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I. THE LOLLARDS.

IN the Middle Ages there were developed two opposite views of the sphere and mission of the church. One was that of Hildebrand and his school, who began with the claim that the church should be independent of the secular power, and ended with the demand that all civil rulers should recognize the successor of St. Peter as their suzerain. The natural outcome of this theory was that the administration of civil governments should be largely in the hands of ecclesiastics, that the hierarchy should be enriched at the expense of the state, and that the whole body of the clergy should be practically divorced from their spiritual functions.

The other view found advocates in William of Ockham and Marsilius of Padua, who held that the sphere of the church was purely spiritual. Not only was the state independent of the church, but the pope, with all ecclesiastics, was of right, in all secular concerns, subject to the civil ruler.

Of this latter view John Wyclif became the champion in England. It was as a member of the Parliament of 1366, which repudiated the papal claim for tribute that King John had engaged to pay, that we first hear of Wyclif's opposition to the pretensions of Rome. From that time forth he was busy refuting her claims, and, by the use of all the means in his power, helping on the efforts, then making under the lead of John of Gaunt, to exclude the dignitaries of the church from secular offices and confine them to their legitimate work.

States, guard well, as a sacred trust, the elevated principles of this illustrious covenant, the most enlightened, consistent and devoted patriot of the age, justly entitled to the preëminent distinction: "THE *Father of his Country!*" Let them cleave to that ancient faith which is consecrated by the blood of a thousand martyrs! Let them not sacrifice one tittle of their glorious inheritance! Let them stand fast to the altars that are hallowed by the blood of their fathers! Let them stand fast to the sanctuaries that enshrine their honored dust! Let them stand fast to those pure and noble truths of doctrine and of order bequeathed by a heroic ancestry, in which they lived and for which they died! Let them stand fast in all the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free!

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VI. THE PERILS OF EXCESSIVE INDIVIDUALISM.

Republican institutions emphasize the intrinsic dignity of man; representative government illustrates vividly his privileges, independent of all accidents of birth or circumstance; popular suffrage exercises the free and equal rights of all most practically. Such emphasis, illustration, and exercise of personal right, offer opportunity of exaggeration; it cannot be but that in the very nature of these things there must lie the latent possibility of a tendency toward such aggrandizement of personal importance as may, under some circumstances, grow to a dangerous because excessive individualism, a self-assertion aggressive and impatient of restraint.

This inherent tendency has had in the last several decades of our history certain influences eminently favorable to the development of the dangerous results referred to, among which may be mentioned: the unusual enlargement of suffrage; an enlargement in the extent and suddenness of it unprecedented, even the removal of every barrier and limit, the immediate and comprehensive destruction of every restraint and safeguard hitherto thrown around

its exercise, thus opening at once and wide the flood-gates of native ignorance and prejudice, as also of imported vice instinct with rank hate generated and rendered outrageous by the intolerable tyrannies of the old world. This evil, great enough in itself, is aggravated by a wholesale immigration which furnishes the incongruous anomaly of foreign parties in American politics.

Again: consider the wonderful strides of organization, arraying every trade and interest and occupation in battle line for its own protection and advancement, demanding consideration and conciliation; just the very spirit to seize and utilize the opportunity afforded by ignorance, prejudice and vice thus empowered and made exacting by the ballot.

A third such influence exists in the great American institution, the hustings, or popular harangue in the shape of the so-called stump-speech; the detailed canvass which the perfection of party machinery in close competition drives to the necessity of personal solicitation; the closeness of the vote compelling this party machinery to seek out the individual voter and ply him with persuasion; the court and homage thus paid in party exigency to the opinions, sentiments, prejudices even, of the individual, and that, too, irrespective of character; for in such political emergencies and crises the voice and vote of the most illiterate or vicious is as potent practically as that of the wisest and best. Circumstances like these must very greatly enhance the value and exaggerate the importance of personal opinion.

