolution: The Political Trials of Ricardo Flores-Magon in the United States. University of California Press, 1991.
 - Mies, Maria. Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labor. Zed Press, 1986.
 - Payne, Charles. I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle. University of California Press, 1995.
 - Presley, Sharon. *Voltairine de Cleyre*, essay from Anarcha-Feminism webpage on internet.
http://burn.ucsd.edu/%7Emai/afem_kiosk.html

Chris Crass is a social justice organizer with Food Not Bombs in San Francisco

ANARCHISM & AMERICAN TRADITIONS

Issued By
The International Anarchist Publishing Committee of America,
Chicago:
Free Society Group,
1932.

INTRODUCTION

"Nature has the habit of now and then producing a type of human being far in advance of the times; an ideal for us to emulate; a being devoid of sham, uncompromising, and to whom the truth is sacred; a being whose selfishness is so large that it takes the whole human race and treats self only as one of the great mass; a being keen to sense all forms of wrong, and powerful in denunciation of it; one who can reach in the future and draw it nearer. Such a being was Voltairine de Cleyre."

What could be added to this splendid tribute by Jay Fox to the memory of Voltairine de Cleyre?

The real biography of Voltairine de Cleyre is to be found in the letters she wrote to her comrades, friends and admires, for like many other women in public life, she was a voluminous writer.

Born shortly after the close of the Civil War, she witnessed during her life the most momentous transformation of the nation; she saw the change from an agricultural community into an industrial empire; the tremendous development of capital in this country with the accompanying misery and degradation of labor. Her life

path was sketched when she reached the age of womanhood; she had to become a rebel! To stand outside of the struggle would have meant intellectual death. She chose the only way.

Voltairine de Cleyre was born on November 17, 1866, in the town of Leslie, Michigan. She died on June 6, 1912, in Chicago. She came from French-American stock on her father's side, and of Puritan on her mother's. Her father, Auguste de Cleyre, was a native of Western Flanders, but of French origin. Being a freethinker and a great admirer of Voltaire, he named his daughter Voltairine. She did not have a happy childhood; her earliest life was embittered by want of the common necessities, which her parents, hard as they tried, could not provide. A vein of sadness can be traced in her earliest poems--the songs of a child of talent and great fantasy.

Strength of mind did not seem to have been a characteristic of Auguste de Cleyre, for he recanted his libertarian ideas, returned to the fold of the church, and became obsessed with the idea that the highest vocation for a woman was the life of a nun; so he sent her to the Convent of Our Lady of Lake Huron at Sarnia, Province of Ontario, Canada. But Voltairine's spirit could not be imprisoned in a convent. After she was there a few weeks she ran away. She crossed the river to Port Huron but as she had no money she started to walk home. After covering seventeen miles, she realized that she could never do it; so she turned around and walked back, and entering the house of an acquaintance in Port Huron, asked for something to eat. They sent for her father who afterwards took her back to the convent. After a while, however, she again ran away, this time never to return.

Reaction from repression and the cruel discipline of the Catholic Church helped to develop Voltairine's inherent tendency toward free thought; the five-fold murder of the labor leaders in Chicago in 1887 shocked her mind so deeply that from that moment dates her development toward Anarchism. When in 1886 the bomb fell in the Haymarket Square, and the Anarchists were arrested, Voltairine de Cleyre, who at that time was a free thought lecturer, shouted: "They ought to be hanged!" They were hanged, and now her body rests in Waldheim Cemetery, near the grave of those martyrs. Speaking at a memorial meeting in honor of those comrades, in 1901, she said: "For that ignorant, outrageous, blood-thirsty sentence I shall never forgive myself, though I know the dead men would have forgiven me, though I know those who loved them forgive me But my own voice, as it sounded that night, will sound so in my ears till I die--a bitter reproach and a shame I have only one word of extenuation for myself and the millions of others who did as I did that night-- ignorance."

She did not remain long in ignorance. In "The Making of an Anarchist," she describes why she became a convert to the idea and why she entered the movement. "Till then," she writes, "I believed in the essential Justice of the American law and trial by jury. After that I never could. The infamy of that trial has passed into history, and the question it awakened as to the possibility of Justice under law has passed into clamorous crying across the world."

Voltairine spent the greater part of her life in Philadelphia. Here, among congenial friends, and later among the Jewish immigrants, she did her best work, producing an enormous amount. Her poems, sketches, propagandist articles and essays may be found in Open Court, Twentieth Century, Magazine of Poetry, Truth,

Lucifer, Boston Investigator, Rights of Labor, Truth Seeker, Liberty, Chicago Liberal, Free Society, Mother Earth, and in The Independent.

In an exquisite tribute to her memory, Leonard D. Abbott calls Voltairine de Cleyre a priestess of Pity and of Vengeance, whose voice has a vibrant quality that is unique in literature. We are convinced that her writings will live as long as humanity exists.

ANARCHISM & AMERICAN TRADITIONS

by Voltairine de Cleyre

American traditions, begotten of religious rebellion, small self-sustaining communities, isolated conditions, and hard pioneer life, grew during the colonization period of one hundred and seventy years from the settling of Jamestown to the outburst of the Revolution. This was in fact the great constitution-making epoch, the period of charters guaranteeing more or less of liberty, the general tendency of which is well described by Wm. Penn in speaking of the charter for Pennsylvania: "I want to put it out of my power, or that of my successors, to do mischief."

The revolution is the sudden and unified consciousness of these traditions, their loud assertion, the blow dealt by their indomitable will against the counter force of tyranny, which has never entirely recovered from the blow, but which from then till now has gone on remolding and regrappling the instruments of governmental power, that the Revolution sought to shape and hold as defenses of liberty.

To the average American of today, the Revolution means the series of battles fought by the patriot army with the armies of England. The millions of school children who attend our public schools are taught to draw maps of the siege of Boston and the siege of Yorktown, to know the general plan of the several campaigns, to quote the number of prisoners of war surrendered with Burgoyne; they are required to remember the date when Washington crossed the Delaware on the ice; they are told to "Remember Paoli," to repeat "Molly Stark's a widow," to call General Wayne "Mad Anthony Wayne," and to execrate Benedict Arnold; they know that the Declaration of Independence was signed

on the Fourth of July, 1776, and the Treaty of Paris in 1783; and then they think they have learned the Revolution--blessed be George Washington! They have no idea why it should have been called a "revolution" instead of the "English War," or any similar title: it's the name of it, that's all. And name-worship, both in child and man, has acquired such mastery of them, that the name "American Revolution" is held sacred, though it means to them nothing more than successful force, while the name "Revolution" applied to a further possibility, is a spectre detested and abhorred. In neither case have they any idea of the content of the word, save that of armed force. That has already happened, and long happened, which Jefferson foresaw when he wrote:

"The spirit of the times may alter, will alter. Our rulers will become corrupt, our people careless. A single zealot may become persecutor, and better men be his victims. It can never be too often repeated that the time for fixing every essential right, on a legal basis, is while our rulers are honest, ourselves united. From the conclusion of this war we shall be going down hill. It will not then be necessary to resort every moment to the people for support. They will be forgotten, therefore, and their rights disregarded. They will forget themselves in the sole faculty of making money, and will never think of uniting to effect a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war, will be heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive or expire in a convulsion."

To the men of that time, who voiced the spirit of that time, the battles that they fought were the least of the Revolution; they were the incidents of the hour, the things they met and faced as part of the game they were playing;

but the stake they had in view, before, during, and after the war, the real Revolution, was a change in political institutions which should make of government not a thing apart, a superior power to stand over the people with a whip, but a serviceable agent, responsible, economical, and trustworthy (but never so much trusted as not to be continually watched), for the transaction of such business as was the common concern and to set the limits of the common concern at the line of where one man's liberty would encroach upon another's.

They thus took their starting point for deriving a minimum of government upon the same sociological ground that the modern Anarchist derives the no-government theory; viz., that equal liberty is the political ideal. The difference lies in the belief, on the one hand, that the closest approximation to equal liberty might be best secured by the rule of the majority in those matters involving united action of any kind (which rule of the majority they thought it possible to secure by a few simple arrangements for election), and, on the other hand, the belief that majority rule is both impossible and undesirable; that any government, no matter what its forms, will be manipulated by a very small minority, as the development of the States and United States governments has strikingly proved; that candidates will loudly profess allegiance to platforms before elections, which as officials in power they will openly disregard, to do as they please; and that even if the majority will could be imposed, it would also be subversive of equal liberty, which may be best secured by leaving to the voluntary association of those interested in the management of matters of common concern, without coercion of the uninterested or the opposed.

Among the fundamental likeness between the Revolutionary Republicans and the Anarchists is the recognition that the little must precede the great; that the local must be the basis of the general; that there can be a free federation only when there are free communities to federate; that the spirit of the latter is carried into the councils of the former, and a local tyranny may thus become an instrument for general enslavement. Convinced of the supreme importance of ridding the municipalities of the institutions of tyranny, the most strenuous advocates of independence, instead of spending their efforts mainly in the general Congress, devoted themselves to their home localities, endeavoring to work out of the minds of their neighbors and fellow-colonists the institutions of entailed property, of a State-Church, of a class-divided people, even the institution of African slavery itself. Though largely unsuccessful, it is to the measure of success they did achieve that we are indebted for such liberties as we do retain, and not to the general government. They tried to inculcate local initiative and independent action. The author of the Declaration of Independence, who in the fall of '76 declined a re-election to Congress in order to return to Virginia and do his work in his own local assembly, in arranging there for public education which he justly considered a matter of "common concern," said his advocacy of public schools was not with any "view to take its ordinary branches out of the hands of private enterprise, which manages so much better the concerns to which it is equal"; and in endeavoring to make clear the restrictions of the Constitution upon the functions of the general government, he likewise said:

"Let the general government be reduced to foreign concerns only, and let our affairs be disentangled from those of all other nations, except as to commerce, which the merchants

will manage for themselves, and the general government may be reduced to a very simple organization, and a very inexpensive one; a few plain duties to be performed by a few servants."

This then was the American tradition, that private enterprise manages better all that to which it IS equal. Anarchism declares that private enterprise, whether individual or cooperative, is equal to all the undertakings of society. And it quotes the particular two instances, Education and Commerce, which the governments of the States and of the United States have undertaken to manage and regulate, as the very two which in operation have done more to destroy American freedom and equality, to warp and distort American tradition, to make of government a mighty engine of tyranny, than any other cause, save the unforeseen developments of Manufacture.

It was the intention of the Revolutionists to establish a system of common education, which should make the teaching of history one of its principal branches; not with the intent of burdening the memories of our youth with the dates of battles or the speeches of generals, nor to make the Boston Tea Party Indians the one sacrosanct mob in all history, to be revered but never on any account to be imitated, but with the intent that every American should know to what conditions the masses of people had been brought by the operation of certain institutions, by what means they had wrung out their liberties, and how those liberties had again and again been filched from them by the use of governmental force, fraud, and privilege. Not to breed security, laudation, complacent indolence, passive acquiescence in the acts of a government protected by the label "home-made," but to beget a wakeful jealousy, a never-ending watchfulness of rulers, a determination to

squelch every attempt of those entrusted with power to encroach upon the sphere of individual action - this was the prime motive of the revolutionists in endeavoring to provide for common education.

"Confidence," said the revolutionists who adopted the Kentucky Resolutions, "is everywhere the parent of despotism; free government is founded in jealousy, not in confidence; it is jealousy, not confidence, which prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those whom we are obliged to trust with power; our Constitution has accordingly fixed the limits to which, and no further, our confidence may go... In questions of power, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution."

These resolutions were especially applied to the passage of the Alien laws by the monarchist party during John Adams' administration, and were an indignant call from the State of Kentucky to repudiate the right of the general government to assume undelegated powers, for said they, to accept these laws would be "to be bound by laws made, not with our consent, but by others against our consent--that is, to surrender the form of government we have chosen, and to live under one deriving its powers from its own will, and not from our authority." Resolutions identical in spirit were also passed by Virginia, the following month; in those days the States still considered themselves supreme, the general government subordinate.

To inculcate this proud spirit of the supremacy of the people over their governors was to be the purpose of public education! Pick up today any common school history, and see how much of this spirit you will find therein. On the contrary, from cover to cover you will find nothing but the

cheapest sort of patriotism, the inculcation of the most unquestioning acquiescence in the deeds of government, a lullaby of rest, security, confidence--the doctrine that the Law can do no wrong, a Te Deum in praise of the continuous encroachments of the powers of the general government upon the reserved rights of the States, shameless falsification of all acts of rebellion, to put the government in the right and the rebels in the wrong, pyrotechnic glorifications of union, power, and force, and a complete ignoring of the essential liberties to maintain which was the purpose of the revolutionists. The anti-Anarchist law of post-McKinley passage, a much worse law than the Alien and Sedition acts which roused the wrath of Kentucky and Virginia to the point of threatened rebellion, is exalted as a wise provision of our All-Seeing Father in Washington.

Such is the spirit of government-provided schools. Ask any child what he knows about Shays' rebellion, and he will answer, "Oh, some of the farmers couldn't pay their taxes, and Shays led a rebellion against the court-house at Worcester, so they could burn up the deeds; and when Washington heard of it he sent over an army quick and taught 'em a good lesson"--"And what was the result of it?" "The result? Why--why--the result was--Oh yes, I remember--the result was they saw the need of a strong federal government to collect the taxes and pay the debts." Ask if he knows what was said on the other side of the story, ask if he knows that the men who had given their goods and their health and their strength for the freeing of the country now found themselves cast into prison for debt, sick, disabled, and poor, facing a new tyranny for the old; that their demand was that the land should become the free communal possession of those who wished to work it, not subject to tribute, and the child will answer "No." Ask him

if he ever read Jefferson's letter to Madison about it, in which he says:

"Societies exist under three forms, sufficiently distinguishable. 1. Without government, as among our Indians. 2. Under government wherein the will of every one has a just influence; as is the case in England in a slight degree, and in our States in a great one. 3. Under government of force, as is the case in all other monarchies, and in most of the other republics. To have an idea of the curse of existence in these last, they must be seen. It is a government of wolves over sheep. It is a problem not clear in my mind that the first condition is not the best. But I believe it to be inconsistent with any great degree of population. The second state has a great deal of good in it...It has its evils too, the principal of which is the turbulence to which it is subject. ...But even this evil is productive of good. It prevents the degeneracy of government, and nourishes a general attention to public affairs. I hold that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing."

Or to another correspondent:

"God forbid that we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion!...What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that the people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take up arms...The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure."

Ask any school child if he was ever taught that the author of the Declaration of Independence, one of the great founders of the common school, said these things, and he will look at you with open mouth and unbelieving eyes.

Ask him if he ever heard that the man who sounded the bugle note in the darkest hour of the Crisis, who roused the courage of the soldiers when Washington saw only mutiny and despair ahead, ask him if he knows that this man also wrote, "Government at best is a necessary evil, at worst an intolerable one," and if he is a little better informed than the average he will answer, "Oh well, he [Tom Paine] was an infidel!" Catechize him about the merits of the Constitution which he has learned to repeat like a poll-parrot, and you will find his chief conception is not of the powers withheld from Congress, but of the powers granted.

Such are the fruits of government schools. We, the Anarchists, point to them and say: If the believers in liberty wish the principles of liberty taught, let them never entrust that instruction to any government; for the nature of government is to become a thing apart, an institution existing for its own sake, preying upon the people, and teaching whatever will tend to keep it secure in its seat. As the fathers said of the governments of Europe, so say we of this government also after a century and a quarter of independence: "The blood of the people has become its inheritance, and those who fatten on it will not relinquish it easily."

Public education, having to do with the intellect and spirit of a people, is probably the most subtle and far-reaching engine for molding the course of a nation; but commerce, dealing as it does with material things and producing immediate effects, was the force that bore down soonest upon the paper barriers of constitutional restriction, and shaped the government to its requirements. Here, indeed, we arrive at the point where we, looking over the hundred and twenty five years of independence, can see that the simple government conceived by the revolutionary

republicans was a foredoomed failure. It was so because of: 1) the essence of government itself; 2) the essence of human nature; 3) the essence of Commerce and Manufacture.

Of the essence of government, I have already said, it is a thing apart, developing its own interests at the expense of what opposes it; all attempts to make it anything else fail. In this Anarchists agree with the traditional enemies of the Revolution, the monarchists, federalists, strong government believers, the Roosevelts of today, the Jays, Marshalls, and Hamiltons of then--that Hamilton, who, as Secretary of the Treasury, devised a financial system of which we are the unlucky heritors, and whose objects were twofold: To puzzle the people and make public finance obscure to those that paid for it; to serve as a machine for corrupting the legislatures; "for he avowed the opinion that man could be governed by two motives only, force or interest"; force being then out of the question, he laid hold of interest, the greed of the legislators, to set going an association of persons having an entirely separate welfare from the welfare of their electors, bound together by mutual corruption and mutual desire for plunder. The Anarchist agrees that Hamilton was logical, and understood the core of government; the difference is, that while strong governmentalists believe this is necessary and desirable, we choose the opposite conclusion, No Government Whatsoever.

As to the essence of human nature, what our national experience has made plain is this, that to remain in a continually exalted moral condition is not human nature. That has happened which was prophesied: we have gone down hill from the Revolution until now; we are absorbed

in "mere money-getting." The desire for material east long ago vanquished the spirit of '76. What was that spirit? The spirit that animated the people of Virginia, of the Carolinas, of Massachusetts, of New York, when they refused to import goods from England; when they preferred (and stood by it) to wear coarse, homespun cloth, to drink the brew of their own growths, to fit their appetites to the home supply, rather than submit to the taxation of the imperial ministry. Even within the lifetime of the revolutionists, the spirit decayed. The love of material ease has been, in the mass of men and permanently speaking, always greater than the love of liberty. Nine hundred and ninety nine women out of a thousand are more interested in the cut of a dress than in the independence of their sex; nine hundred and ninety nine men out of a thousand are more interested in drinking a glass of beer than in questioning the tax that is laid on it; how many children are not willing to trade the liberty to play for the promise of a new cap or a new dress? That it is which begets the complicated mechanism of society; that it is which, by multiplying the concerns of government, multiplies the strength of government and the corresponding weakness of the people; this it is which begets indifference to public concern, thus making the corruption of government easy.

As to the essence of Commerce and Manufacture, it is this: to establish bonds between every corner of the earths surface and every other corner, to multiply the needs of mankind, and the desire for material possession and enjoyment.

The American tradition was the isolation of the States as far as possible. Said they: We have won our liberties by hard sacrifice and struggle unto death. We wish now to be let alone and to let others alone, that our principles may

have time for trial; that we may become accustomed to the exercise of our rights; that we may be kept free from the contaminating influence of European gauds, pageants, distinctions. So richly did they esteem the absence of these that they could in all fervor write: "We shall see multiplied instances of Europeans coming to America, but no man living will ever seen an instance of an American removing to settle in Europe, and continuing there." Alas! In less than a hundred years the highest aim of a "Daughter of the Revolution" was, and is, to buy a castle, a title, and rotten lord, with the money wrung from American servitude! And the commercial interests of America are seeking a world empire!

In the earlier days of the revolt and subsequent independence, it appeared that the "manifest destiny" of America was to be an agricultural people, exchanging food stuffs and raw materials for manufactured articles. And in those days it was written: "We shall be virtuous as long as agriculture is our principal object, which will be the case as long as there remain vacant lands in any part of America. When we get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, we shall become corrupt as in Europe, and go to eating one another as they do there." Which we are doing, because of the inevitable development of Commerce and Manufacture, and the concomitant development of strong government. And the parallel prophecy is likewise fulfilled: "If ever this vast country is brought under a single government, it will be one of the most extensive corruption, indifferent and incapable of a wholesome care over so wide a spread of surface." There is not upon the face of the earth today a government so utterly and shamelessly corrupt as that of the United States of America. There are others more cruel, more tyrannical, more devastating; there is none so utterly venal.

And yet even in the very days of the prophets, even with their own consent, the first concession to this later tyranny was made. It was made when the Constitution was made; and the Constitution was made chiefly because of the demands of Commerce. Thus it was at the outset a merchant's machine, which the other interests of the country, the land and labor interests, even then foreboded would destroy their liberties. In vain their jealousy of its central power made enact the first twelve amendments. In vain they endeavored to set bounds over which the federal power dare not trench. In vain they enacted into general law the freedom of speech, of the press, of assemblage and petition. All of these things we see ridden roughshod upon every day, and have so seen with more or less intermission since the beginning of the nineteenth century. At this day, every police lieutenant considers himself, and rightly so, as more powerful than the General Law of the Union; and that one who told Robert Hunter that he held in his fist something stronger than the Constitution, was perfectly correct. The right of assemblage is an American tradition which has gone out of fashion; the police club is now the mode. And it is so in virtue of the people's indifference to liberty, and the steady progress of constitutional interpretation towards the substance of imperial government.

It is an American tradition that a standing army is a standing menace to liberty; in Jefferson's presidency the army was reduced to 3,000 men. It is American tradition that we keep out of the affairs of other nations. It is American practice that we meddle with the affairs of everybody else from the West to the East Indies, from Russia to Japan; and to do it we have a standing army of 83,251 men.

It is American tradition that the financial affairs of a nation should be transacted on the same principles of simple honesty that an individual conducts his own business; viz., that debt is a bad thing, and a man's first surplus earning should be applied to his debts; that offices and office holders should be few. It is American practice that the general government should always have millions [of dollars] of debt, even if a panic or a war has to be forced to prevent its being paid off; and as to the application of its income office holders come first. And within the last administration it is reported that 99,000 offices have been created at an annual expense of 1663,000,000. Shades of Jefferson! "How are vacancies to be obtained? Those by deaths are few; by resignation none." [Theodore] Roosevelt cuts the knot by making 99,000 new ones! And few will die - and none resign. They will beget sons and daughters, and Taft will have to create 99,000 more! Verily a simple and a serviceable thing is our general government.

It is American tradition that the Judiciary shall act as a check upon the impetuosity of Legislatures, should these attempt to pass the bounds of constitutional limitation. It is American practice that the Judiciary justifies every law which trenches on the liberties of the people and nullifies every act of the Legislature by which the people seek to regain some measure of their freedom. Again, in the words of Jefferson: "The Constitution is a mere thing of wax in the hands of the Judiciary, which they may twist and shape in any form they please." Truly, if the men who fought the good fight for the triumph of simple, honest, free life in that day, were now to look upon the scene of their labors, they would cry out together with him who said:

"I regret that I am now to die in the belief that the useless sacrifices of themselves by the generation of '76 to acquire self-government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be that I shall not live to see it."

And now, what has Anarchism to say to all this, this bankruptcy of republicanism, this modern empire that has grown up on the ruins of our early freedom? We say this, that the sin our fathers sinned was that they did not trust liberty wholly. They thought it possible to compromise between liberty and government, believing the latter to be "a necessary evil," and the moment the compromise was made, the whole misbegotten monster of our present tyranny began to grow. Instruments which are set up to safeguard rights become the very whip with which the free are struck.

Anarchism says, Make no laws whatever concerning speech, and speech will be free; so soon as you make a declaration on paper that speech shall be free, you will have a hundred lawyers proving that "freedom does not mean abuse, nor liberty license"; and they will define and define freedom out of existence. Let the guarantee of free speech be in every man's determination to use it, and we shall have no need of paper declarations. On the other hand, so long as the people do not care to exercise their freedom, those who wish to tyrannize will do so; for tyrants are active and ardent, and will devote themselves in the name of any number of gods, religious and otherwise, to put shackles upon sleeping men.

The problem then becomes, Is it possible to stir men from their indifference? We have said that the spirit of

liberty was nurtured by colonial life; that the elements of colonial life were the desire for sectarian independence, and the jealous watchfulness incident thereto; the isolation of pioneer communities which threw each individual strongly on his own resources, and thus developed all-around men, yet at the same time made very strong such social bonds as did exist; and, lastly, the comparative simplicity of small communities.

All this has disappeared. As to sectarianism, it is only by dint of an occasional idiotic persecution that a sect becomes interesting; in the absence of this, outlandish sects play the fool's role, are anything but heroic, and have little to do with either the name or the substance of liberty. The old colonial religious parties have gradually become the "pillars of society," their animosities have died out, their offensive peculiarities have been effaced, they are as like one another as beans in a pod, they build churches - and sleep in them.

As to our communities, they are hopelessly and helplessly interdependent, as we ourselves are, save that continuously diminishing proportion engaged in all around farming; and even these are slaves to mortgages. For our cities, probably there is not one that is provisioned to last a week, and certainly there is none which would not be bankrupt with despair at the proposition that it produce its own food. In response to this condition and its correlative political tyranny, Anarchism affirms the economy of self-sustenance, the disintegration of the great communities, the use of the earth.

I am not ready to say that I see clearly that this will take place; but I see clearly that this must take place if ever again men are to be free. I am so well satisfied that the mass of mankind prefer material possessions to liberty, that

I have no hope that they will ever, by means of intellectual or moral stirrings merely, throw off the yoke of oppression fastened on them by the present economic system, to institute free societies. My only hope is in the blind development of the economic system and political oppression itself. The great characteristic looming factor in this gigantic power is Manufacture. The tendency of each nation is to become more and more a manufacturing one, an exporter of fabrics, not an importer. If this tendency follows its own logic, it must eventually circle round to each community producing for itself. What then will become of the surplus product when the manufacturer shall have no foreign market? Why, then mankind must face the dilemma of sitting down and dying in the midst of it, or confiscating the goods.

Indeed, we are partially facing this problem even now; and so far we are sitting down and dying. I opine, however, that men will not do it forever, and when once by an act of general expropriation they have overcome the reverence and fear of property, and their awe of government, they may waken to the consciousness that things are to be used, and therefore men are greater than things. This may rouse the spirit of liberty.

