Problems of Anarchism.

INTRODUCTION.

Life throughout all its manifestations has one common need, unimpeded growth, which in man becomes translated into the aspiration for individual freedom. Being a necessary condition to progressive development, it is remarkable that so praiseworthy a wish as the desire for self-liberation has not been sufficiently recognized.

The struggle of man against nature early became the struggle of man against man. This form of the battle is not ended yet. And the ever present need of personal freedom has borne and still bears a prominent part in the conflict.

In the purely animal horde from which our human ancestors at some time slowly grew into societies having more or less cohesion there was doubtless a larger measure of individual liberty than was afterwards possible. But the term is meaningless except in its relative appellation, and is often as living in some kind of definite relation to his fellows. So that, when we speak of personal liberty and for unadorned development, we are always in relation to society, and only in the social state that the individual man is the subject of study and investigation.

Society, however, has never ceased to put a barrier or more to the freedom of its members. Not content with limiting each so as to allow all an equal share of liberty, or rather giving freedom to all bound only by consideration of others, it has been the first inclined to destroy entirely the liberty of the individual, by custom, by law, by religion, by enforced economic conditions, by the whole routine of life which has controlled his progress, stolen away his rights, fettered his natural power of development, and almost annihilated his freedom.

True progress and civilization are nothing but the gradual acquisition of liberty by each. Every progressive change, every reform, every improvement is a revolution in favor of the individual. Let us for a moment take a perspective view of the past. We can then better realize the position attained in the present.

The earlier condition we yet know of seems to have been largely confined to the individual. The man is the unit. The man is quite subordinate. No rights, no property, for him exists: these are thought of only as connected with the units of which he is a part. Selection has been a wife of his own; children, if any, he belongs to either the tribe or to maternal relations. Custom rules all his actions. His conduct is the result of social pressure; his passions, tempered by the instinct of self-preservation, if he ever, sit in the mold of the social state in which he lives. Society claims him and holds him for its own. Individuality does not thrive here. There is but little aspiration for freedom. The individual conditions are, after all, so passive.

The next stage of social growth discloses the family as the unit of society, not of course the family as it now obtains, but each member still dependent on the collective chip of the individual, but far removed from the political form. Liberty now takes a more permanent hold; whatever the individual may have gained through the evolution of the community, he loses by submitting himself to the prevailing superstition. All the abuses that ensnared as the ever growing desire for freedom impels the individual to leave his ancient beliefs behind. Today we see them eternally shatter. Knowledge, truth, science, slowly but surely undermine all that is left, and leave superstition, the naked and unmistakable force of reaction and conservative decay, like a great mountain seen through a mist from which man is steadily receding as he goes forward in pursuit of progress.

Following closely upon the moral and religious revolt came the movement for political reform. Revolutions have destroyed the prerogatives of kings, taken the power from aristocracy, and we now see democracy wholly or in part wailing the privileges once the exclusive right of a few. Individual liberty has been sought through the form of political equality. Whatever achieved or not, it has been the aim of all the great changes in the form and powers of government since the American and French revolutions. With this primary aim the young republic of the western world set out on its career. And even since then the progressions of nation have been following in her footsteps. Liberty for all means freedom for each: unhindered individual development has thus been the motto and the support of all the great progressive movements of modern civilization.

Religion and Government.

[Translated from Nietzsche's "Menachme, Allenmeinhunglich" by George Schumun.]

As long as the State, or rather the government, regards itself as the guardian of the minor masses, and in their behalf considers the question whether religion shall be maintained or abolished, it will most probably always decide in favor of the maintenance of religion. For religion sanctifies the individual nature in times of loss, privation, terror, distrust,—that is, when the government is incapable of doing anything directly for the relief of the mental sufferings of the private man; when, by taking the State's place, it can and does take the State's place, the State will change into a means of decided hostility to the State; they will be on the alert for the measures of the
Liberty.

Issued A Weekly at Two Dollars a Year; Single Copies, Four Cents.

