

Egoism Vol. I. No. 11.

Georgia & Henry Replogle

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Pointers.

Do not fail to read J. Wm. Lloyd's poem to Walt Whitman, on the fifth and sixth pages of this number. Its mingled tribute, criticism, and philosophy is delugingly gratifying.

Tak Kak asks for questions from careful readers of his series running in this paper. If there are any persons who do not understand clearly all that he has written, we hope they will put their questions in clear, pointed sentences and send them to our address.

W. S. Bell will start for the East on a lecturing tour about the 10th of April, and desires engagements. Mr. Bell is the broadest, most radical, and thorough-going thinker now devoting time to anti-theological lecturing, and if any of our readers have money for that cause they can do no better than engage him for a course. They will besides benefiting themselves be patronizing & good Egoist and supporter of the most advanced ideas of the age.

The editor of the New York "Truth Seeker" quotes "Liberty" as follows: "F. Q. Stuart, who is editor of the Individualist department of 'Living Issues' regards municipalization as in perfect line with Individualism. But who regards Stuart as authority on Individualism?" The editor then adds: "Exactly. But who regards Mr. Tucker as authority on authorities?" But again, who regards the authoritarian editor of the "Truth Seeker" as authority on the libertarian editor of "Liberty."

J. W. Cooper, one of our stanchest supporters when publishing Equity, in Liberal, Mo., died of pneumonia on the 15th of last December, which we had not learned in time to report before. He contributed fifty dollars to the defense fund of the Chicago martyrs, which is the key to an impulsive generosity that left his wife without means to pay his funeral expenses. In this she seeks aid from his old comrades. We have sent our mite and will acknowledge in the paper and forward to her any donations sent to our address.

We are, in common with all newspapers, exchanging advertising for the "Scientific American," but on our own account we advise our readers who cannot have access to it, to contrive some way to raise three dollars a year to pay the subscription price, and keep it continually. It is a 16-page weekly, and keeps you posted on all scientific facts and fads, mechanical inventions, discoveries astronomical and chemical, architectural accomplishments, and everything new in art and science. Especially is it useful in families of inquiring children. Address Mann & Co. 361 Broadway New York, N. Y.

On the sixth and seventh pages we have reprinted from "Liberty" "A Gambler," by George Forrest. We have not heard of the man who buys poll-tax receipts under that name, but that does not prove that there is no such person. The hero's position is the nearest our ideal that we have ever seen in a story. His broad, searching sympathy combined with his cool, utilitarian philosophy, and the camera-like descriptive completeness of the story point to Tak Kak as the author. If he is not then we congratulate George Forrest.

The Toledo (Ohio) "Evening Bee" of Feb. 12, says: "The meeting of the Toledo Society of Economic Inquiry last evening was unusually interesting. The speaker of the evening was Alfred B. Westrup, of Chicago, well known as one of the leaders in that school of economic thought which is properly classified as 'philosophic Anarchism.' The speaker's subject was 'Mutual Banks,' in the

establishment of which, he thinks, lies the only solution of the money question, which underlies all other questions of reform, and overtops them, too... Mr. Westrup expects to aid in establishing a bank of this kind in Chicago in the near future, and as it will clearly be illegal under the laws of Illinois, he expects the concern will be cited before the courts where, in his own words, 'the government can do the fighting.'" The same paper of Feb. 20, says: "There was a larger attendance than usual at the special meeting of the Economic society in Walbridge Hall last evening. Mr. Alfred B. Westrup, of Chicago, an Anarchist of the philosophical school, further defined and defended the mutual banking theory. His subject was 'Citizens' Money: Analysis of Free Trade in Banking,' and the paper offered was a very able one indeed. As its underlying principle is mutual contract, and the ignoring of governmental authority, the theory cannot be accepted by any who believe the governments fiat is necessary to establish a currency." It is to be hoped that the readers of this paper will "catch on," and assist when Mr. Westrup is ready to distribute literature. A lecture club should then be formed through which interested parties could co-operate to do pioneer work in sending Mr. Westrup and others to the field to lecture, where they could gather sufficient recruits to prosecute the propaganda to a successful termination. A few hundred dollars to start the ball rolling would do it if properly manipulated. There are men in our ranks who could easily start it if they can see the point as clearly as we think we do.

GEORGE E. MACDONALD has written some very laughable and interesting things about Judge Westbrook's paternal efforts to secure a field secretary for the American Secular Union with benumbed propagative instinct, and this paper has also given some more sober reflections regarding it, with all of which I am in sympathy; but they both leave the judge in the serio-comic dilemma in which they found him. I would help him out, and offer a physiological solution of the problem which will relieve him from the consciousness of being instrumental in placing the families of the Liberal public in danger. What puzzles his brain is to find a "man who is safe to send into our families." My suggestion is, that he appoint one of the female Liberal lecturers. This would secure the mothers and daughters against temptation. And further, the men can also be secured against the assaults of such a secretary by having her vote at regular State polls before she starts, which Cardinal Gibbons says unsexes women. Thus the entire family would be safe, and the secretary untortured with evil impulses.

AT the Woman's Convention at Washington recently Frances Willard had this to say anent the Parnell case: "The woman question has had no triumph so signal. It was not many years since any man of splendid public achievements was, as a man in his relation to women an entirely different personality with whom the public had nothing to do no matter how basely he might conduct himself. This was because the estimate of woman was so much beneath that which is now held." This woman is either very shallow or has implicit faith in public stupidity, for the case had no direct bearing on the woman question at all. If Mrs. O'Shea had claimed injury, that she had been deceived, that Parnell in his greater experience had taken advantage of her amorous propensity and inexperience and then left her in an undesirable position, and an indignant public had rebuked him with political defeat, it might well be considered that it was due to a higher estimate of woman than has hitherto been evinced. But this was not the case. Mrs. O'Shea nor anyone else has ever claimed that she was wronged in the matter. Indeed it was quite the opposite in popular conception; a man, Mr. O'Shea, was looked upon as the injured party. This leaves

nothing for woman's influence to claim unless it be the tyrannical meddling in private affairs with which one politician was able to defeat another, and in this there is nothing except something to be ashamed of under the certain condemnation of an enlightened future. This it would be well for Miss Willard to learn if she really desires to help in freeing woman; but if it is political notoriety that she seeks, she is going just right, she could do no better.