If, on the other hand, the tendency of invention to simplify, enabling the advantages of machinery to be combined with smaller aggregations of workers, shall also follow its own logic, the great manufacturing plants will break up, population will go after the fragments, and there will be seen not indeed the hard, self-sustaining, isolated pioneer communities of early America, but thousands of small communities stretching along the lines of transportation, each producing very largely for its own needs, able to rely upon itself, and therefore able to be

independent. For the same rule holds good for societies as for individuals--those may be free who are able to make their own living.

In regard to the breaking up of that vilest creation of tyranny, the standing army and navy, it is clear that so long as men desire to fight, they will have armed force in one form or another. Our fathers thought they had guarded against a standing army by providing for the voluntary militia. In our day we have lived to see this militia declared part of the regular military force of the United States, and subject to the same demands as the regulars. Within another generation we shall probably see its members in the regular pay of the general government. Since any embodiment of the fighting spirit, any military organization, inevitably follows the same line of centralization, the logic of Anarchism is that the least objectionable form of armed force is that which springs up voluntarily, like the minute men of Massachusetts, and disbands as soon as the occasion which called it into existence is past: that the really desirable thing is that all men--not Americans only--should be at peace; and that to reach this, all peaceful persons should withdraw their support from the army, and require that all who make war shall do so at their own cost and risk; that neither pay nor pensions are to be provided for those who choose to make man-killing a trade.

As to the American tradition of non-meddling, Anarchism asks that it be carried down to the individual himself. It demands no jealous barrier of isolation; it knows that such isolation is undesirable and impossible; but it teaches that by all men's strictly minding their own business, a fluid society, freely adapting itself to mutual needs, wherein all the world shall belong to all men, as much as each has need or desire, will result.

And when Modern Revolution has thus been carried to the heart of the whole world--if it ever shall be, as I hope it will--then may we hope to see a resurrection of that proud spirit of our fathers which put the simple dignity of Man above the gauds of wealth and class, and held that to, be an American was greater than to be a king.

In that day there shall be neither kings nor Americans - only Men ; over the whole earth, Men.

DIRECT ACTION

Source: The Memory Hole "<http://alumni.umbc.edu/~akoont1/tmh/>"

Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912) was an American anarchist / feminist writer and theorist active at the time of the Haymarket riot. She is the person who, in response to U.S. Senator Joseph R. Hawley's offer of one thousand dollars to have a shot at an anarchist, said: "You may, by merely paying your carfare to my home, shoot at me for nothing - but if payment of the \$1000 is a necessary part of your proposition, then when I have given you the shot, I will give the money to the propaganda of the idea of a free society in which there shall be neither assassins nor presidents, beggars nor senators."

From the standpoint of one who thinks himself capable of discerning an undeviating route for human progress to pursue, if it is to be progress at all, who, having such a route on his mind's map, has endeavored to point it out to others; to make them see it as he sees it; who in so doing has chosen what appeared to him clear and simple expressions to convey his thoughts to others, -- to such a one it appears matter for regret and confusion of spirit that the phrase "Direct Action" has suddenly acquired in the general mind a circumscribed meaning, not at all implied in the words themselves, and certainly never attached to it by himself or his co-thinkers.

However, this is one of the common jests which Progress plays on those who think themselves able to set metes and bounds for it. Over and over again, names, phrases, mottoes, watchwords, have been turned inside out, and upside down, and hindside before, and sideways, by occurrences out of the control of those who used the expressions in their proper sense; and still, those who sturdily held their ground, and insisted on being heard, have in the end found that the period of misunderstanding and

prejudice has been but the prelude to wider inquiry and understanding.

I rather think this will be the case with the present misconception of the term Direct Action, which through the misapprehension, or else the deliberate misrepresentation, of certain journalists in Los Angeles, at the time the McNamaras pleaded guilty, suddenly acquired in the popular mind the interpretation, "Forcible Attacks on Life and Property." This was either very ignorant or very dishonest of the journalists; but it has had the effect of making a good many people curious to know all about Direct Action.

As a matter of fact, those who are so lustily and so inordinately condemning it, will find on examination that they themselves have on many occasion practised direct action, and will do so again.

Every person who ever thought he had a right to assert, and went boldly and asserted it, himself, or jointly with others that shared his convictions, was a direct actionist. Some thirty years ago I recall that the Salvation Army was vigorously practising direct action in the maintenance of the freedom of its members to speak, assemble, and pray. Over and over they were arrested, fined, and imprisoned; but they kept right on singing, praying, and marching, till they finally compelled their persecutors to let them alone. The Industrial Workers are now conducting the same fight, and have, in a number of cases, compelled the officials to let them alone by the same direct tactics.

Every person who ever had a plan to do anything, and went and did it, or who laid his plan before others, and won their co-operation to do it with him, without going to external

authorities to please do the thing for them, was a direct actionist. All co-operative experiments are essentially direct action.

Every person who ever in his life had a difference with anyone to settle, and went straight to the other persons involved to settle it, either by a peaceable plan or otherwise, was a direct actionist. Examples of such action are strikes and boycotts; many persons will recall the action of the housewives of New York who boycotted the butchers, and lowered the price of meat; at the present moment a butter boycott seems looming up, as a direct reply to the price-makers for butter.

These actions are generally not due to any one's reasoning overmuch on the respective merits of directness or indirectness, but are the spontaneous retorts of those who feel oppressed by a situation. In other words, all people are, most of the time, believers in the principle of direct action, and practices of it. However, most people are also indirect or political actionists. And they are both these things at the same time, without making much of an analysis of either. There are only a limited number of persons who eschew political action under any and all circumstances; but there is nobody, nobody at all, who has ever been so "impossible" as to eschew direct action altogether.

The majority of thinking people are really opportunist, leaning, some perhaps more to directness, some more to indirectness as a general thing, but ready to use either means when opportunity calls for it. That is to say, there are those who hold that balloting governors into power is essentially a wrong and foolish thing; but who nevertheless under stress of special circumstances, might consider it the wisest thing to do, to vote some individual into office at

that particular time. Or there are those who believe that in general the wisest way for people to get what they want is by the indirect method of voting into power some one who will make what they want legal; yet who all the same will occasionally under exceptional conditions advise a strike; and a strike, as I have said, is direct action. Or they may do as the Socialist Party agitators (who are mostly declaiming now against direct action) did last summer, when the police were holding up their meetings. They went in force to the meeting-places, prepared to speak whether-or-no, and they made the police back down. And while that was not logical on their part, thus to oppose the legal executors of the majority's will, it was a fine, successful piece of direct action.

Those who, by the essence of their belief, are committed to Direct Action only are -- just who? Why, the non-resistants; precisely those who do not believe in violence at all! Now do not make the mistake of inferring that I say direct action means non-resistance; not by any means. Direct action may be the extreme of violence, or it may be as peaceful as the waters of the Brook of Shiloh that go softly. What I say is, that the real non-resistants can believe in direct action only, never in political action. For the basis of all political action is coercion; even when the State does good things, it finally rests on a club, a gun, or a prison, for its power to carry them through.

Now every school child in the United States has had the direct action of certain non-resistants brought to his notice by his school history. The case which everyone instantly recalls is that of the early Quakers who came to Massachusetts. The Puritans had accused the Quakers of "troubling the world by preaching peace to it." They refused to pay church taxes; they refused to bear arms; they refused

to swear allegiance to any government. (In so doing they were direct actionists, what we may call negative direct actionists.) So the Puritans, being political actionists, passed laws to keep them out, to deport, to fine, to imprison, to mutilate, and finally, to hang them. And the Quakers just kept on coming (which was positive direct action); and history records that after the hanging of four Quakers, and the flogging of Margaret Brewster at the cart's tail through the streets of Boston, "the Puritans gave up trying to silence the new missionaries"; that "Quaker persistence and Quaker non-resistance had won the day."

Another example of direct action in early colonial history, but this time by no means of the peaceable sort, was the affair known as Bacon's Rebellion. All our historians certainly defend the action of the rebels in that matter, for they were right. And yet it was a case of violent direct action against lawfully constituted authority. For the benefit of those who have forgotten the details, let me briefly remind them that the Virginia planters were in fear of a general attack by the Indians; with reason. Being political actionists, they asked, or Bacon as their leader asked, that the governor grant him a commission to raise volunteers in their own defense. The governor feared that such a company of armed men would be a threat to him; also with reason. He refused the commission. Whereupon the planters resorted to direct action. They raised volunteers without the commission, and successfully fought off the Indians. Bacon was pronounced a traitor by the governor; but the people being with him, the governor was afraid to proceed against him. In the end, however, it came so far that the rebels burned Jamestown; and but for the untimely death of Bacon, much more might have been done. Of course the reaction was very dreadful, as it usually is where a rebellion collapses or is crushed. Yet even during the brief period of

success, it had corrected a good many abuses. I am quite sure that the political-action-at-all-costs advocates of those times, after the reaction came back into power, must have said: "See to what evils direct action brings us! Behold, the progress of the colony has been set back twenty-five years;" forgetting that if the colonists had not resorted to direct action, their scalps would have been taken by the Indians a year sooner, instead of a number of them being hanged by the governor a year later.

In the period of agitation and excitement preceding the revolution, there were all sorts and kinds of direct action from the most peaceable to the most violent; and I believe that almost everybody who studies United States history finds the account of these performances the most interesting part of the story, the part which dents into the memory most easily.

Among the peaceable moves made, were the non-importation agreements, the leagues for wearing homespun clothing and the "committees of correspondence." As the inevitable growth of hostility progressed, violent direct action developed; e.g., in the matter of destroying the revenue stamps, or the action concerning the tea-ships, either by not permitting the tea to be landed, or by putting it in damp storage, or by throwing it into the harbor, as in Boston, or by compelling a tea-ship owner to set fire to his own ship, as at Annapolis. These are all actions which our commonest textbooks record, certainly not in a condemnatory way, not even in an apologetic way, though they are all cases of direct action against legally constituted authority and property rights. If I draw attention to them, and others of like nature, it is to prove to unreflecting repeaters of words that direct action has always been used,

and has the historical sanction of the very people now reprobating it.

George Washington is said to have been the leader of the Virginia planters' non-importation league; he would now be "enjoined," probably by a court, from forming any such league; and if he persisted, he would be fined for contempt.

When the great quarrel between the North and the South was waxing hot and hotter, it was again direct action which preceded and precipitated political action. And I may remark here that political action is never taken, nor even contemplated, until slumbering minds have first been aroused by direct acts of protest against existing conditions.

The history of the anti-slavery movement and the Civil War is one of the greatest of paradoxes, although history is a chain of paradoxes. Politically speaking, it was the slaveholding States that stood for greater political freedom, for the autonomy of the single State against the interference of the United States; politically speaking, it was the non-slaveholding States that stood for a strong centralized government, which, Secessionists said and said truly, was bound progressively to develop into more and more tyrannical forms. Which happened. From the close of the Civil War one, there has been continual encroachment of the federal power upon what was formerly the concern of the States individually. The wage-slavers, in their struggles of today, are continually thrown into conflict with that centralized power against which the slave-holder protested (with liberty on his lips by tyranny in his heart). Ethically speaking, it was the non-slave-holding States that in a general way stood for greater human liberty, while the Secessionists stood for race-slavery. In a general way only; that is, the majority of northerners, not being accustomed to

the actual presence of negro slavery about them, thought it was probably a mistake; yet they were in no great ferment of anxiety to have it abolished. The Abolitionists only, and they were relatively few, were the genuine ethicals, to whom slavery itself -- not secession or union -- was the main question. In fact, so paramount was it with them, that a considerable number of them were themselves for the dissolution of the union, advocating that the North take the initiative in the matter of dissolving, in order that the northern people might shake off the blame of holding negroes in chains.

Of course, there were all sorts of people with all sorts of temperaments among those who advocated the abolition of slavery. There were Quakers like Whittier (indeed it was the peace-at-all-costs Quakers who had advocated abolition even in early colonial days); there were moderate political actionists, who were for buying off the slaves, as the cheapest way; and there were extremely violent people, who believed and did all sorts of violent things.

As to what the politicians did, it is one long record of "hoe-not-to-to-it," a record of thirty years of compromising, and dickering, and trying to keep what was as it was, and to hand sops to both sides when new conditions demanded that something be done, or be pretended to be done. But "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera;" the system was breaking down from within, and the direct actionists from without as well were widening the cracks remorselessly.

Among the various expressions of direct rebellion was the organization of the "underground railroad." Most of the people who belonged to it believed in both sorts of action; but however much they theoretically subscribed to the right

of the majority to enact and enforce laws, they didn't believe in it on that point. My grandfather was a member of the "underground;" many a fugitive slave he helped on his way to Canada. He was a very patient, law-abiding man in most respects, though I have often thought that he respected it because he didn't have much to do with it; always leading a pioneer life, law was generally far from him, and direct action imperative. Be that as it may, and law-respecting as he was, he had no respect whatever for slave laws, no matter if made by ten times of a majority; and he conscientiously broke every one that came in his way to be broken.

There were times when in the operation of the "underground" that violence was required, and was used. I recollect one old friend relating to me how she and her mother kept watch all night at the door, while a slave for whom a posse was searching hid in the cellar; and though they were of Quaker descent and sympathies, there was a shotgun on the table. Fortunately it did not have to be used that night.

When the fugitive slave law was passed with the help of the political actionists of the North who wanted to offer a new sop to the slave-holders, the direct actionists took to rescuing recaptured fugitives. There was the "rescue of Shadrach," and the "rescue of Jerry," the latter rescuers being led by the famous Gerrit Smith; and a good many more successful and unsuccessful attempts. Still the politicales kept on pottering and trying to smooth things over, and the Abolitionists were denounced and decried by the ultra-law-abiding pacifiers, pretty much as Wm. D. Haywood and Frank Bohn are being denounced by their own party now.

The other day I read a communication in the Chicago Daily Socialist from the secretary of the Louisville local Socialist Party to the national secretary, requesting that some safe and sane speaker be substituted for Bohn, who had been announced to speak there. In explaining why, Mr. Dobbs makes this quotation from Bohn's lecture: "Had the McNamaras been successful in defending the interests of the working class, they would have been right, just as John Brown would have been right, had he been successful in freeing the slaves. Ignorance was the only crime of John Brown, and ignorance was the only crime of the McNamaras."

Upon this Mr. Dobbs comments as follows: "We dispute emphatically the statements here made. The attempt to draw a parallel between the open -- if mistaken -- revolt of John Brown on the one hand, and the secret and murderous methods of the McNamaras on the other, is not only indicative of shallow reasoning, but highly mischievous in the logical conclusions which may be drawn from such statements."

Evidently Mr. Dobbs is very ignorant of the life and work of John Brown. John Brown was a man of violence; he would have scorned anybody's attempt to make him out anything else. And once a person is a believer in violence, it is with him only a question of the most effective way of applying it, which can be determined only by a knowledge of conditions and means at his disposal. John Brown did not shrink at all from conspiratorial methods. Those who have read the autobiography of Frederick Douglass and the Reminiscences of Lucy Colman, will recall that one of the plans laid by John Brown was to organize a chain of armed camps in the mountains of West Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, send secret emissaries among the slaves

inciting them to flee to these camps, and there concert such measures as times and conditions made possible for further arousing revolt among the negroes. That this plan failed was due to the weakness of the desire for liberty among the slaves themselves, more than anything else.

Later on, when the politicians in their infinite deviousness contrived a fresh proposition of how-not-to-do-it, known as the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which left the question of slavery to be determined by the settlers, the direct actionists on both sides sent bogus settlers into the territory, who proceeded to fight it out. The pro-slavery men, who got in first, made a constitution recognizing slavery and a law punishing with death any one who aided a slave to escape; but the Free Soilers, who were a little longer in arriving since they came from more distant States, made a second constitution, and refused to recognize the other party's laws at all. And John Brown was there, mixing in all the violence, conspiratorial or open; he was "a horse-thief and a murderer," in the eyes of decent, peaceable, political actionists. And there is no doubt that he stole horses, sending no notice in advance of his intention to steal them, and that he killed pro-slavery men. He struck and got away a good many times before his final attempt on Harper's Ferry. If he did not use dynamite, it was because dynamite had not yet appeared as a practical weapon. He made a great many more intentional attacks on life than the two brothers Secretary Dobbs condemns for their "murderous methods." And yet history has not failed to understand John Brown. Mankind knows that though he was a violent man, with human blood upon his hands, who was guilty of high treason and hanged for it, yet his soul was a great, strong, unselfish soul, unable to bear the frightful crime which kept 4,000,000 people like dumb beasts, and thought that making war against it was a sacred,

a God-called duty, (for John Brown was a very religious man -- a Presbyterian).

It is by and because of the direct acts of the forerunners of social change, whether they be of peaceful or warlike nature, that the Human Conscience, the conscience of the mass, becomes aroused to the need for change. It would be very stupid to say that no good results are ever brought about by political action; sometimes good things do come about that way. But never until individual rebellion, followed by mass rebellion, has forced it. Direct action is always the clamorer, the initiator, through which the great sum of indifferentists become aware that oppression is getting intolerable.

We have now and oppression in the land -- and not only in this land, but throughout all those parts of the world which enjoy the very mixed blessings of Civilization. And just as in the question of chattel slavery, so this form of slavery has been begetting both direct action and political action. A certain percent of our population (probably a much smaller percent than politicians are in the habit of assigning at mass meetings) is producing the material wealth upon which all the rest of us live; just as it was 4,000,000 chattel Blacks who supported all the crowd of parasites above them. These are the land workers and the industrial workers.

Through the unprophesied and unprophesiable operation of institutions which no individual of us created, but found in existence when he came here, these workers, the most absolutely necessary part of the whole social structure, without whose services none can either eat, or clothe, or shelter himself, are just the ones who get the least to eat, to wear, and to be housed withal -- to say nothing of their share of the other social benefits which the rest of us are

supposed to furnish, such as education and artistic gratification.

These workers have, in one form or another, mutually joined their forces to see what betterment of their condition they could get; primarily by direct action, secondarily by political action. We have had the Grange, the Farmer's Alliance, Co-operative Associations, Colonization Experiments, Knights of Labor, Trade Unions, and Industrial Workers of the World. All of them have been organized for the purpose of wringing from the masters in the economic field a little better price, a little better conditions, a little shorter hours; or on the other hand to resist a reduction in price, worse conditions, or longer hours. None of them has attempted a final solution of the social war. None of them, except the Industrial Workers, has recognized that there is a social war, inevitable so long as present legal-social conditions endure. They accepted property institutions as they found them. They were made up of average men, with average desires, and they undertook to do what appeared to them possible and very reasonable things. They were not committed to any particular political policy when they were organized, but were associated for direct action of their own initiation, either positive or defensive.

Undoubtedly there were and are among all these organizations, members who looked beyond immediate demands; who did see that the continuous development of forces now in operation was bound to bring about conditions to which it is impossible that life continue to submit, and against which, therefore, it will protest, and violently protest; that it will have no choice but to do so; that it must do so or tamely die; and since it is not the nature of life to surrender without struggle, it will not

tamely die. Twenty-two years ago I met Farmer's Alliance people who said so, Knights of Labor who said so, Trade Unionists who said so. They wanted larger aims than those to which their organizations were looking; but they had to accept their fellow members as they were, and try to stir them to work for such things as it was possible to make them see. And what they could see was better prices, better wages, less dangerous or tyrannical conditions, shorter hours. At the stage of development when these movements were initiated, the land workers could not see that their struggle had anything to do with the struggle of those engaged in the manufacturing or transporting service; nor could these latter see that theirs had anything to do with the movement of the farmers. For that matter very few of them see it yet. They have yet to learn that there is one common struggle against those who have appropriated the earth, the money, and the machines.

Unfortunately the great organizations of the farmers frittered itself away in a stupid chase after political power. It was quite successful in getting the power in certain States; but the courts pronounced its laws unconstitutional, and there was the burial hole of all its political conquests. Its original program was to build its own elevators, and store the products therein, holding these from the market till they could escape the speculator. Also, to organize labor exchanges, issuing credit notes upon products deposited for exchange. Had it adhered to this program of direct mutual aid, it would, to some extent, for a time at least, have afforded an illustration of how mankind may free itself from the parasitism of the bankers and the middlemen. Of course, it would have been overthrown in the end, unless it had so revolutionized men's minds by the example as to force the overthrow of the legal monopoly of land and money; but at least it would have served a great educational

purpose. As it was, it "went after the red herring" and disintegrated merely from its futility.

The Knights of Labor subsided into comparative insignificance, not because of failure to use direct action, nor because of its tampering with politics, which was small, but chiefly because it was a heterogenous mass of workers who could not associate their efforts effectively.

The Trade Unions grew strong as the Knights of Labor subsided, and have continued slowly but persistently to increase in power. It is true the increase has fluctuated; that there have been set-backs; that great single organizations have been formed and again dispersed. But on the whole trade unions have been a growing power. They have been so because, poor as they are, they have been a means whereby a certain section of the workers have been able to bring their united force to bear directly upon their masters, and so get for themselves some portion of what they wanted -- of what their conditions dictated to them they must try to get. The strike is their natural weapon, that which they themselves have forged. It is the direct blow of the strike which nine times out of ten the boss is afraid of. (Of course there are occasions when he is glad of one, but that's unusual.) And the reason he dreads a strike is not so much because he thinks he cannot win out against it, but simply and solely because he does not want an interruption of his business. The ordinary boss isn't in much dread of a "class-conscious vote;" there are plenty of shops where you can talk Socialism or any other political program all day long; but if you begin to talk Unionism you may forthwith expect to be discharged or at best warned to shut up. Why? Not because the boss is so wise as to know that political action is a swamp in which the workingman gets mired, or because he understands that political Socialism is fast

becoming a middle-class movement; not at all. He thinks Socialism is a very bad thing; but it's a good way off! But he knows that if his shop is unionized, he will have trouble right away. His hands will be rebellious, he will be put to expense to improve his factory conditions, he will have to keep workingmen that he doesn't like, and in case of strike he may expect injury to his machinery or his buildings.

It is often said, and parrot-like repeated, that the bosses are "class-conscious," that they stick together for their class interest, and are willing to undergo any sort of personal loss rather than be false to those interests. It isn't so at all. The majority of business people are just like the majority of workingmen; they care a whole lot more about their individual loss or gain than about the gain or loss of their class. And it is his individual loss the boss sees, when threatened by a union.

Now everybody knows that a strike of any size means violence. No matter what any one's ethical preference for peace may be, he knows it will not be peaceful. If it's a telegraph strike, it means cutting wires and poles, and getting fake scabs in to spoil the instruments. If it is a steel rolling mill strike, it means beating up the scabs, breaking the windows, setting the gauges wrong, and ruining the expensive rollers together with tons and tons of material. If it's a miners' strike, it means destroying tracks and bridges, and blowing up mills. If it is a garment workers' strike, it means having an unaccountable fire, getting a volley of stones through an apparently inaccessible window, or possibly a brickbat on the manufacturer's own head. If it's a street-car strike, it means tracks torn up or barricaded with the contents of ash-carts and slop-carts, with overturned wagons or stolen fences, it means smashed or incinerated cars and turned switches. If it is a system federation strike,

it means "dead" engines, wild engines, derailed freights, and stalled trains. If it is a building trades strike, it means dynamited structures. And always, everywhere, all the time, fights between strike-breakers and scabs against strikers and strike-sympathizers, between People and Police.

On the side of the bosses, it means search-lights, electric wires, stockades, bull-pens, detectives and provocative agents, violent kidnapping and deportation, and every device they can conceive for direct protection, besides the ultimate invocation of police, militia, State constabulary, and federal troops.

Everybody knows this; everybody smiles when union officials protest their organizations to be peaceable and law-abiding, because everybody knows they are lying. They know that violence is used, both secretly and openly; and they know it is used because the strikers cannot do any other way, without giving up the fight at once. Nor to they mistake those who thus resort to violence under stress for destructive miscreants who do what they do out of innate cussedness. The people in general understand that they do these things through the harsh logic of a situation which they did not create, but which forces them to these attacks in order to make good in their struggle to live or else go down the bottomless descent into poverty, that lets Death find them in the poorhouse hospital, the city street, or the river-slime. This is the awful alternative that the workers are facing; and this is what makes the most kindly disposed human beings -- men who would go out of their way to help a wounded dog, or bring home a stray kitten and nurse it, or step aside to avoid walking on a worm -- resort to violence against their fellow men. They know, for the facts have taught them, that this is the only way to win, if they can win at all. And it has always appeared to me one of the most

utterly ludicrous, absolutely irrelevant things that a person can do or say, when approached for relief or assistance by a striker who is dealing with an immediate situation, to respond with "Vote yourself into power!" when the next election is six months, a year, or two years away.

Unfortunately the people who know best how violence is used in union warfare cannot come forward and say: "On such a day, at such a place, such and such specific action was done, and as a result such and such concession was made, or such and such boss capitulated." To do so would imperil their liberty and their power to go on fighting. Therefore those that know best must keep silent and sneer in their sleeves, while those that know little prate. Events, not tongues, must make their position clear.

