

# Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER. PROUDHON

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Vol. I.

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No. 4.

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

## On Picket Duty.

Society has no rights.

Morality is the science of the mutual rights and duties of human beings.

Liberty attempts to promote unanimity by consent, and succeeds; authority attempts to promote it by compulsion, and succeeds — in retarding it.

"A Socialist," who lately joined in the New York "Truth's" hunt for the "Somebody," is on the right scent when he says that the right of property as defined by Proudhon must be superseded by the right of possession.

Some political philosophers — D. A. Wasson, for instance — are carried away with the idea that man's only right is to do his duty. The contrary is the truth. In the political or civil sphere man's only duty is to respect others' rights.

In the Cranmer murder trial now attracting so much attention at New Haven, a Mr. Bush, one of the prosecuting counsel, described himself as "the representative of a cruel monster — the State." We are glad to know that the State has one servant so well acquainted with his employer.

On the day appointed for public prayer for the president's recovery an aged clergyman of Hingham, Mass., was stricken with paralysis while in the act of supplicating the deity, and died a few days later. Probably a just judgment of Providence on the insinuation that the Almighty does not know his own business.

Emerson has somewhere said: "If you wish to know what a boy will do, strip him naked, place him in a ten-acre lot, and set the dogs on him." We quote from memory, but give the pith of the advice. Liberty will translate it to the striving mortals that stand about. *Don't be so afraid something is going to happen that will bring you death and destruction. Strip for the contest, take all odds, defy the dogs, and be somebody.*

The indomitable Félix Pyat, dramatist, radical, and advocate of regicide, banished from France not many months ago for publishing a revolutionary daily newspaper, no sooner finishes his term of exile than he starts another in his beloved Paris. His former journal was called "La Commune." The new one is "La Commune Libre" (The Free Commune). Being a graphic writer, his paper is sure to be interesting; being an earnest thinker, it is equally sure to be valuable.

Has coercion coerced? We fear it has in the case of Mr. John Dillon. Released from prison, he announces his intention of withdrawing for a time from the land agitation, giving as his reason therefor that the Irish people are determined to try the Land Bill, and that it is best to let them try it without interference. We add our protest to the "Irish World's" against this course. If Mr. Dillon is a true man, he will not desert at the very crisis of the battle, but his voice will be heard in the thick of it, up and down the Irish country, warning the Irish tenantry in unmistakable terms that they will deserve no sympathy if, having once beheld the Sun of Justice, they

shut their eyes to its splendid rays, and that they cannot too soon be deprived of all the benefits of the land they occupy if they consent any longer to periodically transfer any portion of them to the thieves and loafers who call themselves landlords.

The truly great thinker never shrinks from the consequences of his own thought, but accepts all its conclusions fearlessly. "If your ideas were to be realized," objected a timid soul to a seemingly startling proposition made by Colonel William B. Greene, the author of "Mutual Banking," "they would shiver the planet." "Well, what of it?" answered the colonel, nothing daunted; "there are other planets in plenty, I believe."

The "Magdeburger Zeitung" reports that a young man was recently sent to Bismarck with a letter of recommendation for having successfully played the spy in a family where he had been engaged as private tutor, by stealing the contents of certain threatening letters to majesty. Commenting on this young man, the "New Yorker Volkszeitung," in a paragraph which loses half its richness by translation, says: "This patent mutton-head is just the tool whom Bismarck, 'the old stud-horse' Wilhelm, and the whole tribe of German Philistines need, to instruct them in the dangerous tendencies of social democracy, to the end of securing severer strictures on its propagandism."

Liberty is sent regularly to the Boston Public Library that it may be placed on file in the reading-room. We are informed that the trustees have voted not to place it in the reading-room, but to hide it away in the recesses of Bates Hall. Despotism is still at its old tricks. It knows that its only chance for continued existence lies in keeping the light from the people. "You shall not learn to read," said the slaveholder to his slaves. "You shall read nothing but lies," say capital and government to their victims. But their efforts are in vain. Light has a penetrating power that is irresistible, and is bound to make its way. Liberty will be seen and read and understood more and more as time goes on, and will eventually force its way to a place of honor on the shelves of libraries everywhere.

The London "Truth" thinks that "the best use to which a woman can be put is to be made the honest wife of some good man, and the judicious mother of healthy children." It is high time that Editor Labouchere, who claims to be a radical, found out that woman is not here to "be put" to any use whatever. Like man, she has her capacities and her preferences, and, like him, she also has the right to put herself to the uses most in accordance with them. Propagation is an important function in which man and woman are factors equally necessary, but one whose usefulness is entirely incident and subordinate to the rest of life. Its value depends wholly upon its power to produce human beings good for something more than the mere perpetuation of the race. The man who should be told that the best use to which he could be put would be to be made the honest husband of some good woman, and the judicious father of healthy children, would consider himself insulted, and with reason. Why should not woman, too, feel the insult of being degraded in others' estimation to the level of a mere sexual animal, with no brain to speak of above her cerebellum?

## About Progressive People.

One of the forthcoming volumes in The Epochs of Modern History is Mr. Justin McCarthy's monograph on "The Epoch of Reform," from 1830 to 1850.

Professor John Fiske, of Harvard, is to be one of the essayists at the third biennial session of the Ministers' Institute, to be held in Princeton, Mass., in October.

