

# FREE COMMUNE.

NO 1

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## OUR POSITION

THE FREE COMMUNE is Anarchist or Free Socialist in its tendency. Its aims are especially :

1. To supersede Commercialism and "the Factory System" of production, by the promotion of Voluntary Cooperation, especially of an agricultural character.

2. To oppose Centralisation and the State, and all excessive delegation of power.

3. To destroy Monopoly in order to render to all the fruits of nature and social labour, so that all may live abundantly and work joyfully.

4. To remove restraints and restrictions of all kinds and to establish all possible liberties.

5. To promote culture and a higher ideal of life, the completest self development and harmonious cultivation of all human faculties.

THE FREE COMMUNE is however bound to no doctrine or party, not even of an anarchist character. It is a free-lance in the realm of thought, and seeks above all to express the convictions of those who run it, regardless of the approval or disapproval of anyone else.

At the same time the ideas it does express, will be HONEST, if nothing else; and it is launched forth in the hope that it will rouse a correspondingly active thought in the minds of others, and justify for itself a place in the ranks of the workers for a finer and nobler humanity.

## THOUGHTS

The individual, each individual mind, is the centre of things.

We cannot get beyond it. Whether we take the point of view of the extreme materialist, or that of the extreme idealist, we are forced to admit that we cannot get beyond ourselves, that for us, the world is bounded by our consciousness.

If we take the standpoint of the extreme materialist, that everything is matter, and that all matter can be resolved into atoms and ether, yet even then we must admit that we know nothing about world, except in so far as those atoms and ether affect the nervous structure of our cerebral cortex or brain, and that the way in which we see the world depends, not so much on the nature of the world, as upon the character of our own mental organisation.

Heat and light, for example are supposed to be waves of a universal substance called ether. The red rays are both light and heat yet as they affect one set of nerves, and cause them to carry a vibration to a particular ganglion or portion of the brain, we see light or feel heat. The beautiful colours of the world do not exist outside our cranium, only the different lengths of ether waves. And as there are millions of different

lengths of waves and our nerves are only affected by a few, and as each person is affected more or less differently, it is easy to see that the world manufactured in each person's brain, is a very different world from that in another person's.

Indeed so artificial is the world that we know, as compared with the real forces outside, that as ROSENTHAL says "if we cut the nerve of the eye and attached it to the nerve that leads to the ear ganglion of the brain, and attached the nerve of ear in like manner to the nerve that leads to the eye ganglion, we should be able to hear lightning and see thunder; hear the colour of a brass band and see the music. Consequently without any absurdity we may say that the world of sensations, which is the only world we know, is manufactured entirely, is only a grouping of the various changes and movements in that highly complex chemical crucible known as the brain, and that as each brain differs from its neighbour, so does and must every man's world.

And this harmonises with our experience of life. One man sees things another cannot, one looks at things through rose coloured spectacles, another with jaundiced eyes. To one the world is a prison, to another a palace of delight, to others a workshop, a counting house, a camp, or a boudoir. And why? Not because of any essential difference in the facts themselves, but in the constitution which observes and assimilates them.

Thus dogmatism becomes an absurdity and intolerance a crime. The wise man is he who recognises that there is no TRUTH in its ultimate sense, but only a mass of

TRUTHS and that in pursuit of these is satisfaction and delight.

Look what a flood of light this throws on the problems of life. Take the question of right and wrong. We see at once how the different ideas and interpretations of men have arisen. There is no absolute right or wrong, for where is there an infallible standard? "We do not desire a thing because it is good" said SPINOZA "it is good because we desire it." To the man of coarse tastes, things are pleasant which are repellent to another of more refined ones. Yet the one cannot deny the claims of the other to call his special pursuit good and strive for it. The tiger who eats a man is striving for his highest good, just as is the man who shoots the tiger. The tyrant or the murderer seeks only that which gives him satisfaction, as does the hero or the reformer, and if we kill or restrain the former it is simply that his satisfactions happen to conflict with ours. A mother was showing a child some pictures of martyred Christians being devoured by lions. In one corner was an animal looking savagely on, but without any special prey of its. "See the poor Christians being eaten by the lions!" said the mother. "And see" was the reply "that poor lion who has no Christian to eat" That was looking at it from the lion's point of view, and in every way was as true a view as ours. There are also human lions with a point of view of their own, and these we must also deal with as best we can; but in thought of the wise man there can only be one rule of conduct (if rule we call it) and that is: Strive each according to his special bent for his own self development

and expansion - for higher law than that there is none in the universe - and see that in so doing, you include the development and expansion of the greatest number of your fellow beings; for that will be the greatest help to your own!