The Practicability of the Mutual Bank and Absurdity of the Idea of a “Measure” or “Standard” of Value.

Let us suppose a community where there is only one bank and that each individual in that community secures an account current by depositing collateral to a greater or less extent with the bank. Is it not clear that in such a system of payments money would not be needed, every individual would pay by checks, the account being adjusted by offsetting on the books of the bank; the monetary unit we call “dollar” answering the purpose of a conventional denominator or denominant.

We will suppose also that this bank is conducted on the mutual plan, and therefore, charges are made to cover cost only. Gold and silver bullion, like any suitable commodity, could be used as collateral, but no coin would be necessary and none would be used. It would therefore seem to be sufficiently clear that a unit to act as a measure or standard of value is but a fiction, a fetich.

It is admitted that the proposed bank, for various reasons would be an impracticable method of effecting exchanges, but the absence of a coin unit-measure-standard would not be one of them. Not everyone can have a bank account; the inconvenience of paying small amounts by checks as well as the uncertainty, in many instances, as to the acceptability of checks at the bank are insurmountable difficulties, but one can hardly contemplate the foregoing and yet conceive how the advocates of a coin basis to paper money would defend their theory of its necessity. It is not difficult to comprehend the nature of the error they have fallen into. A monetary unit (a conventional denominator or denominant) to facilitate the expressing of amounts in the realm of value is apparently so similar in its function to that of the units employed in physics such as the inch, the pound, etc., especially as certain coin is made legal tender that the notion has become well nigh universal that this monetary unit must be a definite quantity of some commodity just as the inch is a definite and unvarying length or the pound is a definite and unvarying weight; but this notion is utterly devoid of reason. As there is nothing definite or permanent in value, a unit of value is a physical impossibility. The monetary unit is as near a unit or measure of value as the “x” in an algebraic equation is a known quantity. You can ascertain the exchangeable value of a gold dollar in any commodity by inquiring the price of that commodity; so also you can find the quantity “x” by ciphering out the equation.

The value of the gold dollar varies with every change in market price, just as the quantity “x” differs with every change in the equation. The gold dollar is a certain quantity of gold. It is not the gold however, but the value of the gold that is supposed to do the measuring, and it is the value of the gold that is the uncertain quantity. How can an uncertain quantity be a unit or measure? And if it is not a measure, what is the object of a coin basis? If it is answered that it is not a measure, but a “standard” of value if by “standard” is meant denominant, then the use of the term “standard” is equivocal and therefore sophistical or dishonest. If it is claimed that it is more

than a dominant there is no escaping the dilemma that confronts the program "measure." If paper money is issued as proposed by the Mutual Bank Propaganda with ample security but not legal tender nor redeemable in any special commodity, the monetary unit dollar, will simply be a dominant. Its purchasing power could not be affected by a rise or fall in the price of any commodity any more than an order for a pound of butter would command more than a pound at one time and less at another. The Mutual Bank paper dollar will buy more butter at one time than another, but this will take place in consequence of the operation of supply and demand in regard to the butter; and so with regard to all other commodities; the Mutual Bank paper money will have no more effect on the price of commodities than the order for the butter will affect the price of butter; whereas when the monetary unit is a legal tender commodity dollar, variations in the price of any commodity are affected not only by supply and demand in that particular commodity, but also "supply and demand" in the arbitrarily limited legal tender commodity dollar, which limit enables a class to own and control it, the scarcity or abundance of which (dependent upon combinations among this class) must affect the price of all other commodities. Under any system therefore, which recognizes any special commodity as a legal tender basis for its paper money, especially as that commodity must necessarily be one that is limited by nature, fluctuations in prices become complicated by compound causes resulting from the limitations to credit through this control of money. No such effect can occur under the Mutual system, the volume of money being unlimited except by the quantity of collateral offered, and the rate of interest being the same to all borrowers.

Of course it is not contemplated that this system shall remain as it must necessarily start—each bank independent of all the others, although any bank may remain so as long as it considers it to its interest to do so—but as the Mutual Bank is not a speculative institution, but rather an institution to defeat speculation, the system can best subserve this end by the banks becoming a general co-operative institution throughout the entire country, establishing headquarters and clearing house at some central point.

The association of the Mutual Banks thus guaranteeing each individual bank, their bills would circulate as free from discount as do those of the National Banks. What objection then could a mutual bank have to joining the national organization, since its purpose is to carry out generally what each mutual bank is established to accomplish locally; namely, the supply of an abundance of reliable exchange media.

The capitalists form trusts and combinations and seek protection in law. Repeal the law and their protection ceases. It is liberty, therefore, that affords protection to the people. Both are prompted by selfish motives, but if liberty prevails no monopolies can be possible, while at the same time there is opportunity to discover by experiment the best and most economical methods, a result not obtainable where systems are established by law.

ALFRED B. WESTRUP.

The Philosophy of Egoism.

VIII.

