

# **Egoism Vol. I. No. 2.**

Georgia & Henry Replogle

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## Pointers.

Don't take life too seriously. Nothing depends on you but your own happiness, and you are not even obliged to be happy.

The article "Damp, that is the Enemy," on seventh page, is reprinted for the special benefit of our Pacific coast readers, as we believe the damp air to be the worst enemy of health in this climate.

For some reason unknown to us, the second of the series of articles on "The Hour and the Need" by Victor Yarros, has not reached us. These articles are to be put in pamphlet form when concluded.

The series of articles by Tak Kak running in this paper, will be published in pamphlet form when completed. This will be an able statement of the Egoistic philosophy, and a valuable leader in its propaganda.

The stage is said to be a great educator. If this be true, judging from the intelligence of the average theater goer, the "missing link" might be discovered by closing the theaters against that class for a generation or two.

In its characterization of the O'Neill letter as "reactionary, conservative, old-fogyish, and foul with the superstition that sex is inherently unclean," "Liberty" voices the sentiments of this paper, as it does also with regard to "natural" and "unnatural" practices.

Those who delight in seeing men of acknowledged brilliancy accepting the principles of philosophic Anarchism, can find gratification in reading in "Freethought" of May 31, the editor's conclusions on money, in commenting on the Stanford scheme, and in his criticism of Thomas Curtis's position regarding the State owning children.

The trouble with Wordsworth Donisthorpe seems to be that, like thousands of others, he is looking for a kind of eternal square by which to square social existence. In recognized self-interest under free competition, he might find a kind of tape-measure by which to measure it. It is hoped that the social square will go out of market altogether.

The latest news from Mr. Harman is that he has nearly recovered from the cold caused by the State's regulation shave, and is at work in the kitchen. It seems his treatment even by the sword of the State is in marked contrast with that of the vindictive cruelty of the civilian judge, who boasted of the power that he did not fail to abuse.

By a miscalculation of a few feet, in the operating of air-brakes, an engineer on the Oakland narrow gauge local train ran his engine and one coach into an open draw, drowning thirteen persons, but unfortunately escaping with his own life. The frenzied mob wanted to hang him on the spot, but the *revenge* "wisdom" of the State would now be satisfied to comfort the dead with imprisoning him for a number of years, if it could find him.

Husbands are queer creatures; they so criminally love their wives that they often kill another man for doing the same thing. They are outdone only by wives who will kill themselves rather than have their husbands loved by other women. They are both so interested in each other's happiness that the one is perfectly willing to allow the other to be in even the company of the

other sex if they can only be sure that it is not pleasant to be there, but the greater that pleasure the less will it be tolerated.

In marked contrast is the comprehensive conception of the subject, clear-cut logic, and direct application to social and industrial evils of Benj. R. Tucker's "Why I am an Anarchist," in the "Twentieth Century" of May 29<sup>th</sup>, with that of the declamatory denunciation of Most; the evasion and generalizing of Gronlund, and the vicious personalities, and sky-scraping emotionalism of Haskell, each of whom have contributed articles to the "Twentieth Century" on their respective economic and political convictions.

If the average enthusiast were to realize that he and his great grand-children will die and his ideal still not have been generally realized, his enthusiasm would cool down to the point of pay in the pleasure of breaking the monotony of routine ideas instead of being stimulated by a dream of fame and influence. His efforts being thus better timed would be more effective, and better still he himself might be impelled to take some real pleasure as the days pass, even though sitting in the warm sunshine or cool shade be the best he can command.

The advocate of "duty" believes its performance to be the most creditable act conceivable, and his performance of it, the most unselfish. Yet so selfish is he that he will not allow another to do the laudable things, but wants to find *himself* being credited for doing them. If he is so thoroughly unselfish, why not let others have all the opportunities of gaining their fellows' good will. But even this would give him public credit if known by others, and subjective credit if he alone be conscious of it. Some way self-interest and consciousness are inseparable.

The Equity Publishing Company is not an old and well-known establishment in San Francisco, and the postoffice employees are not familiar with the persons of its members, therefore no matter addressed to the editor of EGOISM, or the Egoist Publishing Company, or some other name supposed to be in some way related to Equity Publishing Company, Box 1678, San Francisco, is likely not to reach us. It will be well before sending money for subscription or books to look on the second page of the paper, near the top of the first column, where will be found the address in bold relief.

The indifference with which the masses treat reform ideas would discourage most of those interested in progress were they to thoroughly realize it, but it is really their only protection; through it the beast, ignorance, is held at bay till an idea takes root where it is possible and leads it a little further on. If the prejudice-saturated majority realized what reformers really believe and are trying to inculcate, they would make short work of everything but the most popular crazes. We must watch for the opportunity, drop the seed, and be gone if we be wise.

Love seems to be a kind of subjective torture with which men torment themselves by thinking of women and women by thinking of men; parents by thinking of their children and the children of their parents; the living by thinking of the dead. It dies in the presence of its object or tortures still, being not satisfied. Its presence is not appreciable save by its gnawing torture, other times it does not exist. It can do nothing but sacrifice its possessor or demand sacrifice from its object. It is nothing but memory's phonographic vibrating needle running over the cylinder of personal and hereditary experience. Men heard it and thought it a voice, and have worshiped it as a god, like other phantoms.

