



To My Friend, the Revolutionist.

You say I have become a conservative—a "tory."
I am, what I always have been, I believe, true to my history.
I am not one of those that move checkmen in our land,
Knock the game over, and I'll give you my hand.
I can think only of one revolution
Made in a workman-like style without confusion.
And that takes from all other the glory.
I allude, of course, to the deluge in the Biblical story.
But even then was Mr. Lucifer deceived.
Noah, you know, the dictatorship received.
You radicals seem to talk of revolution in vain,
For that requires both speakers and men.
You procure a freshet for the world-wide field.
A torpedo under the Arch most willingly I shall yield.
— HENRICK IBSEN.

A Brief Treatise on Society.*

There is at present a fermentation going on in society aiming at a rational improvement of the miserable condition in which mankind finds itself. Thousands of noble and well-meaning people from all classes and nations of this globe are striving toward this goal. But it is especially the oppressed workers who cause this fermentation. The ultimate aim of this movement is clear, but regarding the ways and means thru which the end is to be achieved there is a great confusion of opinions, and consequently there is discord among the aspirants. That there are great evils all can see, but only few clearly conceive of the means which will abolish them. The capitalists, on the other hand, who are hostile to the workingmen's movement, know very well what they want, and that is their great advantage.

The discord among the endeavors results from ignorance — from lack of plainly comprehending the causes of the social evils, hence the many futile attempts, the failures in actions, and the temporary disappointments. A physician cannot cure a disease unless he correctly diagnoses the case. Therefore it must be the main endeavor of well-meaning people to arrive at a clear comprehension of the causes of the social evils and to seek to disseminate the revealed truth. The study of nature and history of man will give us the desired knowledge.

Concerning the development of man from the lower animal life we can entertain only suppositions, or at the most set up some probable hypotheses. One thing, however, we can assume with a certainty, namely, that so long as the members of the animal species — man-like apes — lived isolated lives a higher development was hardly possible. Only by associating in groups for the purpose of performing work in common, to protect themselves against forces in nature and the attacks of stronger animals, could such development take place. These beings who thus united for the purpose of mutual aid endeavored to understand each other, which developed language and with language man.

We must keep these important points well in

mind: We, the human beings of this earth, could only develop into man thru the association of the man-apes into groups for common work and mutual aid and protection. With this evolution of man the larger development of the brain, the invention of tools, agriculture, art, and science went hand in hand. In short, everything that the individual man is, and what he has, he owes to society and the social work of his fellow-men. The knowledge of these irrefutable, fundamental facts is absolutely necessary before we can correctly judge the relations of man towards man, for thru them we necessarily come to the very simple conclusion that everything man created by common labor is consequently common wealth. This is the basis of social life. Every deviation from this basis leads to destruction.

To judge human beings and life properly, a clear conception of the universe is also of importance. It is absolutely impossible for the human intellect to limit the universe to time and space. All theories and tales regarding the creation are empty imagination and fables. The world was never created — it is eternal and infinite in time and space. Its forces are indissolubly connected with matter, for force without matter is incomprehensible, just as inconceivable as an absolute nothingness. Such a view will do away with a blind belief in gods, spirits, and immortal souls.

This second fundamental truth is the basis upon which we can correctly judge our being and existence. Every deviation from this basis leads to dangerous and destructive mistakes. We can comprehend the universe as far as our senses reach; to go beyond that is futile. To be sure, the belief in supernatural powers is the result of a desire which distinguishes man from animal; the desire to understand the causes of the phenomena in this world. This is very well, but it has also thru foolish and passionate hastiness and fantastical frauds done much harm to mankind. The causes of the phenomena can only be solved by inductive methods, i. e., by long and careful observations and a correct interpretation of the observed facts with a view to understanding them in relation to each other and to their causes.

And now, understanding the two fundamental principles, we can come closer to the history of mankind, its past and present life. For times immemorial man deviated from the basis of right, i. e., from the principle that everything created in common should be enjoyed in common and should not be the property of any individual. As far as we can trace history of so-called civilization there existed private property, and in consequence we read of bloody wars and butcheries, monstrous acts of tyrants; of suppressed and enslaved masses and inhuman crimes; of misery, poverty, and diseases. This is the awful history of mankind with only occasional rays of light caused by the achievements of science, the works of art, inventions, and insurrections of suppressed nations, which, however, were never successful, for the revolutionists were ignorant of the causes of all these evils. And yet it is so easy to see them: *Private property and credulity*. These two are the causes of all wars, all crimes, and poverty.