To plead before a tribunal is generally understood to be an acknowledgment of its jurisdiction. The intelligent Egoist does not seek to justify his views or conduct according to rules or principles of Moralism which works by awe, aping theology and religion. of which this Moralism is the ghost. Such words as morals, morality, right and wrong, duty and Obligation have not lost their limited Egoistic meanings. The theoretical Egoist may be termed a moralist in so far as he thinks out a course of conduct in conformity with his observation and reason. If in a genial way he soars above business calculations then he "sings as the bird sings." To him duties imply persons who have wants and make the non-satisfaction of those wants a source of discomfort to him. But supernal Moralism with its absolute Duty he apprehends as a claim of an essentially religious character fettering with ghostly terror or enthrallment all who yield to the mystic spell.

Persons who have been reared in a religious belief find themselves years after they have become disbelievers in the doctrines taught them in childhood still so far under the influence of religious sentiment that light remarks on the subject give them a shock, and apparently in the same way a generation that does not know God or ecclesiastical authority, a generation that does not know the sacred political State and the sacred authoritative family of its fathers, still retains some portion of the conscience that would fain subjugate Egoistic reason. For thousands of years preachers in the service of rulers have been preaching Duty, humility, submission, piety to the people, and Egoism has been their unspeakable horror. In our day the results of criticism applied to religious belief are apparent in general scepticism regarding the foundation of their authority, of their dogmas. Still the heredity of preaching, exhorting and warning must find its outlet, to say nothing of calculations made by men whose wealth is insured by the system of belief and submission preached, and to say nothing of calculations by ex-preachers of theology whose prospect of an income seems limited to finding something on which to preach and by which to obtain contributions, and thus the relations of man with man, philanthropy for equity, sentiment for science, serve to continue the comedy-tragedy of preaching and servility.

If Shylock does not go to church he takes a magazine and enables the publisher to pay a few dollars a page for essays on ethics, the purport of which is that Morality, Conscience, Duty reign where God formerly reigned and with much the same restraining effect; that all honorable men will agree that these forces are indispensable, ineradicable and necessary for the conservation of property, the family, government and social order, hence a proof of Moral Being in man, while self-interest as a principle would be subversive of Moral sentiment and ruinous to society; wherein it is assumed that society is about as it is desirable to keep it. By such process Shylock makes 5000 per cent on his investment in Moralistic literature simply in the economic sphere, as he is protected by the State. He accepts any incidental assistance toward keeping women in a receptive and docile condition of mind as being so much clear profit, though really if the enterprise had to be sustained for this purpose alone he must be a miser only or else a free lover and not a "proper

family man," if he did not see the advisability of paying out the few dollars even with this sole end in view.

All reformers who are not intelligent Egoists or endowed with the genius of Egoism continually render themselves ridiculous by complaining of monopolists and tyrants. Thereby they proclaim their Moralistic superstition. Their method is abortive. It can at the best lead people from one form of trustful dependence to another. At the worst and often it causes people to commit acts of ill considered hostility and to indulge in sentimental declarations which enable cool and intelligent masters to incite stronger forces against the reformers. Reform, indeed, is a word for conservative mediocrity. Egoism when understood by the many means nothing less than a complete revolution in the relations of mankind, for it is the exercise of the powers of individuals at their pleasure, and not a plea for their "rights."

The Moralists, or Altruists, come with a tale of Duty, or moral obligation. They say that I ought to love my neighbor as myself and to put aside my selfy pleasure. It is horrifying to them that I act on consciousness of satisfaction, on genial impulse, on calculation of gain, and not in submission to the Moralistic judgment of "conscience." I understand very well that it is their ignorant fear of an independent person which is at the bottom of their pleading. They are accustomed to think of a man as a dangerous animal unless controlled by "conscience." Few of them have met one who does not profess to defer to such a "spiritual guide." I however regard their "conscience," as identical with the superstition which impels Hindoos to throw themselves beneath the wheels of the sacred car and to allow sacred animals and sacred men to devour their substance.

Are the Altruists, the Moralists willing to examine the logic of their principle and carry it out to its consequences? Will they follow where it leads? Then we need not insist upon the prominence of the oppressive idea of Duty and its degradation of the individual, but we may take their own favorite idea of pure, disinterested love expelling self-interest wherever the two conflict. Of course the intelligent Egoist will perceive that I am trying to accommodate the Altruists, to get as near their position as possible, but that nevertheless there is something of falsehood, of contradiction, in the idea that love can be other than a personal interest in the object when love overcomes other interests without a sentiment of sacrifice arising; and that if the consciousness of sacrifice be present the motive is Duty, not love. However, I am discussing an alleged possibility,—a life of Altruistic devotion,—and I do not expect in the statement of the question to succeed better than the Moralists themselves in making the fanciful scheme appear wholly real.

Apart from theology with its gross dogmatism about "souls" in men and the animals as "soulless" machines of flesh and blood, the dogma of Moralism, the duty of love to others, obviously bears a direct and essential relation to the capacity of others to enjoy and to suffer, and no radical distinction can be made between a human subject and any other animal. The anti-vivisection Moralists stand up to the logic of their principle in one particular when they insist that pain ought not to be inflicted upon the inferior animals for the advancement of science intended for the benefit of mankind and not of the species or individual animals operated upon.

The consistent Moralist will now see what his principle requires of him. Though the animal, by reason of its inferior intelligence and want of speech and hands, cannot fully express its complaints, assert its "rights," and maintain its liberty, he will neither use his superior ability to enslave it nor permit others to do such wrong if it be within his power to prevent them. The animal's inability to participate as an equal in social affairs is ground for certain exclusions, but not for usurpation, detention, subjugation, castration, enforced labor, shearing off the natural coat, robbery of the mother's milk, and driving to the slaughter house. By what right does the Moralist

shoot deer or crows, cut off the heads of chickens and turkeys, and cast his line or his net for fish? If by the authority of God, I reply that God is the archetype of personal despotism,—Egoism without the balancing force of approximately equal powers in different individuals; and that there is no such authority. The philosophical Altruist has left that ground. I refuse to recognize the plea. I look to the Altruistic Moralist for a less barbarian answer. And let him remember the incapable of his species,—the idiot, the maniac. Does he exploit them with a good conscience, as he tames and rides a horse? Does he refrain from fattening and killing them only because he thinks they are not good eating? Where and what is his conscience, then as to other animals?

