Problems of Anarchism.

PROPERTY.

2. The Socialists are Subservient of Liberty.

I have already indicated that to demonstrate a truth in the abstract, even when it is generally accepted as such, does not necessarily grant us the power to destroy that existence, which exists no more. Nothing more plainly shows this than an inquiry into property as it exists today. For it is not one simple system based on justice that we find, but a complex of actual property rights and privileges, the latter entailed by the former — which lead to confusion of statements and reasoning by nearly all of those who recognize the enormous evils of the prevailing system, of which the latter is a product. No less hopeless is the confusion of arguments used by its champions and supporters.

Violence, either direct or through law, accounts for the greater part of actual property rights from the remotest past to the present time, as much in so-called free and civilized societies as in the most barbarous. The upholders of the existing order maintain the justice of current methods of obtaining wealth and the validity of present ownership rights to the possession of property, by hypocritically falling back on the true theory which declares, in the words of Adam Smith, that the property which each man has in his own labor, as it is the original foundation of all other property, so is it the most sacred and inviolable. They defend their property on the assumption that it is acquired under the same conditions as the right of those who labor without violating others' rights; and uplift their hands in holy horror in their desire to save the poor man's goods and the toiler's right to his own when the wicked Communists cry in the words of Progress without but without his meaning.

"Property is robbery.

They can show you that laws are continually being made to protect the property of the producer, to insure his right to the fruits of his toil — mental or physical; that the spirit of the age follows the same course, and that justice requires that every man shall be secure in the possession of his own. And they say: 'Down with the revolutionist, the robber who would deny our rights to the wealth we possess! 'Tis the poor we defend as well as the rich, the workingman as quick as the capitalist.'

Anarchy would destroy the wealth that other people produce, extracting it mercilessly from the rightful owners by means of causes, laws, and conditions that have grown up mostly in violence, wrong, and injustice, and are maintained today through force of arms and legal trust; unavailing the while that means of acquiring property do not merely change the plain rights of others and render private property, as conceived in the minds of its possessors and admitted by property dealers, impossible for the vast majority of its creators.

While conceding the fact that the just theory of property rights continues to gain ground both in general belief and in legal establishment, we find that its application is still extremely limited, and that in the industrial world under capitalist conditions it does not obtained at all.

Modern industry and the accompanying economic conditions have arisen under the régime of slavery, that is, under arbitrary conditions in which equal liberty had no place and law-made privileges held unbounded sway, — it is only to be expected that an equally arbitrary and unjust system of property should prevail.

On or as a dependent class of wealth-producing men, on the other a privileged class of wealth-reaping men, each becoming more and more distinct, as capitalism advances, has resulted in a wholesale and gradual concentration of wealth, which grows larger by attraction all property, no matter by whom produced, into the hands of the privileged, and hence property becomes a social power, an economic force decisive of the fate of nations, the modern conception of justice, a means of enslaving the dispossessed.

Under this system equal liberty cannot obtain. The law of life, that each should receive the benefit of his own toil, the society which beholds, with equivalent benefits given, the results of another's life-sustaining actions, that every individual should reap the reward of his energies, the fruits of his labor, his money producing capital and capital producing money, and his mind and body, the mere development and use of society's organs becomes a private property, the property of some, while others by the mere possession of property, the mere possession of property, are entirely entitled to the full product of society's labor, its labor, its organd body, the mere possession of property, are entirely entitled to the full product of society's labor, its labor, its intelligence, its love of beauty, its art, its knowledge, its science, the fruits of which are used to the destruction of the property of others.

Inequalities in possessions exist not so much because of inequalities in the power of individuals to acquire wealth under free conditions, but vastly more because political and social and economic systems have always tended to create artificial inequality, to foster and increase whatever natural inequality did exist: a truth exemplified with as much force in the United States as elsewhere. If we compose ourselves to see how else can explain the fact that society is divided economically into classes as distinct in the republican as in the European countries, and the capitalist form of property becoming ever more concentrated in the hands of a privileged minority, there certainly was a nearer approximation to a state of diffused individual property in the earlier stages of this nation's career. Millionaires were a comparatively humble class. Now a modern growth. Monopolies were few, and had not then attained their present gigantic proportions. Privilege had not the same scope, nor had capitalism destroyed the power of the individual to acquire such wealth as he could produce by the exercise of his abilities.

