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yet another collection of introductory writings

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The ANARCHISMS series is an attempt to collect a wide range of personal statements and introductory accounts regarding anarchism. They are presented without regard to tendency and without editorial comment. No reader is likely to find everything collected to their taste, but most readers will be likely to encounter some new perspectives.

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More volumes are in preparation.

I AM AN ANARCHIST

Lucy Parsons

1913

I am an anarchist. I suppose you came here, the most of you, to see what a real, live anarchist looked like. I suppose some of you expected to see me with a bomb in one hand and a flaming torch in the other, but are disappointed in seeing neither. If such has been your ideas regarding an anarchist, you deserved to be disappointed. Anarchists are peaceable, law abiding people. What do anarchists mean when they speak of anarchy? Webster gives the term two definitions chaos and the state of being without political rule. We cling to the latter definition. Our enemies hold that we believe only in the former.

Do you wonder why there are anarchists in this country, in this great land of liberty, as you love to call it? Go to New York. Go through the byways and alleys of that great city. Count the myriads starving; count the multiplied thousands who are homeless; number those who work harder than slaves and live on less and have fewer comforts than the meanest slaves. You will be dumbfounded by your discoveries, you who have paid no attention to these poor, save as objects of charity and commiseration. They are not objects of charity, they are the victims of the rank injustice that permeates the system of government, and of political economy that holds sway from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Its oppression, the misery it causes, the wretchedness it gives birth to, are found to a greater extent in New York than elsewhere. In New York, where not many days ago two governments united in unveiling a statue of liberty, where a hundred bands played that hymn of liberty, 'The Marseillaise.' But almost its equal is found among the miners of the West, who dwell in squalor and wear rags, that the capitalists, who control the earth that should be free to all, may add still further to their millions! Oh, there are plenty of reasons for the existence of anarchists.

But in Chicago they do not think anarchists have any right to exist at all. They want to hang them there, lawfully or unlawfully. You have heard of a certain Haymarket meeting.' You have heard of a bomb. You have heard of arrests and of succeeding arrests effected by detectives. Those detectives! There is a set of men nay, beasts for you! Pinkerton detectives! They would do anything. I feel sure capitalists wanted a man to throw that bomb at the Haymarket meeting and have the anarchists blamed for it. Pinkerton could have accomplished it for him. You have heard a great deal about bombs. You have heard that the anarchists said lots about dynamite. You have been told that Lingg made bombs. He violated no law. Dynamite bombs can kill, can murder, so can Gatling guns. Suppose that bomb had been thrown by an anarchist. The constitution says there are certain inalienable rights, among which are a free press, free speech and free assemblage. The citizens of this great land are given by the constitution the right to repel the unlawful invasion of those rights. The

meeting at Haymarket square was a peaceable meeting. Suppose, when an anarchist saw the police arrive on the scene, with murder in their eyes, determined to break up that meeting, suppose he had thrown that bomb; he would have violated no law. That will be the verdict of your children. Had I been there, had I seen those murderous police approach, had I heard that insolent command to disperse, had I heard Fielden say, 'Captain, this is a peaceable meeting,' had I seen the liberties of my countrymen trodden under foot, I would have flung the bomb myself. I would have violated no law, but would have upheld the constitution.

If the anarchists had planned to destroy the city of Chicago and to massacre the police, why was it they had only two or three bombs in hand? Such was not their intention. It was a peaceable meeting. Carter Harrison, the mayor of Chicago, was there. He said it was a quiet meeting. He told Bonfield [Captain John Bonfield, Commander of Desplaines Police Station] to send the police to their different beats. I do not stand here to gloat over the murder of those policemen. I despise murder. But when a ball from the revolver of a policeman kills it is as much murder as when death results from a bomb.

The police rushed upon that meeting as it was about to disperse. Mr. Simonson talked to Bonfield about the meeting.' Bonfield said he wanted to do the anarchists up. Parsons went to the meeting. He took his wife, two ladies and his two children along. Toward the close of the meeting, he said, 'I believe it is going to rain. Let us adjourn to Zeph's hall.' Fielden said he was about through with his speech and would close it at once. The people were beginning to scatter about, a thousand of the more enthusiastic still lingered in spite of the rain. Parsons, and those who accompanied him started for home. They had gone as far as the Desplaine's street police station when they saw the police start at a double quick. Parsons stopped to see what was the trouble. Those 200 policemen rushed on to do the anarchists up. Then we went on. I was in Zeph's hall when I heard that terrible detonation. It was heard around the world. Tyrants trembled and felt there was something wrong.

The discovery of dynamite and its use by anarchists is a repetition of history. When gun powder was discovered, the feudal system was at the height of its power. Its discovery and use made the middle classes. Its first discharge sounded the death knell of the feudal system. The bomb at Chicago sounded the downfall of the wage system of the nineteenth century. Why? Because I know no intelligent people will submit to despotism. The first means the diffusion of power. I tell no man to use it. But it was the achievement of science, not of anarchy, and would do for the masses. I suppose the press will say I belched forth treason. If I have violated any law, arrest me, give me a trial, and the proper punishment, but let the next anarchist that comes along ventilate his views without hindrance.

Well, the bomb exploded, the arrests were made and then came that great judicial farce, beginning on June 21. The jury was impaneled. Is there a Knight of Labor here? Then know that a Knight of Labor was not considered competent

enough to serve on that jury. 'Are you a Knight of Labor?' 'Have you any sympathy with labor organizations?' were the questions asked each talisman. If an affirmative answer was given, the talisman was bounced. It was not are you a Mason, a Knight Templar? O, no! [Great applause.] I see you read the signs of the times by that expression. Hangman Gary, miscalled judge, ruled that if a man was prejudiced against the defendants, it did not incapacitate him for serving on the jury. For such a man, said Hangman Gary, would pay closer attention to the law and evidence and would be more apt to render a verdict for the defense. Is there a lawyer here? If there is he knows such a ruling is without precedent and contrary to all law, reason or common sense.

In the heat of patriotism the American citizen sometimes drops a tear for the nihilist of Russia. They say the nihilist can't get justice, that he is condemned without trial. How much more should he weep for his next door neighbor, the anarchist, who is given the form of trial under such a ruling.

There were 'squealers' introduced as witnesses for the prosecution. There were three of them. Each and every one was compelled to admit they had been purchased and intimidated by the prosecution. Yet Hangman Gary held their evidence as competent. It came out in the trial that the Haymarket meeting was the result of no plot, but was caused in this wise. The day before the wage slaves in McCormick's factory had struck for eight hours labor, McCormick, from his luxurious office, with one stroke of the pen by his idle, be ringed fingers, turned 4,000 men out of employment. Some gathered and stoned the factory. Therefore they were anarchists, said the press. But anarchists are not fools; only fools stone buildings. The police were sent out and they killed six wage slaves. You didn't know that. The capitalistic press kept it quiet, but it made a great fuss over the killing of some policemen. Then these crazy anarchists, as they are called, thought a meeting ought to be held to consider the killing of six brethren and to discuss the eight hour movement. The meeting was held. It was peaceable. When Bonfield ordered the police to charge those peaceable anarchists, he hauled down the American flag and should have been shot on the spot.

While the judicial farce was going on the red and black flags were brought into court, to prove that the anarchists threw the bomb. They were placed on the walls and hung there, awful specters before the jury. What does the black flag mean? When a cable gram says it was carried through the streets of a European city it means that the people are suffering—that the men are out of work, the women starving, the children barefooted. But, you say, that is in Europe. How about America? The Chicago Tribune said there were 30,000 men in that city with nothing to do. Another authority said there were 10,000 barefooted children in mid winter. The police said hundreds had no place to sleep or warm. Then President Cleveland issued his Thanksgiving proclamation and the anarchists formed in procession and carried the black flag to show that these thousands had nothing for which to return thanks. When the Board of Trade, that gambling den, was dedicated by means of a banquet, \$30 a plate,

again the black flag was carried, to signify that there were thousands who couldn't enjoy a 2 cent meal.

But the red flag, the horrible red flag, what does that mean? Not that the streets should run with gore, but that the same red blood courses through the veins of the whole human race. * It meant the brotherhood of man. When the red flag floats over the world the idle shall be called to work. There will be an end of prostitution for women, of slavery for man, of hunger for children.

Liberty has been named anarchy. If this verdict is carried out it will be the death knell of America's liberty. You and your children will be slaves. You will have liberty if you can pay for it. If this verdict is carried out, place the flag of our country at half mast and write on every fold 'shame.' Let our flag be trailed in the dust. Let the children of workingmen place laurels to the brow of these modern heroes, for they committed no crime. Break the two fold yoke. Bread is freedom and freedom is bread.

LAW, COMMERCE, AND RELIGION.

Eliphalet Kimball

1862

MR. EDITOR:—Law, Commerce, and Religion, are the causes of the wrongs, vices, and consequent sufferings which have always prevailed in civilized nations. Natural law, or the healing power of Nature, would regulate society as it does the human body.—The mind of man is his body. Artificial law is a poison which deranges the course of Nature, and is sure to disorder society. The stillness of legal despotism is disorder. Artificial government turns morality upside down, and keeps it so by force. It protects a class of bad men in wronging others, but is no benefit to honest men. Under established laws and forms of government, its full development is impossible.

Artificial law creates Commerce. Commerce makes rich men. The rich make the class of suffering poor, as a natural consequence. Commerce, and merchants, cause luxury, love of show, avarice, speculation, selfishness, dishonesty;—then comes aristocracy, and next monarchy. Our commerce with Europe is fast bringing society in the United States into the same condition with that in Europe. Monarchy in the United States is near. Law, Commerce, and Religion, make leading men. The leading men have ruined the United States, and made the nation not worth saving. Every rich man, every man who lives in showy style, is a curse to this country. Commerce was and is the cause of negro slavery. The nations which have most commerce are most unprincipled; for instance, England and the United States. It is pretended that Commerce promotes peace, civilization, and fraternity. The contrary is true. Commerce was at the bottom of the piratical wars of England in India, and China, and others the world over. Commercial avarice caused the great national crime committed by the United States against Japan, in forcing her to open her ports. The ruin of the Japanese dates from the visit of Commodore Perry to their shores. According to all accounts, Japan excels all other civilized nations in the condition and character of its inhabitants. It is comparatively the country of justice and equal rights, of plainness, mediocrity, and comfort. The people are correspondingly virtuous. For the last two hundred years, they have not had a war. The cause of their better state of society is, they have no commerce nor religion. They are a nation of Atheists. They were shocked at being told that the Americans believe in a God. The Japanese have only the social wrongs and faults of character which spring from law. The frequent civil wars in Mexico are owing, not to faults of character of the people, but to their unequal condition, caused by law. The land of Mexico is in the hands of a few men, and of the Church. The leading men, and the Church, are at the bottom of the civil wars in that country. The inability of the French to maintain a republican government, is owing to the inequality of the people, caused, by Law, Commerce, and Religion, and not to faults of national character. Commerce has hastened the degeneracy

of the American republic. The leading men have corrupted society, and the government. The elections are controlled by money. The important offices are mostly filled by unworthy men. The powerful influence of mercantile wealth is brought to bear on Congressional legislation, to encourage Commerce for the gratification of avarice, and thus in effect increase prevailing wrongs. The American government made no open war on China, but their minister and war vessels sneakily accompanied the British expedition, to assist indirectly its piratical operations, and profit by its victories. Just wars are sometimes prevented by commercial selfishness. Commercial influence makes unjust wars, and disgraceful peace, according to which brings most money.

