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Benjamin Tucker
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Not the Daughter but the Mother of Order
February 4, 1882

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Benjamin Tucker

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generations and even his sadly uncritical, "down-east" Yankee, gubernational translator, John D. Long. Line after line and passage after passage of Virgil are as deeply carved in the memory of the Indo-European race as are Shakspere's greatest proverbial lines. There are thousands of lines of Virgil which Whittier could no more have written than he could scale the zenith bodily. He is an exquisite song-bird and sentimentalist, but even in the expression of sentiment he is infinitely below Virgil's mark, while he could not sustain himself for a moment in the higher regions of the imagination in which Virgil's muse takes her flight, breathing with ease "empyreal air." But Whittier does not overestimate himself, and must be annoyed by the fulsome laudation of his admirers. Taken in over-doses of fifty or a hundred consecutive pages, Whittier's poetry cloys with its monotonous sweetness and sameness; but an occasional lyric of his like "My Playmate," for instance, is delightful and medicinal. *Littérateurs* who are overpraised and constantly, elaborately, and systematically bepuffed are sure, later along, to be unduly depreciated. That is the way the world takes its revenge for having been betrayed into a temporary excess of admiration. An excessive laudation of a few "literary fellers" is gross injustice to others who are as good men as they are.

B.

merit of the above list of these *litterateurs*. They are bright and witty, beyond question. But one tires at last of the damnable literature of their names which is forever audible hereabouts. Not one of those over-popular, outrageously bepuffed *litterateurs* is a man of really commanding intellect, as distinguished from the emotional nature. They are deft, androit, highly-scented, and highly-rouged writers merely, felicitous workers-over of current literary material and ideas so superabundant, trickers-out of current thought and themes in pert, studied, ornamental phrase, intent mostly upon style and the *tournure* of their sentences, and emulating the jackdraw in the borrowed character of their plumage. After the sugar candy and treacle of this Cambridge lot of superfine scribblers, the "yawp" of rough, jaunty Walt Whitman is really refreshing, even with Walt's large liberty of speech on ordinarily forbidden themes. Occasionally a great, original idea crops out of Walt, while out of Cambridge lot only honeyed rhetoric sprouts. Who is Howells? A literary carpet-bagger in New England, a sort of sugar-cured ham from Ohio, who was pickled for a time in the language of Venice. He is a novelette-ist of the Parisian sort, whose longest flights are the hops of a sparrow from spray to spray, without length or strength of imaginative wing. Howells and Aldrich are *par nobile fratrum*, American-born Parisians, hot-house plants which have somehow blossomed on our New England soil, as the famous magnolia tree blossomed in the vicinity of the fishy, stony Gloucester. Howells excels in amorous dialogue or the voicing of the flirtations of lavendered youths and maidens laboring under erotomania. Governor Long, who, besides being a politician, is a nice, lavendered *litterateur* of the Howell-Aldrich type, exhibited the utter lack of correct literary judgment and appreciation to claim for Whittier superiority as a poet over Virgil, whom he nevertheless tried to translate,— as Bottom was translated, however. In "the poet's land," to borrow Schiller's phrase, Virgil has stood for centuries like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved, charming with an irresistible spell over new

"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
John Hay.

On Picket Duty.

An East Indian paper says that a number of Italian builders have gone to Mandalay, where King Thebaw is ambitious of having a chapel erected which shall be similar to St. Peter's at Rome. The heathen monarch evidently deems himself "a biger man" than the pope.

Cyrus W. Field, whose fears of communism are said to cause him much loss of sleep, announces, through his new organ, the "Mail and Express," the discovery of forty thousand socialists in the city of New York who are waiting an opportunity to seize his property and upset all the plans of further robbery which he and Jay Gould have concocted. Let us hope he is right.

The "Banner of Light" has always been an interesting well-conducted paper, but, since its enlargement to twelve pages, which has enabled it to present new and attractive features, it may certainly claim to stand at the head of spiritualistic journalism. It has the advantage of being managed by skilled and experienced journalists, who, moreover, are liberal-minded men, showing little or no trace of the spirit of bigotry that narrows the influence and injures the tone of many of its competitors. Its columns afford from week to week an exhaustive history of the progress of the movement of which it is an organ, as well as intelligent discussion of the same, and are especially valuable to those desirous of investigating the subject. Liberty takes very little interest in the "summer-land," but many of her friends support take a great deal. To all such we recommend the "Banner," which

costs but three dollars a year. Address, "Isaac B. Rich, Banner of Light Publishing House, Boston."