Many modern economic evils were absent. Prosperity was more general, if the standard of comfort was not so high. Yet who will claim that the institution of private property was less firmly established or less secure. The like truth holds of all all the antediluvian, in which artificial inequality and the innumerable encroachments on equal freedom which the laws and arrangements of old societies present have not had time to manifest their influence. Still individual property in such places is none the less general. The conclusion which is drawn, however, by such comparative considerations, but by a logical examination of existing circumstances, is that some other cause than the one which Communists ascribe is responsible for the social evils of the day.

It would appear that they sometimes realize this truth. Marx's famous Communist Manifesto, which in 1848 made 'the ruling classes tremble in view of the Communist Revolution,' is to this day accepted as a text-book by various sections of the anti-property school, declares:

"The Bourgeoisie are increased because we aim to abolish private property. But in the very midst of society today private property has been made impossible for nine-tenths of its members. Its present existence in the hands of the Bourgeoisie is based on the fact that it does not exist at all for nine-tenths of the people. We are consequently accused of desiring to abolish that kind of property which involves as a necessary condition the absence of all property for the immense majority of society.

"Communism deprives no one of the power to appropriate social products for his own use, it only deprives him of the power to subject others' labor by such means. Under the present system those who do work acquire property, while those who do acquire property do not work."
The appearance in the editorial column of articles bearing other signatures than that of the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers, by his means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

An Invitation Declined.

The following correspondence explains itself:

THE WORLD'S CONGRESS AUXILIARY OF THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION.

CHICAGO, U.S.A., February 3, 1893.

Mr. Benj. R. Tucker.

DEAR SIR: The Labor Congresses in connection with the world's Columbian Exposition will be held at the close of August and the beginning of September, 1893. The World's Congress Auxiliary is desirous of giving one of the sessions to the subject of the Labor Movement from the Individualist Point of View.

The World's Congress Auxiliary does itself the honor to invite you to participate in the Congress by delivering, in person if possible, a paper on the subject of "The Labor Movement from the Individualist Point of View in the United States." The length of the paper is expected to be about twenty to thirty minutes.

Printed matter descriptive of the scope and plans of the Congresses is mailed to you herewith.

The World's Congress Auxiliary would be glad, if you accept this invitation, to know if there are any other topics connected with the Labor Movement on which you would like to address the Labor Congress, and would be glad to receive suggestions from you concerning other speakers.

Begging the favor of an early reply.

Respectfully yours,

H. D. LODD, Secretary, Committee on Programme and Correspondence.

NEW YORK, February 22, 1893.

Mr. H. D. Lodg, Secretary, Committee on Programme and Correspondence, World's Congress Auxiliary.

DEAR SIR: I am in receipt of an invitation, extended by you in behalf of the World's Congress Auxiliary, to address its Labor Congress upon "The Labor Movement from the Individualist Point of View in the United States." While acknowledging the honor thus conferred upon me and thanking you therefor, I must state at once and very flatly that, in view of such information as has reached me from official and other sources regarding the policy of the World's Congress Auxiliary, I am utterly unwilling to accept the invitation. In fact, I think you must have mistaken your man; let me tell you why.

In the "North American Review" of October, 1891, there appeared an official announcement from the World's Congress Auxiliary that at its congresses "no discussion, whether in religion, law, or indeed any other subject, will be permitted which tends to attack, to antagonize, or to attempt to overthrow the recognized social law of the civilized world or existing forms of government. Thus, the Mormon or the North American will be afforded an opportunity of presenting his peculiar views, as these are in direct antagonism to recognized moral and social laws." Unless the policy thus announced has since been abandoned, and I have not heard of its abandonment, it is clear that your invitation to me has been extended under a misapprehension: for I am one of the most conspicuous among those who are expending their best energies in attacking, antagonizing, and attempting to overthrow recognized moral and social laws and government in all its forms. In short, I am an Anarchist. You evidently did not know this, and mistook me for an Individualist. The two are easily confused, for they have much in common; but there is a vital difference between them. The Individualist believes that cooperation for defence and protection should be compulsory, whereas the Anarchist believes that cooperation should never be compulsory, and that no compulsion should ever be exercised upon the non-invasive individual.

There are two reasons, then, why I should not accept your invitation. First, not being an Individualist, I am not the proper person to speak for the Individualists. Second, being an Anarchist, I am not wanted in your Congress under my true colors. Now, under false colors I will not sail.