Who is in possession of all earthly goods?

- 1) The most reckless robbers, the ruling heads of nations, the leaders in wholesale butcheries;
- 2) the smartest frauds, i. e., the priests who offer mankind an imaginary heaven for a real world; and (3) the most heartless fleecers and cunning thieves who fob the masses of the little they possess — their labor.

Is there anyone who conscientiously can refute these facts? And these robbers, thieves, and frauds rule the earth and transform their fellow-men — sincere philanthropists, inventors, scholars, artists, and industrious working people into slaves. And all these, in numbers a thousand times superior, have tolerated it for centuries and centuries.

Is mankind cursed to remain forever in such an abnormal and miserable condition?

Time and again have well-meaning men and women worked for improvements in society, but pearly all lacked the knowledge of the fundamental facts explained in this treatise. As long as society tolerates private property and its prop—government, just so long will these bloody battles for property with all their terrible results continue to exist, and so long as the masses continue to believe in heaven and hell, just so long will they be fooled by their leaders. What is to be done? Spread these fundamental truths in short, clear, and plain written articles, also in dramas on the stage. *)

When a sufficient number of able workingmen and women (brain and hand workers), have come to this understanding, then the social revolution will follow, for workers with these ideas will refuse to slave on under the present system. They will unite themselves in all countries and with all countries, and a general strike will be the result.

The general strike is the social revolution. Supposing now, the revolutionists are successful—what then? Thousands of questions will be raised, which all go into details. What shall we answer? Nothing in detail! The detailing of things has always been the trouble in the labor movement, leading to endless strife and trifles. The abolition of private property and authority is the only answer. Thus a perfect change in all the present social condition will be accomplished. We, living today, have no right or reason to dictate a future society how to settle its affairs. All difficulties will in a natural way solve themselves. Take for example the present so much trouble-creating sex question. When the woman is no longer the private property of the man, when all relationship between men and women are solved without restraint, where could a difficulty arise?

And finally, if people are not beneath animals intellectually; they will, after having done away with all private property and restraint, know what arrangements are the most expedient to inaugurate.

If they don't know it, they do not deserve freedom.
E. STEINLE.

*) The drama, "The Anarchist," written by the author of this article was produced on the free German stage in New York, also translated into Dutch. Is there no one to translate it into English? Many friends told me it could be produced on the English stage with success.
E. S.

* Read at the St. Louis Convention. — Translated from the German by C. N.

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If these figures are ahead of the number printed on
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your subscription expired so many weeks ago.

..ANARCHY.—A social theory which regards the
union of order with the absence of all direct govern-
ment of man by man as the political ideal; absolute
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ATTENTION, CHICAGO!

Go and indulge in a Social Evening, with Music
and other Entertainment, on Saturday, Oct. 22,
Stangel's Hall is the place, Western Ave., near
Van Buren St. Admission will be 10 Cents, and
the proceeds will go to "Free Society."
Remember, 8 p.m. Saturday, October 22.

By the Wayside.

The mine owners' association of Cripple
Creek has, according to the *Milwaukee Wahr-
heit* (Truth), posted notices in the district to
the effect that no worker shall be permitted to
work there unless he is recommended by the
mine owners. All who violate the ukase will
be deported.

* * *

In his report to chief of police, of Chicago,
Captain Clancy of the stockyard's district as-
serts that about ten thousand old employes of
the packing houses have failed to find employ-
ment, and he fears that starvation and misery
will cause riots. About two thousand of them
have left the city, he says, and many have gone
back to Europe, but he apprehends that about
six thousand men will remain idle in his district,
and therefore asks that his police force be in-
creased — in order to provide the suffering toi-
lers — who are anxious to work — with em-
ployment? Oh no, to protect the property of
the exploiters and idlers of the city.

