On Picket Duty.

To substantiate its assertion that Liberty "is a journal with some good qualities," despite the insufferable dulness of its editorial columns, and paragraphs points to the translations from Nietzsche, Shaw's review of Norden, and a translation from Zola. The obvious inference is that, while the editor of Liberty is incapable of producing anything of value himself, he has the facility of appreciating with some accuracy the products of others. Coming from "paragraphs," this admission must have been an embarassing one, and I can only admire the sacrifice of pride to truth by which alone it could have been made.

Comrade B-j-j-j-n-g-t-n-t is not the only one of my original opponents on the child question whose opinion was changed by the controversy over that subject. I am in receipt of a letter from Comrade Gilmore of Glasgow, in which he says: "I must tell you—and feel no qualms of conscience in doing so—that I now agree with you on the care of children under Anarchism. I have been driven to the conclusion that mutual contract or a free fight are the real issues at stake between parents and a group or community. I intended to write something for Liberty, showing how I arrived at this conclusion; but the fact is, I cannot get time."

The unprecendented rebuke administered to Goff by the New York court of appeal has delighted hundreds of justice-loving men. His charge in the Maria Barberi case is declared to have been objectionable and improper, because it was an animated argument for morality rather than an unbiased review of the facts and the legal principles applicable to them. Maria Barberi will have a new trial, but Goff will not. The verdict against him will not be reversed. He is too useful for his judicial position, and the moral reformers who have elevated him must now see the fruit of their political crusades. I must add, however, that my mind harbors the suspicion that this reversal, just though it unquestionably is, might not have been handed down, had Goff been made recorder by one of the "machines" instead of by a party of rebels against the machines. The motive, I fear, is quite against Goff rather than justice to the accused. Goff is no worse than Gary (in intent perhaps Letter), but the higher court did not reverse Gary.

Bolton Hall tells the "Voice" that justice would solve the great majority of social problems and "make the rest so simple that an enlightened public sentiment," with leisure and energy to think, would speedily find solutions for it. Mani. Mr. Hall has become convinced that history supports the view of libertarians. He himself points out now one of those classes of "facts" which he lately demanded that Liberty should furnish him with. "A saloon-keeper," he says, "in order to sell a drink, furnishes no bath, hot supper, reading-room, and, practically, all the advantages of a club. I never found a man who sold milk doing that. It would not pay. Why not? Because competition has cut down prices on milk. Why has it not cut down the price of liquor? Because, notwithstanding the number engaged in the business, the business is a monopoly." Any man who has his eyes (and mind) open can find all around him lots of illustrations and proofs of the evil of monopoly—another word for invasion merely—and the remedial powers of liberty.

Liberty has little faith in congressional reports and investigations, but it hopes that the latest undertaking of Col. Carroll Wright will prove successful. He proposes to make the economy of municipal ownership of gas and electric light plants a subject for joint investigation by the national and State bureaus of labor statistics. Inasmuch as the more important the subject of lighting is often relied on by "municipalizationists" to prove the merit of governmental operation, the investigation will take account of all the elements that have been ignored. Full statistics will be given of the cost of plant, interest, wages, and cost of superintendence, as well as of the quality of the lighting furnished. The balance sheet, we are told, for public and private establishments, will indicate whether the public plants pay a real profit, make up a deficiency from taxation, or pay a nominal profit by ignoring the cost of plant and the bonded indebtedness incurred for its establishment. Such an investigation, if properly conducted, ought to throw some light on the municipalization. Liberty asks nothing better than to have the facts presented just as they are.

About the Size of It.

The compulsory education law passed by the last legislature is to be enforced, and from the standpoint of a politician it is a first-class law. It will divest $40,000 from the city treasury into the hands of the assessors, instead of having this amount of money wasted in building a school house. The assessors, in return for this, will tell us how many children are not attending school. Superintendent Brooks told us last January that there were 10,000 children of school age not attending school, and 6,000 other children on half-time, but, instead of building school-houses for these wolls and providing for their education, we have had a law passed to give the assessors $40,000 a year, and to punish parents who do not send their children to public schools that do not exist. And the assessors will get their pay, "whether school keeps or not," for the law provides for their compensation, and, if councils should refuse or neglect to make an appropriation, they can get their pay by the aid of the convenient mandamus.

Those Facts—What are They? To the Editor of Liberty: Mr. Saltire, in his reply to Mr. Turro, says he "judges from facts of the past" that anarchy would work badly in protecting life and property. May I ask whether these facts of the past are specified in Mr. Saltire's book, and, if not, whether he will specify them for us when he next writes to Liberty? STEPHEN T. BRICKTON.

The Recruiting Officer.

Well I remember of him Who to the quiet village came With bale of yarn and goods For sale among the poor To mouth of war, nor pain it grim, But winnow, seeking to inflame Men 'gainst his fellow; how the blare Of parrot eloquence swept The sleeping lust of fight, with all Its glorious panoply, while, veiled By sophistry, as when the smoke Of battle blurs its crime and woe. His fine words languished away death's pall. He with smooth pless their cause assailed, And coward did yelp the foe. The sharp, shrewd money getter kept His place, nor dared beyond his sphere; But to that tune the young soul kept That chum of falsehoods! Hearts that broke, And pain and sorrow year by year. The sequence. Back with laugh and joke By midnight train the walker passed Back to those fragrant, silken-draped boudoirs, Red cups of wine and pink-lined paramours.

