On Picket Duty.

Before she died, Madame Blavatsky, of theoretical fame, stated that she had, in presence of Dr. J. Rodes Buchanan, predicted dire disasters to occur in Europe and this country in this year of grace 1891. These predictions Dr. Buchanan published in the "Arena" several months since. If Dr. Buchanan should deny Madame Blavatsky's statement, which he will probably do, it will be interesting to find out which of these two humbugs has the confidence of the fools that believe in the truth of their predictions. Such a controversy, however, must prove disastrous to the theoretical movement.

The editor of the "Arena" longs for the era of woman because, when it arrives, States being woman-governed instead of man-governed, the "age of consent" will be placed at eighteen. Pointing to the example set in this respect by Kansas and Wyoming, the States which come nearest to being woman-governed, he says in rebuking Balzac: "All the other States trail the banner of morality in the dust before the dictates of man's brutality." Mr. Flower supposes himself to be an individualist, and sometimes writes in favor of individualism in a way that commands my admiration. But I am curious to know by what rule he applies the theory of individualism, that he can bring himself to violate and deny the individuality of the girl who wrote "The Story of an Africah Farm," by favoring a law which would send to prison for twenty years, as guilty of rape, any man with whom she might have freely chosen, at the age when she began to write that book, to enter into sexual relations. Had Olive Schreiner lived in civilized Wyoming instead of semi-barbarous South Africa, and had she chosen to practise the theories which she favors in her book, she would indeed have been raped; not however by the lover of her choice, but by the women who deny her the right of choice, and by the men like B. O. Flower, who glory in this denial; raped, not of virginity, that paltry, tawdry, and overrated gem, but of liberty, that priceless, matchless jewel, which it is becoming fashionable to despise.

For one I shall shod no tears if the New York law forbidding the publication of accounts of executions is rigorously enforced and its violators severely punished. Much as I value the liberty of the press, yea, because I value it, I should like to see the knife of authority buried to the hilt in the tenderest part of the ordinarily truckling newspapers of New York and then turned vigorously and mercilessly round. Perhaps, after that, Comstock laws, anti-lottery laws, and other similar legal villanies would no longer be made possible by the subservient hypocrites who cry out against oppressions only when victimized themselves. For some time past the New York "Sun" has been violating law with boasting and defiance and yet, because in Tennessee a forcible attempt has been made to prevent the employment of convicts in the mines, and because in Kansas an Alliance judge has disobeyed the decree of the supreme court, it solemnly declares that to disregard law "is resistance to the will of the people, except in the case of an unconstitutional statute, which is really no law at all." The exception here entered by the "Sun" to save its own skin does not avail for that purpose. Who is to decide whether a statute is unconstitutional? The supreme court, the "Sun" will answer. But is the "Sun" prepared, in case the supreme court declares the law regarding executions constitutional, to continue in violating the law? I think not. But then it must allow to the Tennessee laborers and the Kansas judge the same liberty that it claims for itself. If the "higher law" doctrine is good for anything, it is good, not only against legislatures, but against supreme courts. On the other hand, if it is good for nothing, the "Sun" should take its own advice to other law-breakers, and, instead of violating the law regarding executions, should go to the ballot-box and get it repealed. But the "Sun" will not be thushourly disposed of. That jewel is not prized by hogs. The "Sun" is a hog, an organ of hogs, an apostle for hogs; and I shall not grieve to see it butchered like a hog.

Realism and Romanticism.

