

# FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

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WHOLE NO. 174.

## CHARITY THAT IS NOT CHARITY.

A great many people believe that unless the collectivity acts through some centre or head—a sort of machine set to do certain things as accurately and mechanically as cogs and wheels can be made to perform them, that nothing good, nothing useful can be done. Individualism, or the voluntary associations of individuals, in living, working, producing and exchanging, would leave out the incapable, the unfit, the weak, they say, and these would be left inhumanely to starve in isolation and neglect. People seem to have a horror of an individual or a voluntary group of individuals, of their selfishness, their wickedness, their incapacity to do the necessary work of civilization, but they are not afraid of these same individuals if under compulsory association and governed by a central head.

It is a relic of the old belief in the total depravity of man and his tendency toward evil if left to himself, if made free, in fact. It is the old belief in authority, or the faith in the legality and propriety of that which is done by established institutions or recognized authority. A lady said to me, "What would you do with the sick and the helpless under a system of voluntary association? No one would want to take them into their associations and they would be left out? Would that be right?"

"The very same sentiment that induces you to be concerned about them now, would still exist; the same feeling that inspires the building of public almshouses and hospitals and insane asylums, would have full sway among a free people; the only difference would be that there would not be so much necessity for such institutions under a system of freedom from monopoly. All the good, sympathetic people would live that live today, and, if sure of the possession of all they produced, would be a thousand times more willing to help those who need help than now," I replied.

"But that would be charity; and no one wants to be a subject of charity."

"Well, is it not charity if administered by a public board, from a public fund?"

"Not in the same sense. The poor could accept it as their right."

"I cannot see the difference. In the case of public charity, those who are supported must feel that all are not willing contributors to the public funds, as it is well known that people pay taxes with less willingness than any other demand that can be made upon them. And your fear that the helpless would not be taken care of if some form of coercion were not used, shows that the idea that some would not contribute unless compelled is generally recognized. Now do you not think the helpless would rather be aided by willing, sympathetic friends than from a fund made up of forced contributions from reluctant or indifferent strangers? It is well known that the poor now who are self-respecting will endure any hardship, any deprivation sooner than be sent to the public poor-house or even the public hospital. How can we be assured that any kind of public aid will be received with greater readiness under a system of collectivity?"

In theory, everybody respects and venerates the State. It is supposed by the ordinary, unemancipated thinker that whatever is distasteful, or too bulky or too complicated to be done by the individual, will be mysteriously but willingly performed by that vague something called the State with neatness and despatch; yet in practice we know

that we would rather see an important matter undertaken by any competent, interested person than entrusted to a public function; our general experience is that public officials know more about "how not to do it" than anything else. And the truth of the matter is "the State" never does anything. It never aids the helpless or provides for the weak. Individuals, chosen by the people in whom the sentiment of sympathy toward the afflicted is strong enough to put the machinery into motion, perform the work for a stated salary and without the least interest in the people benefitted. This sympathetic sentiment would exist, in our present stage of development, under any form of society. With free opportunities, every able-bodied person could so easily produce wealth, his sensibilities would be so fine that he could not be happy with sick, starving, helpless people about him. Every object of assistance would be conscious of receiving willing, loving aid instead of living at the cost of cold, unwilling contributions. And should there be a single neglected person in the world, any one in whom no one took any kind of an interest, who had not a single faculty that appealed to a soul on earth, well—that would be an evidence that he did not deserve it. But we know the spirit that keeps the charitable institution, would not allow such a being to exist; humanity will be as noble at least under freedom as under a system of slavery, injustice and monopoly.

LIZZIE M. HOLMES.

## IS IT A CRIME TO STEAL?

It depends upon who the stealer is and what is stolen. If the robbery is through currency laws which, by restricting the volume of money, inequitably increase all debts and despoil producers, or through tariff acts which extort tribute from the many for the aggrandizement of the few, stealing is not a crime. In one case it is protection of the national credit and honor, and in the other protection of American labor and capital. Nor is it robbery to wreck railroads and amass millions by the ruin of those who in good faith paid money for bonds and stocks. This feat has been repeatedly performed, and in every instance the successful robbers have not been termed such but have been proclaimed as "Napoleons of finance." Nor is the acquisition of vast sums by successful gambling in stocks, grain or provisions a crime. The colder the speculator and the more he makes in this way, the more he is respected and envied. If a few men should secure control of the whole supply of bread-stuffs and refuse to sell save at exorbitant prices, the poor who were unable to buy would starve to death. Monopolies of articles of necessity inflict misery on the multitude that the beneficiaries may develop into Croesuses. Industrial trusts are monopolies, and they are founded on the principle that if one has the might he has the right to impoverish his fellows to enrich himself. Yet while repugnant to the instinctive sense of justice both in theory and practice trusts are not a crime. It is but a few months since Congress enacted a bill to foster them, and an ex-Governor of New York has recently published in the magazines articles affirming that the trust is in harmony with natural law and economic principles.

