On Picket Duty.

Congressman Tom Johnson declares that he is opposed to a repeal of the ten per cent. tax on private banking. And that’s the kind of a Henry George free-trader he is!

Shortly after the perpetration of the Texas horror involving the burning of a negro at the stake the London “Personal Rights” sought to establish a connection in principle between Anarchism and the action of the mob. The letter of protest from an English Anarchist, John Badeock, Jr., which is printed in another column, was first sent to “Personal Rights” and declined by the editor.

As Mr. Varros points out in his article in this issue, the editor of “Personal Rights” has now distinctly abandoned his old claim that compulsory cooperation for defence is consistent with equal freedom. Liberty has forced him to do so. He now admits that it is a violation of equal freedom, but a violation that is necessary in order to attain the greatest amount of liberty possible at present. This admission abolishes all ethical difference between Mr. Levy’s position and that of a thousand and one other authoritarians who are willing to violate equal freedom in one or more particulars in order to attain a maximum of freedom. Many a prohibitionist thinks mankind would enjoy more freedom if liquor-selling were forbidden. Many a believer in the contagious diseases act would make the same apology. It is legitimate for Mr. Levy to show that these people are mistaken in their calculations, but it is utterly inconsistent for him to set himself upon a pinnacle of absolute righteousness and denounce these people as immoral because they violate equal freedom. Yet he does this in every number of “Personal Rights.”

Letter to a Tax-Collector.

Sir,—I received on Wednesday last, the 10th inst., a somewhat complicated document, headed “Income Tax,” the apparent purport of which was to obtain some money from me for a firm known as the “British Government,” for which you apparently act as agent in this district. I must observe in the first instance that the method adopted by your firm for getting its money is certainly unique, and I feel sure that, if adopted by any other firm in the country, it would make it a laughing stock amongst commercial people. Instead of sending me in my account, so that I can clearly see what services you have rendered me, or what goods you have supplied, and charging me accordingly, I find that you have all sorts of strange and monstrous ways of obtaining payment. I will not present dwell upon the method of setting man to pounce upon people’s luggage and ransack it when they enter this country, or of keeping men loading along the sea-coast with telescopes for the purpose of preventing freedom of trade, or of running postal systems under strict monopoly, and taxing every letter that is transmitted. I am concerned at present with the method of asking for direct payment from people, simply because you give them an income, and charging accordingly to the amount.

There is only one other class of men, as far as I know, who generally adopt the principle of varying their fees according to the means of their customers, and they are the medical men; but I should like to know what medical man would think of sending me in an account, or want me to pay him money without being able to produce any record of attendance? Yet this is what your firm does, and its managers and collectors still remain at large. Your firm may have rendered me some service or they may not—but I am quite in a haze as to the nature of the services rendered, and certainly have never asked for them. But what is more, whilst I am not at all clear as to the nature of any services your firm has rendered, I am conscious that they are guilty of doing me daily injury. By means of money extorted under threat of violence, your agents infringe the rights of citizens from armies and navies to law courts, school boards, municipal governments, and the like, which in my opinion are a positive injury both to myself and to industry at large.

And yet you think I am going to be simple enough to pay you money, when you can’t for the life of you make out my account? Why, the thing is laughable on the face of it! Indeed I should take it to be a huge practical joke; were it not that, in addition to such a ludicrous way of attempting to carry on business, you actually stoop to acts of very gross impertinence and impudent curiosity. Fancy a set of grown-up "gentlemen," such as the managers of your firm are supposed to be—professing to be filled with the most benevolent intentions, and even assuming the title of "Right Honorables"(1), stooping to such impertinences as are contained in the document you forwarded me, and being unable to devise any contrivance of collecting money for their philanthropic schemes than that of Mr. William Sykes! The one firm in the country which is distinguished by the fact, that of all the $50,000,000 it receives every year, not a single penny is obtained by any really honest means; thinking itself so superior that its directors are entitled to be called "Right Honorables" and to pocket $50,000 a year!