The Paris stock exchange is the center of Zola's latest work, "Money." There has certainly been a more powerful picture drawn in story, sketch, in the intimate workings and devastating fascination of stock-gambling. In other respects people have already bled what unpleasant things Zola mentions, following out his plan, which is realistic, to give the good and the bad as they are found mixed in the life he paints. Though he is condemned by many for mentioning the base and the vile and the criminal, it will be perceived by a careful observer that he does not present such things in the seductive manner of immoral writers of the English school, but with cold impartiality that permits the abominations to leave the impression of precisely what it is, with the effect of thorough repulsion, not attraction. In his pages vice is condemned and unsatisfying and the ground for quarrel with the author is at last that he is a realist, not a romancer; that he makes known things which English and American society generally says must not be made known; that he does not picture ideal men and hide their faults. Then the same objection may apply to the Old Testament. It is hard, however, for one imbued with English romantic literature to accept Zola's story as a pretext for the introduction of one-sided views, or to avoid transferring to the narrator a share of the disgust which arises on reading the accounts of actions which are shameful and horrible. But these do not predominate in life, and they are not the object of realistic painting. In fact, to be worthy of its name it should have no immediate or conscious object except to be true to nature. If then it encounters a back street, it will picture the egalitarian, not flowers where there are none. In proportion as the equal predominates, a faithful description warns people that something is wrong in those conditions. Perhaps this is why a species of conservation has never been more favorable to realism, or a description of facts, beyond the selection of facts which it dictates to be described. But from this position to romantic falsification there is only a step, which is easily taken. It may fairly be inferred that the romantic, pressed into the service of censorship at first, is what has given the vague in lower circles to the romantic literature of vice, inexpressible in effect because not so in appearance, and seductive because not true to fact. It can perhaps be but a work of gaining an understanding of these distinctions when the romantic school will be charged with its own propriety and realism will not be confused with the gilded prison of corrupt imagination. It may be, too, that strong doses of romantic realism are absolutely needed to expel the romantic literature of vice. Realism uncovers unpleasant things; realistic in the service of virtue avoids them or denies their existence, and thus leaves to romance in the service of vice a field for fanciful pictures phantaums in their effect upon youthful imaginations unfurnished of the disquieting realities of vice.

TO A WORKINGMAN.

O laborer worthy of your hire,
What hope is there of your misery?
You still refuse the Equity
That shows the Robber's trick.
The Capital that wins the chain
Of poverty around
Yourself and kin, you're rummaging
For you may be unbound.
And when you grasp the enslaving thing,
You'll take your turn and wind
Awhile yourself; cry lustily,-
"The Capitalist is kind.
Without him where would labor be?
What would the poor man do?"
And then you'd claim the real salt,
The profit all for you.

O now you're at rest, but were you in,
Your turn would break and change;
You'd do the things you now decry.
Nor think it passing strange.
And then 'twas plain you have no cause.
You give the lie yourselves.
To all your howlings and your wrath,-
You want your real salt back.
You think the State, now you are down,
Should give your life a lift.
Place you somewhere quite near the top,
And jar your rich man's shift.
You sing of that as a brotherhood,
And dub it "social soot;"-
The thieves fall out—all hands are tied
So none of them can steal.
Sure is the State your poverty
Inspires you to proclaim:
The force of law, the right of night,
To succeed and fail.
Why will ye still go marching through
The streets your wares to show?
If ye'd but think your work not clear,
A marching ye'd not go.

You'd stop at home, or go the rounds
From neighbor house to house.
Vast tyrant of Capital
You'd every neighbor roose:—

"What is the argument? It is
That Capital gives you
A chance to keep yourself alive,—
The rest goes its fair due.

"Just turn the tables now, and say,
With sober mind and sense,—
To labor across all Capital,
Nor makes its hoarding vain.

And he who has so saved means invests
To yield himself more work,
And calls to all ten other men,
O'er them no foe shall lurk.

But he who with each shall boldly take
His daily yield of salt,
As man by the toper of time,—
On each no theft recoil.

All cost to him of Capital
Well used shall be returned.
No more than that to say men,
And that he daily earned.

"Say thus unto the ruling class
Who make their tenant rent;
By tapping half your daily wage
As millionaire to mount.