Stealing on a colossal scale is not only permitted but encouraged by law, and therefore instead of criminal it is legitimate. It is only petty stealing that is criminal. While the person who makes a

million or two in a deal on the board of trade is lionized and feted, the chap who wins five or ten dollars at poker or faro is lucky if he escapes the patrol wagon and the calaboose. A bread and water diet and a solitary cell are deemed too good for the footpad or the burglar, but palaces and yachts and luxuries without limit are regarded as the merited reward of the railroad wrecker. It is a crime to steal fuel or bread or clothing for a famishing family, but it is according to statute an honorable for a few thousands to rob the millions through changes in the equities of time contracts, and through tariff taxes and trusts. Because wholesale theft is permitted under the forms of law, there never before in history of the world was such a mighty concentration of wealth as has been in progress in the United States in the past quarter of a century and is in progress now. About one-half the people of the republic are homeless, and as the acquirement of homes is steadily becoming more difficult, more and more will become so as time progresses. Present tendencies are to a condition in which a small number will practically own all and the majority of the people nothing, and when, whether it be a crime or not, the dispossessed and improverished must steal to keep the spark of life aglow. History repeats itself, and it is replete with incidents to justify the assumption that the colossal wrong inflicted by sweeping, law-authorized denial of equality of rights and confiscation of labor and property is not unlikely to be ultimately righted by confiscation from the confiscators with utter disregard of all authority or law.—E.L. in Solidarity.

## "CONSISTENCY."

Comrade J. H. M. in his article on consistency says, what no one has disputed or will dispute, namely this: "In a matter of pure logic, individual acts can have no weight." But that the acts of individuals do weigh with people, more than the theories of individuals is also a fact, and a more important one. Therefore we should be more particular in regard to our actions as we realize that acts are more powerful than any mere word building of fine spun theories, for after all it are deeds instead of noble words that have made all the landmarks in history, and I venture to assert it makes little difference what you think or whether you think at all, if you only treat your fellow men as you would be done by. Noble ideas without noble actions have no value. Comrade A. I. says that "Ideas without action have no value." I add the word noble, for some ideas would be valueless if put in action, being utterly worthless.

It is true that "our actions are what they must be," as circumstances influence us, but it does not follow that neither "praise or blame should be given." Appreciation of noble qualities or acts in others is a spontaneous offering that rises from the human heart, and cannot be controlled by any cut and dried theories. The instinct that leads us to express delight and appreciation of all that is beautiful and good in life, leads us to express our disapproval of that which is the reverse to these qualities. I do not believe in hero-worship, neither do I believe in shutting one's eyes to all that is grand, noble and elevating in a human being because that being "acts as he must."

The modest flower blooms as it must, yet we praise its beauty and fragrance. Can we do less by the human flowers that surround us. If we have the eye of an artist to discern a grand bit of humanity, we naturally enjoy the pleasure of expressing our sensations. Criticism has played an important part in the development of art and literature, therefore criticism of the actions of men will play an important part in the development of man.

I think it well to weigh carefully the noble sentiment expressed by A. I. in "Consistency" and E. Goldman's in "Ideas and Men." K. ARSTIN.  
Caplinger Mills, Mo.

# FREE SOCIETY.

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Anarchy.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal; absolute individual liberty.—Century Dictionary

## ATTENTION!

Free Society has barely weathered Cape Lack of Funds and Credit. The late arrival of last week's issue and the reduced size of this bespeak a hard time of it. The facts are that, succeeding only after much difficulty in mailing last week's issue, our indebtedness to the printer and paper-house compelled us to suspend Free Society temporarily, until such time as the readers in arrears would pay up. Two remittances during the week—one from Philadelphia and one from New York—enabled us to keep the paper afloat, reduced, however, on account of the uncertainty and haste. While making this explanation we want to state that to appeal to the readers of Free Society for funds to insure regular issue is becoming a harder and harder task.

A small number of comrades are making heavy sacrifices which to accept time after time becomes more and more difficult, while the great majority of readers seem to be satisfied to receive the paper and allow themselves to fall in arrears. Now we know that with few exceptions the readers of Free Society are poor and that even 50 cents a year is money that they could well spend for necessities of life, but right here we must say that unless the workers are willing to contribute their mite to the propaganda of freedom, both by word and deed, the exploiters and their tyranny will triumph. Now when plutocracy is amusing itself with "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war," when the government, backed by an increased navy and army, is steadily encroaching upon the rights of the people; when contract slavery is again rising its hideous head; when those who dare to speak the truth are jailed and hounded from place to place,—now is certainly the time when those who have not yet despaired of the ultimate triumph of Freedom and Anarchy should help the cause.

FREE SOCIETY GROUP.

## GIVES HER SIDE.

T. P. Quinn in his article "Reflections on Debs," in Free Society of July 2, makes a statement concerning Debs and myself which I must correct. Debs did not promise me the floor; he could not have done so as I had not applied for it. Now, whether Eugene V. Debs is guilty of all T. P. Quinn says or not I do not know (I personally have always believed, and still believe, him to be honest, though have always maintained that he lacks moral courage and energy). I do not wish Debs to be accused of something he is not guilty of.