The Soldier.

From happy wedlock sprang a child A boy; said he fields be grow To strength and beauty joyous days Of innocence among the wild Flowers of the woods; his eyes of blue Broke from high heaven their winnowing hae, And in his wavy hair of gold The glory of the sun was rolled. Unsmirched in any part, he came Upon his years of manhood, met His faultless mate, a sweet brum-te. An evil time; for then the flame Of war burst forth; and needs must be, Fed by the famine of Fame, And dreaming some men might be free By shouting others; join the fray; I saw him as he slay, his arms above his head, his face Black with a few hours death; and cold That form divine—the model of the race— That should have been bequeath'd i' the world. WILLIAM WOLVER'S GODWIN.
Liberty.

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"In publishing not must be foreseen, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, &c. Dr. Pincet disclaims of all order "by "every "preserve of the "reasonably "the "desirable "which "works "not "only "rules."

"In other words, it is synonymous with liberty. Under such a system individuals would simply be left free to do as they choose, compulsion would disappear, the only bonds in society would be moral bonds.

Now I submit that such a description of Anarchy is incorrect and misleading. I have italicized the erroneous parts of the description. It is not necessary to be unduly literal in interpretation to reject this description; it is necessary simply to be logical and precise. What Mr. Salter should have written, and what he now tells us he meant to write, is something like this:

"Anarchy means simply a state of society in which no one is bound or obliged to do anything beyond that enjoined by equal liberty; it is not the duty of the state, or of any enforced by voluntary associations, to engage in voluntary taxation, but only to the enforcement of order by any invasive organization which begins by violating the most fundamental right of all; not to rule in the sense of coercion of invaders, but in the sense of enforced cooperation and submission without regard to invasion. In other words, it is synonymous with equal liberty. Under such a system all non-invasive individuals would simply be left free to do as they choose; compulsion would disappear, except so far as it would be necessary to enforce equal liberty."

The difference between the two statements is radical and manifest. Mr. Salter now admits that he failed to express himself clearly, and that he really intended to describe the position of philosophical individualist Anarchism, and not that of Tolstoiism. I think that no impartial reader who realizes the significance of the distinction will agree with Mr. Salter that I have interpreted him with undue literalism.

Having arrived at an understanding with reference to the problem, or subject-matter of the inquiry, let me see whether I cannot get Mr. Salter to admit that his method "may properly be called in question." In the first place, it was ineffectual to say, as I did, that it is necessary to determine whether Anarchy is "just and possible." In reality, it is necessary to determine only whether Anarchy is just. If we answer this question, everything else is added unto us by necessary implication. As an ethical leader, Mr. Salter must asssent to this proposition. If Anarchy is just, it cannot be impossible or even inexpedient. If government is unjust and without any ethical warrant, it cannot be, in a scientific sense, possible and expedient. What philosophers and sociologists are called upon to do is to discover an ethical warrant for government. Spencer, we know, has tried it, and has failed. He is unable to discover any other warrant than consent, "practical unanimity," and, when it is pointed out to him that no such unanimity exists, he is logically bound to decide that government has no ethical warrant. Mr. Salter, however, in his book, at least, proceeds upon the notion that, if he can prove, by "balancing advantages and disadvantages of government and Anarchy," that the latter would not, or does not, work well, his case is made out. Is it because he is convinced that a thing which does not work well cannot be just? If so, he is committed to the converse of the proposition, that a thing which just necessarily must work well, and hence cannot decline to accept the purely ethical test and abide by the result of an abstract inquiry into the ethical states of government. Is it because he thinks that an appeal to facts and experience is more direct, fruitful, or scientific than the a priori method? An assumption of that kind is too foreign to the very essence of science. If I should ask Mr. Salter whether murder is just, it would never occur to him to seek an answer in facts and experience. If ethical science could not answer that question in any other way, it would hardly be regarded as having reached an advanced state. Similarly, if I ask Mr. Salter whether government is just, and he refers me to facts and experience, he evidently implies that ethical science is so crude, immature, and undeveloped that it is incapable of giving a direct answer to my question. Of course, if this were really the case, we could do nothing but accept the fact, and hope for better things in the future. But no greater blunder can be imagined than to be involved in the notion that what ethical science cannot tell us "facts and experience" will, if we only interrogate them. Who can be sure that he has all the essential facts before him, and that his interpretation of them is sound? Mr. Salter says that in his theoretical part he "argued that Anarchy was possible and, by implication, possibly just," but that, when he came to deal with the practical question as to how Anarchy actually works and is likely to work, he knew of no way to answer it except to examine facts and experience. Here, it is clear, Mr. Salter uses the term "possible," not in the technical sense of compatible with the highest welfare, but in the popular sense. Now, in the popular sense, nobody will claim that Anarchy is possible, just as no Anarchist denies that, in this same sense, government is possible, and usury is possible. But is Anarchy better than government as a condition of social stability and development? Mr. Salter thinks that it is not, and appeals to facts for support. Yet he "urges" that it is possibly just! Again I ask: how can that which is just be worse than that which is unjust? Certainly both government and Anarchy cannot be just, since they are mutually exclusive and irreconcilable. If Mr. Salter had first proved by the a priori method that Anarchy is unjust, and then proceeded to balance advantages and disadvantages by way of strengthening and illuminating his deduction, his method could not have been objected to. Spencer very frequently appeals to facts and experience to exhibit the unfitness of
and inefficiency of government, but he does that after attempting to prove a priori the injustice of governmental interference for any purpose save defense against aggression. It is significant that Spencer's facts have generally very little effect on those who are not convinced by his theoretical demonstrations. Mr. Salter's "facts and experience" will carry no more weight with those who fail to be impressed by his theoretical considerations.