A BARTON.

#### HE OUGHT TO KNOW!

M. HANOTAUX in one of his works, according to a writer in the FORTNIGHTLY says: "Trickery and lying are, alas! most necessary parts of the arts of governing men."

M. HANOTAUX is the French Foreign Minister.

#### DEMOCRACY.

A certain L.P. councillor has been saying that the duty of a 'representative' is to do what he is instructed by the majority, whether he believes in it or not.

Then if the majority want war, we must have it, I suppose; and if they want to make us all go to Church, he like a good democrat would vote for it!

But would it not be a better plan to make a wooden dummy and fix it up on the phonograph plan? You would only then have to turn the handle, and besides, - he would not get corrupted!

But perhaps the democrats think they can get the dummies without wasting good wood!

A party is like a sausage machine, it grinds all the heads together in one mash. IBSEN.

THE FREE COMMUNE as our readers will perceive, is not only edited but printed on the lines of free initiative. One can't reach perfection after an apprenticeship of three weeks; but -- 'bide a wee'!

The ACADEMY says of ZOLA'S "PARIS" "It is one long justification of ANARCHY"

It is the keenest criticism of modern society that has appeared for a long time; its gospel is Reason, Work, and Freedom.

In an interview with Col JOHN HAY in CASSELS for March, the poet and ambassador is reported to say; "If no payment was given for writing, as many people would write as write now. When in America we paid hardly anything for literary work, we had a galaxy of brilliant writers; BRVANT, POE, LONGFELLOW, WHITTIER and FOWELL in his youth, and they didn't receive as much as one poet of to day who said to me that the whole proceeds of his poetry wouldn't pay for his washing."

It will interest social reformers to know that a co-operative workshop on free communist lines has been established in Leeds at 6 Victoria Rd. Comrade GILSON the former proprietor, has handed it over to a group of workers, including some comrades who had been victimised because of their specially active part in the late engineers lock out.

They produce all kinds of electrical apparatus besides the "IMPERATRIX" and VICTORIA cycles. Comrades who "like" should send for a list.

All over the world the plutocrats are getting ready for the international struggle between the exploiters and the oppressed in spite of democratic institutions and progress.

In republican France the Army dictates to Parliament the Law Courts and the Press; in England much bluster is made about Imperialism, under cover of which huge military expenditure and war preparations are made, while in India a Sedition law has been quietly passed which will put the Indian press and people under a censorship and terrorism as bad as in Russia; in America where the Cuban business is made an excuse to vote £10,000,000 to create an army and navy, not to fight for Cuban independence, but to shoot down the workers and farmers of America when the growing discontent against monopolists and inequalities shall have come to a head.

Of course! The Sheriff and 52 deputy sheriffs charged with manslaughter in the Hazleton affair a few months ago, when 23 unarmed working men miners were shot dead, and a large number wounded, without any other provocation than that they were a procession of strikers, have been acquitted.

The papers which howled extermination at the anarchists when ANGIOLILLO slew the torturer and tyrant CANOCAS, were silent over this other matter. But then, they were only working men!

Teacher to Scholar. "Who loves everybody; Johnny?"

Johnny. "My father 'ces he's trying to get on the County Council!"

It is no use blaming the rich. They are only what their environment makes them. We must blame ourselves for allowing them to get rich at our expense.

Some of the Northern Co-operative Societies have been having a conference on agricultural productive co-operation at Sunderland. They visited the Free Communist colony at Clousden Hill, some of whose members spoke at the conference.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Groups and INDIVIDUALS are requested where possible, to pay 6d per 100 for F.C. to cover out of pocket expenses.

READ

### FREEDOM

The English Anarchist-Communist Journal. 1d monthly from 7 Lambs-Conduit St London W, or the FREE COMMUNE Office. Contains articles by KROPOTKINE and others. Sample copy free from the F.C.

#### FREEDOM PAMPHLETS

ANARCHIST COMMUNISM by Kropotkine

ANARCHIST MORALITY " "

TALK BETWEEN WORKERS by Malatesta

ANARCHISM and OUTRAGE by C Wilson

### FREE SOCIETY

American Anarchist weekly. 1d from the F.C. office.

Subscriptions taken also for Les Temps Nouveaux, L'Enclos and all other Continental and American anarchist-socialist journals

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