BENJ. R. TUCKER, Editor and Publisher.
Office of Publication, 120 Liberty Street.
Post Office Address: Liberty, P. O. Box No. 1215, New York, N. Y.
Entered at New York as Second-Class Matter.

NEW YORK, N. Y., JANUARY 7, 1890.

"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestige of old-time dis-
cersy, the Revolution abolishes at once the source of the econom-
ically and socially alluring vice of the present day. For, I think, the
government of the future, the running-halt of the department store, all these
tactics of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."—

"Pedro." (7)

The appearance in the editorial column of articles on econ-
mics by other than the editor's initial indi-
cates that the editor approves their central purpose and
general tenor, though he does not hold himself respon-
sible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in
other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other
writers by no means indicates that he approves yet, in
any respect, such disposition of them being governed
largely by motives of convenience.

SUBSCRIPTION LIST.

We, the undersigned, hereby agree, in case Benj. R.
Tucker shall decide to publish in book form a compila-
tion of articles written by him for his paper, Liberty,
to purchase of him, at his option, one dollar for each
number of copies herewith set opposite our respective
names, and to pay to Benj. R. Tucker one-half the
amount due for these copies whenever he shall call for
it, and the balance on the appearance of the book.

PREVIOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

1,500 copies.

James D. Maffitt, Elgin, Ill. 3
W. J. Willis, 1104 South St., Springfield, Ill. 1

An Important Work.

The series of articles from the pen of William
Baillie, begun in this number under the general
heading of "Problems of Anarchism," will proba-
bly continue for many months and will deal with
most of the sociological questions with which the
Anarchist movement is concerned. I have seen a
small part of it and it is the opinion of one who
has, but, knowing Comrade Baillie as I do and the
excellent articles that he has previously written for
Liberty, I feel justified in beginning its pub-
lication, regardless of any deviations from Lib-
erty's chosen path that future chapters may
show. I do not expect that his views will differ materially from Liberty's, but in any case Com-
rade Baillie's earnestness and ability furnish a
perfect guarantee that the difference which may
develop will be worth considering.

Perhaps Liberty's readers would like to know
what this new contributor does. He is a
younger Irish workingman, from whose years
past has lived in Manchester, England. There
he was a Communist of the Kropotkin school,
one of the most ardent workers for that cause
in England, and a frequent writer for the "Com-
monweal." Coming to this country a year and
a half ago, he made Boston his home and be-
came intimately acquainted with Liberty, of
whose teachings, like most Communists, he had
a very hazy conception. The closer contact with
Anarchist thought soon inspired him with
great interest in it, and he frequently sought in-
terviews with me and with other comrades for
the discussion of knotty points. The result is
that he has thrown his Communist overboard
and is today as good an Anarchist as one would
care to see.

Regarding the series of articles now begun, he
writes me as follows:

Strictly speaking, Anarchism is a political rather
than an economic doctrine, but it is found in pra-
tice to involve the economic aspect of society even
as fundamentally as does the political. I have long
felt that Anarchist literature—at least such of it as I am
acquainted with—is lacking in a connected and sci-
etific presentation of its economic conceptions. A
cor-
relation of the main results, accepted by competent
Anarchists, of what is and is not economic truth,
including the special characteristics of Anarchist eco-
nomics, seems to me to be a work worthy of being ac-
complished.

That the articles I am engaged upon will perform
this function I certainly do not claim. Too well do I
know my unfruitfulness and want of preparation for such a
task. Moreover, I should not care to assert that there
exists the handful of hard believers in our
ideas in the doctrine of the field of economics to render such a
standard work possible. One thing, however, I make bold
to undertake. Anarchists of some schools and nearly
all other Socialists present the hope of continu-
ing in their economic ideas. To dissipate some of
these fallacies and endeavors to establish some principles that
are sound would prove not without value. This at-
ttempt I have the temerity to make. If the effort
should succeed even partially, Socialist economics will
decisively gain, and the ground would be cleared
some-
what for the above-mentioned task.

