

THE HISTORY OF MUTUALISM:

DOCUMENTS FROM

The High Tide

of

Owenism

BY

**“THE MUTUALIST OF 1826,” JOSIAH WARREN,
PAUL BROWN, GEORGE M. WICKERSHAM,
& ANDREAS BERNARDUS SMOLNIKAR.**

**CORVUS EDITIONS
GRESHAM, OR.**

Introduction

Starting on June 7, 1826, a series of letters appeared in the *New-Harmony Gazette*, the weekly paper of Robert Owen's experimental community at New Harmony, Indiana. They were signed "A Member of a Community," and later, "A Mutualist," and the actual identity of the author remains unknown. It is not even clear which community the Mutualist belonged to, although there may be some reasons to favor the Friendly Association for Mutual Interests at Valley Forge, Virginia. There were several Owenite communities founded in 1825 and 1826, including those at New Harmony and Kendall, Ohio.

There are six letters that we can safely attribute to the Mutualist. The first presents a series of questions, apparently posed by "several friends of the social system," as Owen's approach was known, seeking clarification on the practical application of Owen's theories. This was followed immediately by three letters providing answers to the questions posed—answers which are critical of the arrangement of the existing communities, and particularly of New Harmony. These measured criticisms immediately drew responses from "L. G.," an inhabitant of New Harmony and defender of the present state of the experiment there. He contributed four responses in all. Following these, the final two letters from the Mutualist became considerably more emphatic and less friendly in tone.

In 1826, "mutualist" was a brand-new term. Indeed, a whole array of political keywords—including "anarchism," "socialism," "capitalism," "individualism," and others—had either yet to be defined, or were just in the process of taking on meanings which we might recognize. The meanings of these terms, in this formative period, were rather like quicksilver, and subject to multiple, sometimes conflicting coinages. A Fourierist use of the term "mutualism" seems to have had almost no relation to the use made by the weavers of Lyons, from whom Pierre-Joseph Proudhon is believed to have borrowed it. It might well have happened that the Mutualist of 1826—the first explicit "mutualist" that has been found—could have belonged to a political current entirely unconnected with the anarchist mutualism of figures like Proudhon and William Batchelder Greene.

As it happens, there are connections, but they are not of any very clear or simple sort. The history of anarchist mutualism has been punctuated at intervals by periods in which the term "mutualism" has caught on in a big way, without those making use of the term having any particularly specific or programmatic connections with one another. One of these seems to have occurred at the "high tide" of Owenite experimentation in the mid-1820s. Another occurred in the years following 1848, and in America we can probably point to yet another in the 1870s, perhaps as a reaction to the increased currency of other, more aggressive labels, such as "anarchist" and the marxianized senses of "socialism." We are arguably in the midst of yet another

of these moments right now, as the response to Kevin Carson's works has produced relatively large numbers of new critics and new adherents—any two of whom may or may not be “on the same page” with regard to the meaning of the term.

At present, “mutualism” most generally refers to those varieties of individualist anarchism which are both market-friendly and which consider a substantial amount of social involvement, even social construction, to be an inescapable part of what it means to be an individual. Carson considers mutualism to be “free-market anti-capitalism,” and a form of thoroughly voluntary socialism. Modern mutualists tend to claim, though to varying degrees, both the tradition of Proudhon and that of Josiah Warren, along with the particular formulations of “mutual banking” associated with Greene and the land reform priorities of radicals like Joshua King Ingalls. Warren, of course, hated labels and was horrified by comparisons to Proudhon, scandalized as he was by the latter's famous comparison of property and robbery. A certain kind of fidelity to his thought would require us to deny him even the designation “anarchist,” despite the obviously anarchistic character of his thought.

Any attempt at a narrative history of mutualism, in its various senses, would, at this point, probably be premature. Many important documents from the tradition(s) are obscure, hard to access, untranslated or as yet undiscovered. This series of documents is part of an attempt to at least gather the raw materials for such a history. The various texts appear largely without editorial comment—and this is by design. Readers are encouraged to draw some of their own conclusions about the connections—and significant disconnects—between the various documents selected.

The letters of the “1826 Mutualist” are followed by Josiah Warren's “The Motives for Communism,”—an account of his involvement with the Owenite movement,—a speech given at New Harmony by communist Paul Brown,—author of *Twelve Months in New Harmony*,—“How I Became a Shaker,”—by one of the young men involved in the Owenite colony at Valley Forge,—and a short account the trial of one of John Adolphus Etzler's “Satellites,”—sent by Andrew Smolnikar to William Henry Channing, for inclusion in *The Present*. This odd assortment of texts form part the skeleton around which we may eventually be able to flesh out a more complete history. We have tantalizing details to work with, such as an account of Warren and Brown travelling together to visit the Owenite community at Kendal, and ultimately there doesn't seem to be more than a degree or two of separation between any of these figures—or between these figures and others we know from other segments of radical history. For now, it's probably enough to keep those potential histories in mind as you encounter some of the most interesting figures of the Owenite “high tide.”

This volume will be followed by several others, focusing on other moments and movement in mutualist history and then by a series of interpretive articles in *The Mutualist*.—SHAWN P. WILBUR

The Mutualist of 1826

[First Letter]¹

For the *New-Harmony Gazette*

Several friends of the social system would be much gratified, if Mr. Owen, or any other member of your community, could answer explicitly and with perspicuity, the following practical questions on the system; which they deem of great and vital importance. They have perused in vain the writings of Mr. Owen, and Mr. Gray, and the essays in your Gazette, and found no where any explanation relating thereto. The advantages of the social system, the defects of the opposite selfish system, the utility of cooperation and mutual indulgence, have been unfolded with; ability: while the abstract principles of Mr. Owen's peculiar tenets on moral agency, and combinations of circumstances, have been insisted upon, although they do not appear to be essential thereto, since philanthropic individuals could cooperate, whatever might be their ideas on the moral principle of action. The essential and practical operations (and difficulties) of the system have not been clearly stated and examined, their place being occupied by those abstract disquisitions upon which it is hard and needless to convince. But essays on the following operations of active social life would be acceptable to; all, understood by all, useful to all, and would remove many doubts suggested by practical friends of the mutual system.

I. What is to be the stimulus or encouragement to superior industry, activity, and ability in the communities, where no merit is to be ascribed to any one laboring better, quicker, or longer than others? What are to be the inducements to superior exertions, or discoveries in the arts and sciences, or inventions having a beneficial influence and extensive results on the communities and mankind, if such exertions and discoveries are entitled to no reward nor praise? And what are to be the means used or adopted to restrain and meliorate the idle, the petulant, the proud, the vicious, the intemperate, the libertine, &c. if they are to deserve no blame for the injures and unhappiness they may produce? These opposite effects of excellence and depravity are to be expected, more or less, in all communities or aggregation of individuals. If promotion and expulsion are to be the result, are they not rewards and punishments? Is not approbation a kind of praise or reward? Is not admonition equal to blame? How are ambition, jealousy, and vanity to be checked, indolence and neglect to be prevented?

¹ Source: *New Harmony Gazette*. June 7, 1826.

II. How are the communities to stand towards general society and the laws of the land? Even in the United States, the freest of all countries, a series of laws, results of ages of legislation on individual property, will act as checks and restraints on the mutual system, unless special laws are enacted for their benefit, and this it is doubtful whether selfish legislators will do. If the property of the communities is to be held in trust, what guarantee will bind the trustees? Are the members to be termed children or minors before the law, or what? Are they not to be deemed partners, since they labor for mutual benefit? As partners, the perplexing maze of laws on partnership will bear upon them, each being liable for each in all cases, and bad members might injure or disturb the communities: declarations and expositions will not avail in many cases. Widows and orphans have peculiar rights by law, which may perplex, or be used by enemies. How is all this to be avoided, how is it contemplated to act in common, and in spite of the bad laws forbidding special partnerships or cooperations?

III. Money is to be rendered useless, but how? Is not money or any other medium a conventional sign of a value, as much as cattle or cloth? Is not money wanted to buy the land, to settle upon, to hire additional workmen for the great buildings, for materials and tools, of trade or science, to pay the tax, &c. &c.? Are not money or values to be borrowed in and out the society, a stock created, and an interest paid thereon? All this requires money or the equivalent, whence will follow, as in every other concern, financial scheme, book., accounts, &c. If a community does not sell to general society a sufficiency to pay taxes, interest of stock, materials wanted, &c.—How are the difficulties that will follow to be overcome, and money to be dispensed with?

IV. A great hollow square is proposed, as the most efficient and useful mode of building a convenient village? Why has not the square been described, and engraved? Are we to go to Washington, or New Harmony, to see the models thereof? The journey may be long and expensive. Let us have good diagrams, elevations and explanations of a single side of the square, and we may then judge for ourselves, even at a distance. How are the halls, kitchens, rooms, stairs, doors, windows, &c. to be distributed? How are the steam stoves, chimneys, pipes for conveying warm and cool air or water to be contrived? What would be the cost of such a palace or single side, if built by contract, or by the members? What are the superior advantages of a hollow square over parallel sides at a convenient distance, or hollow triangles, pentagons, hexagons, or octagons? How will the unevenness of the ground be avoided? Are the sides to have cellars and garret—two or three stories? What kind of roofs? Are they to be made incombustible, and how?

Such, and many more, are the practical details which many have wished to know and are now asking to be informed upon.

A MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY.

THE MUTUALIST.²

OR, PRACTICAL REMARKS ON THE SOCIAL SYSTEM OF MUTUAL COOPERATION

Mr. John Gray concludes his excellent lecture on human happiness by saying—“*We think that too many modifications of the same fundamental principles cannot be laid before the public, for out of each something advantageous may be selected.*”

Therefore it is to be hoped that the following remarks, may be useful in eliciting and evolving several practical modifications of the beautiful and benevolent scheme of Social Cooperation: altho' they may sometimes contradict come of the notions adopted in New-Harmony. Let us remember the sentiment of Voltaire

“Du choc des opinions, jaillit la verite.”

And since so many Social Communities are forming or contemplated, which all endeavor to vie and improve upon each other, future societies, if not the actual ones, may perhaps benefit by these remarks. The Constitutions of New-Harmony, Macluria, Philadelphia and Gray's Community in England are as widely different in detail, and merely connected by the fundamental principle of cooperation, and mutual reciprocity. One hundred modifications of the same principle may be devised to produce greater facilities, energies, enjoyments, security and happiness: or obviate difficulties and impediments likely to occur.