Mr. John Morley's "Life of Colclough" is so near completion that its publication within three months from the present time is confidently anticipated. One volume is already in type.

The cost of erecting Voltaire's statue on the open square bearing his name and that of Etienne Marcel, on the Place de l'Hotel-de-Ville, will be defrayed by the Paris municipality.

The nihilist journal, "The Will of the People," makes known for the first time that the man who threw the bomb which caused the death of the czar and himself was named Grenévsky.

Castelar, the champion of Republicanism in Spain, declares that both the Carlist and the Christine factors in Spanish politics are daily losing ground, and gives it as his opinion that the dawn of another republic in his country is not far distant.

Walt Whitman, the poet, has been visiting the scenes of his early life, on Long Island, in company with Dr. R. M. Bucke, of Ontario, who is writing a life of Whitman. The title of the book will be "Walt Whitman: a Study." It will be illustrated with a picture of the poet's birthplace, and an etched portrait. The book will be divided into two parts, one biographical, the other critical, and will be published next spring.

M. Clémenceau, the French Radical leader, has a benevolent habit which no other politician probably ever possessed — he gives medical advice gratis to his constituents in Montmartre every morning between 8 and 10. M. Clémenceau has mobile features, with deep-set, dark, and most expressive eyes. His mouth is curved by a constant smile, in which sarcasm and good humor are ever struggling for mastery, and above it grows a short-clipped black moustache which corresponds with his hair. He is a man short in stature and of nervous, muscular frame.

Arrangements for the enlargement of Mr. Ruskin's St. George's Museum at Walkley, near Sheffield, Eng., which were interrupted by Mr. Ruskin's recent illness, have been resumed again since his health was restored. An architect is already engaged in preparing the plans for the galleries, one of which will be two hundred feet long. The present building stands in somewhat extensive grounds, on the brow of a hill overlooking the valley of the Kivelin and the country beyond it. When Mr. Ruskin purchased the land there was not a house upon it, but it is now almost surrounded. Mr. Ruskin, who was again suffering a short time ago, has been well enough to offer the hospitalities of Coniston to several friends at the beginning of the country-house season. He will very shortly resume at Amiens those studies which produced the exquisitely beautiful essay, "Our Fathers have told us," published in the spring.

At the recent anti-clerical congress in Paris, Mlle. Maria Deraisme was the lioness of the platform. In argumentative power there is no orator in the French chamber the superior of this lady. There is a tinge of acrimony in her style, and a subacidity which gives it zest. Her fingers are slightly awry, her face is long and pointed, and her forehead wide, high, prominent, and very smooth. It rises above pencilled eyebrows and bright and feverish hazel eyes. Mlle. Deraisme is a woman of some fortune, keeps a carriage, has a town and country house, and will never marry as long as the status of the married woman is based on the Orientalism of the Christian religion. St. Paul, who was the exponent to the Greek and Roman churches of the Oriental ideas on woman, is the pet hatred of Mlle. Deraisme. There is not a gain of eccentricity in the manner or the method of this oratrix when she is on the platform or on her feet at a banquet. She dresses richly and in excellent taste, wears sparkling rings on her slender fingers, flirts a fan worthily to figure in an art museum, gesticulates with ease and sobriety, and astonishes by her intellectual force. If she only sacrificed to the Graces, — but that she will never do, — she would be a peerless speaker.

# Liberty.

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BENJ. R. TUCKER, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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BOSTON, MASS., SEPTEMBER 17, 1881.

"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions." — PROUDHON.

## The Doctrine of Assent.

At a recent convention of social philosophers the air, as is usual on such occasions, was full of protest and lamentation over the despotic manner in which majorities ride over the will of minorities. More especially, however, were the heated protestations directed against despotic minorities, who, armed with coercive legislation and artillery, contrive to enslave whole peoples without their consent, yea, against their universal dissent and protest. Russia was cited, where one irresponsible autocrat rides rough-shod over eighty millions of people without their assent. Ireland was especially quoted as a down-trodden country, where three millions of tenants are made the virtual slaves of a comparative handful of land monopolists in the face of a protest bordering on revolt. In short, all the prominent reforms were represented as hinging upon a state of things where people are ruled without their assent.

Hearing this representation of the case constantly reiterated, one of the philosophers arose and expressed his utter astonishment that thinking people should suppose that any of these classes and peoples are ruled without their assent. On the contrary, these classes and peoples not only assent to the despotism in every case, but they invite it, take off the hat to it, and make the most elaborate arrangements to receive and welcome it. For how, he maintained, could one man oppress eighty millions without their constant and affectionate assent, and how could two thousand absentee landlords enslave three millions of people unless the latter cordially assented to it?

It is not necessary to enter into a philosophical analysis of what is embodied in the term *assent* to see that the statement of this latter philosopher is perfectly true. With perhaps the exception of the Nihilists, the people of Russia assent to the domination of the czar. The convincing proof that the elephant really assents to being tormented by a troublesome and persistent flea on his eyelids is that he does not brush the flea off. If it be alleged that dissent would be of no avail, with his huge trunk chained to his legs, the question naturally suggests itself: How came he to allow a weak mortal biped to chain him, when one gentle surge of his great body would have ground his master to jelly? Ah! The answer comes unbidden, — his ignorance and superstitious reverence for the office of his keeper makes him a slave. And that is what makes the people of Russia slaves, the people of Ireland slaves, the women slaves, and humanity in general servile.

