On Picket Duty.

A fortnight must elapse before the results of the competitive bidding for the files of Liberty can be announced, as five bidders, one of whom lives in San Francisco, are tied for third choice and must bid again.

Comrade Swartz is wrong in saying that the ten per cent. tax is the only governmental impediment to the organization of mutual banks. In many States—more than three-fourths of them, I believe—there are laws on the statute-books making it a criminal offense to issue or pass as currency any notes not authorized as such by the government.

The "American Architect," one of the blinders of the organs of tyranny, and the suppender of the suggestion that any one who might resign another to stop work should be killed, now writes in a strain of slavery that would be astonishing, were it not so well known that the slave and tyrant are one: "If we were in the habit of making suggestions as to what our superiors should do, we should say that the Legislatures of the various States, etc., etc." Has it come to this, that the citizens of a government of the people, for the people, and by the people should openly bow the knee and acknowledge their "servants" as "superiors?" Citizens of Boston too, born within sight of the Cradle of Liberty, and not of the unlettered sort.

During the interval between the suspension of Liberty in Boston and its revival in New York there occurred an incident in a New York court which it is not yet too late to notice in these columns. Henry George was doing jury "duty" at the time in the capacity of Foreman. In one of the cases on trial the judge ordered a verdict against one of the parties. When the clerk went through the formality of asking the jury if this was their verdict, Mr. George promptly answered "No." "Yes, it is," said the judge. Mr. George reiterated that it was not. Thereupon the judge directed the clerk to record as the verdict of the jury the verdict that he, the judge, had ordered. And, if my memory serves me right, the judge then dismissed Mr. George for the remainder of the term. The rebellion of jurymen against the high-handed usurpations of judges is as rare as righteous, as unusual as useful. Others should follow Mr. George's example. This was the bravest thing that I ever knew him to do, and I confess to some surprise. It is insufficient atonement for the murderous and traitorous sins for which Mr. George must answer before any decent man can afford to take his blood-stained hand; but even the devil must have his due.

I fully share Miriam Daniel's enthusiasm for enthusiasm, to which she gives poetical expression in another column. Indeed, this may be gauged from my recent defense of passion against Mr. Penteceost. But there remains another word to be said, which plain prose best befits. Through much suffering the world has slowly, is now, that there is an independence to be placed on mere enthusiasm or even on enthusiasm dominant. The enthusiasm is the most dangerous of men if he has no brains, or if, having brains, he neglects them or subjects them or obscures them. The most horrible acts of tyranny that stain the world's history were the work of such enthusiasts. They have always been much more ready than philosophers, not only to "state that this is wrong or right," but to enforce their views of wrong or right upon the rest of the world. Without enthusiasm, to be sure, the world would be in a bad way; but fortunately after free competition alone will determine need to sing its praises. If singing could shape and guide it, the effort would be well worth a song or two. The safest, most reliable, best enthusiasm is that which is seldom seen because it seldom comes to the surface; that which has lost its froth and foam and bubble (and mayhap, alas! its sparkle also) and settled down into quiet, patient, steadfast, unshakeable determination. It is because of my faith in this enthusiasm and my distrust of any other that, while responding to the poet's words with an "Amen!" and a "Bravo!" I at the same time whisper in her ear that "hell is paved with good intentions" and "still waters run deep." As another poet, my old friend Morse, himself a rare example of enthusiasm of the higher type, has well said:

"Tis not for lack of goodness, man,
The flames of hell are lit;  
Hear a whole world's experience  
Proclaim 'tis lack of wit.

Blind Leaders of the Blind.

Now, to demonstrate their [the Homestead worker's] responsibility for the present social condition and consequent inequitable distribution of wealth between capital and labor, I wish you would send some one there to teach those men that the unjust power of capital is due to the same condition that produces the interest-bearing power of money; that by this power the wealthy obtain an income not due to their labor but wrong from the earnings of others; that by the removal of legal obstacles to the freedom of exchange this power of money can be destroyed, and that therefore the competitive share each producer should get. If you will do so, you will find that these very workers will think of the few hundred dollars they have invested, and will suspect your representative to be in league with the hated capitalists, trying to deprive them even of these few dollars a year obtained from the investment of their savings, and he will be the first to feel the sting of their vengeance. What can you do with such unreasonable, unreasonable men!