* * *

An Indian woman gave an audience of
Chicago women a few of her reasons why she
refused to be "civilized," which did not seem to
please the civilized femininity. "Mothers are to
blame for all the crimes of their children," she
said. "The Indian mother never brings into the
world a deformed, birthmarked or idiotic child.
Those beings were left for civilization. That's
why I refuse to be civilized." She could have
added that cheating, lying, robbing the laborers
by means of law, driving thousands of people
to suicide thru poverty and misery and per-
verted morality, and then punishing those who
are being caught in the attempt of ending their

FREE SOCIETY.

earthly misery in order to enter the Elysian
fields of paradise, are the exclusive blessings of
church and statecraft — blessings that the bar-
barians do not care to enjoy.

* * *

Social Democracy finds itself in an embarrass-
ing predicament in Germany. Its press reports
that the government contemplates to curtail
the right of suffrage. "What then?" is the
question now heard everywhere among the
workers, according to the *Free Worker*. Bebel
has emphatically declared that the German
workers would have no interest in the contin-
uance of the present order of things if their
right of suffrage should be curtailed; but what's
to be done? The Socialist party leaders have
ridiculed the idea of a general strike as a revo-
lutionary means; they have proved — to their
own satisfaction — that insurrections are doom-
ed to failure; that the ballot-box is the only
reliable savior, and hence the query, "What
then?" And their comes no answer from the
party luminaries. "The dullards among the
toilers," the *Free Worker* replies, "those who
are ready to sell their Socialism for a pot of
pottage will continue to look up to you with
reverence, but thinking men, people to whom
their ideal is sacred, and are ready to stand and
fall with Socialism, will turn their backs on the
Socialist parties. And our aim shall be: The
mental and moral development of men, in order
that they may get ready to take part in the in-
tellectual and economic struggle of the future."

* * *

Our Individualist friends who cannot think
of freedom without "ifs" and "buts" and other
beautiful qualifications, will be delighted to hear
that the civilized nations are now resisting "in-
vasion" among the heathens by wholesale ex-
termination. The natives of Africa "invaded"
the industrious proclivities of the Germans by
their reluctance to work for their white masters
and their disregard for property (one five year
old girl is still in prison because she "stole"
some milk from a goat to quench her thirst),
and they are now being civilized by a rifle diet.
In the Portuguese colonies of Africa, as well
as in New Caledonia the natives offended the
moral sentiment of the Catholic missionaries by
their practise of polygamy, and the "divines" is-
sued an edict to the effect that polygamy should
cease. The poor, ignorant natives could not
comprehend why the followers of Christ
should interfere with their religious and social
customs, and paid little attention to the ukase,
whereupon hundreds of them were thrown into
prison. Then the natives began to resist the
"invasion" of the intruders, with the result
that some of the sky-pilots lost their lives. And
now a campaign of extermination is to be un-
dertaken against the barbarian "invaders," un-
til they have learned to see that God created
them for the purpose of working for the Chris-
tian nations, that the milk of the goats is too
precious for the children of slaves, and that the
surplus of native women is to be preserved for
the Catholic missionaries and the military offi-
cers of christian nations. Verily, the question
of "invasion" is a delicate subject.

* * *

A few years ago a young Catholic priest told
a Socialist audience (in San Francisco), after
he had been assured that religion was a private
affair and had nothing to do with Socialism,
that the Socialists parties were badly mistaken
if they labored under the delusion that Social-
ism could be realized without destroying the
Catholic church. "We shall fight you with teeth
and nail," the "divine" exclaimed, "and you will
find that we are more powerful than capitalism
and governments combined." Of this incident
I was reminded when I came across the news
that the Catholic bishop of Madrid, Spain, had
distributed two hundred thousand revised cate-
chisms in the schools, purporting to promote
the "Movement in Favor of Ignorance," as com-
rade C. L. James so aptly calls the endeavors of
Catholicism.