The preliminary part of the series is a brief and nec-
ecessarily rough outline of the political attitude of
Anarchy. Furnishing an introduction to the econom-
inquiry, it is difficult to realize enough in subject matter to the
reader not to avoid this risk while making the scope of my
subject clear.

I hope that this too modest announcement
of Mr. Baillie's purpose will insure attentive con-
sideration of what he has to offer.

Is It a Vote?

We certainly could not complain (supposing we had the inclination) of any scantness of atten-
tion to Anarchism in current magazine dis-
cussion,—I mean on the principle that it is
better to be ignored than ignored. Anarchism is
not ignored; almost everybody who deals
with the political problems of the day
feels the necessity of referring in some
way or other to the ideas of Anarchist-
ism. The fact that the ideas and practices
generally cited as Anarchistic are the illegiti-
mate and unhealthy offspring of compliance
gnarity does not affect the statement I wish to
make,—that a good deal of attention is being paid
to what is mistaken for Anarchism by the
writers in the leading magazines. It is gratify-
ing to have to note a circumstance which argues
so well for the conscience, if not for the under-
standing, of the enlightened teachers who appear
in the literary arena (previously) to disseminate
knowledge and truth. It is not our fault that
the same fact which is so favorable to the con-
tributors happens to put the editors in a rather
unfavorable light. The writers who fall into
amusing and other blunders in their well-mean-
criticism are the basis of misinforma-
tion as an extinguishing circumstance; but what
plea is there left for the editors who are in-
forned of the true state of the case and who
allow ignorance, error, and injustice unrebuked;
who, by refusing a hearing to the
misrepresented, deliberately assume respon-
sibility for the circulation of error and baseless
charges? Of course the average editor would
think it highly diverting to hear that his con-
duct stands in need of apology; his magazine
being published in the interest of his pocket
rather than that of sweetness and light, it must
be apparent to every one that to burden his
pages with commercially valueless matter would
be the height of unreason. But there are other
editors, who profess to apply another test than
popularity and to be governed by considerations of
fairness to some extent; how will they explain
their apparent determination to screen their
readers from an introduction to the ideas of
real Anarchists?

In at least two December magazines are we
traced to grave criticisms of what the writers
imagine to be the Anarchistic position. In the
"Arena" Mr. Thomas B. Preston, in attempt-
ing to answer the question, "Are We Socialists?"
finds it necessary to define or characterize
the various reformatory schools of the day; and
this is how he discharges his duty with reference to
Anarchism:

"It would abolish all government, and leave individ-
uals subject only to natural laws. In a perfect state
of society, the Anarchists claim, men would do right
without any laws. Education and self-control would
rule the individual, and any other kind of regulation
would be an unwarranted interference with personal
freedom. Communities would be formed of individu-
als attached to each other by a similarity of tastes
and desires. If a member of one of these groups became
dissatisfied, he would leave it, and join some other
group more congenial to his tastes. Truth, justice,
and humanity would be followed in their own way, and
not through fear of any repressive laws. ... The
oretical Anarchy may thus be defined as a state of soci-
te in which every one does as he pleases without
wronging another. Indeed, such perfect community is only
possible in heaven. As long as men are subject to the
physical necessities of the body, it is morally certain that
there will be a class of material interests which re-
quaints them with a regulation; and such a regulation
must be government. The trouble with many Anarchists, however, is
that they wish to bring about their system by violence
if necessary, and consider the first step toward its at-
tainment to be the forcible destruction of present sys-
tems of government. In theory they simply carry out
an exaggerated absurdity the doctrine of non-inter-
ference with personal liberty,—that the "best govern-
ment is that which governs least."