If the O'Donnell and McLaurine should succeed and become the leaders of our social order, do you really believe that their rule would be an improvement upon the present order, however unsatisfactory this order may be? I have every reason to think that it would soon be found to be so unbearable that the reaction that must follow would inevitably delay the solution of the social problem.

What Do They Fear?

They will not listen, dear, what do they fear, That they shut fast their senses lest they hear? They will not reason with us, nor will show A better way in which our feet could go.

They will not talk with us; are they afraid That we might smash the idols they have made? Have they worn fetters now so many years That Liberty to them means pain and fears?

They will not have the Light, for they have been So long in twilight that the Sun, when seen, Looks black and blinds them more than that faint gleam In which they move about their prison room.

The Poor Man's Look.

[Translated from the French by Reg. Tucker.]

The beggar with a bandit's head,  
Looked straight at me and nothing said.

No mock appeal for pity's sake,  
But briusive outburst of hand to take.

No muttered word of thanks gave he  
As he received my charity.

But in his wolfish eyes of gray  
I saw the words they had to say.

They said: "Think you, for your two sous,  
That I will stoop to kiss your shoes?"

They said: "In truth, your charity  
To you is given, not to me."

They said: "The coin you have thrown  
At me contents you alone."

They said: "For giving of your pelf  
'Tis you who ought to thank yourself."

They said: "Two sous for graybeard's fool!  
And one is proud of being good!"

They said: "To you 'tis such a feast  
To make your fellow-man a beast!"

They said: "Were I to spit in spite  
On your two sous, 'twould serve you right."

They said: "So be it! I receive  
The gift, but will no pardon give."

Without a word, with eyes alone,  
Thus spoke to me the silent one.

And I in turn then nothing said  
To the beggar with a bandit's head,  
But dropped more sous into his hand.

And quickly fled the way I'd planned,  
Fled haunted by suspicion strong.  
That, after all, he was not wrong.

Jean Richetin.
Liberty.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the first results of all-time dis-
tery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the moral to the econo-
my, the soil of the manufacturers, the cloth of the philanthom, the gravity of the colossus, the central body of the time and day, all those insinuations of Poets, which young Liberty gently blows in her bed."

—Pericles.

"If the appearance in the editorial column of articles by other signatures than the editor's initial indica-
tes that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means warrants the inference that he approves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

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Is Free Banking Proximate?

It will doubtless be conceded by all reformers — except, of course, the revolutionists — that reform and progress must come and do come step by step; in other words, that, contrary to the belief of the aforesaid revolutionists, all advancement, to be of a stable and beneficial character, must be brought about gradually. Hence Anarchists are interested in what is the first step, or, rather, the next step; and it is maintained by them that it is freedom in banking, which is, essentially, freedom of the citizen to issue or choose his own circulating medium. That this step is advocated by Anarchists as the next one is, however, not only because it is the one that theoretically should be taken, but also because it is the one that promises to be the most easily and speedily taken.

It is, therefore, with pleasure and gratification that I note the tendency of the times in this direction. And, while the first movement toward this end need not be made by the politicians, it is noteworthy that circumstances are forcing them to take up this issue. In the session of Congress just ended, Representative Harter of Ohio introduced a bill repealing the prohibitory tax of ten per cent. on the issue of so-called bank notes. However, this gentleman was but anticipating the expiration of the national banking system, which will ensue upon the maturity of the last government bonds, and he doubtless had no thought of the fact that he was proposing the removal of the only governmental impediment to the organization of mutual banks. I do not give him credit for being so well-informed on progressive topics as to dream of the possibility of an issue of currency differing materially from the State bank money to several decades since.