The writer was once an eye-witness of an incident which bears very significantly on this matter of assent as it pertains to Ireland's degradation and oppression. A rude Irishman had been long pestered by a burly priest for not attending mass and contributing to the usury-box. One day, as he was swaggering along the street, half intoxicated, and savagely bidding for a knock-down fight, he was accosted by his priest, who berated him severely for his shortcomings. His answer not exactly suiting that ecclesiastical functionary, the latter suddenly lifted a huge cane which he carried and felled the man to the ground with one blow. Half stunned, and with the blood streaming down his face, he arose to his feet,

his fists clenched, and inwardly boiling with rage. He partly raised his arms to retort on his brutal antagonist, but one look from that priestly visage daunted him, and, with a burning pang, he exclaimed: "Ah, yer riverence, I'll not strike ye; but, by the holy virgin, remember it's only yer holy office that protects ye!"

Yes, and it is this reverence for office, holy and unholy, that has kept Ireland in chains all these centuries, and still nurtures that foul ulcer, the czarism, on the face of humanity, which the Nihilists alone are ready to tear out by the roots and bury out of sight forever. Success to the Nihilists! They are the only men and women in Russia who do not assent. Liberty honors their deeds and their memories, without fear and without equivocation.

But we by no means would have it inferred that ecclesiastical office is the deadliest bane of progress. The whole tribe of priests are simply the left wing of despotism. They are adjuncts and co-partners in the game of social fraud, along with the emperors, kings, presidents, diplomats, and other uniformed and titled operators who perpetuate all the studied tricks on the bill. *Behind all despotism, whatever it may be, there is some underlying superstition which inveigles the masses into passive assent.* This superstition finds its expression in an office of some kind; the office perverts men's wits and consciences, and forestalls revolt.

It is the purpose of Liberty to get to the bottom of all things, except the bottom of its purse. Government is a machine invented by a few designing schemers to excite discord and war, and profit by the spoils. The main trick by which the conspiracy is perpetuated lies in keeping up a superstitious reverence for authority by cunningly decorating it with official insignia. This induces the masses to give practical assent to that which persecutes and enslaves them. Once got the lever of Liberty under that keystone of superstition, and the arch of despotism will tumble into ruins.

## Reform Made Ridiculous.

One of the most noteworthy of Thomas Jefferson's sayings was that he "had rather live under newspapers without a government than under a government without newspapers." The czar of Russia proposes to make this alternative unnecessary by establishing a national weekly journal to be distributed gratuitously in every village, whose carefully concocted news paragraphs, severely sifted political items, and rose-tinted editorials shall be read aloud on Sundays by designated officials to the assembled multitudes. This absurd proposal is no more absurd than that of a delegate to the state convention of the Massachusetts Greenbackers, who desired that the government should add to its functions that of the collection of news to be furnished gratuitously to the daily journals. And this, again, is no more absurd than some of the proposals actually endorsed by a majority of the delegates to the same convention, nearly all of whose measures and methods, in fact, are quite of a piece with those of the aforesaid czar.

For instance, one of the resolutions adopted (and we grieve to say that it was introduced by no less a person than our excellent and earnest friend, J. M. L. Babcock of Cambridge) asks the legislature to compel all corporations to distribute their profits in excess of six per cent. among their employees in the proportion of the scale of wages. Saying nothing of the fact that this resolution seriously offends Liberty by denying that the equitable distribution of property which the labor movement seeks must result, not from legislative enactment, but from the free play of natural laws, it also offends Equity by admitting that capital is entitled to a portion of labor's product, and that the producer is entitled to exact a profit from the consumer. Yet we are told that only one man in that whole convention had the brains and the courage to rise from his seat and proclaim the great truth that, if labor can claim anything, it can and should claim *ALL*. What wonder that this half-hearted, half-headed Greenback party

excites among intelligent people no sentiment higher than that of a pity akin to contempt! Mr. Babcock's resolution would take the labor movement off of its basis of right, and degenerate it into an unprincipled scramble for spoils by which the strongest would profit. Take the half-loaf who will; we shall never cease to reiterate that the whole loaf rightfully belongs to those who raise the wheat from the soil, grind it into flour, and bake it into bread, and not the smallest taste of it to the sharpeners who deceive the unthinking masses into granting them a monopoly of the opportunities of performing these industrial operations, which opportunities they in turn rent back to the people on condition of receiving the other half of the loaf.

## Religion a Disease.

When one reads a religious journal, or even one which, like our own Boston "Herald," is only occasionally given to religiosity, he is pretty certain to be reminded of the sick-room, and Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences gets new proof. That the religious atmosphere is the atmosphere of the hospital, full of sickness and of nursing, is painfully revealed to him. Low, suppressed speech, solemn wailing, and forms prostrate or bending; awe-struck, blind, believing, fearing, prospecting, entreating, coddling, soul-nourishing with sip of wine and crumb of bread; priests, deacons, and pews,—ah, well, the reminders are too many,—everything but health! And therefore it is, when an old error, a bad superstition is assailed, the truly religious editor cries out: "Oh, spare the blow; leave it, leave it; touch not a single folly; they have sheltered, protected, comforted; the world will never give them up. Never! never! never!" All of which may be set down to mean: "The world is sick; the world is in a hospital; it can not bear strong food; from the light it shrinks. Leave it there, shrouded in the 'dim religious light'; leave it to the divine mercy, to the providence that tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

But with all due respect to whom it may concern we say:—Not so; the world isn't sick,—it's frightened. It is stupid and dull, but not sick, and is sadly in need of *exercise*. It requires good sense, wholesome truth, and the genial breath of Liberty. Don't be afraid; the world will not die. You can't kill it. It is full of grit, has plenty of courage, and can face all the *Facts* of this universe with entire equanimity.

