

Egoism Vol. II. No. 5.

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Pointers.

The article, "A Few Good Books," by George Forrest, which appears on another page was originally written for "Fair Play" and forwarded to us after that magazine ceased publication.

Paternalistic Russia's censorial interest in its subjects is well known but now when hundreds of thousands of them are starving the State does not know of them. But of course when they have nothing to be plundered of it has no function to exercise in connection with them.

The "Beacon," of this city, hitherto published by Sigismund Danielewicz, announces Mr. Danielewicz's retirement and its continuance by its former assistant editor, Clara Dixon Davidson, and by H. C. B. Cowell. The new management is evolutionistic in sentiment and the paper will no longer be an advocate of physical force revolution. While we esteem Mr. Danielewicz as a friend we welcome the change and his successors.

What the press tries to conceal in its lines it usually exposes between them. "Life" is a paper devoted to caricaturing the living habit and exposing its frivolities and vanity. The striking feature is that it illustrates none but bourgeoisie life; all other animate function being realistically regarded as commodity—horses, cows, sheep, fowls, and the laboring biped. The existence of these is not legitimate "life," only the blank lottery tickets that make drawing numbers be what they are.

A Socialist paper in London has been suppressed for attacking the emperor and chancellor of Germany. The wealthiest families of this country are making it their chief accomplishment to marry their daughters to extra copies of the nobility. This collusion of the powers against kickers, and this social engrafting of the wealthy with members of the powers should impress even the dullest that government as a principle is the enemy of equality; the science of brigandage—absolute plundering prerogative combined with full social benefits and public honors.

Quebec furnishes an example of the efficiency of municipal supervision. A fire recently broke out there which turned seventy-five families in the streets. The firemen could do nothing because the pipe of the water supply was too small to furnish sufficient water. Insurance companies maintaining private fire forces would never be caught in such a stupidity, for they would have money at stake. But the collectivity having only political obligation at stake Without competition, soon reaches the impossible and lets God, the next authority, fill the subscription list.

San Francisco "Freethought" is no more. It has consolidated with the New York "Truth Seeker," and Samuel P. Putnam's "News and Notes" are published in that paper and a branch office with its books and pamphlets is kept at the old stand in this city. As usual, insufficient support was the cause of this change. EGOISM is now one of the only two radical papers on the Coast, and has just nine paid up subscribers in California. No other state is so near home, so the prophet. is much greater in many others. While support is yearningly desirable, the regular appearance of the paper does not absolutely depend upon it. It has a habit of materializing anyway.

An employers' union to be extended over the entire state has been organized in this city to resist trades unions. This will bring organization against organization. The proprietor backed by the government will be pitted against the sentiment bolstered laborer. It will expose the ineffec-

tiveness of unionism to solve the labor question when it comes to the final test and tend to cause labor to look deeper than the surface for the cause of its helplessness and a solution. But it will not swell the ranks of the economic solvers yet. Political demagoguery must have a good long pull on labor before it will listen to a more profound canvassing of the subject. It is so easy to drop a little piece of paper in a slot and get a brand new legislator who will square things right up (gradually). Nearly all the leaders of the unions are State Socialists at heart, and as their proposition is only a consistent extension of present methods it will not be hard to get numbers, and we may look for a crop of that ism at no distant day. Ambitious political aspirants are as plenty and ravenous as fleas, and they use the same methods to a dot that are employed by the old party manipulators. The same glittering generalities, barrenness of logic, and appeal to gushing sentiment characterize their public efforts. There are probably not many of them aware that they will not effect any remedy, but their methods of propaganda are precisely as if they were so aware. They go straight for popularity and power and do not attempt to inculcate a solitary tenet of economic science. New men will get into office, some restrictions will be set, stagnation will follow, and the ox-eyed toiler will gaze in astonishment at the vacancy from which the phantom of alleged relief has vanished. If by that time the giants of fortune and men with superior natural endowments have paternal regulation enough, the handful of rationalists may secure a hearing for economic science, and the final start toward equal opportunity and the spontaneities of equal freedom will be made.

A Face Serene.

An Egoistic Ideal.

I would my face were as a god's in mien,
Not proud, or pitiless, or taint with scorn,
But calm, illuminate with joy is born;
The face of one whose eyes to smile are seen
As deep, still fountains, crystal-clear and
 clean,
Hold visions sweet of blue-sky peace 'mid
 thorn
And crag of rudest wilderness, uptorn;
"Self-peace!—To others peace!" from depths
 serene.
Ah, beautiful are lips that restful moire,
And strong, smooth brows that fairly,
 calmly think,
And gentle eyes whose courage is to death;
The fair, strong features whoso sees must
 love,
The firm, strong hands that with yours truly
 link,
The pleasant mouth whence cometh Truth's
 sweet breath.