In the "Appendix" of the catechism the
bishop says, among other things: "When the
wicked did not yet have the freedom they pos-
sess today it was sufficient to know the five
commandments, but today you must know the
rest of the commandments of the church. These
are: 6. Thou shalt not print, read, distribute or
sell vile papers. 7. Thou shalt not belong to
the freemasons. 8. Thou shalt not send thy
children to the undenominational, i. e., public
schools. 9. Thou shalt consult neither a Prot-
estant nor Jewish (heretical) physician, nor
serve a Jew." On page 74 it reads: "Tell me,
children, are freedom, equality, and fraternity
against Christian virtues?" Answer: "Yes,
assuredly, especially when these terms are taken
in the perverted sense, that these conceptions
are given by the enemies of the church." Query:
"Whose example do those fellow that applaud
freedom?" Answer: "The example of Lu-
cifer the First, who hoisted the flag of freedom.
In the scriptures God compares them with the
beasts." Query: "On what is the fraternity
of the Godless founded?" Answer: "On the
love to mankind, and is therefore called philan-
thropy." Query: "Who is the father of phil-
anthropy?" Answer: "The devil." Query:
"Is liberalism acceptable in a degree?" An-
swer: "No, all liberalism is a mortal sin and
essentially anti-christian."

And this precious avowal is not only preached
and disseminated in the schools and churches,
but has also been recommended in glowing
terms to the Academy of Science by one of its
prominent members, the ex-minister Alexan-
der Pidal.

* * *

The American workman, farmer, merchant or pro-
fessional man quickly realizes that without the law,
which he has helped to make, and the officers in his
employ, paid for by his taxes, his little property
would be taken by a mob, and his family left to its
mercies. — C. W. Post in the *St. Louis American*.

Mr. Post has also discovered that this quick-
witted, ingenious, and "peaceful" element is,
thank God, largely in the majority" in the Amer-
ican labor movement. Yet, strangely enough,
Mr. Post finds that, tho there are only "twenty-
thousand Anarchists in this country out of fif-
teen million voters," the Anarchist "have largely
obtained control of the labor unions," and he
fears that they will soon also control the farm-
ers and other acute and law-abiding members
of the community. The irony of his logic does
not seem to bother this wisecrack. He boldly
states that the law-abiding labor leaders "have
been throw out and their places have been
usurped by genuine, out-and-out Anarchists,
with one or two exceptions," and that in spite
of the quick susceptibility of the American
people, and in spite of the "peaceful element,
which is, thank God, largely in the majority."
What an exposure of the stupidity of the law-
abiding Americans and the farce of the ballot-
box if a handful of Anarchists can obtain con-
trol over a large majority of the peaceful ele-
ment! Unfortunately, however, Mr. Post is
grossly mistaken. The average labor leader
comes from the "law-abiding and peaceful ele-
ment," which still harbors the delusion that
government prevents crime and preserves order.
Only few of the intelligent workers begin to
realize that without the law and the police club
they could not be robbed by a few drones in
society; it dawns upon them that "the officers
in their employ" (government officials) are not
their servants but their masters — and hence
their respect for "law and order" is vanishing.
And it is this "disorderly element" which makes
for progress in society. When "the criminal
element" of this country rebelled against the en-
croachments of England — which, by the way,
were of a far less exacting nature than those
imposed upon the people by our present "pub-
lic servants" and money kings — King George
sent troops to "preserve law and put down An-
archy," but the "Anarchists with criminal in-
stincts" defied the divinity of kings and their
"order," and established what is now hailed as

the "most glorious republic on the globe." That was over a century ago. Today some people, whose mentality has survived the stupefying influence of church and state, begin to see that all government is essentially tyrannical, instituted to protect the rich against the poor, and it is only a matter of time when this criminal will be shelved in order to make room for a free and fraternal humanity.

INTERLOPER.

The Future Weapon of the Toilers.

"While the delegates at the Social Democratic convention in Bremen (Germany) were engaged in a theoretical discussion regarding the general strike, and did not exactly know what attitude to take, a strike of this kind took place in Italy, which went far beyond the expectations that is usually associated with the idea. In Milan the strike was complete. All the factories were idle, the street railways had stopped traffic, the papers failed to appear, the stores and restaurants were closed — and bread, meat, and fish could not be bought, in short: the indispensable necessities of life were wanting. Even the cabs were missing on the streets.

"As usual, when the people attempt to test their power, troops were sent to the scene. But the government did not dare to incite the population. Things became suspicious in a high degree. Even the police took pains to observe a considerate reservedness, obeying necessity and not their own inclinations.