That such a tendency as is latent in the very nature of republican institutions, when favored with such environment as we have just outlined, contains at least the possibility of peril must be evident to any reflecting mind. We fear there are not wanting indications that this individualism has already grown into an excessive self-assertion, an exaggeration of self-importance at present insolent, exacting, aggressive, reckless. Possibly we exaggerate the eminence and imminence of the danger, for it seems to us to contain a menace against all order, business, political, social and religious. It looks toward and longs for a state of society in which the individual will shall be lord supreme of conscience and conduct; under the specious pleas of personal liberty, the seductive sophisms

of free thought and free speech, its real millennium is anarchy, its *Marseillaise* is (*a la* Joseph Cook):

Bring forth a royal diadem,
And crown WHIM Lord of all!

But the foregoing favoring influences form only the occasion and encouragement for such development; the cause we incline to think lies somewhat deeper than all mere incidental circumstances. Our study of the subject has led to some attempt to analyze the character, fix the origin, and trace the progress of the evil. This tentative analysis we shall now give the reader, with no overweening confidence, however, in the correctness of our conclusions or in their value. Moreover, as we shall assuredly lay ourselves liable to the charge of both sectional and sectarian prejudice, we may add that we have no apology to make for our convictions. So far as these are concerned, we content ourselves with a simple but earnest disclaimer of all bitterness toward any section of our common country or any servants of our common Lord.

Older readers may remember a phrase which the recent literature of our late war has rendered familiar to those of us who are yet young, a phrase of frequent occurrence in those bitter days which ushered in the lamentable strife; one of those convenient compact sophisms, epigrammatic in form, proverbial in power, which clothe the doubtful in the garment of praise, suggestive thus of the skill described in the familiar line:

“With names of virtue she deceives.”

We refer to the phrase Higher Law. These words were constantly in the mouth of the new party, a party then insignificant in size and influence, with everything against them—the pulpit, the platform, the press, and law divine and human—as then currently interpreted, North and South alike. Appreciating this fact and its tremendous force, there was laid upon them necessity to nullify its inevitable inhibition over all except a few of the most radical and reckless spirits who were superior to all law, whether letter or spirit. The party proved equal to the occasion; necessity travailed in birth, and sired by the very inspiration of ingenuity this phrase was brought forth. It became at once a watchword, aye, a battle-cry. The Higher Law! higher in nature, more sacred in obli-

gation, superior in sanction to any legislative enactment, any ecclesiastical standard, any interpretation of Scripture. Here was satisfaction for the scrupulous and pretext for the unscrupulous. Under the seeming sacredness of this broad and convenient accommodation, enthused, perhaps even crazed, by this sophism, poor old John Brown could invite a quick and ignominious death by hurling himself, in the very abandon of fanaticism, against the combined force of state and nation. And, strange to say, men of the character and position of Henry Ward Beecher could find justification in lending him material and moral support, aiding and abetting, actually arming him in his confessedly lawless and utterly devilish attempt at a servile insurrection with all its inevitable horrors.

And stranger still; under the sanction of this silly sophism, the poor, miserable fanatic, the violent and defiant breaker of the plainest, most fundamental and necessary law, the expressed statute of every civilized land; tried and executed by the regular and orderly administration of common justice, unquestioned even by his most ardent admirers—this crazy criminal with wholesale murder in his heart has been canonized as a saint, and is to-day worshipped as a martyr by a large portion of the intelligent, law-abiding people of our country!

The explanation of such mortifying anomaly is to be sought in the influence of the higher law theory. It discharged its adherents of all obligation to any law or covenant, statute or standard, that stood in the way. Any such opposition, however grounded, was but "a league with the devil" and "a covenant with hell." Of course, then, the phrase became a very besom of destruction; nothing could withstand its superiority; all law and order, human and divine, must stand aside; the higher law had the right of way. It thus taught man a systematic contempt for that which had always been considered solemn and binding; in so doing it tended to make every man's prejudices and passions his guide; its widespread prevalence and paramount influence wielded a slow but sure power to undermine the very foundations of fidelity, integrity, reverence for law, submission to authority.

Fairy literature tells of a man who released the *genii* from im-

prisonment. We remember to-day the effect of that startling picture upon our childish fancy, as the vague smoky cloud emerged from the narrow opening of the vessel, floating in the air to assume above the shape of a hideous giant ready to destroy the hapless wretch who unwittingly by its release wrought his ruin.