J. WM. LLOYD.

THE English clergy recently asked the prayers of the people that the increased freedom in education of a new educational act might not have an injurious effect on religion. They know their danger and expose the weakness of their cause fully as well as those people who deem it necessary to teach patriotism in the public schools, since there is no inducement to spontaneously harbor such a sentiment.

THE "American Non Conformist" has removed from Kansas to Indianapolis, Ind., without missing the regular weekly issue. It is now published by the Vincent Bros. Pub. Co., and has

acquired among other new members to the firm, Watson Heston, the famous Freethought cartoonist. When EGOISM's publishers were still political authoritarians one of them was slightly acquainted with the junior Vincent and found him a democratically good fellow, which makes it seem good to note the 'brothers' influencive and financial success. Then comes that other thought, not to throw an ordinary wet blanket but a whole water-soaked show tent upon our ardor, by the consciousness that that success marks the ripening for an extension and intensification of State interference, the only enemy of freedom and prosperity. Not that these men love or desire the exercise of tyranny and reaction. but because a political effort which does not work for repeal alone, necessitates such tyranny and reaction. This will be clearer when the excitement of political contest leaves the mind to calmly review the work in the light of its ineffective effect.

Editorial Slashes.

The "Examiner" of this city has published some cuts of a Chinese woman at the beginning and at the end of four years of marital bliss with a certain *Chinaman*. As the first picture is the embodiment of vigor and fleshy plumpness, so is the latter that of lassitude and bony angularity. But let the press publish a representative number of representative cases of American monogamic marriage at its beginning and four years after, and it will illustrate that the barbarism consists chiefly in the institution, and that our alleged civilization in this respect is yet as far removed from the really civil as the same barbarity of the stationary race. The beastly crudity of meddling by word or deed with others' sexual relations must become more unpopular than it now is before we can afford to criticise the results of other barbarians' domestic habits.

Oakland has been having one of the most provoking divorce cases that I have ever noticed. The husband was the chief employee of an insurance company and was much away from home. The president of the company became sensitive to the wife's physical charms. Her isolation evidently accumulated such a surplus of vitality as made her susceptible to his advances, and they indulged in mutual orgies which prostrated her. Weakened, regretful, and the slave of the duty superstition, she confessed the cause of her prostration to her husband. He became dramatic and went to his employer's office and fired a few bullets into him. Then fearing the gallows he pathetically begged his wife for a confession of her intimacy with the wounded man with which to save the shooter's life at the trial, promising her a home and protection. Finally, with the understanding that she was to burn it after use, she dictated and signed a confession. It cleared him. He refused to destroy it and used it to secure a divorce from her and try to drive her to the gutter, which he swears he will do. Language fails to fittingly describe such a wretch.

The claim that government regardless of form is an autocratic institution for suppression received another confirmation in the attitude of the United States toward Chile's insurgents. The insurgents naturally expected sympathy and at least not interference from the great republic for the like of which they were fighting, but the stiffest monarchies prompted by commercial interests were more ready to favor them. Innocent people! when they have been blessed with majority tyranny and minority royal prerogative for a hundred years as we have, some of them may discover that plunder and privilege is the real purpose of political authority under whatsoever name, and then the cause of American indifference to the principle sentiment in the matter will be clearer. They were fighting privilege authoritarians there and appealed to the same class here, and it is not surprising that they should be disregarded. Intelligent sentiments on the idea of equal freedom occasion more surprise and opposition on the part of the average American than perhaps any other nationality. He has no idea of such a thing and prides himself on the fact

that his government is as severe as any other. His conscience and ethics are legally constituted, and the breadth of thought which underlies revolution and new social regimes has no more place in his mind than in that of the simplest peasant.

About the first of this month a woman who was in Paris received a dispatch that her husband in New York was dangerously ill, and she at once started for Liverpool but was unable to secure passage for two days. After losing so much time she finally arrived at Boston in the night and tried to get off the vessel, but was refused permission to land until the health officers had been aboard. This kept her the rest of the night and when red tape finally allowed her to go to a train she had been thus uselessly detained too long and arrived at her husband's bedside just a half hour too late. This is another of the beauties of the machine regulation which impulsive and shortsighted collectivists wish to extend to every department of industrial activity and social intercourse. Nobody was to blame: the captain could not afford to be fined for landing passengers illegally; the officers could not know of the case and be ready to land the single passenger, and yet she was uselessly and outrageously detained. Personally, neither captain, officers, nor the people objected, but the unwieldiness of a representative regulative system was the cause. The captain could not get at the officers to permit the landing, nor the officers could not get at their constituents to explain a failure to perform contracted duty had they failed to arraign the captain. And if even a judge had allowed him to go free, there was the loss of time as well as risk of not so escaping a fear of which caused just what occurred. Had restraint from invasion instead of paternal regulation been the executive force of the country, this outrage would not have been perpetrated. No person would have risked coming before a local jury with so groundless a charge, and if they had there would not have been the slightest danger of a penalty for the captain. On the other hand to land contagious disease among the people would be followed by punishment so swiftly and adequate that no one could any more afford to do such a thing under such a regime than under the present. What would be true of freedom's administration in such a case would be as true of all other kinds of more important cases in social compromise.