"And the example in Milan had a contagious effect. Genoa, Turin, Venice, Naples, Rome, and other cities joined the strike, which in consequence became imposingly bulky, and convinced the government that something had to be done to allay the excited masses. As the strike had been caused by the interference of the troops, which had killed several workers and maimed others, the minister of war, Giolitti, felt compelled to give the labor leaders the promise that under no circumstance would in future troops be sent to the scene of a strike, and that the police would also be instructed to observe the greatest impartiality during time of strikes. Thus the Italian workers have achieved a great victory thru their united and harmonious action. And the leaders of the German trades unions will do well in taking a lesson of this event. The general strike is the future weapon of the toilers, from whom one day all other arms may be taken out of their hands. Surely, the general strike ought not to be paraphrased or included in the party platform. But it should not be neglected to familiarize the people with the nature of a general strike. Such agitation will some day surely bear fruit."

These elaborations, adds the Chicago *Arbeiter Zeitung*, we have reprinted from *Zeit am Montag* ("Times on Monday," edited by Bernstein. — Trans.), and we have little to add to them. We only desire to give prominence to the fact that the idea of a general strike is coming more and more home to the minds of the workers. Even the organs of Social Democracy, which formerly scorned and ridiculed the idea, are beginning to take a lively interest in the question. Indeed, even the *Vorwärts*, the leading party organ of Social Democracy in Germany, already speaks of the glorious days of the general strike in Italy. "We must not revoke these days for trifling matters, but we will and must leave open the probability of a repetition of them at any time," the Socialist editor concludes his article on the achievements and lessons of this great strike, without raising the paltry question, "What the toilers are going to eat on the second day of the general strike."

A preacher is society's walking delegate. He is the self-appointed business agent of divinity, and no contract between God and man, man and man, or man and woman is valid unless ratified by him. All who do not belong to his union are scabs. — THE PHILISTINE.

Comments.

Ted's discovery that "we" shall soon be ordered out of the Philippine Islands by Japan, ought to be published, because it illustrates Ted's phenomenal asininity. Any diplomatist could have told him that Russia never keeps her promises. But he chose to believe her. If he had insisted on her opening the ports, when all the powers were at his back, he could have prevented the war. But he thought it smart to leave that for Japan. Any diplomatist could have told him that whichever won would order "us" out of the Philippines. But he has only just found it out.

* * *

I have to confess not quite understanding what comrade Wm. Holmes means by describing our friend, the "Critic," as "a thoro going Anarchist." I thought "Anarchists" of the Tucker school, Individualists, ardent believers in the sacred right of property, in "restraintment," jails, police, soldiers, punishment — to make a long story short in force, when it is exercised by the thieves, tho not when it is exercised in resistance to the thieves, by the producers, — had adopted the name of Anticrats, and quit calling themselves Anarchists. The latter part of which proceeding seemed to me so reasonable that I could see no cause for thrusting the repudiated name of Anarchists upon them. True, it is their privilege, as Comrade Holmes says, to advocate these principles; but hardly, at the same time, to call themselves disciples of Proudhon, who held that property was robbery. I say these things regretfully, and with a consciousness that it is something like a new departure in my own life. Before Anarchism became known to any but a very few, I exerted myself, during some fourteen years, to keep united on the one idea of woman's freedom, all who would do anything for that, and to prevent a schism on variety, ignoring the fact, tho I could not help seeing it, that only opponents of variety ever threatened to make one. Similarly, during the interval between the first use of the word Anarchism in America, and the Individualist slump, I was steadily for "Anarchism without adjectives," and willing to forget the sixty-cent dinner fellows, who said the Chicago martyrs knew nothing about Anarchism but the name, were the only introducers of adjectives. "But, if the unbelieving depart, let him depart," Proudhon, Josiah Warren, Marx, Bakunin, Tucker, and I, all set out with these radical ideas that possession is natural; that property, as distinguished from possession, is robbery; and that this robbery is artificial, being made possible only by government. When experience taught Tucker and his followers the tolerably old lesson that the natural right of possession is liable to be a subject for contest unless merged in the artificial right of property, we reached a parting of the ways. They concluded that "peace" under the sword of state, and property, are of more value than humanity. The rest of us think the man worth more than his goods, and liberty than such order as Governor Peabody dispenses. We, therefore, remain Anarchists. They have taken another name.