Religion is the resource of bad minds. It springs from ignorance, and want of reason, and is false in every particular. False principles cannot be otherwise than injurious to society. Religion and goodness are entirely different and separate. A person may be good without religion, or religious without goodness. Of course, he is not by nature a good man, who does right only from religious motives. All murderers, when in prison, and on the gallows, make known their belief in religion. The same want of reason and goodness that makes them commit murder, makes them believe in religion. Bad men are the strongest believers in the necessity of law and of future punishment. They think that all mankind, like themselves, are governed by nothing better than fear. Such men are the Christians. The followers of Jesus Christ are not good by nature. A follower is an imitator. The imitator is different by nature from the person imitated. Of course, those who imitate Christ do not resemble him in natural character. Those who are born good have to imitate nobody. They act out themselves. Priests declare that the world is governed by a God, and religion is necessary to keep people in order. At the same time they profess to believe that human law is necessary. Kings and aristocrats affirm that human government is indispensable, and at the same time they profess to believe that religion is necessary for society. To assert the need of divine law, and of human law also, proves a want of confidence in either. Both have been abundantly tried together, and found wanting. A God would have not right to create people, without asking their leave, nor govern them without their consent. The clergy are mostly aristocrats and monarchists. Kings and priests strengthen each other. The clergy preach the Divine appointment of kinds, and submission to the powers that be, under penalty of eternal damnation. They are rewarded with a union of Church and State.

Nothing is easier than to have this world a good one, if people had reason enough to see the truth, and would apply it. Abolish all artificial law, and let Nature take its course. Destruction is the word! Destroy the shallow and ruinous contrivances of men, and equality, virtue, justice, and comfort, would be the condition of the world. The laws of Nature would prevent extreme wealth in one class, and its natural consequence, suffering poverty, in another. Aristocracy would be impossible. An aristocrat is never a worthy man—he is ignoble. A government of the aristocracy is atrociously unprincipled and selfish.—In

opposition to the rights of man, it sticks at no crime nor cruelty. Napoleon, the noblest man in the world, was entirely free of aristocracy, and despised it in others. No person can rightfully own land. Every person has a right to cultivate what he needs. Of course, there would be no quarrelling about land, if nobody owned it. Fishermen never quarrel about unclaimed water. Under natural law, the few wrongs that would be committed, would be attended to by the people of the neighborhood. Punishment would be more sure than now. The law ought to be made for the occasion, and not before the crime is committed, as circumstance make a difference in cases.—The right government of society would naturally correspond with the government of the Universe. The Universe is eternal, and, therefore, without beginning. It is boundless, and, therefore, has no place for a Creator to begin at, and no place to leave off.—It governs itself. Organization, fitness, life, mind, and growth, are but the inevitable effect of natural law. With reference to the works of Nature, design and chance are but the nonsense of fools. The earth and planets are obliged by natural law to revolve with regularity. It would take a God of great strength to stop them or turn them from their natural course.—If there is no God-law, of course there ought to be no man-law. Human law is unnecessary and injurious, so of course would be God-law. If there is a king of heaven, so ought there to be kinds of earth. Under artificial, established laws, and forms of government, many deliberate acts of injustice go unpunished, and many rightful things are punished.

It is only by anarchy and violence that a great accumulation of social wrongs can be removed. Anarchy is a good word. It means, "without a head." Violence is the healing power of Nature applied to society. The violence which would follow from the abolishment of law, would be proportion to the number and magnitude of the wrongs that needed removal. There ought always to be anarchy, but there would be no violence where there were no wrongs.—Japan needs but little violence. Great Britain needs much. Nothing but violence could have accomplished the great French Revolution, the most beneficent and glorious even of modern times. Law and Religion are responsible for whatever was wrong in it.—Mob law is the right law. Mobs assemble to do justice, to punish bad men whom the law does not reach, and to remove wrongs. There is more reason and justice in a large number of men than in a small number, more in a mob than in a Senate, House of Representatives, judges, or juries. The government of a State, or nation, is a mob, the government of the majority is a mob, and they are the only mobs that ought to be put down. If mankind are not good enough to live without law, they are not good enough to vote for law-makers. Beasts and savages are not fools enough to believe in religion and law, and are good enough to live right without them. Christian and civilized men appear to consider themselves inferior in goodness to savages and beasts. In an uncorrupted state of society, mankind are inclined to do right.—If they were naturally inclined to evil, they would not make laws to prevent it. The fact that laws are made, proves that law is unnecessary.

AN ANTI-STATIST COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Joseph Lane

1887

"In vain you tell me that Artificial Government is good, but that I fall out only with its abuse. The thing - the thing itself is the abuse !" - Burke

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Human society can only be organized upon the basis of one or the other of the two principles of authority or of liberty. From these two principles are derived two political systems, equally broad and far reaching, though diametrically opposite in their effects, that of the one being the happiness, and of the other the misery of mankind. Beyond these two there is no political system capable of contending for supremacy in this 19th century of ours. All intermediary systems are powerless in equal degree, and can only occasion transient perturbations.

Such has been our situation for a century past, authority losing prestige on the one hand and freedom gaining on the other, but still scarcely understood. Vain attempts have, indeed, been made to reconcile the two, but being by nature incompatible the admixture has only resulted in a yet more debased blend of the two theories, in a conflict of jarring interests which only rend and damage one another.

Thus either liberty or authority each by itself and at issue with each other, must organise society. Where authority flourishes, we shall find the structure of society based upon a fundamental plan of Absolutism. Entirely ignoring the various stages through which humanity has already passed, authority affirms that the world is immutable in its primordial principles; it proceeds from God in the direct line, God the beginning and the end of all things, who has delegated to his representative on earth, Priest or Monarch (both are kings) a portion of his might and power.

The power of king or priest must not be counterbalanced by any other, he is responsible to God alone, and any attempt against his majestic authority is a direct invasion of the prerogatives of the source of all things. Heedless of the fact that the theological and metaphysical phases are spent and exhausted, authority still boldly takes up tradition and appeals to God, who by his grace directly intervenes in the ordering of things human. God, King and Nationalism, the symbols of the most formidable reaction, such is the cry and motto of authority. It believes in God, without whom it would not exist itself; in the King, who is an emanation from God, and in Nationalism, which is a mere jingo sentiment, belonging to the God idea. It has no faith or belief in the people, whose existence alone is a reality, and whose emancipation and enfranchisement it dare not permit on pain of suicide.

In order to its maintenance, the system of authority needs a religion above all. Be it what it may, religion teaches the renunciation of earthly possessions, and a love for the heavenly beatitudes. It causes uncertainty to predominate over certainty, fiction over reality, things imaginary over things palpable, falsehood over truth. It proclaims the doctrine that misery is of divine institution; that it ever has existed and ever must continue to exist in God's ordinance, who will therefore inevitably punish as a crime, any popular insurrection caused by starvation.

After the Church, the army more directly representative of the monarch's power, the mainstay of law and order, and after it, the centralised State uniting in itself all the reactionary forces required to enable it to govern, such are the natural products of authority. Freedom, with such a system, becomes illusory, since it can only exist by dint of the constant abridgement of force and of the progressive annihilation of the powers that be, whereas the whole machinery of the state is devised on the contrary to render the enfranchisement of the people impossible, and to make the power of the government crushing. War, as a matter of course, becomes an indispensable ailment for this type of Society, with which arms, diplomacy and the tribune - the three phases of war - are necessary phenomena. It is in the shade of such a political system that financial and capitalistic feudality will flourish, since God has decreed in his infinite wisdom that the rich and the poor shall for ever form two distinct castes, one of which was created to exploit the other. This flagrant inequality borrows from its source a semblance of justice, and a sanction against which it would ill become us to protest. If the political system of Authority prevails now, the policy of Liberty will henceforth rule the destinies of the world; there is no middle path between these two extremes. Today we must have all or nothing, nothing but freedom and its creations can avail any longer to satisfy us. In the system of Liberty, God is deposed, society is the work of man, who is himself its beginning and end, and the distribution or division of earthly goods shall proceed according to the will of man, regulated by reason and justice. There shall no longer be a class to rule and dominate over another class; each member of society working for himself and for all fulfils his social duties.

All useful forces are necessary to the development of Society, and no one shall be at liberty to deprive it of any of these. God, no longer the supreme regulator of human destinies, becomes useless and misery ceases to be irremedial, for labour and intelligence must of necessity triumph over it. The Church, deriving its power from the Absolute, will disappear with it. It is no longer the State, the Army, the Church or God that will preside over the government of the world; it is labour represented by the people that will organise all things.

Religion annihilated, the people will arise from their degradation, intellectual and moral. Politics being eliminated they will emerge from their state of economical servitude, and with these will disappear the financial industrial proprietorial and capitalistic feudalism. Social science appears

teaching us the uselessness and the nuisance of politics and government. The economic equilibrium realised, there will be no need of force to maintain it, war, by its nature, being a huge parasite, could only disturb and not consolidate it. Peace is the necessary resultant and sublime crowning of all the social forces directed towards labour. The latter being essentially a peace maker, the people being emancipated by the Revolution, will endeavour to guarantee the fruits of their labour and consequently the fruits of the labour of all; instead of creating as must inevitably occur nowadays new monopolies for the benefit of the few, it will extend on the contrary, these guarantees and confederate from town to town, from country to country, internationally. It makes all working men unite together, and creates what is called the life of relationship in the economical order. Is it conceivable that politics and war could find room, be it ever so small, in a Society so transformed ? No, and when the constitution of labour shall have definitely replaced the constitution of the old world, the advent of the working classes will be realised with a character so imperious and fateful that the most severe justice must acknowledge its legitimacy.

II

The object of socialism is to constitute a Society founded on labour and science, on liberty, equality and solidarity of all human beings. It is consequently a mortal foe to all oppressors, of whatsoever kind, of all speculators and exploiters, be their name what it may. The first form in which oppression is manifested in organised society is the religious oppression, the divine exploitation. Religion seeks to enslave the human intelligence, the God idea is the generator of all despotism. Man will never be free in any of the manifestations of his activity, so long as he shall not have expelled from his brain the notion of God, the product of ignorance, sustained by the exploiting priests. So long as a mystic vision of a divinity shall darken the world, it will be impossible for men to know that world, and as a consequence to possess it. It is by the aid of this notion of a God governing the world, that all forms of servitude, moral and social, have come into existence and been established religion's despotism, classes, property, and the exploitation of man by man. To enable men, therefore, to attain to freedom and to knowledge, that is to realise the object of the Revolution he must first expel God from the domain of knowledge and consequently from Society itself. We can therefore only consider as true revolutionary socialists, conscious of the object they pursue, those who, like ourselves, declare themselves Atheists and do whatever in their power lies to destroy this corrupting notion of God in the mind of the masses. The struggle, therefore, against every kind of religion, and the propagation of Atheism must form a part of every socialistic programme that pretends to give a logical exposition of the ideas, the aspirations and the object of the adepts of the Social Revolution.

III

Politics properly so-called, that is the science of government or the art of directing men gathered in social community, is entirely based upon the principle of authority, and, it being so, we oppose with all our might the reactionary notion which consists in the pretence that the revolutionary socialists must seek to seize upon the political machine, and to acquire power for themselves. We decline to recognise a divine absolutism because it can only give rise to the enslavement of reason and intelligence. Why, then, should we recognise a human absolutism, that can only engender the material exploitation of the ruled by the rulers? In this argument we are not specially concerned with any particular form of government, for all without distinction had their rise from the same source: Autocratic, Oligarchic systems, constitutional monarchy, plutocracy, the republic, as governmental forms, are all antagonistic to human freedom, and it is because of this that we are opposed to every form of government. If it be admitted that individual man has no right to govern, we cannot admit that a number of men should have this right, be they a minority or a majority. It is claimed that the theory of government is the outcome of the tacit agreement between all of the citizens for the acceptance of some form of government, but this theory is inadmissible, for such tacit agreement cannot exist since men have never been consulted anywhere upon the abdication of their own freedom.