However, in my review of the book I have tried to meet both the theoretical and practical considerations advanced by Mr. Salter, and I now propose to examine his additional arguments, or his replies to my criticisms.

Upon the subject of Anarchy in defensive war, Mr. Salter said very little in his book. He explains his brief and summary treatment of that fundamental question by stating that he had no idea that his position would be seriously challenged. He spoke of what "every one would feel" simply because he actually thought that every one did feel as he supposed, and, since my dissent has established the error of the supposition, he undertakes to supply the arguments originally omitted as superfluous. In substance, Mr. Salter's new argument is as follows: Right and wrong are measured by the welfare of the tribe or community, and it cannot be for the individual to pursue a course of conduct inconsistent with the welfare of the community. The individual has not the right to do with himself as he pleases irrespective of the welfare of others about him, and hence no man can rightfully take his own life or allow his life to be taken without resistance, when such conduct means injury or ruin to the community. To force a reluctant individual to defend his community is not, therefore, wrong, except in the case of persons having conscientious scruples against war of any kind. In other words, Mr. Salter maintains that the individual does not belong to himself, and that, even if life has no value to him, he is bound to live and work for the welfare of the community; and he further maintains that it cannot be wrong for the community to demand and enforce such subordination of the individual, because "wrong" means something injurious to the community, while the subordination alluded to is good and necessary for the community.

Now, I entirely agree with Mr. Salter that "right and wrong are measured by the welfare of the tribe or community," and that "in its origin conscience was a social sentiment." This is the Darwinian, or, rather, evolutionary, view of ethical sentiments and conceptions, but it is wholly consistent with the doctrine of individual sovereignty; and Mr. Salter is simply guilty of question-begging when, after stating this proposition regarding the meaning of right and wrong, or the origin of social sentiments, he immediately assumes that it is right for the community to force an individual to do with himself, regardless of his own feelings in the matter, when it does not follow from the premise. It is true that everything which is injurious to the community, that everything right which is beneficial and necessary to the community. But whether a thing is or is not necessary and beneficial to the community is itself a question. As I have repeatedly insisted, the Anarchistic position, the demand for absolute non-interference with the non-aggressive, rests precisely on the contention that such conduct is in the highest degree advantageous to the community, and that the society which will respect equality of liberty and that conduct of non-aggressive individuals into cooperation even for purposes of defensive war will be happier, freer, more stable and harmonious and progressive, than any other society. We assert that individual sover- eignty is the essential condition of social well-being, and that coercion of the non-invasive individual is injurious and demoralizing to the community as a whole. The difference, then, between Mr. Salter and myself is that he assumes certain things to be necessary and beneficial to society which I hold to be injurious and fatal to it, and not as with reference to the meaning of right and wrong, or the origin of social sentiments.

It may, I apprehend, seem paradoxical to affirm that the welfare of society demands that individuals shall be allowed to commit suicide or get themselves killed in preference to fighting with the rest of the society, or that individual sovereignty is the condition of social growth and prosperity. The trouble is that writers persist in speaking and thinking about the relations and conditions which prevailed under early militarism, and entirely overlook the great changes brought about by industrialism and the corresponding modification in sentiments. Individual sovereignty under early militancy was an impossibility, and no member of the warring tribes ever dreamed of demanding the right of secession, or of declining to cooperate with his fellows. Men lived by war, and discipline, despotic control, and individual subordination are the conditions of success in war. Men's sentiments, always molded by surroundings and necessities, naturally corresponded to their external relations. To assert that the conduct and prosperity of our society are essentially the same to-day as they have been, to ignore evolution. I cannot dwell on this, nor is it necessary, since Spencer's treatment of this subject leaves nothing to be desired.

Mr. Salter observes that it has been reserved to the philosophical Anarchist of to-day to discover the "abstract, absolute right of the individual to do with himself as he pleases, irrespective of the welfare of others about him." In a sense, this is true, and we are entitled to credit for it, although Spencer, who is not strictly a philosophical Anarchist, may promulgate this doctrine in the first edition of "Social Statics." Yes, we do affirm that the individual has the right to do with himself as he pleases, irrespective of the welfare of others, and we claim that this right, or liberty, is essential to the welfare of the community, and not only of the individual members of society, but of the "social organism" itself. Of course, the "social organism" is a fiction, but what I mean is that the society which recognizes and respects this right is, under present industrial conditions, the fittest and the one most certain to survive. Strange to say, "society" itself, speaking through its legislators, judges, and "public opinion," is gradually discovering the truth of the Anarchistic principle. The most enlightened States have either abrogated anti-suffrage laws, or relegated them to the lumber-room of dead-letter legislation. This is a tacit admission of the absurdity of the claim that an individual who has found life a burden and curse is bound to live and suffer for the sake of "society." The world is, I fear, tending Anarchistward, and repudiating the absurd "social organism" theory. It does this in silence to the new sentiments produced under the régime of industrialism, and will do more in the same direction when its ideas on the subject become clearer and more exact.