Permit me to suggest that a man is safe in reflecting that he will never be a buffalo or a rat,—unless he believes in transmigration, whereupon his unconfessed Egoism crops out keenly self-regardful. Hence buffaloes and rats have no rights that a man even though a professed Moralist need respect, except the right of exemption from torture. (Torture is a bad example. It can be inflicted upon men as well as upon other animals and it does not minister to any demand of enlightened self-interest.) But what man may not be accused of feeble-mindedness or suffer some accident which will impair his mental powers? How then can self-concern be silent when one of his species is ill treated? The other animals—indeed he is never to be one of them: what does it matter to him how you use them so that you do not cultivate cruelty in yourself? (The cruel man is dangerous to us and ours.)

I call upon the Moralist to vindicate his doctrine by applying it consistently to the treatment of all animals. Confining it to our own species is too Egoistic to be deemed pure Moralism. I shall be very much surprised if any such practical response comes as to disprove my new version of scripture, which says that the Moral kingdom of heaven is inaccessible to men of ordinary sanity. Who will rejoice to see the grasshopper getting his fill, and keep sacrilegious hands out of the hen's nest? Who will feed the lambs and neither feed upon lamb nor wrap in woolen blankets, for conscience sake? One Moralist has one hobby and another has another hobby, but if there be one who proposes to live a life of self-denial for the happiness of all other sentient beings as far as they are capable of experiencing pleasure, to respect their liberty and embryonic offspring as conscientiously as any Moralist does those of his own species, I shall regard his appearance upon this scene as the exception which will very strikingly illustrate the rule in individual conduct, and I shall be glad to have an opportunity of learning how he manages to live.

TAK KAK.

[Before this series is finished I should be glad to receive questions from any attentive reader.
T. K.]

Managerial Experience.

My most soaking experience this month was the resignation by George E. Macdonald of the editorship and management of "Freethought." For three years he has maintained an unquestioned credit with such business men in this city as his responsibilities brought him in contact with. But even so mild an innovation as anti-theological Liberalism, has so little support that more than a thousand dollars a year had to be raised by contributions to meet expenses. This uncertainty Mr. Macdonald carried on the sympathetic nerve of his anatomy until his nerves were shattered, when, having enough, he promptly unloaded, the irreligion of which act commands my admiration.

He no longer writes without apology large blue suggestions on the margins of my proof-sheets, but is himself the frontispiece of a rack and case in the same office, and seems light-hearted and happy. He stands by the side of the handsomest girl in the composing room, and when I climb upon the cross-brace of my rock to reassure my mind concerning the expression of the girl's neck and backhead, I can also see him. As he stands there selecting thoughts from the case, he seems to my admiring gaze a "safe man to send into our families," and I think he should be appointed field secretary for the American Secular Union now that he has left the editorial pen, in which, thrust into a poetic warning to "keep out," is a large dirk, and on one of the walls of which hangs a twenty-pound sash-weight labeled "The Editor's Companion." Traveling and two thousand dollars a year would be a much needed change which he admits he has not carried in his private purse since he assumed the bill paying for "Freethought."

For two years I have waited for the Freethought Society of this city, to discuss a question in which I should be interested. This threatened on the evening of February 22d, when the Stanford Land Loan bill among other subjects was to be touched. This event also furnished the occasion for the debut of a new pair of pants of which I am happily the possessor. My four-years-old blue flannel once have tasseled out at the bottoms of the legs like corn in August; the pockets hang languidly open like an extremely monogamic deacon's month; they have taken on an intermittent polish, and acquired a compound odor of their own. All these things my wife observed and smelt, and believing it an unfavorable reflection upon her as head of the family, gave me two dollars and four-hits with which I purchased a pair that were not flashy but yet conspicuous. Concealed in these to the waist, I dashed up the bread stairs of Union Square Hall with assurance and a faded umbrella. The hail had a vacant look and lighted gas. In the ante-room was a discussion under Teutonic rules on which I am not stuck, so instead of taking the responsibility to turn out the gas as George Macdonald did on a similar occasion, I took my spraddling umbrella and an oath to feel no more time away in that manner, and stumbled off through the darkness to the Oakland ferry wondering whether men will ever try half as hard to learn facts as to enforce emotional bias.

I sometimes furnish myself with considerable of more or less unsatisfactory amusement when I contemplate the conduct of the human beast in general and my own in particular. I have only about vitality enough to comfortably exist if I could be well fed, clothed, and lodged with so little labor as would constitute moderate exercise for the average biped. My legal companion is no better off, and yet she pulls away about sixty hours a week at a case on an evening paper, while I kick myself out of bed early every morning and after a yellow-jacket-fighting day's work drag myself back late at night. Half the time I work for wages and the rest I spend at home in the kitchen, at the case, or trying to write profound articles. At the latter I spend some of my most wakeful moments. When I get a galleyful of this matter set and corrected and carefully wrapped in a newspaper (that won't fold without breaking) I take it on one arm and an umbrella and some parcels under the other, and wriggle away to the train straining and puffing as though the continuance of all animate existence depended upon my getting the matter into print. At the ferry gate, with the help of my teeth, I get my ticket in shape to be punched, and upon a time arrive at the office of "Freethought." Here I labor with professional deliberation and bulldog persistence at hair-line adjustments on the press, after which I make a run. When all this is repeated from four to seven times, my wife helps me on Sunday to get the paper ready for mailing, while her little niece purports to take care of the house by wading through mud on the streets and plastering it on the floor with her feet. The next day I could be discovered at the rickety old postoffice weighing in a short strapful of papers at a cent a pound after explaining to the clerk that EGOISM is entered at pound rates, a fact so unimportant to him that he forgets it by the next issue. Thus like the Salvation Army, Holiness Band, or the idealistic Communist, we with deprivation and a printing plant publish a paper from which we hear little and for which we receive less. But this daunts not. Why do we persist in work apparently so fruitless? Why do any maggots wiggle. We must wiggle, and we want to do it with a little variation from the general custom of the human larva. But we bump uncomfortably against the rest when they don't know the motion, so we try to teach it to them. It is interesting to reflect upon the trouble the human grub has taken to vary the wiggles of its history, but not so lively as to attempt a vary.