So this hierarchy of fanaticism has evoked a spirit which it cannot exorcise, the spirit of riotous, reckless, personal opinion or prejudice, the *wrong* of private judgment. Having discounted the law, discredited the Scriptures, disapproved the church, in the interests of their "great moral idea," many pupils and followers will do the same in favor of other and immoral ideas. The mass of mankind cannot be expected to pause and discriminate nicely in their application of principles. Teach them the justice of a principle, and the application will be made in any and in all directions that desire dictates.

Consequently this Higher Law theory has brought forth a prolific progeny. One of its offspring—a baptized child, too—is the so-called Christian Consciousness, so potent a factor in the reconstruction of religious thought. Is it not essentially the same thing under a new name and in a different department? Does it not purpose and propose precisely the same results? It claims the authority of last resort, of ultimate appeal, exercises the function of supreme arbiter; ecclesiastical standards and confessions, all systems of theology, interpretations of Scripture, even the very contents of God's Word, all are to be brought before its judgment-seat to be adjusted, corrected, approved, condemned, abrogated, according to its verdict. Certain results of this will appear in the further progress of our discussion; our purpose at present is simply to identify the old thing under this new name. Church covenants, creeds and symbols, with systems of divinity share the same fate at the hands of the Christian Consciousness that the civil constitution and laws met with in dealing with the higher law. Now, what is this Christian Consciousness but the Higher Law theory, exercising itself in the realm of religious truth with the same reckless, lawless license as its forerunner, endeavoring to do for theological thought and ecclesiastical order just what its famous ancestor did for political parties and social order thirty years ago?

Another fostering influence of excessive individualism is suggested by the illustrious name already mentioned, viz., the preaching of a class of leaders of which Henry Ward Beecher was an eminent instance. His admirers have unequivocally claimed his influence as an epoch in theological thought. The glory assigned to him, in our judgment, trenches hard upon a shame; in doing homage to the power of his example they have laid upon him the burden of a great and unenviable responsibility. If their claim shall have been justified, it is questionable whether succeeding generations will bless his memory.

Beecher stemmed no current, but the rather floated on its crest; he was chiefly the eloquent voice of his time, not the moulder of its thought; he did not create public sentiment, though he may have seemed to do so; he discerned, interpreted and justified the tendencies of the time, but he did this with a foresight, a force, an eloquence which constituted him a leader and a master spirit among the influences of his age. The soul and centre of all his doctrine and preaching was in the wake, possibly in the lead, certainly in the company, of the spirit evoked by the Higher Law theory; his eloquence merely fanned the flame that woful torch had lighted in the pride, the prejudice, the passion of man. The inspiring spirit of his whole creed was the very apotheosis of self-will and self-assertion; so dominant this spirit that it pervades all parts of his work like an underlying stratum imbedded in his thought, appearing not only in the highways of his pulpit ministrations, but cropping out in unexpected places, in the wayside saunterings of his leisurely thought, even in the meadows and gardens of his fancy. He lays little stress upon the sovereignty of God as King, his supreme authority as Lawgiver, to be obeyed submissively, unquestioningly; he exhausts his theology along the line of the Fatherhood with touching and eloquent pathos; love rather than law is master; his whole conception of God seems that of an indulgent father towards erratic but gifted and noble children; his gospel accordingly is "the dignity of human nature," and his aim is "reconstructed manhood." There is an ominous absence of emphasis put upon such humbling doctrines as depravity, such homely duties as self-surrender, obedience, and the faith that can

bid the questioning intellect and querulous pride of man, be still; we doubt if a hearer often came away from Plymouth church impressed with the unworthiness, the meanness, the misery of fallen human nature.

The famous preacher was himself an incarnate example of his own teaching, a fateful illustration of its inevitable tendencies. He never bowed his intellect or his nature, imperious both alike, to any humbling word of God or man; proud, self-reliant, self-sufficient, he took his law from his heart and his theology from his taste; he was a law unto himself, a gifted vagrant ruled by the whim of the moment, changing with chameleon-like facility from one kaleidoscopic phase to another of religious and semi-religious thought, until at last only the marvellous genius with which he clothed and embellished his declamation saved him from the naked shame of disgusting infidelity.