And in return for this huge amount of public fleecing amounting to $50,000,000, what do we get that is of any solid value? Royal families that lay foundation stones, big ugly ships that steam about the world doing nothing at all, or else mischief (fancy a firm keeping its ships and men doing nothing, or, what is worse, going away a lot of money in the form of gunpowder and then thinking itself entitled to compel people who have no money or leisure to pay for it)—then there are the so-called "real" people you have to pay for this! Why, if they were put up for auction, they wouldn’t fetch $50,000, as old rubbish.

In conclusion, Sir, I beg to say that I think you carry the joke a little bit too far. The masses are plenty of people who from sheer force of habit are willing to give your firm pecuniary support, and the concern might certainly be kept going by voluntary contribu-

tions if only for the fun of the thing; but I would suggest that the soldiers be supplied with pop-guns as being less dangerous than their present playthings, and the horses might be found less expensive than the present stedics, and perhaps the services of some energetic gentleman like the late Mr. P. T. Barnum might be secured for the purpose of running the show as a speculation for profit, instead of its being, as it is now, a gigantic loss.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

ALBERT T. HABER.

WEST HAMBLEDEN, ENGLAND, May 17, 1868.

 Didn’t Know ‘Twas Loaded for the Worker.

Comrade Labadie’s late communication reminds one of the frontiersman, who, in doubt as to whether the animal in his corn patch was a wild beast or a tame one, discharged his gun “to see if it was a beast, but to miss if it was a calf.” The idiocy of the voting teller seems to consist in thinking that the government gun is really loaded to hit the boss or capitalist, who violates the laws or poisons the stores of industry. It is not built that way; but to miss a great wrong-doer, and to hit the trivial one, or innocent one, who, by his way of disregarding the laws is just as much of a Game as he is.

Our recent State law to punish conspiracies to raise the price of food and necessary commodities has been found to be sufficient. At least the courts will find no difficulty in firing it off that way, as the interstate commerce law has been.

A pig was said once to have found his way into a cornfield through a hollow sycamore tree, which formed a part of the fence; one end lying inside and the other outside of the field. The owner had much difficulty in finding the place of entrance. When he did, he changed a length of fence so as to throw both ends of the tree outside the field, and then screened off the view, watched proceedings. Soon piggy came sauntering leisurely along, and quietly entered the log. On coming out, he seemed quite astonished, but finally went back and repeated the experiment. On coming out the second time, however, he gave a snarling grunt and dashed away, declining to try the experiment again.

For three-score years, as I personally know, workmen have been marching up to the voting booths, having been through a number of times, but is only the managing few who ever get into the public cornfield, when the fence is turned, and the voters find themselves left. Yet they go on voting year after year, always with the same result.

The Moral Frontier.

[D. Parcell.]

Why do you kill me? What? do you not live on the other side of the water? My friend, if you lived on this side of the water, I would be just as much at home as you. It would be unjust to kill you; but since you live on the other side, I am a brave man, and it is just.

A Joint Responsibility.

[William Henry Matthews.]

Between the government which does evil and the people who accept it there is a certain shameful solicitude.
Liberty.

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The appearance in the editorial column of articles on other matters because 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 issue by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Individualists’ Verbal Ramparts.

Whether the editor of “Personal Rights” was or was not unconsciously preaching on Anarchistic principles as he embodied them in his columns, whether the ‘liberty’ of the Individualist is his private property, or the government or the individualities, it is clear that such an impression has been produced. I willingly grant that, with the editor’s definition in mind, there was nothing inconsistent, no Anarchist in his strictures on Lord Kimberley. It was certainly the definition which I arbitrarily assigned to the term order that afforded me the basis of the charge of inconsistency; but since Lord Kimberley gave us no definition of the term order, it was not very illegitimate to assume that he might, for the sake of the argument, in order to get his point into a corner, take up the definition of order as I suggested. It is plain that the Individualists, for reasons which they frankly state, refuse to go to the length of demanding equal liberty without reservation or qualification; for the present, at least, they desire liberty and something else with it, just a little aggression on the part of the State. Why might not Lord Kimberley call that little aggression “order” (seeing that liberties have been taken with the term order) and proceed to convict “Personal Rights” of opposing order with liberty? At any rate, my offense was not of a peculiarly atrocious character, though, as a rule, I realize the necessity of interpreting expressions in the light of their own definitions.