The truth of the whole thing is that I was requested by several Chicago delegates, R. Goodwin and others, to stop over the convention, as they wanted me to speak there. Being on my way to New York and having nothing of greater importance to do I consented, but after attending the convention for two days I knew that I would not be able to speak before that body, as those in favor of political action would resist with all their power. In fact my very presence at the proceedings excited the political gang to a frenzy and they employed all the dirty tricks possible to exclude me from the convention, but they did not succeed of course.

On the third day of the convention I was informed by J. L. Lloyd, J. B. Ashorn and several others, that that an entertainment was arranged for the evening and that I was expected to speak there, and that Debs had announced this from the platform. Before the close of the day's session Debs came over to me and asked whether I knew that I was expected to speak in the evening. I said yes. Debs promised to be present.

When I arrived in the evening I found about two dozen people in the hall, among them but three delegates, the rest comrades and personal friends from Chicago. J. L. Lloyd tried hard to excuse his fellow colleagues, but he only made things worse, and so when he called on me to speak I did not hesitate to express my opinion concerning the whole farce.

E. GOLDMAN.

A. I. REM.

I am confirmed in my former conviction that A. I. has not given the subject of the Single Tax an impartial investigation or he would not say, "The proposed measure would in reality alter nothing in favor of the producer," etc.

If all wealth, the products of labor, was exempt from taxation, would it not be cheapened to the consumer? (1) Is not the tax on wealth ultimately paid by the consumer? (2) Is not the producer the greatest consumer? (3) Would not a cheapening of goods to the consumer increase the consumption? and would not a greater demand at better wages for labor follow a demand for goods? (4) Count one in favor of the Free Society right here.

If the annual value of land, a value produced by all the community, be taken by all the community, would not the selling value of land be nil? Who would hold land out of use for a future speculative value, if all the future raise in land should be taken by the community? No one would hold land he did not use. He would improve it or abandon it to some one who would improve it for a home. Since no one would pay the annual value or economic rent of land he did not use, would not land be free to any one who desired a home? And would not the annual value or economic rent be paid into a common treasury be much less than the rent he now pays into the pocket of a landlord, and would it not be paying partly to himself? (5) Count point No. 2 right here in favor of the so-called Single Tax.

A. I. says we "must abolish property in land," etc. Another evidence of his misconception of the Single Tax. No Single Taxer ever speaks of land as property. Property consists of the products of labor—a thing that can be proper to some person or persons who produced it. Land is not a production and cannot be property. It was a creation. The value of land is produced by a community and by all of the community and belongs to all—it is proper to all for the reason that all produce the value (6)

No single person ever did or ever could add value to land and for that reason neither the land nor the value of it should belong to him. (7) Would not the Single Tax on land values (not land) abolish the monopoly of land? Who would want more land than he could utilize? Who would not want enough for a home? Who would not be better able to have a home than to pay rent to a landlord? (8) Is not land, the source of all wealth, and is not the monopoly of land the prolific mothers of all other monopolies? Is not land the natural opportunity of producing wealth? Would not the producer be comparatively free and independent of monopolies of land and capital if he could employ himself on free land, and would not wages necessarily raise and wealth be more equitably distributed. (9)

A. I. says, "The land in Chicago produces much less than the land outside of the city." I suppose he means per acre. Strictly speaking, land does not produce any wealth. Labor produces all wealth, but labor is performed by land animals, and they must have land to produce on. And two persons associated together can produce much more than twice as much, and three, much more than three times as much as one unassociated. Two million persons associated can produce more than four million times as much wealth as one person alone. Labor is the lever that moves the world, but it must have a fulcrum to do it. Land is the fulcrum. The fulcrum is as important as the lever. It is important where the fulcrum is set.

A. I. says, "you can levy nothing unless at the expense of either your own or others labor." Let us see. Viscount Scully, of England, owns 3,000,000 acres of land in the United States. He owns 93,000 acres of land in Illinois, which he bought at not exceeding \$1.25 per acre when people were few in Illinois. Every man, woman or child that came into the state by emigration or birth, added \$500 to the aggregate value of the land in the state. We now have a population of over 5,000,000 in the state and Scully's land rents (exclusive of improvement) for \$4.63 per acre. He takes to England over \$400,000 every year of the products of that land as rent. That value was made by the presence of myself and others who settled in the state. Would it not benefit me and others if my property, my house and barn, and everything I consume was exempt from taxation and the \$400,000 that goes to England every year was used here to make roads, bridges and support our schools? It would not be any heavier on the tenants, besides exempting their farm implements, their crops, their live stock etc., from taxation, besides it would cheapen what the tenants bought if taxes were abolished. (10)

The Single Tax is an abolition of all taxes and sim-

is not a tax on land, but land values. It would not hurt the poor man who had no land values, but the rich man who has more than he needs. (11)

There are three factors that enter into the production of wealth, viz: Land, Labor and Capital. By capital, I mean laid up wealth to produce more wealth, such as tools, machinery, etc. Now since the landlord as a landlord takes nearly one third of the wealth produced as rent, (and he is absolutely a non-producer) if he was eliminated as a sharer in wealth, labor and capital would get all the wealth produced, for there is nowhere else it could go. Since land would be free to all under the Single Tax the laborer could produce his own capital and be independent of both landlord and capitalist. Capital could not oppress labor as it does now. He would be freed from both, for capital would be compelled to pay fair wages for labor. (12)

I hope A. I. and others will impartially read upon this great moral subject with a fiscal name, the Single Tax.