Mrs. Lucy Stone and her wing of the woman suffragists have put themselves on record in opposition to the admission to Congress of George Q. Cannon of Utah, on the ground that "he is living in open violation of the laws of United States." If Mr. Cannon were enough of a hypocrite and a sneak to be willing to follow the example of the majority of his fellow-congressmen, who live in a *secret* violation of the laws which they make, the virtuous Lucy and her martinet of a husband would probably hold up both hands in favor of admitting him. But their attitude in the matter will make no difference either way, for the report that Mormon emissaries have been engaged in investigating the daily (and nightly) habits of our national legislators has put a sudden damper on the enthusiasm of the anti-Mormon movement in Congress. A revelation of the "true inwardness" of congressmen's lives would make "mighty interesting reading," and the salacious are already chuckling at the prospect of its forthcoming. "Sunset" Cox, with his usual wit, squarely hit the mark the other day, when, in answering a Kansas member who had shown a conspicuous anxiety concerning Mr. Cannon's morals, he remarked: "Why, if Solomon, with his wisdom and his plural wives, were to come here elected to a seat, the gentleman from Kansas would cry out about a scarlet-robed woman; and had that gentleman been present when it was said, 'Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone,' the gentleman would doubtless have reached for a bowlder of the glacial period and mashed the poor woman flat."

The "Index" delights to say fine things about the Nihilists in Russia, but regards as vagarists and and fanatics that class of radicals in America with whose principles and objects the Nihilists are most in sympathy. We suspect that the "Index" knows so little of those principles and objects that it is unable to identify their supporters. The extreme tyranny practiced by the czar has made it fashionable in "cultured" circles to sym-

As for "F. S. C.'s" sexual distinction between Liberty and Order, we take very little stock in it except as a very pretty and handy figure of speech. The woman's rights people have long maintained that "there is no sex in virtue." We go farther, and doubt if there is any sex in virtues. That Liberty and Order so greatly advance each other by action and reaction that they may be regarded, in one view of the case, as almost cognate principles is not denied; but we insist that, in their relation to modern progress, Liberty comes logically first, and that Order is a result. "F. S. C." unwittingly admits the correctness of our position when he describes the offspring as "a harmonious society of integral individuals." A harmonious society of integral individuals is precisely what we mean by Order; and, if "F. S. C." has a different view of Order, it must be a very narrow one. The logical priority of Liberty to Order cannot be too strongly urged while nine-tenths of the professed friends of Order are pushing schemes to establish it by violations of Liberty. It was for this reason that we chose the grand motto which constitutes the heading of our paper. — Editor Liberty.]

Our Bepuffed Litterateurs.

In a recent number of Liberty the writer briefly descanted on Harvard College as a huge local bore, a mere "good-society" institution rather than an Academy truly devoted to knowledge, science, and reflective thought for their own sake. The college is really a local bore, because the mention of it is never absent from the newspapers of this vicinity. In like manner, there is a local literary clique, sometimes called "the Cambridge set," the sound of which is dinned into one's ears perpetually hereabouts, as if its members were altogether transcendent writers. I refer, of course, to Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Howells, Aldrich, *et id omne genus* of scribbling emotionalists. Within proper limits one is ready to acknowledge the "readability" and

Liberty Against Defined.

> Dear Liberty:— Let me suggest that your new subscriber who says that "perfect liberty is perfect obedience to natural law" probably had the element of choice in his mind, although he did not put it into words, and meant to state that perfect liberty is *voluntary* obedience to natural law. Obedience not voluntary would not be perfect, and would not be liberty.
>
> It seems to me that Liberty is neither the mother nor the daughter of Order, but the equal mate, the woman of the union of which Order is the man, the product of the offspring of the two being harmonious society of integral individuals.
>
> F. S. C.

[It is more than likely that "F. S. C." is right in regard to our new subscriber. Knowing our man, we felt confident at the time that his meaning was not accurately expressed by his statement. Nevertheless his omission afforded a good opportunity to emphasize an important distinction, and we improved it. But even if his meaning was just what "F. S. C." thinks it was, he was not strictly correct. Liberty is not obedience, compulsory or voluntary, any more than it is disobedience, compulsory or voluntary. Nor is it even the actual choice between obedience and disobedience. It is simply and solely *the freedom and power to choose*. And as long as moral philosophers of the Free Religious stamp (among whom we include neither "F. S. C." nor our new subscriber) keep on trying to conceal this, the true idea of Liberty, behind such misleading phrases as the "liberty to do right" and such hackneyed and irrational discrimination as that between "liberty and license," we do not mean to often lose a chance to bring it to the light.

pathize with a movement which these circles know only as a protect against it, and the "Index" floats with the current thus created. Once let it be recognized that Nihilism is a phase of the great labor battle now spreading over the world, and it will be frowned upon by the "Index" with the same severity that that journal now bestows upon all the other phases.