And purge yourself of every hope
Of getting aye the power
To rule a fellow workingman
Of his life's Labor-down.
The State was simply to provide schools and the opportunity for education, but there was to be no compulsion of citizens to avail themselves of the State’s offerings. Indeed, he abhorred compulsory education. And if he had been a prophet of his time, he would have lost his position on this question was not wholly in line with Anarchism. For we leave education entirely to private enterprises, confident of thus securing for it a richer future than will ever fall to the lot of the State. It is foreboding to think of the taking of money from some people for the education of other people’s children.

So much merely in rough outlines to indicate Karl Heinzen’s general position on the great issues of the time.

At the suggestion and in consequence of the liberality of one of Heinzen’s admirers, Mr. Karl Schmehm of Detroit, Mr. Tuckey has recently published a translation of the excellent treatise on “The Rights of Women and the Sexual Relations.” In this treatise, forgetting of his libertarian philosophy, Heinzen charges the State of the future with the task of securing to women as well as to men, free of cost, the means required for the development of their faculties, and in particular, to put an end to the existing evils of married life.

His design of renovating this old world of ours, however admirable and bold in other respects, is thus seen to be vitiated by the admission of the supremacy of the bad State, to use an Evergreen phrase. Something like the State was to get the means for the execution of such generous schemes seems never to have troubled him and appears to have looked to the medium of unwise government for results that can be brought about only by the combination of private individuals or voluntary associations in the State of liberty, as has again and again been demonstrated in these columns.

It was the perception of this truth mainly that led the translator of Heinzen’s treatise to record her “emphatic and forcible” remarks of the present time, from some of the positions taken therein.

Not where he is most radical and thoroughgoing in his advocacy of liberty in the sexual relations and of the independence of woman, for I am with him there, she says; but where he seems to forget his fanaticism and lose his grand confidence in the power of liberty to rejuvenate, to regulate, and to moderate, and falls back upon the State for that readjustment and guidance of human affairs which one day will be accomplished by the power of liberty — it is there I radically dissent.

While a reference to the treatise will fully sustain the translator in filing these exceptions, Mr. Schmehm evidently did not consider them as well taken, for he added a “Postscript” summarizing Heinzen’s views as to the State, etc., and expressed the opinion that there is no such fundamental difference between the views of the translator and those of the great German radical as the former seemed to suppose. According to this Postscript, Heinzen radically came to the principle of authority, and with it the idea of government, and defined the State as a “voluntary association” for the object of facilitating and securing the realization of the life purposes of each individual through the proper authorized agents by means of the self-created and supervised institutions, laws, and resources.

Strictly construed, this is Anarchy pure and simple, notwithstanding Heinzen’s disclaimer to the contrary. The State and Anarchy are indeed contradictions, as he states, but not for the reason he gives, — main anxious, therefore, to be left to these and not be usurped by the State.

Thus is seen a kinship between Heinzen and the Anarchists than between him and his foremost professed disciples of the present day, who are not ashamed of advocating all sorts of compulsory and communistic measures.

It was a return to the subject of education that Heinzen’s enlightened and libertarian philosophy suffered a defeat. Because he feared that education would be neglected if left to private enterprise, he made of it a State affair. But even here he was careful not to grant the State too large powers.

History stood for society based on compulsion. If, however, it should be shown as it has in the brief summary referred to, explicitly insisted on the voluntary principle for the society of the future, he would be found in his voluminous other works; if what he called the State was indeed to have been a voluntary association, — I confess that I have no real quarrel with him, — a gladly claim him for the Anarchists, while I dare say the translator of "The Rights of Women and the Sexual Relations" will also cheerfully modify her expression of dissent.

But I do claim that he did not make his meaning clear in this treatise and that his language is very misleading. I submit no one will get the idea that, when he talks of the State of the future doing this, that, and what, not free of cost, for the poor and the needy, it is a voluntary association he has in mind.