When we read the history of bygone ages as seen by modern commentators, the active brutality in high places is prominent and constant, but the phenomena of course disappears just as our self-sufficient age or country is approached. Any one similarly exposing similar infractions of equal liberty in this age can become just such a victim by just such powers under just such subterfuges as those we read of, and few indeed see the least resemblance. The daily press in its chase for sensation recently discovered that Martinez of this state has become a Mecca for release from matrimonial bondage by divorce. Upon this discovery the preachers of the country, with the brutal ferocity characteristic of those men of alleged sympathy with suffering, raised a coyote chorus that set their monogamy-smashed she eagle-beaks popping like so many screech owls. Not the least shadow of an argument was offered against divorce—nothing but hysterical shrieks of, “a crying shame,” “it's a disgrace,” a “burning shame,” and other such stereotyped and senseless guinea clatter. And the discovery that called out this shower of five thousand years-old Asiatic stone-'em-to-death sentiment is, that certain people who have a vague idea that pleasure

is the legitimate purpose of life, are freeing themselves from what they believe to be their greatest impediment to greater happiness. And more happiness, especially if it is not of the theological brand, is a thing that God's good people cannot witness with composure. The idea of enjoying refreshing new magnetism more than once in a lifetime is too wildly extravagant. This crude mental infusoria cropped out in the recommendation of a "humane" reverend who would allow divorce only for infidelity and not allow the guilty party to marry again. This conformity to a barbaric concept,—this slavery to an idea—a mere word ghost, is the Christian and the popular conception of ethics. No matter how unpleasant or even wretched one might care to make the life of another by cruelty, neglect, or the most outrageous invasions, there would be no escape for him or her. But if one did an act in no way really injuring the other, that other might drive her from her home and her property or if it be a man he might be driven away and his labor ever afterward plundered with alimony. In either case the one who risks everything for even momentary gratification, is to be deprived of not only everything else, but as nearly as possible from further such gratification. The sensitive, suffering, animate, must always be sacrificed to the abstract. It would never do to let people in domestic turbulence and wretchedness enjoy complacency and after a time perhaps intensify the rest by the pleasures of a new conquest. Such breaks in the humdrum of institution monotony tend to divert the mind from a hereafter in which it hopes for relief from the miseries born of popular superstition, therefore these echoes of Jewish barbarism must do everything in their power to maintain a demand for their stock of futures. This is easily accomplished with the theological bivalve by a mad dog cry at innovation. It must have been an interesting sight to see the laity knock its geniuses down when the quadruped human species begun to develop ambition to rise and walk on its hind legs. It could not appear so absurd, however, as the efforts of the more evolved biped to prevent individuals from improving at their own expense their conditions for happiness.

H.

The Philosophy of Egoism.

XII.

The word *right* has the same fundamental meaning as *straight*. When no obstacle stands or lies between an animal and the object of its desire, the shortest way, which is a straight line, is the way the animal takes to reach the object; but when approach by a right line is impracticable the nearest known path is chosen, all considerations such as safety being weighed according to intelligence. This is then the line of least resistance,—the one most approximating in convenience to a right line. The right hand is so named because usually the stronger and more serviceable. A man's right is his straight way to the satisfaction of his desires, and he takes no other way except under adverse circumstances or hallucination.

It will be objected by Moralists that such an exposition of right reduces it to nothing but might. In this inference they are correct, but their objection does not disturb Egoistic philosophy, which regards their alleged supernal, sacred Right as a superstition. I have a right to what I can take and openly keep, and another has a right to take it from me if he can. Those, however, who believe that a superior authority has laid down a rule to which they must conform, will take up that rule or law as they understand it, and their idea of right will be that of conformity to the command of the authority. The Moralist is under an impression that instead of pursuing his own pleasure he has to fulfill a purpose which may be at variance with his pleasure. His conception of Right is not an Egoistic concept-ion. He has surrendered himself, and with himself his own right, and has begun to serve an abstraction. He is in the way to commit great folly and wrong to himself. To the Moralist Right and Wrong are two fixed ideas, forever in opposition in all senses. To the intelligent Egoist they are two words generally perverted from their meaning and used as scarecrows. There is a frequent clash between the right of one and the right of another, and they fight it out. It is settled by the triumph of one and the defeat of the other. Max Stirner in his matchless book, *Der Einzige und Sein Eigenthum*, (the Individual and his Property) says *Ist es mir recht, so is es recht*. (If it be right to me, it is right). The Moralist would say: if it be right *for* me, thus implying that he is under some mysterious authority. The Egoist would not use the latter preposition except when recognizing some law or definite arrangement which prescribes certain rights. When I say: "if it be right for me—," I admit an authority. Now in fact I must often admit one,—that is a power,—but I admit it simply as a power, not at all as the Moralist admits it. I do not bow down to it in my thought or regard it as anything but an enemy to my freedom, and if it cease to assert its power and compel me by penalty or the prospect of penalty, I assert my full power to do my own pleasure and nothing but my own pleasure. The Moralist consents to serve as his own jailer; not so the Egoist. Assert your right, your power, your pleasure, I claim none of that, I assert my own. I appeal to no Moral law of the world. I recognize none. We shall find our interests coincide or we shall give each other battle or we shall steer clear of each other, according to circumstances.