And there has been a very great deal of prating these last few weeks. Speakers and writers, honestly convinced I believe that political action and political action only can win the workers' battle, have been denouncing what they are pleased to call "direct action" (what they really mean is conspiratorial violence) as the author of mischief incalculable. One Oscar Ameringer, as an example, recently said at a meeting in Chicago that the Haymarket bomb of '86 had set back the eight-hour movement twenty-five years, arguing that the movement would have succeeded but for the bomb. It's a great mistake. No one can exactly measure in years or months the effect of a forward push or a reaction. No one can demonstrate that the eight-hour movement could have been won twenty-five years ago. We know that the eight-hour day was put on the statute books of Illinois in 1871 by political action, and has remained a dead letter. That the direct action of the workers could have won it, then, cannot be proved; but it can be shown that many more potent factors than the Haymarket bomb

worked against it. On the other hand, if the reactive influence of the bomb was really so powerful, we should naturally expect labor and union conditions to be worse in Chicago than in the cities where no such thing happened. On the contrary, bad as they are, the general conditions of labor are better in Chicago than in most other large cities, and the power of the unions is more developed there than in any other American city except San Francisco. So if we are to conclude anything for the influence of the Haymarket bomb, keep these facts in mind. Personally I do not think its influence on the labor movement, as such, was so very great.

It will be the same with the present furore about violence. Nothing fundamental has been altered. Two men have been imprisoned for what they did (twenty-four years ago they were hanged for what they did not do); some few more may yet be imprisoned. But the forces of life will continue to revolt against their economic chains. There will be no cessation in that revolt, no matter what ticket men vote or fail to vote, until the chains are broken.

How will the chains be broken?

Political actionists tell us it will be only by means of working-class party action at the polls; by voting themselves into possession of the sources of life and the tools; by voting that those who now command forests, mines, ranches, waterways, mills, and factories, and likewise command the military power to defend them, shall hand over their dominion to the people.

And meanwhile?

Meanwhile, be peaceable, industrious, law-abiding, patient, and frugal (as Madero told the Mexican peons to be, after he sold them to Wall Street)! Even if some of you are disenfranchised, don't rise up even against that, for it might "set back the party."

Well, I have already stated that some good is occasionally accomplished by political action -- not necessarily working-class party action either. But I am abundantly convinced that the occasional good accomplished is more than counterbalanced by the evil; just as I am convinced that though there are occasional evils resulting through direct action, they are more than counterbalanced by the good.

Nearly all the laws which were originally framed with the intention of benefitting the workers, have either turned into weapons in their enemies' hands, or become dead letters unless the workers through their organizations have directly enforced their observance. So that in the end, it is direct action that has to be relied on anyway. As an example of getting the tarred end of a law, glance at the anti-trust law, which was supposed to benefit the people in general and the working class in particular. About two weeks since, some 250 union leaders were cited to answer to the charge of being trust formers, as the answer of the Illinois Central to its strikers.

But the evil of pinning faith to indirect action is far greater than any such minor results. The main evil is that it destroys initiative, quenches the individual rebellious spirit, teaches people to rely on someone else to do for them what they should do for themselves; finally renders organic the anomalous idea that by massing supineness together until a majority is acquired, then through the peculiar magic of that majority, this supineness is to be transformed into energy.

That is, people who have lost the habit of striking for themselves as individuals, who have submitted to every injustice while waiting for the majority to grow, are going to become metamorphosed into human high-explosives by a mere process of packing!

I quite agree that the sources of life, and all the natural wealth of the earth, and the tools necessary to co-operative production, must become freely accessible to all. It is a positive certainty to me that unionism must widen and deepen its purposes, or it will go under; and I feel sure that the logic of the situation will gradually force them to see it. They must learn that the workers' problem can never be solved by beating up scabs, so long as their own policy of limiting their membership by high initiation fees and other restrictions helps to make scabs. They must learn that the course of growth is not so much along the line of higher wages, but shorter hours, which will enable them to increase membership, to take in everybody who is willing to come into the union. They must learn that if they want to win battles, all allied workers must act together, act quickly (serving no notice on bosses), and retain their freedom to do so at all times. And finally they must learn that even then (when they have a complete organization) they can win nothing permanent unless they strike for everything -- not for a wage, not for a minor improvement, but for the whole natural wealth of the earth. And proceed to the direct expropriation of it all!

They must learn that their power does not lie in their voting strength, that their power lies in their ability to stop production. It is a great mistake to suppose that the wage-earners constitute a majority of the voters. Wage-earners are here today and there tomorrow, and that hinders a large number from voting; a great percentage of them in this

country are foreigners without a voting right. The most patent proof that Socialist leaders know this is so, is that they are compromising their propaganda at every point to win the support of the business class, the small investor. Their campaign papers proclaimed that their interviewers had been assured by Wall Street bond purchasers that they would be just as ready to buy Los Angeles bonds from a socialist as a capitalist administrator; that the present Milwaukee administration has been a boon to the small investor; their reading notices assure their readers in this city that we need not go to the great department stores to buy -- buy rather of So-and-so on Milwaukee Avenue, who will satisfy us quite as well as a "big business" institution. In short, they are making every desperate effort to win the support and to prolong the life of that middle-class which socialist economy says must be ground to pieces, because they know they cannot get a majority without them.

The most that a working-class party could do, even if its politicians remained honest, would be to form a strong faction in the legislatures which might, by combining its vote with one side or another, win certain political or economic palliatives.

But what the working-class can do, when once they grow into a solidified organization, is to show the possessing class, through a sudden cessation of all work, that the whole social structure rests on them; that the possessions of the others are absolutely worthless to them without the workers' activity; that such protests, such strikes, are inherent in the system of property and will continually recur until the whole thing is abolished -- and having shown that effectively, proceed to expropriate.

"But the military power," says the political actionist; "we must get political power, or the military will be used against us!"

Against a real General Strike, the military can do nothing. Oh, true, if you have a Socialist Briand in power, he may declare the workers "public officials" and try to make them serve against themselves! But against the solid wall of an immobile working- mass, even a Briand would be broken.

Meanwhile, until this international awakening, the war will go on as it had been going, in spite of all the hysteria which well-meaning people who do not understand life and its necessities may manifest; in spite of all the shivering that timid leaders have done; in spite of all the reactionary revenges that may be taken; in spite of all the capital that politicians make out of the situation. It will go on because Life cries to live, and Property denies its freedom to live; and Life will not submit.

And should not submit.

It will go on until that day when a self-freed Humanity is able to chant Swinburne's Hymn of Man"

"Glory to Man in the highest,
For Man is the master of Things."

THE DOMINANT IDEA

Mother Earth Publishing Association.
210 East 18th Street.
New York.

1910.

ON EVERYTHING that lives, if one looks searchingly, is limned the shadow line of an idea --- an idea, dead or living, sometimes stronger when dead, with rigid, unswerving lines that mark the living embodiment with the stern immobile cast of the non-living. Daily we move among these unyielding shadows, less pierceable, more enduring than granite, with the blackness of ages in them, dominating living, changing bodies, with dead, unchanging souls. And we meet, also, living souls dominating dying bodies-living ideas regnant over decay and death. Do not imagine that I speak of human life alone. The stamp of persistent or of shifting Will is visible in the grass-blade rooted in its clod of earth, as in the gossamer web of being that floats and swims far over our heads in the free world of air.

Regnant ideas, everywhere! Did you ever see a dead vine bloom? I have seen it. Last summer I trained some morning-glory vines up over a second story balcony; and every day they blew and curled in the wind, their white, purple-dashed faces winking at the sun, radiant with climbing life. Higher every day the green heads crept, carrying their train of spreading fans waving before the sun-seeking blossoms. Then all at once some mischance happened, some cut worm or some mischievous child tore one vine off below, the finest and most ambitious one, of course. In a few hours the leaves hung limp, the sappy stem wilted and began to wither; in a day it was dead, --- all but

the top which still clung longingly to its support, with bright head lifted. I mourned a little for the buds that could never open now, and tied that proud vine whose work in the world was lost. But the next night there was a storm, a heavy, driving storm, with beating rain and blinding lightning. I rose to watch the flashes, and lo! the wonder of the world! In the blackness of the mid-NIGHT, in the fury of wind and rain, the dead vine had flowered. Five white, moon-faced blossoms blew gaily round the skeleton vine, shining back triumphant at the red lightning. I gazed at them in dumb wonder. Dear, dead vine, whose will had been so strong to bloom, that in the hour of its sudden cut-off from the feeding earth, it sent the last sap to its blossoms; and, not waiting for the morning, brought them forth in storm and flash, as white night-glories, which should have been the children of the sun.

In the daylight we all came to look at the wonder, marveling much, and saying, "Surely these must be the last." But every day for three days the dead vine bloomed; and even a week after, when every leaf was dry and brown, and so thin you could see through it, one last bud, dwarfed, weak, a very baby of a blossom, but still white and delicate, with five purple flecks, like those on the live vine beside it, opened and waved at the stars, and waited for the early sun. Over death and decay the Dominant Idea smiled: the vine was in the world to bloom, to bear white trumpet blossoms dashed with purple; and it held its will beyond death.

Our modern teaching is, that ideas are but attendant phenomena, impotent to determine the actions or relations of life, as the image in the glass which should say to the body it reflects: "I shall shape thee." In truth we know that directly the body goes from before the mirror, the transient image is nothingness; but the real body has its being to live,

and will live it, heedless of vanished phantoms of itself, in response to the ever-shifting pressure of things without it.

It is thus that the so-called Materialist Conception of History, the modern Socialists, and a positive majority of Anarchists would have us look upon the world of ideas, --- shifting, unreal reflections, having naught to do in the determination of Man's life, but so many mirror appearances of certain material relations, wholly powerless to act upon the course of material things. Mind to them is in itself a blank mirror, though in fact never wholly blank, because always facing the reality of the material and bound to reflect some shadow. To-day I am somebody, to-morrow somebody else, if the scenes have shifted; my Ego is a gibbering phantom, pirouetting in the glass, gesticulating, transforming, hourly or momentarily, gleaming with the phosphor light of a deceptive unreality, melting like the mist upon the hills. Rocks, fields, woods, streams, houses, goods, flesh, blood, bone, sinew, --- these are realities, with definite parts to play, with essential characters that abide under all changes; but my Ego does not abide; it is manufactured afresh with every change of these.

I think this unqualified determinism of the material is a great and lamentable error in our modern progressive movement; and while I believe it was a wholesome antidote to the long-continued blunder of Middle Age theology, viz., that Mind was an utterly irresponsible entity making laws of its own after the manner of an Absolute Emperor, without logic, sequence, or relation, ruler over matter, and its own supreme determinant, not excepting God (who was himself the same sort of a mind writ large) --- while I do believe that the modern re-conception of Materialism has done a wholesome thing in pricking the bubble of such conceit and restoring man and his "soul" to its "place in

nature," I nevertheless believe that to this also there is a limit; and that the absolute sway of Matter is quite as mischievous an error as the unrelated nature of Mind; even that in its direct action upon personal conduct, it has the more ill effect of the two. For if the doctrine of free-will has raised up fanatics and persecutors, who, assuming that men may be good under all conditions if they merely wish to be so, have sought to persuade other men's wills with threats, fines, imprisonments, torture, the spike, the wheel, the axe, the fagot, in order to make them good and save them against their obdurate wills; if the doctrine of Spiritualism, the soul supreme, has done this, the doctrine of Materialistic Determinism has produced shifting, self-excusing, worthless, parasitical characters, who are this now and that at some other time, and anything and nothing upon principle. "My conditions have made me so, they cry, and there is no more to be said; poor mirror-ghosts! how could they help it! To be sure, the influence of such a character rarely reaches so far as that of the principled persecutor; but for every one of the latter, there are a hundred of these easy, doughy characters, who will fit any baking tin, to whom determinist self-excusing appeals; so the balance of evil between the two doctrines is about maintained.

What we need is a true appraisement of the power and rôle of the Idea. I do not think I am able to give such a true appraisement, I do not think that any one --- even much greater intellects than mine --- will be able to do it for a long time to come. But I am at least able to suggest it, to show its necessity, to give a rude approximation of it.

And first, against the accepted formula of modern Materialism, "Men are what circumstances make them," I set the opposing declaration, "Circumstances are what men

make them"; and I contend that both these things are true up to the point where the combating powers are equalized, or one is overthrown. In other words, my conception of mind, or character, is not that it is a powerless reflection of a momentary condition of stuff and form, but an active modifying agent, reacting on its environment and transforming circumstances, sometimes slightly, sometimes greatly, sometimes, though not often, entirely.

All over the kingdom of life, I have said, one may see dominant ideas working, if one but trains his eyes to look for them and recognize them. In the human world there have been many dominant ideas. I cannot conceive that ever, at any time, the struggle of the body before dissolution can have been aught but agony. If the reasoning that insecurity of conditions, the expectation of suffering, are circumstances which make the soul of man uneasy, shrinking, timid, what answer will you give to the challenge of old Ragnar Lodbrog, to that triumphant death-song hurled out, not by one cast to his death in the heat of battle, but under slow prison torture, bitten by serpents, and yet singing: "The goddesses of death invite me away--now end I my song. The hours of my life are run out. I shall smile when I die"? Nor can it be said that this is an exceptional instance, not to be accounted for by the usual operation of general law, for old King Lodbrog the Skalder did only what his fathers did, and his sons and his friends and his enemies, through long generations; they set the force of a dominant idea, the idea of the super ascendant ego, against the force of torture and of death, ending life as they wished to end it, with a smile on their lips. But a few years ago, did we not read how the helpless Kaffirs, victimized by the English for the contumacy of the Boers, having been forced to dig the trenches wherein for pleasant sport they were to be shot, were lined up on the edge, and seeing death facing

them, began to chant barbaric strains of triumph, smiling as they fell? Let us admit that such exultant defiance was owing to ignorance, to primitive beliefs in gods and hereafters; but let us admit also that it shows the power of an idea dominant.

Everywhere in the shells of dead societies, as in the shells of the sea-slime, we shall see the force of purposive action, of intent within holding its purpose against obstacles without.

I think there is no one in the world who can look upon the steadfast, far-staring face of an Egyptian carving, or read a description of Egypt's monuments, or gaze upon the mummied clay of its old dead men, without feeling that the dominant idea of that people in that age was to be enduring and to work enduring things, with the immobility of their great still sky upon them and the stare of the desert in them. One must feel that whatever other ideas animated them, and expressed themselves in their lives, this was the dominant idea. That which was must remain, no matter at what cost, even if it were to break the ever-lasting hills: an idea which made the live humanity beneath it, born and nurtured in the corns of caste, groan and writhe and gnaw its bandages, till in the fullness of time it passed away: and still the granite mould of it stares with empty eyes out across the world, the stern old memory of the Thing-that-was.

I think no one can look upon the marbles wherein Greek genius wrought the figuring of its soul without feeling an apprehension that the things are going to leap and fly; that in a moment one is like to be set upon by heroes with spears in their hands, by serpents that will coil around him; to be trodden by horses that may trample and flee; to be smitten by these gods that have as little of the idea of stone in them

as a dragon-fly, one instant poised upon a wind-swayed petal edge. I think no one can look upon them without realizing at once that those figures came out of the boil of life; they seem like rising bubbles about to float into the air, but beneath them other bubbles rising, and others, and others, --- there will be no end of it. When one's eyes are upon one group, one feels that behind one, perhaps, a figure is tiptoeing to seize the darts of the air and hurl them on one's head; one must keep whirling to face the miracle that appears about to be wrought --- stone leaping! And this though nearly every one is minus some of the glory the old Greek wrought into it so long ago; even the broken stumps of arms and legs live. And the dominant idea is Activity, and the beauty and strength of it. Change, swift, ever-circling Change! The making of things and the casting of them away, as children cast away their toys, not interested that these shall endure, so that they themselves realize incessant activity. Full of creative power what matter if the creature perished. So there was an endless procession of changing shapes in their schools, their philosophies their dramas, their poems, till at last it wore itself to death. And the marvel passed away from the world. But still their marbles live to show what manner of thoughts dominated them.

And if we wish to, know what master-thought ruled the lives of men when the mediæval period had had time to ripen it, one has only at this day to stray into some quaint, out-of-the-way English village, where a strong old towered Church yet stands in the midst of little straw-thatched cottages, like a brooding mother-hen surrounded by her chickens. Everywhere the greatening of God and the lessening of Man: the Church so looming, the home so little. The search for the spirit, for the enduring thing (not the poor endurance of granite which in the ages crumbles,

but the eternal), the eternal, --- and contempt for the body which perishes, manifest in studied uncleanness, in mortifications of the flesh, as if the spirit should have spat its scorn upon it.

Such was the dominant idea of that middle age which has been too much cursed by modernists. For the men who built the castles and the cathedrals, were men of mighty works, though they made no books, and though their souls spread crippled wings, because of their very endeavors to soar too high. The spirit of voluntary subordination for the accomplishment of a great work, which proclaimed the aspiration of the common soul, --- that was the spirit wrought into the cathedral stones; and it is not wholly to be condemned.

In waking dream, when the shadow-shapes of world-ideas swim before the vision, one sees the Middle-Age Soul an ill-contorted, half-formless thing, with dragon wings and a great, dark, tense face, strained sunward with blind eyes.

If now we look around us to see what idea dominates our own civilization, I do not know that it is even as attractive as this piteous monster of the old darkness. The relativity of things has altered: Man has risen and God has descended. The modern village has better homes and less pretentious churches. Also, the conception of dirt and disease as much-sought afflictions, the patient suffering of which is a meet offering to win God's pardon, has given place to the emphatic promulgation of cleanliness. We have Public School nurses notifying parents that "pediculosis capitis" is a very contagious and unpleasant disease; we have cancer associations gathering up such cancers as have attached themselves to impecunious persons, and carefully experimenting with a view to cleaning them out of the

human race; we have tuberculosis societies attempting the Herculean labor of clearing the Aegean stables of our modern factories of the deadly bacillus, and they have got as far as spittoons with water in them in some factories; and others, and others, and others, which while not yet overwhelmingly successful in their avowed purposes are evidence sufficient that humanity no longer seeks dirt as a means of grace. We laugh at those old superstitions and talk much about exact experimental knowledge. We endeavor to galvanize the Greek corpse, and pretend that we enjoy physical culture. We dabble in many things; but the one great real idea of our age, not copied from any other, not pretended, not raised to life by any conjuration, is the Much Making of Things, --- not the making of beautiful things, not the joy of spending living energy in creative work; rather the shameless, merciless driving and over-driving, wasting and draining of the last lit of energy, only to produce heaps and heaps of things, --- things ugly, things harmful, things useless, and at the best largely unnecessary. To what end are they produced? Mostly the producer does not know; still less does he care. But he is possessed with the idea that he must do it, every one is doing it, and every year the making of things goes on more and faster; there are mountain ranges of things made and making, and still men go about desperately seeking to increase the list of created things, to start fresh heaps and to add to the existing heaps. And with what agony of body, under what stress and strain of danger and fear of danger, with what mutilations and maimings and lamings they struggle on, dashing themselves out against these rocks of wealth! Verily, if the vision of the Mediæval Soul is painful in its blind staring and pathetic striving, grotesque in its senseless tortures, the Soul of the Modern is most amazing with its restless, nervous eyes, ever searching the corners of the universe, its restless,

nervous hands ever reaching and grasping for some useless toil.

And certainly the presence of things in abundance, things empty and things vulgar and things absurd, as well as things convenient and useful, has produced the desire for the possession of things, the exaltation of the possession of things. Go through the business street of any city, where the tilted edges of the strata of things are exposed to gaze, and look at the faces of the people as they pass, --- not at the hungry and smitten ones who fringe the sidewalks and plain dolefully for alms, but at the crowd, --- and see what idea is written on their faces. On those of the women, from the ladies of the horse-shows to the shop girls out of the factory, there is a sickening vanity, a consciousness of their clothes, as of some jackdaw in borrowed feathers. Look for the pride and glory of the free, strong, beautiful body, lithe-moving and powerful. You will not see it. You will see mincing steps, bodies tilted to show the cut of a skirt, simpering, smirking faces, with eyes cast about seeking admiration for the gigantic bow of ribbon in the overdressed hair. In the caustic words of an acquaintance, to whom I once said, as we walked, "Look at the amount of vanity on all these women's faces," "No: look at the little bit of womanhood showing out of all that vanity!"

And on the faces of the men, coarseness! Coarse desires for coarse things, and lots of them: the stamp is set so unmistakably that "the wayfarer though a fool need not err therein." Even the frightful anxiety and restlessness begotten of the creation of all this, is less distasteful than the abominable expression of lust for the things created.

Such is the dominant idea of the western world, at least in these our days. You may see it wherever you look,

impressed plainly on things and on men; very like if you look in the glass, you will see it there. And if some archaeologist of a long future shall some day unbury the bones of our civilization, where ashes or flood shall have entombed it, he will see this frightful idea stamped on the factory walls he shall uncover, with their rows and rows of square light-holes, their tons upon tons of toothed steel, grinning out of the skull of this our life; its acres of silk and velvet, its square miles of tinsel and shoddy. No glorious marbles of nymphs and fawns, whose dead images are yet so sweet that one might wish to kiss them still; no majestic figures of winged horses, with men's faces and lions' paws casting their colossal symbolism in a mighty spell forward upon Time, as those old stone chimeras of Babylon yet do; but meaningless iron giants, of wheels and teeth, whose secret is forgotten, but whose business was to grind men tip, and spit them out as housefuls of woven stuffs, bazaars of trash, wherethrough other men might wade. The statues he shall find will bear no trace of mythic dream or mystic symbol; they will be statues of merchants and ironmasters and militia-men, in tailored coats and pantaloons and proper hats and shoes.

But the dominant idea of the age and land does not necessarily mean the dominant idea of any single life. I doubt not that in those long gone days, far away by the banks of the still Nile, in the abiding shadow of the pyramids, under the heavy burden of other men's stolidity, there went to and fro restless, active, rebel souls who hated all that the ancient society stood for, and with burning hearts sought to overthrow it.

I am sure that in the midst of all the agile Greek intellect created, there were those who went about with downbent eyes, caring nothing for it all, seeking some higher

revelation, willing to abandon the joys of life, so that they drew near to some distant, unknown perfection their fellows knew not of. I am certain that in the dark ages, when most men prayed and cowered, and beat and bruised themselves, and sought afflictions, like that St. Teresa who still, "Let me suffer, or die," there were some, many, who looked on the world as a chance jest, who despised or pitied their ignorant comrades, and tried to compel the answers of the universe to their questionings, by the patient, quiet searching which came to be Modern Science. I am sure there were hundreds thousands of them, of whom we have never heard.

And now, to-day, though the Society about us is dominated by Thing-Worship, and will stand so marked for all time, that is no reason any single soul should be. Because the one thing seemingly worth doing to my neighbor, to all my neighbors, is to pursue dollars, that is no reason I should pursue dollars. Because my neighbors conceive they need an inordinate heap of carpets, furniture, clocks, china, glass, tapestries, mirrors, clothes, jewels and servants to care for them, and detectives to, keep an eye on the servants, judges to try the thieves, and politicians to appoint the judges, jails to punish the culprits, and wardens to watch in the jails, and tax collectors to gather support for the wardens, and fees for the tax collectors, and strong houses to hold the fees, so that none but the guardians thereof can make off with them, --- and therefore, to keep this host of parasites, need other men to work for them, and make the fees; because my neighbors want all this, is that any reason I should devote myself to such abarren folly? and bow my neck to serve to keep up the gaudy show?

Must we, because the Middle Age was dark and blind and brutal, throw away the one good thing it wrought into the

fibre of Man, that the inside of a human being was worth more than the outside? that to conceive a higher thing than oneself and live toward that is the only way of living worthily? The goal strived for should, and must, be a very different one from that which led the mediæval fanatics to despise the body and belabor it with hourly crucifixions. But one can recognize the claims and the importance of the body without therefore sacrificing truth, honor, simplicity, and faith, to the vulgar gauds of body-service, whose very decorations debase the thing they might be supposed to exalt.

I have said before that the doctrine that men are nothing and circumstances all, has been, and is, the bane of our modern social reform movements.

Our youth, themselves animated by the spirit of the old teachers who believed in the supremacy of ideas, even in the very hour of throwing away that teaching, look with burning eyes to the social East, and believe that wonders of revolution are soon to be accomplished. In their enthusiasm they foreread the gospel of Circumstances to mean that very soon the pressure of material development must break down the social system --- they give the rotten thing but a few years to last; and then, they themselves shall witness the transformation, partake in its joys. The few years pass away and nothing happens; enthusiasm cools. Behold these same idealists then, successful business men, professionals, property owners, money leaders, creeping into the social ranks they once despised, pitifully, contemptibly, at the skirts of some impecunious personage to whom they have lent money, or done some professional service gratis; behold them lying, cheating, tricking, flattering, buying and selling themselves for any frippery, any cheap little pretense. The Dominant Social Idea has seized them, their

lives are swallowed up in it; and when you ask the reason why, they tell you that Circumstances compelled them so to do. If you quote their lies to them, they smile with calm complacency, assure you that when Circumstances demand lies, lies are a great deal better than truth; that tricks are sometimes more effective than honest dealing; that flattering and duping do not matter, if the end to be attained is desirable; and that under existing "Circumstances" life isn't possible without all this; that it is going to be possible whenever Circumstances have made truth-telling easier than lying, but till then a man must look out for himself, by all means. And so the cancer goes on rotting away the moral fibre, and the man becomes a lump, a squash, a piece of slippery slime taking all shapes and losing all shapes, according to what particular hole or corner he wishes to glide into, --- a disgusting embodiment of the moral bankruptcy begotten by Thing-Worship.

Had he been dominated by a less material conception of life, had his will not been rotted by the intellectual reasoning of it out of its existence, by its acceptance of its own nothingness, the unselfish aspirations of his earlier years would have grown and strengthened by exercise and habit; and his protest against the time might have been enduringly written, and to some purpose.

Will it be said that the Pilgrim fathers did not hew, out of the New England ice and granite, the idea which gathered them together out of their scattered and obscure English villages, and drove them in their frail ships over the Atlantic in midwinter, to cut their way against all opposing forces? Were they not common men, subject to the operation of common law? Will it be said that Circumstances aided them? When death, disease, hunger, and cold had done their worst, not one of those remaining was willing by an easy lie

to return to material comfort and the possibility of long days.