THE MANAGER.

To Walt.

I know you Walt Whitman, and I love you.
Great soul, you are the brother of all free men.
And I know your poetry; it is Hebraic.
I understand and appreciate you.
I am not as broad as you think you are, but I think I am as deep
and high as you are.
You celebrate yourself, and I celebrate myself, (you are the Kosmos,
and I am a part of the Kosmos, the Mikrokosmos
Man), that is the style.
Every man should celebrate himself, and every woman herself, and
every thing itself.
I have always noticed that the man who celebrated himself was a
good fellow to his equals.
It is the O-I-am-modest sort of chap who has to be watched.
He is not honest, he will get you under if he can.
You are “a Kosmos,” you integrate yourself with the universe,
you march with all armies. you wag all tongues, you blow
hot and cold with the same breath?
It’s no use talking Walt, you don’t do it! you are not so big as
you think you are.
You think you include all, you spout bravely about being the poet
of wickedness as much as the poet of goodness;
You would like to fool us into the notion that there is no such
thing as evil.
But I reckon that we are not so green after all.
We don’t believe it, and you don’t believe it, and I will show you
that you don’t believe it.
Let me ask you one question, Walt,—are you as much the poet of
tyranny as the poet of liberty?
Aha!—I have you, and you know I have you.
Old boy!—I dusted the back of your jacket for you that time!
You haven’t a page that celebrates tyranny, and you haven’t a
page but what celebrates liberty.
It is easy for you to say a laissez faire word for vice, for that is
looking toward liberty.
And it is easy for you to say a good word for prostitutes and
convicts and lunatics, staggering sots and gamblers, because
you really don’t think they are as evil as they are supposed

to be.

You somehow suspect that they have not had a fair show.
They are like animals, and you are in sympathy with animals.
They are not respectable, and you like them the better for that.
You have found out that the biggest hearts are apt to beat
under the dirtiest shirts.

You are a big fellow, you have a big hug, you include a good deal;
but can you include chants authoritarian with chants democratic,
sneaks and tyrants with free individuals, lawyers
and liars with the scorners of lies; prohibitionists with rum-bloats,
the shriveled prude simpering scandal with the pimpled
prostitute, the heart-broken widow nursing her dying
babe with the landlord who turns both into the street?

When you chant the merry little girl, red-cheeked, happy-hearted,
chasing butterflies into the wood, do you chant just as merrily
of the hell-faced ruffian who rapes her to death in that wood?

You have songs for the anguished slave, have you a song for the
sleek master who holds him in the dust with his dainty heel,
and nonchalantly strips the blood from the lashes of his cat
with his white fingers?

Are you as much the poet of laws, theories, conventions, as of the
opposite?

You celebrate yourself, you celebrate egoism, you celebrate free
individuals, democracy, liberty, equality, the citizen the center
toward which all things tend.

Do you celebrate taxation, protection, regulation, legislation,
proscription, conscription, confiscation, repression, permission,
prohibitions, inquisitions, censorship?

Bribes, privileges, classes, castes, titles, sinecures, whitewashings,
machines, rings, centralization, monopolies, trusts—the privileged
man and the office-holder the center toward which all
things tend?

I tell you, Walt, you are not big enough! there's not room enough
inside the bag of your shirt or the waist-band of your breeches
to hold them all.

You are like all the Christs—full of charity till you get a lick at the
money changers.

Some things Jesus Christ himself couldn't stand.

Come, I will challenge you! You are the poet of wickedness. Of
all wicked things there is nothing so wicked as tyranny—the
invasion of free individuals—nothing else so damnably, monumentally
bad as that. It includes about all the evil worth
fussing about. Are you the poet of tyranny? I dare you to
be the poet of tyranny.

If you are not the poet of tyrants, you are not the poet of evil.

You celebrate heroes, you celebrate Washington—do you celebrate
 vampires and sneaks? Do you celebrate Caligula, Loyola,
 Calvin, Judge Jeffries, Judge Gary, Anthony Comstock?
 But you feel the point; I don't need to stick it into you.
 You are one of the apologists and explainers away of evil—I know
 the breed.
 They all blow thro' the same born; they are all blind in the same eye.
 They all sing the same song: "Whatever is is right!"
 But pretty soon something sticks in their throats, and then they
 gag and sputter just like common folks.
 They all have to acknowledge something evil, even if it is only your
 refusal to acknowledge everything good.
 No use to tell me everything is good in its place.
 Who said it wasn't?
 And if it isn't in its place—what is it then?
 I am like you, Walt, I like all the despised and homely things—
 elder and mullen and pokeweed, skulls, cobweb, scabs on the
 worm fence, cacti, toads, brush-piles, rots, puddles, sex, gutteral
 tones, oaths, slang, aroma of arm-pits, rags, awkwardness,
 jackasses, dust, snakes, stable manure, skunk cabbage
 —but none of these things are evil.
 Nor are whips evil, nor fetters, nor prussic acid, nor claws, nor
 stings, fangs, lightning, bullets, daggers, malaria, parasites.
 Evil is not any object, or person, or piece of matter, any thought
 or sound, or act—it is a position, an attitude, a relation.
 Stand here, good; stand there, bad. Turn it this way, right; turn
 it that way, wrong. Today, excellent; tomorrow, outrageous.
 The tyrant is not an individual but an attitude; change the attitude
 and he is no tyrant.
 Liberty is a position.
 Justice is a relation.
 Equality and fraternity are of the same.
 You are all right!—you are the universe, and you talk just like the
 universe. If I were the universe I should talk just as you do.
 But I am not the universe, and you are not the universe.
 (From the standpoint of the Kosmos nothing is evil; from our
 standpoint anything may become evil.)
 I am where I am, and you are with me, and I with you.
 I know that evil is necessary, and that we are adapted to it, and
 that without it there would be no good—no matter that
 doesn't make it good.
 Is it evil?—turn it the right way and it will be good. But it has to
 be turned and it is our business to turn it. Turn the cock
 to the right, stop—to the left, open. Which is evil?—neither,
 and yet always one.