In words you can assert my right, but when you attempt to do so in deeds you succeed only in asserting your own right. I alone can prove my right by deeds.

The Moralist pretends to be under an obligation to respect the rights of others and never do them any wrong; but he defines their rights and does not allow them all their rights. He abdicates his own and cripples theirs and then flatters himself that the mutilation and effacement constitute superior Right. He protests against Egoism because it wrongs his system. At times he imagines that the Egoist must talk in the language of Moralism and must mean that in acting with Egoistic right the Egoist would pretend not to do wrong to another; wherein the Moralist becomes absurd, for the Egoist does not pretend that he can always exercise his right without wrong to another. It is a matter of expediency with the Egoist what wrong to another he shall do.

“Right wrongs no man,” exclaims the landlord, and drives the tenant out of a house. The inclement weather beats upon the unsheltered, and their nerves are wrung. The landlord exercises his right, but lies moralistically.

The word *wrong* is a variation upon the past participle of the verb to *wring*, to twist. Victor and Vanquished are two, and the Moralist simply looks away from the facts of life when he preaches a universal natural Right and ignores individuals with their various wants and powers and the probability that what is good to one may entail some ill upon another.

But the species? The Moralist, driven from the former position of a divinity ordering all things in harmony in the world, or at least the conceit that his own species is favored at the expense of all below it, and this not- by its intelligence but by a divine decree, arbitrarily making the spoliation of the world and rule over inferior animals Right, takes refuge in a belief that the welfare of the species may give Moral law to the individual. Hence the dogma that the individual exists for the species. Were it so, the individual might insist upon existing at any cost, assuming that he is what he knows best of the species, and that his stubborn will might probably be a provision for the species. That is Right, says the Moralist, which best serves the species. And what best serves the species? The Moralist will generally reply: “that which is Right,” thus completing a little circle in dogmatism. Nature, however, seems to say that species survive by the survival of their individuals. The Egoist will find in himself certain loves and aversions, and he may think that the species is taking care of itself just in proportion as he is following those paths which give him satisfaction.

The Moralist, becoming more philosophical, suggests that the war of interests will cease as men understand their similar needs and the possibility of mutual benefit, hence wrongs in the species may become fewer or cease. With all our heart say the Egoists, only you are not to begin by sacrificing us. If the later Moralism be merely a prophetic dream of a harmony of interests through wisdom, we are not without hope that at last the dreamers will recognize individuality as the condition precedent to the fulfillment of their hopes. The fellow feeling in the species is a certain fact. Let us take it for what we find it to be and not attempt to place it in antagonism toward our individualities. As these are developed the necessity will appear for each one to recognize somewhat the individuals of his species, and thus the “claims of the species” will be recognized.

TAK KAK.

SEPARATED from nature by monopoly, cut off from humanity by poverty, the mother of crime and its punishment, what refuge remains for the plebeian whom labor cannot support, and who is not strong enough to take? To conduct this offensive and defensive war against the proletariat a public force was indispensable: the executive power grew out of the necessities of civil legislation, administration, and justice. And there again the most beautiful hopes have changed into bitter disappointments. As legislator, as burgomaster, and as judge, the prince has set himself up as a representative of divine authority. A defender of the poor, the widow, and the orphan, he has promised to cause liberty and equality to prevail around the throne, to come to the aid of labor, and to listen to the voice of the people. And the people have thrown themselves lovingly into the arms of power; and, when experience has made them feel that power was against them, instead of blaming the institution, they have fallen to accusing the prince, even unwilling to understand that, the prince being by nature and destination the chief of non-producers and greatest of monopolists, it was impossible for him, in spite of himself, to take up the cause of the people. All criticism, whether of the form or the acts of government, ends in this essential contradiction. And when the self-styled theorists of the sovereignty of the people pretend that the remedy for the tyranny of power consists in causing it to emanate from popular suffrage, they simply turn, like the squirrel, in their cage. For, from the moment that the essential conditions of power—that is, authority, property, hierarchy—are preserved, the suffrage of the people is nothing but the consent of the people to their oppression,—which is the silliest charlatanism.—Proudhon.

A Few Good Books.

BY GEORGE FORREST.