Had our modern social revolutionists the vigorous and undaunted conception of their own powers that these had, our social movements would not be such pitiful abortions, -- core-rotten even before the outward flecks appear.

"Give a labor leader a political job, and the system becomes all right," laugh our enemies; and they point mockingly to Terence Powderly acid his like; and they quote John Burns, who as soon as he went into Parliament declared: "The time of the agitator is past; the time of the legislator has come." "Let an Anarchist marry an heiress, and the country is safe," they sneer: --- and they have the right to sneer. But would they have that right, could they have it, if our lives were not in the first instance dominated by more insistent desires than those we would fain have others think we hold most dear?

It is the old story: "Aim at the stars, and you may hit the top of the gatepost; but aim at the ground and you will hit the ground."

It is not to be supposed that any one will attain to the full realization of what he purposes, even when those purposes do not involve united action with others; he will fall short; he will in some measure be overcome by contending or inert opposition. But something he will attain, if he continues to aim high.

What, then, would I have? you ask. I would have men invest themselves with the dignity of an aim higher than the chase for wealth; choose a thing to do in life outside of the making of things, and keep it in mind, --- not for a day, nor

a year, but for a life-time. And then keep faith with themselves! Not be a light-o'-love, to-day professing this and to-morrow that, and easily reading oneself out of both whenever it becomes convenient; not advocating a thing to-day and to-morrow kissing its enemies' sleeve, with that weak, coward cry in the mouth, "Circumstances make me." Take a good look into yourself, and if you love Things and the power and the plenitude of Things better than you love your own dignity, human dignity, Oh, say so, say so! Say it to yourself, and abide by it. But do not blow hot and cold in one breath. Do not try to be a social reformer and a respected possessor of Things at the same time. Do not preach the straight and narrow way while going joyously upon the wide one. Preach the wide one, or do not preach at all; but do not fool yourself by saying you would like to help usher in a free society, but you cannot sacrifice an armchair for it. Say honestly, "I love arm-chairs better than free men, and pursue them because I choose; not because circumstances make me. I love hats, large, large hats, with many feathers and great bows; and I would rather have those hats than trouble myself about social dreams that will never be accomplished in my day. The world worships hats, and I wish to worship with them."

But if you choose the liberty and pride and strength of the single soul, and the free fraternization of men, as the purpose which your life is to make manifest then do not sell it for tinsel. Think that your soul is strong and will hold its way; and slowly, through bitter struggle perhaps the strength will grow. And the foregoing of possessions for which others barter the last possibility of freedom will become easy.

At the end of life you may close your eyes saying: "I have not been dominated by the Dominant Idea of my Age; I

have chosen mine own allegiance, and served it. I have proved by a lifetime that there is that in man which saves him from the absolute tyranny of Circumstance, which in the end conquers and remoulds Circumstance, the immortal fire of Individual Will, which is the salvation of the Future."

Let us have Men, Men who will say a word to their souls and keep it --- keep it not when it is easy, but keep it when it is hard --- keep it when the storm roars and there is a white-streaked sky and blue thunder before, and one's eyes are blinded and one's ears deafened with the war of opposing things; and keep it under the long leaden sky and the gray dreariness that never lifts. Hold unto the last: that is what it means to have a Dominant Idea, which Circumstance cannot break. And such men make and unmake Circumstance.

THE ECONOMIC TENDENCY OF FREETHOUGHT

Freethought in America was an anti-clerical, anti-Christian movement which sought to separate the church and state in order to leave religious matters to the conscience and reasoning ability of the individual involved. Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912) was prominent both as a feminist and as a freethinker. The following article, reprinted from Benjamin Tucker's periodical *Liberty*, was originally delivered by de Cleyre as a lecture before the Boston Secular Society. It is an excellent example of the interrelationship between the individualist-feminist view of the church and of the state. In her essay "Sex Slavery," de Cleyre reiterated this two-pronged attack. She wrote: "Let every woman ask herself, 'Why am I the Slave of Man?' . . . There are two reasons why, and these are ultimately reducible to a single principle -- the authoritarian supreme power GOD-idea, and its two instruments: the Church -- that is, the priests -- and the State -- that is, the legislators."

Wendy McElroy Freedom, Feminism and the State)

FRIENDS,--On page 286, Belford-Clarke edition, of the "Rights of Man," the words which I propose as a text for this discourse may be found. Alluding to the change in the condition of France brought about by the Revolution of '93, Thomas Paine says:

"The mind of the nation had changed beforehand, and a new order of things had naturally followed a new order of thoughts."

Two hundred and eighty-nine years ago, a man, a student, a scholar, a thinker, a philosopher, was roasted alive for the love of God and the preservation of the authority of the Church; and as the hungry flames curled round the crisping flesh of martyred Bruno, licking his blood with their wolfish tongues, they shadowed forth the immense vista of "a new order of things": they lit the battle-ground where Freedom fought her first successful revolt against authority.

That battle-ground was eminently one of thought. Religious freedom was the rankling question of the day. "Liberty of conscience! Liberty of conscience! Non-interference between worshipper and worshipped!" That was the voice that cried out of dungeons and dark places, from under the very foot of prince and ecclesiastic. And why? Because the authoritative despotisms of that day were universally ecclesiastic despotisms; because Church aggression was grinding every human right beneath its heel, and every other minor oppressor was but a tool in the hands of the priesthood; because Tyranny was growing towards its ideal and crushing out of existence the very citadel of Liberty, -- individuality of thought; Ecclesiasticism had a corner on ideas.

But individuality is a thing that cannot be killed. Quietly it may be, but just as certainly, silently, perhaps, as the growth of a blade of grass, it offers its perpetual and unconquerable protest against the dictates of Authority. And this silent, unconquerable, menacing thing, that balked God, provoked him to the use of rack, thumb-screw, stock, hanging, drowning, burning, and other instruments of "infinite mercy," in the seventeenth century fought a successful battle against that authority which sought to control this fortress of freedom. It established its right to be. It overthrew that portion of government which attempted to guide the brains of men. It "broke the corner." It declared and maintained the anarchy, or non-rulership, of thought.

Now you who so fear the word an-arche, remember! the whole combat of the seventeenth century, of which you are justly proud, and to which you never tire of referring, was waged for the sole purpose of realizing anarchism in the realm of thought.

It was not an easy struggle,--this battle of the quiet thinkers against those who held all the power, and all the force of numbers, and all of the strength of tortures! It was not easy for them to speak out of the midst of faggot flames, "We believe differently, and we have the right". But on their side stood Truth! And there lies more inequality between her and Error, more strength for Truth, more weakness for Falsehood, than all the fearful disparity of power that lies between the despot and the victim. So theirs was the success. So they paved the way for the grand political combat of the eighteenth century.

Mark you! The seventeenth century made the eighteenth possible, for it was the "new order of thoughts," which gave birth to a "new order of things". Only by deposing priests,

only by rooting out their authority, did it become logical to attack the tyranny of kings: for, under the old regime, kingcraft had ever been the tool of priestcraft, and in the order of things but a secondary consideration. But with the downfall of the latter, kingcraft rose into prominence as the pre-eminent despot, and against the pre-eminent despot revolt always arises.

The leaders of that revolt were naturally those who carried the logic of their freethought into the camp of the dominant oppressor; who thought, spoke, wrote freely of the political fetich, as their predecessors had of the religious mockery; who did not waste their time hugging themselves in the camps of dead enemies, but accepted the live issue of the day, pursued the victories of Religion's martyrs, and carried on the war of Liberty in those lines most necessary to the people at the time and place. The result was the overthrow of the principle of kingcraft. (Not that all kingdoms have been overthrown, but find me one in a hundred of the inhabitants of a kingdom who will not laugh at the farce of the "divine appointment" of monarchs.) So wrought the new order of thoughts.

I do not suppose for a moment that Giordano Bruno or Martin Luther foresaw the immense scope taken in by their doctrine of individual judgment. From the experience of men up to that date it was simply impossible that they could foresee its tremendous influence upon the action of the eighteenth century, much less upon the nineteenth. Neither was it possible that those bold writers who attacked the folly of "hereditary government" should calculate the effects which certainly followed as their thoughts took form and shape in the social body. Neither do I believe it possible that any brain that lives can detail the working of a thought into the future, or push its logic to an ultimate. But

that many who think, or think they think, do not carry their syllogisms even to the first general conclusion, I am also forced to believe. If they did, the freethinkers of today would not be digging, mole-like, through the substratum of dead issues; they would not waste their energies gathering the ashes of fires burnt out two centuries ago; they would not lance their shafts at that which is already bleeding at the arteries; they would not range battalions of brains against a crippled ghost that is "laying" itself as fast as it decently can, while a monster neither ghostly nor yet like the rugged Russian bear, the armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger, but rather like a terrible anaconda, steel-muscled and iron-jawed, is winding its horrible folds around the human bodies of the world, and breathing its devouring breath into the faces of children. If they did, they would understand that the paramount question of the day is not political, is not religious, but is economic. That the crying-out demand of today is for a circle of principles that shall forever make it impossible for one man to control another by controlling the means of his existence. They would realize that, unless the freethought movement has a practical utility in rendering the life of man more bearable, unless it contains a principle which, worked out, will free him from the all-oppressive tyrant, it is just as complete and empty a mockery as the Christian miracle or Pagan myth. Eminently is this the age of utility; and the freethinker who goes to the Hovel of Poverty with metaphysical speculations as to the continuity of life, the transformation of matter, etc.; who should say, "My dear friend, your Christian brother is mistaken; you are not doomed to an eternal hell; your condition here is your misfortune and can't be helped, but when you are dead, there's an end of it," is of as little use in the world as the most irrational religionist. To him would the hovel justly reply: "Unless you can show me something in freethought which commends itself to the needs of the

race, something which will adjust my wrongs, 'put down the mighty from his seat,' then go sit with priest and king, and wrangle out your metaphysical opinions with those who mocked our misery before."

The question is, does freethought contain such a principle? And right here permit me to introduce a sort of supplementary text, taken, I think, from a recent letter of Cardinal Manning, but if not Cardinal Manning, then some other of the various dunce-capped gentlemen who recently "biled" over the Bruno monument.

Says the Cardinal: "Freethought leads to Atheism, to the destruction of social and civil order, and to the overthrow of government." I accept the gentleman's statement; I credit him with much intellectual acumen for perceiving that which many freethinkers have failed to perceive: accepting it, I shall do my best to prove it, and then endeavor to show that this very iconoclastic principle is the salvation of the economic slave and the destruction of the economic tyrant.

First: does freethought lead to Atheism?

Freethought, broadly defined, is the right to believe as the evidence, coming in contact with the mind, forces it to believe. This implies the admission of any and all evidence bearing upon any subject which may come up for discussion. Among the subjects that come up for discussion, the moment so much is admitted, is the existence of a God.

Now, the idea of God is, in the first place, an exceeding contradiction. The sign God, so Deists tell us, was invented to express the inexpressible, the incomprehensible and infinite! Then they immediately set about defining it. These

definitions prove to be about as self-contradictory and generally conflicting as the original absurdity. But there is a particular set of attributes which form a sort of common ground for all these definitions. They tell us that God is possessed of supreme wisdom, supreme justice, and supreme power. In all the catalogue of creeds, I never yet heard of one that had not for its nucleus unlimited potency.

Now, let us take the deist upon his own ground and prove to him either that his God is limited as to wisdom, or limited as to justice, or limited as to power, or else there is no such thing as justice.

First, then, God, being all-just, wishes to do justice; being all-wise, knows what justice is; being all-powerful, can do justice. Why then injustice? Either your God can do justice and won't or doesn't know what justice is, or he can not do it. The immediate reply is: "What appears to be injustice in our eyes, in the sight of omniscience may be justice. God's ways are not our ways."

Oh, but if he is the all-wise pattern, they should be; what is good enough for God ought to be good enough for man; but what is too mean for man won't do in a God. Else there is no such thing as justice or injustice, and every murder, every robbery, every lie, every crime in the calendar is right and upon that one premise of supreme authority you upset every fact in existence.

What right have you to condemn a murderer if you assume him necessary to "God's plan"? What logic can command the return of stolen property, or the branding of a thief, if the Almighty decreed it? Yet here, again, the Deist finds himself in a dilemma, for to suppose crime necessary to God's purpose is to impeach his wisdom or deny his

omnipotence by limiting him as to means. The whole matter, then, hinges upon the one attribute of authority of the central idea of God.

But, you say, what has all this to do with the economic tendency of freethought? Everything. For upon that one idea of supreme authority is based every tyranny that was ever formulated. Why? Because, if God is, no human being is a thing that lives, ever had a right! He simply had a privilege, bestowed, granted, conferred, gifted to him, for such a length of time as God sees fit.

This is the logic of my textator, the logic of Catholicism, the only logic of Authoritarianism. The Catholic Church says: "You who are blind, be grateful that you can hear: God could have made you deaf as well. You who are starving, be thankful that you can breathe; God could deprive you of air as well as food. You who are sick, be grateful that you are not dead: God is very merciful to let you live at all. Under all times and circumstances take what you can get, and be thankful." These are the beneficences, the privileges, given by Authority.

Note the difference between a right and a privilege. A right, in the abstract, is a fact; it is not a thing to be given, established, or conferred; it is. Of the exercise of a right power may deprive me; of the right itself, never. Privilege, in the abstract, does not exist; there is no such thing. Rights recognized, privilege is destroyed.

But, in the practical, the moment you admit a supreme authority, you have denied rights. Practically the supremacy has all the rights, and no matter what the human race possesses, it does so merely at the caprice of that authority. The exercise of the respiratory function is not a right, but a

privilege granted by God; the use of the soil is not a right, but a gracious allowance of Deity; the possession of product as the result of labor is not a right, but a boon bestowed. And the thievery of pure air, the withholding of land from use, the robbery of toil, are not wrongs (for if you have no rights, you cannot be wronged), but benign blessings bestowed by "the Giver of all Good" upon the air-thief, the landlord, and the labor-robber.

Hence the freethinker who recognizes the science of astronomy, the science of mathematics, and the equally positive and exact science of justice, is logically forced to the denial of supreme authority. For no human being who observes and reflects can admit a supreme tyrant and preserve his self-respect. No human mind can accept the dogma of divine despotism and the doctrine of eternal justice at the same time; they contradict each other, and it takes two brains to hold them. The cardinal is right: freethought does logically lead to atheism, if by atheism he means the denial of supreme authority.

I will now take his third statement, leaving the second for the present; freethought, he says, leads to the overthrow of government. I am sensible that the majority of you will be ready to indignantly deny the cardinal's asseveration; I know that the most of my professedly atheistic friends shrink sensitively from the slightest allusion that sounds like an attack on government; I am aware that there are many of you who could eagerly take this platform to speak upon "the glorious rights and privileges of American citizenship"; to expatiate upon that "noble bulwark of our liberties--the constitution"; to defend "that peaceful weapon of redress, the ballot"; to soar off rhapsodically about that "starry banner that floats 'over the land of the free and the home of the brave.'" We are so free! and so brave! We don't

hang Brunos at the stake any more for holding heretical opinions on religious subjects. No! But we imprison men for discussing the social question, and we hang men for discussing the economic question! We are so very free and so very brave in this country! "Ah"! we say in our nineteenth century freedom (?) and bravery (?), "it was a weak God, a poor God, a miserable, quaking God, whose authority had to be preserved by the tortuous death of a creature!" Aye! the religious question is dead, and the stake is no longer fashionable. But is it a strong State, a brave State, a conscience-proud State, whose authority demands the death of five creatures? Is the scaffold better than the faggot? Is it a very free mind which will read that infamous editorial in the Chicago "Herald": "It is not necessary to hold that Parsons was legally, rightfully, or wisely hanged: he was mightily hanged. The State, the sovereign, need give no reasons; the State need abide by no law; the State is the law!"--to read that and applaud, and set the Cain-like curse upon your forehead and the red "damned spot" upon your hand? Do you know what you do?--Craven, you worship the fiend, Authority, again! True, you have not the ghosts, the incantations, the paraphernalia and mummery of the Church. No: but you have the "precedents," the "be it enacteds," the red-tape, the official uniforms of the State; and you are just as bad a slave to statecraft as your Irish Catholic neighbor is to popecraft. Your Government becomes your God, from whom you accept privileges, and in whose hands all rights are vested. Once more the individual has no rights; once more intangible, irresponsible authority assumes the power of deciding what is right and what is wrong. Once more the race must labor under just such restricted conditions as the law--the voice of the Authority, the governmentalist's bible--shall dictate. Once more it says: "You who have not meat, be grateful that you have bread; many are not allowed even so much. You who

work sixteen hours a day, be glad it is not twenty; many have not the privilege to work. You who have not fuel, be thankful that you have shelter; many walk the street! And you, street-walkers, be grateful that there are well-lighted dens of the city; in the country you might die upon the roadside. Goaded human race! Be thankful for your goad. Be submissive to the Lord, and kiss the hand that lashes you!" Once more misery is the diet of the many, while the few receive, in addition to their rights, those rights of their fellows which government has wrested from them. Once more the hypothesis is that the Government, or Authority, or God in his other form, owns all the rights, and grants privileges according to its sweet will.

The freethinker who should determine to question it would naturally suppose that one difficulty in the old investigation was removed. He would say, "at least this thing Government possesses the advantage of being of the earth,-earthy. This is something I can get hold of, argue, reason, discuss with. God was an indefinable, arbitrary, irresponsible something in the clouds, to whom I could not approach nearer than to his agent, the priest. But this dictator surely I shall be able to meet it on something like possible ground." Vain delusion! Government is as unreal, as intangible, as unapproachable as God. Try it, if you don't believe it. Seek through the legislative halls of America and find, if you can, the Government. In the end you will be doomed to confer with the agent, as before. Why, you have the statutes! Yes, but the statutes are not the government; where is the power that made the statutes? Oh, the legislators! Yes, but the legislator, per se, has no more power to make a law for me than I for him. I want the power that gave him the power. I shall talk with him; I go to the White House; I say: "Mr. Harrison, are you the government?" "No, madam, I am its representative." "Well,

where is the principal?-Who is the government?" "The people of the United States." "The whole people?" "The whole people." "You, then, are the representative of the people of the United States. May I see your certificate of authorization?" "Well, no; I have none. I was elected." "Elected by whom? the whole people?" "Oh, no. By some of the people,--some of the voters." (Mr. Garrison being a pious Presbyterian, he would probably add: "The majority vote of the whole was for another man, but I had the largest electoral vote.") "Then you are the representative of the electoral college, not of the whole people, nor the majority of the people, nor even a majority of the voters. But suppose the largest number of ballots cast had been for you: you would represent the majority of the voters, I suppose. But the majority, sir, is not a tangible thing; it is an unknown quantity. An agent is usually held accountable to his principals. If you do not know the individuals who voted for you, then you do not know for whom you are acting, nor to whom you are accountable. If any body of persons has delegated to you any authority, the disposal of any right or part of a right (supposing a right to be transferable), you must have received it from the individuals composing that body; and you must have some means of learning who those individuals are, or you cannot know for whom you act, and you are utterly irresponsible as an agent.

"Furthermore, such a body of voters can not give into your charge any rights but their own; by no possible jugglery of logic can they delegate the exercise of any function which they themselves do not control. If any individual on earth has a right to delegate his powers to whomsoever he chooses, then every other individual has an equal right; and if each has an equal right, then none can choose an agent for another, without that other's consent. Therefore, if the

power of government resides in the whole people, and out of that whole all but one elected you as their agent, you would still have no authority whatever to act for the one. The individuals composing the minority who did not appoint you have just the same rights and powers as those composing the majority who did; and if they prefer not to delegate them at all, then neither you, nor any one, has any authority whatever to coerce them into accepting you, or any one, as their agent--for upon your own basis the coercive authority resides, not in the majority, not in any proportion of the people, but in the whole people."

Hence "the overthrow of government" as a coercive power, thereby denying God in another form.

Upon this overthrow follows, the Cardinal says, the disruption of social and civil order!

Oh! it is amusing to hear those fellows rave about social order! I could laugh to watch them as they repeat the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" "Down on your knees and adore this beautiful statue of Order," but that I see this hideous, brainless, disproportion idol come rolled on the wheels of Juggernaut over the weak and the helpless, the sorrowful and the despairing. Hate burns, then, where laughter dies.

Social Order! Not long ago I saw a letter from a young girl to a friend; a young girl whose health had been broken behind a counter, where she stood eleven and twelve hours a day, six days in the week, for the magnificent sum of \$5. The letter said: "Can't you help me to a position? My friends want me to marry a man I do not like, because he has money. Can't you help me? I can sew, or keep books. I will even try clerking again rather than that!" Social Order!

When the choice for a young girl lies between living by inches and dying by yards at manual labor, or becoming the legal property of a man she does not like because he has money!

Walk up Fifth Avenue in New York some hot summer day, among the magnificent houses of the rich; hear your footsteps echo for blocks with the emptiness of it! Look at places going to waste, space, furniture, draperies, elegance,--all useless. Then take a car down town; go among the homes of the producers of that idle splendor; find six families living in a five-room house,--the sixth dwelling in the cellar. Space is not wasted here,--these human vermin rub each other's elbows in the stifling narrows; furniture is not wasted,--these sit upon the floor; no echoing emptiness, no idle glories! No--but wasting, strangling, choking, vicious human life! Dearth of vitality there--dearth of space for it here! This is social order!

Next winter, when the 'annual output' of coal has been mined, when the workmen are clenching their hard fists with impotent anger, when the coal in the ground lies useless, hark to the cry that will rise from the freezing western prairies, while the shortened commodity goes up, up, up, eight, nine, ten, eleven dollars a ton; and while the syndicate's pockets are filling, the grave-yards fill, and fill. Moralize on the preservation of social order!

Go back to President Grant's administration,--that very "pure republican" administration;--see the settlers of the Mussel Slough compelled to pay thirty-five, forty dollars an acre for the land reclaimed from almost worthlessness by hard labor,--and to whom? To a corporation of men who never saw it! whose "grant" lay a hundred miles away, but who, for reasons of their own, saw fit to hire the "servants

of the people" to change it so. See those who refused to pay it shot down by order of "the State"; watch their blood smoke upward to the heavens, sealing the red seal of justice against their murderers; and then -- watch a policeman arrest a shoeless tramp for stealing a pair of boots. Say to your self, this is civil order and must be preserved. Go talk with political leaders, big or little, on methods of "making the slate," and "railroading" it through the ward caucus or the national convention. Muse on that "peaceful weapon of redress," the ballot. Consider the condition of the average "American sovereign" and of his "official servant," and prate then of civil order.

Subvert the social and civil order! Aye, I would destroy, to the last vestige, this mockery of order, this travesty upon justice! Break up the home? Yes, every home that rests on slavery! Every marriage that represents the sale and transfer of the individuality of one of its parties to the other! Every institution, social or civil, that stands between man and his right; every tie that renders one a master, another a serf; every law, every statute, every be-it-enacted that represents tyranny; everything you call American privilege that can only exist at the expense of international right. Now cry out, "Nihilist--disintegrationist!" Say that I would isolate humanity, reduce society to its elemental state, make men savage! It is not true. But rather than see this devastating, cankering, enslaving system you call social order go on, rather than help to keep alive the accursed institutions of Authority, I would help to reduce every fabric in the social structure to its native element.

But is it true that freedom means disintegration? Only to that which is bad. Only to that which ought to disintegrate.

What is the history of free thought?

Is it not so, that since we have Anarchy there, since all the children of the brain are legitimate, that there has been less waste of intellectual energy, more cooperation in the scientific world, truer economy in utilizing the mentalities of men, than there ever was, or ever could be, under authoritative dominion of the church? Is it not true that with the liberty of thought, Truth has been able to prove herself without the aid of force? Does not error die from want of vitality when there is no force to keep it alive? Is it not true that natural attractions have led men into associative groups, who can best follow their chosen paths of thought, and give the benefit of their studies to mankind with better economy than if some coercive power had said, "You think in this line--you in that"; or what the majority had by ballot decided it was best to think about?

I think it is true. Follow your logic out; can you not see that true economy lies in Liberty,--whether it be in thought or action? It is not slavery that has made men unite for cooperative effort. It is not slavery that produced the means of transportation, communication, production, and exchange, and all the thousand and one economic, or what ought to be economic, contrivances of civilization. No--nor is it government. It is Self-interest. And would not self-interest exist if that institution which stands between man and his right to the free use of the soil were annihilated? Could you not see the use of a bank if the power which renders it possible for the national banks to control land, production and everything else, were broken down?

Do you suppose the producers of the east and west couldn't see the advantage of a railroad, if the authority which makes a systematizer like Gould or Vanderbilt a curse where swept away? Do you imagine that government

has a corner on ideas, now that the Church is overthrown; and that the people could not learn the principles of economy, if this intangible giant which has robbed and slaughtered them, wasted their resources and distributed opportunities so unjustly, were destroyed? I don't think so. I believe that legislators as a rule have been monuments of asinine stupidity, whose principal business has been to hinder those who were not stupid, and get paid for doing it. I believe that the so-called brainy financial men would rather buy the legislators than be the legislators; and the real thinkers, the genuine improvers of society, have as little to do with law and politics as they conveniently can.

I believe that "Liberty is the mother, not the daughter, of Order."

"But," some one will say, "what of the criminals? Suppose a man steals." In the first place, a man won't steal, ordinarily, unless that which he steals is something he can not as easily get without stealing; in liberty the cost of stealing would involve greater difficulties than producing, and consequently he would not be apt to steal. But suppose a man steals. Today you go to a representative of that power which has robbed you of the earth, of the right of free contract of the means of exchange, taxes you for everything you eat or wear (the meanest form of robbery),--you go to him for redress from a thief! It is about as logical as the Christian lady whose husband had been "removed" by Divine Providence, and who thereupon prayed to said Providence to "comfort the widow and the fatherless." In freedom we would not institute a wholesale robber to protect us from petty larceny. Each associative group would probably adopt its own methods of resisting aggression, that being the only crime. For myself, I think criminals should be treated as sick people.