Indeed, Mr. Salter himself unconsciously retreats from his position when he concedes to Quakers and non-resisters the right to ignore society and refuse to defend it against invaders. This concession is utterly unjustifiable on principle. If men belong to society, have no right to do with themselves as they please, and are bound to subordinate their own interests and inclinations to the welfare of others, then no amount of "conscientious" scruples can relieve an individual from the duty of serving society. Isn't it preposterous to plead conscientious scruples when the very existence of the community is at stake, and when failure to offer due resistance means the annihilation of everybody, including the men whose scruples prevent them from fighting? What is the real meaning of the plea? The Quakers and non-resisters say to the community, "We do not believe in killing, even in self-defense; we prefer to risk being killed ourselves; and we would rather have the community destroyed than attempt to resist invasion by physical force." What becomes of their duty to the community? Will Mr. Salter urge that they have higher duties than those they owe to the community? It would be rather difficult for him to name them, I fancy, in view of his own emphatic assertion that "right and wrong are measured by the welfare of the community," and that it cannot be wrong for society to demand of individuals the doing of that which is essential to social welfare. From his point of view, the alleged "conscientious scruples" are malignant anti-social sentiments, and the possessors are enemies of society. How can that be conscientious which violates "conscience"—the social sentiment, as Mr. Salter asserts?

The inconsistency is glaring, and Mr. Salter's only escape from the dilemma is in the admission that, whatever may have been the case in the early stages of social evolution, to-day the welfare of society is best preserved by respecting individuals, because the existence of such sentiments is one of the strongest evidences of human development and socialization. To say this, however, is to imply that men no longer belong to society, but are independent sovereigns, and that we have, or ought to have, the liberty to do as we please with ourselves, irrespective of the welfare of others.

Now, when the Anarchists would exempt, not only non-resistants, but all those who prefer to commit suicide from other motives, or who wish to defend themselves in their own way, Mr. Salter is estopped from making general the argument that right and wrong are measured by social welfare. The obvious answer which he must anticipate is: Granted that right and wrong are measured by social welfare; but it does not follow that a given course is necessary
Mr. Varro's Ethics in His Way.

Without the smallest desire to turn the controversy between Mr. Varros and Mr. Salter into a triangular one, I am, nevertheless, under the necessity, in order to preserve the integrity of Liberty's editorial policy, of dismissing some of the positions now taken by Mr. Varros. As soon as I had read Mr. Salter's answer, I foresaw trouble; for I knew that Mr. Varros, in his rejoinder, would be obliged to deal with Mr. Salter from the standpoint of fundamental ethics, and in fundamental ethics Mr. Varros and I are as far apart as the poles. Yet, as the controversy had been begun in the editorial columns, it seemed, on the whole, the better way to let it proceed there, and mend matters as best as I could by taking an occasional exception over my own signature.

Let me say at once, then, that Liberty deserts from the doctrine propounded both by Mr. Salter and Mr. Varros that "right and wrong are measured by the welfare of the tribe or society, that there is a single standard of right, observance of which is incumbent upon all. If, indeed, the tribe or community were itself a personality; if it had such a thing as a sensorium or seat of consciousness, then, truly enough, its rights and wrongs would be measured by its own welfare, just as every individual's right and wrong is measured by his or her own welfare. But on the lips of men who, like Mr. Varros and Mr. Salter, reject the theory that society is an organism and deny the existence of a social sensorium, the words quoted above are utterly meaningless, the veriest nonsens. The words right and wrong, so far as they can be looked upon as expressive of rational concepts, are simple equivalents of advisability and unadvisability of certain courses of conduct viewed from the standpoint of the welfare of the conceiver; and, as it is in the fundamental nature of the conceiver to make his own happiness paramount and measure his conduct accordingly, and as there are as many conceivers as there are individuals, there are as many rights and wrongs as there are individuals: with this qualification, however, that, when two or more individuals agree upon a common line of conduct as the one most highly advantageous, they unify right and wrong so far as they themselves are concerned.