It has been suggested to me, by a friend who claims to know, that the exclusive policy adopted by the World's Congress Auxiliary is aimed, not at persons like myself, who carry on their warfare against government solely by educational means and passive resistance, but at those who seek to overthrow government by physical force, in other words, at those revolutionary Communists (misnamed Anarchists by others and by themselves) who favor "propaganda by deed." If this is true, it only adds to my unwillingness to address your Congress. I will not enter a deliberative body professedly as broad as a World's Congress Auxiliary should be, under cover of a distinction framed to admit me and to exclude Pierre Kropotkin, Elise Reclus, or John Most. Intensely hostile though I am to the teachings and methods of these men, I consider it a very shortsighted intolence that would deny them a hearing.

Let me say, then, in conclusion, that I hope to see an Independent Congress held in Chicago at the same time that your Congress is in session, a Congress of intellectual outcasts, if you will, to whose daily那里 shall be admitted who have been ruled out by the World's Congress Auxiliary, or who, like myself, are prepared to choose between the exclusive and the excluded in favor of the latter. In such a Congress, and not in that of the World's Congress Auxiliary, will be best exemplified the spirit of the brave discoverers of new worlds whose achievements your undertaking is designed to celebrate. The timidity and intolerance which characterize the policy of the World's Congress Auxiliary are as incapable of discovering an economic and industrial America today as they were of discovering physical America four hundred years ago. Yours truly,

Benj. R. TUCKER.
product of brainlessness rather than unfairness is the falsehood embodied in Mrs. White's response to Mr. Cohen, who had ventured to endorse my estimate of the Keble book and to remind the furious editor that abuse is a poor substitute for refutation. "Mr. Cohen intimates," she says, "that there is something to refute in Mr. Yarrows' analysis of Keble's book. If there is, it is buried so far beneath the avalanche of conceit, arrogance, egotism, vindictiveness, and assumption, that the difficulty of overcoming one's dignity and wawan's long enough to dig it out and seriously consider it is too great an undertaking." (The "difficulty" is "too great an undertaking"! Now, this is simply false. My points are as clear and prominent that some of my friends here doubted the wisdom of filling a page of Liberty with self-evident propositions and truisms. My "demonstration" of the utter worthlessness of the book seemed to them altogether too elaborate. But Mrs. White does not know the difference between bawling a point beneath "an avalanche of conceit," etc., and bringing out one's points so as to make them seem too obvious to require elaboration. It seems, moreover, that Mrs. White is suffering from lack of memory as well as from absence of reasoning power, for in her first comment she tacitly admitted the existence of well-taken points in my review, and pretended to find fault, not with its substance, but with its form and style.

Mrs. White seems to be the victim of the hallucination that I want to club her through a "narrow turnpike." "Even taking his word for it," she means, "that his is the only plan of salvation, the most of us prefer to go our own way, even though we stumble through tangled paths, follow false lights, and sometimes lose the way. Let us go wrong rather than be clubbed or driven right." This is the talk of hysterical imbeciles, not of reasoning and healthy individuals. Mrs. White can go in any direction she chooses, and she can remain still, if she likes; but I reserve the right to compare her way with mine, and show why mine is better. My clubbing is not for those who differ with me, but for those who pretend to agree with me in the abstract and to go my way, when, in truth, they neither understand nor follow the light I am guided by. I do not club any honest adherent of any reform school; but those who try to sow confusion and ignorance, to darken counsel, and to usurp functions and titles to which they have no claim, I deem it an imperative necessity and intense pleasure to club out of sight and hearing.

The Kebles, the Hartmans the Whites, have the right to believe and preach any doctrine conceivable; and I have the right to cut their preaching, if I care to do so, in any legitimate way. Still, as long as they do not ignorantly or maliciously pervert and misrepresent those ideas which I am engaged in expounding and defending, they are safe from my club. It is only when the Kebles parade their crude and contradictory notions as the philosophy of Anarchism, or when Mrs. White and her friends impudently undertake to authorize the Kebles to speak in the name of Anarchism, that the club is called into active service. Anarchism is something which they do not even remotely comprehend, and which I, among others, have made it my business to defend against all comers from antagonistic camps; shall I allow a few sentimentald and weak-minded "harmonies" and "peace-makers" to sit at ease in my work by nonsensical patching of ignorant misrepresentations? We teach Anarchism, and we propose to allow no one who does not teach to mislead the world and neutralize our efforts by claiming to do so.