"But suppose you have murderers, brutes, all sorts of criminals. Are you not afraid to lose the restraining influence of the law?" First, I think it can be shown that the law makes ten criminals where it restrains one. On that basis it would not, as a matter of policy merely, be an economical institution. Second, this is not a question of expediency, but of right. In antebellum days the proposition was not, Are the blacks good enough to be free? but, Have they the right? So today the question is not, Will outrages result from freeing humanity? but, Has it the right to life, the means of life, the opportunities of happiness?

In the transition epoch, surely crimes will come. Did the seed of tyranny ever bear good fruit? And can you expect Liberty to undo in a moment what Oppression has been doing for ages? Criminals are the crop of depots, as much a necessary expression of the evil in society as an ulcer is of disease in the blood; and so long as the taint of the poison remains, so long there will be crimes.

"For it must needs that offences come, but woe to him through whom the offence cometh." The crimes of the future are the harvests sown of the ruling classes of the present. Woe to the tyrant who shall cause the offense!

Sometimes I dream of this social change. I get a streak of faith in Evolution, and the good in man. I paint a gradual slipping out of the now, to that beautiful then, where there are neither kings, presidents, landlords, national bankers, stockbrokers, railroad magnates, patentright monopolists, or tax and title collectors; where there are no over-stocked markets or hungry children, idle counters and naked creatures, splendor and misery, waste and need. I am told this is farfetched idealism, to paint this happy, povertyless,

crimeless, diseaseless world; I have been told I "ought to be behind the bars" for it.

Remarks of that kind rather destroy the white streak of faith. I lose confidence in the slipping process, and am forced to believe that the rulers of the earth are sowing a fearful wind, to reap a most terrible whirlwind. When I look at this poor, bleeding, wounded World, this world that has suffered so long, struggled so much, been scourged so fiercely, thorn-pierced so deeply, crucified so cruelly, I can only shake my head and remember:

The giant is blind, but he's thinking: and his locks are growing, fast.

SEX SLAVERY

NIGHT in a prison cell! A chair, a bed, a small washstand, four blank walls, ghastly in the dim light from the corridor without, a narrow window, barred and sunken in the stone, a grated door! Beyond its hideous iron latticework, within the ghastly walls, -a man! An old man, gray-haired and wrinkled, lame and suffering. There he sits, in his great loneliness, shut in front all the earth. There he walks, to and fro, within his measured space, apart from all he loves! 'There, for every night in five long years to come, he will walk alone, while the white age-flakes drop upon his head, while the last years of the winter of life gather and pass, and his body draws near the ashes. Every night, for five long years to come, he will sit alone, this chattel slave, whose hard toll is taken by the State, -and without recompense save that the Southern planter gave his Negroes, -every night he will sit there so within those four white walls. Every night, for five long years to come, a suffering woman will lie upon her bed, longing, longing for the end of those three thousand days; longing for the kind face, the patient hand, that in so many years had never failed her. Every night, for five long years to come, the proud spirit must rebel, the loving heart must bleed, the broken home must be desecrated. As I am speaking now, as you are listening, there within the cell of that accursed penitentiary whose stones have soaked tip the sufferings of so many victims, murdered, as truly as any outside their walls, by that slow rot which eats away existence. inch-meal, -as I am speaking now, as you are listening, there sits Moses Harman!

Why? Why, when murder now is stalking in your streets, when dens of infamy are so thick within your city that competition has forced down the price of prostitution to the level of the wages Of Your starving shirt makers; when

robbers sit in State and national Senate and House, when the boasted "bulwark of our liberties," the elective franchise, has become a U. S. dice-box, wherewith great gamblers play away your liberties; when debauchees of the worst type hold all your public offices and dine off the food of fools who support them, why, then, sits Moses Harman there within his prison cell? If he is so great a criminal, why is he not with the rest of the spawn of crime, dining at Delmonico's or enjoying a trip to Europe? If he is so bad a man, why in the name of wonder did he ever get in the penitentiary?

Ah, no; it is not because he has done any evil thing; but because he, a pure enthusiast, searching, searching always for the cause of misery of the kind which he loved with that broad love of which only the pure soul is capable, searched for the data of evil. And searching so he found the vestibule of life to be a prison cell; the highest and purest part of the temple of the body, if indeed one part can be higher or purer than another, the altar where the most devotional love in truth should be laid, he found this altar ravished, despoiled, trampled upon. He found little babies, helpless, voiceless little things, generated in lust, cursed with impure moral natures, cursed, prenatally, with the germs of disease, forced into the world to struggle and to suffer, to hate themselves, to hate their mothers for bearing them, to hate society and to be hated by it in return, -a bane upon self and race, draining the lees of crime. And he said, this felon with the stripes upon his body, "Let the mothers of the race go free! Let the little children be pure love children, born of the mutual desire for parentage. Let the manacles be broken from the shackled slave, that no more slaves be born, no more tyrants conceived."

He looked, this obscenist looked with clear eyes into this ill-got thing you call morality, sealed with the seal of marriage, and saw in it the consummation of immorality, impurity, and injustice. He beheld every married woman what she is, a bonded slave, who takes her master's name, her master's bread, her master's commands, and serves her master's passion; who passes through the ordeal of pregnancy and the throes of travail at his dictation, not at her desire; who can control no property, not even her own body, without his consent, and from whose straining arms the children she bears may be torn at his pleasure, or willed away while they are yet unborn. It is said the English language has a sweeter word than any other, -home. But Moses Harman looked beneath the word and saw the fact, - a prison more horrible than that where he is sitting now, whose corridors radiate over all the earth, and with so many cells, that none may count them.

Yes, our masters! The earth is a prison, the marriage-bed is a cell, women are the prisoners, and you are the keepers!

He saw, this corruptionist, how in those cells are perpetrated such outrages as are enough to make the cold sweat stand upon the forehead, and the nails clench, and the teeth set, and the lips grow white in agony and hatred. And he saw too how from those cells might none come forth to break her fetters, how no slave dare cry out, how all these murders are done quietly, beneath the shelter-shadow of home, and sanctified by the angelic benediction of a piece of paper, within the silence-shade of a marriage certificate, Adultery and Rape stalk freely and at case.

Yes, for that is adultery where woman submits herself sexually to man, without desire on her part, for the sake of "keeping him virtuous," "keeping him at home," the women

say. (Well, if a man did not love me and respect himself enough to be "virtuous" without prostituting me, - he might go, and welcome. He has no virtue to keep.) And that is rape, where a man forces himself sexually upon a woman whether he is licensed by the marriage law to do it or not. And that is the vilest of all tyranny where a man compels the woman he says he loves, to endure the agony of bearing children that she does not want, and for whom, as is the rule rather than the exception, they cannot properly provide. It is worse than any other human oppression; it is fairly God-like! To the sexual tyrant there is no parallel upon earth; one must go to the skies to find a fiend who thrusts life upon his children only to starve and curse and outcast and damn them! And only through the marriage law is such tyranny possible. The man who deceives a woman outside of marriage (and mind you, such a man will deceive in marriage too) may deny his own child, if he is mean enough. He cannot tear it from her arms -he cannot touch it! The girl he wronged, thanks to your very pure and tender morality standard, may die in the street for want of food. He cannot force his hated presence upon her again. But his wife, gentlemen, his wife, the woman he respects so much that he consents to let her merge her individuality into his, lose her identity and become his chattel, his wife he may not only force unwelcome children upon, outrage at his own good pleasure, and keep as a general cheap and convenient piece of furniture, but if she does not get a divorce (and she cannot for such cause) he can follow her wherever she goes, come into her house, eat her food, force her into the cell, kill her by virtue of his sexual authority! And she has no redress unless he is indiscreet enough to abuse her in some less brutal but unlicensed manner. I know a case in your city where a woman was followed so for ten years by her husband. I believe he finally developed

grace enough to die: please applaud him for the only decent thing he ever did.

Oh, is it not rare, all this talk about the preservation of morality by marriage law! O splendid carefulness to preserve that which you have not got! O height and depth of purity, which fears so much that the children will not know who their fathers are, because, forsooth, they must rely upon their mother's word instead of the hired certification of some priest of the Church, or the Law! I wonder if the children would be improved to know what their fathers have done. I would rather, much rather, not know who my father was than know he had been a tyrant to my mother. I would rather, much rather, be illegitimate according to the statutes of men, than illegitimate according to the unchanging law of Nature. For what is it to be legitimate, born "according to law"? It is to be, nine cases out of ten, the child of a man who acknowledges his fatherhood simply because he is forced to do so, and whose conception of virtue is realized by the statement that 11 a woman's duty is to keep her husband at home;" to be the child of a woman who cares more for, the benediction of Mrs. Grundy than the simple honor of her lover's word, and conceives prostitution to be purity and duty when exacted of her by her husband. It is to have Tyranny as your progenitor, and slavery as your prenatal cradle. It is to run the risk of unwelcome birth, "legal" constitutional weakness, morals corrupted before birth, possibly a murder instinct, the inheritance of excessive sexuality or no sexuality, either of which is disease. it is to have the value of a piece of paper, a rag from the tattered garments of the "Social Contract," set above health, beauty, talent 01' goodness; for I never yet had difficulty in obtaining the admission that illegitimate children are nearly always prettier and brighter than others, even from conservative women. And how supremely

disgusting it is to see them look from their own puny, sickly, lust-born children, Upon whom he the chain-traces of their own terrible servitude, look from these to some healthy, beautiful "natural" child, and say, "What a pity its mother wasn't virtuous!" Never a word about their children's fathers' virtue, they know too much! Virtue! Disease, stupidity, criminality! What an obscene thing "virtue" is!

What is it to be illegitimate? To be despised, or pitied, by those whose spite or whose pity isn't worth the breath it takes to return it. To be, possibly, the child of some man contemptible enough to deceive a woman; the child of some woman whose chief crime was behef in the man she loved. To be free from the prenatal curse of a stave mother, to come into the world without the permission of any law-making set of tyrants who assume to corner the earth, and say what terms the unborn must make for the privilege of coming into existence. This is legitimacy and illegitimacy! Choose.

The man who walks to and fro in his cell in Lansing penitentiary tonight, this vicious man, said: "The mothers of the race are lifting their dumb eyes to me, their scaled lips to me, their agonizing hearts to me. They are seeking, seeking for a voice! The unborn in their helplessness, are pleading from their prisons, pleading for a voice! The criminals, with the unseen ban upon their souls, that has pushed them, Pushed them to the vortex, out of their whirling hells, are looking, waiting for a voice! I will be their voice. I will unmask the outrages of the marriage-bed. I will make known how criminals are born. I will make one outcry that shall be heard, and let what will be, be!" He cried out through the letter of Dr. Markland, that a young mother lacerated by unskillful surgery in the birth of her

babe, but recovering from a subsequent successful operation, had been stabbed, remorselessly, cruelly, brutally stabbed, not with a knife, but with the procreative organ of her husband, stabbed to the doors of death, and yet there was no redress!

And because he called a spade a spade, because he named that organ by its own name, so given in Webster's dictionary and in every medical journal in the country, because of this Moses Harman walks to and fro in his cell tonight. He gave a concrete example of the effect of sex slavery, and for it he is imprisoned. It remains for us now to carry on the battle, and lift the standard where they struck him down, to scatter broadcast the knowledge of this crime of society against a man and the reason for it; to inquire into this vast system of licensed crime, its cause and its effect, broadly upon the race. 'The cause! Let Woman ask herself, "Why am I the slave of Man? Why is my brain said not to be the equal of his brain? Why is my work not paid equally with his? Why must my body be controlled by my husband? Why may he take my labor in the household, giving me in exchange what he deems fit? Why may he take my children from me? Will them away while yet unborn?" Let every woman ask.

There are two reasons why, and these ultimately reducible to a single principle: the authoritarian, supreme power, God-idea, and its two instruments, the Church -that is, the priests, -and the State -that is, the legislators).

From the birth of the Church, out of the womb of Fear and the fatherhood of Ignorance, it has taught the inferiority of woman. In one form or another through the various mythical legends of the various mythical creeds, runs the undercurrent of the belief in the fall of man through the

persuasion of woman, her subjective condition as punishment, her natural vileness, total depravity, etc.; and from the days of Adam until now the Christian Church, with which we live specially to deal, has made Woman the excuse, the scapegoat for the evil deeds of man. So thoroughly has this idea permeated Society that number", of those who have utterly repudiated the Church, are nevertheless soaked in this stupefying narcotic to true morality. So pickled is the male creation with the vinegar of Authoritarianism, that even those who have gone further and repudiated tire State still cling to the god, Society as it is, still hug the old theological idea that they are to be "heads of the family" --to that wonderful formula "of simple proportion" that "Man is the]lead of the Woman even as Christ is the head of the Church." No longer than a week since, an Anarchist (?) said to me, "I will be boss in my own house" -a "Communist-Anarchist," if you please, who doesn't believe in "my house." About a year ago a noted libertarian speaker said, in my presence, that his sister, who possessed a fine voice and had joined a concert troupe, should "stay at home with her children; that is her place." The old Church idea! This man was a Socialist, and since an Anarchist; yet his highest idea for woman was serfhood to husband and children, in the present mockery called "home." Stay at Ironic, ye malcontents! Be patient, obedient, submissive! Darn our socks, mend our shirts, wash our dishes, get our meals, wait on us and mind the children! Your fine voices are not to delight the public nor yourselves; your inventive genius is not to work, your fine art taste is not to be Cultivated, your business facilities are not to be developed; you made the great mistake of being born with them, suffer for your folly! You are women, therefore housekeepers, servants, waiters, and child's nurses!

At Macon, in the sixth century, says August Bebel, the fathers of the Church met and proposed the decision of the question, "has Woman a soul?" Having ascertained that the permission to own a nonentity wasn't going to injure any of their parsnips, a small majority vote decided the momentous question in our favor. Now, holy fathers, it was a tolerably good scheme on your part to offer the reward of your pitiable "salvation or damnation" (odds in favor of the latter) as a bait for the hook of earthly submission; it wasn't a bad sop in those days of faith and ignorance. But fortunately fourteen hundred years have made it stale. You, tyrant radicals (?), have no heaven to offer, -you have no delightful chimeras in the form of "imerit cards;" you have (save the mark) the respect, the good offices, the smiles --of a slave-holder! 'This in return for our chains! Thanks!

The question of souls is old -we demand our bodies, now. We are tired of promises, God is deaf, and his church is our worst enemy. Against it we bring the charge of being the moral (or immoral) force which hes behind the tyranny of the State. And the State has divided the loaves and fishes with the Church, the magistrates, like the priests take marriage fees; the two fetters of Authority have gone into partnership in the business of granting patentrights to parents for the privilege of reproducing themselves, and the State cries as the Church cried of old, and cries now: "See how we protect women!" The State has done more. It has often been said to me, by women with decent masters, who had no idea of the outrages practiced on their less fortunate sisters, "Why don't the wives leave?"

Why don't you run, when your feet are chained together? Why don't you cry out when a gag is on your lips? Why don't you raise your hands above your head when they are pinned fast to your sides? Why don't you spend thousands

of dollars when you haven't a cent in your pocket? Why don't you go to the seashore or the mountains, you fools scorching with city heat? If there is one thing more than another in this whole accursed tissue of false society, which makes me angry, it is the asinine stupidity which with the true phlegm of impenetrable dullness says, "Why don't the women leave!" Will you tell me where they will go and what they shall do? When the State, the legislators, has given to itself, the politicians, the utter and absolute control of the opportunity to live; when, through this precious monopoly, already the market of labor is so overstocked that workmen and workwomen are cutting each others' throats for the dear privilege of serving their lords; when girls are shipped from Boston to the south and north, shipped in carloads, like cattle, to fill the dives of New Orleans or the lumber-camp hells of my own state (Michigan), when seeing and hearing these things reported every day, the proper prudes exclaim, "Why don't the women leave?," they simply beggar the language of contempt.

When America passed the fugitive slave law compelling men to catch their fellows more brutally than runaway dogs, Canada, aristocratic, unrepublican Canada, still stretched her arms to those who might reach tier. But there is no refuge upon earth for the enslaved sex. Right where we are, there we must dig our trenches, and win or die.

This, then, is the tyranny of the State; it denies, to both woman and man, the right to earn a living, and rants it as a privilege to a favored few who for that favor must pay ninety per cent toll to the granters of it. These two things, the mind domination of the Church, and the body domination of the State are the causes of sex slavery.

First of all, it has introduced into the world the constructed crime of obscenity: it has set up such a peculiar standard of morals that to speak the names of the sexual organs is to commit the most brutal outrage. It reminds me that in your city you have a street called "Callowhill." Once it was called Gallows' Hill, for the elevation to which it leads, now known as "Cherry Hill," has been the last touching place on earth for the feet of many a victim murdered by the Law. But the sound of the word became too harsh; so they softened it, though the murders are still done, and the black shadow of the Gallows still hangs on the City of Brotherly Love. Obscenity has done the same; it has placed virtue in the shell of an idea, and labeled all "good" which dwells within the sanction of Law and respectable (?) custom; and all bad which contravenes the usage of the shell. It has lowered the dignity of the human body, below the level of all other animals. Who thinks a dog is impure or obscene because its body is not covered with suffocating and annoying clothes? What would you think of the meanness of a man who would put a skirt upon his, horse and compel it to walk or run with such a thing impeding its limbs? Why, the "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" would arrest him, take the beast from him, and he would be sent to a lunatic asylum for treatment on the score of an impure mind. And yet, gentlemen, you expect your wives, the creatures you say you respect and love, to wear the longest skirts and the highest necked clothing, in order to conceal the obscene human body. There is no society for the prevention of cruelty to women. And you, yourselves, though a little better, look at the heat you wear in this roasting weather! How you curse your poor body with the wool you steal from the sheep! How you punish yourselves to sit in a crowded house with coats and vests on, because dead Mme. Grundy is shocked at the "vulgarity" of shirt sleeves, or the naked arm!

Look how the ideal of beauty has been marred by this obscenity notion. Divest yourselves of prejudice for once. Look at some fashionslaved woman her waist surrounded by a high-board fence called a corset, her shoulders and hips angular from the pressure above and below, her feet narrowest where they should be widest, the body fettered by her everlasting prison skirt, her hair fastened tight enough to make her head ache and surmounted by a thing of neither sense nor beauty, called a hat, ten to one a hump upon her back like a dromedary, -look at her, and then imagine such a thing as that carved in marble! Fancy a statue in Fairmount Park with a corset and bustle on. Picture to yourselves the image of the equestrienne. We are permitted to ride, providing we sit in a position ruinous to the horse; providing we wear a riding-habit long enough to hide the obscene human foot, weighed down by ten pounds of gravel to cheat the wind in its free blowing, so running the risk of disabling ourselves completely should accident throw us from the saddle. Think how we swim! We must even wear clothing in the water, and run the gauntlet of derision, if we dare battle in the surf minus stockings! Imagine a fish trying to make headway with a water-soaked flannel garment upon it. Nor are you yet content. The vile standard of obscenity even kills the little babies with clothes. The human race is murdered, horribly, "in the name of" Dress.

And in the name Of Purity what lies are told! What queer morality it has engendered. For fear of it you dare not tell your own children the truth about their birth; the most sacred of all functions, the creation of a human being, is a subject for the most miserable falsehood. When they come to you with a simple, straightforward question, which they have a right to ask, you say, "Don't ask such questions," or

tell some silly hollowlog story; or you explain the incomprehensibility by another - God! You say "God made you." You know you are lying when you say it. You know, or you ought to know, that the source of inquiry will not be dammed up so. You know that what you Could explain purely, reverently, rightly (if you have any purity in you), will be learned through many blind gropings, and that around it will be cast the shadowthought of wrong, embryo'd by your denial and nurtured by this social opinion everywhere prevalent. If you do not know this, then you are blind to facts and deaf to Experience.

Think of the double social standard the enslavement of our sex has evolved. Women considering themselves very pure and very moral, will sneer at the street-walker, yet admit to their homes the very men who victimized the street-walker. Men, at their best, will pity the prostitute, while they themselves are the worst kind of prostitutes. Pity yourselves, gentlemen -you need it!

How many times do you see where a man or woman has shot another through jealousy! The standard of purity has decided that it is right, "it shows spirit," "it is justifiable" to -murder a human being for doing exactly what you did yourself, -love the same woman or same man! Morality! Honor! Virtue! Passing from the moral to the physical phase, take the statistics of any insane asylum, and you will find that, out of the different classes, unmarried women furnish the largest one. To preserve your Cruel, Vicious, indecent standard of purity (?) you drive your daughters insane, while your wives are killed with excess. Such is marriage. Don't take my word for it; go through the report of any asylum or the annals of any graveyard.

Look how your children grow up. Taught from their earliest infancy to curb their love natures --restrained at every turn! Your blasting lies would even blacken a child's kiss. Little girls must not be tomboyish, must not go barefoot, must not climb trees, must not learn to swim, must not do anything they desire to do which Madame Grundy has decreed "improper." Little boys are laughed at as effeminate, silly girl-boys if they want to make patchwork or play with a doll. Then when they grow up, "Oh! Men dont care for home or children as women do!" Why should they, when the deliberate effort of your life has been to crush that nature out of them. "Women can't rough it like men." Train any animal, or any plant, as you train your girls, and it wont be able to rough it either. Now will somebody tell me why either sex should hold a corner on athletic sports? Why any child should not have free use of its limbs?

These are the effects of your purity standard, your marriage law. This is your work -look at it! Half your children dying under five years of age, your girls insane, your married women walking corpses, your men so bad that they themselves often admit that Prostitution holds against PURITY a bond of indebtedness. This is the beautiful effect of your god, Marriage, before which Natural Desire must abase and belie itself. Be proud of it!

Now for the remedy. It is in one word, the only word that ever brought equity anywhere --LIBERTY! Centuries upon centuries of liberty is the only thing that will cause the disintegration and decay of these pestiferous ideas. Liberty was all that calmed the bloodwaves of religious persecution! You cannot cure serfhood by any other substitution. Not for you to say "in this way shall the race love." Let the race alone.

Will there not be atrocious crimes? Certainly. He is a fool who says there will not be. But you can't stop them by committing the arch-crime and setting a block between the spokes of Progress-wheels. You will never get right until you start right.

As for the final outcome, it matters not one iota. I have my ideal, and it is very pure, and very sacred to me. But yours, equally sacred, may be different and we may both be wrong. But certain am I that with free contract, that form of sexual association will survive which is best adapted to time and place, thus producing the highest evolution of the type. Whether that shall be monogamy, variety, or promiscuity matters naught to us; it is the business of the future, to which we dare not dictate.

For freedom spoke Moses Harman, and for this he received the felon's brand. For this he sits in his cell to-night. Whether it is possible that his sentence be shortened, we do not know. We can only try. Those who would help us try, let me ask to put your signatures to this simple request for pardon addressed to Benjamin Harrison. To those who desire more fully to inform themselves before signing, I say: Your conscientiousness is praiseworthy -come to me at the close of the meeting and I will quote the exact language of the Markland letter. To those extreme Anarchists who cannot bend their dignity to ask pardon for an offense not committed, and of an authority they cannot recognize, let me say: Moses Harman's back is bent, low bent, by the brute force of the Law, and though I would never ask anyone to bow for himself, I can ask it, and easily ask it, for him who fights the slave's battle. Your dignity is criminal; every hour behind the bars is a seal to your partnership with Comstock. No one can hate petitions worse than I, and no one has less faith in them than I. But for my champion I am

willing to try any means that invades no other's right, even though I have little hope in it.

If, beyond these, there are those here to-night who have ever forced sexual servitude from a wife, those who have prostituted themselves in the name of Virtue, those who have brought diseased, immoral or unwelcome children to the light, without the means of provision for them, and yet will go from this ball and say, "Moses Harman is an unclean man -a man rewarded by just punishment," then to you I say, and may the words ring deep within your ears UNTIL YOU DIE: Go on! Drive your sheep to the shambles! Crush that old, sick, crippled man beneath your juggernaut! In the name of Virtue, Purity and Morality, do it! In the names of God, Home, and Heaven, do it! In the name of the Nazarene who preached the golden rule, do it! In the names of Justice, Principle, and Honor, do it! In the names of Bravery and Magnanimity put yourself on the side of the robber in the government halls, the murderer in the political convention, the libertine in public places, the whole brute force of the police, the constabulary, the court, and the penitentiary, to persecute one poor old man who stood alone against your licensed crime! Do it. And if Moses Harman dies within your "Kansas Hell," be satisfied when you have murdered him! Kill him! And you hasten the day when the future shall bury you ten thousand fathoms deep beneath its curses. Kill him! And the stripes upon his prison clothes shall lash you like the knout! Kill him! And the insane shall glitter hate at you with their wild eyes, the unborn babes shall cry their blood upon you, and the graves that you have filled in the name of Marriage, shall yield food for a race that will pillory you, until the memory of your atrocity has become a nameless ghost, flitting with the shades of Torquemada, Calvin and Jehovah over the horizon of the World!

Would you smile to see him dead? Would you say, "We are rid of this obscenist?" Fools! The corpse would laugh at you from its cold eyelids! The motionless lips would mock, and the solemn hands, the pulseless, folded hands, in their quietness would write the last indictment, which neither time nor you can efface. Kill him! And you write his glory and your shame! Moses Harman in his felon stripes stands far above you now, and Moses Harman dead will live on, immortal in the race he died to free! Kill him!