In his own case the principle upon which he regulated his course was limited and restrained by the influence of heredity, by the environment of position, by the refinement of good taste, by the instincts of genius, by a heart pure, we hope, amid all indiscretions, and a motive good through all eccentricities of creed and conduct; but transplant the same principle from its environment of Beecher's position, character and circumstances, and you have just the elements for unbridled license of all sorts. So far, therefore, as his influence and example have been a power, so far has he aided the advance of excessive individualism. That he exercised so dominant an influence as his eulogists claim, we are prepared neither to affirm nor deny. He was, however, the conspicuous forerunner of a large and enlarging class who have followed afar in his imperial footsteps, until we are saddened to see traces of this new idea of humanity in many places; in volumes of sermons, ethical and theological discussions in reviews, moral essays in even the lighter periodical literature, together flooding the land like the vermin of Egypt, heralds perhaps of a darkness that may be felt for its thickness.

Coincident and kindred with the personal example and preaching of such leaders, partially perhaps a result of it, we mark another favoring influence in the rise and spread of the Liberal The-

ology. Our reading of this in various quarters has never failed to reveal a constant characteristic common to all the protean variety it assumes, ever identical in all the forms and phases of its shifting shapes; that constant characteristic is Arminianism. Whatever the particular branch of the new theology, whatever its peculiarities, its local, individual, denominational coloring, you will find amid all *differentiæ* one unchanging feature alike in all, viz., it is invariably Arminian. We maintain, moreover, without fear of successful denial, that the essence of Arminianism is entirely on the side of just that view of human nature, its dignity, its power, its righteousness, which gratifies human pride, which begets self-sufficiency, which nourishes self-will and self-assertion and hence must infallibly foster the individualism that forms the tap-root of these evils that spread their baneful branches around us.

Now, study at your leisure the deliverances of this broad theology in the light of the foregoing charge. You shall notice that it never fails to fight bitterly every distinctive tenet of Calvinism, that it is always allied with Arminianism in all differences between these two great opposing systems. This much in general. You shall notice more specifically a direct denial of all the most humbling doctrines of the nature and condition of man, an emasculation of the character of God, a lowering and lessening of the authority of the Holy Scriptures even to the virtual nullification of any supreme and infallible standard, a pervading spirit of compromise and concession to the pride and the prejudice of man, a universal adjustment and reconstruction along the line of rationalism, an amazing wildness and unbridled license of speculation. It lacks conspicuously that reverent submission to God and God's revealed will, that is so decided and constant a characteristic of Calvinism, and consequently it puts no break-water of a "Thus saith the Lord," before the advancing tide of human speculation; it has no "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther," with which to rebuke the encroaching insolence of rationalism; it does not lay man's pride of intellect and rebellion of will and perverse passionate hardness of heart humble and submissive in the very dust before God. On the contrary, it tends to make man abundantly satisfied with himself, to exalt and inflate his pride. In its last analysis

and cumulative effect it leads up to making each individual, his own prejudices, sentiments, views and opinions, the ultimate arbiter of every question. The final result is that a man's conscience, judgment and feelings combined, become practically his guide and his God.

Now, it is entirely possible that some readers may inquire somewhat sceptically, if not scornfully, into the bearing of all this upon the tendencies of our times. Some of it is far away, and most of it high up in the hazy realm of theory, far above the practical doings of man, aloft in the cold abstractions of theology, in the clouds of speculation. But in these regions is born the whirlwind, from these clouds drops the thunderbolt. The man whose farm is enriched or ruined by the river, has no thought or concern for the spring afar and aloft, but it is none the less, however, the source of his blessing or his blight.