Representative Crapo has raised his bid for the Massachusetts governorship. Not satisfied with asking, as chronicled in our last issue, a twenty years' extension of the national banks' privilege to steal, he now proposes to move (so the Washington dispatches say) to strengthen their privilege by allowing them to issue currency to the amount of ninety per cent. of their bonds. Mr. Crapo is proving true to the trust which capital has placed in him. It will exhibit fresh proof of its well-known ingratitude if, in answer to his prayer for political advancement, it does not say to him: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

There seems to be no limit to the petty outrages to which that most contemptible of creatures, Anthony Comstock, is willing and able to resort for the gratification of his spite and the annoyance of his enemies. For years he has been trying to injure in all possible ways Dr. E. B. Foote and his son, of New York, publishers of the "Health Monthly" and two of the most upright of men, and we supposed that he had exhausted his resources in that direction. But no! Only a few weeks ago he induced the post-office department to deny mail facilities to a regular and respectable weekly newspaper. "House and Home," simply for printing an advertisement of Dr. Foote's "Hand-Book of Health Hints and Ready Recipes," a perfectly clean and valuable work. Dr. Foote at once procured counsel, who soon convinced the postal authorities that they had gone too far, and consequently the order was rescinded, but not before the entire edition of "House and Home" had been held

back one week, to the great annoyance of the subscribers and damage of the publishers. And so great is the terror inspired, even in the most powerful quarters, by the acts of this Comstock, that Dr. Foote was actually unable, pending the decision, to get a simple recital of the facts into the columns of the New York dailies as a paid advertisement. But, after all, is there anything to wonder at in this? Comstock is a true child of the State, of which nearly everybody is mortally afraid. The State is, by necessity, a breeder of sneaks and spies. It cannot live without them. Therefore all liberals who oppose the work of Comstock from any other platform than that of the abolition of the State are wasting good ammunition. By some fortunate chance they may succeed in displacing the man himself, but Comstock*ism* will live after him, and will fall only with the State, its creator and sustainer.

The following deserved rebuke, administered by the Boston "Globe," indicated a desire for fair play in that journal which is not shared to the extent that it should be by any large portion of the daily press: "It was charged recently by the Chicago 'Herald' that Justus Schwab was expelled from the Socialistic-Labor party for appropriating party funds. Schwab at once addressed a note to the editor, denying the charge and saying that he and his friends were expelled for 'disregarding the dictates of the would-be authorities of the party.' In this note Schwab, who is a foreigner, was so unfortunate as to spell the word *princi-ple*thus: 'prinziple.' The 'Herald' printed the note, but made no answer to it except to ridicule the misspelling at length. The 'Globe' does not champion Mr. Schwab for his theories. For aught it knows, the latter may be the devil's own invention, and the former Beelzbub disguised, but it cherishes a decided conviction that the day when the enemies of the devil cannot answer his arguments except by ridiculing his inability to spell correctly any other than his native tongue will prove a cold day for the saints."

[Mr. Colville errs in supposing that we criticised him for reading from the Bible. That strange book contains many passages which Mrs. Kendrick, in common with all sensible people, ardently admired, and which might have been read with peculiar propriety at her funeral. It was the *character* of Mr. Colville's selection that aroused our indignation. The keynote of the services was a sentence not only containing the words *Christ Jesus* (which Mr. Colville certainly used), but directly inculcating the Christian scheme of salvation, for which Mrs. Kendrick entertained no sentiment save that of the profoundest contempt. As one of her most intimate friends, a spiritualist, has since said to us, "a more inappropriate passage could not have been selected." To show Mr. Colville that we are not averse to quoting scripture properly, we call his attention, in answer to his strained symbolism identifying the truth with the Lord, to the seventeenth verse of the ninth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew: "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottle perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." It is true that Mr. Colville had no instructions concerning the service, but for the very reason, we suppose, that his intimate acquaintance with the deceased inspired a confidence that he would say nothing inappropriate. We may have erred in imputing unworthy motives in explanation of his conduct, but we had to choose between impeaching his motives or his good sense. That our criticism was substantially correct we have the amplest proof in the thanks and congratulations thereon that continue to pour in on us from Mrs. Kendrick's dearest friends present at the funeral. — Editor Liberty.]