Ah! thou poor, religious, skulking world, awake! arouse! arise! Take up thy bed, cast it away, and walk!

## Liberty's Weapons.

Our methods are methods of peace. Liberty is not the advocate of force. Speaking for itself, it hates murderous weapons of all descriptions. It enters into no planning, plotting, or dark and secret measure of assassination or revolution. The French were to call their statue in New York harbor, "Liberty enlightening the world." And that is Liberty's proper function. Compared with the light that is to come, the world sits in darkness. Liberty is the torch we bear aloft, convinced that Liberty's light is to lead the world to heights and into a fullness of life beyond the heart of man now to conceive.

With old, dead, and decaying ideas; with shows and shams; with half-heartedness, hypocrisy, and pious, moralistic, pharisaic pretension; with all that hinders, cripples, dwarfs the human intellect and the robust heart of mankind,—Liberty fights; but with the ploughshare of thought and the lance of freest criticism, disbelieving in all other weapons—those that are death-dealing and not life-giving.

And yet Liberty finds words of approval for the Hartmanns and the tyrant-slayers who in secrecy plot the revenges of fate. Why? Because Liberty is forced to choose between one class that slays to oppress and another that slays to free.

Is there not a difference?

You know there is, you editors who mouth about assassination, and, if you say there isn't, why, we take the Liberty to say that the truth is not in you.

Some of our friends are in a great hurry for a full and systematic explanation of Liberty's philosophy and purposes. They are very anxious to know "just what we are driving at." Patience, good friends, patience! You will get it all in due season. But Liberty's philosophy is a comprehensive one, and cannot be compassed in a day or in a column. The contents of a little fortnightly journal like this, hastily put together as they are in the few spare moments of an otherwise busy life, must perforce present it in dribbles, a little here and a little there. Only follow it closely, in all its applications, and you will finally find that it fits everywhere and is deeply rooted. But to a certain extent Liberty, like the rest of the world, floats with the tide, and the development of her philosophy is governed by the progress of affairs. Where we shall next branch out, we can no more tell than could John Ruskin, who answered a similar criticism of his "Fors Clavigera" in these words: "As well plead with a birch-tree growing out of a crag to arrange its boughs beforehand. The winds and floods will arrange them according to their wild liking; all that the tree has to do, or can do, is to grow gaily, if it may be; sadly, if gaiety be impossible; and let the black jags and scars rend the rose-white of its trunk where Fors shall choose." Meanwhile, we are scoring one point, and for the present the most important one, in arousing people to the fact that *we are driving at something*.

The Marquis of Waterford, foreseeing the inevitable, is endeavoring to stave it off by posing as a philanthropist and a reformer. He offers his tenants a permanent reduction of their rents, and to those whom he has evicted a reinstatement. If his tenants show themselves base enough to accept this bribe, they will become neither more nor less than compounders of felony, and will win the same disrespect from those who thoroughly understand the nature of theft that is now accorded by those who know only theft as defined by statute to the merchant who compromises with the burglar by whom his safe has been robbed. "Rent under any circumstances is an immoral tax," says Michael Davitt, boldly and truthfully. No compromise with it, then, is the only course for honest men to follow.

On the strength of the favorable symptoms in the president's case immediately following the so-called "nation's prayer," Dr J. L. Withrow, who now fills old Dr Beecher's pulpit at "Brimstone Corner," made the rash announcement last Sunday that the prayer had been heard in heaven and speedily answered, little knowing that as the words were leaving his lips, the wires from Long Branch were saying to the newspapers that an abscess had formed on the president's right lung, greatly endangering his chances for recovery. Probably Dr. Withrow will hereafter maintain a judicious reserve until the final designs of Our Lord are manifested in a way that no longer leaves room for doubt.

Uncompromising Stephen Foster, the old-time abolitionist who died the other day at his home in Worcester, was one of the most useful citizens that ever honored this country by living in it. Thoroughly honest, devoid of personal ambition, anxious only for the good of his fellows, fearless, logical, and persistent in his maintenance of their rights, he has left behind him a record that will grow whiter in the eyes of generations better able than this to contrast it with the blackness of the sins against which his life was one long battle. Liberty honors his memory as one of her truest soldiers.

Liberty knows no difference whatever between the rights of man and the rights of woman. Therefore it is eternally opposed to woman suffrage.

A minister had preached an hour; then he remarked: "Another wide field opens from the subject in another direction." Just then an old colored saint ejaculated, "Please, Lord, put up de bars."

## The Poetry of Places.

BY WILLOUGHBY WIGGIN.

"Places," observes the dramatist Pythagoras, "are often poetical, and poetry is sometimes local." Great hearts, like Spenser's, are frequently attached by cords which they cannot sever to a garret, a cellar, or a hovel; but their furniture and other valuables have sometimes been separated from them by a still stronger attachment. Poets seldom go to law; the law generally goes to them.