A certain school of socialists, while sharing our ideas upon the majority of forms of government, seeks nevertheless to defend what they call the democratic state, ruling nations by means of a parliamentary system, but we argue just precisely that freedom does not exist any more in this system than in any of the others, and it is for this reason that we oppose it. Act as it will, this popular state will nevertheless require for its maintenance to appeal to the reactionary forces, which are the natural allies of authority - the army, diplomacy, war, centralisation of all the powers which operate in restraint of freedom, and the initiative of individuals and social groups. Once launched upon this arbitrary career, it is an inevitable necessity to mount up round after round of the ladder, there being no resting place. On the contrary they must be ever trenching more and more upon the freedom and autonomy of the individual until these undergo a process of complete absorption and annihilation. In opposition therefore to those who desire by means of parliamentarianism to achieve a conquest of political power, we say for ourselves that we wish to forgo power and monopoly alike, which means that we seek to bring out from the very bosom of the people, from the depths of labour a factor more potent, that shall deal with capital and the state and subdue them. This powerful factor will be realised by the organisation of industrial and agricultural groups, having studied and being able to apply the laws of exchange possessing the key and secret of the contradictions and antagonism of the bourgeois political economy, standing possessed, in a word, of social science. And what does social science teach to those who consult it? It teaches that political reforms, as a preliminary to

social reforms, are a Utopia or a mere trick and an eternal mystification, by which the radicals of every shade, including parliamentary socialists have up till now deceived the workers. Social science protests against these subterfuges and palliatives; it repudiates every alliance with the policy of parliaments. Far from expecting any succour from them, it begins its work of exclusion by eliminating politics and parliamentarianism. We revolutionary socialists desire to organise ourselves in such a manner as to render politics useless and the powers that be superfluous, i.e., that we aim at the abolition of the State in every form and variety. We are waging a battle of labour against capital i.e., against the State proprietary, financial and industrial. We pursue a warfare of freedom against authority, i.e., against the State, the respecter of religion and the master of all systems of teaching. We champion the cause of the producers as arrayed against that of the non-producers, i.e., we combat the State in its military and civil functionaries. We fight the battle of equality against privilege, i.e., we oppose the State, having all monopolies industrial, bankocratic, agricultural, etc. Now in order to subdue capital, to subjugate the powers that be, and destroy them, we in no way need to win by means of a parliamentary system that political power which as a matter of fact we seek to destroy, we do not wish, by acquiring power, to increase the number of non-producers that our socialistic organisation is meant to reduce more and more until none are left, i.e., until the complete annihilation of power, until the abolition of the State whatever its form, monarchical or democratic.

We need not waste time over those Socialists who while condemning the political action of the proletariat, at the same time wish to avail themselves of parliamentary action as a means of propaganda; such socialists are wanting in logic. If the participation of socialists in the policy of governments be condemned as fatal to the interests of the proletariat, then a propaganda in favour of parliamentary action on behalf of the proletariat can be neither good in itself nor serviceable in the development of socialism. On the other hand, as regards socialistic propaganda in times of election, all the good achieved by a candidate for parliamentary honours would be counter-balanced by the evil which he would otherwise cause, by filling the minds of the workers with notions false and reactionary, thus creating complete confusion among those who are struggling for the emancipation of mankind. The only means in our view of making the most of a period of political excitement, such as may be an electoral contest, would be to take advantage of it, to disseminate among the masses revolutionary papers, pamphlets leaflets, etc., got up specially for the occasion, and showing the people that it is not by Parliamentary means but by social revolution, that their lot will be ameliorated materially, morally and socially. Summing up we may, therefore, say that as far as politics are concerned we are Anti-Statists, and as such we abstain from taking any part whatsoever in parliamentary action, whatever be the end assigned to such action.

IV

If we are Atheists in point of philosophy, and Anti-Statists in point of politics, we are communists as regards the economic development of human society. And whereas in the elaboration of all our conceptions, we always start from the principle of liberty, we are free communists as opposed to state communists. The society that we assail has for its basis of existence the private property of all raw materials, of the soil, of the wealth below the soil, all tools, and machinery, and all capital. Private property in its turn is the direct emanation from the principle of authority, and is based upon the theory of remuneration, or reward for individual efforts. Now it is absolutely certain that there is no isolated individual effort, there can only be efforts, general and collective or common; consequently neither should there be individual remuneration or reward, and we may thus logically be allowed to declare that property is robbery.

Social wealth has a threefold source : the forces of nature, the instruments of labour, and labour itself. An individual does not create the forces of nature, and therefore he can not appropriate them to his own use; at most they are the common property of all men. An individual does not create the plant and machinery of work. He therefore cannot appropriate them to his own use. It is the generations of men that from century to century have transformed the raw materials into tools of production, and consequently the theory of plant and machinery being regarded as a stock of property held in common must be the only principle accordant with equity and justice. The individual works it is true, but his personal work, his particular endeavour, would, as it were, have no value in the immense field of activity of modern production, did he not constitute an integral portion of the work and of the endeavour collective or common of all men.

It follows therefore that private property cannot be regarded as legitimate from any point of view. Society as under its present constitution, which makes of it a pivot of its organisation, political and economical, thus merely becomes an immense financial industrial, agricultural, and mercantile Feudalism, exploiting mercilessly the countless masses of the proletariat. Everything in the regime of individual property belongs to the bourgeoisie, even including thanks to the iron law of wages, the worker himself. In the proprietary system the majority of men are condemned to work for the sustenance and enjoyment of a handful of masters and parasites.

As the ultimate expression of all other forms of servitude, the bourgeois domination has at last divested the exploitation of labour of the mystic veil that obscured it; governments, family, law, institutions of the past, as of the present have at last shown themselves in this system of society, reduced to the simple terms of wage slaves and capitalists, as the instruments of oppression by means of which the bourgeoisie maintains its predominance and holds in check the proletariat. Reserving for itself, in order to increase its wealth, all the surplus of

the product of labour, the capitalist leaves for the workman only just the scanty store he needs to keep him from starvation.

Forcibly held down in this hell of capitalist and proprietorial production, it would seem as though the working classes are powerless to break their fetters, but the proletariat has at length become alive to its own condition, it is sensible that within it, exists the elements of a new society, that its deliverance shall be the price of its victory over the bourgeoisie and that this class destroyed, the classes will be abolished altogether, and the object of the revolution attained. We desire to reach this object i.e., the triumph of the revolution without stopping at any middle paths which are mere compromises putting off victory and prolonging slavery.

By destroying individual property the Communist overthrows one after another all the institutions of which property is the pivot. Driven from his property, garrisoned by himself and family as though it were a citadel, the rich man will no longer find an asylum for his selfishness and his privileges. With the annihilation of the classes will disappear all the institutions that cause the oppression of the individual and of the social group, the only reason for which has been the maintenance of these very classes - the subjugation of the working man to his master.

Education open to all and equally placed at the disposal of all will produce that intellectual equality, without which material equality would be without value and without charm. No more wage slaves, victims of misery and wretchedness, of want of solidarity, of competition, but a free association of working men with equal rights, distributing the work among themselves, to procure the greater development of the community, the greater sum of well-being for each of its members. For every citizen will find the most extended freedom, the largest expansion of his individuality in the greater expansion of the Community.

It is hardly necessary for us to add that we fight against (on the same principle of the abolition of private property), the institution of the family, such as it exists nowadays. Thoroughly convinced partisans of the free union of the sexes, we repel the thought of marriage which institutes for the benefit of the man a new and exorbitant proprietorial right, namely the right of ownership of the woman, but in order to ensure a possible establishment of the free union of the sexes, it is necessary that both the man and the woman shall enjoy the same right in society as well as have the same duties imposed on them, that is, they must be equal, a thing that is impossible, unless private property be done away with.

In the same way it seems to us superfluous to state that recognising neither boundaries nor frontiers we are concerned in working out the realisation of our aspirations, wherever the lottery of events has placed us, regarding each revolutionary associate, no matter whence he comes, as a brother, and each exploiter of humanity, whatever tongue he may speak, as an enemy. And lastly we do not believe in the advent of the new order for which we

are struggling by means of legal and pacific methods, and that is why we are revolutionary socialists. The study of history has taught us that the noblest conquests of man are written on a blood-stained book. To give birth to justice, humanity suffers a thousand tortures. Ours be then the force, so often employed against us, ours the force the heritage of the people which has been wrested from it by a coalition of the clever, and from its own want of energy, ours the force less as a desideratum than a consummation, regretfully sought less as a choice than as a necessity. Ours the force as the only means of breaking asunder the iron chains that bind us!

But at the same time let also prudence and caution guide us, the caution that determines the hour for the employment of force, and the firmness that preserves and directs it, unvanquished through all obstacles. Let us mature our ideas and our aspirations. Away with reckless and useless struggles; but no more hesitation nor armistice on the day of the battle, and once having commenced the final struggle let it be no longer merely with the hope of success, but with the certainty of triumph!

So, comrades, we finish by saying we are Atheists, Anti-Statists and Free Communists or International Revolutionary Socialists.

POLICY

Having stated our principles I will now briefly state what should be our policy in accordance with our principles, which can be summed up shortly as educate, educate, educate, that an organisation may spring from the body of the people prepared for action, this action to be the destruction and not reform of Government, Authority, and Monopoly, of every description.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHER BODIES

To the individualists (anarchists or otherwise) we are opposed. We contend that capital is the result not of any one individual's labour, but of all the workers combined, not only of this but of many past generations. Therefore it would be unjust that it should be held as Individual Property. We are also opposed to the idea of every one receiving according to his deeds, that the strong, the able bodied, those well endowed by nature, are to have all they can procure, while the halt, the lame, and the blind are to be left to their own resources, or at best depend on the charity of those better off. Again, so long as private property exists, there can be no freedom for women, all the advantages of co-operative labour are lost, and an enormous amount of labour wasted in providing for separate homes, farms and what not.

STATE SOCIALISTS

These believe that the state should be all powerful, that it should own the land, mines, railways, machinery and means of exchange, in fact own all things and organise labour in all its branches, that their policy should be to gain possession of the state machine and then arrange everything for the people. The bureaucracy and officialism of today is not to be compared to what it must be when the state undertakes these manifold duties.

The representative farce would have to be resorted to. These representatives at once become the Authority, the Government, superior to the body of the people, and would have to be prepared with force to defend their authority against any rebellious minority.

The march of progress is against isolation and individualism on one hand, and on the other against centralisation and authority of every description. We, the Anti-Statist Communists are the pioneers of that future state of society towards which all progress tends, namely, the free association of groups of workers (call them Towns, Villages, Communes or what you will) holding the land and capital, in common, working it on true co-operative principles, federated with each other for mutual assistance, every member working according to his ability and receiving according to his needs, man and woman being then equally free, would form connections through love alone. Connections of this description would not require a State or Priest to endorse or enforce it. The bond of love would be sufficient, when it was not it would naturally be dissolved. This would be done without injury to anyone, the children being fed, clothed and cared for by the Community.