This legal restriction on the issue of money by private banks can easily be declared unconstitutional, if the lawyer-politicians make any effort in that direction; and, as most of the people who have the business experience requisite for the organization and successful maintenance of a mutual bank are persons who are to a more or less extent constitution-worshippers, it will probably be necessary, before the experiment of a mutual bank is made, to obtain the consent of the most conservative of the world's governing. The labor of the State governments generously condescends to permit the people to conduct the exchange of their commodities in their own way.

But, if the attitude of prominent newspapers and financiers who have influence in shaping legislation may be taken as a criterion, the day of the removal of the ten per cent. tax is not far distant. The Pittsburgh "Post" has been discussing this subject of late, and, though somewhat non-committal in its attitude, it tacitly endorses the proposition of Congressman Harter; but it does not seem to realize that there are other and far better bases for the issue of currency than State, municipal, and railroad bonds. The "Post," as a truly conservative journal, does not attempt to advance any idea of its own or even one evolved by rational and logical deduction from the principle of State rights or local autonomy. It would be here for the editor of the "Post" to think for himself; he can only rehash that to which some prominent politicians have given utterance.

But in the "Forum" for August Mr. David M. Stone, the well-known editor of the "New York Journal of Commerce," a newspaper high in authority in orthodox financial matters, discusses the "Repeal of the State Bank Tax" in a manner indicative of at least a little more scientific study of the banking problem and of a more thorough knowledge of finance in general than is shown by the editor of the Pittsburgh "Post." In regard to the basis of an issue of bank notes, the volume of which will "adjust itself to the demands of trade," he has this to say:

"Nothing ever served the purpose so well as a bank that was put out on the credit of a well-established institution in exchange for business paper which represented some actual value of produce or merchandise for the movement of which the currency was issued."

It remains a matter of conjecture whether Mr. Stone goes as far as he can in the direction of freedom in banking, or whether he went only so far as he dared. If he had followed this idea to its logical conclusion, he would certainly have seen that currency could be issued directly on property, — the imperishable products of labor and the soil. And since it must be evident to even the ordinary mind that nothing short of this could by any possibility approach a "perfect currency," it is just possible that Mr. Stone had some thought of this rational application of the principle of State banking when he said, anent the proposition to repeal the ten per cent. tax on the issue of State banks:

"There would follow from its repeal the most perfect currency for business purposes the world has ever known. Fiat banks, in its character, redeemable at all central points, and thus always at par throughout every portion of the country, and meeting the needs of the hour in its answer to every legitimate demand, it would prevent pressure and distress in the monetary market, and injure no one but the greedy speculator who makes his cent per cent. in a financial crisis."

Of course the utterances of such people are not significant of any thoughtful study, on their part, of the economic question from the standpoint of Equal Freedom; they are simply the outcome of the drift of individual intelligence towards enlightenment. But it is possible that, if the attention of Mr. Stone were called to the conclusions which logically follow from his premises, he might be able to see that "the most perfect currency that the world has ever known" is possible only through the entire absence of government restriction and regulation, and through the acceptance of every form of wealth of actual and imperishable value as a basis for the issue of currency.

Unless this be done, the substitution of State restriction for Federal monopoly can be regarded as a very short "step" in the direction of Freedom.

C. L. SWARTZ.

Millionaires vs. the Public.

In the opinion of the editor of the "Review of Reviews," (English edition), it is the part of wisdom for millionaires, in view of the deep-rooted jealousy of vast fortunes which is growing up, to pay a liberal ransom to society, not only during life, but also at death, and to justify their existence generally by doing things for the public which the public cannot do for itself. "The next parliament," Mr. Steel goes on to say, "will not expire before an energetic at-
ttempt has been made to deal with the question of death duties." At first it is possible that the millionaire may be allowed an option; that is to say, if by will be set aside the stipulated minimum objects of public utility or charity, his estate may be exempted from the new impost; but should he entirely ignore the claims of the public, then the law will step in and levy the proportion which the legislature in its wisdom deems to be fair and just."