J. C. BARNES.

## COMMENT.

1.—Not necessarily as long as the means of production are monopolized. On the other hand all wealth is not exempt from taxation when a tax or rent is levied on land.

2.—Ultimately all taxes, rent, profit, or whatever you may call it, are paid by the producer. Those who live on rent or profit pay absolutely nothing.

3.—If the producer was the greatest consumer he would live in luxury and the non-producer in destitution.

4.—Of course it would, but the Single Taxers have so far failed to prove that the measure they propose will cheapen goods and raise wages.

5 and 6.—"Land value" is the result of monopoly, and not the result of the whole community. The non-producers add nothing to its value. I know that the Single Taxers claim that it would take an unearned increment from the landlord for the benefit of the community, but there is no "unearned increment," as Henry George himself admits when he says: "It (the land value) expresses the exchange value of labor," i. e., all taxes come from labor. On the other hand if the "land value" is to be taken for the benefit of the whole community, then the levying of taxes is an absurdity. Henry George says in regard to property in land: "I do not propose to either purchase or confiscate private property in land. . . . It is not necessary to confiscate private property in land, it is only necessary to confiscate rent," to which an able critic of the Single Tax replied: "It is not necessary to confiscate the slaves, it is only necessary to confiscate the slave's product. . . . The slave was freed, the land must be freed, and neither of them will, under freedom, have 'value of exchange.' Thus the Single Tax is impossible."

The utility or utilization of land is increased in proportion to the increase of the community, but the increase of "rental" or "economic value" is simply a result of monopoly.

7.—Correct. Neither should it belong to the State.

8.—If it abolishes monopoly, it must also abolish rent or taxes according to Henry George's own argument.

9.—Certainly, but land is not free as long as it is rented.

10.—As the Single Tax does not intend "to confiscate the land" and as all "taxes come from labor" (I quote Henry George's words), Mr. Scully would simply raise the rent, as people cannot live without land, and still take \$400,000 to England.

11.—It would hurt the men that apply their labor to land.

12.—This is a puzzle. If, under the Single Tax, the laborer would be freed from capital and landlord, where does the capitalist come from that "would be compelled to pay fair wages?" Those that work for wages are not freed from the parasites. Capitalists do not employ labor for mere pleasure—they seek profit and rob the laborer to the extent possible.

A. I.

## PROPAGANDA FUND.

Week ending Saturday, July 23

Circolo Ed. and Intrusione Sociale, New London, Conn., \$1.25.  
Pfueter, Jeneren, Shilling, Helfman, each \$1.00.  
Hallestein, Feldman, Day, each 50c.  
Moritz, Sigh, Levinson, Woere, Chamerglain, Porter, each 25c.  
Cole, 38c.



## ANARCHISM: ITS PHILOSOPHY AND IDEAL.

BY  
PETER KROPOTKIN.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

It is often said that Anarchists live in a world of dreams to come, and do not see the things which happen today. We do see them only too well, and in their true colors, and that is what makes us carry the hatchet into the forest of prejudice that besets us.

Far from living in a world of visions and imagining men better than they are, we see them as they are; and that is why we affirm that the best of men is made essentially bad by the exercise of authority, and that the theory of the "balancing of powers" and "control of authorities" is a hypocritical formula, invented by those who have seized power, to make the "sovereign people," whom they despise, believe that the people themselves are governing. It is because we know men that we say to those who imagine that men would devour one another without those governors: "You reason like the king, who, being sent across the frontier, called out, 'What will become of my poor subjects without me?'"

Ab, if men were those superior beings that the utopians of authority like to speak to us of, if we could close our eyes to reality, and live, like them, in a world of dreams and illusions as to the superiority of those who think themselves called to power, perhaps we also should do like them; perhaps we also should believe in the virtues of those who govern.

With virtuous masters, what dangers could slavery offer? Do you remember the Slave-owner of whom we heard so often, hardly thirty years ago? Was he not supposed to take paternal care of his slaves? "He alone," we were told, "could hinder these lazy, indolent, improvident children dying of hunger. How could he crush his slaves through hard labor, or mutilate them by blows, when his own interest lay in feeding them well, in taking care of them as much as of his own children! And then, did not 'the law' see to it that the least swerving of a slave-owner from the path of duty was punished?" How many times have we not been told so! But the reality was such that, having returned from a voyage to Brazil, Darwin was haunted all his life by the cries of agony of mutilated slaves, by the sobs of moaning women whose fingers were crushed in thumb screws!

If the gentlemen in power were really so intelligent and so devoted to the public cause, as panegyrist of authority love to represent, what a pretty government and paternal utopia we should be able to construct! The employer would never be the tyrant of the worker; he would be the father! The factory would be a palace of delight, and never would masses of workers be doomed to physical deterioration. The State would not poison its workers by making matches with white phosphorus, for which it is so easy to substitute red phosphorus.\* A judge would not have the ferocity to condemn the wife and children of the one whom he sends to prison to suffer years of hunger and misery and to die some day of anemia; never would a public prosecutor ask for the head of the accused for the unique pleasure of showing off his oratorical talent; and nowhere would we find a gaoler or an executioner to do the bidding of judges, who have not the courage to carry out their sentences themselves. What do I say! We should never have enough Plutarchs to praise the virtues of Members of Parliament who would all hold Panama checks in horror! Bribes would become an austere nursery of virtue, and permanent armies would be the joy of citizens, as soldiers would only take up arms to parade before nursemaids, and to carry nose-gays on the point of their bayonets!