TRADES UNIONS

Trades Unionism like Socialism, is the outcome of the greed, tyranny, and oppression of the Capitalist class. The Capitalists at first thought the unions meant fighting, and that they would be successful, they became frightened, fearing that this would mean less profits if not the total extinction of their monopoly and privileges, they roundly abused and denounced Trades Unions, and passed laws against combination; but now that the development of the commercial system and the invention of new machinery has placed the workers in a more dependent position, and the Trades Unions are becoming little better than Benefit Societies, with an ever increasing subscription and decreasing reserve funds, helpless in the meshes of capitalism, they now tolerate and even occasionally say a good word for Trades Unions. But with the practical breakdown of Trades Unions Socialism springs forth and says the day for this unequal and losing battle between the bloated Capitalist and the starving workman for a mere increase or to prevent a decrease of wage is past. Today and from henceforth, the battle is by the workers as a whole, for the destruction

of monopoly and tyranny of every description, as the only means of emancipating themselves.

As commerce grew and expanded, as fresh markets were found for commodities even faster than they could be manufactured, trade went up by leaps and bounds, when a comparative small amount of machinery was used, a large portion of the working population was employed in tilling the soil, this was the time of the prosperity of Trades Unions. Then, though the workers did not get all they wanted or were entitled to, they did by combination get some improvement in their position. But how do they stand today with depopulation of the rural districts, crowding in to the towns, an increase of population? The increased use of machinery, the ever growing force of foreign competition are all adding to the number of the unemployed. With all these forces against Trade Unions, is it possible for them to be otherwise than mere benefit Societies.

Our policy towards the Trades Union then, is to show them how this evolution has gone on in the past and will in the future; that as the commercial system expands and new machinery is invented, wealth can be produced to an unlimited extent, and comparatively independent of manual labour; the capitalists reaping all the benefit, the workers becoming more helpless and enslaved in their economical toils. That as the policy and tactics of the Trade Unions have failed to alter this in the past, so still more will they, in the future, their only hope being by developing their organisation, becoming Socialists and rebelling against a system that enslaves them, using their organisations not for a mere increase or to prevent a decrease of wage, but for the destruction of the capitalist system and the emancipation of the whole of the workers.

EIGHT HOURS LABOUR MOVEMENT

With reference to this, the most prominent proposal put forward by the Social Democrats. In the first place what all socialists protest against is the exploitation of the labourers by the capitalist, whatever the hours of the working day may be. So long as labour has to pay a tribute to capital and is not free we have not achieved our end, moreover, an eight hours bill or even less would not in the long run absorb the reserve army of labourers even if it was carried. Competition at home and abroad would force on the invention and use of new machinery in order to dispense with human labour; capital and machinery would be removed to other countries where cheap labour could be obtained for the benefit of the capitalists. Labour would also be intensified so that an hour's labour would mean much more wear and tear than it does now, as it does now more than it did fifty years since. For a large part of the workers, an act of this kind would be inoperative as the Factory Acts are for many women and children today, in short there would still be an ever growing army of unemployed, and the employed would be in much the same position as now. Seeing this so clearly it is not our business to advocate this palliative measure, but to criticise the action of those who do so.

THE UNEMPLOYED

This question of the unemployed is one of great difficulty. Our sympathy is naturally with these starving people. But there is no special unemployed class. It is the workers, some of whom are employed, others unemployed, these constantly changing places, employed today, unemployed tomorrow; therefore, it is a question for the whole of the workers. The question is, what can we do for the unemployed portion of the workers. It appears hard to call meetings specially of the unemployed and tell them that they cannot be permanently benefited until the Revolution, and that they must starve in the meantime. The only alternative is to advocate relief works, which no Revolutionist can do. These relief works must be unproductive or productive. If unproductive, it will be task labour, with just sufficient food for the workers to keep life in their bodies until the capitalist requires their services for fresh exploitation; and even at this no society could keep an ever-increasing army of unproductive workers for any length of time.

If on productive works, they are unemployed because wealth is produced for sale at a profit, and at present no profit can be made on their labour. We have wealth, the results of labour, in abundance, and no market for it; therefore, there is no demand for their labour; and if they are set to work producing other wealth, it will cause a still greater abundance for the world's markets. This will mean a fall in prices and a reduction in wages, and the throwing out of work those at present employed. We hear even now of the unfair competition of prison labour, and this employment of the surplus labourers of our commercial system on productive works would have the same effect, only in a much greater degree. The most likely thing to occur by calling meetings specially of the unemployed is that, having their passions aroused by our denunciations of the thieving class, they will destroy a few windows. The paltry bill will be paid by an insurance company, and we lose some of our best advocates as a result. We Socialists do not want to see the aimless destruction of property, but the destruction of the property holders. In the meantime, let the starving people steal, sack shops, or what not, in preference to starving, if they so choose, it is a sign of discontent and of a determination to die fighting rather than starving. We may regard this as a sure forerunner of Revolution, but we must not let it be supposed that it is Socialism. Meetings specially of the unemployed, therefore, should not be called, but meetings of the workers as a whole should be held on every possible occasion. The principles of Socialism should be put plainly before them, and they must be told that the only remedy for their misery, poverty and constant unemployment is the destruction of a system that puts it in the power of an idle class to employ and enslave the workers, and at best to dole out a small portion of their stolen wealth as charity to those who have produced it all when starving, and that no permanent good can be done for them by relief works,

charity, or, in fact, anything under our competitive commercial system, with all the means of producing wealth monopolised.

RADICALISM

The official and recognised Radical party is based on what they are pleased to call liberty and freedom. Freedom meaning to them Free Trade, Free Contract, and Free Competition; and Liberty to them is the liberty to fleece the destitute and starving workers to their heart's content by the aid of these three Fs.

They will not admit that there is a class struggle going on, but contend that with the aid of these three Fs all the workers have to do is to be more temperate and thrifty, and that under this splendid arrangement there is a chance for everyone to rise, blinding the workers to the fact that only a few can do this, and that they then leave their class and become exploiters in one way or another.

But there is an advanced wing of Radicalism formed by the workmen who having found that Toryism and liberalism were of no use to them, have gone as far as they could see or understand. They have no clearly defined principles, and, after all, only agitate for mere superficial reforms. The election of governors and the extension of the suffrage these have been agitated for about 120 years, and more strongly at the commencement than the finish. In 1770, part of the programme was adult suffrage and annual parliaments, but now it is not the question of a useless vote but food in the stomach. This question will not wait a hundred years for settlement, before this social problem the Radical stands helpless, shouting loudly about the cost of Monarchy and the pension list. This is as far as he can grasp at present, failing to see that this is a drop in the ocean compared to the robbery of the landlord and capitalist class. It is from this wing of the Radical party only that we can expect to make converts. We must, then, lay before them our principles, show them that any mere reform is useless. Urge upon them the necessity of studying this social problem, work with them when possible, but make no alliances that would cause us to sacrifice our principles in the least.

TEMPERANCE, VEGETARIANISM AND THRIFT

Many people belong to Temperance Societies, and think they have found the cure for poverty and misery by the mere abstention from drink. No greater delusion could enter the mind of man. As Socialists we admit that if people give way to drink they cannot have a clear head to understand the Social problem, and until a large part at least of the people understand this, we shall have the misery and poverty, but if a man becomes a blue ribbonite and nothing more he has done nothing towards the emancipation of the workers.

Where we Socialists fall foul of the temperance thrift and vegetarian advocates is with the iron law of wages argument. We contend, and all political

economists agree with us that under a capitalist system of society, with monopoly and competition, wages are ruled by the standard of comfort, adopted by the people of a country, and always have a tendency to fall to the minimum rate or starvation point, therefore a reduction in the standard of comfort by a majority, or even a large minority, would only result in a reduction of the standard rate of wages, and be of benefit only to the capitalist class, being only of benefit to those who practise it so long as they are a small minority, if it can only affect the individual or small minority for good, and the majority for evil, it is a proof that it is no remedy for the workers as a whole.

As a proof of this argument we have only to refer to Ireland with a potato-standard, Russia black-bread, India rice, Germany and Italy with their cheap soups, and wages in all these countries accordingly low. The English workers are now complaining of the competition of other countries, particularly Germany. They are told that they are losing their trade because the German is content to work longer hours for less wages than an Englishman. This means that his standard of living is lower than an Englishman's. Are we, then, to take the advice of the capitalists, vegetarians and temperance advocates, and reduce our standard of comfort to the level of the Germans ?, or, rather, should we not tell these people that so long as they advocate their doctrines as a remedy for poverty we shall oppose them ? That we are determined not to lower our standard of comfort, but rather to increase it, and at the first opportunity overthrow the system of monopoly as the only cure for poverty and misery.

SECULARISM

We are in accord with the Freethought party in their battle against superstition and authority divine. The people must be free both economically and mentally. Tyranny, oppression and pea-soup philanthropy on one side, and cringing poverty and hypocrisy on the other, must be put to an end. This, however, can only be done by the destruction of monopoly and authority of every description. Priestcraft is, after all, only one of the effective weapons used for keeping the workers in slavery. Freedom of thought is of small avail without freedom for all to live as freely as they think.

LAND NATIONALISATION

We are in agreement with the Land Nationalisers so far as they advocate the abolition of private property in land; but we contend that if we had land nationalisation alone it would be the capitalists' class, who would benefit by a reduction in taxation, so long as private property in the means of production, transit, and exchange exist, the iron law of wages comes into force, and the workers will only get a bare subsistence wage. We are entirely opposed to the idea of giving compensation to the present holders, believing that their having robbed and enslaved us and our forefathers in the past does not give them a

title to further enslave our children for generations to come in the form of usury, which compensation would mean. Being opposed to centralisation and authority, we are not in favour of the central state under any name or form holding the land and demanding a rent for it, but believe that it should be in the hands of the local communes or towns, and cultivated on co-operative principles, without payment of any compensation or rent whatsoever.

CO-OPERATION

The co-operative movement started with a noble ideal : the overthrow of the commercial system by the co-operative and self-employment of the workers. This has been found impossible, and the co-operators have degenerated into mere joint stock companies or distributive agencies, with agents in all parts of the world buying in the cheapest market, which means beating down the wages of the producer for the benefit of those with capital to spare to invest in these societies and, like Building Societies, are a very good investment for those better off, but for the poverty-stricken proletariat this co-operation is not only useless, but often used for their exploitation. Our duty, then, is, while always advocating co-operative effort to show these people that their movement, so far as it effects the condition of the people as a whole, has been a failure, and must be so as long as they attempt to plant it down in the midst of a competitive commercial system, and that until usury and monopoly of every description is destroyed there can be no real co-operation that shall benefit the workers, and unless they are prepared to do their duty and assist in this destruction, they, in the times coming, will be swept away as part and parcel of the old system of Society.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION

To Imperialism and Jingoism of every form we, as international Revolutionary Socialists, are bitterly opposed it being entirely in contradistinction to our idea of the brotherhood of man and of the principles of liberty and freedom. This policy is upheld by the capitalists for the purpose of finding markets for their shoddy wares. They are responsible for the wars in which many people are slaughtered or enslaved which are the outcome of this policy. It is not the Tory, Liberal or Radical, but the Capitalists, the Property and Bond holders who are responsible, as let the Soudan, Afghanistan and Burmah testify.

New markets are a necessity of the Capitalist system of production. They must be got in some way, for as soon as the capitalist system ceases to expand, it begins to fall to pieces. The latest move, Imperial Federation, simply means an attempt on the part of the Capitalists of this country to get a monopoly of the trade with the colonies to the exclusion of other countries and that the resources of these colonies shall be used for the defence of the present markets and gaining of new ones in any and every direction, and not only this but that

these united forces of the whole shall be used for keeping the workers in bondage to the Capitalists in every part.