Says Hugh O. Pentecost: "A moralist cannot advocate Socialism (or Nationalism)." "Pure morality has in it no place for compromise." "A moralist must be an extremist." In which "morality" is not different from any other form of bigotry, nor the Moralist from other fanatics, and he needs the power of authoritarian Collectivism to enforce what his "pure" and uncompromising

code dictates and his enthusiasm would propagate. Otherwise morality is a matter of personal opinion and all are alike Moralists, which leaves it like God, a mere word-ghost. Verily, Hugh O thou worshipest still the nothing-gods. Come let us worship not gods at all, but see the relativity of things, lest whilst we, be entangled in theological cobwebs progress pass us by and leave us dangling like flies on the wall.

## Religion in Reform.

The constant factors of religion—aggressive enthusiasm, blind devotion, sacrifice, and cruelty indicate that its impelling force lies in its immediate relation to that most primitive faculty of conscious life, the sense of touch and repulsion, the impulse of which as evolution added complexity and strength was to absorb or destroy everything with which it came in contact. The Ego having been made conscious of its being partly by the resistance of other objects, and through this consciousness feeling nothing but that being and such resistance, would by the nature of being endeavor to be all by annihilating all opposition. The life that during the ages has been sacrificed to this blind impulse while experience has been slowly impressing its uselessness is of course incomprehensible. Its spirit has prevailed in physical or mental strife in every age including the present. It is now becoming semi-physical. Men are inclined to use moral suasion first, resorting to physical force as a last expedient in carrying points. This is not due to a growing spirit of Altruism, but to the fact that as the more useless of the weaker elements gave away and the useful and those equal in strength confronted the Ego, it learned to conserve the energy of 'this' root impulse by directing it along the line indicated by experience as productive of the longest pleasure, through preserving the useful and making terms with the strong.

The final basis of religion is nothing other than the crude expression of the sense of being, the blind impulse to be all, from which develops the enthusiasm, blind devotion, sacrifice, and cruelty required in persuing the ideal of becoming all. These elements enter every reform and systematically crucify its adherents in each succeeding crusade. The primitive propelling force expresses itself in the fixed idea of the reform, and from the enthusiasm of proselyting comes the "call" to "duty," the sacrifice to the "cause," the aggression of which aggravates conservatism to persecution—to making martyrs. This in its turn generates sympathy among the hitherto indifferent and secures their support while it adds in all the idea of reverence to those of duty and sacrifice. It now becomes the "holy cause," and intensifies the other elements of devotion to the point of fanaticism, which makes the demand for sacrifice severe and unrelenting. Self-sacrifice is the parent of the sacrifice of others. It says, "I must suffer, why not you." This sentiment combined with the reverence for a "holy cause," makes it easily possible for these reformers to as conscientiously persecute heretics as they themselves were persecuted. Thus animate existence bleeds through the ages while experience slowly grinds into it the expediency of moderation. It slowly but surely impresses the blind Ego that if existence is worth anything its value must consist in its benefit to such Ego; that in whatever degree sacrifice is imposed or risk incurred in that degree is the purpose of being defeated.

This religious fanaticism with its primitive impulse, is the mental state particularly of the physical force revolutionist. He preaches "duty," heroism; enjoins sacrifice, and consigns his comrades to the prison of the persecutor with the pious zeal of the early Christian martyrs while he exults over the benefit to the "holy cause." He refuses to attempt any steps toward their deliverance because it would deprive him of the opportunity of brandishing their impaled liberty before a partially indifferent public for the purpose of gaining the desired support for his violent revolu-

tion. So devoutly does he love his cause that he gladly sacrifices those to it whose suffering is the strongest reason for it. He derides as cowards and Christ-like turners of the “other cheek” those who direct their energies toward removing the errors that make oppressive institutions possible, while with exquisite fidelity to the seeming paradoxes of real life, we find that it is religion that posits *him* as we find him.

So slowly do we learn the variation of a consistent course in thought and conduct that some of our most radical papers are often found urging their constituents in a genuinely religious manner to forward contributions with which to propagate the cause—to prepare better conditions for posterity. This perpetuates the old tendency of religion, that of directing the attention of the Ego to some object or idea too far from himself. Humanity will probably always have a cause, and we can do nothing that will benefit posterity so much as to leave the example of self-defense against all exactions of “duty;” a policy of intelligent self-interest. We do not know what posterity may desire, but we may be reasonably sure that the prevalence of a custom enjoining each to attend to his own affairs will not be amiss, should we ourselves enjoy and leave such a custom. Since every oppressive institution that we now have is the fruit of somebody’s solicitude for posterity or society, we may well abandon that idea. The living, suffering Ego of the now needs the fruit of his own efforts to provide his own pleasure while his flash of eternity lasts. Therefore any means for obtaining his support of reform that does not make it a pleasure as spontaneously entered as the other pleasures he pursues is not defensible. If the matter be presented in a light of mutual benefit that inspires a spontaneous self-interest the pleasure of his flash of eternity is not invaded as by duty.

Another slight relic of the influence of theological dominance in the expression of thought is the use by some of our ablest radical writers of the terms “high,” “noble,” etc. in referring to conduct or complexity in development. Justification of their use in connection with evolution may be sought, but the relative nature of evolution even may soon confine it to being spelled with a little “e” so far as the merit or demerit of its various stages of complexity are concerned. These words are readily traced to the throne of God and the altar of self-sacrifice, and can mean little away from their respective homes.

H.

## The “Duty” Fetich in Law.

The following pathetic description of legal outrage is clipped from the Daily Chronicle of this city:

A painful scene occurred in Judge Lawler’s court yesterday, growing out of the removal of a child from its mother’s custody.