"Were I addressing the readers of the "Arena,"
I should take up Mr. Preston's assertions one by
one and proceed to prove that not one of them applies to
genuine Anarchism. Of course it would be easy to
show that Mr. Preston has "Communistic Anarchism" in mind, and that, the
logical and philosophical Anarchism of the
individualists not being taken cognizance of, the
points made against something radically opposed to
it could not affect it in the least. It would
be easy to convince Mr. Preston and his readers
that the talk about "perfect society," "groups," or
"similarity of tastes," is totally irrelevant to a
discussion of true Anarchism. But I am not
carrying Mr. Preston or his readers, and
therefore do not need to go into those questions.

My thoughts are now busy with the editor of
the "Arena," Mr. Flower, who, I have ample
reason to believe, knows full well that his contribu-
tors is unintentionally misleading and therefore
unfair to his readers as well as to the read-
er, who will be condemned unheard and
through a comedy of errors and misunderstand-
ings. Mr. Flower understands the Anarchistic
position as the "Community of the
Nameless Anarchists"—a political
or follow the cardinal principles of scientific
Anarchism; yet he permits an indiscriminate
and erroneous infliction of Anarchism to ap-
ppear in his magazine, regardless of the inevita-
able injustice of such a verdict upon it. I
am not irrational enough to expect Mr. Flower
to append critical comment and correction to ar-
ticles dealing with general problems; or move-
Liberty. 253

All laws is equivalent, in intention and fact, to the deliberate abandon of all attempts to restrain and punish crime. Imagining that the anarchists predicate "absolute liberty" and non-resistance (or at least no regular and systematic resistance) to crime, Mr. Kitchin seems to impress them with the fatality of the proposal by the old but ever instructive tale of the donkey. He virtually makes the point that "absolute liberty" is something unthinkable under social conditions and is invariably reduced to license for some and slavery for others. Had he taken the trouble to inform himself of the conditions given by anarchists of "law" and "government," he would have learned that anarchists make due provision for the health and comfort of the donkey,—that they do not propose to encourage crime and violence and do not intend to endanger the stability of society. The anarchists are convinced that the law of equal freedom, if obeyed, assures the donkey life and health, and they will abolish nothing that can show a valid title to existence under the seal of equal freedom. Everything and everybody not in rebellion against equal liberty will be fully protected and guarded. In a word, there can be no doubt there would be attempts to disregard the social compact in an anarchistic society, as there are attempts to violate present "agreements"; but the difficulties of disposing of criminals would not (to say the least) be greater than they are today.

Ignorance, however, does not excuse any one in the republic or Anarchy of letters. The fact that Mr. Kitchin made uninteresting remarks on Anarchism in the "Popular Science Monthly" makes it quite proper that he should allow an anarchist to correct his contributor and counteract the mischief done by him. Mr. Kitchin named the victims of his contempt, and, if injustice has been done them, they should be afforded an opportunity for self-defense. True, society has not yet tacitly agreed to be scrupulously fair in such matters; unfairness of this kind and degree does not involve serious consequences to the contributor or editor. But Mr. Youmans and his contributors pose as leaders and teachers of a higher ethical code; they profess to desire the recognition of a higher standard to conduct; and surely no greater sacrifice is demanded of them when we ask the privilege of addressing their constituency. I move that the anarchists be given the floor. Is the motion seconded? Is it a vote? v. y.

The responses to my call for payment of the first instalment due from subscribers to the book fund have come in very satisfactorily. Never fear, the work is not dead, nor yet Secretary's chair, nor ever to be. We have at least a chance for a good showing in the present contest. And, perhaps because the issue of December 10, in which I called for the money, received abominable treatment from the post-office, and may consequently have failed to reach many subscribers. I wish that all who have not already responded would send me at once one-half the amount of their subscription (or the whole, if they prefer to finish the matter with one remittance). I hope to issue the book by February 15, if subscribers are prompt in their payments.