EMIGRATION

As socialists, we contend that emigration is no remedy for poverty. We are opposed to the forcing of our fellow workers by their economical condition, to flee from the land of their birth to other countries to escape from removable evils, and which they are sure to find in large or small degree in any country to which they may go; even if they were sure of finding a paradise in a distant land it would be cowardly on their part to go without striking a blow for freedom, leaving their fellow workers in slavery at home.

THE MALTHUSIAN

Man, unlike animals and plants, does not depend entirely on the nourishment provided by nature, but as he consumes he produces not only an equivalent but a far larger quantity, or we should not have the enormous accumulation of wealth in all civilised nations, more particularly in the more densely populated ones.

The fecundity of individuals, of females especially, is in direct proportion to the intensity of the causes which tend to destroy them, or what amounts to the same thing, inversely in proportion to the causes tending to their preservation, that is, inversely proportional to their well being and improvement.

This apparent paradoxical proposition can be easily proved by the argument that flowers and fruits on which you bestow most care produce fewer seeds as they are more perfected.

Horse, oxen, sheep, pigs, dogs, fowls and other domestic animals of improved breeds are comparatively unfruitful, whence it happens that their price is always high. Hens stop laying when they get too fat.

Children are less numerous in opulent families than in poor ones. Weak, diseased, unhealthy women have generally more children than strong healthy women, especially if the minds of the latter are cultivated.

In this country nine out of ten marriages have children, but in the nobility only eight out of ten. Our Malthusian friends cannot say that this is caused by the check because the end and aim of this class is to accumulate wealth and perpetuate the family name and title.

We Socialists do not recognise any particular part of the wealth produced as being a wage fund, but contend that all wealth is produced by the labourers, and they, and they only, have a right to it. Until this right is recognised and acted upon, and every available means used for the production of wealth, it is rank nonsense to talk about a wage fund, to which they must keep their numbers down.

The aim of the Capitalists is to keep down the numbers of the labour class to their requirements; to have enough for competition in the labour market to keep wages down, but not enough to be a tax on the poor rates or a danger to Capitalism. If the reduction in the number of labourers was too great, and wages rose, i.e. : the cost of production increased, at once new machinery would be invented to supplant manual labour and again reduce the cost of production.

Has a decrease of population ever tended to increase the comfort and happiness of mankind? Let Spain, Turkey, France, Ireland, and even Sutherlandshire, after the Highland clearances, testify!

This Malthusian theory is the first article of the capitalist creed today. The large capitalists swallow up the small ones; joint stock companies swallow up the individual capitalists; there is not room for all. The large landed estates swallow up and consolidate the small ones; there is not room for all. Machinery supersedes manual labour; there is not room for man and machine; man must, or according to Malthus, will be, starved out of existence; there is no need of him; Nature has not provided for him, therefore he must depart.

Lastly, this Malthusian doctrine is the embodiment of capitalism.

The right to labour and live is the principle of Revolutionary Socialism.

WHY I AM AN ANARCHIST

Benjamin R. Tucker

1892

Why am I an Anarchist? That is the question which the editor of the Twentieth Century has requested me to answer for his readers. I comply; but, to be frank, I find it a difficult task. If the editor or one of his contributors had only suggested a reason why I should be anything other than an Anarchist, I am sure I should have no difficulty in disputing the argument. And does not this very fact, after all, furnish in itself the best of all reasons why I should be an Anarchist – namely, the impossibility of discovering any good reason for being anything else? To show the invalidity of the claims of State Socialism, Nationalism, Communism, Single-taxism, the prevailing capitalism, and all the numerous forms of Archism existing or proposed, is at the same blow to show the validity of the claims of Anarchism. Archism once denied, only Anarchism can be affirmed. That is a matter of logic.

But evidently the present demand upon me is not to be met satisfactorily in this way. The error and puerility of State Socialism and all the despotisms to which it is akin have been repeatedly and effectively shown in many ways and in many places. There is no reason why I should traverse this ground with the readers of the Twentieth Century, even though it is all sufficient for proof of Anarchism. Something positive is wanted, I suppose.

Well, then, to start with the broadest generalization. I am an Anarchist because Anarchism and the philosophy of Anarchism are conducive to my own happiness. “Oh, yes, if that were the case, of course we should all be Anarchists,” the Archists will shout with one voice – at least all that are emancipated from religious and ethical superstitions – “but you beg the question; we deny that Anarchism is conducive to our happiness.”

Do you, my friends? Really, I don't believe you when you say so; or, to put it more courteously, I don't believe you will say so when you once understand Anarchism.

For what are the conditions of happiness? Of perfect happiness, many. But the primal and main conditions are few and simple. Are they not liberty and material prosperity? Is it not essential to the happiness of every developed being that he and those around him should be free, and that he and those around him should know no anxiety regarding the satisfaction of their material needs? It seems idle to deny it, and, in the event of denial, it would seem equally idle to argue it. No amount of evidence that human happiness has increased with human liberty would convince a man incapable of appreciating the value of liberty without reinforcement by induction. And to all but such a man it is also self-evident that of these two conditions – liberty and wealth – the former takes precedence as a factor in the production of happiness. It would be but a poor apology for happiness that either factor alone could give, if it could not produce

nor be accompanied by the other; but, on the whole, much liberty and little wealth would be preferable to much wealth and little liberty. The complaint of Archistic Socialists that the Anarchists are bourgeois is true to this extent and no further – that, great as is their detestation for a bourgeois society, they prefer its partial liberty to the complete slavery of State Socialism. For one, I certainly can look with more pleasure – no, less pain – upon the present seething, surging struggle, in which some are up and some are down, some falling and some rising, some rich and many poor, but none completely fettered or altogether hopeless of a better future, than I could upon Mr. Thaddeus Wakeman's ideal, uniform, and miserable community of teamy, placid, and slavish oxen.

To repeat, then, I do not believe that many of the Archists can be brought to say in so many words that liberty is not the prime condition of happiness, and in that case they cannot deny that Anarchism, which is but another name for liberty, is conducive to happiness. This being true, I have not begged the question and I have already established my case. Nothing is more needed to justify my Anarchistic creed. Even if some form of Archism could be devised that would create infinite wealth, and distribute it with perfect equity (pardon the absurd hypothesis of a distribution of the infinite), still the fact that in itself it is a denial of the prime condition of happiness, would compel its rejection and the acceptance of its sole alternative, Anarchism.

But, though this is enough, it is not all. It is enough for justification, but not enough for inspiration. The happiness possible in any society that does not improve upon the present in the matter of the distribution of wealth, can hardly be described as beatific. No prospect can be positively alluring that does not promise both requisites of happiness – liberty and wealth. Now, Anarchism does promise both. In fact, it promises the second as the result of the first, and happiness as the result of both.

This brings us into the sphere of economics. Will liberty abundantly produce and equitably distribute wealth? That is the remaining question to consider. And certainly it cannot be adequately treated in a single article in the *Twentieth Century*. A few generalizations are permissible at most.

What causes the inequitable distribution of wealth? "Competition," cry the State Socialists. And if they are right, then, indeed, we are in a bad box, for we shall, in that case, never be able to get wealth without sacrificing liberty, and liberty we must have, whether or no. But, luckily, they are not right. It is not competition, but monopoly, that deprives labor of its product. Wages, inheritance, gifts, and gambling aside, every process by which we acquire wealth, rests upon a monopoly, a prohibition, a denial of liberty. Interest and rent of buildings rest on the banking monopoly, the prohibition of competition in finance, the denial of the liberty to issue currency; ground rent rests on the land monopoly, the denial of the liberty to use vacant land; profits in excess of wages rest upon the tariff and patent monopolies, the prohibition or limitation of competition in the industries and arts. There is but one exception, and that a

comparatively trivial one; I refer to economic rent as distinguished from monopolistic rent. This does not rest upon a denial of liberty; it is one of nature's inequalities. It probably will remain with us always. Complete liberty will very much lessen it; of that I have no doubt. But I do not ever expect it to ever reach the vanishing point to which Mr. M'Cready looks forward so confidently. At the worst, however, it will be a small matter, no more worth consideration in comparison with liberty than the slight disparity that will always exist in consequence of inequalities of skill.

If, then, all these methods of extortion from labor rest upon denials of liberty, plainly the remedy consists in the realization of liberty. Destroy the banking monopoly, establish freedom in finance, and down will go interest on money through the beneficent influence of competition. Capital will be set free, business will flourish, new enterprises will start, labor will be in demand, and gradually the wages of labor will rise to a level with its product. And it is the same with the other monopolies. Abolish the tariffs, issue no patents[,] take down the bars from unoccupied land, and labor will straightway rush in and take possession of its own. Then mankind will live in freedom and in comfort.

That is what I want to see; that is what I love to think of. And because anarchism will give this state of things, I am an Anarchist. To assert that it will is not to prove it; that I know. But neither can it be disproved by mere denial. I am waiting for some one to show me by history, fact, or logic that men have social wants superior to liberty and wealth or that any form of Archism will secure them these wants. Until then the foundations of my political and economic creed will remain as I have outlined them in this brief article.

Mini-Manual of Individualism

Han Ryner

1905

I have adopted the question and answer format, so handy for rapid exposition. In this case it not an expression of any dogmatic pretensions: we won't find here a master who interrogates and a disciple who responds. There is an individualist questioning himself. In the first line I wanted to indicate that it was a question of an interior dialogue. While the catechism asks: "Are you Christian?" I say "Am I individualist?" However, prolonged this procedure would bring with it some inconvenience and, having laid out my intention, I remembered that the soliloquy often employs the second person.

One will find pell mell in this book truths that are certain but whose certainty can only be discovered in oneself and opinions that are probable. There are problems that admit of several responses. Others—aside from the heroic solution, which can be advised only when all else is crime—lack an entirely satisfactory solution and the approximations I propose are not superior to other approximations: I don't insist on mine. The reader who is incapable of separating them out and, acquiescing to truths, finding the probabilities analogous to my probabilities and in many cases more harmonious for him would not be worthy of the name of individualist.

Due to lack of development, or for other reasons, I will often leave unsatisfied even the most fraternal of spirits. I can only recommend to men of good will the careful reading of Epictetus's Manual. There, better than anywhere else, can be found the response to our worries and doubts. There, more than anywhere else, he who is capable of true courage will find the source of courage.

From Epictetus, as well as others, I have borrowed formulas without always thinking it necessary to indicate my debts. In a work like this one it is the things that matter, not their origin, and we eat more than one fruit without asking the gardener the name of the river or stream that fertilizes his garden.

Chapter One.

On Individualism and a few individualists.

Am I an individualist?

I am an individualist.

What do I mean by individualism?

I mean by individualism the moral doctrine which, relying on no dogma, no tradition, no external determination, appeals only to the individual conscience.

Hasn't the word individualism only designated this doctrine?

The name of individualism has often been given to the appearance of doctrines aimed at covering with a philosophical mask cowardly or conquering and aggressive egoism.

Cite a cowardly egoist who is sometimes called an individualist.

Montaigne.

Do you know of any conquering and aggressive egoists who proclaim themselves to be individualists?

All those who extend the brutal law of the fight for life to relations between men.

Cite some names.

Stendhal, Nietzsche.

Name some true individualists.

Socrates, Epicurus, Jesus, Epictetus.

Why do you love Socrates?

He didn't teach a truth external to those who listened to him, but rather taught them to find the truth within themselves.

How did Socrates die?

He died condemned by laws and judges, assassinated by the city, a martyr to individualism.

What was he accused of?

Of not honoring the gods the city honored and of corrupting youth.

What did this last grievance mean?