On Saturday last a writ of habeas corpus was granted to David Reulein, commanding Mrs. Anna Clarke to produce her son, aged four years in court. The petition for the writ stated that Reulein and his wife, Kate, were the lawful guardians of the child, and that he had been forcibly removed from their custody by Mrs. Clarke and Rebecca Herringer, her mother. In a suit filed on the same day Mrs. Clark asserted that she had consented to the adoption of her son by the Reuleins some months ago, through fear of personal violence at the hands of her husband, James P. Clarke, a brother of Mrs. Reulein.

When the case was called, Attorney M. Cooney, representing the mother, asked for a continuance, basing his request on a physician’s certificate, that his client was in such a delicate condition that it would be dangerous for her to leave home or to be subjected to any undue excitement. Judge Lawler, however, denied the request, and Mr. Cooney dispatched a messenger for his client and had her brought into court. Testimony was taken which showed that while the Reuleins had legally adopted the child fifteen months ago, he had ever since continued in the custody of his mother, and that she had provided for his support. An attempt was made by Mrs. Clarke’s attorney to show that the adoption paper introduced in evidence was invalid. Reulein’s attorney objected, and Judge Lawler sustained the objection. He further denied a motion to dismiss the writ, and despite the protest of Mr. Cooney, decided that the child should be returned to its guardians.

The bailiff of the court attempted to enforce this order, but the mother clung to her child with a strength born of desperation, and resisted every effort to take him from her. So heart-rending were her cries that the bailiff at length desisted. Another deputy sheriff was sent for, and while the court waited, the mother strained the child to her heart and sobbed out in her grief such disconnected sentences as: “They shall not take him from me!” “I will go to jail first!” “He is my baby!” “I suffered for him and now they would steal him from me!”

The child also sobbed, and there were few dry eyes in the courtroom. When help arrived another vain attempt was made to wrench the boy from his mother’s arms, and again the officers had to desist. Judge Lawler tried to induce Mrs. Clarke to give up the child peaceably. She refused, however, and again the deputy sheriffs, obeying the judge’s order, as he hastily left the courtroom, seized the distracted woman, and,



while two of them held her tightly, a third person standing near seized the screaming boy and bore him from the courtroom. "My baby—oh, my baby!" shrieked Mrs. Clarke hysterically as she fell from the officer's arms to the floor. Again and again the heartrending cry was uttered, but it fell on ears that were deaf to her supplications. For fully ten minutes the poor mother refused to be pacified, but sobbed and moaned as though her heart was broken. Those about the courtroom withdrew and left her alone with her friends and her grief. She was finally sufficiently calmed to permit her parents to lead her from the courtroom and started toward home.

The fetich of "duty" to religion which caused all the sickening cruelties of persecution in the past, is paralleled only by the fetich of duty to law which characterizes the law-worshippers of our time. The crushing cruelty always comes from adherence to the letter of written law. The circumstances and equity of the case are not once thought of, everything must conform to mechanical routine or crude precedent. Despite the fact that the court knew that the mother had been forced through fear of violence to sign the adoption paper, the case was decided as though she had voluntarily signed it.

The incident is an exceedingly clear illustration of the psychology of the "duty" fetich in law. No movement in the whole proceeding was actuated by the least human spontaneity. Nothing but the force of the idea of duty to "law" could have forced these men to tear the child from its mother's arms. None of the officers really wanted the order executed; they saw its injustice, but the slavish psychology of a fixed idea drove them to it as the same superstition drives the religious fanatic to crucify his sympathies. The judge himself could not stand by his decision with the firmness that accompanies one's best judgment, but "hastily left the courtroom." He was not following his own desire or judgment, and could not witness the pain caused by following the letter of the statute.

Had the judge and officers made the same effort to adjust the case on its merits that they did to enforce a stereotyped law, how different would have been the result, for they realized that that law was not applicable to that case, but excused their act by the idea of doing their "duty." Duty to what? Duty to whom? Not to the father, for the child was not to go to him. Not to the guardians for they had no personal claim on the child, but only to a written law; an abstract idea; a thought, which has neither sensation nor sympathy, and cannot be pained or pleased by their actions. On the other hand they were dealing with a living, sensitive, human being, on whom they could see the immediate result of their actions; whom they had no reason to cause to suffer; toward whom they had no ill will; whose suffering even caused them pain, and yet two of them held her arms while a third party took her boy and fled. Physical strength, impelled by social superstition had triumphed, and the woman was left helpless without further consideration.

By forcing this separation these officers were carrying out the law, which is supposed to be the "will of the people," but that as much of the "people" as was present was as feelingly opposed to the enforcement of the law as were the officers, is evidenced by their tears. What a ridiculous spectacle: the people weeping because their "will" was being obeyed! Yet this is the logic of their position. In an age of science, philosophy, and invention bounded only by the imagination, we find a judge, officers, and people helplessly writhing at the feet of a superstition as palpable as ever terrified the most ignorant barbarian, and a public press manipulated by long-titled graduates from longer-titled colleges, which, while pathetically lamenting the fact, no more thinks of proposing a remedy than of proposing to stop the revolving of the earth.

Ye worshipers of “Duty” with a big “D,” does it occur to you that it is in the nature of “duty” to be thus blind, or is this instance only an error in its administration, and if so, what but the abolition of the idea will prevent similar occurrences eternally?

G.

## **Moses Harman.**

Moses Harman is now in penitentiary, sentenced to five years, and to pay a fine of \$300. There are only two things that can be done: one is not to attempt to do anything for him, the other, is to procure the signature of every adult who can be induced to petition the president for his release. EGOISM chooses the latter, and desires its friends to procure each as many signatures to the petition as possible. Petition blanks and copies of a leaflet, containing for those canvassed, a statement of the case, will be furnished upon application to EGOISM, Box 1678, San Francisco, Cal. Attach blank sheets to the bottom of petition sheet until it is too long to handle conveniently, then return to us. Take none but adult men and women.