However, “Personal Rights” is not satisfied with demurring to my charge of inconsistency, but insists further that I was wrong in my representation of the Individualist point of view. It will be profitable to dwell on this matter somewhat.

What was the substance of my allegation? “Unlike Anarchists,” I said, “Individualists are not satisfied with absence of aggression, or equal freedom. Perhaps it is more correct to say that absence of aggression, equal freedom, is more than the Individualists want; they are not only satisfied with less, but absolutely refuse to ask for more than their programme demands.”

The editor of “Personal Rights” pretends that this is an unfair or unintelligent statement of the case, and he essays to correct me, as follows: Absence of aggression more than we want! And this is asserted by the man who almost solemnly affirms his thorough comprehension of our doctrine! Indeed, we say that absence of limitations on freedom is, just the one thing we do politically want! Up to this point there is no difference between Individualists of our own type and Anarchists of the type of Mr. l’Ange J. Baud, is it? Since we have descended from this ideal platform to the actual business of life that Individualists and Anarchists begin to differ. We hold that, although equal freedom pure and unimpeded is desirable, it is unattainable except, it may be, in a more remote and abstract sense. And from the individualist states that what we have to decide now is, not whether we will have complete liberty in equality, for we cannot get it, but how we can approximate to it as nearly as possible. We hold that Anarchism, if ever put in “active,” would result in a less near approximation to that ideal than would the retention of the minimum of government which constitutes the essential difference between Individualism and L’Ange J. Baud’s programme were reduced to what we judge to be Individualist limits. If Mr. Yorros could then show that it would be still further reduced — to the point of abolition — with advantage to the cause of freedom, we should be willing to accept the principle, to accept this abolition of government. If he could not show this, why should we sacrifice liberty to a more Anarchist ideal? We hope Mr. Yorros will see that, when Individualism and Anarchism come to close quarters, it is much the worse for Anarchism.

Instead of censoring me, I claim that “Personal Rights” has, in the above comments, blessed us with a new definition of an individualist, and Anarchism come to close quarters, Individualism saves itself from utter defeat by surrendering everything but a few truisms, which, though by no means its private property, we are all perfectly willing to let it share and enjoy with the rest of us. If we understand “Personal Rights” rightly, its ideal platform is unmistakably Anarchistic, and the only reason why it does not demand “complete liberty in equality,” or Anarchism, but constructs a temporary, provisional, and imperfect platform (which, by its implication it admits to be subversive of equal freedom as far as it goes), is that we cannot get absence of aggression by appeals or protests, whereas “minimum government” is something which is not unattainable. In other words, Individualism fully admits the logical, philosophical, and ethical soundness of Anarchism, which it indeed espouses and from which it draws its inspiration and its “ideal platform”; but, recognizing that it would be futile to demand the unattainable, Individualism puts forward a more modest platform. Is “Personal Rights” does not mean this, it means nothing; yet, if it does mean it, how can it advance the preposterous pretense that Anarchism has reason to fear a confrontation with Individualism? Since when is a part greater and better than the whole? Individualism being a practical political movement depending for its ethical and philosophical basis on Anarchism, how can it sneer at or revile its own ideal and guide? Those who appreciate the importance of principles, ideals, know that it is the ideal platform which invests the political platform with the ethical value it possesses. A practical movement without an ideal platform back of it commands no respect from the wise. “Personal Rights” never fails to emphasize the need of principled conduct, of philosophical and consistent statesmanship; and it is very severe and merciless with the time-serving politicians who praise about expediency and practicability. Expenditure without principle is carr without horse. Those who have principles and an ideal platform can talk rationally about expediency and practicability, about gradual reform and near approximation. Those who seek an ideal platform are totally at sea in the actual business of life, ignorant even of the proper direction of the first step.