1st Remark—A violent and sudden separation from society is always detrimental to the public and the individual. Has it ever been calculated how much the removal to New-Harmony of all its actual inhabitants has cost them? And how many friends of the System have been kept away by not having the means to remove there. If 1000 individuals have removed to New-Harmony, some must have spent ten dollars to convey themselves and their property, others twenty dollars or fifty dollars or even one hundred dollars. If twenty-five dollars for each be taken for an average, twenty-five thousand dollars was spent by them merely to reach a place of cooperation. This sum saved and put into common stock could have afforded a capital for two or three Communities to being with any where. One thousand individuals at least have preferred to stay at home, or been unable to leave it, principally on this consideration. It is for them that the remark is intended: let them choose a place or places of cooperation much nearer o at hand, and thus by saving a great expense of removal, be able to throw more in common stock.

² Source: *New Harmony Gazette*. June 14, 1826; June 21, 1826; June 28, 1826; October 25, 1826; December 27, 1826.

2d Remark.—What need of a definite number of members in order to cooperate? why 50 or 1000?—Cannot 5 or 10 or 20 or 50 families cooperate also on a small scale any where, as easily if not as effectually, and by gradual additions increase their number? They can surely and by setting a good example to their neighbors of good intent and brotherly friendship, do much on behalf of themselves and social cause. If they cannot procure all they want among themselves at first, whatever they exchange or perform or produce is so much gained, and the rest they can purchase as if they were in general society. Let therefore mutual societies be formed every where, whenever there are several families willing to help each other, and thus form the nucleus of a future Community.

3d Remark.—Why cannot mutual societies exist in large towns, where are the best markets for labor, and in the midst of actual society? What need of moving or buying large tracts of land, building expensive palaces, at the outset? Why not put their property, skill, funds, labor and resources in common, rent houses and stores, live like brothers, qualify themselves by mutual instruction, establish schools, profess, and create all needful conveniences, until they can by their own labor create sufficient wealth to become land holders, great proprietors and manufacturers?

The money spent by Mr. Owen for New-Harmony, would have enabled him to start twenty Communities in our principal cities and towns. If land is required to make new settlements, there are now many great landholders who would be very willing to have tenants on such terms as Mr. Owen, to improve their lands and pay them a good interest. Several may even be found, generous enough to give their land for such beneficial purposes on any terms.

4th Remark.—It is the principle of human nature to be acted on by motives; whether they be circumstances or self acts which create new circumstances. Therefore motives must be presented to the mind for actions and exertions. If the idle, the slothful, the apathetic, are to be on a level with the diligent, the active, the skillful, these last who are the marrow-bones of society, will have no motives to exert themselves: since all their exertions would lead to support the idle in idleness, as now slaves do for the masters. It is vain to talk and write that we can not help in ourselves idleness or vice, because irresistibly led thereto, since we can when we are compelled. Let the compulsion be gentle but it must be efficient, or no reciprocal cooperation can ensue. Emulation must therefore be admitted in the mutual system, else all will gradually sink into machines. This emulation may be of rank or rewards or superior comforts. This, although denied in theory, by the metaphysicians of New-Harmony, is in fact the case in practice, since there must be *there*, superintendents, foremen, lecturers, &c. and the rewards of consideration, approbation, goodwill, facilities for comfort, better houses, &c. This is not said in rebuke; but merely to warn the future societies to avoid this inconsistency, which has already caused much obloquy, and never deny what is obvious and unavoidable. The benevolent men, rich in wealth or in talents and skill, who shall establish and help future

communities, ought to receive superior privileges and accommodations, and obtain, (willing or not) the thanks and praises of those whom they have benefited.

5th Remark.—The same reasoning applies to vice, which must be restrained and blamed in spite of metaphysics, and all idle notions in their origin. And this is done in New Harmony, I hope, whatever be its inconsistency with favorite dreams of the mind. Are not or would not the members be blamed, rebuked and even expelled, who should steal what has been granted for the comfort of another or wantonly destroy it; who should abuse and strike a fellow-member; who should poison or choke him with brimstone or tobacco smoke; who should become intoxicated with opium or alcohol, &c.? If this has never happened yet, it may happen, and the consequence is the same.

6th Remark.—Why should we hurt the prejudices, or infatuation, or habits, of the rich, the religious, the lawyers, and other actual classes of society, by telling them, you are useless, and we mean to teach how to dispense with you. This cannot be said in the pure spirit of genuine benevolence to all men. We ought to respect and conciliate all classes and opinions that are not vicious. The rich are to be invited to join us, and enjoy among us their actual wealth. The religious are to be respected, the free enjoyment of their worship granted, and any discussion avoided, or carried on with charitable equity and equanimity, &c.

7th Remark.—Lawyers are the rulers of the land, in this country of laws: when private strife shall cease, they will have to change their functions and become arbitrators, diplomatists, &c. Meantime they rule or have great influence, and ought not to be irritated. There are sufficient legal restraints already upon mutual property and labors and we must avoid to increase them by hostility. They ought rather to be consulted in transactions of moment, that we may not through oversight or neglect, fall under the lash of some flaw. We have promised to respect the laws, this includes those on property of all kinds, land, houses, patents, goods, &c. and the laws on inheritance, division of property, militia, trusts, conveyances, &c. and no one knows them all but those very lawyers.

8th Remark.—A pretension to absolute equality is rather a dream of the mind than a practicable good. It is acknowledged by all that we are not born alike both physically and mentally, and that no two individuals experience the same modifications of circumstances: therefore absolute equality is impossible and against nature's rule of diversity in all her productions. The man born blind, or deaf, or lame, or deformed, is physically different from others. We are born with different strength of limbs, propensities, sympathies, faculties and powers of mind, and then are daily modified by our food, education, exercise our own actions, and the reactions of others. Uniformity of thought and motion, cannot be produced by any circumstance or combination of circumstances, because we all act or think in a peculiar way under the very same events. Political or social equality is very different from this abstract absolute equality, and qualified by liberty of action, allowing of gradations of skill, talents, capacities, comfort, &c.

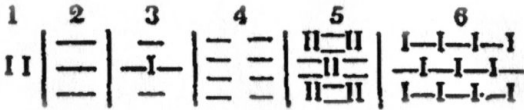
The inference is plain, we ought not to contend for absolute equality; but admit the law of nature, *diversity*, for a practical principle, wherefrom is derived the right of social equality in proportion to our powers and abilities to become useful to each other.

9th Remark.—Absolute toleration or liberty is likewise a theory, and not a practical effect; because it must always be qualified or limited by mutual reciprocity. Every individual ought to be free to think and act as he pleases, when he does not thereby curtail the happiness of others: else the absolute liberty to do good or evil, would be the liberty of a despot. It is even doubtful whether any one ought to be free to injure oneself, (for instance by intoxication or suicide,) if he is a useful and needful member of society. Restraints are therefore indispensable whenever an individual has the madness to do evil, and in the mutual societies, where no causes will exist for vice or crime, any one doing injuries, must be a wanton madman. We must hope that persuasion, blame, admonition and expulsion, will be as efficient punishments as confinement and murdering by hanging.

10th Remark.—As long as the mutual associations shall be surrounded by actual society, and people trafficking in land, cattle, goods, &c.: they will have occasion to deal with them, and employ a medium of exchange. When mutual institutions shall be so multiplied as to be able to deal in all instances among themselves, even then, they will want money, to pay taxes and postages: besides some medium to regulate their own exchanges. What medium shall be chosen, salt, skins, shells, &c. as among savage nations? or metals as now adopted by all the civilized nations? It is desirable that gold and silver should become merchandise again. In that case no other adequate regulating medium would be better than labor itself, and hours of labor might become the standard of value. This change cannot however be very proximate, and meanwhile an accordance of labor and money might be introduced, or a peculiar amount of money represent an hour of labor, according to the local value of labor.

11th Remark.—It cannot be too often repeated that the mutual system is no wise necessarily connected with Mr. Owen's plan of hollow squares, as he has himself declared, when they were ridiculed. His plan is the best he could devise with the help of actual knowledge, to unite economy, concentration, comfort, and beauty; but he has invited to do better if possible. Knowledge is progressive, and something may yet be devised as superior to the hollow square, as they are to a log house. Meantime let us build when we have the means or the leisure, *palaces* 1000 *feet long* as the sides of the square are to be. Yet they ought not in all instances to be put 4 together in a square; because this would produce dullness of *uniformity*, and nature demands in the works of arts as in her own *diversity*, with the addition of symmetry. These palaces may therefore be aggregated or grouped in any convenient symmetrical form to suit the ground, our taste, our convenience and our means. They may be put 2 or 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, &c. in parallel rows surrounded by gardens, or even form a town and city by multiplication,

each being 500 feet distant from each other. The following arrangements will illustrate this:



12th Remark—Mutual labor can be exerted in as many ways as individual labor, and with the additional advantage of unity of interest and cooperation. In the concentrated communities, gardening, agriculture, manufactures, instruction, and recreations, appear to form the circle of labor. But why are commerce, transportation, improvements, to be neglected? Mutual societies ought to trade (if not for profit) to exchange the exuberant for the needful. No company could better than they, build vessels or steamboats, pave roads, dig canals, and use them to run stages, wagons, lines. This would produce the threefold advantage of being profitable labor, of showing to the people at large how useful cooperation can be made, and to scatter everywhere the seeds of the mutual system. Moral, honest, and industrious mutual laborer, wagoners, mail-carriers, steam-liner men, would be admired and preferred. Tow-boats on canals and rivers, are particularly safe and useful; let the social friends turn their attention that way as soon as they can.

13th Remark.—Instruction is after education, the best mode to convince and ameliorate mankind.—Both ought to be used at the same time. The most efficient modes to instruct will be:

1. By establishing superior academies or universities of general knowledge.
- 2 By mutual instruction and lectures on all subjects.

3. By the Press. Academics and lecture may all be on the plan of mutual instruction; the most able and willing members may be monitors and teachers by turns. There are few who cannot communicate some knowledge, if it be merely the result of their own experience. Teachers of youth must have a greater share of self-knowledge and attainments: and may be considered as a profession. Good teachers will do much to establish a popular college; but another requisite is very much wanted to render education more generally attainable. It is cheapness of tuition and food. Now these desiderata can no where be attained more completely than in the communities. Ten dollars per annum, or one dollar per month, ought to be the utmost charged to strangers who should send their children to receive our mutual instruction. The rich may be charged one dollar per week, board, and the poor only half a dollar, or even nothing, if they allow their children to work some hours a day for us.

14th Remark.—The press deserves a few remarks. Gazettes, newspapers, tracts and books, cannot be too much multiplied. Let them be well conducted, impartial, devoted to human happiness and the mutual system, free of any

metaphysical or abstract creed, or at least without a wish to enforce one; but above all, let them be cheap and attainable by the poor. By mutual labor, paper and printing can be afforded for half of the actual price, and this alone is an engine of knowledge beyond calculation. A weekly paper of one dollar per annum, or pamphlets at 6 cents a piece, would be read by thousands, and scatter our views of human happiness, with useful knowledge, to the most remote corners.