# The Philosophy of Egoism.

## II

It is now time to meet the demand for a definition of Egoism. The dictionaries must be resorted to for explanations of the meanings of most words, but in any science, art, or philosophy there are some leading terms understood in a more precise manner than that general notion or mass of nearly related significations given in the dictionary under one term. The dictionary is like a map of the world, which shows where a country is with relation to all other countries. The definition of the dictionary is simply objective, not closely analytical. Its language is popular, as in the speaking of black and white as colors. All this is well enough. People need information which will be true to appearances, for practical purposes, and need so wide an extent of this in a moderate compass, that they are glad to get brief explanations or even hints at meanings, prepared by men skilled in classifying linguistic growths. Hence, however, they sometimes find the popular definitions as good but not better than to define cheese as condensed milk. The so-called synonyms have different shades of meaning, but disputants easily yield to the temptation to assume an identical import in two terms, sometimes for the purpose of blackening one by throwing upon it an evil connotation which adheres to the other; and conversely the hearer is usually able to understand immediately whether the speaker, if sincere, is friendly or hostile toward an object, merely by noting the terms chosen in alluding to its existence. We rarely find many sentences together without a moral judgment being conveyed. Such judgments, from an Egoistic point of view, could be illustrated by representing a beggar extolling charity.

The definition of the specialist, on the other hand, is like a map which shows the boundary between two countries, but does not attempt to show anything else. To the navigator land is that beneath his vessel which is not water. To the political economist a lake and a bed of coal are equally land. The two specialists are concerned with two different series of ideas, therefore with different aspects of the object.

The best that can be said of Webster's dictionary definitions of Egoism, is that a reader who already understands the term as it has been used in practical philosophy for more than forty years, may barely recognize the idea as one espies a diamond in a dustheap. "The habit of ... judging of everything by its relation to one's interests or importance," is Webster's nearest approach. In what sense can the individual and his interests be other than all-important to the individual? Only in the sense that, in order to reject Egoism, his interests are not to be understood as including his intellectual and sentimental interest in objects, including other persons. But the Egoist will take the liberty to inquire how any one can be engaged in judging of anything without having taken an interest in it. Let us assume that anew dictionary maker inserts in his work a paragraph like this:

EGOISM, *n.* The principle of self; the doctrine of individuality; self-interest; selfishness.

Then I shall comment by saying that “the doctrine of individuality,” is a happier expression than the single word individuality, for the latter is commonly used to convey the idea of distinctive, marked peculiarities of character. Self-interest is usually restricted to pecuniary interest and the like, ignoring what is reciprocal in the pleasures of companionship and what affords intellectual satisfaction. Selfishness is commonly used to indicate self-gratification in disregard of the feelings of others. All these words indicate Egoism, but they indicate it with special determinations. In the word selfish the termination arrests attention. It is generally disparaging; either connected with bad words or it gives them a contemptuous shade of meaning, as knavish, thievish, foolish, mawkish, bookish, monkish, popish. Hence when a man acts in certain ways causing disgust in other people they declare his action selfish,—not merely a manifestation of self, but one which they purpose castigating by adding the termination expressive of aversion and contempt. The linguistic instinct appears correct to this extent, however incorrect may be the popular judgment regarding certain actions which are thus stigmatized. For want of this thought some writers have laid the whole popular judgment, expressed in the reproach of selfishness, to the account of opposition to the principle of self. There is certainly a great deal of that. It is selfism of course, which protests, and selfishness which protests most against the selfishness of others and against the principle of self in others. Selfishness argues that its pasture will be greener and richer in proportion as others yield in particular desires to the preaching of unselfishness and self-abnegation, which terms, the genius of selfishness cunningly declares to be synonymous whenever its ends are to be served by such a view. Self-abnegation, however, in its full sense, is evidently insanity, while unselfishness may be only selfism without any feature which can be calculated to arouse the antipathy of other individuals. (that is, the unishness of the self). This is a new analysis and I do not pretend that users of the word unselfish are generally conscious of any force in the termination, to which the privative prefix may apply, I but I refer to Webster’s definitions of selfishness and self-love respectively for support as to the usage.

TAK KAK.

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WHAT is the use of putting our heads into the sand and dreaming of an impossible glory? Will it come by dreaming, by denying facts, by shutting our eyes to the enormous pain, and woe, and bitterness of things? Let us be brave and frank. Fling optimism to the winds, and recognize the burden of life, and bear it courageously. Recognize that this universe is for us a battle-ground, and if we don’t fight We shall be borne under by advancing millions. Keep in mind that all the justice in the universe is human justice, and all love human love, and all wisdom human wisdom.—Samuel P. Putnam in “My Religious Experience.”

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THE subjective origin of invasion in general is perhaps never better exemplified than in the well-meaning assurance with which a number of adults will obtrude their philoprogenitive impulses on a helpless babe.

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# The Science of Social Relations.

By the law of the Three Stages, so elaborately set forth by Auguste Comte, we are told that every science, each branch of knowledge, passes through three different theoretical conditions; the theological, or mythical; the metaphysical, or speculative; and the positive or scientific. "Hence," said Comte, "arises three philosophies, or general systems of conceptions on the aggregate of phenomena, each of which excludes the other. The first is the necessary point of departure of the human understanding; and the third is its fixed, or definite, state; the second is merely a state of transition."