Let us see: We have unbridled license of private opinion and free thought, *i. e.*, freedom to entertain whatever opinion a man pleases about God, heaven, hell, man, his duty, his destiny; freedom to think just whatever he chooses. He has lost his reverence for the authority of God, for the inspired Word of God as man's guide, teaching him what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requireth of man. The necessary result is a general lowering of reverence, a self-sufficiency and arrogance of opinion that renders him resentful against interference, impatient of restraint, scornful of correction, contemptuous of authority. If any man is so fatuous as to infer no practical result from such anarchy in the mind and heart, he is beyond the reach of reason. True, this movement is made under the standard of free thought and free speech, but does the banner hoisted over a host alter the character of the revolution wrought? Call it by whatever specious, even holy, name you please, it cannot be either right or safe for a man to think incorrectly, unjustly, unrighteously, irreverently.

An authority somewhat archaic with these free thought advocates, but as philosophic as it is orthodox, has said, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he," and we shall assuredly find society much affected by this riot in the realm of thought.

Given this alleged license under claim of free thought, and

the next step is demand for a like license in the name of free speech; the inevitable drift of unbridled speculation is toward unreserved expression of opinion, and when that opinion is the dictate of an overweening confidence and self-sufficient pride of intellect, free speech presses its claims *pari passu* with free thought. If a man has the right to cherish whatever opinion he chooses, he very naturally insists on the untrammelled advocacy of that opinion. Accordingly, in the leading periodical of the United States, we hear Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll say to Dr. Henry M. Field:

“The question then is, not have we the right to think—that being a necessity—but have we the right to express our honest thoughts. You certainly have the right to express yours, and you have exercised that right. Some of your brethren, who regard me as a monster, have expressed theirs. The question now is, have I the right to express mine? In other words, have I the right to answer your letter? To make that a crime in me which is a virtue in you, certainly comes within your definition of superstition. To exercise a right yourself which you deny to me is simply the act of a tyrant. Where did you get your right to express your honest thoughts? When, and where, and how did I lose mine?”

The claim sounds only just, indeed it rings almost like a truism; but then Spies, Parsons, Fielden & Co. made precisely the same claim for their “honest thoughts;” they were doubtless fully as sincere in holding and advocating their opinions as Colonel Ingersoll is. They claimed and exercised the right to express their honest thoughts, but the law claimed and exercised the right to break their necks, and the law-abiding people of the land said, Amen.

Is it not evident abundantly that this so-called right has been carried to the last limit endurable? Are we not already reaping a harvest of dragon’s teeth in the crude, callow, flippant, irreverent, even blasphemous, “honest thoughts” sown broadcast in our homes, contaminating almost every branch of literature? When crazy enthusiasts claim the privilege of preaching a crusade against all order and decency, has not the right been exaggerated into a wrong, rampant, ruinous to the peace and prosperity of our country?

Unbridled license in thought and speech lead infallibly to the same in conduct. If a man exercises the right to think and speak as he pleases, he will soon demand to do as he pleases. And why

not? His honest thought claims to be heard, and by the same and equal right it claims to be done. The whole purpose of earnest, honest thought (and we refer to none other in this discussion) is earnest, honest deed. Has a man the right to justify and advocate any course of conduct that he has not a right to pursue? If he is free to stand on a goods-box in the public street and appeal to my prejudice, inflame my discontent, impose on my ignorance, incite and persuade to crime by pleading, defending, justifying his cause; if he is free to drive his "honest convictions" into me, to sear them on brain and heart with maddening power, have I any the less right to act out these same honest convictions that dominate my soul and conscience as with the very possession of the devil? Common sense, common justice, common equity agree in holding the instigator even guiltier than his puppet, the perpetrator of the crime. All this is plain and simple enough, but *ex uno disce omnes*. The same is true of all loose, wild license of thought and speech; the evils may not be so patent because not so gross, but they may be none the less dangerous and productive of injury when their silent growth shall have finished its fruitage. Is proof asked? It shall be forthcoming.