of Jesus Christ in the reading, though I quoted the well-known passage from the Apocalypse, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." To me the truth itself is the Lord, and I do believe Mrs. Kendrick died in a love of truth, as her life was for many years a willing sacrifice to the truth as she beheld it. I think your readers ought to know that Mrs. Kendrick and I have been warm personal friends; that she frequently attended my lectures in Berkeley Hall, accompanied by her husband and daughter; and that I spoke at her funeral in compliance with the earnest request of the former. It is also due to me to state that no one of her friends instructed me how to proceed, and I read passages of scripture quite innocently, the very same that I had read recently at the memorial service commemorating the departure from earthly life of a daughter of the late Francis Jackson. On that occasion no exception was taken to the proceeding, and, seeing a number of my dearest friends at Mrs. Kendrick's funerals, I acted independently and unconstrainedly. If I have "outraged her memory and insulted her friends," I can only say that she was a very different woman from the Mrs. Kendricks I had the honor of knowing, and her friends must be persons of very peculiar sensibilities, at least. I wish to awaken no controversy, but an attack ought to be replied to by the one attacked in a journal styling itself Liberty.

Yours for the truth,

W. J. Colville.

John Bright says that he justifies Irish coercion policy on the same ground that he would justify the suppression of the mutiny by putting the mutineers in irons. But would he always justify such suppression of a mutiny? Suppose Mr. Bright were first mate of a vessel, and for months had witnessed the intermittent flogging and persistent starvation, by order of the captain, of a crew well-disposed when well treated; suppose, further, that this *régime* having become intolerable, certain sailors were to lift their voices in earnest protest, and advise the others to do no more work until the captain should cease his cruelty; suppose, finally, that the captain were to put these ringleaders in irons,— what would Mr. Bright consider his line of duty, not as first mate, but as a man? Judging by his past, he would resign his office, side with the crew, and advise them to throw overboard, or at least depose, so tyrannical and cruel a captain. But, judging by his present, he would support the captain in his infamy. For that is just what he had done in the case of Ireland. Instead of withdrawing, as he should have done, from Gladstone's cabinet, he has aided and abetted Gladstone and Forster in putting into prison men whose worst offence consists in advising their countrymen to pursue policy of passive resistance towards the tyrants who, for centuries, have kept them in a state of semi-barbarism. Mr. Bright's parallel is an unhappy one, and tells decidedly against him. He further says that he favors "such a degree of freedom as will give security to freedom, but not such a degree as would destroy it." What nonsense! When will our political philosophers learn that violations of freedom, only trace them back far enough, always result from other violations of freedom, and that the more freedom there is, the better, in the long run, it is secured?

"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by

passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions." — Proudhon.

Do Liberals Know Themselves?

Liberty not unfrequently receives the compliment of being considered the most radical and revolutionary sheet ever published in this country. So startling has seemed the project of abolishing the State to not a few radicals in the other reform spheres that they have hesitated to entertain this paper in their family circles and places of business, lest they might be ticketed by Mrs. Grundy and "good society" as Nihilists, enemies of law and order, and dangerous citizens generally.

Yet, after all, what is any radical, whose protest means anything, but a person who is attempting to abolish the State? Bear in mind that the State typifies any organized machine which attempts to enforce its measures and methods by other means than persuasion and consent and at other than its own cost. Messrs. Seaver and Mendum of the Boston "Investigator" are materialists. They see in the way of progress and organized machine presided over by ecclesiastic hierarchs. It attempts to saddle its theological constitution upon those who never subscribed to it. Its dogmas are crammed down the throats of the unthinking and gullible through authoritative posting of certain theological maxims. It erects an omnipotent God to suit its own despotic purposes, and saddles the expense of supporting him and his hierarchical retinue upon those who do not acknowledge allegiance.

Now, the thing that Messrs. Seaver and Mendum are endeavoring to abolish is this theological State, which, if they examine it is almost the exact counterpart of the political State,

The trackless desert of the sea, when night
And storm and darkness o'er the planet hung
Their mantle, ere the needle's marvelous sight
Tracked through the gloom the pole star, and revealed
To the foiled pilot's ken where 'twas concealed.

But in our day flames on Caprera's shore
A beacon brighter than old Etna's ray,
That signals, "Italy's long night is o'er,
And there has dawned for her a brighter day
Than when upon Rome's seven hills late power
That held a world in awe: the gracious away
Of reason, truth, and right, and liberty."
This precious boon Italia owes to thee.