THEY WHO MARRY DO ILL

LET ME make myself understood on two points, now, so that when discussion arises later, words may not be wasted in considering things not in question:

First -How shall we measure doing well or doing ill;

Second -What I mean by marriage.

So much as I have been able to put together the pieces of the universe in my small head, there is no absolute right or wrong; there is only a relativity, depending on the consciously though very slowly altering condition of a social race in respect to the rest of the world. Right and wrong are social conceptions: mind, I do not say human conceptions. The names "right" and "wrong," truly, are of human invention only; but the conception "right" and "wrong," dimly or clearly, has been wrought out with more or less effectiveness by all intelligent social beings. And the definition of Right, as sealed and approved by the successful conduct of social beings, is: That mode of behavior which best serves the growing need of that society.

As to what that need is, certainly it has been in the past, and for the most part indicated by the unconscious response of the structure (social or individual) to the pressure of its environment. Up till a few years since I believed with Huxley, Von Hartman, and my teacher Lum, that it was wholly so determined; that consciousness might discern, and obey or oppose, but had no voice in deciding the course of social development: if it decided to oppose, it did so to its own ruin, not to the modification of the unconsciously determined ideal.

Of late years I have been approaching the conclusion that consciousness has a continuously increasing part in the decision of social problems; that while it is a minor voice, and must be for a long time to come, it is, nevertheless, the dawning power which threatens to overhurl old processes and old laws, and supplant them by other powers and other ideals. I know no more fascinating speculation than this, of the role of consciousness in present and future evolution. However, it is not our present speculation. I speak of it only because in determining what constitutes well-being at present, I shall maintain that the old ideal has been considerably modified by unconscious reaction against the superfluities produced by unconscious striving towards a certain end.

The question now becomes: What is the growing ideal of human society, unconsciously indicated and unconsciously discerned and illuminated?

By all the readings of progress, this indication appears to be the free individual; a society whose economic, political, social and sexual organization shall secure and constantly increase the scope of being to its several units; whose solidarity and continuity depend upon the free attraction of its component parts, and in no wise upon compulsory forms. Unless we are agreed that this is the discernable goal of our present social striving, there is no hope that we shall agree in the rest of the argument. For it would be vastly easy to prove that if the maintenance of the old divisions of society into classes, each with specialized services to perform -the priesthood, the military, the wage earner, the capitalist, the domestic servant, the breeder, etc. -is in accord with the growing force of society, then marriage is the thing, and they who marry do well.

But this is the point at which I stand, and from which I shall measure well and ill-doing; viz.: that the aim of social striving now is the free individual, implying all the conditions necessary to that freedom.

Now the second thing: What shall we understand as marriage?

Some fifteen or eighteen years ago, when I had not been out of the convent long enough to forget its teachings, nor lived and experienced enough to work out my own definitions, I considered that marriage was "a sacrament of the Church" or it was "civil ceremony performed by the State," by which a man and a woman were united for life, or until the divorce court separated them. With all the energy of a neophyte freethinker, I attacked religious marriage as an unwarranted interference on the part of the priest with the affairs of individuals, condemned the "until death do us part" promise as one of the immoralities which made a person a slave through all his future to his present feelings, and urged the miserable vulgarity of both the religious and civil ceremony, by which the intimate personal relations of two individuals are made topic of comment and jest by the public.

By all this I still hold. Nothing is more disgustingly vulgar to me than the so-called sacrament of marriage; outraging of all delicacy in the trumpeting of private matters in the general ear. Need I recall, for example, the unprinted and unprintable floating literature concerning the marriage of Alice Roosevelt, when the so-called "American princess" was targeted by every lewd jester in the country, because, forsooth, the whole world had to be informed of her forthcoming union with Mr. Longworth! But it is neither

the religious nor the civil ceremony that I refer to now, when I say that "those who marry do ill." The ceremony is only a form, a ghost, a meatless shell. By marriage I mean the real thing, the permanent relation of a man and a woman, sexual and economical, whereby the present home and family life is maintained. It is of no importance to me whether this is a polygamous, polyandric or monogamous marriage, nor whether it is blessed by a priest, permitted by a magistrate, contracted publicly or privately, or not contracted at all. It is the permanent dependent relationship which, I affirm, is detrimental to the growth of individual character, and to which I am unequivocally opposed. Now my opponents know where to find me.

In the old days to which I have alluded, I contended, warmly and sincerely, for the exclusive union of one man and one woman as long as they were held together by love, and for the dissolution of the arrangement upon the desire of either. We talked in those days most enthusiastically about the bond of love, and it only. Nowadays I would say that I prefer to see a marriage based purely on business considerations, than a marriage based on love. That is not because I am in the least concerned with the success of the marriage, but because I am concerned with the success of love. And I believe that the easiest, surest and most applicable method of killing love is marriage --marriage as I have defined it. I believe that the only way to preserve love in anything like the ecstatic condition which renders it worthy of a distinctive name --otherwise it is either lust or simply friendship --is to maintain the distances. Never allow love to be vulgarized by the indecencies of continuous close communion. Better to be in familiar contempt of your enemy than the one you love.

I presume that some who are unacquainted with my opposition to legal and social forms, are ready to exclaim: "Do you want to do away with the relation of the sexes altogether, and cover the earth with monks and nuns?" By no means. While I am not over and above anxious about the repopulation of the earth, and should not shed any tears if I knew that the last man had already been born, I am not advocating sexual total abstinence. If the advocates of marriage had merely to prove the case against complete sexual abstinence, their task would be easy. The statistics of insanity, and in general all manner of aberrations, would alone constitute a big item in the charge. No: I do not believe that the highest human being is the unsexed one, or the one who extirpates his passions by violence, whether religious or scientific violence. I would have people regard all their normal instincts in a normal way, neither gluttonizing nor starving them, neither exalting them beyond their true service nor denouncing them as the servitors of evil, both of which mankind are wont to do in considering the sexual passion. In short, I would have men and women so arrange their lives that they shall always, at all times, be free beings in this regard as in all others. The limit of abstinence or indulgence can be fixed by the individual alone, what is normal for one being excess for another, and what is excess at one period of life being normal at another. And as to the effects of such normal gratification of such normal appetite upon population, I would have them conscientiously controlled, as they can be, are to some extent now, and will be more and more through the progress of knowledge. The birth rate of France and of native-born Americans gives evidence of such conscious control.

"But," say the advocates of marriage, "what is there in marriage to interfere with the free development of the

individual? What does the free development of the individual mean, if not the expression of manhood and womanhood? And what is more essential to either than parentage and the rearing of young? And is not the fact that the latter requires a period of from fifteen to twenty years, the essential need which determines the permanent home?" It is the scientific advocate of marriage that talks this way. The religious man bases his talk on the will of God, or some other such metaphysical matter. I do not concern myself with him; I concern myself only those who contend that as Man is the latest link in evolution, the same racial necessities which determine the social and sexual relations of allied races will be found shaping and determining these relations in Man; and that, as we find among the higher animals that the period of rearing the young to the point of caring for themselves usually determines the period of conjugality, it must be concluded that the greater attainments of Man, which have so greatly lengthened the educational period of youth, must likewise have fixed the permanent family relation as the ideal condition for humanity. This is but the conscious extension of what unconsciousness, or perhaps semi-conscious adaptation, had already determined for the higher animals, and in savage races to an extent. If people are reasonable, sensible, self-controlled (as to other people they will keep themselves anyway, no matter how things are arranged), does not the marriage state secure this great fundamental purpose of the primal social function, which is at the same time an imperative demand of individual development, better than any other arrangement? With all its failures, is it not the best that has been tried, or with our present light has been conceived?

In endeavoring to prove the opposite of this contention, I shall not go to the failures to prove my point. It is not my

purpose to show that a vast number of marriages do not succeed; the divorce court records do that. But as one swallow doesn't make a summer, nor a flock of swallows either, so divorces do not in themselves prove that marriage in itself is a bad thing, only that a goodly number of individuals make mistakes. This is, indeed, an unanswerable argument against the indissolubility of marriage, but not against marriage itself. I will go to the successful marriages --the marriages in which whatever the friction, man and wife have spent a great deal of agreeable time together; in which the family has been provided for by honest work decently paid (as the wage-system goes), of the father, and preserved within the home by the saving labor and attention of the mother; the children given a reasonable education and started in life on their own account, and the old folks left to finish up life together, each resting secure in the knowledge that he has a tried friend until death severs the bond. This, I conceive, is the best form that marriage can present, and I opine it is oftener dreamed of than realized. But sometimes it is realized. Yet from the viewpoint that the object of life should be the development of individuality, such have lived less successfully than many who have not lived so happily.

And to the first great point -the point that physical parentage is one of the fundamental necessities of self-expression: here, I think, is where the factor of consciousness is in process of overturning the methods of life. Life, working unconsciously, blindly sought to preserve itself by generation, by manifold generation. The mind is simply staggered by the productivity of a single stalk of wheat, or of a fish, or of a queen bee, or of a man. One is smitten the appalling waste of generative effort; numbed with helpless pity for the little things, the infinitude of little lives, that must come forth and suffer and die of

starvation, of exposure, as a prey to other creatures, and all to no end but that out of the multitude a few may survive and continue the type! Man, at war with nature and not yet master of the situation, obeyed the same instinct, and by prolific parentage maintained his war. To the Hebrew patriarch as to the American pioneer, a large family meant strength, the wealth of brawn and sinew to continue the conquest of forest and field. It was the only resource against annihilation. Therefor, the instinct towards physical creation was one of the most imperative determinants of action.

Now the law of all instinct is, that it survives long after the necessity which created it has ceased to exist, and acts mischievously. The usual method of reckoning with such a survival since such and such a thing exists, it is an essential part of the structure, not obliged to account for itself and bound to be gratified. I am perfectly certain, however, that the more conscious consciousness becomes, or in other words, the more we become aware of the conditions of life and our relations therein, their new demands and the best way of fulfilling them, the more speedily will instincts no longer demanded be dissolved from the structure.

How stands the war upon nature now? Why, so -that short of a planetary catastrophe, we are certain of the conquest? Consciousness! The alert brain! The dominant will! Invention, discovery, mastery of hidden forces. We are no longer compelled to use the blind method of limitles propagation to equip the race with hunters and trappers and fishers and sheep-keepers and soil-tillers and breeders. Therefor, the original necessity which gave rise to the instinct of prolific parentage is gone; the instinct itself is bound to die, and is dying, but will die faster as men grasp more and more of the whole situation. In proportion as the

parenthood of the brain becomes more and more prolific, as ideas spread, multiply, and conquer, the necessity for great physical production declines. This is my first contention. Hence the development of individuality does no longer necessarily imply numerous children, nor indeed, necessarily any children at all. That is not to say that no one will want children, nor to prophecy race suicide. It is simply to say that there will be fewer born, with better chances of surviving, developing, and achieving. Indeed, with all its clash of tendencies, the consciousness of our present society is having his driven home to it.

Supposing that the majority will still desire, or let me go further and say do still desire, this limited parentage, the question now becomes: Is this the overshadowing need in the development of the individual, or are there other needs equally imperative? If there are other needs equally imperative, must not these be taken equally into account in deciding the best manner of conducting one's life? If there are not other needs equally imperative, is it not still an open question whether the married state is the best means of securing it? In answering these questions, I think it will again be safe to separate into a majority and a minority. There will be a minority to whom the rearing of children will be the great dominant necessity of their being, and a majority to whom this will be one of their necessities. Now what are the other necessities? The other physical and mental appetites! The desire for food and raiment and housing after the individual's own taste; the desire for sexual association, not for reproduction; the artistic desires; the desire to know, with its thousand ramifications, which may carry the soul from the depths of the concrete to the heights of the abstract; the desire to do, that is, to imprint one's will upon the social structure, whether as a mechanical contriver, a force harnesser, a combiner, a

dream translator, -whatever may be the particular mode of the personal organization.

The desire for food, shelter, and raiment, it should at all times lie within the individual's power to furnish for himself. But the method of home-keeping is such that after the relation has been maintained for a few years, the interdependence of one on the other has become so great that each is somewhat helpless when circumstance destroys the combination, the man less so, the woman wretchedly so. She has done one thing in a secluded sphere, and while she may have learned to do that thing well (which is not certain, the method of training is not at all satisfactory), it is not a thing which has equipped her with the confidence necessary to go about making an independent living. She is timid above all, incompetent to deal with the conditions of struggle. The world of production has swept past her; she knows nothing of it. On the other hand, what sort of an occupation is it for her to take domestic service under some other woman's rule? The conditions and pay of domestic service are such that every independent spirit would prefer to slave in a factory, where at least the slavery ends with the working hours. As for men, only a few days since a staunch free unionist told me, apparently without shame, that were it not for his wife he would be a tramp and a drunkard, simply because he is unable to keep a home; and in his eyes the chief merit of the arrangement is that his stomach is properly cared for. This is a degree of helplessness which I should have thought he would have shrunk from admitting, but is nevertheless probably true. Now this is one of the greatest objections to the married condition, as it is to any other condition which produces like results. In choosing one's economic position in society, one should always bear in mind that it should be such as should leave the individual

uncrippled -an all-round person, with both productive and preservative capacities, a being pivoted within.

Concerning the sexual appetite, irrespective of reproduction, the advocates of marriage claim, and with some reason, that it tends to preserve normal appetite and satisfaction, and is both a physical and moral safeguard against excesses, with their attendant results, disease. That is does not do so entirely, we have ample and painful proof continuously before our eyes. As to what it may accomplish, it is almost impossible to find out the truth; for religious asceticism has so built the feeling of shame into the human mind, on the subject of sex, that the first instinct, when it is brought under discussion, seems to be to lie about it. This is especially the case with women. The majority of women usually wish to create the impression that they are devoid of sexual desires, and think they have paid the highest compliment to themselves when they say, "Personally, I am very cold; I have never experienced such an attraction." Sometimes this is true, but oftener it is a lie - a lie born of centuries of the pernicious teachings of the Church. A roundly developed person will understand that she pays no honor to herself by denying herself fullness of being, whether to herself or of herself; though, without doubt, where such a deficiency really exists, it may give room for an extra growth of some other qualities, perhaps of higher value. In general, however, notwithstanding women's lies, there is no such deficiency. In general, young, healthy beings of both sexes desire such relations. What then? Is marriage the best answer to the need? Suppose they marry, say at twenty years, or thereabouts, which will be admitted as the time when sexual appetite is most active; the consequence is (I am just now leaving children out of account) that the two are thrown too much and too constantly in contact, and speedily exhaust the delight of

each other's presence. Then irritations begin. The familiarities of life in common breed contempt. What was once a rare joy becomes a matter of course, and loses all its delicacy. Very often it becomes a physical torture to one (usually the woman), while it still retains some pleasure to the other, for the reason that bodies, like souls, do most seldom, almost never, parallel each other's development. And this lack of parallelism is the greatest argument to be produced against marriage. No matter how perfectly adapted to each other two people may be at any given time, it is not the slightest evidence that they will continue to be so. And no period of life is more deceptive as to what future development may be than the age I have just been speaking of, the age when physical desires and attractions being strongest, they obscure or hold in abeyance the other elements of being.

The terrible tragedies of sexual antipathy, mostly for shame's sake, will never be revealed. But they have filled the Earth with murder. And even in those homes where harmony has been maintained, and all is apparently peaceful, it is mainly so through the resignation and self-suppression of either the man or the woman. One has consented to be largely effaced, for the preservation of the family and social respect.

But awful as these things are, these physical degradations, they are not so terrible as the ruined souls. When the period of physical predominance is past, and soul-tendencies begin more and more strongly to assert themselves, how dreadful is the recognition that one is bound by common parentage to one to remain in the constant company of one from whom one finds oneself going farther and farther away in thought every day. -"Not a day," exclaim the advocates of "free unions." I find such exclamation worse folly than the

talk of "holy matrimony" believers. The bonds are there, the bonds of life in common, the love of the home built by joint labor, the habit of association and dependence; they are very real chains, binding both, and not to be thrown off lightly. Not in a day or a month, but only after long hesitation, struggle, and grievous, grievous pain, can the wrench of separation come. Oftener it does not come at all.

A chapter from the lives of two men recently deceased will illustrate my meaning. Ernest Crosby, wedded, and I assume happily, to a lady of conservative thought and feeling, himself the conservative, came into his soul's own at the age of thirty-eight, while occupying the position of Judge of the International Court at Cairo. From then on, the whole radical world knows Ernest Crosby's work. Yet what a position was his compelled by honor to continue the functions of a social life which he disliked! To quote the words of his friend, Leonard Abbot, "a prisoner in his palatial home, waited on by servants and lackeys. Yet to the end he remained enslaved by his possessions." Had Crosby not been bound, had not union and family relations with one who holds very different views of life in faith and honor held him, should we not have had a different life-sum? Like his great teacher, Tolstoy, likewise made absurd, his life contradicted by his works, because of his union with a woman who has not developed along parallel lines.

The second case, Hugh O. Pentecost. From the year 1887 on, whatever were his special tendencies, Pentecost was in the main a sympathizer with the struggle of labor, an opposer of oppression, persecution and prosecution in all forms. Yet through the influence of his family relations, because he felt in honor bound to provide greater material comfort and a better standing in society than the position of a radical speaker could give, he consented at one time to be

the puppet of those he had most strenuously condemned, to become a district attorney, a prosecutor. And worse than that, to paint himself as a misled baby for having done the best act of his life, to protest against the execution of the Chicago Anarchists. That this influence was brought to bear upon him, I know from his own lips; a repetition, in a small way, of the treason of Benedict Arnold, who for his Tory wife's sake laid everlasting infamy upon himself. I do not say there was no self-excusing in this, no Eve-did-tempt-me taint, but surely it had its influence. I speak of these two men because these instances are well known; but everyone knows of such instances among more obscure persons, and often where the woman is the one whose higher nature is degraded by the bond between herself and her husband.

And this is one side of the story. What of the other side? What of the conservative one who finds himself bound to one who outrages every principle in his or hers? People will not, and cannot, think and feel the same at the same moments, throughout any considerable period of life; and therefor, their moments of union should be rare and of no binding nature.

I return to the subject of children. Since this also is a normal desire, can it not be gratified without the sacrifice of individual freedom required by marriage? I see no reason why it cannot. I believe that children may be as well brought up in an individual home, or in a communal home, as in a dual home; and that impressions of life will be far pleasanter if received in an atmosphere of freedom and independent strength than in an atmosphere of secret repression and discontent. I have no very satisfactory solutions to offer to the various questions presented by the child-problem; but neither do the advocates of marriage. Certain to me it is, that no one of the demands of life should

ever be answered in a manner to preclude future free development. I have seen no great success from the old method of raising children under the indissoluble marriage yoke of the parents. (Our conservative parents probably consider their radical children great failures, though it probably does not occur to them that their system is in any way at fault.) Neither have I observed a gain in the child of the free union. Neither have I observed that the individually raised child is any more likely to be a success or a failure. Up to the present, no one has given a scientific answer to the child problem. Those papers which make a specialty of it, such as Lucifer, are full of guesses and theories and suggested experiments; but no infallible principals for the guidance of intentional or actual parents have as yet been worked out. Therefor, I see no reason why the rest of life should be sacrificed to an uncertainty.

That love and respect may last, I would have unions rare and impermanent. That life may grow, I would have men and women remain separate personalities. Have no common possessions with your lover more than you might freely have with one not your lover. Because I believe that marriage stales love, brings respect into contempt, outrages all the privacies and limits the growth of both parties, I believe that "they who marry do ill."

IN DEFENSE OF EMMA GOLDMANN AND THE RIGHT OF EXPROPRIATION.

PHILADELPHIA. 1894.

Note: This pamphlet is reproduced from the original, including errors. Goldman is misspelled throughout, and the speech was actually delivered on Dec. 16, 1893, not 1894 (Avrich, Paul (1978), pp. 85-86).

"A STARVING MAN HAS A NATURAL RIGHT TO HIS NEIGHBOR'S BREAD".

CARDINAL MANNING.

"I HAVE NO IDEA OF PETITIONING FOR RIGHTS. WHATRVER THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE ARE, THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO THEM, AND NONE HAVE A RIGHT TO EITHER WITHOLD OR GRANT THEM".

PAINES "RIGHTS OF MAN".

"ASK FOR WORK; IF THEY DO NOT GIVE YOU WORK ASK FOR BREAD; IF THEY DO NOT GIVE YOU WORK OR BREAD THEN TAKE BREAD".

EMMA GOLDMANN.

The light is pleasant, is it not my friends? It is good to look into each other's faces, to see the hands that clasp our own, to read the eyes that search our thoughts, to know what manner of lips give utterance to our pleasant greetings. It is good to be able to wink defiance at the Night, the cold, unseeing Night. How weird, how gruesome, how chilly it would be if I stood here in blackness, a shadow addressing shadows, in a house of blindness! Yet each would know that he was not alone; yet might we stretch hands and touch each other, and feel the warmth of human presence near. Yet might a sympathetic voice ring thro' the darkness, quickening the dragging moments. -- The lonely prisoners in the cells of Blackwell's Island have neither light nor sound! The short day hurries across the sky, the short day still more shortened in the gloomy walls. The long chill night creeps up so early, weaving its sombre curtain before the imprisoned eyes. And thro' the curtain comes no sympathizing voice, beyond the curtain lies the prison silence, beyond that the cheerless, uncommunicating land, and still beyond the icy, fretting river, black and menacing, ready to drown. A wall of night, a wall of stone, a wall of water! Thus has the great State of New York answered EMMA GOLDMANN; thus have the classes replied to the masses; thus do the rich respond to the poor; thus does the Institution of Property give its ultimatum to Hunger!

"Give us work" said EMMA GOLDMANN; "if you do not give us work, then give us bread; if you do not give us either work or bread then we shall take bread."-- It wasn't a very wise remark to make to the State of New York, that is--Wealth and its watch-dogs, the Police. But I fear me much that the apostles of liberty, the fore-runners of revolt, have never been very wise. There is a record of a seditious

person, who once upon a time went about with a few despised followers in Palestine, taking corn out of other people's corn-fields; (on the Sabbath day, too). That same person, when he wished to ride into Jerusalem told his disciples to go forward to where they would find a young colt tied, to unloose it and bring it to him, and if any one interfered or said anything to them, were to say: "My master hath need of it". That same person said: "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that taketh away thy goods ask them not back again". That same person once stood before the hungry multitudes of Galilee and taught them, saying: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; therefore whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do. But do not ye after their works, for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments: and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi'." And turning to the scribes and the pharisees, he continued: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a presence make long prayers: therefore shall ye receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done and not left the other undone. Ye blind guides, that strain at a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup end plaster, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which

indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous; and say, 'if we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets'. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers! Ye serpents! Ye generations of vipers! How can ye escape the damnation of hell!"

Yes; these are the words of the outlaw who is alleged to form the foundation stone of modern civilization, to the authorities of his day. Hypocrites, extortionists, doers of iniquity, robbers of the poor, blood-partakers, serpents, vipers, fit for hell!

It wasn't a very wise speech, from beginning to end. Perhaps he knew it when he stood before Pilate to receive his sentence, when he bore his heavy crucifix up Calvary, when nailed upon it, stretched in agony, he cried: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

No, it wasn't wise--but it was very grand.

This grand, foolish person, this beggar-tramp, this thief who justified the action of hunger, this man who set the right of Property beneath his foot, this Individual who defied the State, do you know why he was so feared and hated, and punished? Because, as it is said in the record, "the common people heard him gladly"; and the accusation before Pontius Pilate was, "we found this fellow perverting

the whole nation. He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry".

Ah, the dreaded "common people"!

When Cardinal Manning wrote: "Necessity knows no law, and a starving man has a natural right to his neighbor's bread", who thought of arresting Cardinal Manning? His was a carefully written article in the FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW. Who read it? Not the people who needed bread. Without food in their stomachs, they had no fifty cents to spend for a magazine. It was not the voice of the people themselves asserting rights. No one for one instant imagined that Cardinal Manning put himself at the head of ten thousand hungry men to loot the bakeries of London. It was a piece of ethical hair-splitting to be discussed in after-dinner speeches by the wine-muddled gentlemen who think themselves most competent to consider such subjects when their dress-coats are spoiled by the vomit of gluttony and drunkenness. But when EMMA GOLDMANN stood in Union Square and said, "if they do not give you work or bread then take bread", the common people heard her gladly and as of old the wandering carpenter of Nazareth addressed his own class, teaching throughout all Jewry, stirring up the people against the authorities, so the dressmaker of New York addressing the unemployed working-people of New York, was the menace of the depths of society, crying in its own tongue. The authorities heard and were afraid: therefore the triple wall.

It is the old, old story. When Thomas Paine, one hundred years ago, published the first part of "The Rights of Man", the part in which he discusses principles only, the edition was a high-priced one, reaching comparatively few readers. It created only a literary furore. When the second part

appeared, the part in which he treats of the application of principles, in which he declares that "men should not petition rights but take them", it came out in a cheap form, so that one hundred thousand copies were sold in a few weeks. That brought down the prosecution of the government. It had reached the people that might act, and prosecution followed prosecution till Botany Bay was full of the best men of England. Thus were the limitations of speech and press declared, and thus will they ever be declared so long as there are antagonistic interests in human society.