Occasionally we are confronted with a claim, on the part of preachers of the gospel, to retain positions of influence and emolument in a church with the creed of which they are no longer in accord, nay, verily, but on the contrary in conspicuous and clamorous discord; they assert and maintain the right to assail the distinctive doctrines of a denomination under the sacred *imprimatur* of its own authority; and not only so, but even sustained and supported by its own stipend. Such a course, we confess, in our opinion rises little above the grade of vulgar treachery; yet we see reputable writers in standard periodicals peremptorily claiming, and laboriously defending, the right of such dissidents so to do; basing such claim and defense on the sacred privilege of free thought and free speech, commending the treachery for its candor and boldness, and supporting their outrageous claims by the sweeping and slanderous assertion that these troublers of Israel are only more outspoken than their more conservative because more timid brethren. Does this statement savor of exaggeration? Read the

following extract from an editorial of perhaps the most popular and widely circulated magazine in our country, in which the editor delivers himself in behalf of a minister who had been suspended for promulgating views patently contradictory to the creed of the church which commissioned and stood responsible for him :

“Every such case as his brings up the fact that the confession is subscribed to by every one in a more or less Pickwickian sense. Just how far the Pickwickian quality in the subscription may be allowed to go has to be determined anew each time according to the temper of the judges. The truth is, the whole system of subscription is a scandal to christian honesty. It is a disgrace to any church—and in this matter the Presbyterian Church is no worse than most of the others—to require its ministers to formally assent to an elaborate creed some part of which every one of them in his heart disbelieves. It is not now a question of sound theology; it is a question of personal honesty. The Westminster Confession may every word of it be true, if you please; none the less is it a shame to religion to ask men who do not believe it to say they do believe it. In effect, the church does not require or expect a genuine belief in all her articles from her ministers; she exacts only a pretence of belief, understood by every one to be a mere sham. If the great Presbyterian Church of America were bravely to renounce the time-honored lie, it would be the best day in her history. While the present system stands, with its admitted uncertainties and duplicities and pitfalls for christian conscience, it must be a question for the judges in every ecclesiastical case like Mr. ---’s, just what degree of manfully avowed dissent from a confession of which nobody believes the whole, disqualifies a man for the ministry which owns Christ as its Master?”

Without pausing to mark the glaring inconsistency and rich absurdity generally of this oracular deliverance, we emphasize the moral blindness involved in it.

The religious world has been recently startled by what will pass into history as the Andover Case, the gist of which is simply this: the faculty of Andover Theological Seminary is required individually to subscribe a creed which the seminary was founded to teach and support; so cautious were the founders that they made this subscription renewable every five years, in order the more scrupulously and carefully to guard the orthodoxy of the institution and the fidelity of its faculty. Now, it is notorious that its present professors are out of harmony with this creed. They publish under the name and auspices of the seminary a *Review*, devoted mainly to the maintenance and spread of doctrines not only diverse from, but diametrically opposite to, those of the Andover creed. The authorities of the semi-

nary have expressly so declared, and yet these teachers of the teachers refuse to surrender their places. Not only are they willing, but they demand to sign the creed and have actually appealed from the government of the seminary to the civil law to sustain them in this demand. This wrong they perpetrate in the name of free thought. In the interests of liberty of conscience this manifest malfeasance, this high-handed outrage is sought to be justified.

An additional development of this same controversy has brought about the now celebrated wrangle in the venerable American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. One phase of the aforementioned doctrinal eccentricities is the theory of probation after death. This same dissident party demand that men holding this heresy be commissioned and supported as foreign missionaries by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. And they offend high heaven with an unseemly clamor because the heretical vagaries of a beggarly minority are not recognized by the guardians of the work and supported by the money which christian liberality contributes for the express purpose of teaching the contrary.

Our readers will readily recognize the fact that in each of the three foregoing instances the "liberal" men are not fighting for liberty of conscience, but for such liberty *plus* their positions. They are demanding to proclaim by the authority, in the name, and through the support, both moral and financial, of the church, doctrines which the church disapproves. The fight is not for the right of free thought. Not at all. The fight is simply for the wrong of forcing others who differ from them to sustain and support their views. They are seeking in each respective instance to compel the perversion of trust funds and trust positions. Mark it: This is not a question of the soundness of their views on the matters in dissent. Grant that they are correct in their views, yet this does not give them the right to force the support of those views on others who repudiate them. This is an achievement of free thought and liberty of conscience quite peculiar!