Brave Garibaldi! And the time will come
When Caprera will be to men a shrine
More sacred than the prophet's honored tombs
At Mecca, or the mount in Palestine
Where died the fabled Savior. But no gloom
Will cast its shadow o'er our lives from thine,
More than thy country's saviour, whom men bless
As freedom's champion, lover of thy race!

Simson Palmer.

Mr. Colville Explains.

To the Editor of Liberty,

Dear Sir:— Allow me to inform your readers that, had I thought it objectionable to any of Mrs. Kendrick's real friends, I should not have read any extracts from the Bible at her funeral, as I do not deem reading a necessary part of a funeral service. I am not aware of having used the word

The society should not appeal to charity, or to philanthropy, or to the justice of government or municipal authorities, or to no matter what benevolent institution. It should place its sole reliance on the echo which its suffering would awaken in the hearts of the people and on the terror which would be struck to the hearts of the exploiters by the apparition of the advance-guard of the Revolution.

Timely Truth Tersely Told.

[From the New York "Sun."]

A correspondent in Brooklyn writes in praise of the notion of putting the railroads of the country under a national system, "the control and management of which shall be in the hands of agents of the whole people."

We cannot imagine anything more absurd, unpatriotic, and dangerous than this scheme.

There is one end which should be constantly pursued by every intelligent American in whatever belongs to legislation and to government. This end is to diminish the power of government, to reduce the number and authority of officeholders, and to abolish as far as possible the interference of political agents in private affairs.

Let our correspondent also recall the wisdom which suggests that we should

> "rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of."

GARIBALDI.

> Once the Cyclopean king the poets sang
> Was Etna's beacon of eternal light
> That led the grateful mariner along

or, rather, is one phase of it. So true is this that to attempt to abolish the theological State without abolishing the political is as impossible as ridiculous. It is strange that religious liberals do not see this at a glance.

Take, again, the Free Religionists, with their famous "demands of liberalism." Many of their leading demands were simply attempts to abolish certain despotic appendages of the State. Those who initiated the movement, in calling it *Free* Religion, asked for the abolition of the State to that extent that they conceived the State to be the antipodes of Liberty. The movement promised well, and might accomplish much if it had sufficient sagacity and bravery in its constituency to pursue the State *versus* Free Religion far enough to see that the main purpose of the State is to deny freedom, whether in religion, morals, trade, or industry. The Free Religionists unfortunately have achieved little more than an exchange of the orthodox God for enforced "culture," "morality," "purity," and other undefined fictions — thus becoming more offensively bigoted in the eyes of true liberals than the Orthodox themselves.

But all religious liberals, to the extent that they institute effective protests against a real enemy, will find, upon knowing themselves better, that that enemy is the State in some of its allied forms, and that they are engaged in a movement to abolish it. There is a theological State, a social State, an industrial State. The pernicious element of them all is that species of organization which is based on compulsion and authority rather than upon reason and consent. Though our attitudes towards Spiritualism is a skeptical one, we nevertheless accord to its friends the credit of being, in one respect, the most sagacious body of liberals in the world, in that they largely discard organization and leave a wide latitude to individuality. The result is seen in the rapid and wonderful growth of their numbers.

The State is simply a mammoth organization, held together by usurpation and force. All minor organizations in society are modeled after it. Of this type of organization Liberty is the

avowed enemy. It violated individual right. It is unscientific. It is the universal foe of progress. It must go. Curiously enough, some of our liberal friends, who, in all they effectively do for growth and emancipation, are fighting that same foe, have yet to learn the logic of their own dissent. But they, too, like the benighted bigots whose servility they deplore, are still bound in the shackles of custom and revered named. They, however, providentially persist in acting better than they know, and all we can do is invite them to patiently follow our method and logic till they know themselves better.

The "New" Morality of Free Religion.

The last issue of Liberty called attention to the claim set up by the teachers and prophets of Free Religion, to wit, that they have successfully passed by that first phase of liberalism where so great a stress is put upon the importance of negative criticism and denial, and are now serenely encamped on the broad plains of a new constructive, philosophical science, preparatory to leading the world onwards by new paths of living waters and universal good: which claim was contested, Liberty maintaining that, whatever denial Free Religionists have left behind, no new affirmative gospel as yet has fallen from their lips. And this, we stated, is true as regards both the beatitudes of religion and the practical moral problems of the time.