Another and more serious criticism I have to make is this: If, as we maintain, the all-important desideratum of the scientific world is that in the constitution of society the voluntary principle shall supersede the compulsory principle, it is plainly idle to discuss side issues to the neglect of the main issue before that has been carried to victory. The one thing needful here and now is to place emphasis on the voluntary principle. Instead of doing this, Heinzen appears to have proceeded on the assumption that the voluntary principle already forms the basis of this republic. He does not seem to have questioned the fundamental character of the original covenant of this government. He has said "it was in accord with voluntarism." He has talents to the advocacy of the simplification or governmental machinery. He demanded the abolition of the presidency and of the senate, and claimed the right of the people to enroll their representatives, etc. But the assumption that this government is essentially a voluntary one is utterly without foundation. And I contend that it will be soon enough to discuss the administrative forms of a voluntary association when one can have the weight of a dozen columns, while to do so before then will largely amount to a waste of energy. I refer the German-American radicals to Mrs. Ginz’s recipe for a ragoût: “First catch your hare.”

Neo-"Scientific-Socialism."

The “Twentieth Century” ought to be proud of the quality and quantity of biologists, sociologists, and philosophers which it is introducing to the light-seeking world. The latest discovery of that periodical is a philosopher and reformer named West,— George West, in a contribution to social science it publishes under the important and respect-inspiring title of “The Historical Method and Social Reform.” The essay bearing this title is neither more nor less than an attempt to establish both a scientific and a significant truth that “labor is destined to control industry,” in the sense that great industrial trusts will be “managed by the laborers for the laborers, theoretically, and by the politicians for the politicians, actually.” If the reformers think their task is not a pellucid, I can only assure him that the author simply means compulsory cooperation, Nationalism, governmental control of industry. And now let us watch the process of demonstration.

In the first place:

It is acknowledged by all that there exist some general causes of unhappiness that may be affected by social reforms, and the two most prominent of these are poverty and vice. Poverty is, by many, considered as being dependent on prosperity than on freedom, and in all men ought to be like him, and as the ultimate type of man who is, not to be a citizen, but to join the array of State Socialists. Another theorist believes that his happiness is more dependent on freedom than on prosperity, and that the happiness of the people, and all in proportion to the number of citizens in the ranks of the Anarchists. Now, the reform that would increase the happiness of one theorist would decrease that of the other, and vice versa, and it would be interesting to know how the effect of other reforms on the happiness of the people at large could be estimated. At the present time in this country, it seems to me that poverty is a more serious evil than restraint, but this is mere opinion that I know of no way to substantiate.

As it cannot be proven that either Anarchism or Socialism is
would increase the mass of human happiness, what possible sense can there be for these vast and often ambiguous promises? Ab, indeed, what sense, since, as the author has shown, it cannot be proven that either Anarchism or Socialism would increase happiness? We may as well retire. But, before retiring, it may not be unprofitable to take another and closer look at our philosopher's display of his conclusions in the light of the question. His argument is that, since "the reform that would increase the happiness of one theorist would decrease that of the other," neither can claim to be in possession of a means of increasing the sum of happiness. I venture to give expression to the suspicion that the philosopher is guilty of a misconception and a fallacy: it is true that the Anarchists emphatically deny that State Socialism would conduces to happiness, but they do not mean their own happiness. Their system is a means of increasing the happiness of all. Well, they hold that it would conduces to the misery of most men and the degradation of all. Conversely, the State Socialists, in condemning Anarchism, imply that it would benefit some and injure all, while they are confident that their system would be a blessing to all. Suppose, however, that Anarchism should prevail and utterly dissipate the fears and doubts and prejudices of its opponents: would these persist in being unhappy without cause? Would they refuse to be converted simply because happiness had been found in the Anarchist's system of their own way? Would they not acknowledge themselves wrong and at once proceed to enjoy their share of the good things newly and Anarchistically acquired? Or, make, if you please, the violent assumption that State Socialism might, if established, lead to a standard of living and comfort lower than the Anarchists or Socialists: would the Anarchists or Socialists decline to accept the new conditions and indulge in futile lamentations and unreasonable grief? No, their sense of humor would not allow them to make such a spectacle of themselves. It follows that if our philosopher will only be satisfied that Anarchism and Socialism may continue to describe themselves as means of increasing the sum of human happiness.