* * *

I have been requested to read and comment on E. C. Walker's "Communism and Conscience; Pentecost and Paradox"; but truly my patience fails. So much about "rights," "free will," "necessity," "all is good," and other Lime Kiln Club topics of discussion, may amuse a boy; but an overworked revolutionist of sixty knows no way of deciding whether "de pen am mightier dan de soard" except to try which serves his purpose best. The "newly fledged and half-baked aspirant to same" article said Comrade Walker had declared for the inductive method; but I fear his conversion was like that of the man out of whom the devil was cast indeed, yet came back with seven others more wicked than himself; because, as some one has said, no angels were put in: If the inductive angel had been put into E. C. Walker,

he would not indulge in such diabolical analogies as my saying that combinations to coerce murderers would give rise to tyranny is of a piece with saying you must not eat when hungry, lest you eat too much. That was just how Lincoln with the Democrats who told him his war for the Union would destroy all that made the Union worth having, and which was right, let the present attitude of the G. O. P. bear witness. If Lincoln had studied history half as much as lawyers' logic, it should have been easy to show him a temperance man, that combinations to "coerce murderers," preserve order," etc., are the alcohol and opium of communities, so extremely dangerous and seductive that their use can barely be warranted by the most extreme emergencies. And that is all I have said against them. I never denied that combination to coerce a murderer of Von Plehve's calibre may be harmless and useful, tho hazardous. If proof were needed where combination to coerce little murderers leads, we might find it in E. C. Walker, who justified McKinley's war of benevolent assimilation!

C. L. JAMES.

Herbert Spencer.

By P. KROPOTKIN.

II.

All of Spencer's philosophy, including his Principles of Ethics, is absolutely free from any Christian influence. This is saying a great deal. When we think how much of what is written in our day on philosophy, and especially on moral questions, is influenced by Christianity, we appreciate the service rendered by Spencer.

Nobody before him gave us a system of the universe, of organisms, of man, of human societies and their moral conceptions, that was absolutely agnostic, non-Christian. Christianity is, in Spencer's view, a religion like all others, born of the same superstitions, the same fears, the same legends, and interesting only as a fact in the history of societies — on the same grounds as the juridical conceptions of savages and the marriage ceremonies, whereof he studies the origin and evolution.

Even when he does speak of ethics, he is interested rather in the origin and development of a given custom or a moral principle, than in the individual rules set up by priests, mullahs, or chamans (savage sorcerers) as founders of the religion or moral precept.

What Spencer lacks is the spirit of attack, the fighting spirit. He builds his system of the universe without a creator, but we should like to see him directly demolish the superstitions that encumber the minds of people, preventing them from accepting his system. Spencer passed them in silence, or throws them a word of scorn on the way.

* * *

Spencer's style is sometimes heavy. Very often his proofs are insufficient to convince you (Darwin had noticed this). You also feel that he has nothing of the poet or artist in him. But when you have read his works — were it only in a synopsis — you feel that you master a complete conception of the universe, of nature as a whole, in which no place is left to mystery and the supernatural. A creating god, an "absolute," a "substance" represented as a "divine spirit" — even the "great geometer" — all this seems to you so small, so obviously the product of ignorance, so useless and artificial, when you can represent to yourself the real concrete life of worlds, solar systems, planets, and those pre-tentious little beings — men!

Spencer does not rise high enough to give you great and beautiful outlooks. He is always of the earth earthly, and does not answer to the poetic enthusiasm that is inspired in us by the contemplation of the universe. But he explains how life has been brought about on this planet by chemical and physical forces alone; how by the action of the same forces the simplest plants appeared; how by even more complicated adaptations much more complex plants

had to develop. He shows how the other branch—that of animal life—had also to appear and develop even unto man, to perfect man in turn, and some day to surpass him.

If we were to have asked Spencer, What part was here played by the creator? where is the plan of the universe? the directing idea? he would have answered as Laplace once did: "You see that in no part have I felt the need to fall back on such an hypothesis!"