Understand me clearly. I believe that the term "constitutional right of free speech" is a meaningless phrase, for this reason: the constitution of the United States, and the Declaration of Independence, and particularly the latter, were, in their day, progressive expressions of progressive ideals. But they are, throughout, characterized by the metaphysical philosophy which dominated the thought of the last century. They speak of "inherent rights", "inalienable rights", "natural rights", etc: They declare that men are equal because of a supposed, mysterious wetness, existing somehow apart from matter. I do not say this to disparage those grand men who dared to put themselves against the authorities of the monarchy, and to conceive a better ideal of society, one which they certainly thought would secure equal rights to men; because I realize fully that no one can live very far in advance of the time-spirit, and I am positive in my own mind that, unless some cataclysm destroys the human race before the end of the twentieth century the experience of the next hundred years will explode many of our own theories. But the experience of this age has proven that metaphysical quantities do not exist apart from materials, and hence humanity can not be made equal by declarations on paper. Unless the material

conditions for equality exist, it is worse than mockery to pronounce men equal. And unless there is equality (and by equality I mean equal chances for every one to make the most of himself) unless, I say, these equal chances exist, freedom, either of thought, speech, or action, is equally a mockery.

I once read that one million angels could dance at the same time on the point of a needle; possibly one million angels might be able to get a decent night's lodging by virtue of their constitutional rights; one single tramp couldn't. And whenever the tongues of the non-possessing class threaten the possessors, whenever the disinherited menace the privileged, that moment you will find that the constitution isn't made for you. Therefore I think anarchists make a mistake when they contend for their constitutional rights. As a prominent lawyer, Mr. Thomas Earle White of Phila., himself an anarchist, said to me not long since: "What are you going to do about it? Go into the courts, and fight for your legal rights? Anarchists haven't got any." "Well", says the governmentalist, "you can't consistently claim any. You don't believe in constitutions and laws." Exactly so; and if any one will right my constitutional wrongs I will willingly make him a present of my constitutional rights. At the same time I am perfectly sure no one will ever make this exchange; nor will any help ever come to the wronged class from the outside. Salvation on the vicarious plan isn't worth despising. Redress of wrongs will not come by petitioning "the powers that be". "He has rights who dare maintain them." "The Lord helps them who help themselves." (And when one is able to help himself, I don't think he is apt to trouble the Lord much for his assistance.) As long as the working-people fold hands and pray the gods in Washington to give them work, so long they will not get it. So long as they tramp the streets, whose

stones they lay, whose filth they clean, whose sewers they dig, yet upon which they must not stand too long lest the policeman bid them "move on"; as long as they go from factory to factory, begging for the opportunity to be a slave, receiving the insults of bosses and foremen, getting the old "no", the old shake of the head, in these factories they built, whose machines they wrought; so long as they consent to herd like cattle, in the cities, driven year after year, more and more, off the mortgaged land, the land they cleared, fertilized, cultivated, rendered of value; so long as they stand shivering, gazing thro' plate glass windows at overcoats, which they made, but cannot buy, starving in the midst of food they produced but cannot have; so long as they continue to do these things vaguely relying upon some power outside themselves, be it god, or priest, or politician, or employer, or charitable society, to remedy matters, so long deliverance will be delayed. When they conceive the possibility of a complete international federation of labor, whose constituent groups shall take possession of land, mines, factories, all the instruments of production, issue their own certificates of exchange, and, in short, conduct their own industry without regulative interference from law-makers or employers, then we may hope for the only help which counts for aught--Self-Help; the only condition which can guarantee free speech, (and no paper guarantee needed).

But meanwhile, while we are waiting, for there is yet much grist of the middle class to be ground between the upper and nether millwheels of economic evolution; while we await the formation of the international labor trust; while we watch for the day when there are enough of people with nothing in their stomachs and desperation in their heads, to go about the work of expropriation; what shall those do who are starving now?

That is the question which EMMA GOLDMANN had to face; and she answered it by saying: "Ask, and if you do not receive, take,--take bread".

I do not give you that advice. Not because I do not think that bread belongs to you; not because I do not think you would be morally right in taking it; not that I am not more shocked and horrified and embittered by the report of one human being starving in the heart of plenty than by all the Pittsburghs;, and Chicagoes, and Homesteads, and Tennessees, and Coeur d'Alenes, and Buffaloes, and Barcelonas, and Parises not that I do not think one little bit of sensitive human flesh is worth all the property rights in N. Y. city; not that I think the world will ever be saved by the sheep's virtue of going patiently to the shambles; not that I do not believe the expropriation of the possessing classes inevitable, and that that expropriation will begin by just such acts' EMMA GOLDMANN advised, viz: the taking possession of wealth already produced; not that I think you owe any consideration to the conspirators of Wall Street, or those who profit by their operations, as such nor ever will till they are reduced to the level of human beings having equal chances with you to earn their share of social wealth, and no more, not that I would have you forget the consideration they have shown to you; that they have advised lead for strikers, strychnine for tramps, bread and water as good enough for working people; not that I cannot hear yet in my ears the words of one who said to me of the Studebaker Wagon Works' strikers, "if I had my way I'd mow them down with gatling guns"; not that I would have you forget the electric wire of Ft. Frick, nor the Pinkertons, nor the militia, nor the prosecutions for murder and treason; not that I would have you forget the 4th of May, when your constitutional right of free speech was vindicated, nor the

11th of Nov. when it was assassinated; not that I would have you forget the single dinner at Delmonico's which Ward Mc.Allister tells us cost ten thousand collars! Would I have you forget that the wine in the glasses was your children's blood? It must be a rare drink--children blood! I have read of the wonderful sparkle on costly champagne; --I have never seen it. If I did I think it would look to me like mother tears over the little, white, wasted forms of dead babies;--dead--because--there was no milk in their breasts! Yes, I want you to remember that these rich are blood-drinkers, tearers of human flesh, gnawers of human bones! Yes, if I had the power I would burn your wrongs upon your hearts in characters that should glow like live coals in the night!

I have not a tongue of fire as EMMA GOLDMANN has; I cannot "stir the people"; I must speak in my own cold, calculated way. (Perhaps that is the reason I am let to speak at all.) But if I had the power my will is good enough. You know how Shakespeare's Marc Antony addressed the populace of Rome:

"I am no orator, as Brutus is,
But as you know me all, a plain blunt man
That love my friend. And that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him.
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech
To stir men's blood. I only speak right on.
I tell you that which you yourselves do know,
Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor, poor dumb
mouths,
And bid them speak for me. But were I Brutus
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue

In every wound of Caesar's, that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny."

If, therefore, I do not give you the advice which EMMA GOLDMANN gave, let not the authorities suppose it is because I have any more respect for their constitution and their law than she has, or that I regard them as having any rights in the matter.

No. My reasons for not giving that advice are two. First, if I were giving advice at all, I would say: "My friends, that bread belongs to you. It is you who toiled and sweat in the sun to sow and reap the wheat; it is you who stood by the thresher, and breathed the chaff-filled atmosphere in the mills, while it was ground to flour; it is you who went into the eternal night of the mine and risked drowning, fire-damp, explosion, and cave-in, to get the fuel for the fire that baked it; it is you who stood in the hell-like heat, and struck the blows that forged the iron for the ovens wherein it is baked; it is you who stand all night in the terrible cellar shops, and tend the machines that knead the flour into dough; it is you, you, you, farmer, miner, mechanic, who make the bread; but you haven't the power to take it. At every transformation wrought by toil some one who didn't toil has taken part from you; and now he has it all, and you haven't the power to take it back! You are told you have the power because you have the numbers. Never make so silly a blunder as to suppose that power resides in numbers. One good, level-headed policeman with a club, is worth ten excited, unarmed men; one detachment of well-drilled militia has a power equal to that of the greatest mob that could be raised in New York City. Do you know I admire compact, concentrated power. Let me give you an illustration. Out in a little town in Illinois there is a certain capitalist, and if ever a human creature sweat and ground

the grist of gold from the muscle of man, it is he. Well, once upon a time, his workmen, (not his slaves, his workmen,) were on strike; and fifteen hundred muscular Polacks armed with stones, brickbats, red hot pokers, anti other such crude weapons as a mob generally collects, went up to his house for the purpose of smashing the windows, and so forth; possibly to do as those people in Italy did the other day with the sheriff who attempted to collect the milk tax. He alone, one man, met them on the steps of his porch, and for two mortal hoers, by threats, promised, cajoleries, held those fifteen hundred Poles at bay. And finally they went away, without smashing a pane of glass or harming a hair of his head. Now that was power! And you can't help but admire it, no matter if it was your enemy who displayed it; and you must admit that so long as numbers can be overcome by such relative quantity, power does not reside in numbers. Therefore, if I were giving advice, I would not say, "take bread", but take counsel with yourselves how to get the power to take bread.

There is no doubt but that power is latently in you; there is little doubt it can be developed; there is no doubt the authorities know this, and fear it, and are ready to exert as much force as is necessary to repress any signs of its development. And this is the explanation of EMMA GOLMANN'S imprisonment. The authorities do not fear you as you are, they only fear what you may become. The dangerous thing was "the voice crying in the wilderness" foretelling the power which was to come after it. You should have seen how they feared it in Phila. They got out a whole platoon of police and detectives, and executed a military maneuver to catch the little woman who had been running around under their noses for three days. And when she walked up to them, why then, they surrounded and captured her, and guarded the city hall where they kept her

over night, and put a detective in the next cell to make notes. Why so much fear? Did they shrink from the stab of the dressmakers needle? Or did they dread some stronger weapon?

Ah! -- the accusation before the New York Pontius Pilate was: "she stirreth up the people". And Pilate sentenced her to the full limit of the law, because, he said, "you are more than ordinarily intelligent". Why is intelligence dealt thus hardly with? Because it is the beginning of power. Strive, then, for power.

My second reason for not repeating EMMA GOLDMANN'S words is, that I, as an anarchist, have no right to advise another to do anything involving a risk to himself; nor would I give a fillip for an action done by the advice of some one else, unless it is accompanied by a well-argued, well-settled conviction on the part of the person acting, that it really is the best thing to do. Anarchism, to me, means not only the denial of authority, not only a new economy, but a revision of the principles of morality. It means the development of the individual as well as the assertion of the individual. IT means self-responsibility, and not leader worship. I say it is your business to decide whether you will starve and freeze in sight of food and clothing, outside of jail, or commit some overt act against the institution of property and take your place beside TIMMERMANN and GOLDMANN. And in saying this I mean to cast no reflection whatever upon Miss Goldmann for doing otherwise. She and I hold many differing views on both Economy and Morals; and that she is honest in hers she has proven better than I have proven mine. Miss Goldmann is a communist; I am an individualist. She wishes to destroy the right of property, I wish to assert it. I make my war upon privilege and authority, whereby the

right of property, the true right in that which is proper to the individual, is annihilated. She believes that co-operation would entirely supplant competition; I hold that competition in one form or another will always exist, and that it is highly desirable it should. But whether she or I be right, or both of us be wrong, of one thing I am sure; the spirit which animates EMMA GOLDMANN is the only one which will emancipate the slave from his slavery, the tyrant from his tyranny--the spirit which is willing to dare and suffer.

That which dwells in the frail body in the prison-room to-night is not the New York dressmaker alone. Transport yourselves there in thought a moment; look steadily into those fair, blue eyes, upon the sun-brown hair, the sea-shell face, the restless hands, the woman's figure, look steadily till these fade from sight, as things will fade when gazed long upon, look steadily till in place of the person, the individual of time and place, you see that which transcends time and place, and flits from house to house of Life, mocking at Death. Swinburne in his magnificent "Before a Crucifix" says:

"With iron for thy linen bands,
And unclean cloths for winding-sheet,
They bind the people's nail-pierced hands,
They hide the people's nail-pierced feet:
And what man, or what angel known
Shall roll back the sepulchral stone?"

Perhaps in the presence of this untrammeled spirit we shall feel that something has rolled back the sepulchral stone; and up from the cold wind of the grave is borne the breath that animated ANAXAGORAS, SOCRATES, CHRIST, HYPATIA, JOHN HUSS, BRUNO, ROBERT EMMET, JOHN BROWN, SOPHIA PEROVSKAYA,

PARSONS, FISCHER, ENGEL, SPIES, LINGG, BERKMANN, PALLAS; and all those, known and unknown, who have died by tree, and axe, and fagot, or dragged out forgotten lives in dungeons, derided, hated, tortured by men. Perhaps we shall know ourselves face to face with that which leaps from the throat of the strangled when the rope chokes, which smokes up from the blood of the murdered when the axe falls; that which has been forever hunted, fettered, imprisoned, exiled, executed, and never conquered. Lo, from its many incarnations it comes forth again, the immortal Race-Christ of the Ages! The gloomy walls are glorified thereby, the prisoner is transfigured: And we say, reverently we say:

"O sacred Head, O desecrate,
O labor-wounded feet and hands,
O blood poured forth in pledge to fate
Of nameless lives in divers lands!
O slain, and spent, and sacrificed
People! The gray-grown, speechless Christ."

FRANCISCO FERRER

Voltairine de Cleyre

IN all unsuccessful social upheavals there are two terrors: the Red--that is, the people, the mob; the White--that is, the reprisal.

When a year ago to-day the lightning of the White Terror shot out of that netherest blackness of Social Depth, the Spanish Torture House, and laid in the ditch of Montjuich a human being who but a moment before had been the personification of manhood, in the flower of life, in the strength and pride of a balanced intellect, full of the purpose of a great and growing undertaking,-- that of the Modern Schools,--humanity at large received a blow in the face which it could not understand.

Stunned, bewildered, shocked, it recoiled and stood gaping with astonishment. How to explain it ? The average individual--certainly the average individual in America--could not believe it possible that any group of persons calling themselves a government, let it be of the worst and most despotic, could slay a man for being a teacher, a teacher of modern sciences, a builder of hygienic schools, a publisher of text-books. No: they could not believe it. Their minds staggered back and shook refusal. It was not so; it could not be so. The man was shot,--that was sure. He was dead, and there was no raising him out of the ditch to question him. The Spanish government had certainly proceeded in an unjustifiable manner in court-martialing him and sentencing him without giving him a chance at defense. But surely he had been guilty of something; surely he must have rioted, or instigated riot, or done some desperate act of rebellion; for never could it be that in the

twentieth century a country of Europe could kill a peaceful man whose aim in life was to educate children in geography, arithmetic, geology, physics, chemistry, singing, and languages.

No: it was not possible!--And, for all that, it was possible; it was done, on the 13th of October, one year ago to-day, in the face of Europe, standing with tied hands to look on at the murder.

And from that day on, controversy between the awakened who understood, the reactionists who likewise understood, and their followers on both sides who have half understood, has surged up and down and left confusion pretty badly confounded in the mind of him who did not understand, but sought to.

The men who did him to death, and the institutions they represent have done all in their power to create the impression that Ferrer was a believer in violence, a teacher of the principles of violence, a doer of acts of violence, and an instigator of widespread violence perpetrated by a mass of people. In support of the first they have published reports purporting to be his own writings, have pretended to reproduce seditious pictures from the walls of his class-rooms, have declared that he was seen mingling with the rebels during the Catalonian uprising of last year, and that upon trial he was found guilty of having conceived and launched the Spanish rebellion against the Moroccan war. And that his death was a just act of reprisal.

On the other hand, we have had a storm of indignant voices clamoring in his defense, alternately admitting and denying him to be a revolutionist, alternately contending that his schools taught social rebellion and that they taught nothing

but pure science; we have had workmen demonstrating and professors and litterateurs protesting on very opposite grounds; and almost none were able to give definite information for the faith that was in them.

And indeed it has been very difficult to obtain exact information, and still is so. After a year's lapse, it is yet not easy to get the facts disentangled from the fancies,-- the truths from the lies, and above all from the half-lies.

And even when we have the truths as to the facts, it is still difficult to value them, because of American ignorance of Spanish ignorance. Please understand the phrase. America has not too much to boast of in the way of its learning; but yet it has that much of common knowledge and common education that it does not enter into our minds to conceive of a population 68% of which are unable to read and write, and a good share of the remaining 32% can only read, not write; neither does it at all enter our heads to think that of this 32% of the better informed, the most powerful contingent is composed of those whose distinct, avowed, and deliberate purpose it is to keep the ignorant ignorant.

Whatever may be the sins of Government in this country, or of the Churches--and there are plenty of such sins--at least they have not (save in the case of negro slaves) constituted themselves a conspiratical force to keep out enlightenment,--to prevent the people from learning to read and write, or to acquire whatever scientific knowledge their economic circumstances permitted them to. What the unconscious conspiracy of economic circumstance has done, and what conscious manipulations the Government school is guilty of, to render higher education a privilege of the rich and a maintainer of injustice is another matter. But it cannot be charged that the rulers of America seek to render the people

illiterate. People, therefore, who have grown up in a general atmosphere of thought which regards the government as a provider of education, even as a compeller of education, do not, unless their attention is drawn to the facts, conceive of a state of society in which government is a hostile force, opposed to the enlightenment of the people,--its politicians exercising all their ingenuity to sidetrack the demand of the people for schools. How much less do they conceive the hostile force and power of a Church, having behind it an unbroken descent from feudal ages, whose direct interest it is to maintain a closed monopoly of learning, and to keep out of general circulation all scientific information which would tend to destroy the superstitions whereby it thrives.

I say that the American people in general are not informed as to these conditions, and therefore the phenomenon of a teacher killed for instituting and maintaining schools staggers their belief. And when they read the assertions of those who defend the murder, that it was because his schools were instigating the overthrow of social order in Spain, they naturally exclaim: "Ah, that explains it! The man taught sedition, rebellion, riot, in his schools! That is the reason."

Now the truth is, that what Ferrer was teaching in his schools was really instigating the overthrow of the social order of Spain; furthermore it was not only instigating it, but it was making it as certain as the still coming of the daylight out of the night of the east. But not by the teaching of riot; of the use of dagger, bomb, or knife; but by the teaching of the same sciences which are taught in our public schools, through a generally diffused knowledge of which the power of Spain's despotic Church must crumble away. Likewise it was laying the primary foundation for the

overthrow of such portions of the State organization as exist by reason of the general ignorance of the people.

The Social Order of Spain ought to be overthrown; must be overthrown, will be overthrown; and Ferrer was doing a mighty work in that direction. The men who killed him knew and understood it well. And they consciously killed him for what he really did; but they have let the outside world suppose they did it, for what he did not do. Knowing there are no words so hated by all governments as "sedition and rebellion," knowing that such words will make the most radical of governments align itself with the most despotic at once, knowing there is nothing which so offends the majority of conservative and peace-loving people everywhere as the idea of violence unordered by authority, they have wilfully created the impression that Ferrer's schools were places where children and youths were taught to handle weapons, and to make ready for armed attacks on the government.

They have, as I said before, created this impression in various ways; they have pointed to the fact that the man who in 1906 made the attack on Alfonso's life, had acted as a translator of books used by Ferrer in his schools; they have scattered over Europe and America pictures purporting to be reproductions of drawings in prominent wall-spaces in his schools, recommending the violent overthrow of the government.

As to the first of these accusations, I shall consider it later in the lecture; but as to the last, it should be enough to remind any person with an ordinary amount of reflection, that the schools were public places open to any one, as our schools are; and that if any such pictures had existed, they would have been sufficient cause for shutting up the

schools and incarcerating the founder within a day after their appearance on the walls. The Spanish Government has that much sense of how to preserve its own existence, that it would not allow such pictures to hang in a public place for one day. Nor would books preaching sedition have been permitted to be published or circulated.--All this is foolish dust sought to be thrown in foolish eyes.

No; the real offense was the real thing that he did. And in order to appreciate its enormity, from the Spanish ruling force's standpoint, let us now consider what that ruling force is, what are the economic and educational conditions of the Spanish people, why and how Ferrer founded the Modern Schools, and what were the subjects taught therein.

Up to the year 1857 there existed no legal provision for general elementary education in Spain. In that year, owing to the liberals having gotten into power in Madrid, after a bitter contest aroused partially by the general political events of Europe, a law making elementary education compulsory was passed. This was two years before Ferrer's birth.

Now it is one thing for a political party, temporarily in possession of power, to pass a law. It is quite another thing to make that law effective, even when wealth and general sentiment are behind it. But when joined to the fact that there is a strong opposition is added the fact that this opposition is in possession of the greatest wealth of the country, that the people to be benefited are often quite as bitterly opposed to their own enlightenment as those who profit by their ignorance, and that those who do ardently desire their own uplift are extremely poor, the difficulty of practicalizing this educational law is partially appreciated.

Ferrer's own boyhood life is an illustration of how much benefit the children of the peasantry reaped from the educational law. His parents were vine dressers; they were eminently orthodox and believed what their priest (who was probably the only man in the little village of Alella able to read) told them: that the Liberals were the emissaries of Satan and that whatever they did was utterly evil. They wanted no such evil thing as popular education about, and would not that their children should have it. Accordingly, even at 13 years of age, the boy was without education,--a circumstance which in after years made him more anxious that others should not suffer as he had.

It is self-understood that if it was difficult to found schools in the cities where there existed a degree of popular clamor for them, it was next to impossible in the rural districts where people like Ferrer's parents were the typical inhabitants. The best result obtained by this law in the 20 years from 1857 to 1877 was that, out of 16,000,000 people, 4,000,000 were then able to read and write,--75% remaining illiterate. At the end of 1907 the proportion was altered to 6,000,000 literate out of 18,500,000 population, which may be considered as a fairly correct approximate of the present condition.

One of the very great accounting causes for this situation is the extreme poverty of the mass of the populace. In many districts of Spain a laborer's wages are less than \$1.00 a week, and nowhere do they equal the poorest workman's wages in America. Of course, it is understood that the cost of living is likewise low; but imagine it as low as you please, it is still evident that the income of the workers is too small to permit them to save anything, even from the most frugal living. The dire struggle to secure food, clothing and shelter is such that little energy is left

wherewith to aspire to anything, to demand anything, either for themselves or their children. Unless, therefore, the government provided the buildings, the books, and appliances, and paid the teachers' salaries, it is easy to see that the people most in need of education are least able, and least likely, to provide it for themselves. Furthermore the government itself, unless it can tax the wealthier classes for it, cannot out of such an impoverished source wring sufficient means to provide adequate schools and school equipments.

Now, the wealthiest classes are just the religious orders. According to the statement of Monsignor Jose Valeda de Gunjado, these orders own ,two-thirds of the money of the country and one-third of the wealth in property. These orders are utterly opposed to all education except such as they themselves furnish--a lamentable travesty on learning.

As a writer who has investigated these conditions personally, observes, in reply to the question, "Does not the Church provide numbers of schools, day and night, at its own expense?"--ëIt does,--unhappily for Spain.í î It provides schools whose principal aim is to strengthen superstition, follow a mediaeval curriculum, keep out scientific light,--and prevent other and better schools from being established.

A Spanish educational journal (La Escuela Espanola) , not Ferrer's journal, declared in 1907 that these schools were largely "without light or ventilation, dens of death, ignorance, and bad training." It was estimated that 50,000 children died every year in consequence of the mischievous character of the school rooms. And even to schools like these, there were half a million children in Spain who could gain no admittance.

As to the teachers, they are allowed a salary ranging from \$50.00 to \$100.00 a year; but this is provided, not by the State, but through voluntary donations from the parents. So that a teacher, in addition to his legitimate functions, must perform those of collector of his own salary.

Now conceive that he is endeavoring to collect it from parents whose wages amount to two or three dollars a week; and you will not be surprised at the case reported by a Madrid paper in 1903 of a master's having canvassed a district to find how many parents would contribute if he opened a school. Out of one hundred families, three promised their support!

Is it any wonder that the law of compulsory education is a mockery ? How could it be anything else?

Now let us look at the products of this popular ignorance, and we shall presently understand why the Church fosters it, why it fights education; and also why the Catalonian insurrection of 1909, which began as a strike of workers in protest against the Moroccan war, ended in mob attacks upon convents, monasteries, and churches.

I have already quoted the statement of a high Spanish prelate that the religious orders of Spain own two-thirds of the money of Spain, and one-third of the wealth in property. Whether this estimate is precisely correct or not, it is sufficiently near correctness to make us aware that at least a great portion of the wealth of the country has passed into their hands,--a state not widely differing from that existing in France prior to the great Revolution. Before the insurrection of last year, the city of Barcelona alone had 165 convents, many of which were exceedingly rich. The

province of Catalonia maintained 2,300 of these institutions. Aside from these religious orders with their accumulations of wealth, the Church itself, the united body of priests not in orders, is immensely wealthy. Conceive that in the Cathedral at Toledo there is an image of the Virgin whose wardrobe alone would be sufficient to build hundreds of schools. Imagine that this doll, which is supposed to symbolize the forlorn young woman who in her pain and sorrow and need was driven to seek shelter in a stable, whose life was ever lowly, and who is called the Mother of Sorrows, --imagine that this image of her has become a vulgar coquette sporting a robe where into are sown 85,000 pearls, besides as many more sapphires, amethysts, and diamonds!

Oh, what a decoration for the mother of the Carpenter of Nazareth! What a vision for the dying eyes on the Cross to look forward to! What an outcome of the gospel of salvation free to the poor and lowly, taught by the poorest and the lowliest,--that the humble keeper of the humble household of the despised little village of Judea should be imaged forth as a Queen of Gauds, bedizened with a crown worth \$25,000 and bracelets valued at \$10,000 more. The Virgin Mary, the Daughter of the Stable, transformed into a diamond merchant's showcase!

And this in the midst of men and women working for just enough to keep the skin upon the bone; in the midst of children who are denied the primary necessities of childhood.

Now I ask you, when the fury of these people burst, as under the provocation they received it was inevitable that it should burst, was it any wonder that it manifested itself in mob violence against the institutions which mock their

suffering by this useless, senseless, criminal waste of wealth in the face of utter need?

Will some one now whisper in our ears that there are women in America who decorate themselves with more jewels than the Virgin of Toledo, and throw away the price of a school on a useless decoration in a single night; while within a radius of five miles from them there are also uneducated children, for whom our School Boards can provide no place?

Yes, it is so; let them remember the mobs of Barcelona!