A few more of Mrs. White's stupidities, and I am done with the subject and the crew. Mr. Cohen wonders why the word imbecility exists at all, "if it is not a mark of imbecility not to know the difference between various doctrines that are as different as night and day, and to talk of them as if they were one and the same thing." What he gets from Mrs. White is the following luminous observation:

"No, Mr. Cohen, I do not feel like saying that it is a mark of imbecility, even if Mr. Keble did not know the difference between different doctrines. It isn't safe to say such things, for a great many people of unqualified intelligence confound the different issues of economic reform. Proudhon is claimed as authority by schools that are as different as night and day." Herbert Spencer is "told out by Henry George; George is told out by various others; some on cogito ergo sum. Where is there a writer of prominence not accused of inconsistency and lack of logic by some one? But we call them all "idiots, imbeciles," etc.

"Two-thirds of all this is utterly irrelevat, as anybody with any degree of logical capacity cannot fail to perceive. The question is not whether writers are criticised, accused of inconsistency, or charged with ignorance, but whether it is not a mark of imbecility to lump together as identical or similar doctrines essentially unlike and even diametrically opposite. To this the only relevant answer is that "Proudhon is claimed as authority by schools that are as different as night and day." This, I say, is relevant, if true. But it is not true. In every movement there are Lillie D. Whites, and among such it may still be a question where Proudhon belongs. But these do not settle anything finally, and their notions are as dust in the balance. Ask such men as Marx and Engels and Hay and Hax and Staunton whether Proudhon was Anarchist or Socialist, and their opinion will be entitled to weight, since, as authorities in their own school, they may be presumed to know who and what should be regarded as opposed to them. What Marx thought of Proudhon is well known."

Mr. Cohen further desires to be told whether it is not also a mark of imbecility to declare that governments are but mythical monsters, invented by selfish, crafty men, who are controlled by them. What they say need not necessarily have any meaning or point. It is useless to search for their "words, words, words" for any trace of logic or idea. Cohnness is not their ambition, and intelligence is not their gift from nature.

Problems of Anarchism. (Continued on next page.)

monstrosity condemning the existing property system because it is not based on this principle. But I am unable to affirm that the document as a whole would justify us in taking such a view.

The exponents of Communism, however, seem to agree in the view of property rights which I have established. Says Kropotkine in his work, "Socialistic Evolution": "Abuse the conditions which allow some to monopolize the fruits of the labor of others," apparently agreeing that each should be assigned the fruits of his activities. Another Communist, of no less pronounced views against the existing property relations, is still more emphatic on the same point. William Morris declares that, having labored towards the production "is the only claim that can rationally be allowed to the claim on any other ground must lead to what in plain terms we must call robbery." ("True and False Society," page 17.)

As I shall presently show that there is no difference in their attitude towards private property between Communists of the type just quoted and the Social Democrats of the English Fabian Society, I may add that are the Fabians "they say in "Capital and Land," when treating of incomes from capital, admitting the fairness and advantage of guaranteeing every man the equivalent of the result of his industry, they declare that there is no either justice or profit in a system which "cannot claim the largest for a personal annoyance."

In the sense, then, that we have in previous articles seen the notice of individual property, it is not condemned by Communist, or even in preventing the validity of its basis. And in so doing they admit that some other cause than the institution of private property must be sought in order to account for the evils and injustice which arise out of modern industrial and economic arrangements.

Wm. Ralfe.
The Sociological Index

Henry W. Cannon, American Banker, Feb. 4, 1900 words.
408. Bimetallism. By Samuel Foord. Liver-
pool Finance, February 16, 1900 words.

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION


LAND


POLITICS

420. Interview with General Weaver on Prohibition and other Issues. Voice, Feb. 18, 2500 words.
422. The Break-Up of the Union. Editorial in N. Y. Nation, Feb. 16, 1500 words.

RELIGION


SEX


SOCIOLoGY


MISCELLANEOUS

477. Trained Workers for the Poor. By Octavia Hill. Nineteenth Century, Jan. 8, 1500 words.
499. Licensing Engineers. Two bills before the Massachusetts legislature. Boston Daily Concord, Feb. 8, 1500 words.

New Books.