The poetry of places is often very charming, sometimes even more so than the places themselves. It may be divided into two general classes, namely, the I-am-bic and the You-dam-bic. We will omit the consideration of the first for the present, and proceed to examine the second. You-dam-bic poetry was almost unknown to the ancients; and, though it may be found in a rudimentary form in other countries, it has been chiefly cultivated in the United States, where it may be found in its highest perfection. The extreme delicacy of this species of poetic composition admirably fits it for a place in the literature of a free country. So frail and tender is its constitution that it has never been known to flourish amid the rigors of despotic governments like Great Britain and France. It droops and fades beneath the blighting shadows of oppression, but blossoms out in all its beauty and glory when caressed by the atmosphere of freedom, and nourished by the encouraging rays of the sun of republican liberty. Here, where great cities spring up as if by magic, there is a true local rivalry, never before equalled in intensity, that fires the heart of enthusiasm and arouses a poetic frenzy in the breast of the humblest inhabitants. Take, for example, the following pathetic lines, which we recently found in the columns of a St. Louis newspaper, the able "Cuba-Courier":

There was a Miss Blank in Chicawgal  
Who started a-courting, but mangre  
She pleaded her cases  
In satins and laces,  
She couldn't earn pretzels and lawgerr.

Alfred Tennyson himself never gave us a verse like that, and we hazard the prediction that he never will. He has, perhaps, surpassed it in mere melodiousness; but poetry is more than bare music: it is sentiment rhythmically expressed. And the exquisite perfection of the verse before us culminates in a refined and tender human sympathy, which, like an atmosphere, envelops and permeates the entire stanza, but whose efflorescent bloom is completed in the closing line.

Take another example, which I find in an Eastern paper, accredited to the Chicago "Nadir-Zenith":

There was a young man in St. Louis  
Whose doctor confined him to brewis:  
He lived for a season,  
But soon lost his reason,  
And married a pawn-breaking Jewess.

This, though scarcely so delicate as the other verse, is remarkable for the intellectual grasp it displays, a grasp combined with subtle refinement of thought and unusual purity and depth of emotion. It evinces the classic serenity of Bryant united with the turbid grandeur of Byron; the simplicity and repose of Longfellow with the abstruse profundity and even the inimitable punctuationality (there ought to be such a word) of Mrs. Piatt. The second line is, by far, the most affecting: the heartless decree of the unfeeling physician, and then—the meagreness of the diet, and in such a country! But the logical necessity of the catastrophe and final *dénouement* is not paralleled within the entire range of modern art. You can see the whole scene before you: the loan-office filled with all sorts of trumphy, the three gilded balls over the door, the motley crowd hurrying by on the street, and, at the far extremity of the establishment, the ghost-like figure, a mere shadow in the dim gloom of the apartment, leaning his scarily forward over the antique desk in the very act of making out a ticket!

Or again, what could be more touching than this from the "Daily Diary":

Folks in Chicago  
Try to make hog go  
For venison, rabbit, and beef;  
But sometimes they find  
It's nothing but rind,—  
And then the poor cats come to grief.

Matthew Arnold says that Homer is noble, and, on the whole, perhaps he is right, with certain important qualifications; but genuine nobility was almost unknown to the ancients, and has been fully developed only by the lofty school of bards whom we are now considering. Has Mr. Arnold ever examined the poetry in question? The *navel* with which he asserts that Homer is noble plainly indicates that he has not. He means, no doubt,—and so far he is correct,—that, if real nobility of style and thought had been known to the Greeks, Homer would probably have been noble. But just here we wish to caution Mr. Arnold, and the flippant English *littérateurs* who take him as a model, not to be rash in their assertions; for callow literary criticism is almost certain, sooner or later, like the unhappy felines of Chicago, to "come to grief." A man like Mr. Arnold cannot afford to

lose his reputation by a slip, a mere *lapsus pinguis*\* like the one to which we have just referred. But we digress. We quote the following from the "Weakly Weekly," which, save in critiques, admits verse to its columns only in those rare cases where extraordinary merit absolutely forbids exclusion:

Down to St. Louis  
All they can do is  
Make shoes for their girls' clumsy pedes;  
Their feet are so large  
As an up-river barge,  
With ankles as slender as needles.

Note the temperate moderation of these lines. The true poet is always easy and natural. He never exaggerates, never strains a point. And observe how he condenses. A mere versifier would have thinned out the tropical luxuriance of this passage into fifty or a hundred lines. The most skilful chiropodist could not treat this delicate theme with more tenderness, and the description of the ankles is Spenserian, or rather, it is, by far, a *finer* simile than Spenser ever conceived. Spenser wrote tolerable English for his day, but he was too matter-of-fact for subtle and refined concepts. Still, he deserves our gratitude, for, like a true poet, he died of starvation in a garret. We sincerely hope the noble bards on whose writings we have been descending may all speedily have an opportunity to imitate his example; and we will conclude by suggesting to all young aspirants, like the poet of the "Weakly," that the female form divine is the best figura to begin with, for, in the words of the classical couplet of the gentle poet of Florence, Machiavelli, —

"In the vast scope of lore, divine and human,  
The noblest study of mankind is woman."

\* *Lapsus pinguis*, a slip, or want of fullness, that is, knowledge. See Kikero, "De Senectute," MDCXL, 2, 3, 4, 5.