Among the number of scientific works, novels, and dramas pertaining to modern social questions, which have appeared of late years, there are some of great value; yet it must be confessed the major portion are merely passing contributions of no lasting worth. Of least value are the novels, which, while they may treat of social questions in a radical manner, are written by persons who are unscientific, incompetent, and who write on the spur of the moment, simply because they know there is a demand for the radical novel. Very frequently these novels become popular, the authors are set up as great teachers, and that which was written in an empirical manner is declared to be infallible. People are ever ready to set up a hero and worship him, frequently for qualities which he does not possess, and thus every new prophet in the social movement has a number of followers, who swear by whatever he writes. Sentiment carries them away,—they are going to reform the world—what use have they for facts. Thus there are constantly arising hosts of these heroes, and they all attract worshipers.

But among these books there are some which are not of the “plan-of—campaign” character. They do not give directions in instantaneous world-reform—they give facts; just simple facts. They do not seek popularity by catering to the sentimental foolishness of the people—for the majority of the people are fools—therefore they never become really popular. It is of late years, as I have said, that so much time has been devoted by scientists, novelists and dramatists to the social question. Yet there are some works which are not of late years, but which were so far in advance of their time that it is only lately they have begun to be read.

Of novels which are of artistic value, and whose subject-matter is of the highest order, are Tchernychewsky’s “What’s To Be Done?” and Olive Schreiner’s “Story of an African Farm.” These two are probably the only ones in the long list of radical novels which will live. They are both philosophical and both concern the woman question. “What’s To Be Done?” is perhaps the more artistic as a whole, though some critics have called it crude. The egoistic arguments between Kir-sanoff and Lopoukhoff, the two young medical students are delightful. It is one of those books that you like to have within reach after you have read it, for no matter where you open it there is nearly always food for reflection in what you read. “The Story of an African Farm,” has also attraction for you after you have read it—there is so much written between the lines. It is loved best by young people who are just beginning to understand that religion is not always what it is painted. It is the story of the evolution of a young man, or boy, rather, from belief to disbelief. Those who may read it when they and orthodoxy are parting company, will feel a deep sympathy with the ideas in the book, and its philosophy will help them. These novels should not be confounded with even the better class of radical novels; they are of superior merit, their authors taking rank among the leading novelists of the world.

There are a few scientific works which every person who desires to understand the basic principles of modern thought should read. Spencer’s “Social Statics,” for instance, is one of the

best of books to “give you a center around which to hang your ideas,” as Olive Schreiner would say. “Social Statics,” “First Principles,” “Data of Ethics,” and “The Man Versus the State” will give you a fair idea of Spencer’s worth.

Proudhon’s “What Is Property?” contains the economics of Anarchy, and it is brilliantly written. The different phases of the land question about which there has been so much discussion, and which is one of the principal points of difference between Individualists and Anarchists, is well considered. Proudhon was undoubtedly the first to see this question in the proper light, and to show the great injustice caused by property in land. Proudhon, as a writer, was masterly: brilliant, sarcastic, kindly, bold, almost reckless; he wrote what he thought and cared not what the world said—so the world treated him shamefully. But “against the enemy revendication is eternal,” and thousands are now demanding what he demanded—Liberty.

Then there is John Stuart Mill’s “Liberty.” The very name is attractive. State Socialists, who believe in regulating other people’s morals, health, pleasure, business, misery and life ought to read it, and then try minding their own business for a day or two. “Liberty” is an excellent little work, protesting strongly against the assumption of infallibility by any person in regard to another’s affairs. Mill’s “Subjugation of Women” is also an excellent work.

Until the past few years there has been no dramatic writer of any ability in the field of Individualism. One has, however, arisen, who has astonished the world. Henrik Ibsen is now the most widely read dramatist living, and this, too, in spite of the extreme radicalism of his writings. His war is against the State; he wishes to abolish it, mere changes in the form of government he regards as “more or less degrees of trifling.” All of his dramas are well worth reading for their literary value alone, but his social dramas are of most interest to Anarchists and Individualists on account of their subject-matter. The influence exerted by Ibsen has undoubtedly done more to spread Individualistic doctrines than that of any other writer of late years. Ibsen is a thorough Egoist, and therefore an Anarchist. This is clearly shown by his dramas and letters. Of course the great fashionable world—those who attend Ibsen readings—would never think of him as an Anarchist. They read Ibsen because Ibsen is the fad—they haven’t the slightest idea what his theories are, but simply know that he is fashionable. When they discover what it is they have been reading they will be horrified, and—get a new fad.

A LIBERTY which anybody else in the universe has a right to define is *no* liberty for me. A pursuit of happiness which some despot, or some oligarchy, or some tyrannical *majority*, has the power to prescribe and shape for me, is not the pursuit of *my* happiness. Statesmen, politicians, religious dissenters, and reformers, who have hitherto sanctioned the principle of freedom, have not seen its full reach and expansion; hence they become reactionists, conservatives, and “old fogies,” when the whole truth is revealed to them. They find themselves getting more than they bargained for. Nevertheless, the principle, which already imbues the popular mind instinctively, though not as yet intellectually, will not wait their bidding. Hence all middle men, far more than the conservatives, are destined in this age to be very unhappy.—Stephen Pearl Andrews in “Love, Marriage, and Divorce.”