Since, then, the Individualists recognize the ethical and philosophical soundness of the Anarchistic platform, it is manifest that their quarrel with Anarchism proceeds from the mistaken notion that we contemptuously turn our back upon every attempt to attain the attainable and secure the reforms which the existing state of feeling and thought renders possible,—that, in other words, we refuse sympathy and aid to every movement that stops short of complete liberty in its immediate work. But this mistaken notion, being wholly gratuitous, ought not to persist in the mind of so fair a critic as “Personal Rights.” That it is impossible to put Anarchism in practice here and now nobly realizes more keenly than the Anarchists themselves. The Anarchism of the Anarchists is an “ideal platform”; when they descend to the actual business of life, they bear in mind “what we have to decide now is, not whether we will have complete liberty in equality, for we cannot get it, but how we can approximate to it as nearly as possible.” The Anarchist would give maximum government in exchange for minimum government at any time, and they are as anxious as anybody to work for proximate ends. If Individualists do not criticize Anarchistic ideas and beliefs, then they accept these ideas and beliefs and are Anarchists themselves. Certainly Anarchists, when they criticize Individualists qua Individualists, do not refer to this or that political move, or to any particular method; what they refer to are the ultimate political and ethical ideas of Individualism. They have been led to believe that Individualism is a system of political cooperation for defence against aggression is inconsistent with equal freedom, — that to coerce the non-aggressive into cooperation for the putting down of aggressors is ethically wrong; and they have argued against this theoretical position. If Individualism repudiates this position, and accepts the ideal platform of complete liberty in equality, absence of coercion, then Anarchists may and do welcome Individualists into their own ranks, whatever differences there may exist as to the best methods of gradually abolishing governmental aggression.

We are glad, of course, to learn from “Personal Rights” that Individualists are really Anarchists at bottom, that they really want complete liberty in equality, and fully recognize the aggressive character of all compulsory cooperation. But certainly this was not the position of “Personal Rights” when its editor first made the acquaintance of Liberty and philosophical Anarchism. Passages from his editorials might be quoted from which it would clearly appear that he did not, at that time, regard it as an aggression and violation of equal liberty
for government to coerce an, inoffensive, bystander into cooperation against an actual invader. At that time it was scarcely the conscience of the impossibility of attaining complete liberty in equality, Anarchism, which prompted his denunciation of Anarchism and chauvinism of the system which, he said, "would not only restrain the active invader up to the point necessary to restore freedom to others, but would also coerce the man who would otherwise be a passive witness of, or conniver at, aggression into cooperation against his more active colleague." Indeed, so novel is the attitude taken by "Personal Rights" in the passage above quoted that the editor has been unable to guard against the admission of sentiments inconsistent with his own editing very issue of the paper in which he makes the gratifying declaration that Individualists accept the ideal platform of Anarchism. He reprints from another journal an article on "Individualism as a Political Creed," in which the writer (a very able and fair man) points out that Individualism is not Anarchism, since it believes in "public force to protect private freedom," and not "baisse fâche" when it is a question of repelling aggression, but only when the "doing to be 'let alone'" is within the limits of equal freedom. This eleemosynary approach to cooperation in putting down aggression; this "doing" not within the limits of equal freedom. The inconsistency between this assumption and the admission of the editor that Individualism, by retaining this element of coercion of non-invaders, stops short of equal freedom, is plain.