But let it be understood that we by no means gainsay the fact that the disciples of Free Religion make a *point* of morality. Equally with their Christian brethren of the present day, they come boldly to the front, vindicating the standard moral code. They are opposed to theft, lying, adultery, — indeed, they reaffirm the ten moral rules of the decalogue with as much unction as the most devout Biblical sect. We do not criticise this; we refer to it merely to say that there is nothing new or *especially* "affirmative" in it. It is the old, old story again, the same

To effect a permanent organization of laborers out of work, which, losing daily its old members, should recruit daily new ones from the laborers who remain out of work. Thus, by turns, all the laborers of the community would pass through the ranks of the organization.

This society should have a permanent committee composed of trusty and devoted men, endowed with the powers purely executive and continually receiving fresh inspiration from the will of the mass of unemployed laborers. The members of this committee themselves should not be necessarily unemployed, or in circumstances which would prevent them from displaying constant activity.

The society should give the greatest possible publicity to its acts through the newspapers, and, if need be, by huge posters. The objects of the society should be: (1) to group the entire idle proletariat of the locality; (2) to make known as widely as possible the number and position of its members; (3) to affirm, by all methods in harmony with the socialistic and revolutionary spirit, the right to life and the will to work, and especially to compete for contracts to be awarded, offering as sole guarantee the capital of its own poverty. Then, to present themselves at public festivals, meetings, and popular assemblies, interrupt the festivities, and demand a consideration of the question of Misery. On especial occasions,— for instance, in case of an exceptional increase of poverty or of the gathering of a great multitude,— to present themselves in procession with other industrial bodies, or else to march by themselves *en masse* through the city to expose their misery and hunger.

To display, at these public manifestations of hunger, placards bearing this inscription: "We, who produce all things, have no bread." If unable to fly the red flag of the International let them use a black flag as an emblem of death, or else display a workingmen's blouse or some other tattered garment as an emblem of pauperism.

Liberty Still Ahead.

> Friend Tucker:— Put me down for one of the bound volumes of Liberty. I am familiar with most of the radical literature of the day, especially the periodicals. Took the "Index" eight years, but outgrew it. Have got two volumes of it to sell, all in good order. Liberty is still ahead, but I shall catch up in time, and drop it when it ceases to instruct and lead. Am glad you are not afraid of your subscribers. Liberty should be a weekly, and as large as the "Truth Seeker." What do you say for an effort in that direction? The world needs your thought more largely diffused. Get up a stock company, and we will all help. Agitate the thing through Liberty, and commence at once.
>
> Admiringly,
>
> D. P. Willcox.
> Deadwood, Dakota, January 1, 1881.

[Liberty would soon lag behind, were we to follow our friend's advice. A stock company would ruin the paper. All that keeps it fresh and bright and bold and true is its absolute control by one individual, who had a definite purpose in view. Liberty intends to become a weekly in due time, and as large as necessity requires. But slow and sure! — Editor Liberty.]

A New Method of Agitation.

An Italian journal, *La Miseria*, recommends the following proposition, which is well worthy the attention of Anarchists in all countries, suggesting, as it does, an excellent means of utilizing enforced idleness in the interest of the social revolution. Here is the plan:

rehearsed in the Episcopal service for lo, these many centuries, with its "Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners." But how far this reiteration of the Jewish commandments will go in shaping the new civilization is a matter of speculation. Some may think, as doubtless our Free Religion friends do, that, in the absence of their yet-to-be-developed scientific religion, a good stiff emphasis on the old-time moral dogmas will serve them and the world in a good stead. We notice in a recent number of the "Index" a special commendation given to a new "Association of Moralists" just now in process of incubation at Hannibal, Missouri. The one great aim of this new organization is "to show the world that liberalism does not mean lawlessness or *im*morality, but, on the contrary, it is conducive to the highest type of morality and the best interest of society." These moralists have a "form of admission to membership," one clause of which reads as follows: "Do you faithfully promise that, if received into this brotherhood, you will strive to live a just and honorable life, that no reproach may ever come upon our cause through any act or word of yours?" And the good "Index" adds: "A society organized on such a basis ought not to fail of success." The other "affirmation" which this society offers is to effect that it will "make an earnest effort to promote the religion of humanity."

Have we now in this illustration exhausted the "affirmation" of Free Religion? We should not, we suppose, get credit for being serious if we referred to the zeal of the "Index" against the circulation of "obscene literature," or to its unabated demand for the suppression of that "Twin relic of barbarism" in the far-away territory of Utah. Though both of these attitudes must be described as highly moral, they are neither of them so unlike the popular clamor as to entitle them to rank among the Free Religious "affirmations." There remains, then, simply the summary of the Simon-pure "moralists" of Hannibal with which to furnish forth the marriage table of Free Religion and the newest civilization. And to what a feast are the anhungered

guests bidden! The centre of this world-round table is set apart for a wide-spreading dish, on which, gently simmering in a bluish, aesthetic flame, lies the "Religion of Humanity." Side dishes circle about, each laden with some one of the prevailing moralities. A solemn, decorous hush pervades the room, as the assembled guests draw nigh and swear in subdued speech to "strive to live a just and honorable life, that no reproach may ever come upon our cause through any act or word of ours."