This generalization is strikingly illustrated in the metaphysical character of current discussions of social problems, which are everywhere in the crucible of analysis. Every passage from one social system to another is accompanied by a transitional stage wherein scientific convictions are not yet reached and the old figments of the imaginative stage still survive to figure as metaphysical entities supposed in some way to control phenomena and determine events.

An illustration may be cited. The imaginative conception of the Nile and the Ganges as deities gave place later to more abstract conceptions. In the metaphysical stage this passed through a still further abstraction and became the Aqueous Principle. Thus in the middle age, the properties of water, such as being wet, were deemed fully accounted for by stating that its cause was the nature of Aquosity. Words were taken for events and endowed with generative causation. In the historical field this method has had full play, and to it we are indebted in no small degree for the incoherence distinguishing the political and social world.

The philosophy of history in its highest conception embraces not only the study of civilization and the underlying ideas which determine and interpret its course, but the search for its ultimate end, the true theory of order and progress, and a synthetic grouping of the phenomena of social life. Has human history any comprehensive significance? What is the law of progress? Is the evolution of social life interpretable by reason? In these great questions, it will at once be seen, exists the opportunity for the freest display of speculative inquiry. The first and most obvious interpretation of the phenomena of social life, was that of a direct guidance by divine providence in human affairs, watching over and determining all human actions; and even today the press groans beneath the works unceasingly turned out by

"Those pseudo Privy-Councillors of God  
Who write down judgments with a pen hard-nibbed,"

by whom the workings of the almighty mind are as familiarly understood as the fluctuations on 'Change.

Later, we metaphysically personalized Nature and glibly talked of natural laws, natural rights, etc. Though the nasal accent had been dropped, the words had not even the significance of the old myth, for Nature remained but a word to represent the unceasing flux of events, without will or power save as human thought subjectively created it. They fail to realize that the correlations

existing in logic are not necessarily real, objective, the subjective requirements of thought not carrying with them absolute existence outside of and beyond relations.

On the one hand science analyzes the feelings and sentiments, and subjects them to a microscopic study, submitting them to the law of averages, considering them as relations and reducing them to their phenomenal manifestations. On the other hand dogmatic theology and its progeny, metaphysics, searching after final causes turns its back on present needs of social existence. The one uses the microscope for increasing our knowledge of specialties; the other a speculative telescope for extra-mundane life. Science in freeing itself from the finite speculations of relative minds that law is an expression of will, rather than a generalization describing mode of action, in short, as an objective causative will acting in phenomena, instead of being merely an ideal conception of the phenomena themselves classified according to their resemblance to other phenomena, has been slow in extending its sway into the field of sociology.

The positive, or scientific method consists in three phases: first, observations of *facts*; second, their classification into generalizations, or *laws*; third, *verification*.

Turning from the historical to the social sphere, nowhere do we find greater the prevalence of incoherence than in political-economical questions. The same metaphysical conception of laws as an active force or creative energy in the renovation of society prevails today as in the time of the French economists of the last century. It forms but a part of the characteristic discord of the present regime, wherein the thousand and one quack remedies submitted for the redress of social ills attest the inability of prevalent methods to grapple with the problems.

The age is teeming with schemes, as before the French revolution, to secure the natural rights of those who feel their equal freedom abridged. Read the French economists, the debates in the parliaments, in the National Convention, and we find the remedy in—organizing liberty! By this mysterious and undefined principle, undefined save in metaphysical terms, all wrongs were to be righted, all ills redressed. Does the tenure of land cripple agricultural development? Does the industrial policy restrict manufactures? Does monopoly over capital limit exchange? In reply they set up abstract man, the isolated individual, without historical connection with the past or social ties with his fellows, and demanded for him metaphysical “natural rights.”

The modern, or scientific method starting with facts explores the world for past and present social relations. From their collaboration we rise to the generalization that society is more equitable precisely as social relations are unhampered by interference. As generalization from facts constitutes scientific “law,” we are led to posit the “law of equal freedom” as the true basis for social activity. Verification of this is unceasingly being developed, hence in sociology all rights are equal, all laws social; evolved, not conferred. To assert a “right” is but the negative form of stating that equal privilege is demanded because denied. In short equality of rights, of privilege, eliminates rights. The law of equal freedom being the product of social evolution, each age determines for itself its application. Regarded from the ethical standpoint truth is no longer spelled with a capital initial T, but becomes adaptation to environment; like all else, relative.

While we are social beings, the product of an evolved social environment, our moral sense the growing conception of an external self, still the basis of all social relations, rights, truth, ethics, becomes in the last analysis primarily the assertion of the individual within the lines of equal freedom, asserting for each equal right for unequal capacity, which necessarily carries with it respect for and the same assertion of the equal right of others. Mutual interests are thus seen to be not only based but furthered by self-interest, and both God and Nature relegated to the limbo of past personalizations, survivals of a more childish form of thought.

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LIBERTY is essentially an organizing force. To insure equality between men and peace among nations, agriculture and industry, and the centres of education, business, and storage, must be distributed according to the climate and the geographical position of the country, the nature of the products, the character and natural talents of the inhabitants, etc. in proportions so just, so wise, so harmonious, that in no place shall there ever be either an excess or a lack of population, consumption, and products. There commences the science of public and private right, the true political economy.—Proudhon.

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## Enlightened Selfishness.

The world justly condemns stupid selfishness, but when the world concludes that all sorts of selfishness are wrong and debasing, then the world itself is stupid. Enlightened selfishness leads a man not to wrong his neighbor or himself, while stupid or ignorant selfishness induces one to harm both himself and others. We have all been taught that to be selfish is to be base. We have learned to abhor the word selfishness, and it seems at first sight, that anyone who will try to make out that even enlightened selfishness is the real guiding power of human life, is attempting to corrupt us with error.