Thus it appears that the Anarchists were not without justification in interpreting individualism as they did. Now, however, that we are distinctly told that the theoretical position of the Individualists is the same as that of the Anarchists, and that a minimum of government is retained in the practical platform of the Individualists from considerations of expediency, we cheerfully withdraw the statement that the Individualists do not want equal freedom. We are all Anarchists now.

The Meaning of Liberty's Motto.

In recently defending the motto of this journal, "Liberty, not the daughter, but the mother of order," against the assaults of the editor of "Personal Rights," I stated that Proudhon, the author of the motto, meant by order, not simply absence of aggression, but society at its highest in organization and development.

In answer Mr. Levy accuses me of trying to save my motto by putting a new and extraordinary meaning into the word "order." Not only does he declare that I am striving to maintain a verbal consistency by now giving to the word a meaning which I did not give to it when I adopted the motto, but he more than miscasts that I do not know what I am talking about when I interpret Proudhon as I do. Now, the fact is that the ignorant party in this discussion, the man who does not know what he is talking about, is Mr. Levy, as I shall proceed to show.

"Mr. Tucker tells us," writes Mr. Levy, "that St. Peter Joseph meant this, just as we are told that more ancient prophets meant the successive and not altogether consistent discoveries and prodigies of their expositors.

It is useless to make hardy assertions—with out a scrap of evidence—about what Proudhon meant by 'order,' if he meant by it something very different from the sense in which he was contradicted—something unlearned by them, then, be it only by a system of trade, or the simple absence of aggression. I am convinced of the words of J. H. Belfrage: "It is better not to know so much than to know so many things that I don't know." When Proudhon wrote the phrase which I have adopted as a motto, he was contradicting, not as Mr. Levy seems to think, some French count-part of the editor of "Personal Rights," but Louis Blanc and the members of the Provisional Government of 1848. These men, in varying degrees, were Social Democrats. By order they meant, as Proudhon did, society at its highest in organization and development, but, unlike Proudhon, they thought that order was to be achieved by co-ordination and authority and that liberty would result from the order thus realized. Proudhon wrote a pamphlet controverting this position, and one of his closing phrases was the motto in question. So much for the charge of juggling.

Now for the charge that I misunderstand Proudhon. I did not offer any evidence in support of my "hardy assertion" for the very reason that such evidence is so plentiful,—a fact which every one who has read Proudhon with anything approaching thoroughness well knows. The assertion being disputed, I content myself with two or three quotations from one volume only, which will prove amply sufficient. This volume has the word order even in its title: "The Creation of Order in Humanity." The first sentence of the book is a definition, not of social order, but of order in general. "I call Order," says Proudhon, "any serial or symmetrical disposition whatsoever." On page 4 we find the social application. "There is an order, or natural system of social bodies, demonstrated by Newton; a system of plants, recognized by de Jussieu; a system of zoology, of which Cuvier is the principal discoverer; a system of chemistry, which Lavoisier has more or less completely formulated; a system of nomenclature, admitted from the remotest antiquity; systems of molecular composition, of organic reproduction, of cosmogony, of grammar, of art, and of literature, still little known, but all of which tend to disengage themselves from the veils which cover them and to constitute themselves in an absolute manner. Likewise there exists a natural system of social economy, clearly foreseen by legislators, who have striven to conform their laws thereto: a system which humanity is every day realizing and which it is my purpose to investigate." On page 390 the statement is still more definite. "To coordinate or classify functions necessarily equal; to distribute the instruments of labor and products in accordance with individual specialties and the laws of exchange,—such is the problem of the creation of order in humanity." Now, Mr. Levy, hide your head.

It being established that I know what Proudhon meant by order, it is to be presumed further that I know what he meant when I adopted the motto, and that therefore I am not guilty of putting forward new definitions to maintain a verbal consistency. This charge made by Mr. Levy is a "hardy assertion without a scrap of evidence." I demand the evidence. And at the same time I challenge Mr. Levy to state specifically how many of the fifty volumes written by Proudhon he has thoroughly read. I do not say that it is his duty to read any of them. I simply say that as a public critic it is his business to read them or to keep quiet about them and then tell us what anarchists will listen with more patience to swains at ‘St. Peter Joseph’ when the man who swears all show that he has made himself competent to utter.