15th Remark.—Combination and competition are the two great balances of labor or the power of production. Competition prevents and countervails combination, which leads to monopolies. The mutual societies will be combinations of labor; not for the purpose of raising prices, but to lessen them; or rather to render labor exchangeable. They will be able to work so much cheaper because free of clogs, charges and profits, they can afford to sell their superfluous labor very low, or even to give it away in pure benevolence. Therefore no one ought to be afraid of such combinations, except those who are interested in selling at high rates, or making great profits. For instance, a pound of physic sells perhaps for one dollar by wholesale; but, if you want a dose you must pay twenty-five cents; while the pound may afford 100 such doses, and therefore sells by retail at 25 dollars, or 25 times its first cost. Such is the absurdity and abuse of the retailing system. In the mutual societies your dose will cost you one cent, and so on for every needful article.

16th Remark.—Before the combination of actual trade, there is another kind which the mutual system will destroy: it is that of puffing reputation, whereby the man by cunning and the help of his friends can acquire a name, must be paid more than another for doing the very same thing, and no better. This applies to mechanics, lawyers, and almost every other profession. A tailor will charge 30 dollars for a coat, made by his workman, and the same coat in the hands of that workman, is only worth 15 or 20 dollars! A great lawyer must have a fee of 1000 dollars, and a petty lawyer will do the same business for 100, or even 10 dollars. None but fools it seems could thus throw away their money; but mankind are now a mass of folly. One must have a fashionable tailor in order to boast of it, and he pays double price for the boast. We shall avoid all this by estimating all labor by its intrinsic and equivalent utility.

17th Remark.—Mutual exchanges between individuals or communities, may perhaps require appraisers. These officers will have the task of equity to perform, and act as arbitrators. Their rule of conduct will be and ought to be based upon three considerations. 1. Time required or employed to perform a labor. 2. Skill displayed in the execution. 3. Intrinsic utility and duration. From the combination of these, every labor can be reduced to a standard of value. In some countries, and at a distance from markets or consumption, many variations will occur, in the value of some labor, which will be regulated by circumstances, and local wants or mutual calls.

18th Remark.—There are some habits which time alone can eradicate, and we ought not to be overjealous about them, when they are harmless, although they may consume additional labor. For instance, how can we hope to destroy

the wish of finery and pretty baubles in women, except by degrees? That innocent habit can be partly indulged, a few ribbons, or flowers, can satisfy it, as well as lace or gold lama. In general, indulgence and liberty could be safely allowed in dress; a neat shoe often costs no more than a clumsy one, a good coat is not dearer than a plain quaker coat. Therefore, each may suit their taste.

19th Remark.—But there is something of far more importance than dress:— it is food. Such food as we have acquired the habit of, or agrees with our stomach, is by far more conducive to health and happiness than any other.— Entire liberty should be left on that score, and a variety of food provided to suit all—healthy and delicate food, or even dainties, cost no more than gross and coarse food, and if they do, they save sickness and medicines. Some individuals prefer, however, this coarse food, and are fond of hams, bloody roast beef, smoked raw meat, cucumbers, pickles, green apples, and other indigestible bad food. Let them be indulged, but warned of their effects on health. While soups, jellies, meat and vegetables well steamed or dressed ought to be provided for those who value their health and an easy digestion.

20th Remark.—Next comes drink. There are an infinite variety of beverages. The sober and enlightened man will always prefer water, milk, wine, lemonade, cider, beer, syrups, &c. to every other. But let those be indulged who have acquired the habit of tea, coffee, chica, &c. As for all the alcoholic liquors, such as brandy, whiskey, rum, &c, it would be well to dispense with them altogether, for they are disguised poisons, but if habits are strong, let them be overcome gradually, and these liquors only used as occasional medicaments.

21st Remark.—The mutual societies must not fall into the mistaken notion or belief, that we live in the most enlightened age of the world, and that arts and sciences have reached their *ne plus ultra*. Nothing is more erroneous nor more common: how many think yet that after us the world is to end, or can no longer improve! Let us on the contrary admit that notwithstanding the wonderful discoveries of this age, there are many more in store for future ingenuity and enjoyment, Therefore we must trail with pleasure all present and future improvements, whatever be their nature, and encourage by all means our fellows to do the same, and follow the path of discovery. We must allow them some merit for the good they may do to us, in spite of metaphysical notions. At present the laws of the land grant them a reward, and we must devise means to make our regulations accord with these laws. Else every ingenious man who may achieve a great discovery or improvements among us would be *ipso facto* driven away into general society; by the very act of the good and useful mental and mechanical labor he may have achieved; since he would receive no reward (not even praise) for the benefits he may confer.

22nd Remark.—All recreations are innocent, which do not produce vice or unhappiness. Dancing is not vicious; it is as innocent as walking, running, or jumping, an agreeable and healthy exercise for youth principally; nay, in France and Switzerland young and old dance together. But if some should find a recreation in loud noise and screams, that would disturb the peace and quiet of

society, let them be restrained. Singing and music delight every one except a few who are defective in ears or may be sick; they need not attend concerts.

23rd Remark.—Breaking the Sabbath is a great scandal with Puritans. But the Catholic and Grecian churches do not deem dancing, nor singing, nor theatrical performances, a breach of the Sabbath; and why should Protestants dictate to Catholics? The Jews and Sabatarians hold Saturday to be the Sabbath. The Mohomedans hold Friday. We have chosen the day of the sun; but if any one chooses any other day or no day at all, who has a right to interfere and say you shall not follow your Sabbath, but mine? This question about Sabbath will only cease when we shall change our weeks and make them of five days, as they were once (or of ten, as the French did once). That a time of rest is needful to all, cannot be denied; but one day in five would be better than one day in seven. Or what will be still better, no days of public rest ought to be chosen, when four hours of labor daily will be amply sufficient to supply all our wants; since then we shall have a daily Sabbath, or rest of 24 hours.

24th Remark.—The credit we have received ever from the foes of the social system is, that all our communities would be so many asylums for the indigent, the unfortunate, the disappointed, the industrious with a large family, &c. Let us therefore render them such, and never refuse admittance, or rather invite at all times, all those and any other unhappy being, who wishes to better himself. We shall then become *benevolent institutions* if nothing more, and deserve the respect of the good.

The Mutualist has seen the reply of a writer in the Gazette to his Practical Remarks on Cooperation. This writer has done him injustice in suggesting that the moral aim and improvement had been kept out of view. Because the Mutualist had only touched some of the practical topics of cooperation, it ought not to be said that he had forgotten the others; but leaving recrimination, he means to enter at once into some other practical remarks, which may be extended again in time, and apply to all the aims of cooperation.

25th Remark.—It is a very unhappy *Circumstance*, that whenever any number of individuals congregate for any useful specific purpose, they will deviate from their moral and benevolent aim, to talk, dispute, or insist upon some peculiar exclusive *political* or *religious* opinions or notions, wherein they may differ, and which have no special bearing upon the good in view. It is desirable that means may be devised to change this propensity or circumstance, in order that no exclusive irrelevant notion may interfere with cooperation.—Why could not the subject be dismissed altogether?

26th Remark.—But since Mr. Owen is making his metaphysical theory of circumstances the *sine qua non* of cooperation, as much so as the Shakers make the separation of the sexes let him know that there are many of his friends who

think that by doing so he is becoming an *intolerant sectarian* himself. They consider that sectarianism consists in compelling and insisting upon any peculiar tenet, whatever it may be, while tolerance and benevolence consist in allowing to all the enjoyment or happiness of their private thoughts, on abstruse and religious subjects.

27th Remark.—The practice of Mr. Owen being contrary to his profession of benevolence and tolerance, will be a heavy blow to moral and mutual cooperation. His new religion being a sect of *Pantheism* and *Materialism*, and as exclusively intolerant as any other, must be deemed by many, another new aberration of the human mind.

28th Remark.—Yet M. Owen will have proselytes and converts: since if a man was to preach and compel his disciples to believe that the *moon was made of green cheese*, he would be followed by some, particularly if he had land and money to support his disciples in idleness and slavery of body and mind—of this we have many proofs in history. Mr. Owen is then the founder of a new sect, and not the benefactor of all industrious and oppressed individuals.

29th Remark.—The moral results of this new sect are yet to be seen. Many doubt whether compelling cooperators to abandon their religion, their liberty of thought, and their wives, can improve their moral habits. Mental Independence ought not to be a dictation, else it becomes mental slavery to a peculiar notion.

30th Remark.—Good men of all sects, or of no sect at all, believe or feel that men have always had the power to change their circumstances, and even their religion, whenever their mind and reason become ripe and able to choose between many. The new sect of circumstances or exclusive materialism, professes to teach and force the opinion that no circumstances have ever been changed by men, until now! or until it has become known that they can change them: while many believe that this has always been known, and acted upon by all the legislators and sectarians of old.

31st Remark.—The great plan of extensive benevolence announced by Mr. Owen, had gained him many friends all over the United States. These friends should wish to know what he has done to realize their expectations. Where have the square palaces been built which were to supersede all other buildings? Has even one been begun? Where are the gardens, conveniences, improvements, great machines, which were to provide for all those willing to work and unable to find a remuneration for their labors? What moral evils have been destroyed?

32nd Remark.—Has not Mr. Owen, like other sectarians, been more intent on inculcating his religious principles, than in organizing communities? But what are to be the moral ties of his disciples (or machines as some would be called?) A single rotten wheel, or cog, puts machinery out of order; many such rotten cogs will be found, or become such in time, and then moral evil will be produced as in any other sect or society.

33rd Remark.—The Mutualist does not look at the Owenian system through the medium of selfish society; but in the balance of good and evil to be produced, and he asserts with all benevolent minds, that to deprive men and women of

their religion, if they choose to have any; or allow a bad husband to discharge at pleasure a good wife, or a bad wife a good husband, *who do not wish to be discharged*, will lead to unhappiness, misery, discord, and many other ills in the selfish system; which would have been avoided by not mixing these notions with cooperation, to which they are quite strangers, but are introduced by a sectarian spirit, not calculated to add to the individual happiness of all.

34th Remark.—Has not freedom of thought and metaphysical tolerance, been partly if not wholly discarded in New Harmony? and has not a new mental thralldom been established instead, whereby all are compelled by the public opinion of the majority to believe, or feign to believe, that they are machines (and posts, as Mr. Owen has said) to be carved and molded by new modellers, under the penalty of being thought fools, or priest-ridden.