The wisdom of Nietzsche's remark in this week's instalment of Mr. Schum's illuminating translations from that author, depreciating work for the destruction of the State, depends upon its meaning. If Nietzsche simply deprecates at}

Religion and Government. (Continued from page 1.)

government, they will seek to hinder, to cross, to give battle to, to give air to every possible mode of manipulating the opposite party, the irreligious, through the heat of their opposition, into an almost fanatical enthusiasm for the State; wherein the additional factor comes into play that the religious parties are still powerful enough to restore an ancient condition and turn back the wheel of progress,—in which case enlightened despotism (perhaps less enlightened and timider than formerly) will intervene to seize the opportunity, whether the irreligious parties will assert themselves and for several generations, perhaps by means of the school and education, undermine and finally make impossible the perpetuation of the opposite party. The enthusiasm for the State will begin to wane; it will become more and more evident that with the religious adoration for which the State is a mystery, a supernatural institution, the most sovereign and affectionate attitude towards which has been shaken. Henceforth the individuals will view it only in the light in which it may become helpful or harmful to them, and strive by all means to gain power over the other party. The more they become too great, people and parties will change too rapidly, and mutually hurl themselves too wildly again from the eminence after they have scarcely reached it. And thereby the guarantee of permanence; people will be frightened from enterprises which require a quiet growth of decades and centuries in order to bear ripe fruit. Nobody will any longer fear any other obligation to a law than temporarily to submit to the force which it represents; but once the effort will be made to undermine it by a new force, try a newly-to-be-formed majority. Finally—we may say it with confidence—the increase of all government, the increase of the necessities and worry of these anguistic struggles, must force people to an entirely new resolve,—to the abolition of the State, to the cancellation of the antithesis, of private and public, of state and society, of a new order of natural governmental functions; even the most temerarious survival of the old work of government (the protection, for instance, of the private man against the private man) will one day be assumed by private enterprise. The neglect, the decay, and the death of the State, the unannouncing of the private person (I am careful not to say: the individual), is the outcome of the demotion of the State to the level of a mere machine. Has it accomplished its task,—which 23r all things human is fraught with much reason and reason, have all relapsed into the old distemper been overcome, the reassertion of mankind, on which one may read all sorts of strange histories and perhaps also some good things.

To briefly repeat what has just been said: the interest interwoven with governments of religion go hand in hand, so that, when the latter begins to decay, the foundation of the State will also fall to pieces. The belief in a divine order of political matters, in the sanctity of the life of the State, is a religious origin: if religion disappears, the State will inevitably lose its old Isis veil and no longer command reverence. The sovereignty of the people, seen clearly, becomes a wheelwright way through the inverted eminence in the domain of these sentiments; modern democracy is the historical form of the decay of the State.

The prospect resulting from this certain decay is, however, not in every respect one: human prudence and selfishness are of all qualities the most highly developed; when the State shall no longer meet the requirements of these forces, it will be least of
Money and Currency

BY

A. H. STEPHENSON AND G. F. STEPHENS

The invention of money—the standard of value—diversification of money issue—The best currency—solution of the money question.

Price, 15 cents.

Address

JUSTICE PUBLISHING CO.

1314 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.

THE ANARCHISTS:

A Picture of Civilization at the Close of the Nineteenth Century.

BY

JOHN HENRY MACKAY.

Translated from the German by

GEORGE SCHUM.

A poet's prose contribution to the literature of philosophic and egoistic anarchism. The author traces his own mental development and the incidents, manifestations of the unemployed, the rolling at Trafalgar Square, and the execution at the Ems. The antagonists between the Compromisers and Anarchists sharply brought out. One of the world's great artists places his pen at the seat of Anarchism.

CONTENTS.


315 Pages.

Price, cloth, $1.00; paper, 50 cents.

Address

BENJ. R. TUCKER, Box 1315, New York, N. Y.

LIBERTY—Vols. V and VI.

Complete files of the fifth and sixth volumes of this journal, beautifully bound in cloth, now for sale at

Two Dollars Each.

People who desire these volumes should apply for them early, as the number is limited. The first four volumes were sold out immediately after paying ten dollars for a copy of the first volume. The others will become more valuable as time goes on.

Address

BENJ. R. TUCKER, Box 1318, New York, N. Y.