Most people cannot see how selfishness can take the place of morality, duty, and religion. In the first place a large part of the race does not rise high enough in the scale of intelligence to see that very many of the most familiar words are without meaning. They are worse than a mouldy chestnut; for even it has some sort of substance within, but the words God, heaven, morality, duty, are not words that have anything inside. They are absolutely empty, and void as a burst bubble, but the stupidly selfish are receiving them for face value. They are the bank paper of banks that never had anything more than an imaginary existence.

It is plain that blind selfishness seeks for immediate pleasure—it riots in overdoing the pleasure act, while intelligent selfishness takes a broad survey of life, and aims to secure the more elevating and lasting pleasures. Intelligent selfishness does not induce one to conform to justice and equal freedom from any sense of duty, but because it pays best to do so. There is no such thing as “duty.” It is a figment of the brain, a fancy, a word-ghost. When the phantom-god is dissolved in the crucible of science, there are no grounds on which duty can rest. After the phantom-god has left the mind, man rationally turns to find his greatest happiness. Duty implies obligation, but to whom are you obliged ? Echo answers “to whom?”

The Christian will say “you are in duty bound to tell the truth.” But there is no duty at all in the matter. It is a question of expediency. The intelligent individual holds truth in high esteem because it contributes to human happiness. It does not pay to lie. The experience of mankind has established a consensus on truthfulness, but as a “virtue,” or “duty,” the consensus has fixed no definite standard respecting it. There is no standard of truth. You are responsible concerning truth, for yourself and only to yourself. You owe no obligation to any other human being, but your intelligent selfishness will lead you to pay due regard to the so-called cardinal virtues, as they lie close to the path that leads to the greatest happiness. The ray of light that falls on the path of every mortal is happiness

Some people drink so little from the cup of joy, that in their despair hope points them to another and better world beyond this life, where happiness is supreme and constant; there are others who are content with the consolations of this basement world. But all alike, saint and sinner, are moved by the selfish desire of happiness. The minister has a call from Georgetown with an increase of \$500 in his salary. He leaves Jamestown, and goes to Georgetown. Like Moses, he has “respect unto the recompense of the reward.” He still retains his title to mansions in the

skies. Just a little selfish. Ministers and laymen are conscious of a genuine thrill of joy when you hold up before their possible grasp the "Almighty Dollar."

If one clearly comprehends the nature of intelligent selfishness he will not find it difficult to understand Anarchism, but until he can clearly see that the spur-wheel in the machinery of human life is selfishness, he has not yet learned the "a b c" of Anarchism. If he admits selfishness to be the constant motive, but decries it, he has yet to fix his attention upon the nature of selfishness seeking the highest happiness of the individual through the recognition of equal freedom.

W. S. BELL.

## Gronlund's Time-serving Evasion.

Mr. Laurence Gronlund has contributed an article to the "Twentieth Century" entitled, "Why I am a Socialist." In it he makes a very curious and significant omission; he fails to use the word *State* throughout the whole article of over twelve hundred words. This word does not once occur. He very astutely confines himself to the word *Socialism*. Now Individualists know that Mr. Gronlund is a *State* Socialist. Mr. Bellamy, the father and founder of that new sentimental State Socialism disguised under the reputable name of Nationalism, is a student of Mr. Gronlund, and is heels over head in debt to him for all he knows or doesn't know of the science of State socialistic government. The omission of the compound word "State-Socialism," by Mr. Gronlund, is tacitly admitting that like "calomel and jalap" it is becoming a nauseous compound among men making a conscientious and intelligent study of economic freedom.

I am glad to see Mr. Gronlund's thoughtful admission of the unpopularity of the word "State," and this peculiar omission shows that the best way to ascertain what Mr. Gronlund knows about *State* Socialism is not to study what he says, but what he fails to say.

Mr. Gronlund cannot resist the temptation so prevalent among sentimental governmentalsists to give the Individualists a back-handed slap. This is a custom that has been followed so long that not to do it would be to ignore the "customs of the country." See how gently and genteely he lays us out in the following sentences: "There are two temperments in the world: men of an individualist order of mind, who cannot bear to have their liberty in the least infringed upon, and who insist on the right not alone of using, but of *abusing* what is theirs, and men of the opposite spirit, the Socialist spirit [add the word "State" to catch Mr. Gronlund's true meaning]. The fact that I belong to the latter class is sufficient to explain my position. I further hold that it is perfectly useless to try to *convert* the former class (Individualists). Take for instance Henry George; he is from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet an Individualist; that means, that he, in my opinion, never will and considering his *maturity*, never can become a [State!] Socialist."

I wish I was as sure of Henry George's Individualism as I am of Mr. Gronlund's uninformed state of mind on that subject. Henry George undoubtedly has individualistic tendencies, and this fact alone places him a long step ahead of Mr. Gronlund's State Socialism. If Mr. George is an Individualist it is (as Mr. Gronlund unwittingly says) because of his *maturity—intellectual* maturity. It takes a somewhat matured mind to comprehend the full meaning of the word Individualism. *If* Mr. Gronlund understands this point he will know why he is not himself an Individualist. The self-complacency with which Mr. Gronlund treats the position of the Individualist, in the sentences quoted, shows his acquaintance with egotism to be greater than his knowledge of Egoism. If his idea of liberty consists in believing that twenty or more men know what the individual wants or needs better than he does himself, that it is something to be doled out to him from the Socialist *State* as soup is from a "soup-house" to a charity patient, then indeed would it be possible to "abuse our liberty" by demanding more liberty. But in case of refusal by Collectivists like Mr. Gronlund to allow us that which by equal freedom is really ours, we would be able to demonstrate to more comprehensive people our right to use or "abuse" our liberty providing in

the abuse of our liberty we do not abuse the liberty of another individual, but confine ourselves to the abuse of our own. Surely Mr. Gronlund would not object to this unless he has turned Moralistic and wishes to force men to do "right" in accordance with his theologically socialistic conception of what is right and wrong, by passing a *law* that would prohibit men from abusing their liberty. In that case the idea of liberty would undergo a transformation only equaled by the transformation scenes in the spectacular play of the "Black Crook."