Oh, the beautiful utopia, the lovely Christmas dream we can make as soon as we admit that those who govern represent a superior caste, and have hardly any or no knowledge of simple mortals' weaknesses! It would then suffice to make them control one another in hierarchical fashion, to let them exchange fifty papers, at most, among different administrators, when the wind blows down a tree on the national road. Or, if need be, they would have only to be valued at their proper worth, during elections, by those same masses of mortals which are supposed to be endowed with all stupidity in their mutual relations but become wisdom itself when they have to elect their masters.

All the science of government, imagined by those who govern, is imbued with these utopias. But we know men too well to dream such dreams. We have not two measures for the virtues of the governed and those of the governors; we know that we ourselves are not without faults and that the best of us would soon be corrupted by the exercise of power. We take men for what they are worth—and that is why we hate the government of man by man, and that we work with all our might—perhaps not strong enough—to put an end to it.

But it is not enough to destroy. We must also know how to build, and it is owing to not having thought about it that the masses have always been led astray in all their revolutions. After having demolished they abandoned the care of reconstruction to the middle class people, who possessed a more or less precise conception of what they wished to realize, and who consequently reconstituted authority to their own advantage.

That is why Anarchy, when it works to destroy authority in all its aspects, when it demands the abrogation of laws and the abolition of the mechanism that serves to impose them, when it refuses all hierarchical organization and preaches free agreement—at the same time strives to maintain and enlarge the precious kernel of social customs without which no human or animal society can exist. Only, instead of demanding that those social customs should be maintained through the authority of a few, it demands it from the continued action of all.

\* The making of matches is a State's monopoly in France.

† Bribri is the name given in France to the punishment battalions in Algeria. Every young man who has been in prison before he begins his military service, is sent to such a battalion. Many soldiers, for want of discipline, undergo the same punishment. The treatment in these places is so horrid that no Englishman would believe it possible. A very few years ago, the pear-shaped hole in the ground, where men were left for weeks, and some were actually devoured by vermin, was an habitual punishment. At the present time, it is quite habitual to let a man, handcuffed and chained, lay for a fortnight on the ground, covered by a bit of cloth, under the scorching sun of Algeria and through the bitterly cold nights, compelled to eat his food and to lap his water like a dog. Scores of the most terrible facts became known lately, since Georges Darien published his book "Bribri" (Paris, 1899, Seytre, publisher) based on actual experience, and full of the most horrible revelations. One of my Clairvieux companions had to spend two years of military service in such a battalion—his condemnation at Lyons, as the editor of an Anarchist paper, being already a reason to be transported to Algeria. He fully confirmed, on his release, all that was written by Darien.

Communist customs and institutions are of absolute necessity for society, not only to solve economic difficulties, but also to maintain and develop social customs that bring men in contact with one another; they must be looked to for establishing such relations between men that the interest of each should be the interest of all; and this alone can unite men instead of dividing them.

In fact, when we ask ourselves by what means a certain moral level can be maintained in a human or animal society, we find only three such means: the repression of anti-social acts; moral teaching; and the practice of mutual help itself. And as all three have already been put to the test of practice, we can judge them by their effects.

As to the impotence of repression—it is sufficiently demonstrated by the disorder of present society and by the necessity of a revolution that we all desire or feel inevitable. In the domain of economy, coercion has led us to industrial servitude; in the domain of politics—to the State, that is to say, to the destruction of all ties that formerly existed among citizens, and to the nation becoming nothing but an incoherent mass of obedient subjects of a central authority.

Not only has a coercive system contributed and powerfully aided to create all the present economical political and social evils, but it has given proof of its absolute impotence to raise the moral level of societies; it has not been even able to maintain it at the level it had already reached. If a benevolent fairy could only reveal to our eyes all the crimes that are committed every day, every minute, in a civilized society under cover of the unknown, or the protection of law itself,—society would shudder at that terrible state of affairs. The authors of the greatest political crimes, like those of Napoleon III. coup d'état, or the bloody week in May after the fall of the Commune of 1871, never are arraigned; and as a poet said; "the small miscreants are punished for the satisfaction of the great ones." More than that, when authority takes the moralization of society in hand, by "punishing criminals" it only heaps up new crimes!

Practised for centuries, repression has so badly succeeded that it has but led us into a blind alley from which we can only issue by carrying torch and hatchet into the institutions of our authoritarian past.

Far be it from us not to recognize the importance of the second factor, moral teaching—especially that which is unconsciously transmitted in society and results from the whole of the ideas and comments emitted by each of us on facts and events of every-day life. But this force can only act on society under one condition, that of not being crossed by a mass of contradictory immoral teachings resulting from the practice of institutions.