And what is to be the upshot of this new consecrated union? What shall issue forth from this civilization of Free Religious *moralists?*

Celebrate the event, O "Index!" but tell us what new affirmative moral truth shall come to stand as a pillar of humanity on the earth upholding the heavens.

Seriously, so far as we can observe, Free Religion has no courage, no faith, no purpose,— no courage to face the world and proclaim the *necessity* of new moral relations in the great practical world of industry; on every issue of this nature it sides with the old, upholding landlords, money-kings, and monopolists: no faith in human nature as equal to its destiny of freedom; but sides with the oppressor in placing Liberty always on the debatable ground of expediency: no purpose beyond that of a drifting tub, catching only what the elegant swash of the times tosses to its embrace.

Take its own excuse for being,— a devotion to freedom. How *free* is Free Religion? The last half-dozen years have been given in great part to a crusade against "individualism" and "private judgment," and for the *restraining* influence that comes of "organization." Nearly all of its distinguished leaders have proclaimed that the era of the *individual* is at an end. Henceforth, there must be the "consensus of the *competent*;" in other words, private judgment must be held in abeyance or set aside in deference to the concurrent judgment of what practically might as well be called "the church" as by any other

Liberty desires to testify to its heartfelt admiration for the devotion displayed by Mrs. Scoville, Guiteau's sister, in her support of her unfortunate, insane relative. In a letter answering the statement that the defence had become discouraged, she nobly said: "Be that as it may, the one who probably cares more than any person living for the prisoner and his defence begs leave to state that, so far as she is concerned, there is no discouragement. I shall stand by him against the whole world, against my whole family even, as I have stood since that fated second of July, until the end, whatever that may be, shall come. Because I know that his cause is righteous; because to him it was the command of God, and he obeyed against his own will and inclinations. 'This faith shall be accounted unto him for righteousness.' If the Lord wills, I can say good-by to him on the scaffold even as calmly as if it were good-night, so well assured am I of his eternal salvation." Such words, uttered in the face of a passion-crazed people, sound like the voice of a saint among savages.

D. G. Croly says, in the New York "Hour," that, "apart from their ideas on the marriage question, the Oneida Communists were the most honest, conscientious, religious people I ever knew." Does Mr. Croly mean to say that the Oneidans held their ideas of marriage dishonestly and in violation of their consciences and religion, or does he insinuate as much only because he is afraid to say a good word for that feature of their system which as contributed most to their unpopularity?

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is sacrificed to capital, the chief murderers, and to the State, the weapon with which it does its bloody work.

Hard-pan Jurisprudence.

One Abraham Payne of Providence, a liberal in theology, a woman suffragist, and an advanced thinker on many subjects, lately attempted to tell the people of Rhode Island whether they had the right to call a convention and frame a new constitution. The learning and great legal reputation of the gentleman brought a very intelligent audience to hear his paper.

But, instead of assuming to have an opinion of his own on the subject, Mr. Payne consumed his whole time in quoting the opinions of Daniel Webster. Chief Justice Durfee, and other fossils. "This authority says this," "this authority says that," etc.

"But what do *you* say?" shouted an ignorant laborer, after the reading of the paper. Mr. Payne responded by a speedy retirement. He, of course, had no opinion in the presence of the dead and dry bones of Webster and other defunct judicial popes.

Mr. Payne, as a vice-president of the Free Religious Association, regards with cultured pity and contempt the benighted Orthodox who look to popes, bibles, and preachers for their opinions in theology. In his profession, however, he waives his right of judgment in the presence of his judicial superiors,— an authority-ridden judicial slave.

The ignorant laborer suggested that anything was constitutional that had bayonets enough behind it, and that brute force, after all, was the highest judicial authority. He was ignorant and uncultured enough to have an opinion, and dare to express it. Is there not a possibility that he had studied constitutional law with greater success than Popes Webster and Durfee?

name. "Consensus of the competent" is merely the new Free Religious invention for Mother Church and Papal authority.