35th Remark.—Has not a physical thralldom been adopted in practice, where all are compelled to toil as slaves, for coarse food and clothes, and 10 hours a day, (while it was declared that a general decrease of labor was to follow immediately) under penalty of expulsion, &c.? And what is worse, why are many compelled to labor at occupations uncongenial and disagreeable to them? Is not this slavery? and worse circumstances than in selfish society? where any individual would for such drudgery and toil, be better fed, clothed, and enjoy many innocent gratifications besides.

36th Remark.—The observations of the Mutualist are not made in a spirit of hostility, but far otherwise; he deems to understand the Social System as well as Mr. Owen himself, who will be taught by experience that nothing great nor good nor permanent, can be done, even with his ample means, under a system of circumstances not better, but worse, and involving a mixture of intolerance, thralldom, servitude and immorality.

“A MUTUALIST” (aka “A MEMBER OF COMMUNITY”)

COMMUNISM

Mesdames Editors: How often have I said to myself, "Oh, for a paper of world-wide circulation, through which we could pour into the public lap the most important results of our lives' experience! That others who come after us may avoid the thorny paths that have lacerated our feet—may profit by our errors and successes. I hope and believe that your is, or will be, such a paper: and in it I propose to furnish a series of articles, showing the practical workings of Communism and other reform experiments running through the forty-six years devoted to peaceful social revolution; and it will be seen that some facts are more strange than fiction, more philosophical than philosophy, more romantic than romance and more conservative than conservatism.

THE MOTIVES FOR COMMUNISM—HOW IT WORKED AND WHAT IT LED TO.

ARTICLE I.

When Robert Owen came to this country in 1825 I listened to some of his sublime discourses and read some of his publications, from which it appeared that, unless some peaceful revolution could be devised, the working classes, driven to starvation by machinery and destructive competition between themselves, would be compelled to choose between death by destitution and an effort to save themselves by violent revolution.

He showed us that in Communism, instead of working against each other as in competition, we should all work for each other while working for ourselves. A problem that had been profoundly considered by the wisest of our race, but which had always baffled the highest stretch of genius. It appeared that mutual help would beget mutual sympathy, or social harmony. That labor would be reduced to two or three hours a day, leaving abundance of leisure for new enterprises and general improvement. That the jealousies and antagonisms between the poor and the rich would be at an end, and a fellow feeling would grow up from equality of condition. No more horrible crimes, or punishments still more horrible. No more children crying for bread. No more suicides for fear of starvation. No more drunkenness from despair. No more prostitution to escape starvation. No more wars about the profits in trade nor for the privileges of governing, for the government was to consist of all above a certain age. The business of nations would not be the destruction of each other, but a mutual interchange of services beneficial to each.

Sick at heart with the habitual contemplation of the frauds and cruelties of men toward each other, and the miseries in different forms that had surrounded me from childhood, all growing out of the crudity of our civilization, and seeing no hope of change, I had, at the age of 23, become willing to shut my eyes forever; but here was a new sun arisen! and my young and ardent spirit grasped at it as at the breath of life. Mr. Owen had become a new god to me, and I said to myself, now I have an object worth living for!

I was not alone in these views and feelings; several excellent people of rare intelligence and thoughtful habits joined in a project to start a community in the neighborhood of Cincinnati.

The next article will show how it worked.

I would gladly avoid the imputation of egotism, but for the sake of giving definite responsibility, and as simple truth works better than anything short of it, and to put myself in communication with readers, I give my name and place of residence.

Josiah Warren,
Princeton, Mass.

ARTICLE II.

Some facts are more strange than fiction, more philosophical than philosophy, more romantic than romance and more conservative than conservatism.

In my previous article I spoke of some of the motives for communism; and, certainly, no higher or more holy motive can possibly actuate human beings. We now come to the way it worked.

We had assembled with a view of organizing a community, as I said, in the vicinity of Cincinnati. We were in the best of humor with each other, and expectations ran high. After a little preliminary conversation, the idea of organizing a meeting came up; but who should call us to "order?" No one felt "authorized" to do it, and each one seemed to feel a modest objection to assume authority. At last, one seemed to think that, if anything was done, somebody must do it, and he modestly laid aside his modesty and "called the meeting to order," and proposed the appointment of a chairman. Of course, no one objected, and chairman was appointed, not without some embarrassment in selecting one for "the honor of presiding" where all were admitted to be equally entitled to it.

The first subject proposed for consideration was a name for the contemplated community. One proposed "the practical Christians." Another objected that there were some very good Jews with us, and he hoped there would be many; not only so, but this movement was, we hoped, to become world-wide, including all beliefs and all non-beliefs in natural co-operation and harmonious feeling; and it would seem contrary to this all-embracing brotherly spirit to adopt a name that would imply anything like sectism or tend to divide

us into insiders and outsiders. He said, it pained him to be obliged to say any thing adverse to what the brother had proposed, for we look for perfect "unity" in this movement. The other replied that we need not look for unity till all were willing "to stand up for Jesus." This is the first dash of cold water upon our kindling enthusiasm, and it was felt keenly by several who endeavored to allay the disturbed feeling by various remarks, all differing to some extent with each other; and the evening was spent without coming to any conclusion as to the name. If we came near to any one conclusion from the proceedings, I think it was not that "unity" that we had expected to see among us.

The next meeting was spent in a similar manner, but with the brotherly feeling somewhat diminished though no one could hardly acknowledge the fact to himself. At the next meeting we fortunately hit upon the experience of naming the community by the place of its locality, whatever that might eventually be. That being settled, the next thing was a constitution. A committee was appointed to draft one, at the meeting following, it was brought forward for acceptance. There were perhaps about thirty articles in it, and we found it impossible to agree on three of them that evening. In fact, we got into confusion. The chairman felt embarrassed, and the rest of us, (some at least) began to feel that this was not the "Unity" we had expected. Just in proportion as we desired to persevere this "unity" we hesitated to express conflicting opinions; some were consequently silent and their opinions were unknown even in regard to a measure with was to involve the whole life's destiny.³

At this meeting I said "Friends, we have certainly committed some mistake somewhere: I do not know where it is: but if we were right, there would not be so much friction in our machinery. I will go down to New Harmony and join Mr. Owen's Community. He knows how to do it. I will go to school to him; and when I have got the lessons I will report to you."

ARTICLE III.

I knew nothing then about Individuality. I had, indeed, heard that individual ownership was one of the great roots of human evil, and that Communism was to be the remedy. The idea of individuality being the germ of "intellectual anarchy" had not yet reached this country, where we were asleep like the man in the boat that was silently gliding over the cataract of Niagara. I had heard of the monarch who, in reply to a proposition to educate the people, said "he did not want learned opponents; he wanted obedient subjects." There certainly can be no "intellectual anarchy" where there is no intellect. The monarch was right in his conclusions from his premises: if one mind is to govern millions, these millions must have no minds; but, like dried herrings on a stick, their intellectual eyes must be punched out, all life must be extinguished, and they

³ These friends went on and organized, and moved out about thirty miles from Cincinnati—failed within a year and returned to Cincinnati discouraged.

must all be dried and fixed to one pattern. As I have said, knowing nothing about Individuality (as the great, supreme, divine⁴ law of order, progress and repose); I had plunged my hand into scalding water and suddenly withdrew it, and was now ready to plunge into it over head and ears.

I began to prepare for joining Mr. Owen at New Harmony, Indiana. Among my customers were some very good friends who endeavored to dissuade me from the contemplated step. One said, "Now, it isn't possible, is it, that thee is going to break up thy nice, comfortable home and business, and risk all in an untried experiment that may disappoint thee at last?"

"O, my dear, sir, it is because is untried that it requires to be tried. I don't fear that I shall ever want for business: and besides, in the present condition of things and people in general, life has no charms for me."

"But, then, how can thee succeed, when thee knows that minds differ so much from each other, they cannot agree, and how can they walk together unless they be agreed?"

"O, my friend, we must yield these little difference for the great general good."

"Well, I hope thee will not be disappointed, but I fear thee will."

Several other friends went over just about the same ground with me, and though I fully appreciated their kindness I thought my replies ought (in view of the public good) to overbalance their objections. My wife, too, a most careful and judicious woman, was as much in favor of the movement as I was, and I began to sell off and give away some of the goods in the store, and send other notions to be sold at auction, let my house for a year, bought a "flat boat" and floated down the Ohio river, bag and baggage, and reached New Harmony about the first of May, 1825.

ARTICLE IV.

We found New Harmony to be a clean, handsome village with substantial buildings, wood and brick, capable of housing about eight hundred people, most of whom had already arrived. There were very intelligent people from Philadelphia, Washington, London, Paris and other cities, all as enthusiastic as ourselves. Mr. Owen had purchased the whole of the Rappite community which had just left. In the town there was a woollen factory all in running order, a large grist mill, a little outside of town, twenty-eight hundred acres, I believe, of the best land well timbered. Mr. William McClure, a life-long philanthropist and "the father of geology in this country," with millions of money all ready to embark in the movement, with an immense collection of apparatus for model industrial schools, with a set of Pestalozian teachers whom he had met and engaged in Europe, paying them salaries from the time they started and their

⁴ By the word divine, I mean that which I not the work of man, whatever may be thought to be its origin.

passage across the Atlantic. A rare library of very scarce and valuable books, costing perhaps thirty thousand dollars. Mr. Owen had another and particularly a musical library, containing a copy of all the pieces that in London were thought worth having; and, what Mr. Owen playfully termed "a whole boat load of learning," books without number on the sciences and professors to match. I give these particulars so that our failure can not be attributed to the common explanation, "want of means."

We had a Constitution (of course) of perhaps about thirty articles, one of which was that all the members were to give their best services for the general interests; but we had no sooner sat down to the committee table and got a subject before us, than we found that we differed widely as to what would best promote the best interests of the society; and the more we talked, the more points of difference were raised (as usual) and we were obliged to leave the decision to Mr. Owen at last. Here was king and council at the very outset! This looked ominous, but I supposed it was the best that could be done in the crude state in which we found ourselves.

Everyone felt free to express any opinion he or she might entertain on any subject, without fear of a Bastille, or even of offence, and as there was a great deal of active intellect assembled there, and in dead earnest, upon subjects entirely untried, no wonder that we could scarcely find much "unity" of opinion on any subject that came up.

I am not now writing the history of the present time among Reformers, but of Communism in New Harmony in 1825. If one is a description of the other, the fact may help us in the end to a solution that will well pay for the study it may cost.

We could not get things into working order. The people, having no land of their own, could not set themselves to work, but must wait for orders from superintendent; and superintendents must be appointed by the committee, and the committee were not sufficiently familiar with the business to be done nor with the qualifications of persons for superintendents, and besides they were busy with other matters, equally embarrassing.