Evil is *the turn you don't want!*—it is the relation of the turn to you at that moment which makes it either good or evil. Knowledge is the great good, and ignorance the great evil. But knowledge is a relation, and ignorance is a relation, a relation of the intellect to facts. And sometimes it is evil to know, and sometimes it is good to be ignorant, but that is because of previous misrelation. I am not against all evil, but against that evil which is evil to me, and against that which is evil to me thro' being evil to others who are good to me. And yet I am against all evil, because the evil which is not evil to me is not evil at all but good. Between man and man it is good for us to be free, but between man and the not-man it is good for us to be tyrants—to do evil. The more completely I am the equal of that which is man, and the more completely I am the master of that which is not man, the better for me. Evil is a shifting, visible, invisible, omnipresent fact, but it is a fact, and it were better for a man that he had no brains than that he should butt his head against a fact. Everything is in motion; and evil is here, there, nowhere?—but it is always somewhere, and we must be on guard, always, to maintain our liberties, and maintain our tyrannies. No, Walt, you celebrate yourself, and you are a man; there's no use in your trying to celebrate something else. You are “Walt Whitman one of the roughs,” a free socialist; you will never be counted one of the smooths, or the superfines; one above or against men. But no matter if you do applaud evil; you do not applaud it and everybody knows it. It is strange!—no matter what we say, those who listen to us long enough understand us. Tho' we speak in paradoxes, or borrow unknown tongues. Tho' we contradict our souls. There is something in the belly and the back of the head, and in the knots of the nerves, that teaches them, and they see thro' the clothes. We shall all be sorted right. Men will say, Lloyd the Anarchist (or what I mean by that), and they will say, Whitman the big-heart, egoist, radical, free man, free-lover. They will never say, Whitman the big-bug politician, conservative, dandy, priest, mealy-mouth. I know you Walt Whitman!—you stand for free-men, free-society.

We are comrades.
So long!

—J. WM. LLOYD.

A Gambler.

FROM "LIBERTY," BY GEORGE FORREST.

He was leaning back comfortably in the large wicker rocking chair, the soft red light from the shaded lamp of brass just barely illuminating his features and the broad expanse of his white shirt front, rescuing them from the darkness of the room. He yawned and glanced at his watch, the reflections of the gold case sending sprays of light shivering around the room, drowning themselves finally in the cool depths of the mirrors and the wall. The glittering watch amused him; and it was so pleasant to be amused. Amusement, pleasure, before all things, thought he; but *ennui* was dreadful. When he first suffered *ennui*, he rather enjoyed it,— so novel, you know; quite a sensation. Again he yawned; his watch had ceased to amuse him; and he picked up a book, but that cursed, fashionable light forbade his reading — really he was *ennuys*. But a knock at the door, and a voice calling, drove away the weary expression from his face.

"My dear boy," he was saying to a blonde young man who stood in the door-way, "My dear boy, I'm deuced glad to see you. I heard you were coming; and really, I've been waiting nearly an hour."

He held the newcomer by the hand, and rested the other hand on his shoulder. In the dim light they looked very much like each other: the same clear-cut features, the same cold eyes; the delicate, quivering nostril, alike in both. As they walked into the better light and seated themselves near the lamp, the newcomer's features showed the younger and more sanguine cast. He was smiling, and saying:

"Not more glad than I am to see you, George; it's like meeting an old sweetheart. We liked each other somewhat in old college days, you know."

His voice was soft and musical, and his mobile face reflected the tenderness of his tones. The soft light from the lamp seemed to exercise a silent effect on the room, so that, when they spoke, it felt as though an everlasting stillness had just been broken.

"Like each other!" exclaimed George, "ah, it was nearer love,— that friendship of ours. But we've grown cold since then; I am a man of the world, who cares for no one, for nothing,— you a brilliant young physician, caring only for your profession; perhaps with great ambitions, which I have not, nor wish for; yet, to me, that old friendship is as real today as ever, the sweetest thing of my life."

He became quite earnest as he spoke, and his voice had that beautiful modulation, cold, yet tender, which is common to those who are without an emotion, yet have felt all: in their voice lingers the memory of what their life has been.

"And you, Harry," he continued, "I suppose you sometimes think of those old days; of our plans to reform the world, of your devotion to your profession and the great good you were to do, and of my devotion to everything — nothing. You remember it all, do you not?"

There was something of irony in his voice as he referred to their youthful ambitions, and he smiled in his usual sarcastic manner. Even his smile was slightly grave, and his sarcasm was of that soft, delicate kind which never gives pain.

Harry laughed; there was yet a boyish ring in the laugh, young and fresh.