Now, the process of unification has been going on, at quicker or slower pace, during the entire evolution of the human race; so that there has come to be, at the present day, a considerable and, in regard to some things, a preponderant consensus of opinion of the theory that one of the tendencies of evolution is to show that men, as a rule, best serve their own interests by assuming the interests of all to be harmonious instead of antagonistic, and by allowing, as a consequence, the freest play to individual exercise and development,—that is to say, a consensus of opinion in favor of the theory that equal liberty is an essential condition of the highest social achievement. To those who, having attained this stage of mental development, are likely to join in this consensus of opinion, I write the following: 'Social progress upon equal liberty is a rational and any idea to the contrary is so irrational, that having to solve any special social problem, the first question that they ask themselves is not which of the various solutions proposed offers the greatest balance of advantage, but which is in harmony with equal liberty. From this point of view I am heartily with Mr. Varros in claiming that the test of justice is the proper one to apply to any social proposition or philosophy, and that Mr. Salter's rule-of-thumb method implies ignorance of one of the foundation principles of society. But I do not adopt the test of justice for Mr. Varros' reasons. I do not hold that which is just cannot in any case be expedient. I hold that emergencies are liable to arise in the lives of men and of societies when all principles except that of self-preservation must be thrown to the winds; that there are moments when the continuance of individual life and social relations depend on the promptness with which we violate the very rules of conduct that in ordinary and normal times contribute most vitally to our well-being. But it does not follow from this that in the ordinary course of evolution we must, with every change of circumstance, submit the rules of conduct to the whims of the scales of experience or to fresh speculation as to the advantage or disadvantage of acting upon them, any more than it would follow from the possible necessity of inhaling a poisonous gas as an antidote to some other violent poison suddenly taken into the system that we must consider the advisability of discontinuing the breathing of pure air in view of a threatened epidemic of cholera. Now, having satisfied myself that equal liberty is as essential to social health as is pure air to individual health, it is enough for me, when confronted with a social proposition, to inquire whether it satisfies or goes counter to the requirements of equal liberty. For these reasons, but not for those put forward by Mr. Varros, I am practically with Mr. Varros against Mr. Salter as to the method by which the subject in hand should be treated.

On the other hand, I admit that, if Mr. Salter has not reached that height from which the necessity of equal liberty to social life appears as a self-evident truth,—if, in other words, he cannot see that human existence is not to be secured by: ing the hands and minds of non-invasive men,—he is fully justified in pursuing the rule-of-thumb method. But in that case I put him in the category in which I put the man who comes forward to question the advisability of breathing pure air. I am ready to listen to either of them, when either shall come forward with facts of sufficient moment to make it worth my while. But, unless these facts shall be overwhelming; unless they are exhaustive, leaving no possibility that other facts of importance have been ignored unless they all point unambiguously to one logical conclusion,—I shall refuse to abandon either equal liberty or pure air, even though some of the facts cited I am unable to explain. And, with all these conditions seemingly fulfilled, I should resort to authority and inquirers only tentatively, in half distrust of my senses and my reason, and in constant fear of disaster. It seems to me that the State Socialism which tries to defend itself by the claim that it does not violate equal liberty is far more rational in its method than the Socialism of the Chair, which plays with equal liberty almost as if it
were a toy.

Upon the question of compulsory cooperation in military defense I simply note that this sort of compulsory cooperation, like any other sort, is a violation of equal liberty, and there I rest. In other words, I am interested in it only as a theoretical question,—one which helps me to understand, explain, and illustrate what equal liberty is. Practically I am too frequently confronted with actual violations of equal liberty to worry over much this possible violation of it. As a practical question its decision must always rest on the gravity of the emergency which the occasion presents. Inasmuch as the very consideration of the question contemplates the possibility of war even at the present day, it seems to me that Mr. Yarros, who declares that despotism is the condition of success in war and who is not a non-resistant, is bound by his own argument (though it is inconsistent with his other argument that the just is always expedient) to admit that a defensive war, necessitating compulsory cooperation, may be justified.

Mr. Salter is entitled to remind him that his remarks about the displacement of militarism by industrialism are irrelevant to this practical question of the moment, since the question itself is an admission that such displacement has not yet occurred, or is as yet incomplete. Mr. Salter’s willingness to exempt Quakers and other “conscientious” non-resistants from military service is laughably weak, and I concur in Mr. Yarros’s criticisms upon it. But, when Mr. Yarros says to Mr. Salter: Isn’t it preposterous to plead conscientious scruples when the very existence of the community is at stake? I am tempted to turn upon Mr. Yarros with the parallel question: Isn’t it preposterous to plead equal liberty when the very existence of the community is at stake?

Notwithstanding the exceptions which I have taken above, of course I join hands most heartily with Mr. Yarros in his main contention that none of the harmful things done by non-invasive men can injure others to a degree approaching that in which others and all will be and are injured by the policy of coercing non-invasive men. But I am ex- cept to his statement that to coerce the invasive is not to require their subordination. Coercion of the invasive is not tyranny, to be sure; on the contrary, it is defense against tyranny.

But he who successfully defends himself against a tyrant subordinates the tyrant’s wishes to his own, just as truly as the successful tyrant subordinates his victim. Anarchism is not the doctrine of no subordination; it is the doctrine that none but the invasive should be subordinated. To say that resistance upon the predatory does not subdivide their instinct to those of the non-predatory, or to society if you will, is to deceive oneself with words.

Why is it that “Paragraphs” is not published once a day, instead of once a month, that I, like Zola, might flourish on the morning meal of “green and slimy toad”? I am one of the great novelists.

Florida School Law Up to Date.

[AMERICAN MUNICIPALITY.]

Rev. T. S. Perry, of Lithonia, Ga.; Mr. O. Dickson, of West Valley, Mass.; Principal B. D. Howle, of East Woodstock, Conn.; Mrs. B. D. Bow-
Anarchist.