In his "Principles of Sociology" Spencer unfolds in the same way the series of human institutions, beliefs, general ideas, civilisations, from the simplest to the most complex. In detail he evidently may make mistakes—he often does. Our conception of society is already very different from his.

But Spencer gives us the method by which we are to interpret social facts—the method that flows from the progress of inductive science, the method which consists in searching for an explanation of all social facts in natural causes, beginning with the nearest and simplest, and not in supernatural forces or in the hypothesis born of verbal, metaphysical analysis. If one accustoms oneself to this method, one truly sees that all our institutions, our economic relations, our languages, our religions, our music, our moral ideas, our poetry, etc., can be explained by the same concatenation of natural events that explain the movements of suns and those of the dust that circulates in space, the color of the rainbow and those of the butterfly, the forms of flowers and of animals, the customs of ants and elephants.

It is true that Spencer does not bring this unity of nature home to us; he does not make us feel the beauty and poetry of this synthetic interpretation of the universe. To do this he lacks the genius of Laplace, the poetic feeling of Humboldt, the beauty of style possessed by Elisee Reclus. These and other qualities are lacking in him. But he makes us understand how a naturalist reasons, when he is once freed of the religious and scholastic teaching by which they try to paralyze the mind.

We cannot but ask ourselves whether Spencer himself is entirely freed of this dead weight. Yes, almost but not entirely.

In all sciences, when study has been pushed to its furthest, we reach a limit that cannot at a given moment be surpassed. It is this that makes science forever young and attractive.

What delight amongst us when, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, such splendid discoveries were made in astronomy, the physical sciences, the science of life, psychology!

What grand horizons displayed themselves to our eyes in those times, as the limits of science suddenly widened! They were widened at that time, but not effaced—immediately new limits were placed as new problems to solve on all sides.

Continually does science thus displace her limits; where she stopped twenty years ago we now have a conquered field. The limit has receded. But after having made a few steps forward, science stops again to unite her efforts and accumulate new facts before she makes another great effort.

Fifty years ago we said: "Here is a group of phenomena—attractions and repulsions—they have something in common. Let us call them electric phenomena, and call the common cause, unknown for the moment, 'electricity.'" When impatient people would ask, "What is this electricity?" we had sufficient honesty to answer that we did not know anything about it—for the time being.

We have advanced a step today. We have found a point of agreement between sound, heat, light, and—electricity. When a bell rings it produces waves in the air, alternately compressed and rarefied, which follow one upon the other as waves on the surface of a pond.

These sound-waves move in the air at a pace of about 300 metres a second. They are propagated in a way that is well known to us, so that we submit it to mathematical calculation.

This was known a long time ago. But it has now been discovered that heat and light and also electricity are propagated in the selfsame way, but at a pace of 300,000 kilometres a-second.

It is perhaps matter more rarefied than air that vibrates in the case of electric phenomena; but electricity is due to vibrations quite similar to those produced in the air by a bell, and capable in the same way of being mathematically studied.

Doubtless this is not to know all about electricity: the unknown presses round on all sides—but it is a gain. Thus we can chat from one continent to another without the aid of so much as a submarine cable; and we get the news of the day on board a vessel sailing full speed on mid-ocean.

"But what is this vibrating matter?" you will perhaps ask. "I know nothing about it for the moment, any more than I knew anything about electricity or heat fifty years ago." This will be your answer. And if you still insist and ask, "Will anything be known fifty years hence?" nobody will be able to inform you. How could we tell in 1860 that towards the end of the century we would be able to throw electric vibrations over from Ireland to New York, when we did not even know that electricity consisted of vibrations analogous to light vibrations? Let us try to teach less nonsense, whether religious or lay, in our schools. Let us try to teach natural science better, so as to develop boldness—for ever boldness in young minds—and those that live will see! This is all that science can tell you.

Spencer had affirmed that beyond a certain limit we have—not the unknown, that will perhaps be known within a hundred years—but the unknowable, that which cannot be known by our intelligence; whereupon Frederic Harrison, the Positivist philosopher, justly remarked to him, "Well, you seem to know a good deal about this unknown of which you make an unknowable, since you can affirm that it can not be known."