A Suspense of Government?

To the Editor of Personal Rights:

In your March issue, under the heading with which the reader is likely to agree with me regarding Anarchism, Anarchism, as I understand it, is a doctrine in opposition to all forms of government, as might be inferred from the word itself. It is not only directed against kingship and representative government, but also against non-government (such as that which tortured the negro South) and also against private individual government (such as that of Smith against Bacon's laws). All invasive acts are by reason of the government of some individual. The most valuable part of Anarchist Herbert Spencer's teaching, to my mind, is the destruction which he gives to the artificial distinctions that have been set up between the acts of a public official and the acts of others, and the placing on a par of all aggressions, whether individual or collectively perpetrated, whichever sanction by statute law or not so sanctioned.

When a regular constitution government is ignored, it may be that you fall into a suspense of government. That could only be the case when aggressions cease. Herbert Spencer mentions various tribes in India and elsewhere, in which the individuals are the most peaceable on the face of the earth. In other words, in other words, there is a total absence of individual or collective aggressions; or, to put it better, in which Anarchists prevail.

To call the Texan mob, which murdered a wild woman beast to be executed, which cut the dead beast and handed him over to Van de Vactor that vengeance might be inflicted,—to call that mob Anarchist is an abuse of Anarchism committed to the application of the word Aristotelian to designate all who do not believe in the popular God. To show that the Texan mob was actuated by their petting propensities, it is only necessary to compare their acts with the acts committed by the recognized government. There is the crime of the Russian government, for example. Or, take the sentence passed and carried out on the regicide Ravaillac, for the murder of Henry IV, of France in 1610: After removing the most laudable thing that has ever been taken in a tomb of the Place de Grève and there, in the terms of his sentence, the flesh was torn with red-hot pincers from his breasts, arms, thighs, and the calves of his legs; his right hand was scorched and burned with flaming brand; on the places where the flesh had been torn by the pincers were poured melted lead, boiling oil, scaling pitch with wax and brimstone melted together; after which he was torn in pieces by four horses, his body being limited to the performance of that part of his sentence which consisted in his being torn by horses occupied an hour, and was only ended by the mob rushing up and cutting the body with knives. (Four Hundred.)

However difficult the question of the best defense against aggressions may be, you certainly do not get over the difficulty by delegating the defense to a power which itself can be the great aggressor above all others. Years ago he jury system was invented to resist the aggression of government, and it is but natural that the free and unfettered jury should be again advocated as a means of defense. To the Texans it should be pointed out that the infliction of torture was no part of necessary defensive operations; neither the killing of a wild beast may be: that, therefore, such torturing was direct aggression, and aggression to their aggressors under the thirst for revenge rendered individual liberty more remote and difficult to attain than it would be if citizens cultivated their social institutions instead.
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DEBLES-LETTERS.


BIOGRAPHY.


1427. Cesar Lombroso. By Helen Zimmerman. N. Y. Sun, June 11. 4000 words.


ETHICS.


1436. An Error. "Discovery." (Flexibility in cur-

1437. Material or Psychical, or Neither? By B. F. Underwood. Twentieth Century, June 15. 1600 words.

1438. Still Open. (The Fair.) By F. M. Holland. Open Court, June 15. 1400 words.


1444. Clerical Aids. (The church and labor.) By M. C. O'Byrne. New Occasions, June. 4 pages.

1445. A Literary History of Early Christianity. By Charles Griffin & Co. (Cloth, 2 vols.)


1447. Etudes sur le Science Sicle (Tableaux, Mage, Caitlin.) Paris, Lecron, Odin et Cie. (1890, paper, 357 p.)


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