As one upon no mission bent
I came—to sauceful cause
Save to live by nature's laws,
And her divinity
To hold in awe, to please myself,
And thus the world a service do;
To thrive devold the greed of helf,
The power of my veins;
To worship at the hallowed shrine
Beheading me, and love the new,
Which is the old unvelled again;
To revel a way away;
But hearth from the leagures of blue
To drink the gladness of the lively day,
To dwell in peace, and bear no fruitless pain.

But I—who love the wood and stream,
The winning voice of Day and Night,
And man and beast, and Art and Song;
And fail would want a dream
Of life and love, and seek delight
In gentle moods, forgetting wrong,
Musing o'er mellow sunsets, lost
In contemplation's misty deep,—
I, waking, and ever to dust.
The mystery that lurks behind
Fair nature's appurtenance, must
Into this bitter warfare leap,
The uncustomed work upon me bind,
And, facing Hell, give biting thrust for thirst.

William Welestein Gerdak.

In Defence of the Single Tax.

My dear Mr. Tucker:

I am much pleased at the kind words of yourself and Mr. Yarros concerning me. In the issue of April 18, and I think it a very fair shot that you give me in saying that the thought of the matter of Mr. Stephens's remark was not worth mention is one that might well have been stated at an earlier stage of the proceedings. I wish to say, however, that I never feared a quarrel, and used the word "misunderstanding" in a much stricter and more accurate sense than you gave and that Mr. Stephens is to know exactly what I had written you, in order that no two of us might hereafter, about this matter, seem at cross purposes, see misconceiving what had passed between the other two. Of course I have nothing further to say upon the subject of my previous letter to you. Stephens and you will undoubtedly take care of it.

Nor have I any excuse to offer for the treatment of Mr. Yarros at the Chicago Single Tax Club. If Mr. Trinkaus is accurate in his report. I was not present, but I know enough of Mr. Yarros to know that whatever he said was worthy of, and should have received, not only the attention and thoughtful consideration. I beg, however, to differ from Mr. Trinkaus in the implication which he makes that intolerance and inexactitude of views are always signs of defective intelligence and ability, and, were it at all germane to the argument, which I do not hold to be it, I could, I think, describe to him scenes at meetings of Anarchists where courtesy and respectful bearing of opponents are always wanting. But, like Mr. Stephens's remark to me about the meeting before the Art Club, I do not think the "matter worth mention."

I am, however, disposed to say a word concerning Mr. Yarros's criticism of my remarks when Mr. Yarros read his paper on the Single Tax before the Economic Section of the Chicago Ethical Culture Society. I do not propose to enter into any long argument or discussion of the issues involved, but I do, so I cannot admit that my answer to Mr. Salters's propositions that under the Single Tax there would be no free land, but simply land taxed up to the highest rental value, and that under that system labor would have to pay for land to the State at least as much as it has to pay to private landlords, was weak or a failure. I do not think Mr. Yarros shows his usual acumen and force in so regard.

In the first place, whether or not the belief of all Single Taxers (so far as I know) that the destruction of speculation in land would be brought about by the adoption of the Single Tax, and would be of very

dramatic assertion that my comment upon Mr. Salters's address reduced the Single Tax to a very insignificant thing. I am still as much as ever of the opinion that the chief end and to which the Single Tax is directed is the abolition of land speculation; secondly, that it would be effective to that end; and, thirdly, that the carrying out of that end should be, not indeed a "panacea," but the greatest of all means at present practicable and feasible for the amelioration of our distressing economic and social conditions. I simply assert that the dangerous opponents of liberty, for I hold it to be the one thing of supreme importance to mankind. But, seeing things so differently, I must be content to fall under that unfavorable opinion.

And in this I am a firm believer in the right of all men to equal liberty, and that the only justification which I find for the government for which you find none is the necessity of limiting the freedom of the individual in certain respects, and I do not think the equal liberty of every other.

The State, which does more than thus to protect the equal liberty of its citizens, is usurping power, but the prevention, by the Single Tax or otherwise, of the monopolization of natural opportunities and the consequent interference with the equal rights of citizens to such opportunities is such a protection of equal liberty; see Justin! Very truly.

Edward Osgood Brown.

Lamentations Against the State.

[Quoted from Le Journal]

Yesterday morning appeared at my house a gentleman whom I don't know. Upon his insisting that he should be received at once—for the affair of which he desired to speak to me admitted, he said, of no delay.

—I ordered that he should be shown to my room. He had a very good countenance, although he was slightly agitated.

"Pray excuse my indiscretion," he said to me, "but I am worn out, worn out, worn out..."

"It is not pathological," I declared, "that a healthy and virtuous man should be worn out so early in the morning. Unless you are a gambler or a rake, it must be something very serious that brings you here."

"Very serious, indeed!"

"Then what is it, Monsieur?"

"It is, Monsieur," answered the stranger, forcibly, "that I can no longer live in this stupid land of red tape. I have enough of France, and I wish to be naturalized as a Bordeaux or a Basque. That is what it is!"

"But how was that concern me? And what can I do for you?"