After his successful impeachment of the theorists, the philosopher's historical inquiry engages to solve the labor problem by the historical method. Concerning the evolution of government and the evolution of capitalism present marked resemblances, and that the history of the former indicates strongly the future of the latter, he proceeds to do no less than to weigh two whole paragraphs to the analogy, as follows:

Reverting to the "dark ages" of European history, we find society roughly divided into classes, the nobles and the serfs, the king or emperor, as the case might be, having little or no power over some of the nobles or commoner classes. This might be termed a period of disintegrated government. Sooner or later, however, a movement toward centralization sets in. The most powerful among the nobles, the great lords in England, the kings of France, Great Britain, Germany, etc., each large country under its own acknowledged ruler. Then come a period of conflict, a period of persecution, a period in the establishment of republican or cooperative governments, beyond which no large body of people has yet advanced.

In the industrial world, we find a rough division of the people into the bourgeois and proletarian classes or the capitalist and laboring classes. Until recently, industry, like government in the time of ancient Rome, was a matter of the great powers. In the United States, Great Britain, Germany, etc., each large country under its acknowledged ruler. Then come a period of competition, a period of persecution, a period in the establishment of republican or cooperative governments, beyond which no large body of people has yet advanced.

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The ruling power of the country has been little or not at all controlled by the people. The system of the government has been so organized that it could be easily inverted, and if the government, it was a matter of the great powers. In the United States, Great Britain, Germany, etc., each large country under its acknowledged ruler. Then come a period of competition, a period of persecution, a period in the establishment of republican or cooperative governments, beyond which no large body of people has yet advanced.

A Parable of Misfortunes.

A certain Barbarian came up once to the country which is called The Land of Civilization to see its sights and to be instructed by its superlatives. His shoes were torn out on the journey, and, being footsore, he resolved first of all to obtain more. Presently he took an all-but-significant step:

"THE WORLD OF SHOES."

"It is not good for a man to be barefoot," and, being greatly pleased, he ordered the door above which it swung. He found himself in a splendid pavilion full of men and women, of every possible description, of every conceivable sort. There were spectacles, paintings, mirrors, statues, and showers. There were great multitudes of customers, who seemed to be in a great excitement of conflicting emotions, and the Barbarian, who at least understood well the language of the human face, perceived feverish expectation, desire, hope, joy, sorrow, and the toute filled with hate and poignant anguish. It was a scene very much to his taste, for so far as had had a very pleasant experience with shoes. The Storekeeper too astonished by his simple mood, for he appeared to be a man of great authority and in an almost ceremonial role, and, for a while, he seemed to be a group of people, and gave them dogmatic discourse. The poor Barbarian, who had no formal education, was simply impressed by the fat feet, and, truly, there were none, but instead the shoes were lined with glass boxes, semi-translucent, and richly and tastefully adorned. The storekeeper at last approached, the Barbarian stated his needs:

"You are free to choose," was the reply, with a pompous and solemn tone, and a wave of the arm toward the well-lined shelves.

"But where are the shoes?"

"Here, in the center of the floor, as you see."

So the Barbarian reached down a box, and was about to open it, when, with a horrified and indignant mien, the storekeeper interposed:

"What are you about to do?"

"Why, to open the box and look at the shoes."

"To open the box and look at the shoes? Why, you shameless creature, that is vile, immoral, indecent!"

"Pardon me!" said the puzzled Barbarian, "I meant no harm — I did not know — I just went to try on the shoes to see if they fit me."

"To try on the shoes! — Why, that's fornication!"

"Do you not then try on your shoes in this country?"

"Yes, of course, but not till after marriage. To try them on before is fornication, and a sin."

"I do not know what fornication is," faltered the Barbarian, "but I cannot see the shoes through this box, and unless I see them, and try them on, how can I know whether or not they will fit?"