And let me remember I am talking about Spain!

The question naturally intrudes, How does the Church, how do the religious orders manage to accumulate such wealth? Remember first that they are old, and of unbroken continuance for hundreds of years. That various forms of acquisition, in operation for centuries, would produce immense accumulations, even supposing nothing but legitimate purchases and gifts. But when we consider the actual means whereby money is daily absorbed from the people by these institutions we receive a shock which sets all our notions of the triumph of Modern Science topsy-turvy.

It is almost impossible to realize, and yet it is true, that the Spanish Church still deals in that infamous "graft" against which Martin Luther hurled the splendid force of his wrath four hundred years ago. The Church of Spain still sells indulgences. Every Catholic bookstore, and every priest, has them for sale. They are called "bulas." Their prices range from about 15 to 25 cents, and they constitute an elastic excuse for doing pretty much what the possessor

pleases to do, providing it is not a capital crime, for a definitely named period.

Probably there is no one in America so little able to believe this condition to exist, as the ordinary well-informed Roman Catholic. I have myself listened to priests of the Roman faith giving the conditions on which pardon for venal offenses might be obtained; and they had nothing to do with money. They consisted in saying a certain number of prayers at stated periods, with specified intent. While that may be a very illogical way of putting things together that have no connection, there is nothing in it to offend one's ideas of honesty. The enlightened conscience of an entire mass of people has demanded that a spiritual offense be dealt with by spiritual means. It would revolt at the idea that such grace could be written out on paper and sold either to the highest bidder or for a fixed price.

But now conceive what happens where a people are illiterate, regarding written documents with that superstitious awe which those who cannot read always have for the mysterious language of learning; regarding them besides with the combination of fear and reverence which the ignorant believer entertains for the visible sign of Supernatural Power, the Power which holds over him the threat of eternal punishment,--and you will have what goes on in Spain. Add to this that such a condition of fear and gullibility on the side of the people, is the great opportunity of the religious "grafter." Whatever number of honest, self-sacrificing, devoted people may be attracted to the service of the Church, there will certainly be found also, the cheat, the impostor, the searcher for ease and power.

These indulgences, which for 15 or 25 cents pardon the buyer for his past sins, but are good only till he sins again,

constitute a species of permission to do what otherwise is forbidden; the most expensive one, the 25c-one, is practically a license to hold stolen property up to a certain amount.

Both rich and poor buy these things, the rich of course paying a good deal more than the stipulated sum. But it hardly requires the statement that an immense number of the very poor buy them also. And from this horrible traffic the Church of Spain annually draws millions.

There are other sources of income such as the sale of scapulars, agnus-deis, charms, and other pieces of trumpery, which goes on all over the Catholic world also, but naturally to no such extent as in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, where popular ignorance may be again measured by the materialism of its religion.

Now, is it reasonable to suppose that the individuals who are thriving upon these sales, want a condition of popular enlightenment? Do they not know how all this traffic would crumble like the ash of a burnt-out fire, once the blaze of science were to flame through Spain? They EDUCATE! Yes; they educate the people to believe in these barbaric relics of a dead time,--for their own material interest. Spain and Portugal are the last resort of the mediaeval church; the monasticism and the Jesuitry which have been expelled from other European countries, and compelled to withdraw from Cuba and the Philippines, have concentrated there; and there they are making their last fight. There they will go down into their eternal grave; but not till Science has invaded the dark corners of the popular intellect.

The political condition is parallel with the religious condition of the people, with the exception that the State is poor while the Church is rich.

There are some elements in the government which are opposed to the Church religiously, which nevertheless do not wish to see its power as an institution upset, because they foresee that the same people who would overthrow the Church, would later overthrow them. These, too, wish to see the people kept ignorant.

Nevertheless, there have been numerous political rebellions in Spain, having for their object the establishment of a republic.

In 1868 there occurred such a rebellion, under the leadership of Ruiz Zorilla. At that time, Ferrer was not quite 20 years old. He had acquired an education by his own efforts. He was a declared Republican, as it seems that every young, ardent, bright-minded youth, seeing what the condition of his country was, and wishing for its betterment, would be. Zorilla was for a short time Minister of Public Instruction, under the new government, and very zealous for popular education.

Naturally he became an object of admiration and imitation to Ferrer.

In the early eighties, after various fluctuations of political power, Zorilla, who had been absent from Spain, returned to it, and began the labor of converting the soldiers to republicanism. Ferrer was then a director of railways, and of much service to Zorilla in the practical work of organization. In 1885 this movement culminated in an abortive revolution, wherein both Ferrer and Zorilla took

active part, and were accordingly compelled to take refuge in France upon the failure of the insurrection.

It is therefore certain that from his entrance into public agitation till the year 1885, Ferrer was an active revolutionary republican, believing in the overthrow of Spanish tyranny by violence.

There is no question that at that time he said and wrote things which, whether we shall consider them justifiable or not, were openly in favor of forcible rebellion. Such utterances charged against him at the alleged trial in 1909, which were really his, were quotations from this period. Remember he was then 26 years old. When the trial occurred, he was 50 years old. What had been his mental evolution during those 24 years?

In Paris, where, with the exception of a short intermission in 1889 when he visited Spain, he remained for about fifteen years, he naturally drifted into a method of making a living quite common to educated exiles in a foreign land; viz., giving private lessons in his native language. But while this is with most a mere temporary makeshift, which they change for something else as soon as they are able, to Ferrer it revealed what his real business in life should be; he found teaching to be his genuine vocation; so much so that he took part in several movements for popular education in Paris, giving much free service.

This participation in the labor of training the mind, which is always a slow and patient matter, began to have its effect on his conceptions of political change. Slowly the idea of a Spain regenerated through the storm blasts of revolution, mightily and suddenly, faded out of his belief, being replaced, probably almost insensibly, by the idea that a

thorough educational enlightenment must precede political transformation, if that transformation were to be permanent. This conviction he voiced with strange power and beauty of expression, when he said to his old revolutionary Republican friend, Alfred Naquet: "Time respects those works alone which Time itself has helped to build."

Naquet himself, old and sinking man as he is, is at this day and hour heart and soul for forcible revolution; admitting all the evils which it engenders and all the dangers of miscarriage which accompany it, he still believes, to quote his own words, that "Revolutions are not only the marvelous accoucheurs of societies; they are also fecundating forces. They fructify men's intelligences; and if they determine the final realization of matured evolutions, they also become, through their action on human minds, points of departure for newer evolutions." Yet he, who thus sings the paean of the uprisen people, with a fire of youth and an ardor of love that sound like the singing of some strong young blacksmith marching at the head of an insurgent column, rather than the quavering voice of an old spent man; he, who was the warm personal friend of Ferrer for many years, and who would surely have wished that his ideal love should also have been his friend's love, he expressly declares that Ferrer was of those who feel themselves drawn to the field of preparative labor, making sure the ground over which the Revolution may march to enduring results.

This then was the ripened condition of his mind, especially after the death of Zorilla, and all his subsequent life and labor is explicable only with this understanding of his mental attitude.

In the confusion of deafening voices, it has been declared that not only did he not take part in last year's manifestations, nor instigate them; but that he in fact had become a Tolstoyan, a non-resistant.

This is not true: he undoubtedly understood that the introduction of popular education into Spain means revolt, sooner or later. And he would certainly have been glad to see a successful revolt overthrow the monarchy at Madrid. He did not wish the people to be submissive; it is one of the fundamental teachings of the schools he founded that the assertive spirit of the child is to be encouraged; that its will is not to be broken; that the sin of other schools is the forcing of obedience. He hoped to help to form a young Spain which would not submit; which would resist, resist consciously, intelligently, steadily. He did not wish to enlighten people merely to render them more sensitive to their pains and deprivations, but that they might so use their enlightenment as to rid themselves of the system of exploitation by Church and State which is responsible for their miseries. By what means they would choose to free themselves, he did not make his affair.

How and when were these schools founded? It was during his long sojourn in Paris, that he had as a private pupil in Spanish, a middle-aged, wealthy, unmarried, Catholic lady. After much conflict over religion between teacher and pupil, the latter modified her orthodoxy greatly; and especially after her journeys to Spain, where she herself saw the condition of public instruction.

Eventually she became interested in Ferrer's conceptions of education, and his desire to establish schools in his own country. And when she died in 1900 (she was then somewhat over 50 years old) she devised a certain part of

her property to Ferrer, to be used as he saw fit, feeling assured no doubt that he would see fit to use it not for his personal advantage, but for the purpose so dear to his heart. Which he did.

The bequest amounted to about \$150,000; and the first expenditure was for the establishment of the Modern School of Barcelona, in the year 1901.

It should be said that this was not the first of the Modern School movement in Spain; for previous to that, and for several years, there had sprung up, in various parts of the country, a spontaneous movement towards self-education; a very heroic effort, in a way, considering that the teachers were generally workingmen who had spent their day in the shops, and were using the remainder of their exhausted strength to enlighten their fellow-workers and the children. These were largely night-schools. As there were no means behind these efforts, the buildings in which they were held were of course unsuitable; there was no proper plan of work; no sufficient equipment, and little co-ordination of labor. A considerable percentage of these schools were already on the decline, when Ferrer, equipped with his splendid organizing ability, his teacher's experience, and Mlle. Meunier's endowment, opened the Barcelona School, having as pupils eighteen boys and twelve girls.

So proper to the demand was this effort, that at the end of four years' earnest activity, fifty schools had been established, ten in Barcelona, and forty in the provinces.

In 1906, that is, after five years' work, a banquet was held on Good Friday, at which 1,700 pupils were present.

From 30 to 1,700,--that is something. And a banquet in Catholic Spain on Good Friday! A banquet of children who have bade good-bye to the salvation of the soul by the punishment of the stomach! We here may laugh; but in Spain it was a triumph and a menace, which both sides understood.

I have said that Ferrer brought to his work splendid organizing ability. This he speedily put to purpose by enlisting the co-operation of a number of the greatest scientists of Europe in the preparation of text-books embodying the discoveries of science, couched in language comprehensible to young minds.

So far, I am sorry to say, I have not succeeded in getting copies of these manuals; the Spanish government confiscated most of them, and has probably destroyed them. Still there are some uncaptured sets (one is already in the British Museum) and I make no doubt that within a year or so we shall have translations of most of them.

There were thirty of these manuals all told, comprising the work of the three sections, primary, intermediate, and superior, into which the pupils were divided.

From what I have been able to find out about these books, I believe the most interesting of them all would be the First Reading Book. It was prepared by Dr. Odon de Buen, and is said to be at the same time "a speller, a grammar and an illustrated manual of evolution," "the majestic story of the evolution of the cosmos from the atom to the thinking being, related in a language simple, comprehensible to the child."

20,000 copies of this book were rapidly sold.

Imagine what that meant to Catholic schools! That the babies of Spain should learn nothing about eternal punishment for their deadly sins, and should learn that they are one in a long line of unfolding life that started in the lowly sea-slime!

The books on geography, physics, and mineralogy were written in like manner and with like intent by the same author; on anthropology, Dr. Enguerrand wrote, and on evolution, Dr. Letourneau of Paris.

Among the very suggestive works was one on "The Universal Substance," a collaborate production of Albert Bloch and Paraf Javal, in which the mysteries of existence are resolved into their chemical equivalents, so that the foundations for magic and miracle are unceremoniously cleared out of the intellectual field.

This book was prepared at Ferrer's special request, as an antidote to ancestral leanings, inherited superstitions, the various outside influences counteracting the influences of the school.

The methods of instruction were modeled after earlier attempts in France, and were based on the general idea that physical and intellectual education must continually supplement each other. That no one is really educated, so long as his knowledge is merely the recollection of what he has read or seen in a book. Accordingly a lesson often consisted of a visit to a factory, a workshop, a studio, or a laboratory, where things were explained and illustrated; or in a class journey to the hills, or the sea, or the open country, where the geological or topographical conditions

were studied, or botanical specimens collected and individual observation encouraged.

Very often even book classes were held out of doors, and the children insensibly put in touch with the great pervading influences of nature, a touch too often lost, or never felt at all, in our city environments.

How different was all this from the incomprehensible theology of the Catholic schools to be learned and believed but not understood, the impractical rehearsing of strings of words characteristic of mediaeval survivals! No wonder the Modern Schools grew and grew, and the hatred of the priests waxed hotter and hotter.

Their opportunity came; indeed, they did not wait long.

In the year 1906, on the 31st day of May, not so very long after that Good Friday banquet, occurred the event which they seized upon to crush the Modern School and its founder.

I am not here to speak either for or against Mateo Morral. He was a wealthy young man, of much energy and considerable learning. He had helped to enrich the library of the Modern School and being an excellent linguist, he had offered to make translations of text-books. Ferrer had accepted the offer. That is all Morral had to do with the Modern School.

But on the day of royal festivities, Morral had it in his head to throw a bomb where it would do some royal hurt. He missed his calculations, and the hurt intended did not take place; but after a short interval, finding himself about to be captured, he killed himself.

Think of him as you please: think that he was a madman who did a madman's act; think that he was a generous enthusiast who in an outburst of long chafing indignation at his country's condition wanted to strike a blow at a tyrannical monarchy, and was willing to give his own life in exchange for the tyrant's; or better than this, reserve your judgment, and say that you know not the man nor his personal condition, nor the special external conditions that prompted him; and that without such knowledge he cannot be judged. But whatever you think of Morral, pray why was Ferrer arrested and the Modern School of Barcelona closed? Why was he thrown in prison and kept there for more than a year? Why was it sought to railroad him before a Court Martial, and that attempt failing, the civil trial postponed for all that time?

WHY? WHY?

Because Ferrer taught science to the children of Spain,--and for no other thing. His enemies would have killed him then; but having been compelled to yield an open trial, by the outcry of Europe, they were also compelled to release him. But I imagine I hear, yea hear, the resolute mutter behind the closed walls of the monasteries, the day Ferrer went free. "Go, then; we shall get you again. And then-- "

And then they would do what three years later they did,--damn him to the ditch of MONTJUICH.

Yea, they shut their lips together like the thin lips of Fate and--waited. The hatred of an order has something superb in it,--it hates so relentlessly, so constantly, so transcendently; its personnel changes, its hate never alters;

it wears one priest's face or another's; itself is identical, inexorable; it pursues to the end.

Did Ferrer know this ? Undoubtedly in a general way he did. And yet he was so far from conceiving its appalling remorselessness, that even when he found himself in prison again, and utterly in their power, he could not believe that he would not be freed.

What was this opportunity for which the Jesuitry of Spain waited with such terrible security? The Catalonian uprising. How did they know it would come? As any sane man, not over-optimistic, knows that uprising must come in Spain. Ferrer hoped to sap away the foundations of tyranny through peaceful enlightenment. He was right. But they are also right who say that there are other forces hurling towards those foundations; the greatest of these,--Starvation.

Now it was plain and simple Starvation that rose to rend its starvers when the Catalonian women rose in mobs to cry against the command that was taking away their fathers and sons to their death in Morocco. The Spanish people did not want the Moroccan war; the Government, in the interest of a number of capitalists, did; but like all governments and all capitalists, it wanted workingmen to do the dying. And they did not want to die, and leave their wives and children to die too. So they rebelled. At first it was the conscious, orderly protest of organized workingmen. But Starvation no more respects the commands of workingmen's unions, than the commands of governments, and other orderly bodies. It has nothing to lose: and it gets away, in its fury, from all management; and it riots.

Where Churches and Monasteries are offensively rich and at ease in the face of Hunger, Hunger takes its revenge. It has long fangs, it rends, and tears, and tramples--the innocent with the guilty--always. It is very horrible! But remember,--remember how much more horrible is the long, slow systematic crushing, wasting, drying of men upon their bones, which year after year, century after century, has begotten the Monster, Hunger. Remember the 50,000 innocent children annually slaughtered, the blinded and the crippled children, maimed and forsaken by social power; and behind the smoke and flame of the burning convents of July, 1909, see the staring of those sightless eyes.

Ferrer instigate that mad frenzy! Oh, no; it was a mightier than Ferrer!

"Our Lady of Pain"--Our Lady of Hunger--Our Lady with uncut nails and wolf-like teeth--Our Lady who bears the Man-flesh in her body that cannon are to tear-- Our Lady the Workingwoman of Spain, ahungered. She incarnated the Red Terror.

And the enemies of Ferrer in 1906, as in 1909, knew that such things would come; and they bided their time.

It is one of those pathetic things which destiny deals, that it was only for love's sake--and most for the love of a little child--who died moreover--that the uprising found Ferrer in Spain at all. He had been in England, investigating schools and methods there from April until the middle of June. Word came that his sister-in-law and his niece were ill, so the 19th of June found him at the little girl's bedside. He intended soon after to go to Paris, but delayed to make some inquiries for a friend concerning the proceedings of

the Electrical Society of Barcelona. So the storm caught him as it caught thousands of others.

He went about the business of his publishing house as usual, making the observations of an interested spectator of events. To his friend Naquet he sent a postal card on the 26th of July, in which he spoke of the heroism of the women, the lack of co-ordination in the people's movements, and the total absence of leaders, as a curious phenomenon. Hearing soon after that he was to be arrested, he secluded himself for five weeks. The "White Terror" was in full sway; 3,000 men, women, and children had been arrested, incarcerated, inhumanly treated. Then the Chief Prosecutor issued the statement that Ferrer was "the director of the revolutionary movement."

Too indignant to listen to the appeals of his friends, he started to Barcelona to give himself up and demand trial. He was arrested on the way.

And they court-martialed him.

The proceedings were utterly infamous. No chance to confront witnesses against him; no opportunity to bring witnesses; not even the books accused of sedition allowed to offer their mute testimony in their own defense; no opportunity given to his defender to prepare; letters sent from England and France to prove what had been the doomed man's purposes and occupations during his stay there, "lost in transit"; the old articles of twenty-four years before, made to appear as if recent utterances; forgeries imposed and with all this, nothing but hearsay evidence even from his accusers; and yet--he was sentenced to death.

Sentenced to death and shot.

And all Modern Schools closed, and his property sequestrated.

And the Virgin of Toledo may wear her gorgeous robes in peace, since the shadow of the darkness has stolen back over the circle of light he lit.

Only,--somewhere, somewhere, down in the obscurity--hovers the menacing figure of her rival, "Our Lady of Pain." She is still now,--but she is not dead. And if all things be taken from her, and the light not allowed to come to her, nor to her children,--then--some day-- she will set her own lights in the darkness.

Ferrer--Ferrer is with the immortals. His work is spreading over the world; it will yet return, and rid Spain of its tyrants.

DE CLEYRE BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE

de Cleyre, Voltairine (1889) *The Drama of the Nineteenth Century.* (translated lecture) Pittsburgh: R. Staley & Co.

---(1894) *In Defense of Emma Goldmann [sic] and the Right of Expropriation.* Philadelphia: The Author

---(1895) *The Past and Future of the Ladies' Liberal League* Philadelphia: Ladies Liberal League

---(1898?) *The Gods And The People.* Glasgow: William Duff,

---(1900) *The Worm Turns.* Philadelphia PA: Innes & Sons.

---(1903) *Det Anarkistiske Ideal.* (translated lecture) *hristiania* [Oslo]: Social-Demokraten

---(1903) *Crime and Punishment.* (translated lecture) Philadelphia: Social Science

---(1907) *McKinley's Assassination from the Anarchist Standpoint.* New York: *Mother Earth*

---(1909) *Anarchism and American Traditions.* New York, NY: *Mother Earth*

---(1910) *The Dominant Idea.* New York: *Mother Earth*

---(1912) *Direct Action.* New York: *Mother Earth*

--- (1914) *Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre*. New York: *MotherEarth* publishing association.

---(1916) *Selected Stories*. Seattle: The Libertarian Magazine

---(1929) *Anarquismo*. (translated lecture) Buenos Aires: La Antorcha, 1929.

--- (1972) *Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre pioneer of women's liberation*. New York: Revisionist Press.

--- (1980) *The First Mayday : The Haymarket Speeches, 1895-1910*. Sanday, Orkney : Cienfuegos Press ; New York, N.Y. Libertarian Book Club.

ABOUT VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE

Abbot, Leonard D. A Priestess of Pity and Vengeance, The International (New York, August 1912; reprinted in *Mother Earth*, September 1912. See also Abbots' letter on Voltairine de Cleyre in *The American Freeman* (Girard, Kans.), July 1949.

---, Voltairine de Cleyre's Posthumous Book, *Mother Earth*, October 1914.

Atlas, Marilyn Judith (1980) *Voltairine de Cleyre's Feminism: A Study of Her Theory and Characterization*. Midamerica: The Yearbook of the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature. East Lansing, MI.

Avrich, Paul (1978) *An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Cohen, Joseph J. Voltairine de Cleyre, *Fraye Arbeter Shtime*, June 29, 1912

Constan, P. [Ahrne Thorne]. Tsum fertsigstn yortsayt nokh Voltairine de Cleyre, *Fraye Arbeter Shtime*, January 2, 1953.

Duff, William. Voltairine de Cleyre, *The Herald of Revolt*, September 1913 (a special Voltairine de Cleyre issue).

---, Voltairine de Cleyre's Tour in Scotland, *Freedom* (London), November 1897.

Elwell, Mary. The Worm Turns, *Lucifer*, June 9, 1900.

Fox, Jay. Voltairine de Cleyre, The Agitator, July 15, 1912. See also his speech in *The Syndicalist*, July 1, 1913, delivered in Chicago on the first anniversary of her death.

Frumkin, Abraham. Voltairine de Cleyre, in his *In friling fun yidishn sotsializm*, New York, A. Frumkin Jubilee Committee, 1940, pp.223-60 (originally published in the *Fraye Arbeter Shtime*).

Galleani, Luigi. Voltairine de Cleyre, 1866-1912, La Cronaca Sovversiva, July 27, 1912. Reprinted in his *Medaglioni: figure e figuri*, Newark, L'Adunata del

Refrattari, n.d. [1930], pp.110-118; and in L'Emancipazione (Oakland, CA), June 15, 1932.

Greco, Michael Douglas (1991) *The Remembrance of the Haymarket Martyrs: A Marcusean Analysis of the Rhetoric of Voltairine de Cleyre*. Thesis (M. A.)--University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Goldman, Emma (1932) *Voltairine de Cleyre*. Published privately by the Oriole Press.

--- (1914) *Voltairine de Cleyre*. 18 p. Typescript.

Hapgood, Hutchins. A Famous Unknown, *The Globe and Commercial Advertiser* (New York), June 21, 1912.

Hartmann, Sadakichi. Voltairine de Cleyre, *Mother Earth*, April 1915.

Havel, Hippolyte. *Introduction to the Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre*, New York, Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1914, pp. 5-14

Heyman, porter. Voltairine at Waldheim (poem), *Man!*, July-August 1937.

In Memoriam: Voltairine de Cleyre, Chicago, Annie Livshis, 1912.

Inglis, Agnes (1934) Interview with Adelaide Thayer. Notes on biographical information and recollections of the childhood of Voltairine De Cleyre. 3 p. unpublished.

--- (1934) Biographical notes on Voltairine De Cleyre and her family. 41 p. typescript. Unpublished.

Kelly, Harry. Voltairine de Cleyre *Mother Earth*, June 1913.

Koringen, Olav. Untitled manuscript on Voltairine de Cleyre's visit to Norway (1903), with notes by Max Nettlau, Ishillcollection, Harvard.

Kucera, Joseph. Voltairine de Cleyre (A Character Sketch), *Why?*, August 1913.

Leighton, Marian. Voltairine de Cleyre: An Introduction to American Left-Wing Anarchism, Black Rose (Somerville, MA), no.2 Spring 1975, pp.1-7, whith Voltairine de Cleyre's The Making of an Anarchist, pp. 8-15

Matthews, Henry W. (1975) *Voltairine de Cleyre: The Making of an Anarchist*. Thesis (M.A.): Old Dominion University.

Munoz, V. (1979) *Voltairine de Cleyre; A Chronology*. New York: Gordon Press Publishers.

Navro, Nathan. Untitled manuscript on Voltairine de Cleyre, Ishill Collection, Harvard.

Nettlau, Max. En recuerdo de Voltairine de Cleyre, anarquista americana (1866-1912), *La Protesta* (Buenos Aires), supplement, March 31 and April 16, 1928.

Palczewski, Catherine Helen (1995) Voltairine de Cleyre: Sexual Slavery and Sexual Pleasure in the Nineteenth Century. *NWSA* vol.7, Fall 95.

Parker, S.E. Voltairine de Cleyre: Priestess of Pity and Vengeance, *Freedom* (London), April 29, 1950.

Perlin, Terry M. Anarchism and Idealism: Voltairine de Cleyre, *LaborHistory*, xiv (Fall 1973), 506-20.

Rexroth, Kenneth. Again at Waldheim (poem), *Retort* (Bearsville, NY), Winter 1942.

Starrett, Walter [W.S. Van Valkenburgh]. Untitled manuscript on Voltairine de Cleyre, Ishill Collection, Harvard.

Stein, Gordon (1995) *Voltairine De Cleyre: The American Rationalist* Volume 39, Number 6.

Voltairine de Cleyre, *Freedom* (London), August 1912. Probably by John Turner or Thomas H. Keell.

Voltairine de Cleyre, *Regeneración*, June 22, 1912. Se also Voltairine Dead, in English page of same issue, probably by W.C Owen

Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912), Equality (Evansville, IN), 1:2, n.d. [February 1976].

Voltairine de Cleyre: A Tribute, by Harry Kelly, George Brown, Mary Hansen, and Alexander Berkman, *Mother Earth*, July 1912 (a special Voltairine de Cleyre issue).

Yanovsky, Saul. Voltairine de Cleyre, *Fraye Arbeter Shtime*, June 22, 1912.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.