"This, Mme. Sériveau is away. M. Henry Bauer has gone to carry the artistic gospel to the southern shores of France. Of the few generous, compassionate, and yeoman souls who do not fear to tell the truth in an idle and, most of the time, society, you are to-day the only one to whom I can fraternally pour out my rancor. I do not ask you for money, or anything of the sort. I ask you only to listen to me for a few minutes. Tell you what justice seems to you to dictate."

"I am listening."

And the visitor spoke as follows:

"I live in the suburb of Paris, in the open country, almost two miles from a telegraph station. Consequently my relations with Paris are not easy, and cost me as much as to deal with New York. I thought that I should not be indulging in luxury, if I were to have a subscription placed in the post office, and I therefore decided to subscribe. Do you follow me, Monsieur?"

"Perfectly."

"In the first place, they made me sign papers green, blue, yellow, red, and printed paper, of which I understood nothing at all, except that, before anything could be set in motion, I must pay down a certain sum of money,—to secure a footing, no doubt I paid it. As I seemed to have been forgotten, I applied again to the post office, asking that the work of installation be begun. I received this answer:"

"I will begin that work, when the installation has finished."

"I was not a little puzzled.

my morality, my fortune, my political opinions?"

"Come, Monsieur, you are neither a Belgian, a Kafir, or a Matabele, and you know very well that the French Revolution can do nothing whatever with an investigation. That causes delays, that annoys people, that throws things into confusion. That is what I need!

"I am referring myself to the situation, and another month passed. As nothing came, I went again to the administration.

"And that investigation? I asked.

"The investigation is finished. But a complication has arisen. We are at loggerheads with the department of bridges and roads.

"With the department of bridges and roads? You astonish me! Well, pray, has the department of bridges and roads to do with my telephone?

"Your line has to cross one of the Seine bridges, has it not? Well, the department of bridges and road is opposed to this crossing. Or, at least, is studying the question. Naturally we do not at all agree with them... and they do not agree at all with us.

"'Ah! And that may last a long time?'

"'We cannot tell. Two months, three months, perhaps six months. I could point you to a very curious case where we had to squabble with the department of bridges for fifteen months. It is very funny.'

"It is idiotic and absolutely embarrassing. The department of bridges and roads is a State Institution, is it not? And so is the department of posts and telegraphs. Over what, then, can they squabble, as you say?

"Why, my dear and beloved taxpayer, if State institutions did not squabble among themselves and over your back, what would they do, I ask you? If all went on smoothly, there even were no more administration. One would think, indeed, that you had just come back from China!

"Would to heaven that I had gone to that free and civilized country! Be sure that I would not have come back.'

"At the end of the fourth month... do you still follow me?"

"Perfectly.

"At the end of the fourth month I witnessed the appearance of a gang of workmen, who set the poles and fastened the wires with mechanical modernity. It remained only to put the apparatus, in accordance with all the requirements of the regulations, in the way of which some new impediment—"I forget what—interposed to a-day the final installation three weeks more. At last, after innumerable and unforeseen manoeuvres, it was joined and culminated in my house. It cost me very dear. I had to pay for the Installation, then the amount of the monthly subscription, and, finally, what they call a 'provision'; for I pay not the subscription, but also for each telephonic communication,—doubtless to simplify bookkeeping and bureaucratic functions. It would be really too simple to unify the subscription price in a telephonic circuit. There would be no more administration, as the official said.

"'Well, now your telephone is in operation, and you are content?'"

"Not at all. Do you know what happens to me? Ah! it is extraordinary! Well, this is what happens to me. Properly speaking, I have but half a telephone. I mean by that, whenever I like and in proportion to the number of fits which the Bell Company is willing to endure at my house, it costs me very dear. I had to pay for the installation, then the amount of the monthly subscription, and, finally, what they call a ‘provision’; for I pay not the subscription, but also for each telephonic communication,—doubtless to simplify bookkeeping and bureaucratic functions. It would be really too simple to unify the subscription price in a telephonic circuit. There would be no more administration, as the official said.

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"'Well, now your telephone is in operation, and you are content?'"

"No.

"'No? Then good evening.'

"And in vain does Paris ring, in vain does Paris call. And every day my telephone remains as silent as if I had a log of wood on my desk. What would you have me do? I use it for a match-box.

"A gentleman paced feverishly up and down my room.

"'Another thing,' he exclaimed, 'I have caterpillars and plants-like is my garden. My trees and plants are attacked by all sorts of invisible and devouring enemies, which can be overcome by but one means,—nicotine. You know that the State monopolizes the manufacture and sale of this substance. Now, you talk of the press as having only to walk into the State shop and say:

"'A quart of nicotine, if you please.'