## Enforced Education.

EDITOR LIBERTY:—Thanks for the copy of your most excellent first number. Count me as one subscriber, with hope of others. "The Anatomy of Liberty" is the best article on the subject that I has been my good fortune to read. The first four lines of the extract from "La Verité" regarding the liberty of parents are sufficient to convince any rationalist of the fallacy of compulsory education. We run no great risk of contradiction in saying that the public-school system is deficient, that the course of study is ill-vised and, in many respects, unwise, and that the teachers do not fully comprehend the scope of education and the field to cover. If it becomes compulsory, common schools become degraded to the level of educational jails. We lower the character of every pupil in his or her own estimation the moment they enter the school-yard. We insult the spirit of intelligence and common sense in the American people. Children would not as readily learn if they felt that they were being driven to school by law. Incentive would be blighted, pride hurt, and ambition distorted. Compulsion in any form is antagonistic to the spirit of our institutions, and if a foothold is obtained in the public schools, it will establish an undesirable precedent.

With these premises we may assert that the necessity that compels parents to send their children to shops, stores, factories, etc., should be removed. If parents are to be compelled to send children to school, the community owes the parents two things: first, that the school be *fit* to send children to; second, that the father, by industry and thrift, be enabled to allow his children to go to school. Love of esteem; ambition; pride; the influence of good example; the advantages to be derived from education,—these and other influences combine to induce parents to send children to school without the aid of compulsory measures. In fact, the true business of the American legislature is to go behind the returns, and see to it that the conditions are such as to lead the people to accept voluntarily the benefits and advantages of common-school education. The question of compulsory education will be solved by the solution of deeper and broader questions behind it, present reference to which would trench too far on our time and your space.

Philadelphia, August, 1881.

EL-D. L.

## Game for the Fool-Killer.

Though man, pricked by a stupid arrogance, strives often to break the reins of government, he never escapes having to obey some one! Very necessity compels, in every association of men, and in every community, that some shall be at the head. Without a head, or chief, by which it may be governed, any society, defrauded of the aim for which it was framed and formed, goes to pieces, and can never avail.—Pope Leo XIII.

The "Somebody" of the present hour is always a thrifty, lively, industrious, temperate, far-seeing individual, that is always looking out for the main chance, and always ready and eager to seize and improve it when he finds it. It matters not whether he is a merchant, a mechanic, a professional character, or a corporation, he is invariably found the possessor of the same intellectual elements and capabilities. That "Somebody" is a great financial, social, or political tyrant is utter nonsense. The door is open to every American citizen to be a "somebody" instead of a nobody. He has his choice and ought not to complain.—T. W. B., in *New York Truth*.

## TO WASH WHITMAN.

O Walt, you are endorsed: no more  
r muse the shadow of neglect will feel.  
"Atlantic Monthly" acquires have set their seal  
credentials: your probations are over.  
ay, then, O bard, and drink galore;  
yawn" is classic now, if not before.  
true that long ago the great Reviews  
Albion hailed with joy your new-world muse  
native here and to the manor born.  
"sat-in-and-patchouly" bards their scorn  
vented on your long, unmeasured line,  
ded in wrath their borrowed leathers fine  
"Leaves of Grass" and mention of your name,  
ugh Tennyson, their master, owned your fame.

B.

## The Agricultural Crisis.

Following article, written in France and for France by a  
journalist signing "D. G.," applies more or less ap-  
ply to all civilized countries, and states truths especially  
to students of the Irish land question:—

Just industry under the pretext of cheapening prod-  
ucts finance by stock-jobbing and agriculture by usury,  
expropriation, and then to shout, "Let us protect  
agriculture industry and agriculture, and improve our  
condition,"—such is the economic program: of cer-  
tainly treat French labor as a simple stock-exchange  
speculate by turns on the prosperity and ruin of a  
nion.

which concerns more particularly agriculture and  
action which it merits we know what complaints  
daily to the authorities by farmers and espe-  
cially large landed proprietors, who, to the exclusion of  
country people, have a voice in the matter. Now phy-  
sically the trouble, now American competition, now the bad  
And the government promises a decrease of the land  
cultural instruction, agricultural credit, etc., which  
ry well in an electoral program.

beyond question that agriculture to-day is passing  
crisis. What is its intensity and what is its cause?  
In judging these economic revolutions, we commit  
of consulting statistical tables alone and of consider-  
the quantity or value of products, without reflecting  
not by the bushel that the prosperity of agricultural  
measured, but that we must rather ask if the twenty  
of French peasants live in comfort; if, on the con-  
try do not suffer and to what their sufferings must be  
ed, and if it is not true that, in the present state of  
property with us, the progress of agriculture is a prob-  
lem cannot be solved.

known that out of twenty millions of people devoted  
ture, seven or eight millions are proprietors cultiva-  
own land; they are found generally on small or  
estates and live in comparative ease, provided they do  
themselves to get entangled in a meshwork of mort-  
gages to the other twelve millions they are composed,  
farmers submitted to the pressing and extortionate  
of a lease, and then of laborers whose pitiful con-  
ditions worse than that of the workmen of the  
ms less glaring because not as familiar and because  
is class of the disinherited any corporative union, any  
demand for justice is impossible.

ever they may do, these twelve millions of men will  
come proprietors. Let agricultural schools be organ-  
ized: a decrease in the cost of production, a larger