It meant that Socrates professed opinions disagreeable to those in power.

Why do you love Epicurus?

Beneath his carefree elegance, he was a hero.

Cite a clever phrase of Seneca on Epicurus.

Seneca calls Epicurus "a hero disguised as a woman."

What was the good that Epicurus did?

He delivered his disciples from the fear of gods or God, which is the beginning of madness.

What was Epicurus' great virtue?

Temperance. He distinguished between natural and imaginary needs. He showed that very little was needed to satisfy hunger and thirst, to defend oneself against heat and the cold. And he liberated himself from all other needs, that is, almost all the desires and all the fears that enslave men.

How did Epicurus die?

He died of a long and painful illness while boasting a perfect happiness.

In general do we know the true Epicurus?

No. Unfaithful disciples covered his doctrines with vice, in the same way a sore is hidden beneath a stolen coat.

Is Epicurus guilty of what false disciples have him say?

We are never guilty of the foolishness or perfidy of others.

Is the perversion of Epicurus' doctrine an exceptional phenomenon?

Every word of truth, if it is listened to by many men, is transformed into a lie by the superficial, the crafty, and charlatans.

Why do you love Jesus?

He lived free and a wanderer, foreign to any social ties. He was the enemy of priests, external cults and, in general, all organizations.

How did he die?

Pursued by priests, abandoned by judicial authority he died nailed to the cross by soldiers. Along with Socrates, he is the most celebrated victim of religion, the most illustrious martyr to individualism.

In general, do we know the real Jesus?

No; the priests crucified his doctrine as well as his body. They transformed the tonic beverage into a poison. On the falsified words of the enemy of external organizations and cults they founded the most organized and most pompously empty of religions.

Is Jesus guilty of what disciples and priests have made of his doctrine?

We are never guilty of the foolishness or perfidy of others.

Why do you love Epictetus?

The Stoic Epictetus courageously bore poverty and slavery. He was perfectly happy in the situations most painful to ordinary men.

How do we know Epictetus' doctrine?

His disciple Arrien gathered together some of his sayings in a small book entitled "The Manual of Epictetus."

What do you think of "The Manual of Epictetus?"

Its precise and unflinching nobility, its simplicity free of any charlatanry render it more precious to me than the Gospels. Epictetus' Manual is the most beautiful and liberating of all books.

In history are there not other celebrated individualists?

There are others. But those I have named are the purest and the easiest to understand.

Why do you not name the Cynics Antisthenes and Diogenes?

Because the Cynic doctrine is but a sketch of Stoicism.

Why do you not name Xenon of Citium, the founder of Stoicism?

His life was admirable and, according to the testimony of the ancients, always resembled his philosophy. But today he is less well known than those I have named.

Why do you not name the Stoic Marcus Aurelius?

Because he was an emperor.

Why do you not name Descartes?

Descartes was an intellectual individualist. He wasn't a clearly moral individualist. His actual morality appears to have been Stoic, but he didn't dare render it public. He only made known a "provisional morality" in which he recommends to obey the laws and customs of your country, which is the contrary of individualism. What is more, he seems to have lacked philosophical courage in other circumstances.

Why do you not name Spinoza?

Spinoza's life was admirable. He lived modestly, on a few grains of groats and a bit of milk soup. Refusing the chairs that were offered him, he always earned his daily bread through manual labor. His moral doctrine is a stoic mysticism. But too exclusively intellectual, he professed a strange absolutist politics and, in the face of power, only reserved the freedom to think. In any case, his name puts one in mind more of a great metaphysical power than of a great moral beauty.

Chapter II.
Preparation for Practical Individualism

Is it enough to proclaim oneself individualist?

No. A religion can be satisfied with verbal adherence and a few acts of adoration. A practical philosophy that isn't practiced is nothing.

Why can religions show more indulgence than moral doctrines?

The gods of religions are mighty monarchs. They save the faithful through grace and miracles. They grant salvation in exchange for the law, certain ritual words and certain agreed upon gestures. They can even give me credit for gestures done and words spoken for me by mercenaries.

What must I do to truly deserve the name of individualist?

All my acts must be in agreement with my ideas.

Is that agreement not difficult to obtain?

It is less difficult than it seems.

Why?

The beginning individualist is held back by false goods and bad habits. He only liberates himself at the cost of some effort. But the discord between his acts and his ideas is more painful to him than all renunciations. He suffers from it in the same way that a musician suffers from lack of harmony. At no price would the musician want to pass his life amidst discordant noises. In the same way my lack of harmony is, for me, the greatest of sufferings. .

What do we call the effort of putting one's life in agreement with one's thoughts?

It is called virtue.

Does virtue receive a reward?

Virtue is its own reward.

What do these words mean?

They mean two things: 1—If I think of a reward I am not virtuous. Disinterestedness is the primary characteristic of virtue. 2—Disinterested virtue creates happiness.

What is happiness?

Happiness is the state of the soul that feels itself free of all outside servitudes and feels itself in perfect accord with itself.

Is it not then the case that there is only happiness when there is no longer a need to make an effort, and does happiness succeed virtue?

The wise man always needs effort and virtue. He is always attacked from without. But in fact, happiness only exists in the soul where there is no longer internal struggle. .

Are we unhappy in pursuit of wisdom?

No. While awaiting happiness each victory produces joy.

What is joy?

Joy is the feeling of passing from a lesser to a greater perfection. Joy is the feeling that we are advancing towards happiness.

Distinguish between joy and happiness by a comparison.

A peaceful being, forced to fight, carries away a victory that brings him nearer to peace: he feels joy. He finally arrives at a peace that nothing can trouble: he has reached happiness. .

Should one attempt to obtain happiness and perfection the first day we understand them?

It is rare that we can attempt immediate perfection without imprudence.

What dangers do the imprudent risk?

The danger of retreating and becoming discouraged.

What is the right way to prepare oneself for perfection?

It is right to go to Epictetus by passing through Epicurus.

What do you mean?

One must first place oneself from the point of view of Epicurus and distinguish natural from imaginary needs. When we are able to despise in practice all that is unnecessary to life, when we will disdain luxury and comfort, when we will savor the physical pleasure that come from simple food and drink; when our bodies as well as our souls will know the goodness of bread and water we will be able to advance further along the road.

What steps remain to be taken?

It remains to be felt that even if deprived of bread and water we could be happy; that in the most painful illness, where we have no assistance, we could be happy; that even dying under torture in the midst of the insults of the crowd we could be happy.

Are these peaks of wisdom reachable by all?

These peaks are reachable by all men of good will who feel a natural penchant towards individualism.

What is the intellectual path that leads to these peaks?

It is the Stoic doctrine of the true good and the true evil.

What do we call this doctrine again?

We call this the doctrine of things that depend on us on those that don't depend on us.

What are the things that depend on us?

Our opinions, our desires, our inclinations, and our aversions: in a word, all our internal acts.

What are the things that don't depend on us?

The body, riches, reputation, dignities: in a word, all those things that are not counted among our internal acts.

What are the characteristics of the things that depend on us?

They are free by nature: nothing can stop them or place an obstacle before them.

What is the other name of the things that don't depend on us?

The things that don't depend on us are also called indifferent things.

Why?

Because none of them is either a true good or a true evil.

What happens to he who takes indifferent things for things that are good or evil?

He finds obstacles everywhere. He is afflicted, troubled; he complains of things and of men.

Does he not feel an even greater evil?

He is a slave to desire and fear.

What is the state of he who knows in practice that the things that don't depend on us are indifferent?

He is free. No one can force him to do what he doesn't want to do or prevent him from doing what he wants to do. He has nothing to complain about of any thing or person.

Illness, prison, and poverty, for example: don't they diminish my liberty?

External things can diminish the liberty of my body and my movements. They aren't hindrances to my will as long as I don't have the folly to want that which doesn't depend on me.

Doesn't the doctrine of Epicurus suffice during the course of life?

Epicurus' doctrine suffices if I have the things necessary for life and if my health is good. Before joy it renders me the equal of animals, who don't forge for themselves imaginary worries and ills. But in illness and hunger it no longer suffices.

Does it suffice in social relations?

In the course of social relations they can suffice. It frees me from all the tyrants who have power only over the superfluous.

Are there social circumstances where they no longer suffice?

They no longer suffice if the tyrant can deprive me of bread, if he can put me to death or wound my body. .

What do you call a tyrant?

I call a tyrant whoever, in acting on indifferent things—such as my wealth or body—pretends to act on my will. I call a tyrant whoever attempts to modify the state of my soul by other means than reasonable persuasion.

Are there not individualists for whom Epicureanism suffices?

Whatever my present might be, I am ignorant of the future. I don't know if the great attack, where Epicureanism will no longer suffice, is laying in wait for me. I must then, as soon as I have attained Epicurean wisdom, work at ever more strengthening myself until I reach Stoic invulnerability.

How will I live in calm?

In calm I can live gently and temperately like Epicurus, but with the spirit of Epictetus.

Is it useful to perfection to propose for oneself a model like Socrates, Jesus, or Epictetus?

This is a bad method.

Why?

Because it is my harmony I must realize, not that of another.

What kinds of duties are there?

There are two kinds of duties: universal and personal duties.

What do you call universal duties?

I call universal duties those incumbent on any wise man.

What do you call personal duties?

I call personal duties those that are incumbent on me in particular.

Do personal duties exist?

Personal duties exist. I am a particular being who finds himself in particular situations. I have a certain degree of physical strength, of intellectual strength, and I possess greater or lesser wealth. I have a past to continue. I have to fight against a hostile destiny, or collaborate in a friendly one.

Distinguish with a simple sign personal and universal duties.

Without any exception, universal duties are duties of abstention. Almost all duties of action are personal duties. Even in those rare circumstances where action is imposed on all the detail of the act will bear the mark of the agent, will be the like the signature of the moral artist.

Can personal duty contradict universal duty?

No. It is like the flower which can only grow on the plant.

Are my personal duties the same as those of Socrates, Jesus, or Epictetus?

They don't resemble them at all if I don't lead an apostolic life.

Who will teach me my personal and universal duties?

My conscience.

How will it teach me my universal duties?

By telling me what I can expect from every wise man?

How will it teach me my personal duties?

By telling me what I should demand of myself.

Are there difficult duties?

There are no difficult duties for the wise man.

Before reaching wisdom can the ideas of Socrates, Jesus and Epictetus be useful to me in difficulty?

They can be useful to me, but I would never portray these great individualists as models.

How do I portray them?

I portray them as witnesses. And I want them to never condemn my way of acting.

Are these serious and slight errors?

Any error recognized as such before being committed is serious.

Theoretically, in order to judge my situation or that of others on the path to wisdom can I not judge serious from slight errors?

I can.

What do I call a slight error?

I ordinarily call a slight error one that Epictetus would condemn and Epicurus wouldn't condemn.

What do I call a serious error?

I call a serious error that which would be condemned even by the indulgence of Epicurus.

Chapter III.

On the Mutual Relations Between Individuals.

Say the formula defining obligations towards others.

You will love your neighbor like yourself and your God above all.

What is my neighbor?

Other men.

Why do you call other men your neighbor?

Because, gifted with reason and will they are closer to me than are animals.

What do animals have in common with me?

Life, feelings, intelligence.

Don't these common characteristics create obligations towards animals?

These common characteristics create in me the obligation to not make animals suffer, to avoid their useless suffering, and to not kill them unnecessarily.

What right is given me by the absence of reason and will in animals?

Animals not being persons I have the right to make use of them in accordance with their strength and to transform them into instruments.

Do I have the same right over certain men?