"The box is not your affair," was the rebuking answer,

"God will atone to that; she will be made in heaven."

"God! — who is God?"

"We cannot then, ignorant savage, do you think of the King of this country? he has all the factories, and he made all these shoes, and he made you, too, and all of us!"

"The storekeeper was deeply bewitched now, but he stuck to the business in hand.

"And if I choose as carefully as possible among these boots, will God see to it that the shoes I select are a good fit?"

"Certainly!"

Then the Barbarian deemed his trouble over, and rejoiced, for he very shortly was able to get the idea that appeared to reveal through its semi-transparency a dainty pair of shoes, adorned with silver buckles, and studded with precious stones. They charmed his childlike fancy, and he trembled with delight.

"And now what must I do before I am permitted to wear these lovely, these charming shoes?" he asked the Storekeeper.

"You must be married."

"What is marriage?"

"It is the ceremony by which God, through me, fits you to the shoes you have chosen."

"Marry me then, O good Storekeeper, as soon as possible.

So the Barbarian stood up and held the box in his hand and promise to wear, or polishing, and to cherish the shoes, he had chosen, until they be worn-out, which the Barbarian, being blindfolded in his own way, and beside himself with the imagined delights of his beautiful shoes, really did. Then the Storekeeper attributed the whole performance to the influence of God.

"I now pronounce you Man and Wife! What God has joined let no man part asunder! Amen!"

Then in an undertone he admonished the Barbarian to go off privately and open his box; it would not be done, he said, to do it in public. So the happy Barbarian went to a private room, opened the box, and wore the shoes. And lo! the box had deceived him. The shoes were indeed well enough made and of good material, but they were clumsily shaped, hard and coarse, with an odor of jewels, and they were too short and too narrow, and tortured him cruelly. And no God appeared to fit them. He went back to the Storekeeper and complained bitterly, but got no consolation.

"It is your cross," said the Storekeeper, "you must bear it. It is the will of God, and we must not murmur. You choose these shoes, and you must abide by your choice. You promised to be satisfied with them, and you must abide by your promise. It is wicked to quarrel with your shoes, or to complain against the foot-wear which God in his mercy has bestowed upon you."

"But you said God would fit them to me."

"And so be it! by the sacred power of marriage."

"The storekeeper said this as though he had said nothing bad of his own. Marriage business is a failure. I could fit myself better without it."

"Wretch! Be careful what you say! The law will take its revenge, and you will not be able to marry again, and you will not be permitted to corrupt the public morals with impunity. And God will hurl you in brimstone if you blaspheme Him or His Holy Storekeepers."

And he went away frowning. And the poor Barbarian, terrified and troubled, sat down and wept.

He understood now why the World of Shoes was so full of emotion. He was afraid to say so, but it did seem to him that, if there were no Storekeepers, there would be little or no trouble. God, he concluded, was a hagghooe the Storekeepers used to frighten folk with. He regretted the fat feet of the Barbarian, and the Storekeeper had made him pay the price of the marriage of the poor Barbarian.

Presently another man, who thought himself unobserved, looked at his feet and took the shoes, and went to the private room with them. The Barbarian did not care for the shoes, they were useless to him, but he felt sorry that the man should be made to pay for them. He made a man to pay the fat fees of the Storekeeper with a radiant face. The shoes fitted him exquisitely. The Barbarian went up to him: "See here, my friend, I saw you trying on the shoes, I have stolen them. I cannot wear them. You are welcome."

The man, who had turned 15 when he commenced to wear shoes, had been won over by the fat fees, and when the Barbarian had finished, instead of thanking him, he sneered openly and swaggered on. And when the Barbarian exclaimed what a cinch he had passing looked upon him with astonishment and loathing, and he heard them whispering, "cuckold," "coward," "mean-spirited villain," he must have been bought over, etc.

But this man's success gave the Barbarian a thought.
LIBERTY. 190.

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