True, Free Religionists, as a class, have hardly realized this abridgment of Liberty, and will doubtless dispute the fact. No more did Unitarians perceive they had surrendered Liberty when they proclaimed Lordship of Christ. But those who abandoned the old Christian despotism saw it, and determined to have their religion "*free.*" No one doubts the sincerity of those free religious protestants when they began their crusade for Liberty. And now they are free enough on the purely theological issues; but, just where their religion becomes involved in the practical moral issues of the day, where it is afforded a chance to become truly the "Religion of Humanity," there it shrinks back; free discussion is disliked, if not thrust wholly out in the cold; *there* the "consensus of the competent" looms up to settle and hush the disquieting reformers. This is the cue to the new effort of the Hannibal "moralists." They wish to "show the world that liberalism does not mean *lawlessness* and *immorality.*" (The italics are Liberty's) In other words, they accept what that world they fear calls "law" *as* law, and what is deems "moral" they, too, swear is moral. And they are very anxious, too, that, after the fashion of the world, they may appear as representing the "highest type of morality and the best interests of society."

Think of it!

Liberty says of all such "liberalism," it has gone to seed.

Take now the attitude of Free Religionists towards the great labor movement that had arrived at such proportions in every intelligent country on the face of the earth. Scarcely *ever* touching the subject, and, when it does, with one or two exceptions, never touching it but to bolster up in some way the pretensions of capitalists. Industrial freedom has no niche in its new temple. Its new president, having some rather crude, yet sympathetic, word to utter in behalf of the claims of labor, preached to the deaf ears of the freedom-loving capitalists who

have been warming themselves around that live-coal on the altar Parker set up. But, plainly, all they knew was, *Parker* put it there. When Adler tried to say what he thought it meant, capital had no ears to hear, for he was "avowing agrarian doctrines." A Christian weekly says that "Webster, in his later years, was in bond to the bankers, manufacturers, and merchants." Is Free Religion in like bond of servitude?

Liberty so thinks.

And Liberty proposes to take up the great issues of practical affirmative morality, not in fear of the world, not in deference to any prevailing opinion or party not potent in the land, but in obedience only to those "unwritten laws" of Justice, Equity, and Liberty which are fundamental in human nature, the only guarantees of universal prosperity and ennobling peace.

Capital the Chief of Criminals.

One of the most frightful of the abuses resulting from the tremendous power now lodged in the hands of capitalists is their utter disregard for human life. In the insolent indifference of their autocratic sway they pay less heed to the safety of their employees than to the protection of their property. The lives and limbs of laborers are regarded as the merest trifles in comparison with the prospective loss or gain of a few dollars. Only a week ago, in Fairfield, Maine, a boiler explosion occurred in the engine-house of the Kennebec Framing Company, killing three men and seriously crippling several others. It now appears that the boilers had been in such notoriously bad condition for two years past that engineer after engineer had come and gone, refusing to work in close proximity to these potential instruments of death and destruction. The stockholders and directors, nearly all of them men of immense wealth and one of them an ex-governor of the State were repeatedly warned and expostulated with and remonstrated with in regard to their

criminal neglect, but all to no purpose. They thought only of their pocket-books and bank accounts, and shut their eyes to the danger. For once, however, fortune dealt out righteous retribution; for, when the fatal moment came, a son of one of the principal directors, twenty years of age, whose duty it was to pay off men, had just stepped into the boiler-room to take their time, and was literally roasted to death in the escaping steam. Liberty wishes death to no man, but is none the less sincerely glad that the grief and suffering bound to result from this cruel and carelessness fell, partially at least, upon the hearts, if they have any, of those responsible for it, instead of invading the homes of additional laborers. In no other respect however, was this an exceptional occurrence. Similar cases, more or less glaring, daily meet the eyes of all who read the newspapers. Nor is there likely to be an improvement until capital shall be stripped of its power for evil. The Fairfield disaster occurred simply because the corporation could find plenty of men willing to risk their lives rather than throw up their job in the face of the possibility that no other be obtained in the season to keep their families from starving or freezing to death. As long as labor is thus dependent upon capital, so long will it be outraged with impunity. It is useless to look to the State for remedy or punishment. Capital rules every department of it from legislature to court. It is through the State that capital wields its power. Take away the privilege which capital compels the State to grant it, strike down the infamous money and land monopolies, and almost immediately, as has been demonstrated over and over again, the demand for laborers would so far exceed the supply that labor would be the master and capital subject to its bidding. Then no expense would be spared in taking every possible precaution for the health and safety of the workers, and one could open his newspaper at breakfast without fear of the destruction of his appetite by blood-curdling accounts of explosions, collisions, and holocausts entirely within the power of human foresight to avoid. But, as things go now, everything