Mr. Gronlund thinks it useless to try to convert the Individualists to Socialism. This is a gratuitous assertion on his part, and is an evidence that he himself is not a Socialist in its broad, true sense, or he would know that Individualists are already Socialists and need no conversion.

The trouble with Mr. Gronlund is that he, as he says, "believes in a *moral* ordering of this world." Now in order to enforce this conviction upon individuals you have got to have a State, a collective, centralized State, under the governorship of men with the same moral conceptions as Mr. Gronlund, therefore Mr. Gronlund is a State Socialist and should have so labeled himself in his article, "Why I am a Socialist." This would have prevented the confusion in the minds of beginners who do not thoroughly grasp the difference between Socialism pure and undefiled, and State Socialism. The first is Socialism *without* authority, moral or immoral, while the latter is Socialism *and* authority.

It is true that Individualists can never be converted to State Socialism, for the simple reason that they are subject in common to intellectual evolutionary growth (this being the only form of subjection that they will willingly submit to), and having once partaken of that, to them, social emetic called State Socialism, never return to swallow the rejected contents of a sick stomach. They prefer not to reverse the order of mental evolution for the same reason that an Agnostic never returns to the church, or that progress never walks backward like a crab. This is the reason that Individualists cannot accept State Socialism. "It is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous," and Individualists would be obliged to take that step backward in order to occupy the position that Mr. Gronlund does.

San Diego, Cal.

F. B. PARSE.

## Damp, that is the Enemy.

Sir Edwin Chadwick, known in England as the “pioneer of sanitary science,” opened the winter session of the London Sanitary Institute by reading a paper, in the Parkes Museum, Regent Street, on “The General History and Principles of Sanitation.” He summed up his conclusions as follows:

I have desired to show that sanitation possesses a history as old as the oldest of religions, and may be looked upon, in itself, as a form, originally, of religious observance.

In the second place, turning from the first days of sanitation to some of the modern essentials of the art, I dwelt on the importance of the study of dampness of air as a cause of disease. I might, perhaps, have entered into a very wide field. I might have tried to indicate the manner in which damp affects the human body,—whether it acts as the bearer of morbid particles, living or dead, or whether it exerts its influence in a more direct manner by simple interference with vital activities essential to health. I must be content to state the main factor, damp, as the grand traitor, leaving it to others to find out and expound all the details. But, after all, they will not be able to convey to you more than one practical lesson that, if damp be kept out, disease will be kept out of the land, the town, and the dwellinghouse. It is not invariably the new house that is rendered dangerous by being damp. There are in this country many old houses, picturesquely situated, which are not less dangerous. The stranger passing one of these residences is struck by its beauty. There is the ancient moat around it, or the lake in front, with the sailing boat and swans, the summer house and splendid trees down to the water’s edge. The stranger may well enough be fascinated by the view; but let him inquire, and he will too often find a truly ghostly history of the place. He will be told, probably with some exaggeration of the truth, that the house is unlucky, that no one who has lived in it has reared a healthy child, and that a traditional malediction taints the place. If he enter the house, he finds a basement steaming with water vapor; walls constantly bedewed with moisture, cellars coated with fungus and mould, drawing-rooms and dining-rooms always, except in the very heat of summer, oppressive from moisture; bed-rooms, the windows of which are, in winter, often so frosted on their inner surface, from condensation of the water in the air of the room, that all day they are coated with ice. The malediction of the young nurtured in that mansion may not be so deep as is rumored, and it is much less obscure than is imagined; but it is there, and its name is damp.

In the third place, I have striven to urge the necessity of instant, continuous, and automatic self-cleansing of every house, town, and city. In primitive times, amongst nomadic people, the old Mosaic method was a good one, and under some conditions, this method, somewhat modified, is still, to a limited extent, applicable. The great principle, however, which I wish emphatically to fix in your minds is that of circulation versus stagnation: the only true and vital sanitary plan of drawing away at every moment, by an unceasing mechanical central engine power, all the dead human and other animal excreta of communities, and casting it upon the lands undecomposed, so that they may, through the intermediate work of plants, break out into life again, and give sustenance to man and animal. Let nothing move you from this lesson of sanitation. It is the

foundation of the best sanitary work, beside of which all else of the kind is a mere compromise, and often nothing less than an aggravation of the mischiefs intended to be rectified.

In the fourth place, passing from the community to the individual, I tried to inculcate on modern scientific principles the force of the old motto, "Wash and be clean." It was my special desire in enforcing this lesson to make it applicable to the young, so that personal cleanliness may not only become a habit of life, but a habit that is felt as a necessity. Lastly, it was my wish to convey hope and confidence for the future by what we have learned of the past; and particularly to open up a vista of a new future for the wage classes of the population. I held out the modest expectation that under sanitation every family may, in a happier day, be provided with a dwelling well drained, well warmed, well ventilated, well lighted, well supplied with water, and well supplied with all comforts for preparation of food, and wholesome repose. I might have suggested more had I gone in, for luxury; but my long experience has shown me so much cross danger from luxury that I am quite content to leave the recommendation I have offered where it is, convinced that that luxury will of itself follow comfort fast enough to be compatible with safety, without any urgent pressure from you or from me.—Transatlantic.