In fact, in order that we may state of this beyond that it is unknowable, we must be sure that it differs essentially from all that we have learned to know so far. But this is to know a very great deal about this unknowable. We are affirming that it is so different from all mechanical, chemical, intellectual, and emotional phenomena of which we have any knowledge, that it will be for ever impossible to bring it under any of these classes. To make such a statement of a thing wherof we say that we know nothing, is to involve ourselves in a flagrant contradiction. It is to say at once, "I know nothing," and "I know enough to tell you that this is in nowise like anything I know!"

If we know anything about the universe, its past existence and the laws of its development; if we are capable of establishing the relations that exist, let us say, between the distance separating us from the Milky Way and the movements of suns, as of the molecules that vibrate in space; if, in a word, the science of the universe is possible,—it depends on a similarity of structure existing between this universe and our brain and nervous system.

If our brain were composed of matter different from that composing the universe of suns, stars, plants, and the other animals; if the law of molecular vibrations and chemical transformations differed for our brain and spinal cord from those existing outside our planet; if, lastly, light crossing the distance between the stars and my eye obeyed, on its way, other laws than those governing my eye, my visual nerve and my brain, I could never have known anything true about the universe and the laws that govern it; whereas things being as they are, we know enough to foretell innumerable things, and the very laws permitting us to foretell are nothing but relations apprehended by our brain.

This is why not only is there a contradiction when we talk of the unknown as the unknowable, but all that leads us to believe, on the

contrary, that nothing in nature fails to have a counterpart in our brain—part and parcel of the very same nature, composed of the same physical and chemical elements. Therefore, nothing need remain unknown for ever, nothing is incapable of being represented in our brain.

At bottom, to speak of the unknowable is to return unwittingly to the great words of all religions; and it is because religious people will not fail to avail themselves of Spencer's error that we allow ourselves to go into these arduous details. To admit of Spencer's unknowable is always to suppose a force infinitely superior to those working in our intelligence and displayed by the activity of our brain, while nothing authorizes us to suppose such a force. For the naturalist, the abstract, the absolute, god, the unknowable, are ever the same hypothesis that Laplace found unnecessary for his system of the world, and that we do not require to explain the universe or even the appearance of life on our planet in all its manifestations. It is a luxury, a useless superstructure, a survival that it is time to forget.

(To be continued.)

For New York.

October 19—Hugh O. Pentecost will speak on "Self-Expression" at the Radical Literary Club, 206 E. Broadway.

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A concert and dance will be given by the federated groups of Russian-American Anarchists on Saturday, November 5, 8 p. m., in the Pacific Hall, 209 East Broadway. Ticket, 15 cents.

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The German singing societies "Freiheit" will give a grand vocal and instrumental concert and dance on Sunday, November 6, 7 p. m., in the New York Männerchor Hall, 203—207 E. 56th St. Tickets, 15 cents.

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A Commemoration Meeting of the Eleventh of November in 1887 will take place November 10, 8 p. m., at the Grand American Hall, Second Ave. and First St. Emma Goldman, Lucy E. Parsons, James F. Morton, Jr., and Harry M. Kelly will be the principal speakers.

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November 11, 8 p. m., the same speakers will address a massmeeting on the occasion at the Labor Lyceum on Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

For Boston.

Under the auspices of the group "Progress," a concert and performance, "The Innocent Walking Delegate, or Justice by Force," will be given for the benefit of a library fund in Paine's Memorial Hall, 9 Appleton St., Sunday, Nov. 6, 7:30 p. m. Single tickets 20 cents; 35 cents for man and woman.

Letter-Box.

B. S., Chicago. Thanks for sub. and encouraging words. If every reader would try to secure new subscribers and send us names of liberal-minded people who could be supplied with sample copies, there would soon be more life in the movement. Greetings.

Disturber San Francisco. — The matter which you have sent will not appear for the following reasons: Firstly, you have had your "say," and at considerable length; secondly, you do not discuss the principles of liberty, but wish to split hairs with the editor of FREE SOCIETY; and thirdly, because a man who desires a "Constitution" for the reason that he is an Anarchist (which is the same as wanting rules and regulation because one abhors them) is a clog in the way of all reason, and should take a long rest lest the insanity experts get hold of him. — Now, do not complain. This is a just conclusion, but remember that you repudiated justice in a recent article, and have "no case."