In that case its influence is nil or baneful. Take Christian morality: what other teaching could have had more hold on minds than that spoken in the name of a crucified God, and could have acted with all its mystical force, all its poetry of martyrdom, its grandeur in forgiving executioners? And yet the institution was more powerful than the religion: soon Christianity—a revolt against imperial Rome—was conquered by that same Rome; it accepted its maxims, customs, and language. The Christian church accepted the Roman law as its own, and as such—allied to the State—it became in history the most furious enemy of all semi-communist institutions, to which Christianity appealed at its origin.

Can we for a moment believe that moral teaching, patronized by circulars from ministers of public instruction, would have the creative force that Christianity has not had? And what could the verbal teaching of truly social men do, if it were counteracted by the whole teaching derived from institutions based, as our present institutions of property and State are, upon unsocial principles?

The third element alone remains—the institution itself, acting in such a way as to make social acts a state of habit and instinct. This element—history proves it—has never missed its aim, never has it acted as a double-bladed sword; and its influence has only been weakened when custom strove to become immovable, crystallized, to become in its turn a religion not to be questioned when it endeavored to absorb the individual, taking all freedom of action from him and compelling him to revolt against that which had become, through its crystallization, an enemy to progress.

In fact, all that was an element of progress in the past or an instrument of moral and intellectual improvement of the human race is due to the practice of mutual aid, to the customs that recognized the equality of men and brought them to ally, to unite, to associate for the purpose of producing and consuming, to unite for purpose of defence to federate and to recognize no other judges in fighting out their differences than the arbitrators they took from their own midst.

Each time these institutions, issued from popular genius, when it had reconquered its liberty for a moment,—each time these institutions developed in a new direction, the moral level of society, its material well-being, its liberty, its intellectual progress, and the affirmation of individual originality made a step in advance. And, on the contrary, each time that in the course of history, whether following upon a foreign conquest, or whether by developing authoritarian prejudices men become more and more divided into governors and governed, exploiters and exploited, the moral level fell, the well-being of the masses decreased in order to insure riches to a few, and the spirit of the age declined.

History teaches us this, and from this lesson we have learned to have confidence in free Communist institutions to raise the moral level of societies, debased by the practice of authority.

To-day we live side by side without knowing one another. We come together at meetings on an election day: we listen to the lying or fanciful professions of faith of a candidate, and we return home. The State has the care of all questions of public interest; the State alone has the function of seeing that we do not harm the interests of our neighbor, and, if it fails in this, of punishing us in order to repair the evil.

Our neighbor may die of hunger or murder his children,—it is no business of ours; it is the business of the policeman. You hardly know one another, nothing unites you, everything tends to alienate you from one another, and finding no better way, you ask the Almighty (formerly it was a God, now it is the State) to do all that lies within his power to stop anti-social passions from reaching their highest climax.

In a Communist society such estrangement, such confidence in an outside force, could not exist. Communist organization cannot be left to be constructed by legislative bodies called parliaments, municipal or communal council. It must be

the work of all, a natural growth, a product of the constructive genius of the great mass. Communism cannot be imposed from above; it could not live even for a few months if the constant and daily co-operation of all did not uphold it. It must be free.

It cannot exist without creating a continual contact between all for the thousands and thousands of common transactions; it cannot exist without creating local life, independent in the smallest unities—the block of houses, the street, the district, the commune. It would not answer its purpose if it did not cover society with a network of thousands of associations to satisfy its thousand needs: the necessities of life, articles of luxury, of study, enjoyment, amusements. And such associations cannot remain narrow and local; they must necessarily tend (as is already the case with learned societies, cyclist clubs, humanitarian societies and the like) to become international.

And the sociable customs that Communism—were it only partial at its origin—must inevitably engender in life, would already be a force incomparably more powerful to maintain and develop the kernel of sociable customs than all repressive machinery.

This, then, is the form—sociable institution—of which we ask the development of the spirit of harmony that Church and State had undertaken to impose on us—with the sad result we know only too well. And these remarks contain our answer to those who affirm that Communism and Anarchy cannot go together. They are, you see, a necessary complement to one another. The most powerful development of individuality, or individual originality—as one of our comrades has so well said,—can only be produced when the first needs of food and shelter are satisfied; when the struggle for existence against the forces of nature has been simplified; when man's time is no longer taken up entirely by the meaner side of daily subsistence,—then only, his intelligence, his artistic taste, his inventive spirit, his genius, can develop freely and ever strive to greater achievements.

Communism is the best basis for individual development and freedom; not that individualism which drives man to the war of each against all—this is the only one known up till now,—but that which represents the full expansion of man's faculties, the superior development of what is original in him, the greatest fruitfulness of intelligence, feeling and will.

Such being our ideal, what does it matter to us that it cannot be realized at once!

Our first duty is to find out, by an analysis of society, its characteristic tendencies at a given moment of evolution and to state them clearly. Then, to act according to those tendencies in our relations with all those who think as we do. And, finally, from day to day and especially during a revolutionary period, work for the destruction of the institutions, as well as the prejudices, that impede the development of such tendencies.