But the inflexible theory of not product always con-  
farmers; they will sow, but the harvest will benefit  
themselves. Let the land tax be reduced! The reduction  
yield them a cent. Let the city tolls be abolished!  
s will offer to the products of the country a larger  
whence will result an increase in the value of the land  
proprietor and an increase of rent against the tenant.

age then is offset by the loss. Whatever reform may  
take in the direction which it is now proposed to take,  
cover side the professed reformers and pseudo-phila-  
nropy may turn, they invariably bring up against the theory  
the landed proprietor always taking the excess of the  
product over the cost of production, in a word the whole  
act, and the tenant scarcely recovering his investment.

farm-lands, servants, and other agricultural laborers,  
receive contemptible wages. The proprietor specu-  
lates the farmer, the farmer on them, and often their situa-  
tion precarious that they are forced to the factories to  
migration, as the emigration from the fields to the city  
grows.

political economy strike up its usual strain about the  
of economy. Its teachings and advice, always ad-  
dressed to those who do not need them or cannot profit by  
them like cruel jests to these men, workers in city or  
who cannot economize.

of past achievements, the economists have codified  
and given the name of science to this collection of the  
principles which regulate the exploitation of man by  
to more on this question than on those of industrialism,  
taxation, have they been able to grasp the difference  
demanded right and existing fact.

It is said on all sides, and with reason, that, to develop  
the agricultural forces of a country, it is necessary to make  
use of new processes, and especially not to fear to devote large  
amounts of capital to the cultivation of land. But who will  
furnish this capital? The tenant, for land that does not belong to  
him? He will guard well against that, and, if he has saved  
something, he will consider rather the purchase of a bit of  
land. The landlord? Better worth his while to invest his  
capital in manufacturing enterprises and to speculate; for—  
and there lies the evil—land is less profitable than the stock  
exchange. Instead of improving the soil and applying to it  
the best system of cultivation, the landed proprietor, who gen-  
erally does not even know his estates and who, in any case, has  
no experience in farming, will content himself with receiving  
regularly his rents which he will try to raise, little by little, so  
that at last well-cultivated lands will be found only among  
those who themselves add to the value of soil which they own.

And this observation comes to the support of the complaints  
of the economists against absenteeism, as if absenteeism was  
not the forced result of the present form of property in land,  
and as if every proprietor not a cultivator was not necessarily  
an absentee. Further, by the periodical demands of rent, the  
proprietor forces the tenant to exhaust the land, an event that  
generally occurs toward the expiration of the lease, whence an  
eventual loss for society. There lies an evil which no legal  
remedy can alleviate and the cause of which must be sought  
for in the constitution of landed property itself.

It must be confessed that of the problem now before us the  
French Revolution has furnished no satisfactory solution. It  
has destroyed feudalism, but what has it put in its place?  
Another feudalism. "The land of France is free throughout  
its whole extent," says the law of September 23, 1791. But is  
the peasant free? Is he free when, in law and in fact, he can  
be evicted, without compensation, from an estate the value of  
which he has doubled? On this point the Revolution did not  
complete its work. Its principles suffice to organize gov-  
ernment, or rather on the ruins of governments they build  
autonomy; but, to organize labor, they are insufficient. The  
Revolution abolished the personal inequality of rights; real in-  
equality survived it, and it has been forgotten that privilege is  
organic in a society when some can rest and consume without  
working while others must labor without hope. "The liberty  
of the proletariat," said Proudhon, "is the right to labor—  
that is, to be robbed—or not to labor—that is to starve. Lib-  
erty now benefits none but the strong."

It is then outside of the Revolution itself, and by devoting  
itself to the study and accomplishment of what the Revolution  
did not study and accomplish, that social science must hence-  
forth do its work. In the place of the feudalism of the nobility  
we see to-day an industrial and mercantile feudalism, more  
powerful than the other. Industry has led to industrialism;  
so agriculture inclines to become industrial; the machine will  
hunt the peasant from the field as it has hunted the workman  
from the shop. The proprietor, the capitalist, will alone  
remain. Everywhere will be effected a concentration of capital  
accompanied by a corresponding impoverishment of the masses;  
for, even when the total wealth of a country increases, the  
number of the poor may increase also. And that will last  
until the day when the antagonism in economic society shall  
have reached that degree of bitterness which, in 1789, made  
inevitable and fatal the overturning of political society. Ex-  
cess of abuse leads to reforms. But so rarely does society  
adopt means of prevention that it is a rule that in social pro-  
gress it is necessary to exhaust each of the series composing it,  
and that it is never noticed that the bow is bent too far until it  
breaks.

## The Face of Popular Sovereignty.

The letter from the Paris correspondent of "Le Révolté"  
from which the following is an extract was written prior to the  
late French elections, but the facts to which it alludes have not  
lost their significance:—

A fresh act of absolutism on the part of the bourgeoisie  
Republic has just exhibited, even to the least clairvoyant,  
the hollowness of universal suffrage and the little heed that  
the governing classes may with impunity pay to the pretended  
sovereignty of the people when they find it for their interest to  
do so.