I observe that Mr. Steel forbears to offer any guidance to the legislature in the matter of determining what a fair and just proportion is, nor am I aware of any attempt on the part of any other disinterested advocate of the "claims of the public" to indicate the principles whereby the problem might be solved. It is obvious, however, that, no matter how wise the legislature might be, it is impossible to determine the just proportion in the absence of principles permitting the drawing of corollaries with regard to the rights of the millionaires and the claims of the public. The first task before the legislature will be, therefore, the discovery of such fundamental principles.

I am constrained to point out, however, that legislators are in the habit of dispensing with all such preliminary investigations and proceeding to impose taxes and create conditions without the least concern about ultimate principles. And "able editors" like Mr. Steel are never known to disapprove such methods, or to suspect that there is anything imperfect about them. Yet, can there be anything more irrational than the use of such absolutely meaningless (to them) words as "fair," "just," "claims," in connection with this question of millionaires versus the public? This talk about "ransoming" millionaires would be monstrous and barbarous, did it not point to a vague consciousness that the truth that vast fortunes are, not, as a rule, compatible with justice in political and social life, and that millionaires are the product of monopolies, special legislation, privileges, and other forms of legal
injustice. The respect for private property is certainly not decaying, and it would be regu-
lar to the sentiment of justice to deprive any person, whether poor or rich, of anything legiti-
mately acquired in a fair, free, and open field. The dependence of vast fortunes on legal injusti-
tive is felt rather than reasoned out, and this ac-
counts for the deep-rooted jealousy of the farmer. That the public has some claims in the premises is held to be certain, though no definition or cir-
cumscription of such claims is possible.

A little thought would lead to the conclusion that the impossibility of defining the claims in question renders rectification and adjustment im-
possible and improper. Hap-hazard adjustment is sure to generate greater evils than those sought to be remedied. Instead of vainly trying to rect-
ify past sins in this particular respect, the legis-
lators and "able men" should turn their attention to the study of that science which alone can guide them to the prevention of the repetition of past abuses and the introduction of right principles in political relations. To rectify all the evils of the past is impossible; to provide for justice in the future is not. There are three alternatives: to attempt, in ignorance of all principles, to remedy past wrongs; to refuse to deal either for the past or for the future; and to re-
form things along the lines of true social laws so as to render the future secure. The intelligent will make the choice without difficulty.

V. V.

Is Frick a Soldier of Liberty?
To the Editor of Liberty:

In vain I have waited to hear from you a word of approval of the efforts of a man who lately has even risked his life for the struggle for liberty. For even though Frick is one of the "Brotherhood of Thieves," he is now on the side of Liberty. Not can I see that he is any more responsible for the existence of that "Brotherhood" than those that lead the contention against him. His only crime is that he is suc-
sessful under present conditions. Of course, being an employer myself, my opinion may possibly be warped; but if Frick, in this particular case at least, has insti-
tuted a wage system, the oppression and robbery of labor unions, defending liberty and independence, I do not see why Anarchists should condemn him therefore. Let the other side do the same. — i.e., combat the inequi-
ties of the wage system by promoting the underpritions instead of increasing their number. I am sure, if the workmen should insist upon the proper remedy, the inequitable power of capital would be gone. If, however, they do not understand the source of this power, it is fair to assume that the Fricks do.

Is it true that all the workmen are fools, while all the Fricks are knaves? And, on that assumption, how is it possible to help those who resist the only measure that can help them. — i.e., Liberty?

Hugo Bilgram
Philadelphia, August 12, 1892.

When that most brilliant of Catholic journalist,
Louis Veulliot, was once taunted by the Freethinkers in power because he, a Catholic and an unbeliever in liberty, had complained that the liberties of Catholics were denied, he thus made answer to his critics: "When I am not in power, I demand of you who are in power all possible liberties, because you believe in liberty; when I get into power, you shall have no liberties because I do not believe in lib-
erty." Veulliot was in religion what Frick is in political economy,—a believer in liberty for himself and his immediate allies, and in slavery for everybody else. Neither the Veulliots nor the Fricks have any use whatever for a society based throughout on equal liberty. Now when

a man goes into a struggle in this Napoleonic style and in the course of it gets a knock-down blow, it is going too far to ask an Anarchist, a believer in equal liberty, to sympathize with or approve this would be despot simply because at this time the workmen are not struggling for equal liberty but happen to defend a liberty which equal liberty recognizes.