Managerial Experience.

I experienced last month an impulse of evolutionary propulsion, and have some idea how that intellectual pride is acquired which permits its victim to make a fool of himself several times before he will acknowledge his error once. Last May I predicted that with the necessary material to print EGOISM on a steam press I could operate the little Columbian as a relic with great ease, and it has turned out just so. This causes me to feel like a budding philosopher, and gives me a touch of the inductive spur that has tickled the racial flank from the state of the complacent-minded snail to that of the tasseling vertebrate with his remarkable logic that a universal desire for service from others justifies its exaction, instead of provision against it. Having carefully realized this generalization, it was with great felicity and both eyes that I watched a genial pressman and Hoe press cultivate EGOISM's as rapidly as hickory nuts fall after a heavy frost from a bumped tree. When all is deliberately made ready the pressman prods the machine in the ribs, and a great cast stove drum starts to roll, pops its bill, and from the top of the pile grabs a sheet which races down among rollers and over strings like a lizard through a rock pile and is slapped upon a table with four printed pages quicker than I can give a thought. It is interesting to see the form chasing about under the press like a mouse under benches, and to hear the rollers smack their lips every time they get a fresh bite of ink, and thereafter to observe them mixing up with each other like smooth and reciprocal nether limbs. This press not only snaps and lizards and prints fast, but has four boards on a table which stand on their edges and joyfully dance a quadrille around the newly-coined thought on EGOISM's pages. All this is in delightful contrast with the centenarian duration and parturitive agony of the Columbian lever act. But though without gray, it has its drawbacks. The press is located in a large roomful of case stands and compositors, and I am exposed to their presence. Upon this occasion and my person I wore my decollete pants, pump-a-door vest, and such a look as a cat is attired in while being entertained by a strange garret. To such scenery the compositors were unaccustomed, and glad smiles broke irreparably out upon their gazes like measles on the cheek of beauty. But while the loudest observers were beautiful enough to smite the heart of a Russell or rustle that of a live oak, they were neither cheeky nor measly and for this I am gratefully grateful. In some offices the compositors would have directed such audible remarks at each other as would fit my case with long primer accuracy, and I could not well get back at them. A compositor's life is full of lean, solid long primer and monotony, and this makes him as sensitive to novel sights as a plowboy. I mingled with their estimation at a disadvantage too, for I have been accustomed only to fox chases and those used on job presses, and didn't know which was the "outside" of the ones used on the cylinder press, so of course "locked up" untechnically. This made no difference as regarded the work for that time, but it exposed the fact that I have learned only so much of the trade as I have used, and to a regular he printer even "pi" is not so disreputable as a printer who has been moved into before the plastering and finish is on. I don't blame them either, for one has to have something to assume upon in so pretentious a world. A lack of great experience and money, is my misfortune as manager for a poor but respectable publishing company. At the printing house, even one of

the proprietors who is not a flatterer and who has an eye for the humorous in nature, suggested in a tone containing among other ingredients tincture of irony, that I have the cases patented in which EGOISM's beautiful and chaste forms are concealed while being carried by the transfer company under piles of snaggy boxes and the rude gaze of a vulgar public. But I received an invitation to return in September, which I accept, gratefully remembering the man who made this method possible and congratulating radicalism on numbering among its own those with money-making ability and without miserly meanness.