In the first, no doubt, that too long an electoral period, by  
raising on every hand political discussions and exciting public  
opinion, would shed too much light on the secret intrigues of  
the ministers,—intrigues likely to end in fatal catastrophes  
in Tunis, Algeria, or elsewhere,—the Ferry ministry has  
brusquely decided that the general elections shall occur Au-  
gust 21, instead of in September or October as was generally  
expected. And when this unexpected stroke provoked pro-  
tests from the most moderate, and certain deputies, finding  
their own interests threatened and their little plans upset,  
demanded an explanation, the president of the cabinet an-  
swered, in a tone admitting no rejoinder, that the malcontents  
were wasting their time and their complaints, and that the  
elections would take place at the appointed date, "such being  
his good pleasure." Perhaps those were not the exact words  
of his declaration, but they certainly do not pervert his mean-  
ing. An absolute monarch would not have spoken otherwise.

M. Jules Ferry, nevertheless, is a representative of the people,  
one of the elect of universal suffrage! Which proves that the  
origin of power does not modify its dangerous character, and  
that it is of small consequence to the people whether the mas-  
ters who make laws to govern them are masters imposed upon  
them, or masters chosen by themselves.

French citizens, then, are to go to the polls without having  
had time for mutual consultation, adoption of platforms, or  
close scrutiny of the innumerable candidates who solicit their  
votes. All will be settled in a fortnight in slovenly, blind,  
haphazard style. And it is this sorrowful farce that is called  
the sovereignty of the people!

But the proletariat, it appears, is beginning to understand  
how they are defooled and begot it. Never, indeed, has an electoral  
period agitated opinion so little. Without doubt meetings are  
as numerous and exciting as ever; without doubt committees  
multiply, as well as candidates and professions of faith. But  
this agitation is wholly superficial; it has not penetrated, as  
formerly, deep down among the masses, and the anonymous  
crowd; and were it not for the motley water covered, until  
they have become an eye-sore, with veritable rainbows of  
posters, no one would detect that the destiny of a great nation  
—the fate of peoples now depending on the cast of a die—is  
under discussion.

Has governmental absolutism produced this indifference,  
which may culminate in the near future in vengeance, discontent  
and virile passion? Or is it not due rather to anarchistic  
teaching, which, though it has hitherto done little more than  
speak without acting, pursues slowly and mysteriously its  
undermining work, like the water which, falling drop by drop,  
finally wears away the hardest rock? Possibly the result is  
attributable to both causes, but certain it is that the Anar-  
chistic ideas are gaining ground every day, more ground per-  
haps than its most ardent champions imagine. Take one  
example among a thousand. A few days ago Comrade Emile  
Gautier, being present at an electoral meeting in the Pantheon  
quarter at the hall of Vieux-Chêne, took the floor to develop  
the revolutionary theories before the large audience attending.  
But one of the chief leaders of so-called radicalism in the  
quarter, the young Pichon, an editor of M. Clémenceau's  
"Justice," broke out in violent protest, pretending that the  
Anarchists, from the moment that they preached abstention,  
had no right to attend electoral meetings, much less to speak  
at them. Unfortunate words for the young bourgeois! From  
all parts of the hall went up protests, and these cries, "Citizen  
Gautier is right," "Voting is a game of see-saw," were uttered  
by a large number of citizens whose faces were unfamiliar  
and who are not accustomed to frequent our circles or our  
groups. They were so many unknown friends. So numerous  
were they that, a few minutes later, the president having  
denied the floor to Comrade Gautier, and the latter having  
answered that he would take it in spite of him, as he did not  
recognize the president's authority (which led to the resigna-  
tion of the officers of the meeting), Comrade Gautier, although  
an Anarchist, was chosen president by a large majority. He  
made haste, however, to decline the position, but the event  
none the less showed that the strike of the electors finds more  
favor with the people than the minimum radicals like to  
admit.

## Switzerland's Double Shame.

Read the outspoken utterances of Henri Rochefort's journal  
"L'Intransigeant," on the Kropotkin expulsion:—

A letter from Berne informs us that our friend, Prince Kro-  
potkin, one of the most distinguished men in the Russian  
revolutionary party, has just been expelled from Switzerland  
by a decree of the federal council.

They accuse Pierre Kropotkin of having called himself  
Levaschov, which, it will be admitted, is not highly criminal;  
of having been editorially connected with "Le Révolté,"  
which was his indisputable right; of having expressed no  
regret at the death of Alexander II, who had robbed him of  
his property and banished him; of having remained resolutely  
true to his republican faith and socialistic convictions; of hav-  
ing manifested sympathy for Sophie Perovskaya, Ryssakoff,  
Mikhailoff, Jelaboff, and their heroic friends hung at St.  
Petersburg on the fifteenth of last April; and, finally, of hav-  
ing taken part in the London revolutionary congress, which, it  
would seem, is England's affair alone.

It is evident that the ridiculous reasons alleged by the fed-  
eral council in justification of the expulsion of Citizen Pierre  
Kropotkin only the more clearly reveal the odious character  
of the measure of which our friend is the victim. Switzerland  
refuses its hospitality to this proud republican in order to  
court the favor of Russian authority.

As long ago as 1878 the Swiss republic expelled Paul  
Brousse for a few newspaper articles; to-day it expels Pierre  
Kropotkin for a few words spoken at London or Geneva. A  
double shame will rest upon its shoulders in the eyes of all  
free peoples.

Ministers, as a rule, know but little of public affairs, and  
they always account for the action of people they do not like  
or agree with by attributing to them the lowest and basest  
motives. This is the fault of the pulpit, always has been, and  
probably always will be.—R. G. Ingersoll.