But, Mr. Bilgram tells me, these union labor-
ers are also struggling for unequal liberty; why then sympathize with them? True enough; and their claim to sympathy is greatly lessened by their abominable authoritarianism. If it will comfort Mr. Bilgram, I take pleasure in assur-
ing him that, if the time ever comes when these trade-union employees are thoroughly on top with their hands fastened upon their employers' throats, and when in consequence the employees begin to wax fat and the employers go down and thin, much of my sympathy will be trans-
ferred from the employees to the employers. Therefore, when both parties to a fight are wrong, what-
ever sympathy is felt goes naturally to the one that suffers most. Apart from this friendly feel-

ing for the underdog, however, there is another consideration which mitigates the offense of the labor authoritarians as compared with that of the capitalist authoritarians. The latter, for the most part in knavery, set up authority as a wea-
pon of aggression, the former are only in part in ignominy and for this reason the latter's examples are worthy of authority originally as a weapon of de-
fence. The difference is considerable.

Mr. Bilgram and I agree almost to a dot as to what constitutes the true solution of the difficul-
ties: at Homestead and of nearly all other labor difficulties whatsoever. I agree with him too that, if the workmen knew the remedy, they could apply it very quickly and effectively. But I do not think that the ignorance of the workmen implies a similar and equal ignorance on the part of the employers. For one thing, the employers, as a rule, are men of superior education and intellect. And for another thing, the creators of a scheme of aggression are much less likely to be innocent of evil intent than the victims. To be sure, there are many exceptions, and I have said nothing to the contrary. I am just as certain, for instance, that the employer, Hugo Bilgram, is not a knave as I am that Dana and Frick are knaves. If there were no such exceptions, then, as Mr. Bilgram says, the situation would be hopeless. It is on these exceptions that my hope rests. All the employers are not knaves, and the workmen, as a matter of course, have such fools that they cannot acquire wisdom; and because of these two facts I see Light and liberty ahead.

Yours, with deep sorrow for all the oppressed,

Edith St. Clair.

July 11, 1893.

Dear Edith:

I shall gladly cooperate with you in a manner which I am sure you will fully sympathize.
We English women ought not to remain silent and inac-
tive at this moment. If, as I believe, our hearts are ar-
time for our Rulers, from the fullness of our in-
most hearts we must give them consolation. Editha, I do not know why you have not written to me lately, but I do believe that a brief earnest prayer where two or three are gathered together with heartfelt faith has Power. Will you kindly see if you can join me in such a Prayer for the deliverance of our Russian sisters in their unspeakable anguish? It would propose 12 o'clock noon on Sunday, 14th and 26th, as the hour when many of us may unite to send forth a wave of love and sympathy to them and of prayer to God.

I remain, yours ever,

Connelley Cunningham.

The Great Disillusionizer.

[Robert Reitel in Der Arme Fried]

According to the usual irony of fate, the grave of the most innocent of all thinkers is in the cemetery of the Sophistic School, from whose trap-pits perishing souls had first to be secured. If the gentlemen had known who and what was concealed behind this simple name (Max Stirner), they would never have permitted such a de-
lusion. If a high Persian govern-
ment could suspect what philosophy it is that has found its most consistent expression in Stirner's book, it would erect larrasions and a church-garrison upon the spot. And yet, out of what is meant by this book, the potli-ticians and men who supply the coming generation the chemical means for the absolute disintegration of the soul of the State and Society with contempt and the sentence of slow death by starvation on account of casuism.

The idea of a monument for Stirner found little re-
response among the few in America who knew him. I
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