"'What a mistake! There, too, the complications are such that, after having to go to two or three counters to buy his crops rather than to go through the cumbersome procedure which the State forces upon you. Listen carefully. You wish a quart of nicotine, we will say. First, you have to go to the desk of the State that buys the Quai d’Orsay. There you are led from office to office in which you are shown that you are a horticulturist, an agriculturist, a winegrower, or a druggist, according to whom being given nicotine is delivered. This shows, they give you a little paper, with which you present yourself at the office of the collector of indirect taxes in your commune. This functionary, after having made you pay into his strong box the price of the quart in question, hands you, in his turn, another little paper, with which you present yourself again at the factory at the Quai d’Orsay. A new promenade through the offices, where you are, authenticate, homologate, and stamp this paper on the back, on the front, lengthwise, crosswise, diagonally, squarely, circularly, and triangulately; after which, equipped with this talisman, you are sent to a laboratory, where after going through a sacrificial ritual, symbohcal and diabolical, this paltry quart of nicotine is last delivered to you. That takes three days. And so with everything, dear, generous, compassionate, and vehement writer. I cannot risk a step, a wall, prune a tree, transport earth or drink, or perform the simplest act of domestic life, without the State’s intervention, now to prevent me from doing what I want to do, always to rob me of my time. For we do not lay sufficient stress on this tax of last time with which the State overwhelms us. It is frightful!'

"I tried to console my visitor, and I added to him:

"'Do not be so downcast. The hour of social justice and individual liberty will soon strike. Thank God; the Socialists are gaining ground every day. A few months more, and we shall enter into the infinite joys of the promised land. For the admirable Socialists, Mousseul,..."

"But at this word ‘Socialists’ my visitor uttered a cry of terror, and he bounded about in my room like a frightened cat.

"'The Socialists?’ he cried. ‘The State-baker, the State-butcher, the State-tillor, the State ironmonger, the State-farmer, the State—Everything! You do not dream of that! Do not lose hope of being able to copulate and procreate, all at the same hour, at the sound of the same bell, to the tap of the same drum! No, no, you have decided me. I hesitate no longer. I am off."

"And he disappeared behind the door, so quickly opened and so quickly shut again that I thought he had vanished through the wall, like a ghost.

Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.
The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrollment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write letter after letter, every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects to the ‘target’ assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the publication of the same, or failure to write a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), in or on a column of this weekly withdrawal of the work of the Corps. Whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, Stephen T. Hoynton, Flushing Institute, Flushing, N. Y.

Why I believe in the Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.
Forthright—because our shots will receive more attention and more respect if several are concentrated on a single target than if they go one a time. The average man will at first regard Anarchism as a wildcat notion of no consequence, but as the load of his head finds that a number of men are after him on this line, he will begin to feel that it has some little importance, and that it concerns him to know what these men are talking about. Then he will begin to read the letters for the purpose of understanding them, instead of for the purpose of getting through them. Even letters from people who have no talent for writing can be useful in this way,—by helping to draw attention to the letters of those who can.

Mum: Join the Corps.
Target, section A—‘Daily Globe,’ 242 Washington Street, Boston, Mass., on Saturday, May 3, published an advertisement which appeared in Liberty, May 10, in which an English Anarchist-Communist, who come over to help Mowbray convert America to that faith and has gone back again. Turner is described as a pleasant, respectable-looking man, president of the English Assn. of Ex-Spillers Union of London. He is quoted as saying:

'I find a deal of Anarchist sentiment among Americans, even among those who would be the last to call themselves anarchists. Anarchistic ideas are certainly spreading in England. The Socialist idea, which is much stronger and clearer, more definitely desirable than before, is continually furnishing recruits to the ranks of the Anarchists. The more extended the Socialist movement grows, the less violent it becomes.

'When it started as a revolutionary movement ten or fifteen years ago in England, but just in proportion as it has entered the political arena, it has dropped its old interest in the poorest and worst-off section in society, the real proletariat, and caters to the small shop-kepters and better-off working class—element, in the hope of making votes out of them. I think highly of the organized labor movement of England, and my best hopes are centred upon it. But to my eye, it is rapidly advancing in ideas.'

Eight years ago Socialism was ignored; now the first principles of the socialists are recognized in the labor world, and, best of all, it has not been married to political action, as in Germany.'

I am interested in an improvement of the English trade-unionists, but their influence is already being felt."

The ‘new’ trade union movement of five or six years ago was mainly political, and is already a spent force. But in a young struggling body of workers, and gained many advantages for unskilled labor by big interest. But, unfortunately, the political action as the remedy, it slackened down to politics and impotence. Influenced by Anarchism, they are beginning to see that it is only by direct action on the part of the workers as a class against the employing and controlling class that any improvement can really be gained.

He was converted to Anarchist-Communism by the executions at Chicago.

On Wednesday, May 4, the ‘Globe’ reported a May Day demonstration Sunday night, addressed by Mowbray, Turner, Most, and several others. Its description of the meeting is as follows:

'It was a cosmopolitan and polyglot audience, very much interested and with a distinctly influential core of purpose of the meeting. The card of admission was hoisted, "Workingmen of the world, unite," and the roll was closed. The May Day demonstration by the Anarchists of Boston.'

Show why popular dread of Anarchism is unreasonable; that Anarchism should receive the same respectful consideration as any other idea. Something may be learned from it, as is accorded to Nationalism and other social movements. Advise people to get their ideas of Anarchism directly from Anarchists, instead of from anti-Anarchists accounts and from their own imagination of what it must be like. Recommend Liberty. Be brief.

Section B—U. Turner, Cannon Falls, Minn., much interested in proportional representation and in giving "Liberty" and "The World.""
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