That is all we can do by peaceable or revolutionary methods, and we know that by favoring those tendencies we contribute to progress, while who resist them impede the march of progress.

Nevertheless, men often speak of stages to be travelled through, and they propose to work to reach what they consider to be the nearest station and only then to take the high road leading to what they recognize to be a still higher ideal.

But reasoning like this seems to me to misunderstand the true character of human progress and to make use of a badly chosen military comparison. Humanity is not a rolling ball, nor even a marching column. It is a whole that evolves simultaneously in the multitude of millions of which it is composed; and if you wish for a comparison, you must rather take it in the laws of organic evolution than in those of an inorganic moving body.

The fact is that each phase of development of a society is a resultant of all the activities of the intellects which compose that society; it bears the imprint of all those millions of wills. Consequently, whatever may be the stage of development that the twentieth century is preparing for us, this future state of society will show the effects of the awakening of libertarian ideas which is now taking place. And the depth with which this movement will be impressed upon the coming twentieth century institutions will depend upon the number of men who will have broken to-day with authoritarian prejudices, on the energy they will have used in attacking old institutions, on the impression they will make on the masses, on the clearness with which the ideal of a free society will have been impressed on the minds of the masses. But, to-day, we can say in full confidence, that in France the awakening of libertarian ideas has already put its stamp on society; and that the next revolution will not be the Jacobin revolution which it would have been had it burst out twenty years ago.

And as these ideas are neither the invention of a man nor a group, but result from the whole of the movement of ideas of the time, we can be sure that, whatever comes out of the next revolution, it will not be the dictatorial and centralized Communism which was so much in vogue forty years ago, nor the authoritarian Collectivism to which we were quite recently invited to ally ourselves, and which its advocates dare only defend very feebly at present.

The "first stage," it is certain, will then be quite different from what was described under that name hardly twenty years ago. The latest developments of the libertarian ideas have already modified it before hand in an Anarchist sense.

I have already mentioned that the great all-dominating question now is for the Socialist party, taken as a whole, to harmonize its ideal of society with the libertarian movement that germinates in the spirit of the masses, in literature, in science, in philosophy. It is also, it is especially so, to rouse the spirit of popular initiative.

Now, it is precisely the workers' and peasants' initiative that all parties—the Socialist authoritarian party included—have always stifled, wittingly or not, by party discipline. Committees, centers, ordering everything; local organs having but to obey, "so as not to put the unity of the organization in danger." A whole teaching, in a word; a whole false history, written to serve that purpose, a whole incomprehensible pseudo-science of economics, elaborated to this end.

Well, then, those who will work to break up these superannuated tactics, those who will know how to rouse the spirit of initiative in individuals and in groups, those who will be able to create in their mutual relations a movement and a life based on the principles of free understanding—those that will understand that variety, conflict even, is life, and that uniformity is death,—they will work, not for future centuries, but in good earnest for the next revolution, for our own times.

We need not fear the dangers and "abuses" of liberty. It is only those who do nothing who make no mistakes. As to those who only know how to obey, they make just as many, and more, mistakes than those who strike out their own path in trying to act in the direction their intelligence and their social education suggest to them. The ideal of liberty of the individual—if it is incorrectly understood owing to surroundings where the notion of solidarity is insufficiently accentuated by institutions—can certainly lead isolated men to acts that are repugnant to the social sentiments of humanity. Let us admit that it does happen: is it, however, a reason for throwing the principle of liberty overboard? Is it a reason for accepting the teaching of those masters who, in order to prevent "digressions," reestablish the censure of an enfranchised press and guillotine advanced parties to main-

tain uniformity and discipline—that which, when all is said, was in 1793 the best means of insuring the triumph of reaction?

The only thing to be done when we see anti-social acts committed in the name of liberty of the individual, is to repudiate the principle of "each for himself and God for all," and to have the courage to say aloud in any one's presence what we think of such acts. This can perhaps bring about a conflict; but conflict is life itself. And from the conflict will arise an appreciation of those acts far more just than all those appreciations which could have been produced under the influence of old-established ideas.

When the moral level of a society descends to the point it has reached today we must expect beforehand that a revolt against such a society will sometimes assume forms that will make us shudder. No doubt, heads paraded on pikes disgust us; but the high and low gibbets of the old regime in France, and the iron cages Victor Hugo has told us of, were they not the origin of this bloody exhibition? Let us hope that the coldblooded massacre of thirty-five thousand Parisians in May, 1871, after the fall of the Commune, and the bombardment of Paris by Thiers will have passed over the French nation without leaving too great a fund of ferocity. Let us hope that. Let us also hope that the corruption of the swell mob, which is continually brought to light in recent trials, will not yet have ruined the heart of the nation. Let us hope it! Let us help that it be so! But if our hopes are not fulfilled—you, young Socialists, will you then turn your backs on the people in revolt, because the ferocity of the rulers of today will have left its furrow in the people's minds; because the mud from above has splashed far and wide?

It is evident that so profound a revolution producing itself in people's minds cannot be confined to the domain of ideas without expanding to the sphere of action. As was so well expressed by the sympathetic young philosopher, too early snatched by death from our midst, Mark Guyan, \* in one of the most beautiful books published for thirty years, there is no abyss between thought and action, at least for those who are not used to modern sophistry. Conception is already a beginning of action.