I never have the right to consider a man as a means. Every person is a goal, an end. I can only ask people for services that they will freely accord me, either through benevolence or in exchange for other services.

Are there not inferior races?

There are no inferior races. The noble individual can flourish in all races.

Are there not inferior individuals incapable of reason and will?

With the exception of the madman, every man is capable of reason and will. But many only listen to their passions and have only whims. It is among them that we meet those who have the pretension to command.

Can't I make instruments of incomplete individuals?

No. I must consider them as individuals whose development has been halted, but in whom the man will perhaps be awakened tomorrow.

What am I to think of the orders of those with the pretension of commanding?

An order can only ever be the caprice of a child or the fantasy of a madman.

How should I love my neighbor?

Like myself.

What do these words mean?

They mean: in the same way that I should love myself.

Who will teach me how I should love myself?

The second part of the formula teaches me how I should love myself.

Repeat that second part.

You will love your God above all else.

What is God?

God has several meanings: he has a different meaning in every religion or metaphysic and he has a moral meaning.

What is the moral meaning of the word God?

God is the name of moral perfection.

What does the possessive "your" mean in the formula for love: "You will love YOUR God?"

My God is my moral perfection.

What must I love above all else?

My reason, my freedom, my internal harmony, and my happiness, for these are the other names of my God.

Does my God demand sacrifices?

My God demands that I sacrifice my desires and my fears. He demands that I detest false goods and that I be “poor in spirit.”

What else does he demand?

He also demands that I be ready to sacrifice to him my sensibility and, if need be, my life.

What then will I love in my neighbor?

I have the same duties towards the sensibilities of my neighbor as I do towards the sensibilities of animals or myself.

Explain yourself.

I will not create pointless suffering in others or myself.

Can I create pointless suffering?

I cannot actively create pointless suffering. But certain necessary abstentions will have as a consequence suffering in others or myself. I should no more sacrifice my God to the sensibility of others than to my sensibility.

What are my obligations towards the lives of others?

I must neither kill nor wound them.

Are there not cases where we have the right to kill?

In the case of self-defense it would seem that necessity creates the right to kill. But in almost all cases, if I am brave enough, I will maintain the calm that permits us to save ourselves without killing.

Is it not better to be attacked without defending oneself?

In this case abstention is, in fact the sign of a superior virtue, the truly heroic solution.

In the face of the suffering of others, are there not unjustified abstentions that are exactly equivalent to evil acts?

There are. If I allow to die he who I could have saved without crime, I am a veritable assassin.

Cite a phrase of Bossuet's dealing with this.

“This rich inhuman being has stripped the poor man because he did not clothe him. He cruelly murdered him because he did not feed him.”

What do you think of sincerity?

Sincerity is my primary duty towards others and myself, the testimony that my God demands as a continual sacrifice, like a flame that I must never allow to be extinguished.

What is the most necessary sincerity?

The proclamation of my moral certainties.

What sincerity do you put in second place?

Sincerity in the expression of my sentiments. .

Is exactitude in the exposition of external facts without importance?

It is much less important than the two great philosophical and sentimental sincerities. Nevertheless, the wise man observes it.

How many kinds lies are there?

There are three kinds of lies: the malicious lie, the officious lie, and the joyous lie.

What is a malicious lie?

The malicious lie is a crime and an act of cowardice.

What is an officious lie?

An officious lie is one that has usefulness to others or myself as its goal.

What do you think of the officious lie?

When an officious lie contains no harmful element the wise man doesn't condemn it in others, but he avoids it himself.

Are there not cases where the officious lie is needed; if a lie can, for example, save someone's life?

In this case the wise man can tell a lie that doesn't touch on the facts. But he will almost always, instead of lying, refuse to respond.

Is a joyous lie permitted?

The wise man forbids him the joyous lie.

Why?

The joyous lie sacrifices to a game the authority of the word which, maintained, can sometimes be useful to others.

Does the wise man forbid himself fiction?

The wise man doesn't forbid himself any open fiction, and it happens that he tells parables fables, symbols, and myths.

What should the relations between men and women be?

The relations between a man and a woman should be, like all relations between people, absolutely free on both sides.

Are there rules to be observed in these relations?

They should express mutual sincerity.

What do you think of love?

Mutual love is the most beautiful of indifferent things, the nearest to being a virtue. It makes a kiss noble.

Is a kiss without love a fault?

If a kiss without love is the meeting of two desires and two pleasure it doesn't constitute a fault.

Chapter IV.

On Society.

Do I not have relations with isolated individuals?

I have relations, not only with isolated individuals, but also with various social groups and, in general, with society.

What is society?

Society is a gathering of individuals for a common labor.

Can a common labor be good?

Under certain conditions a common labor can be good.

Under what conditions?

A common labor will be good if, through mutual love or through love of the task workers all act freely, and if their common efforts bring them together in a harmonious coordination.

Does social labor in fact have this characteristic of liberty?

In fact, social labor has no characteristics of liberty. Workers are subordinated to each other. Their efforts are not spontaneous and harmonious acts of love, but grinding acts of constraint.

What do you conclude from this characteristic of social labor?

I conclude from this that social labor is evil.

How does the wise man consider society?

The wise man considers society as a limit. He feels social in the same way he feels mortal.

What is the attitude of the wise man in face of these limits?

The wise man regards these limits as material necessities and he physically submits to them with indifference.

What are limits for he who is on the march towards wisdom?

Limits constitute dangers for he who is on the march towards wisdom.

Why?

He who cannot yet distinguish in practice, with unshakeable certainty, the things that depend on him from those that are indifferent risks translating material constraints into moral constraints.

What should the imperfect individualist do in the face of social constraints?

He should defend his reason and his will against them. He will reject the prejudices it imposes on other men, and he will forbid himself from hating or loving it. He will progressively free himself from any fear or desire concerning it. He will advance towards perfect indifference, which is what wisdom is when confronting things that do not depend on him.

Does the wise man hope for a better society?

The wise man forbids himself any hope.

Does the wise man believe in progress?

He notes that wise man are rare in all eras and that there is no moral progress.

Does the wise man take joy in material progress?

The wise man notes that material progress has as its object the increasing of the artificial needs of some and the labor of others. Material progress appears to him as an increasing weight, which increasingly plunges man in the mud and in suffering.

Won't the invention of perfected machines diminish human labor?

The invention of machines has always aggravated labor. It has rendered it more painful and less harmonious. It has replace free and intelligent initiative with a servile and fearful precision. It has made of the laborer, once the smiling master of tools, the trembling slave of the machine.

How can the machine, which multiplies products, not diminish the quantity of labor to be furnished by man?

Man is greedy, and the folly of imaginary needs grows as it is satisfied. The more superfluous things the madman has, the more he wants.

Does the wise man carry out social acts?

The wise man notes that in order to carry out social acts one must act on crowds, and one doesn't act on crowds through reason, but through the passions. He doesn't believe that he has the right to stir up the passions of men. Social action appears to him to be a tyranny, and he abstains from taking part in this.

Is the wise man not selfish in forgetting the happiness of the people?

The wise man knows that the words "The happiness of the people," have no meaning. Happiness is internal and individual. It can only be produced within oneself.

Does the wise man then have no pity for the oppressed?

The wise man knows that the oppressed who complain aspire to be oppressors. He relieves them according to his means, but he doesn't believe in salvation through common action.

The wise man then doesn't believe in reform?

He notes that reforms change the names of things and not the things themselves. The slave became a serf, and then a salaried worker: nothing has been reformed but language. The wise man remains indifferent to these questions of philology.

Is the wise man revolutionary?

Experience proves to the wise man that revolutions never have lasting results. Reason tells him that lies are not refuted by lies, and that violence isn't destroyed by violence.

What does the wise man think of anarchy?

The wise man regards anarchy as a form of naiveté.

Why?

The anarchist believes that the government is the limit of liberty. He hopes, by destroying government, to expand liberty.

Is he not right?

The true limit is not government, but society. Government is a social product like another. We don't destroy a tree by cutting one of its branches.

Why does the wise man not work at destroying society?

Society is as inevitable as death. On a material level our strength is weak against such limits. But the wise man destroys in himself the fear of society, just as he destroys the fear of death. He is indifferent to the

political and social form of the milieu in which he lives, just as he is indifferent to the kind of death that awaits him.

So the wise man will never act on society?

The wise man knows that we can't destroy either social injustice or the waters of the sea. But he strives to save an oppressed person from a particular injustice, just as he throws himself into the water to save a drowning man.

Chapter V. On Social Relations

Is work a social or a natural law?

Work is a natural law worsened by society.

How does society worsen the natural law of work?

In three ways: 1—It arbitrarily dispenses a certain number of men from all work and places their part of the burden on other men. 2—It employs many men at useless labors and social functions. 3—It multiplies among all, and particularly among the rich, imaginary needs and it imposes on the poor the odious labor necessary for the satisfaction of these needs.

Why do you find the law of work natural?

Because my body has natural needs that can only be satisfied by products of labor.

So you only consider manual labor to be labor?

Without a doubt.

Doesn't the spirit also have natural needs?

Exercise is the only natural need of our intellectual faculties. The spirit forever remains a happy child who needs movement and play.

Aren't special workers needed to give the spirit occasions for play?

The spectacle of nature, the observation of human passions, and the pleasure of conversation suffice for the natural needs of the spirit.

So you condemn art, science, and philosophy?

I don't condemn these pleasures. Like love, they are noble as long as they remain disinterested. In art, in science, in philosophy, in love, the delight I feel in giving to myself shouldn't be paid for by he who enjoys the delight in receiving.

But there aren't there artists who create with pain and scholars who seek with fatigue?

If the pain is greater than the pleasure I don't understand why these poor people don't abstain?

So you would demand manual labor of the artist and the scholar?

As is the case with lovers, nature demands manual labor of the scholar and artist since it imposes natural needs on them, as on other men.

The infirm also have material needs, and you wouldn't be so cruel as to impose a task on them they wouldn't be capable of?

Without a doubt, but I don't consider the beauty of a body or the force of a mind to be infirmities.

So the individualist will work with his hands?

Yes, as much as possible.

Why do you say: "As much as possible?"

Because society has rendered obedience to natural law difficult. There is not remunerative manual labor for all. Ordinarily, we awaken to individualism too late to do an apprenticeship in a manual trade. Society has stolen from all, in order to turn over to a few, that great instrument of natural labor, the earth.

The individualist then can, in the current state of things, live off a task that he doesn't consider true labor?

He can.

Can the individualist be a functionary?

Yes, but he can't agree to all kinds of functions.

What are the functions the individualist will abstain from?

The individualist will abstain from any function of an administrative, judicial, or military order. He will be neither a prefect, a policeman, an officer, judge or executioner.

Why?

The individualist cannot figure among social tyrants.

What functions can he accept?

Those functions that don't harm others.

Aside from functions paid for by the government, are there harmful careers that the individualist will abstain from?

There are.

Cite a few.

Theft, banking, the exploitation of the courtesan, the exploitation of the worker.

What will the relations of the individualist be with his social inferiors?

He will respect their personality and their liberty. He will never forget that professional obligation is a fiction and that human obligation is the only moral reality. He will never forget that hierarchies are follies and he will act naturally, not socially with the men that social falsehood affirm to be his inferiors, but which nature has made his equals.

Will the individualist have many dealings with his social inferiors?

He will avoid abstentions that could upset them. But he will see little of them for fear of finding them social and unnatural; I mean for fear of finding them servile, embarrassed or hostile.

What will the relations of an individualist be with his colleagues and his fellows?

He will be polite and accommodating with them. But he will avoid their conversation as much as he can without wounding them.