Another instance of the peculiar pranks played by this high-strung freedom in practical affairs, is furnished by the "Personal Liberty Leagues." This is a sort of saloon and anti-Sabbath asso-

ciation. They are banded together for the abolition of legal regulations and police restrictions.

The importance of Sabbath observance may be inferred from the universal effort making in all the various denominations towards a stricter Sabbath. Just when committees, special and standing, under appointment by the different churches, are inviting cooperation in a united effort on the State legislatures for more stringent laws, feeling that this lies at the source of a healthful moral and spiritual life of our people, that the nullification of Sabbath sanctity is but the beginning of a sweeping revolution that would take away all recognition of a divine obligation in human affairs and bring a swift declension in all that is good; just at this juncture, we are met with the charge that even such laws as we have are a tyranny not to be endured by a free people. In the name of freedom the right to open the marts of trade and places of amusement is claimed. The dance-hall and the church, the bar-room and the Sabbath-school must have equal rights and fair competition on what America has been wont to call the Lord's day. And one of these banded leaguers, waxing bold, declares that he would vote for the devil if he would bring it about; which they both would no doubt be glad to do.

These leagues are organized for active, aggressive work. They are moving in large masses and with perfect system to attack the sanctity of our Sabbath and the peace of our homes, and, lo! this revolution, like the others, advances under the very same banner, viz., free thought and liberty of conscience, as witness the following:

"Something has to be done to remove the oppression resting upon us. [The speaker read various sections of law as passed by different Legislatures, but dwelling especially on the law of 1794.] I ask you, gentlemen, has anybody the right, from a moral point of view, to offer us any thing like that for our Sundays? Were this land a declared christian nation there would be at least the right and excuse for the execution of such, but our Constitution does not say a word like that, and in our country everybody can seek his own salvation according to his own methods.

"The ministers declare that these laws existed here before we came to the country, and if they did not suit us, we could return to where we came from. The native-born possess no more rights than the naturalized citizen who voluntarily comes to this country. I ask you, gentlemen, shall such laws be longer executed?"

The most signal instance of this spirit of excessive individualism we have reserved for the last, viz., Anarchism, as it is called. This is so diabolic in nature and motive and method as to seem almost independent and original in wickedness. We cannot see that it is, however; it falls into line with what has just been gone over; it is only a logical and natural, though very decided, development of exactly the same principles that underlie the more moderate movements hitherto discussed. The violent anarchist, socialist, communist simply carries into actual conduct the creed he has been taught by the arguments of the more decent advocates of free thought and free speech.

Make a man a law unto himself in his opinions, assert and defend his liberty of conscience to believe whatever he chooses provided only he is sincere, constitute his feelings and prejudices the supreme arbiter of right and wrong, destroy his submission to the authority of God, his reverence for the inspired Word, and you have made him superior to the sanctions of so sacred an influence as religious belief, will you now expect him to be amenable to lesser obligations?

If the statutes of the Almighty are made subordinate, subservient even, to the man's private prejudices, what reverence can be expected for the statutes of a legislature? If he adjusts the law of God according to the dictates of his own preference, will the law of man fare better? Lessen his sense of honor in the discharge of fidelity to trusts moral and financial, teach him to justify himself in the plain perversion of trust funds, to defeat the express will of the contributors in the face of their emphatic protest, and can you hope to see him maintain his respect for property rights in general? When men of refined culture, of high place even in the church, can be so dull to a nice sense of honor, is it to be supposed that the ignorant, the prejudiced, the vicious, the needy will be more scrupulous in sensibility? Ah! no; men never yet gathered grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. Sanctify unfaithfulness to church covenants by the title of Christian Consciousness, dignify the passion of prejudice by the sacred and powerful name of "the Higher Law," and under such names and claims preach a holy crusade against the statutes of state and church, and you are unwittingly paving the way for the

“great unwashed” to follow with their application of the same principles.

The nation is horrified to hear Fielden in Chicago incite to murder and massacre by saying:

“It is quite true that we have lots of explosives and dynamite in our possession, and we will not hesitate to use it when the proper time comes. We care nothing either for the military or the police, for these are in the pay of the capitalist. We are told that we must attain our ends and aims by obeying law and order. Damn law and order! We have obeyed law and order long enough. The time has come for you, men, to strangle the law, or the law will strangle you.”