We now heard complaints of "idleness,"—a desire to "shun labor,"—but those complaints came from those who, having had an over share of labor their whole lives, very naturally would like to escape from it and have a little rest; never even suspecting that the subjects of their criticism wished above all things to be at work, not only for their own personal comfort, but for the sake of the cause that had brought them there. It was almost impossible to believe one's eyes when they saw two eminent physicians right from their practices in Philadelphia, the one in the harvest field, in the hot July suns, week after week, and the other, a young and light framed man, rolling logs the whole day long, doing more than the share of one man, among those who had done such work all their lives.

ARTICLE V.

Here we are, eight hundred of us, living mainly at Mr. Owens expense, at the rate of \$9,000 a month.

Economy was now the word, and the expenses of living were reduced to the lowest living rates. We had, as I said, a "Constitution," and this called for "Equality;" and one member who had not thought much upon such subjects, demanded an opportunity of keeping the public-house his share of the time, in order to get his share of the good things that were promised for visitors, and so persistent was he that a public meeting of the whole population (of legislative age) was called to give him a hearing, although it excited only laughter in some, and sadness in others, to see so noble an enterprise produce such results: but we had got a "Constitution" like all other Constitutions or rather, it had got us, for we were bound to carry out its requirements, however absurdly they might be interpreted; or else alter or abolish it. Very soon a meeting was called for public business, and it was proposed to alter the Constitution in several respects. Conflicting views consumed that evening without result, and the meeting was adjourned to the next day, and the next day was taken up in trying to make a "Constitution," instead of making food and clothing. After several days spent in this way, a great variety of subjects being agitated, the Constitution was altered (if not amended) but the meetings and conflicting opinions consumed day after day and week after week, and led to dividing the society into three societies or departments—the agricultural, the mechanical, and the educational. Here was a step toward individuality; but it was thought best as a step out of, instead of into, "confusion and anarchy."

Mr. Owen, believing that a uniformity of dress would have a tendency to allay jealousies and envy, proposed that the women wear what was called the tunic (what is now called the bloomer dress) and that the men wear something similar while aiming in this way to produce a feeling of equality among ourselves, he did not seem to think of the other fact that while this might bring us nearer together in feeling, it would drive outsiders further from us, when our object was not to build up a sect, but by including all mankind in an effort for harmonious life, to abolish sectism and clanship. This was the first intimation I had that my new god might possibly prove to be human.

We now began to hear of the failures of several community experiments in this country, and that of Orbiston in Scotland, managed by Abraham Coombe, who, after superhuman effort and intense anxiety, died of exhaustion and a broken heart.

Discontents among ourselves now began to appear in the succession of ten or twelve families from us, and going by themselves out upon the unsettled lands, believing that they, at least, who thought and felt so nearly alike, could succeed, but in a few weeks they returned to the main town defeated, but could not seem to explain why they failed. Then another little company went out, and another and another—in all, from first to last, ten attempts of this kind were made, each very confident that if they only meant well they would surely

succeed, but they all returned to the town disappointed. Now came the news of the failure of the "Valley Forge" community, and the Haverstraw, and others, but no explanation of the philosophy of these failures was heard.

Our expenditures were becoming alarming, when compared with the income. The charge of a desire to shun work was quite loud, and of course every remark of this kind was a very firebrand wherever it happened to fall. Mr. Owen proposed as a stimulus to industry, that each superintendent of a department should report his estimate of the workers under his direction, at the end of each week, at a public meeting. The working of this measure hardly needs illustration, perhaps, but I will give one. We had a young man there who had come all the way from Washington, (I believe), and who had been an apprentice to a jeweler. He was of a very delicate make and charmed even professional ears with his performances on the flute. He was in the agricultural department, and was ordered to go into the harvest field, and as might have been foreseen was reported as lowest, or almost or quite worthless. He was very sensitive and modest, and to see himself stamped all at once with such a reputation among us, seemed almost like a death blow to him. I felt deeply for him, for I loved him, but no words of sympathy and respect could restore his smile. We never heard his charming music again. We soon followed the first victim of our communistic criticism to his last resting place.

ARTICLE VI.

We had organization after organization, constitution after constitution, and rules and regulations, only to abolish them and replace them with others only to be abolished in their turn. A large portion of our time, day and evening, was spent in legislation in general meetings or conversation in detail but the fruits of all this were only more compulsion and doubt as to our final success. Our confidence gradually gave place to anxiety, especially as some of the most intelligent began to leave.

Mr. McClure withdrew from the connection, and the ownership of the town was divided between him and Mr. Owen.

Here is an item of instruction. Two of the best men in the world, with exactly the same objects in view, could not act in communism together, but were compelled to go back to individuality for the sake of repose.

Mr. McClure then sustained the educational department with his own means, and he spent. \$40,000 of his own money in three months, without anything to show for it (at least it was confidently so stated at the time).

One little incident will show how communism destroys harmony and friendship. In this department, one woman had been very low with a nervous fever several weeks, and shortly after she began to recover, some of the other women thought she was well enough to take her share in the washing and other house work, and continued to have this intimated to her husband; but his wife did not make her appearance in the kitchen, and some of the women agreed

among themselves to confront the husband as he came out of the dining room, and to tell him in positive terms that they were for equality, and unless his wife came forward and did her part in the kitchen, they would leave it, and anybody might do the work that had a mind to. "Well," said the husband, "my wife will not come, at any rate, at present, let the consequences be whatever they may."

In two or three weeks after this, the department broke up, and having returned to individuality, there was nothing between the parties to dispute about.

All organizations had now failed; and we had so completely worn ourselves and each other out by increased legislation, that we could not talk any more on the subject that brought us together. The question then was, what is to be done? A public meeting was called, at which an intelligent gentleman from London (Mr. Whitwell) got up and said, "We have done nothing for the last six weeks but to meet here and make constitutions, laws, rules and regulations and to unmake them—It is now the middle of May* and there is not a seed in the ground; and I propose that all of us immediately put ourselves under the direction of Mr. Owen for one year from this date." This was carried without a single word of debate or one dissenting voice.

Here we are, after having gone through every possible form of organization and government: we had arrived at anarchy, to be succeeded, as always, by despotism—that is, individuality in the deciding power: but it was individuality in the wrong form. It was the denial of the right of individuality in all except the ruler: this led to its inevitable consequences. In three weeks Mr. Owen, though still the best of men, was as unpopular as he had before been beloved: do what he would no body was satisfied: and one man watched the streets a large portion of the time, declaring that his purpose was to meet Mr. Owen and fight him.

Some young men got a coffin and a flag inscribing on it "The Social System" with the intention of having a funeral the next day and burying the social system after parading it through the streets: butt to save the feelings of Mr.

Owen some one or more broke into the room where the preparations **were,** (the night previous to the intended funeral,) and destroyed them.

ARTICLE VII.

THE MODEL SCHOOLS.

I must not omit to describe the model schools, sustained by Mr. McClure. They were conducted by the pestalozzian teachers before mentioned. One was conducted in one wing of the large town hall. There was a partition separating this from the centre portion, where I was when my attention was arrested by a few words that I overheard addressed to a class of boys by Mr. Darusmont, a

French gentleman, the conductor of this school. The thoughts presented to the public were so new, so sublime, and the language so charming, that I stood fascinated. I could not go about the business I went there for; but after having listened to the whole discourse, I resolved (though several years a married man) to beg of Mr. Darusmont the privilege of coming and sitting with his boys and listening to his teachings. I knocked at his door—he came—I made known my purpose—his handsome countenance lighted up and his eyes moistened with an evidently benevolent emotion, and taking my hand within both of his, he drew me within the door and gave me a welcome with a charming cordiality, in word, tone and gesture truly French. We immediately became fast friends.

The next day I took my seat with the boys, and for the first time in my life, I saw the true mission of education! No generalization that I can give will convey an adequate idea of the teachings of William Phiquepal Darusmont, so careful was he to put forth the exact truth, and to see that it was thoroughly understood—so minutely analytical; so profoundly philosophical in the smallest particular—such nice discriminations where common eyes see no difference, but the want of which so often proves disastrous through life! With all this minuteness his discourse was not tiresome; and though addressed entirely to the intellect, the effect upon the feelings was like that of a masterly musical composition; which, by judicious changes of key and occasional digressions from the main theme, and then by natural and easy returns to it, with slight variations of expression, carries us, unconsciously wherever the author chooses.

I was speechless with admiration—reverence—love! When the sitting was over and the boys gone to their work, we had a long conversation (if that may be called conversation in which I could only listen). In this and subsequent interviews I learned that he had, early in life, resolved to devote himself to what he considered education should be. That he had been several years a friend and coadjutor of Pestalozzi. It seemed that one great idea with him was to draw out into exercise the self-sustaining faculties and thus qualify pupils to meet any contingencies of after life; and with this view he had experimented with himself in order to find out the extent of human capacities. He had learned several branches of mechanism—made a piano-forte from the raw materials, had gone all through the details of cooking food, washing and mending clothes, as well as as cutting out and making them, and his pupils were now doing all these kinds of work for themselves.

He had remodeled the modes of almost every branch of civilization. He was the inventor of the instrument now used in many of the schools, viz, a frame with ten rods in it with ten balls on each for the better teaching of arithmetic; and he called it the "Arithmometer." In teaching geometry, instead of depending on words and lines, he had cubes, cones and every geometrical idea in wood, hanging up about the schoolroom or otherwise in plain sight. In teaching geography, each pupil had a little globe which he held in his hand to refer to. He had spent four years in one of the hospitals in Paris to qualify himself to speak

intelligently upon anatomy and diseases, and he discoursed to us on those subjects using a pig for illustrations, as the animal nearest resembling the human structure. I also understood, (not from him) that he was a most thorough musical scholar, and an exquisite performer. He had also digested a system of universal phonography, representing all the elements of all languages.

In short, he seemed, like Lord Bacon, to have taken for his life-long pursuit, the study and promulgation of all useful knowledge, by the shortest and most thorough modes that could be devised; with the great leading idea that "there is nothing too large or too small for the greatest to engage in, which has a tendency to mitigate the pains, or promote the enjoyments of the humblest."

Since his death, I have learned that he belonged to the French nobility: but no hint of the kind ever escaped him in our interviews. With all his wonderful acquirements, his unaffected modesty was strikingly conspicuous.

ARTICLE VIII.