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COULD there be a greater, and apparently more dismal, paradox than the sight of the seer of democracy sitting serene under the total neglect of the democracy? If anything could bely the faith of the "Democratic Vistas," ... it is the spectacle of the only great living American poet dependent in his old age upon the sympathy—and at one moment almost upon the maintenance—of foreign friends. And yet he keeps his faith in the faithless people unshaken, ... if he is right in his robust belief, surely the solution of the paradox lies in the meaning of that much abused word the "people." The "people" in whom his confidence burns so unquenchably are not the rich people, not the millions of wire-pullers and place-hunters, not the spurious elite of culture, but the mass of the people, who know little of Whitman and his books, or of any books, who labor obscurely, manfully, and restlessly, who represent the vast sum-total of energy comparable to the energies of nature herself,—the mass of the people whose force and fertility are independent of all possible vicissitudes in institutions—Oliver Elton, in the London Academy.

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## Egographs.

Original matter often sacrifices quality, and usually quantity, as the scissors are more prolific as well as select than the pen.

Anger and fury, though they add strength to the sinews of the body, yet are found to relax those of the mind, and to render all its efforts feeble and impotent—Swift.

Out of a world of unwise, nothing but an unwisdom can be made. Arrange it, constitution-build it, sift it through ballot-boxes as thou wilt, it is and remains an unwisdom, the new prey of new quacks and unclean things, the latter end of it slightly better than the beginning. Who can bring a wise thing out of a man unwise? No one. —Carlyle.

There is inequality in nature, but it is a moderate, orderly inequality; excessive inequality, great poverty by the side of extreme wealth, is the work of the State. It is only in its shadow that, flying the flag of solidarity, the egoism of some fails to be checked by that of others. How, then, is it possible for the State to remedy this wrong? —Roux<sup>1</sup> in the *Journal des Economistes*.

I found a wild flower one day, and, wondering at its beauty and perfection in every part, cried: “This lovely flower, then, and myriads of others, bloom unregarded, oft-times unseen, by human eye.” I seemed to hear the flower reply: “Thou fool! thinkest thou I bloom in order to be seen? I bloom for myself, not for others, because it pleases me. Therein, because I exist, is my joy and contentment.” —Schopenhauer.

Government is a suction-pump, with its draughtpipe anchored in industry’s pocket. It draws the valuables out of that pocket, and forces them into the pocket of idleness. This is the agent that makes the many poor, while it makes the few rich. The rich in turn loan the plunder to industry, at usury, acting as a blister on the wound made by government, intensifying the disease, till it becomes unendurable. The church then comes along and applies a poultice composed of two parts, one to “bear the burden for Christ’s sake,” the other a small sprinkle of charity—the mite it can spare from support of the priesthood. A small mite it is, too.—Selected.

I am told that it is for my good that I am governed; now, as I give my money for being governed, it follows that it is for my good that I give my money; which is possible, but calls nevertheless for verification. Moreover, in addition to the fact that no one can be more familiar than myself with the means of making myself happy, I also find it strange, incomprehensible, unnatural, and extra-human, that people should devote themselves to the happiness of those whom they do not know, and I declare that I have not the honor of being known to the men who govern me. Hence I am justified in saying that from my standpoint they are really too good and, in fact, somewhat indiscreet who concern themselves so much about my felicity, especially when it is not proven that I am incapable of pursuing its realization *myself*.—Bellegarigue.

Humanity in our century resembles a traveler who, on leaving the city which he is to see no more, lingers, has regrets, retraces his steps, has always forgotten something which he goes to find; and night overtakes him on the road, so that he has no shelter either in the city which he has left or in that at which he has not arrived, and must sleep in the beautiful starlight. We are very willing to go forward to liberty, but there is always something that we regret in authority.

We return, we take what we can, we bring it along, we load ourselves down, and do not advance. And this simply from not understanding that liberty and authority are two different countries, which have nothing in common, that one cannot live in two places at the same time, and that we must stay where we are unless it is our formal intention to go somewhere else.—Henry Maret in *Le Radical*.

In all the attempts of moralists, I see this fatal error: a belief in the superior worth of some one state of mind in which we are supposed to have a true perception of reality. The aspect thus seized must be abided by, and our thoughts and actions subordinated accordingly. Whatever tends to question it must be thrown aside as frivolity, or stamped down as sin—not in ourselves alone, but also in others. That which at first was pure delight in us, a gift of grace, what have we made of it? A yoke for our own necks, and stocks for other men's feet. This is the misdeed of morality—that it takes the innocent pleasure we may have in our own ways, and replaces it by a duty that must rule when the pleasure which was the sign of life is gone; must rule at home and abroad. After which we look round, and marvel to find the world joyless and egotistical. And we try to warm in ourselves and in others the first day's enthusiasm; we expatiate on the sanctity of the law, in hopes that its defense in common will draw us nearer one to another. Not so. What we may thus stir up is a superficial emotion that creates in our imagination a bond of sympathy between us and our brothers, but leaves us as far apart as ever in our practical impulses. We fall into each other's arms while the sound of the church organ lasts, but as soon as it expires we are ready to condemn each other on appearances, and strictly by the letter of the law. The taint of egotism lies farther back—in our misconception of reality. The day we invested it with a character of permanence, and resolved to abide by it such as it appeared to us then, we were cut off from experience.—H. Brewster.



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