Why?

In order to defend himself against two subtle poisons: esprit de corps and professional stupefaction. .

How will the individualist conduct himself with his social superiors?

The individualist will not forget that the words of his social superiors almost always deal with indifferent things. He will listen with indifference and respond as little as possible. He will make no objections. He won't indicate the methods that appear to him to be the best. He will avoid all useless discussion.

Why?

Because the social superior is generally a vain and irritable child.

If a social superior orders, not an indifferent thing, but an injustice or a cruelty, what will the individualist do?

He will refuse to obey.

Won't disobedience cause him to risk danger?

No. Becoming the instrument of injustice and evil is the death of reason and liberty. But disobedience to an unjust order only places the body and material resources in danger, which are counted among indifferent things.

What will the ideas of the individualist be in the face of the forces of order?

The individualist will mentally say to the unjust chief: you are one of the modern incarnations of the tyrant. But the tyrant can do nothing against the wise man.

Will the individualist explain his refusal to obey?

Yes, if he thinks the social chief capable of understanding and rejecting his error. The chief is almost always incapable of understanding.

What will the individualist then do?

The refusal to obey is the sole universal obligation before an unjust order. The form of the refusal depends on my personality. .

How does the individualist consider the crowd?

The individualist considers the crowd as one of the most brutal of natural forces.

How does he act in a crowd that is causing no harm?

He strives to not feel himself in conformity with the crowd and to not allow, even for a single instant, his personality to be drowned in it.

Why?

In order to remain a free man. Because perhaps soon an unforeseen shock will cause the cruelty of the crowd to burst forth, and he who will have begun to feel like it, he who will truly be part of the crowd will have difficulty in separating from it at the moment of moral élan.

What will the wise man do if the crowd that he finds himself in attempts an injustice or a cruelty?

The wise man will oppose, by all means noble and indifferent, the injustice or the cruelty.

What are the methods the wise man will not employ, even in these circumstance?

The wise man will not descend to falsehood, prayer, or flattery. .

Flattering the crowd is a powerful oratorical method. Does the wise man absolutely forbid this to himself?

The wise man can address to the crowd, as to children, that praise that is the ironically amiable envelope of his counsels. But he will know that the limit is uncertain and adventure dangerous. He will not risk it unless he absolutely certain not only of the firmness of his soul but also of the precise flexibility of his speech.

Will the wise man testify before tribunals?

The wise man will never testify before tribunals.

Why?

Testifying before tribunals for material or indifferent interests means sacrificing to the social idol and recognizing tyranny. What is more, there is cowardice in appealing to the power of all for assistance.

What will the wise man do if he is accused?

In keeping with his character he can tell the truth or oppose disdain and silence to social tyranny.

If the individualist recognizes his guilt what will he say?

He will speak of his real and natural error; will clearly distinguish it from the apparent and social error for which he is pursued. He will add that his conscience inflicts true punishment on him for his true error. But for an apparent error society, which only acts on indifferent things, will inflict an apparent punishment.

If the accused wise man is innocent before his conscience and guilty before the law, what will he say?

He will explain in what way his legal crime is a natural innocence. He will speak of his contempt for the law, that organized injustice and that powerlessness that can do nothing to us, but only to our bodies and our wealth, indifferent things.

If the accused wise man is innocent before his conscience and the law, what will he say?

He can only speak of his real innocence. If he deigns to explain these two innocences he will declare that only the first one matters to him.

Will the wise man testify before civil tribunals?

The wise man will not refuse his testimony to the feeble oppressed.

Will the wise man testify at penal court or before the court of assizes?

Yes, if he knows a truth useful to the accused.

If the wise man knows a truth harmful to the accused, what will he do?

He will remain silent.

Why?

Because a condemnation is always an injustice and the wise man doesn't make himself an accomplice in an injustice.

Why do you say that a condemnation is always an injustice?

Because no man has the right to inflict death on another man or to lock him in prison.

Doesn't society have rights different from those of the individual?

Society, a gathering of individuals, cannot have a right that isn't found in any individual. Zeroes, when added up, however numerous they might be, always add up to zero.

Isn't society in a state of self-defense against certain malefactors?

The right to self defense only lasts as long as the attack itself.

Will the wise man sit on a jury?

He will always answer "no" to the first question: Is the accused guilty?

Won't that response sometimes be a lie?

That response will never be a lie.

Why?

The question of the president should be translated thusly: "Do you want us to inflict punishment on the accused?" And I am forced to answer "no," for I don't have the right to inflict punishment on anyone.

What do you think of duels?

Every appeal to violence is an evil. But the duel is a lesser evil compared to appealing to justice.

Why?

It isn't a form of cowardice; it doesn't cry out for assistance, and doesn't employ the force of all against one alone.

CHAPTER VI.

On Sacrifices to Idols.

May I sacrifice to the idols of my time and country?

With indifference I can allow idols to take indifferent things from me. But I must defend what depends on me and belongs to my God.

How can I distinguish my God from idols?

My God is proclaimed by my conscience the moment it is truly my voice and not an echo. But idols are the work of society.

By what other characteristic do we recognize idols?

My God only desires the sacrifice of indifferent things. Idols demand that I sacrifice myself.

Can you explain yourself?

Idols proclaim as virtues the most servile and low expedients: discipline and passive obedience. They demand the sacrifice of my reason and my will.

Do idols commit other injustices?

Not content with wanting to destroy what is superior to them and what I never have the right to abandon, they want me to sacrifice what doesn't belong to me at all: the life of my neighbor.

Do you know any other characteristics of idols?

The true God is eternal and immense. It is always and everywhere that I must obey my reason always and everywhere. But idols vary with the time and country. .

Show how idols vary with the times.

Once I was asked to suppress my reason and to kill my neighbor for the glory of I don't know what God foreign and external to myself for the glory of the King. Today I am asked to make the same abominable sacrifices for the honor of the Fatherland. Tomorrow they will perhaps be demanded for the honor of the race, the color, or the part of the world. .

Does the idol only vary when its name changes?

As much as possible the idol avoids changing its name. But it often varies. .

Cite changes in an idol that aren't accompanied by a change in name.

In a neighboring country the idol of the Fatherland was Prussia; today, under the same name, the idol is Germany. It demanded that the Prussian kill the Bavarian. Later it demanded that the Prussian and the Bavarian kill the Frenchman. In 1859 the Savoyard and the Nicois were at risk of soon bowing before a fatherland shaped like a boot. The hazards of diplomacy have them adore a hexagonal Fatherland. The Pole hesitates between a dead and a living idol; the Alsatian between two living idols who pretend to the same name of Fatherland. .

What are the current principal idols?

In certain countries, the King or the Emperor, in others some fraud called the Will of the People. Everywhere Order, the Political party, Religion, the Fatherland, the Race, the Color. We shouldn't forget public opinion, with its thousand names, from the most emphatic, Honor, to the most trivially low, the fear of "What will the neighbors say?"

Is Color a dangerous idol?

The White color especially. It has managed to unite in one cult the French, Germans, Russians, and Italians and to obtain from these noble priests the bloody sacrifice of a great number of Chinese.

Do you know other crimes of the White Color?

It is they who have made all of Africa a hell. It is they who destroyed the Indians of America and lynches Negroes.

Do the adorers of the White Color offer only blood to their idol?

They also offer it praise.

Speak of this praise.

It would be too long a litany. But when the White Color demands a crime the liturgy calls this crime a necessity of civilization and progress.

Is Race a dangerous idol?

Yes, especially when it is allied to religion.

Speak of a few crimes of these allies?

The wars of the Medes, the conquests of the Saracens, the Crusades. adees, the massacres of the Armenians, anti-Semitism.

What is the most demanding and universally respected idol today?

The Fatherland. .

Speak of the particular demands of the Fatherland.

Military service and war.

Can the individualist be a soldier in time of peace?

Yes, as long as he isn't asked to commit a crime.

What does the wise man do in time of war?

The wise man never forgets the order of the true God, of Reason: Thou shalt not kill. And he prefers to obey God than men.

What acts will his conscience dictate to him?

The Universal conscience rarely orders pre-determined acts. It almost always carries prohibitions. It forbids killing or wounding your neighbor and, on the point, it says nothing more. Methods are indifferent and constitute personal obligations.

Can the wise man remain a soldier in time of war?

The wise man can remain a soldier in time of war as long as he is certain not to allow himself to be dragged into killing or wounding.

Can the formal and open refusal to obey murderous orders become a strict duty?

Yes, if the wise man, by his past or for other reasons finds himself in one of those situations that attract attention. Yes, if his attitude risks to scandalize or edify it can bring other men towards good or evil.

Will the wise man fire at the officer who gives a murderous order?

The wise man kills no one. He knows that tyrannicide is a crime, like any willful murder.

CHAPTER VII.

On the Relations Between Morality and Metaphysics.

In how many ways do we conceive the relations between morality and metaphysics?

In three ways: 1—Morality is a consequence of metaphysics, a metaphysics in action; 2—Metaphysics are a necessity and a postulate of morality; 3—Morality and metaphysics are independent of each other.

What do you think of the doctrine that makes morality depend on metaphysics?

This doctrine is dangerous. It forces the necessary to be supported by the superfluous, the certain on the uncertain, the practical by the dream. It transforms moral life into a somnambulism trembling in fear and hope.

What do you think of the concept that renders morality and metaphysics independent of each other?

It is the only one that can be supported from a moral point of view. This is the one that should be held to in practice.

Theoretically, don't the first two contain a portion of truth?

Morally false, they express a probable metaphysical opinion. They signify that all realities form a whole and that there are close ties between man and the universe.

Is individualism a metaphysic?

Individualism appears to be able to coexist with the most differing metaphysics. It appears that Socrates and the Cynics had a certain disdain for metaphysics. The Epicureans were materialists. The Stoics were pantheists.

What do you think of metaphysical doctrines in general?

As poems and I love them for their beauty.

What constitutes the beauty of metaphysical poems?

A metaphysic is beautiful under two conditions: 1—It should be considered as a possible and hypothetical explanation, not as a system of certainties, and it must not deny neighboring poems; 2—It must explain everything by a harmonious reduction to unity.

What should we do in the presence of affirmative metaphysics?

We should generously strip them of the ugliness and heaviness of affirmation in order to consider them poems and systems of dreams.

What do you think of dualist metaphysics?

They are provisional explanations, semi-metaphysics. There is no true metaphysic, but the only true metaphysics are those that arrive at a monism.

Is individualism an absolute morality?

Individualism is not a morality. It is only the strongest moral method we know, the most impregnable citadel of virtue and happiness.

Is individualism fitting for all men?

There are men who are invincibly repelled by the seeming harshness of individualism. These should choose another moral method.

How can I know if individualism is not appropriate to my nature?

If after a loyal attempt at individualism I feel myself to be unhappy, if I don't feel that I am in the true refuge, and if I am troubled with pity for myself and others I should flee individualism.

Why?

Because this method, too strong for my weakness, will lead me to egoism or discouragement.

By what method can I create a moral life for myself if I am too weak for the individualist method?

By altruism, by love, by pity.

Will this method lead me to acts different from those of an individualist?

Truly moral beings all carry out the same acts and, even more, all abstain from the same acts. Every moral being respects the life of other men; no moral being occupies himself with earning useless wealth, etc.

What will the altruist say who uselessly attempted to use the individualist method?

He'll say to himself: "I have the same path to follow. I have done nothing but leave behind an armor too heavy for me and that attracted violent blows

from destiny and men. And I took up the pilgrim's staff. But I will always remember that I hold this staff to support myself, and not to strike others.”

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