“Yes,” he answered, “I remember well, and when I received your letter yesterday, stating that you had just returned from one of your long tours, all the old memories became revived. But they’re not so old either, it’s scarcely five years since we left college. I wondered if you were just as independent as over, if you had reached your ideal and become the ‘perfect man,’ that you used to preach so much about. Are you that self-sufficient, inemotional personage yet, or have you changed your views?”

Harry spoke laughingly at first, but his tone changed as he noticed the sad gravity of his friend’s features. He knew how well George had loved that ideal, and himself had, almost unconsciously, endeavored to attain it also.

“My views have not changed,” answered George, enunciating every word gravely and clearly, “except to become more thorough. And you,” he said, his gaze becoming clear and penetrating, “have you attained the ideal?”

“I have married,” stammered Harry, and his sanguine face clouded a little.

“And you are beginning to think you have made a mistake.”

“No, no; you do not understand me. My wife is a most excellent woman, and we loved each other,” interrupted Harry.

“I do understand you, my boy,” said George, slowly. “You fell in love and married; but you are not in love now. True, you do not seem to be very unhappy. You have settled down to make the best of it, but you no longer have an ideal; home, duty, and family have taken its place. I see you understand me. You have done what I expected you would do; it was very natural. What matter if we prove that love can very seldom last a lifetime; people will still agree to love a lifetime — but love is not made by agreement. You may think that I am criticising you. I am not, I am merely stating general truths. You know we used to discuss the question of love and marriage years ago; my views have changed but little since then, but yours have, or you would not have married.”

He paused and toyed with his watch-chain. Harry looked up as his friend ceased speaking and said:

“I remember your ideas about love and my own were almost the same; we thought that true love for life was exceeding rare. Three years ago I changed my mind; it was then I first met my wife. But I will be frank with you, as we have always been with each other. Well, I fell in love with her and we were married, and for a year we were very happy: our views were the same on everything, our natures were parallel; but soon our individuality began to creep back on us, and we grew apart. I no longer love; my wife no longer loves; yet we agree very well together; a staid friendship has taken the place of love. I am not unhappy, yet I confess to you that I would be happier if I had not married.”

George listened attentively, and he stretched forth his hand in sympathy and clasped Harry’s as he spoke:

“I know it all,” he said; “it is always the same story. I early found love to be a very unstable thing, which changes as we change. That which I loved ten years ago I care nothing for now, and that which I care for now I may detest next year. When I was a boy I was religious; I vowed to love Christ above all things, as long as I should live.”

He smiled softly, and slowly said: "Poor little fool — poor little fool." He sighed, and then continued:

"I broke my vow, as you know, for I now love myself above all things; yet I was as much in earnest then as I am now. My agreement to love amounted to nothing, and love and belief were shattered at the same time."

"But even you have not reached the ideal that you had in view," said Harry. "Have you done better than I, or worse?"

"I, ah, I have lived, that is all — sometimes ill, sometimes well, but I have not reached the ideal. The ideal, the perfect man is an impossibility in an imperfect environment. The greater our culture, the greater must be the pain of our vulgar surroundings. Of course I found it difficult to live up to my ideas, but — ideas are flexible things, so I modified some of them. I have not made a martyr of myself: I have enjoyed life; and, in the words of Gustave Fallot, 'I suffer,

I labor, I dream, I enjoy, I think; and, in a word, when my last hour strikes, I shall have lived.' How well I remember that sentence! You know, when we used to read Proudhon, Fallot's letter impressed me very much."

He remained for some time silent, the memories of the past drifting through his mind.

"Well," he resumed, "I haven't read Proudhon in a long time. I spend most of my time drifting about the world, seeing men, places, and such, and doing a great many foolish things. When I read, it is generally George Moore or some other author that the world thinks I should not read. Of late Ibsen has attracted me; in fact, he almost aroused me from my lethargy, and I felt like preaching the old ideal again; but I have subsided, for I know the uselessness of my efforts. Yet the old thoughts were not downed — I was still the cool idealist, though my life would seem to contradict it. While drinking in the *café*, smoking on the boulevard, or card-playing, the old thoughts would come before my mind. I wondered how many days' labor the workmen had to give to supply the young fools with the money which I fleeced from them at poker; and I saw the parallel clearly: the workingmen were fleeced by the fools, and the fools were fleeced by me; and I thought it very, very strange. Then I'd take a brandy and soda and think over it."

"Why, George," interrupted Harry, "I never thought you would gamble. I'm afraid there's very little of the old ideal that you care for."

George smiled, as though he enjoyed his friend's perplexity. He stroked his moustache lazily and seemed in no hurry to relieve the anxiety regarding his morals. At last he spoke, still stroking his moustache, and uttering his words with a pronounced drawl:

"I see you are startled: you think me immoral. I am not. True, I have gambled; in fact, lived by gambling. You undoubtedly think that wrong; but you are mistaken. To obtain money by winning it is no more immoral than to receive it as a gift. Most people think it is; but then" —

He paused abruptly, evidently for effect, and then finished the sentence quietly:

"Most people are fools."

Again he resumed stroking his moustache. He was evidently waiting for Harry to speak. The silence became embarrassing. Finally Harry spoke.

"I had hardly thought that of you, George," he said seriously. "I never supposed you would become a professional gambler, much less endeavor to justify it. You were always so high-minded, so conscientious, that it seems impossible."

"It is because I am conscientious that I am a gambler," he replied. "Startling, isn't it? — I know how it appears to you, impregnated with conventionality as you are,— liberal conventionality though it be. To you my actions appear immoral because you do not understand them. I remember

in old days, when we used to chum together, I frequently startled you, and, liberal though you were, there were many truths which so conflicted with general belief that you would never accept them.”