As I before said, our experiments had come to an end. We had fairly worn each other out by incessant legislation about organizations, constitutions, laws and regulations, and we would no longer talk with each other on the subject that brought us there. We had tried every possible kind of organization and government, from political Democracy through every modification and mixture of all known political elements to anarchy, and then, of course, to despotism, and then, of course, to revolt—the old routine over again, excepting that we did not quarrel; because Mr. Owen had made it an habitual thought with us, that all our thoughts, feelings and actions are the effects of the causes that produce them, and that it would be just as rational to punish the fruit of a tree for being what it is, as to quarrel with each other for being what we are; that our true issues are not with each other, but with causes.

Many intelligent and far-seeing members had left, and others were preparing to leave, and an oppressive despondency hung heavily upon all. I shared the general feeling, and nothing saved me from despair but the idea that our business is with causes; and the question now was, what could be the causes of all this confusion and disappointment? What was the matter, when all were so willing to sacrifice so much for success? These questions led my thoughts back to our difficulties in detail. The first constitution bound every one to give his best services for the general good of the society; but we could not agree as to what would best promote this general good, and the more we talked and argued, the more we disagreed.

That phrase, "the general good," is a harmless and useful one, providing there is no necessity of agreeing as to its meaning. Why was it necessary to agree as to its signification? The necessity evidently arose out of our connected interests. If each one interpreted the word only for himself, the great diversity of views would not only have been harmless but might have been profitable; but

in communism, some one view must prevail over all Communism, then, was the root of the trouble here. The constitution also required every one to be industrious, but the word industrious is an indefinite one, and like all other indefinite words is subject to different interpretations. The teacher of music was busy all the school hours, week after week with the children, and in many of the evenings, teaching the use of instruments; suffering torture (of ear) all the time, and craved above all things to have rest in something to do out of doors, in the sun-light and air; but he thought he must be industrious for the good of the whole; while at the same time, the out-door workers raised a cry that this man's teaching was not at all necessary, they demanded that he should go about some industrious pursuit! So differently do we see, feel and think, according to our circumstances and experiences, and so incapable are we of judging and deciding for each other; and consequently are not adopted to live in communism, where there is no freedom to differ, but all must conform to some one idea or view of each subject as it arises.

The demand in the constitution for equality, gave rise to the demand of the clown for a chance at the good things in the public house. The idea of entertaining strangers, who came to enquire into the philosophy of our movement, was no part of his programme.

That word, Equality, is a very useful word, in some places; but in a constitution, binding on all, anti subject to as many different meanings as there are people to use, it can produce only the severest and bitterest of fruits. The case of the sick woman arose from the same source, the indefiniteness of the word Equality. On this ground they demanded her presence in the kitchen, when she was not able to sit up half the time. These women did not know her condition, but thought they did. This mistake, which made a wide breach between the parties, would have been entirely harmless, had it not been for communism, and the constitution.

ARTICLE IX.

In our educational department there was a gentleman of whom I was very fond, who took to going about the streets without any hat, and allowing his beard to grow to such an extent that, together with the effect of the sun on his fine skin made him look frightfully repulsive, somewhat like an ourang outang. Fearing that his appearance would give character to the schools (in which he was one of the teachers) and disgust strangers, I ventured to say to him as gently as I could, what I thought, that I was afraid that as strangers could only judge at first of our enterprise by externals, would it not be best to forego for the present unimportant peculiarities for the sake of getting the attention of the public for whose benefit we were working?

"My God!" he exclaimed, have I come three thousand miles over the Atlantic Ocean in pursuit of freedom to be dictated to how I shall dress!" I could say not

another word, our friendship was broken up and was never renewed, for he soon left the place.

Now, what was the matter here? It was Communism that was the matter. He and I both belonged to the same (educational) department; and I was not willing to bear any portion of the reputation that the school was likely to get, nor to have it suffer defeat without an effort to save it. In our connection we could not both of us have our different ways; the liberty he desired was impossible if I had my way, or mine was impossible if he had his; but if each of us had conducted a school individually there would have been freedom to differ without disturbance.

Another case. Passing by the blacksmith's shop, I saw him sitting on the bench talking, as he was in the habit of doing a large portion of the time. On my return, in about a half an hour, he still sat there, swinging his legs and talking as usual. I had business with him, and stepped in. Just then a young woman was passing over the green at a little distance. "There," said he; "now what is she there for, wasting her time; she had much better be in the straw room at work, than gadding about at that rate." Neither he nor I knew who the lady was, nor where she was going, nor what she was going for. I was shocked and disgusted at the rough impertinence of the criticism upon the young lady, and asked myself the question: What could possibly justify him in his own opinion for wild brutality? and I perceived that it was communism. He would probably say that having a joint interest in results, he had a right to look at and criticise any member's movements; and in communisms this could not be disputed and for the same reason I should criticise the position in which he had been for the last half hour, and where would quarreling end? It could end in nothing short of individualizing our interests—the abandonment of Communism.

My thoughts went back to many more instances similar to these, and in every case I could come to no other conclusion than that Communism was the matter, and that it was false and wrong in principle.

What, then, was to be done? Must we give up all hope of successful society? Or must we attempt to construct society without Communism?—for all societies, from a nation to the smallest partnership, are more or less communistic.

We had carried Communism farther than usual, and hence our greater than ordinary confusion. Common society, then, had all the time been right in its individual ownership of property, and its individual responsibilities and wrong in all its communistic entanglements!

ARTICLE X.

Had society, then, started wrong at the beginning? Had all its governments and other communistic institutions been formed on a wrong model? Was disintegration, then, not an enemy but a friend and a remedy? Was individuality to be the watchword in harmonic progress, instead of Union? I dwelt upon these thoughts day and night, for I could not dismiss them, and was almost bewildered with the immense scope of the subject and the astounding conclusions that I

could not avoid; but I had become so distrustful of my own judgment from our late disappointments, I resolved to dismiss these thoughts and these great problems to be solved by the wise, the "great" and the powerful; but I could not dismiss them. They haunted me day and night; they presented to me society beginning anew; I found myself asking how it should begin. It could not be formed or formulized, for we had just proved that we could no more form successful society than we form the fruit upon a tree. It must be the natural growth of the interest that each one feels in it from the benefits derived or expected from it. The greater these benefits, the stronger is the "bond of society;" where there is no interest felt there is no "bond of society," whatever its "unions," its organizations, its constitutions, governments or laws may be.

We had just seen that no bond could be stronger than that which bound us together till we commenced "organizing" and making laws, rules, regulations and governments. There was now no interest felt in the enterprise, no "bond," no society; but we were scattering as rapidly as possible, never, perhaps, to see each other again.

If the enjoyments derived from society are its true bond, what do we want of any other bond? "Oh, we want governments and laws to regulate the movements of the members of society—to prevent their encroachments on each other, and to manage the combined (communitic) interests for the common benefit."

But the movements of members have never been regulated; encroachments have not only not been prevented by laws and governments, but they have always proved the greatest of all encroachers and disturbers. Encroachments are increasing every day, the common interests have never been managed to the satisfaction of the parties interested, and there is no agreement among us as to what would best promote the common interest or what measures to adopt to that end. It was precisely these problems that remained to be solved which was our purpose in our late movement. It had been defeated by our attempts to govern each other, to regulate each other for the common benefit, the good of society, no two having the same view of the best way of Promoting the good of society, and no one retaining the same view from one week to another. We had not arrived at principles, and infinite diversity with regard to measures and modes was inevitable in the transitional stage. If we could fortunately arrive at principles, they would become our regulators, perhaps.

ARTICLE XI.

Infinite diversity instead of "unity" is inevitable, especially in the progressive or transitional stage. Then why not leave every one to regulate his own movements, within equitable limits, provided we can find out what equity is,

and leave the rest to the universal instinct of self-preservation?⁵ But what constitutes equity is the greatest question of all. It is the "unknown quantity" that even algebra has failed to furnish! One thing may be depended on. If all our wants are supplied that is all we want. Could we not supply each other's wants without "entangling" ourselves in Communism, and thereby involving ourselves in interminable conflicts and fruitless legislation? Could we not have a central point in each neighborhood where all wants might be made known, and where those wanting employment or who might have anything to dispose of could also make it known, and thus bring the demand and the supply together and adopt the one to the other? But on what principle could we exchange, so that each and every one could get as much as he gave? Here the idea of labor for labor (first broached in Europe) presented itself; but hour for hour, in all pursuits, did not seem to promise the equilibrium required, because starved, ragged, insulted and suffering labor would be shunned even more than it is now by every one who could avoid it; and the more respected and more agreeable pursuits would be overcrowded, and conflict between all would continue, and the demand and supply would be thrown out of balance; but as no one would be bound to follow any theory any farther than it best suited him, every one could make any exceptions to the rule that he might choose to make.

Estimating the price of everything by the labor there is in it, promised to abolish all speculations on land on clothing, food, fuel, knowledge—on every thing—to convert time into capital, thereby abolishing the distinctions of rich and poor; to reduce the amount of necessary labor to two or three hours per day, where no one would desire to avoid his share of useful employment. The motive of some to force others to bear their burthens would not exist, and slaveries of all kinds would naturally become extinct.

⁵ Freedom of speech here might have gone against "unity," but it might have saved the company from an expensive defeat and discouragement.

For the New-Harmony Gazette,

*The Substance of a Lecture delivered at New-Harmony,
on Sunday, May 26th. 1826.*

BY PAUL BROWN.

The great stumbling-block in the entrance of men's speculations on a community (so called) or a new system of society in which they promise themselves an enfranchisement from the hardships, the anxieties, the disappointments, in short most of the evils adjunct to their accustomed institutes and old way of living, is, that they lay their account with deriving their happiness from the identical sources peculiarly afforded by the institutes which they abandon. They seem to think they shall inherit all the pleasures, and the same *sorts* of pleasures, and none of the pains, adherent to the old constitution of society, at the same time that they reckon upon changing the very structure of society and constituting it on entirely different principles, being a new system of reciprocal relations of individuals. All this is frustraneous. This proceeds from illusory and inadequate conceptions of those principles. They seem not to have considered them thoroughly, nor to have investigated the reasons or the truth of them; not to have traced out their necessary connection with the conclusions to be logically deduced from them;—but, in making their inferences, they fall into error; and directly return into the dull circle of their calculations of individual interest in which they were educated. In consequence whereof, they remain incompetent to apply those principles beneficially to practice.

Those fantastical and illiberal enjoyments which are continually objects of pursuit under the old exclusive individual arrangements of society, and are there invariable stimulants of contention and envy, have no place in a pure commonwealth. All refinement of social enjoyment, must proceed from the cultivation of sympathy. That sort of pleasure which is derived from the idea of being thought superior to others in the opportunity or means of comfort, leisure, possession of costlier or finer clothes, furniture, more commodious habitations, &c. cannot be enjoyed in a community. Therefore the pride of appearance, pride of power, dominion, or influence, cannot have place in any persons that are fit members of a community.—Any such as have their delight in these things, cannot be sincere members of a community.