When Hugh O. Pentecost gets off something particularly silly I sometimes 'think he has softness in the head, but I never dreamed that the softness was not cerebrally confined until I read that he regrets the process by which the race is now manufactured. If the protest had come from a woman, whose absorption of the subject under Mr. Pentecost's penetration would be supposed to acquaint her more internally with the unpleasant spirit of its features, I should have regarded it as characteristic, but when a man wails, my curiosity and so forth rise at once and I am willing to assist as best I can. I have also canvassed several of my male friends regarding the matter and they have to a man proffered their services in cases where such unaccountable taste renders such tasks repugnant. George Macdonald is gone now and I have no statement from him relating to it, but I feel safe in saying he will be all right, for I do not believe he would refuse to lend his strong limbs to promote welfare and good feeling in the community. Mr. Pentecost can feel reassured so far as the Pacific coast is concerned. There is little apprehension felt, however, that my friends' philanthropy will be imposed upon, as Mr. Pentecost's kind of taste is very rare—so rare in fact, that it smacks a little of the verdure the beef fattened on. It is a taste susceptible of being consistently extended in other vital directions. Take eating for instance. This is a necessary habit and one in which many people find much comfort and belching, and one in which many more are anxiously seeking the former. Yet for those too ethereal for the necessities of animate life, the habit must be unutterably disgusting, for it is a tripish subject all the way through and is ardently practiced by every kind of beast and upon all sorts of fodder. It is a munching, mixy, slabbery, churning, belching, seeping, growling process beside of and among which gestation is as fine pastry work compared with swill boiling. Let Mr. Pentecost contemplate the parturitive as well as tropical source of a roast, and the nastiness of strawberry shortcake with its wheat and berries grown from unpalatable manure and handled by porous hands throughout and eaten with milk strained through a hairy cow of organism. Let him exercise his unanalytic impressibility upon all these and (lightly) upon the inevitable incidents of alimentation, and he will find in the means by which the race exists, a parallel of his regret at the method by which it is continued. Then there is breathing usually regarded as an ethereal practice, but let him remember ugly grating dust, smudgy coal smoke, burning rags and leather, croutish sewer gas, fummy corpses, unshampooed skunks, unsalted human feet and socks, poultry stalls, threshing machines, declining fish, contagious diseases, and think of pumping such air into his celestial lights as is often unavoidable, and he will probably find breathing too disgusting to continue. Thus a sandpapered asceticism driving him from procreation, eating, and breathing, he will have to dissolve or admit the futility of his taste apology for an unmistakable affliction of sex superstition. This will be so, not because it is so, but because in complex mentality even taste is affected by ideas of consistency. Mr. Pentecost, however, will probably do neither; he evidently carries a posteriorly located steel plate about his

nether raiment which enables him to sit for months with the utmost composure on the sharpest horn of any dilemma. He will no more be an *ist* of any kind than a negro will be black, but he espouses Egoism, if not understandingly at least devotedly, yet the slavery to an idea that impelled him to burn manuscript on parturition and desire to scrub his office because such pen marks had been in it, is parallel to that of the worst fanaticism of the age. If the rejected manuscript was not wanted by the author, Mr. Pentecost could have shown a well-balanced disinterest by disposing of it as he does of other rejected manuscript. One need not go far to find people as well fitted as he to reason prejudice from their minds.

I was at Labor day this year which happened here on the 7th of this month. When I came home at night with headache and no dinner I forcibly sensed how realism is penetrating everything so that even picky Labor day has become laborious. The governor of this state did not proclaim Labor day, for he had no way of knowing the numbers of agitating labor and could not tell what would be most politic, so he advised all to observe it who wished to. Uninfluenced by his suggestion, but impelled by curiosity I in the morning sponged with a rag and some gasoline the big grease spot from the front of my vest and sneaked my wife's perfume bottle, dubbing the cork against my bony bosom so that I smelt real good to myself all day and felt quite refined. Perfumery is great to make one feel refined, and I notice that some people depend upon it altogether for their refinement. Such refinement smells nice but it doesn't look well. It took me so long to refine that I had to pare my quarter-moon countenanced nails on the train, and found that I had just five pairs exposed. A good many working people were at the local stations, and the young men with tolerably plump wives looked very proud of them and these wives were proud to be looked proud of. The older men from the extremities of whose wives the upholstering had worked out, did not seem proud of anything they had on exhibition, but like pious worshipers conferred much credit upon themselves by a superfluity of "sacred duty" to variably-sized posterity which swarmed about them under odd-styled hats and in roomy new shoes. I think this zeal will have to be replaced with a careful study of economics before the laboring class becomes the citizen class. But it was the day of my class and a few of us were out to uselessly show our hand and dusty feet. Anatomically speaking, I am in some important respects not proud of us. We measure well enough from the ear back and from it straight above the backbone and have plenty of width between the ears, but from the ear forward and especially to the top part of the frontal lobe the distance is not a long one, however dusty it may have been that day. It is painful to note how the repugnance of a task from which we get all the weariness and pain and only a little of the product, has battered our frontal sinuses back against our medulla oblongatas. I was despairingly struck with this contrast as our people reformatory waded the (lust of the street while faces with large upper stories gazed upon them from the windows of comfortable offices in elegant buildings. The marchers believe they will rout them from those drawing-room workshops and make them produce their living themselves, but the two-storied men are not frightened. They have little to fear from a movement that proposes a system of officialism knitted by treacherous gradations from the dome down into the very Vitals of the laboring mudsill. They will be around in time to find places in it just as they were to find them in the privilege of present State interference with industrial freedom, for they already pat the political authority worshiping laborer on the head

and tell him through the press that he is great and fighting in the right direction to better his condition.

The mayor was invited by the Federated Trades to review the parade, which he kindly did from the city hall portico and a white vest in which he was that day laboring for the residents of the city. I stood very near him to see how reviewing is performed, and found that I was doing the thing myself. Besides a better suit of clothes than I ever had he wore, before the parade arrived, such an expression as I have felt when my mother made me play with visiting neighbors' children whom I believed several sizes too small for me. He made no advances and the divisions did not cheer as they passed, which was the only thing in the day's doings that surprised and pleased me. But so long as men will parade there is no hope that they will solve the industrial problem.