Consequently, the new ideas have provoked a multitude of acts of revolt in all countries, under all possible conditions: first, individual revolt against Capital and State; then collective revolt—strikes and working class insurrections—both preparing, in men's minds as in actions, a revolt of the masses, a revolution. In this, Socialism and Anarchism have only followed the course of evolution, which is always accomplished by force-ideas at the approach of great popular risings.

That is why it would be wrong to attribute the monopoly of acts of revolt to Anarchism. And, in fact, when we pass in review the acts of revolt of the last quarter of a century, we see them proceeding from all parties.

In all Europe we see a multitude of risings of working masses and peasants. Strikes, which were once "a war of folded arms," today easily turning to revolt, and sometimes taking—in the United States, in Belgium, in Andalusia—the proportions of vast insurrections. In the new and old worlds it is by the dozen that we count the risings of strikers having turned to revolts.

On the other hand, the individual act of revolt takes all possible characters, and all advanced parties contribute to it. We pass before us the rebel young woman Vera Zassulitch shooting a satrap of Alexander II.; the Social Democrat Hodel and the Republican Nobiling shooting at the Emperor of Germany; the cooper Otero shooting at the King of Spain, and the religious Mazzinian, Passanante, striking at the King of Italy. We see agrarian murders in Ireland and explosions in London, organized by Irish Nationalists who have a horror of Socialism and Anarchism. We see a whole generation of young Russians—Socialists, Constitutionalists and Jacobins—declare war to the knife against Alexander II., and pay for that revolt against autocracy by thirty-five executions and swarms of exiles. Numerous acts of personal revenge take place among Belgian, English and American miners; and it is only at the end of this long series that we see the Anarchists appear with their acts of revolt in Spain and France.

And, during this same period, massacres, wholesale and retail, organized by governments, follow their regular course. To the applause of the European bourgeoisie, the Versailles Assembly causes thirty-five thousand Parisian workmen to be butchered—for the most part prisoners of the vanquished Commune. "Pinker-ton thugs"—that private army of the rich American capitalists—massacre strikers according to the rules of that art. Priests incite an idiot to shoot at Louise Michel, who—as a true Anarchist—snatches her would-be murderer from his judges by pleading for him. Outside Europe the Indians of Canada are massacred and Riel is strangled, the Matabele are exterminated, Alexandria is bombarded, without saying more of the butcheries in Madagascar, in Tonkin, in Turkoman's land and everywhere, to which is given the name of war. And, finally, each year hundreds and even thousands of years of imprisonment are distributed among the rebellious workers of the two continents, and the wives and children, who are thus condemned to expiate the so-called crimes of their fathers, are doomed to the darkest misery.—The rebels are transported to Siberia, to Biribi, to Noumea and to Guiana; and in those places of exile the convicts are shot down like dogs for the least act of insubordination. What a terrible indictment the balance sheet of the sufferings endured by workers and their friends, during this last quarter of a century, would be! What a multitude of horrible details that are unknown to the public at large and that would haunt you like a nightmare if I ventured to tell you them tonight! What a fit of passion each page would provoke if the martyrlogy of the modern forerunners of the great Social Revolution were written!—Well, then, we have lived through such a history, and each one of us has read whole pages from that book of blood and misery.

And, in the face of those sufferings, those executions, those Guianas, Siberias, Noumeas and Biribis, they have the insolence to reproach the rebel worker with want of respect for human life!!!

But the whole of our present life extinguishes the respect for human life! The judge who sentences to death, and his lieutenant, the executioner, who garrots in broad daylight in Madrid, or guillotines in the mists of Paris amid the jeers of the degraded members of high and low society; the general who massacres at Bac-leh, and the newspaper correspondent who strives to cover the assassins with glory; the employer who poisons his workmen with white lead, because—he answers—"it would cost so much more to substitute oxide of zinc for it;" the so-called English geographer who kills an old woman lest she should awake a hostile village by his sob, and the German geographer who causes the girl he had taken as a mistress to be hanged with her lover, the court-martial that is content with fifteen days arrest for the Biribi gaoler convicted of murder... all, all, all in the present society teaches absolute contempt for human life—for that flesh that costs so little in the market! And those who garrot, assassinate, who kill depreciated human merchandise, they who have made a religion of the maxim that for the safety of the public you must garrot, shoot and kill, they complain that human life is not sufficiently respected!!!

No, citizens, as long as society accepts the law of retaliation, as long as religion and law, the barrack and the law-courts, the prison and industrial penal servitude, the press and the school continue to teach supreme contempt for the life of the individual,—do not ask the rebels against that society to respect it. It would be exacting a degree of gentleness and magnanimity from them, infinitely superior to that of the whole of society.

If you wish, like us, that the entire liberty of the individual and, consequently, of his life be respected, you are necessarily brought to repudiate the government of man by man, whatever shape it assumes; you are forced to accept the principles of Anarchy that you have spurned so long. You must then search for the forms of society that can best realize that ideal and put an end to all the violence that rouses your indignation.

\* La morale sans obligation ni sanction, par M. Guyan.