The essence of a community, is common property. All matters of possession are in a common stock.—There is a common inclusive inheritance of the uses of things by all the members, for supplying every one's wants and necessities—Reason being the constant guide of all appropriations; and the sole umpire in cases of doubt. All persons should be ready to yield to the decisions of reason. Therefore the young should be taught to reason. They should be taught moral

reasoning—taught to reason on moral modes and relations—the relations in which individuals stand to each other,—their comparative wants, views, capacities, feelings, duties, &c. They should not only be taught mathematics, geometry, ball-playing, card-playing, dancing, and fiddling; but they should be taught to reason, and that accurately; and to habitually *follow* reason. In a perfect community all transferable and impersonal things are held in common stock. All persons have equal privileges and opportunities of enjoyment. It is a community of goods. Now *some* goods may be common, and not *all*. Such is not an absolute or perfect community. In a perfect community, all sorts of good are common. All the goods in the community are common and equally accessible to all persons belonging to it, without a single exception: Whether it be bread, cloth, brooms, baskets, tea, wine, milk, land, houses, cider, or fruit,—whatsoever is produced or procured by the labor of the community, every one should have equal access to the use of it according to his necessities. Where goods are not common stock, of free and equal access to all, as reason points out their appropriation, is no community. Where one person holds part of his possessions to his name at a distance, another part at his residence, of things he does not need; where another puts in his whole estate into the general stock; where another puts in none of it; and where another, because he has no private property when he comes, and contributes nothing but his labor, lives poorer and coarser than others who were rich, is no community:—it is far enough from a free and equal community—a community of equality—It is a sort of *mongrel*, between aristocracy and anarchy. Where one has fine carpets, fine curtains, fine and gaudy clothing, fine furniture, fine bedding, elegant and commodious dishes and culinary apparatus, and another has but an iron cup to drink his water out of, rough tables, rough seats, coarse clothing, coarse lodging, &c—Where one eats eggs, cheese, butter, soups, and confectionary; and another has nothing but bread, and swine flesh;—in short, where the people in any one house live better than those in any other house, as to the quality or proportional quantity of their provisions; we find no such thing as a free republic—no such thing as a community of equality. Also; the people of a free community will participate of the products of their labor in proportion to their wants, whether they treasure any redundancy to sell to the world for money or not. If they can make cider, porter, or wine, they will drink it. If they deem it unhealthy they will not make it. If they can procure by means of their labor, nourishing and wholesome provisions, they will eat them.—Those who labor, ought to live *as well as any people*. If any difference, they ought to live *better* than those who do nothing. At any rate, they ought to have plentiful and nourishing sustenance, if the traveller is entitled to wine or strong beer for his money, he that labors in the community is entitled to it for his labor. For his labor is as good as the traveller's money. Money cannot be better than labor; for it can represent nothing more than what is produced by labor. Use can be made of money by a community in its incipient stage, to procure things of the world, which it cannot produce within itself: But *labor* is that which ultimately produces *every* thing; and it ought to have the

precedence. Those who do the labor that produces or procures these things, ought not to be excluded from the use of them: This were to muzzle the ox that treads out the corn. An enlightened and free people will not descend to be mew caterers to the gentry of aristocratical society, who travel and lounge about to gratify their curiosity; and for the sake of *their money*, crucify their own guts. He that travels the road, does not stand in need of any more wine, or strong beer, or other cordial and nourishing drinks or aliments, than the laborer that labors in the community according to his strength, towards procuring those things, and certainly he does not any more *deserve* them for his money, than the laborer does for his labor—because his money is of no more value, than the labor of him that labors. The member of the community that labors, as much deserves, porter, wine, cider, tea, eggs, cheese, or whatever is afforded to any one, for hi, labor, as the traveller, deserves them for money. I say, the laborer who is a member of the community, deserves, and is entitled to, every thing that is as good to eat and drink, as the traveller, who is not a member of the community, does for his money. If the majority of a community have that sordidness, to sell all the best of the fruits of their industry, and live miserly themselves, they are not free: and they never can be an intelligent and happy community. They lack that liberality of mind, essential to the invariable object of their professed purpose of the renovation of social institutes which is the highest refinement of social happiness. Few things are more odious to cultivated minds than *parsimony* and close avaricious calculations to get or save money. Who are they that will consent to live miserable and penurious all the remainder of their lives, in order that their children that come after them may *live well* when themselves are dead?—A multitude of grocers, shopkeepers, and confectioners, in our cities, have a bountiful provision of delicate and cordial aliments and drinks, which they keep to sell to customers for *money*, which they never set upon their own tables, but keep themselves and their households upon very coarse fare,—that they may acquire a hoard of money to pay the rent of their houses and maintain a splendid outside show of the fantastical satisfaction of living in a conspicuous situation in a populous city. Thus they are sure to hold in readiness for sale to those that have money, the most expensive and extravagant preparations of luxuries, at the expense of their own guts, and those of their households.

Something like this would be the character of a people who should make a point to sell all their most valuable products for gain, and deny themselves a reasonable supply to sustain the comforts of life. I have known some families allow themselves high feeding on Sundays when they did no labor; and on their working days live as coarse as dogs. Likewise when they had friends visiting them, they were found able to set before *these* the most costly luxuries; though at all other times their table was that of the most indigent people. I once sojourned at the house of a thrifty Dutchman, whose farm had yielded him a plentiful year's stock of cider; and because he could get eight dollars a barrel for

it in cash, he had sold the whole, and not reserved a drop to set upon his own table during the year.

It indicates sure progress in civilization, when the laborer lives upon the very best provisions that are afforded by the labor done upon the estate where he lives.

The people of a free enlightened community will not gage the character of the members merely by the visible effect of each one's efforts; nor by the quantity of their labor: but by their integrity, their stability, their punctuality, and their devotion to the general weal. Their comparative estimate of character will not be graduated precisely by the quantities of labor accomplished by every one in given times; but other circumstances will be taken into view.—One man is not able to labor as many hours in a day in some occupations, or perhaps in any occupation at all, as another is—and yet he may be as good a member of the community, notwithstanding:—and both are equally intitled to a comfortable living.—Nature has made one man strong; and another weak. The one does not merit any thing for his strength; neither does the other *deserve any blame*, for the want of it. Both the one and the other ought to be esteemed good members in proportion as they are *willing* to do what is in their power, consistent with the preservation of their health, to advance the common interest. Possibly, one man may not be able to more than four hours in a day; while another, having a strong constitution, can with equal ease accomplish ten hours' labor. Likewise the same person may be unable to effect more than one hours labor in *one* day, and on *another* day he is enabled to labor ten hours. The one requires as much clothing and nourishment as the other: and is intitled to them, by the law of nature. More particular regard should be had to the manner in which the work is done, than to the quantity; if a view is had to the estimate of character. The weak man is reckoned a good citizen because he is *willing* to labor whenever he is able, and to do what he can, to promote, in any way competent to his capacity, the general weal.

Furthermore, the children and all the young part of the population should be bounded and conducted in such a manner as to assimilate them to each as delight in order and tranquility. Otherwise, there will be less satisfaction than among the scattered settlements of general society. For a large number of young collected together in a small compass being clamorous, blustering, and boisterous in their movements must continually irritate the feelings of such as being studious and contemplative, are pleased with whatsoever is mild, gentle, regular, and deliberate. Such recreations as involve vociferation and obstreperousness, should be discountenanced. For if the children be, not only tolerated, but encouraged, in vociferation, violent irregular motions, loud and harsh speaking, "like the piercing of a sword"—fascination, horse laugh, &c., there will evidently be less tranquility than what is found to prevail in some situations under the old system;—and they not only disturb, but they go to form a class by themselves with contrary views and intents from those of the more experienced part of the society. For, those elderly sedate persons, of a

meditative cast of mind, who are mostly entertained in the pursuits of wisdom and virtue, are necessarily interested in having all things tranquil around them, in soft and gentle speaking, and amiable and humane deportment of the young:—whereas children and youth that find their habitual entertainment in noisy sorts of sport, uproar, confusion, and absence of all deliberation and reflection, have *their* interest in the company of those only who approve of such things and acquiesce in them; considering the others as enemies. Now here are two separate classes of persons with distinct and opposite interests. There can be no intimate friendship between these—little or no sympathy: for what communion has tumult with serenity? Here is a manifest discrepance of temperament. This state of things then, is irreconcilable to the idea of a harmonious community. The youth should have their education conducted in such a way as will make them necessarily and unavoidably find their evident interest in things that are propitious to this tranquility and unanimity of the society.

All those vain and trifling amusements which degrade the minds and misapply the thought of the young, should be discouraged, discountenanced, and suppressed.

We have several reasons why *card-playing* for amusement, should be wholly suppressed and driven out of repute, in a community.

1. Advert to its origin. *Playing-cards* were invented expressly for the diversion of a weak-minded monarch, to amuse his vacant hours:—They were invented us a recourse of amusement of (I think) one of the kings of England, in the dark ages, purely to relieve *ennui*, in the idle and heavy-hanging intervals of his dissipation and vanity. How very proper, then, to be used now to exercise and divert the thoughts of the free born sons and daughters of an enlightened people, (at the present stage of human science) which are capable of so much more elevated entertainments!! It seems to be paying quite too great a compliment to the imbecility and puerility of crowned heads, to perpetuate the use of these baubles.

2. It disturbs the tranquility of contemplative persons who disapprove of so trifling employments of the thoughts of their fellow beings, whereby they are excluded from all rational intercourse. It keeps the mind vacant, and regardless of the feelings of others, it leads on to clamor, and the keeping of late hours. I have known parents with their children sit round a card table the whole night; and with their scannel uproar, disturb the repose of all the rest of their household. Much more exercise of mind would be found in learning the grammar of their language, and perusing sentimental and scientific books, without intercepting the intercourse with intelligent persons, or giving offence. Even the singing of sentimental songs, is a better exercise than card-playing, and might with some advantage be substituted for it.

3. Every thing base, despicable, and immoral, is *associated* with the idea of card-playing. Wherefore it invariably suggests to reflecting minds, the most disagreeable images. The history of cultivated nations, ever since the invention of cards, constantly presents instances of the most frightful traits of the human

character, in a point of strong association with card-playing. Slanders, house-burnings, duels, murder, robberies, ribaldry, fighting, swindling, and every sort of disorder, have been somewhere immediate effects of *cards*. So that it is apparently a disgrace to refined cultivated society, by the inveterate odium of its *associations*.