He became quite in earnest; the train of thought seemed to please him, and he continued fluently:

“General belief is no measure of truth; while it has been the passport of all the great falsehoods of ages. That the world was flat was general belief; general belief was responsible for the horned devil; that the sun moved, that Christ arose from the dead, that the king could do no wrong, that the voice of the people was the voice of a vague, indefinitely-defined, eternal being — all were general beliefs; some of them are still believed in. The list of general beliefs of today which are lies is a long one: the sacredness of marriage, the life-lasting of love, that this is a free country, and, to approach what we were talking of, that gambling is a vice. I repeat, I am a gambler, because I am conscientious and cannot earn a living by fraudulent means.”

He stopped speaking and lazily leaned back in his chair. He had become so much in earnest that he had spoken rapidly, forgetting his assumed drawl; but he now again assumed it.

“Really,” he said, “it requires too much energy to talk on these subjects. It is always the same: one talks and argues, and writes and occasionally thinks; but it doesn’t amount to anything: the energy is wasted. The vast majority still insist on not thinking.”

“Ah!” said Harry, sadly, “I’m afraid you’ve changed much since we were boys together. There is no longer the same affinity between us,— we have grown apart” —

“As lovers do,” said George, finishing the sentence. “Well, what matters!” he continued. “It nearly always happens so.”

Then as Harry arose to go, he arose also, and put on his coat and hat to accompany him, saying as they walked out:

“Well, there is one thing upon which we can agree.”

“What?”

“To take a brandy and soda together.”

EGOISM'S PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE.

EGOISM's purpose is the improvement of social existence through intelligent self-interest. It finds that whatever we have of equal conditions and mutual advantage is due to a prevalence of this principle corresponding with the degree and universality of individual resistance to encroachment.

Reflection will satisfy all who are desirous of being guided in their conclusions by fact, that as organization itself is a process of absorbing every material useful to its purpose, with no limit save that of outside resistance, so must the very fact of its being a separately organized entity make it impossible for it to act with ultimate reference to anything but itself. Observation will show that this holds good throughout the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and that whatever of equality exists among members of a species or between different species has its source and degree in the resisting capacity, of whatever kind, which such member or species can exert against the encroachment of other members or species. The human animal is no exception to this rule. True, its greater complexity has developed the expedient of sometimes performing acts with beneficial results to others, but this is at last analysis only resistance, because it is the only means of resisting the withholding by others from such actor's welfare that which is more desirable than that with which he parts. If, then, (the self-projecting faculty of mankind is such that it will in addition to the direct resistance common to the less complex animals, diplomatically exercise present sacrifice to further extend self, and it being a fact that equality depends upon equal resistance, diplomatic or otherwise, what are its chances in an absence of enlightenment in which the individuals of the majority so far from *intelligently* using this resisting power in their own behalf, do not even believe that they should do so? The result of a general conception so chaotic, would naturally be what we find: the generalization from the practical expediency of certain consideration for others, crystallized through the impulse of blind selfishness into a mysterious and oppressive obligation, credit for the observance of which gratifies the self-projecting faculty of the simple, while the more shrewd evade its exactions, and at every step from the manipulation of the general delusions of religious and political authority to the association of sexes and children at play, project themselves by exchanging this mythical credit for the real comforts and luxuries of the occasion, which the others produce. Thus in addition to the natural disadvantage of unequal capacity, the weaker are deprived through a superstition, of the use of such capacity as they have, as may be seen in their groping blindness all about us.

To secure and maintain equal conditions then, requires a rational understanding of the real object of life as indicated by the facts of its expression. It is plain that the world of humanity is made up of individuals absolutely separate; that life is to this humanity nothing save as it is something to one of these; that one of these can be nothing to another except as he detracts from or adds to his happiness; that on this is based the idea of social expediency; that the resistance of each of these individuals would determine what is socially expedient; that approximately equal resistance makes it equality, and on such continued and a universal resistance depends equality. This can leave no room for any sane action toward others but that of the policy promoting most

the happiness of the acting Ego. Therefore EGOISM insists that the attainment of equal freedom depends upon a course of conduct-replacing the idea of “duty to others” with *expediency* toward others; upon a recognition of the fact that self-pleasure must be the final motive of any act; thus developing a principle for a basis of action about which there can be no misunderstanding, and which will place every person squarely on the merit of his or her probable interests, divested of the opportunity to deceive through pretension, as under the dominance of altruistic idealism. It will maintain that what is generally recognized as morality is nothing other than the expediency deduced from conflicting interests under competition; that it is a policy which, through the hereditary influence of ancestral experience, confirmed by personal experience, is found to pay better than any other known policy; that the belief that it is something other than a policy—a fixed and eternal obligation, outside of and superior to man’s recognized interests, and may not be changed as utility indicates, makes it a superstition in effect like any other superstition which causes its adherent-s to crystallize the expediency adopted by one period into positive regulations for another in which it has no utility, but becomes tyrannical laws and customs in the name of which persecution is justified, as in the fanaticism of any fixed idea.

Another part of its purpose is to help dispel the “Political Authority” superstition and develop a public sentiment which would replace State interference with the protection for person and property which the competition of protecting associations would afford. Then the State’s fanatical tyranny and industry crushing privilege would torture the nerves of poverty-stricken old age or pinch tender youth no more. The most disastrous interference of this monster superstition is its prohibition of the issuing of exchange medium on the ample security of all kinds of property, which at once would abolish speculative interest and practically set all idle hands at productive labor at wages ever nearing the whole product until it should be reached. The next interference is by paper titles to vacant land instead of the just and reasonable one of occupancy and use, which with the employment that free money would give, would furnish all with comfortable homes in a short time, and thereafter even with luxuries from like exertion. Following this is its patent privilege, customs robbery, protective tariff, barbarous decrees in social and sexual affairs; its brutal policy of revenge, instead of restitution, in criminal offenses, and finally its supreme power to violate the individual, and its total irresponsibility.

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