But what is this “damn law and order” but the echo of that same “higher law” theory? What is it except a low and coarse, but entirely consistent, application of the identical principle espoused, defended, glorified by so many when they maintained that their own ideas of right and wrong were superior to the laws of the land, and being so, discharged their conscience of obligation thereto? In Fielden’s “honest judgment” the capitalist is a criminal, a tyrant fattening on the starved labor of the poor. The whole system of law is in unholy alliance with this injustice and oppression. How suggestive would have been the historic words, “a league with the devil” and “a covenant with hell”! Such being the “honest conviction” of the anarchist, he has high authority for his right to hold, advocate, defend, propagate it. We hear him exercise it. While his condemned brethren are awaiting the execution of the death sentence, Herr Most harangues the brotherhood in New York:

“Do they think we are going to remain quiet and allow our friends to die an ignominious death? You cannot allow that hanging to take place. Arm yourselves, and for every drop of blood that is shed from our friends let it cost a human life. I am not alone an Anarchist, but also a Revolutionist. The capitalists shall be the first to suffer. No one shall escape his just dues. The twelve jurors, judges and detective spies will not sleep very soundly at present. Let them beware. [Wild yells and cheers from the crowd.] As Anarchists, we have no respect for these laws by which our brothers die. As Revolutionists, we are fearless. The day will come when we will be forced to use fire-arms.”

At the funeral of the men hanged for the horrible slaughter of the officers of the law while engaged in the performance of their sworn duty, we hear the same spirit speak:

“With grief and shame my eyes look down into these graves,” he said, his teeth almost clinched. “I could tear my flesh in agony when I behold how the workmen have allowed this manifold, outrageous and diabolical murder. I have

spoken to you since these heroes were dragged into a hell upon earth by the capitalistic monsters and demanded of you if you would allow this terrible outrage. You then all shouted in unison, 'No!' 'No!' 'No!' Shame! Shame upon you that you have eaten your words, and, like weaklings, allowed your best and most heroic champions to be sacrificed. I term you cowards. Cowards, to allow the noblest men in your ranks to be butchered in cold blood and never rise in their defense. [Loud and continuous applause and howls of rage.] Are you united now? Are you strong and firm for one united purpose? Revenge! [Here somebody touched Currlin's arm and made a motion to him.] Revenge! I say. Revenge in a humane way. Mr. Morgan has talked to you of the power of the ballot and has told you to use it for your relief, but in spite of the ballot we are enslaved and down-trodden. Be men! [Tumultuous applause.] Fulfil the legacy of your martyrs. Devote all your energy to the task of avenging the crime committed. The ballot—pshaw! Despite the ballot these four were strangled. Join hands and let us all fight, and if necessary die for liberty. Let justice be done in fullest measure to the memory of our noble martyrs." [Great applause.]

Such language makes the ears tingle and society rises in wrath and horror to hush it within the walls of a prison or strangle it with a hangman's noose. Horrible as it is, it is but a logical result, a natural consequence, a legitimate harvest of seed sown long before; seed of very slow, but very sure growth, with a distant but certain fruitage.

It is our firm conviction that there is in all these various disturbing elements a close kinship, a common thread connecting all the developments of anarchy, in thought, in speech and in conduct. To reveal such kinship, to trace this thread has been the purpose of our paper; our conclusion is that when we view the lawless, devilish violence that startles our land, we do but stand by the turbid torrent that takes its rise in those calm, clear, cold heights of abstract thinking which seem so far from the practical concerns of everyday life. Limited and restrained by the environment of its advocates it seems at worst a harmless vagary, an innocuous eccentricity; but such principles percolate downward, and gathering the soil of impure souls, they become so foul that the spring is not recognized in the stream. Principles are powerful; ethical and moral, and preëminently theological, principles are productive of practical results; they lie at the bottom of all great social and political disturbances; they furnish the motive power of the revolutions that wreck society. A false principle is a child of the devil, and is in every stage of it an enemy of God and man.

SAMUEL M. SMITH.