I was curious to know just what the orator would orate, so accompanied by a cable car I was on the ground early that I might capture the larva. It proved to be a constable and there being no one else there the State and Anarchy laid down together in the shade upon a bench, and I gave him my experience as a tramp for his as our catcher. He complained bitterly of the government continually cutting on the salaries of its lower-case officials while the "caps" who get all the "pick-up" are undisturbed. I then explained how I thought it the source of the trouble in the whole case, but he neither combatted nor understood the idea, and looked into the face of his gold watch. Soon men brought tenderly-dandled canes, and broodworn women brought armfuls of accumulated squall. Then an old man with hysterical inspiration and a dinted voice tried to sell Christian Socialistic papers. A girl with a distaff of new Irish linen hair and with folio feet monopolized the swing while a young man longing to be the seat board, swung her like a skein of hot candy. The metallic horn band set off packages of last year's campaign notes, then a man with a mein and with a hole worn in the top of his hair, proved with great elaboration that wage workers are slaves. He declared that science will save us, is divine, and consists in the government first taking all profitable business from individuals and afterward establishing national co-operation. Nobody asked the demagogue to head the list by surrendering his vocation of political manipulator, nor how some kinds of business came to be so much more profitable than others, nor why the ounce of privilege prevention would not be more scientific than a countryful of administration to soak up the plunder.

Most of the magazine muzzle loading audience were filled with the orator's articulatory exercise, and the rest with the barkeeper's beer, but the effect was the same in both cases and the labor problem was uproarously applauded. It was now time for the closing concert of embryo politicians, and I walked sadly away on part of the skin of an unknown cow. Behind me was the orator looking dramatically heroic; nervless old men looking solidly constituent; wrinkled and shattered old women filling in with stereotyped head gear and toothless grins; red-eyed boozy men hooked like dark lanterns on the backs of benches or stretched like dried salmon upon the ground, and splintery young girls of diluted purpose gadding about acting silly. But unlike marriage, I could get out of it for the same price that I got in, and with popular labor agitation in a nutshell and Oakland's effort floating away on the sea breeze among the eucalyptus trees, I sat down upon the skirt of my low-necked pants in a cable car and smelled up the fragments of my morning's perfuming as I rode through three miles of desert town lots at business location prices. And the sun and enlarged heads rose the next morning.

THE MANAGER.

Straws in the Breeze.

Straws are the component parts of a great stack made by gathering them.

Personally, I am a believer in the discredited policy of the *laissez faire* school; and in virtue of my belief, I have the utmost doubts as to the success of any attempt to alter the relations of labor and capital by means of legislation. On the other hand, I am bound to admit that the whole course of legislation in recent years, no matter what party was in power, has been one series of violations of the fundamental principles of, my old-fashioned creed—Edward Dicey.

General Longstreet says that on one of the long night marches in Virginia, the only way he could get rest was to lie down on the ground while the column was passing, and sleep for an hour or so. He woke up just as the stragglers were coming along the rear, and heard an old Georgia cracker soliloquizing about the situation: “I love my country, and I’ll fight for it, and I’ll die for it, and I’ll go naked and barefooted for it; but when this war is over, I’ll be cursed if I ever love another country.”—Argonaut.

“I haf ‘der right—der constitutional right to garry veapons,” protested Mr. Royer the other day when booked at the police station after notable feats of arms against certain railroad men who were setting posts on his premises. “Ven dose vellers injure my gometree I vall pack on my right to garry and bear arms, dot vas all.” Mr. Royer, you are indubitably correct: the constitution of the United States explicitly declares that the right of the people to bear arms shall not be abridged. But, dear, dear! There are circumstances of which you are unaware. The United Sates supreme court (august tribunal!) has decided that this clause is, first, in conflict with various city ordinances; second, obscured by bad spelling—it should be “bare” arms; third unwise; and, fourth, unconstitutional.—Ambrose Bierce in Examiner.

The things sought to be accomplished by disregarding liberty and justice are frequently good; indeed, it is by fixing their eyes so intently on the special object that the larger considerations are overlooked. It is desirable that great manufacturing establishments shall exist in a country, and laws specially assisting manufactures will produce them; but liberty and justice are still better things, and therefore we may be sure that protection is a bad thing. Temperance is a good thing, and may, in some degree, be produced by law; but liberty and justice are better things, and

therefore prohibition is a bad thing. Education, even the kind given in our public schools, is a good thing; but liberty and justice are better things, and therefore our compulsory public-school system is a bad thing. Most of the things aimed at by Socialists are in themselves good things, but they can be obtained in better ways than those proposed; besides, liberty and justice are still better things, and therefore all Socialistic legislation, being inconsistent with these, is a very bad thing.—To-day.

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 not-hing 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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