4. It directly conduces to a deceptions and elusive turn of mind, and a habit of insincerity. But the people of a community should be sincere. It has been said, that, upon the predominancy of a community spirit, every one will aptly speak with the most unrestricted sincerity, exactly what he thinks. The card-table is a poor school of sincerity; for it teaches deception: and deception is insincerity. For the very essence of this sort of game, is cheating. The game itself (of card-playing) consists of arts and knacks of deception. Those who play, are continually exercised in methods to elude each other's perspicacity. Their thoughts are entirely occupied in expedients to mislead and deceive. How can a man cheat and deceive, and yet be sincere! Every moment the young are playing cards for amusement, they are learning insincerity. But if they learn insincerity, how can we rely upon their being sincere? How then can they be fit members of a Community? It is utterly irreconcilable to the principles upon which we profess to establish communities. In a perfect community there can be no card-playing.

5. It tends to a confliction of interests, those who play; and those who know it to be a trifling and pernicious employment of mind, and therefore necessarily despise it; have opposite interests. Here are two distinct parties opposed to each other,—between which, can be no reciprocity of good feelings—no friendly intercourse—the young that are always playing cards or poring over some frivolous romance,—and the studious contemplative *considerate* class, who are disturbed and contrasted by the prospect of such frivolity and contempt of reasoning.—The former are interested in clamor, loud talking, loud laughing, negacity, equivocation, and in having for their company only those who approve of, and look with complacency on, their trifling play, as feeling some degree of interest in it; wherefore they view with eyes of distrust and aversion, the *considerate*, whom they deem a sort of adversaries. The latter cannot feel *interested* in these things; but place their interest in tranquility, in having such around them with whom they can hold intelligent converse, in beholding mild, gentle, and humane deportment in the young, and in these young having due respect for experience. So then here are two great parties or classes of persons with detached and irreconcilable interests. But, in a Community should be but *one party* and *one interest*;—and indeed cannot be; else it is no longer a community. Such collocation is inadmissible to a community—it is in plain contradiction to it. Since then it is impossible that card-playing for amusement should exist in a perfect community, it seems fit, for these reasons, that it should be put out of countenance among those who are to form a community.

HOW I CAME TO BE A SHAKER.

GEORGE M. WICKERSHAM.

While attending the memorial service of Elder Giles B. Avery, Jan. 4, 1891, I felt impressed to ask myself this question,—How came I to be a Shaker? Why I was so impressed I cannot tell; I hope it will do no harm.

In the year 1824, while in the fourteenth year of my age, there was quite an agitation among a large class of people in relation to living a Community life. About this time, Robert Owen, the great philanthropist from Lanark, Scotland, came to Philadelphia on a lecturing tour, and advanced the principles and advantages of a life in Community. My father, at that time, was much interested with his theory, and I was highly pleased while attending his lectures. I thought I could see more happiness in a Community, than in the common way of living. The first time that I heard the name Shaker mentioned, was in one of his lectures. Robert Owen gave an account of a visit to Union Village, Ohio, where he spent three days. He was much pleased with some things that he saw among the people, and thought if the Shakers could live in Community, and in peace and harmony, so long as they had, he could see no reason why the society that he was trying to build up in the state of Indiana should not succeed and hold together, in like manner. He exhibited a model, showing his plan in the form of a square and enlarged for a village or town, to be built as the society increased. The arrangements were very complete; the model could be taken apart, and all the interior rooms and different apartments presented to view. The cooking and laundry establishments were placed in the center, and were designed to accommodate the whole square. Steam was to be used for washing and cooking, which was quite a novel idea in those days. But all do not see alike: some thought they saw room for improvement, and proposed starting a society nearer home, and making all the improvements that their wisdom could devise.

They looked for a place upon which to locate and finally concluded to settle at Valley Forge, the noted place which General Washington chose for his winter quarters; in the time of the revolutionary war. The price agreed upon for the estate was sixty-five thousand dollars. My father was one of the first to move his family into the place; and was the last to move away. The number of members belonging to the society was about three hundred. They did not all move to the new settlement but intended to do so as soon as buildings could be prepared. But as a house built upon sand has a poor foundation, so it was with the Valley Forge community. The fall of that society, however, turned to the upbuilding of Lebanon in some degree.

Abel Knight, a prominent member of our Community, saw a letter written by one of the western Shakers to a Quaker preacher by the name of Mott, of New

York, and after hearing of the Shakers, Abel could find no rest until he had made a visit to Watervliet, N. Y., and another to New Lebanon the following summer. When he returned he brought some of the publications of the Believers, "Christ's Second Appearing" and "Millennial Church."

But to return. I lived at Valley Forge about one year, and worked in the machine shop most of the time. My father concluded to start again in his former business, which was wireworking. He took me to the city, where I boarded nearly a year and looked after the business in the shop when he was absent. About the latter part of October, my father moved his family from Valley Forge to the city again, and I went home to live with my mother, brothers and sister. By this time, my father, being intimately acquainted with Abel Knight, had received from him some knowledge of the Shakers, and obtained some books. In the evenings he got the family together and read to us from "Christ's Second Appearing," or the "Millennial Church." I was interested on account of Community life, and I often felt sorry that our Community had proved a failure. One day, in conversation with my father, I said to him I wished he would let me go to Indiana and see Robert Owen's community. He replied, "They are breaking up the; they are scattering; it would be useless to go." I had heard my father tell much about the Society at Economy in the western part of Pennsylvania, founded by George Rapp. I had passed through the place myself when about ten years of age, had seen their large buildings and pleasant location; and I asked him to let me go and see them. He said, "They are all Germans. Their society does not increase in numbers and will not be what you are expecting." I concluded that I would have to stay where I was.

When about sixteen years of age, while in conversation, I told father that I thought I was about old enough to learn a trade. "What trade would you like to learn?" he enquired. I replied, to be a carpenter or machinist. After further conversation, he thought working among machinery would be most agreeable to me, and if I could find a place that would suit me, he would make no objection. Then I turned my attention to the finding of a place such as I had desired. By inquiry I found a situation within a few days which I thought would suit me to perfection. In the establishment of my choice, they manufactured from the heaviest engines to the lightest running machinery; and I felt that my chance for a start in business was about complete. I informed my father of my success and asked him if he would go with me and see the proprietor and make a contract of apprenticeship. He proposed going the next forenoon; and we went accordingly, to see the head of the firm. As there were no street cars in those days, we walked about two miles and found to my disappointment that the proprietor was not in.

The foreman, when informed of our object, was very obliging, showed us through the establishment and informed us that if we would call in the afternoon at 6 o'clock, we would find the proprietor in his office, as he would inform him of our business. After dinner we started again on our two mile walk. As we drew near the place, my father seemed to slacken his pace; while I was in

a hurry to reach our destination. When we were within a few yards of the office he stopped and observed "I have another thing in view. Before you are bound and cannot get away, if you wish to go to Lebanon and see the Shakers, you may go. If you only make a visit and return, or if you wish to stay until spring, do so. If you would like to make it a permanent home you may; but you must get the consent of your mother if you conclude to stay when you get there." I replied, I should like to go and see the Shakers, but I have not mentioned it to you because I received so little encouragement when I wished to go and see Owen and Rapp's societies. The evening was spent in visiting a Shaker brother who was in the city, and expected to stay but one day. He was the first Shaker that I ever saw. I intended to go home with him if I could get ready, but had not yet obtained the consent of my mother. From her I received a positive denial; it was "you shall not go." She had just returned from an experiment which had proved a failure, and was satisfied that a community could not hold together. I could not blame her feeling as she did, neither was I discouraged. The next morning I began pleading for her consent to go to Lebanon. I did not leave the house all day but kept on pleading till about four o'clock in the afternoon when she gave her consent. It was too late to leave the next morning which was Wednesday. In course of the day I learned there was a man in town by the name of John Shaw, who wished to settle some business and go to Lebanon. He would be ready to take the boat on Saturday at noon, and we might be company for each other. At the appointed time Abel and my father accompanied me to the boat to introduce me to John and see us safely off. Here disappointment again awaited me; John did not make his appearance. Then I was asked "Will you wait till another opportunity presents?" I replied, I have had such a time getting away from mother, that I prefer to go alone. I think there will be no trouble in finding the way.

In those days we could not go from Philadelphia to New York in two hours as we can at the present time. We left at noon, and arrived in New York about one o'clock the next day. The fog was so thick in the bay that we could not see the length of the boat until nearly noon. They rang the boat-bell every few minutes and finally we heard a bell ringing to the left of us. Our pilot steered toward it, and it proved to be a steamboat which had struck on a rock the night before and lay with its deck about one third under water. We took a number of persons from the wreck, but some chose to remain.

When we landed in New York I was surprised to see the same Shaker I had seen a few days before, expecting to meet John Shaw and myself; he had business in the city for three or four days longer and I told him I would remain there till he left for home, as it was my first visit and I wanted to see the city. I went to the same hotel where he was stopping and traced out a route, on a map of the city, which I thought would fill up my time in the forenoon to explore, and another for the afternoon, and so employed myself for three days. We then took the night boat for Hudson, here we found a team which brought us out to Lebanon.

We arrived at the North Family about seven o'clock in the evening and had a short visit in the Deaconesses' room with some who came from Philadelphia. I there saw a sight I never beheld before. Some of the Sisters sat smoking pipes with stems sixteen or eighteen inches long, and the room was so filled with smoke that everything looked blue. I suppose it appeared stranger, because I had never before seen but one woman smoke a pipe, and that was not more than three inches long. Thanks that its day has passed away to return no more. It was Thanksgiving day. (Dec. 12.)

After our visit we went to the Hill Family and stayed overnight. I slept so soundly that I did not awake till some one came to me and said that breakfast was over long ago. They gave me breakfast however, and I returned to the North Family and remained there twenty-five years. The kindred feeling and sympathy which existed between the members of the Valley Forge community, was with many, more than an outside show, or an internal selfish personality; it was a religious feeling that seemed to bind them together. When a few of them found something better than they possessed, they wanted those with whom they had been united to come and share with them.

Owing to this mutual interest, there were nearly fifty in this Society at one time who were gathered through the influence of one member acting upon another, and the Elders working with that influence at the right time. Eight of that number are now living in the Society after a period of sixty-three years, and within a short time the following have passed to the Spirit land: Elizabeth Justice, Jane D. Knight, Ann Busby, Sarah Woodrow, William Justice, John Shaw and Clawson Middleton.

Through the influence of Elder Richard Bushnell and others, I was persuaded that a community cannot exist merely by holding their land and property in joint interest, while in all other respects the associative members live according to the ways and customs practiced in the common course of the world; but all must come together and live as brothers and sisters of one family, and consider the happiness of others equal with their own. I had no faith in the confession of sin as it was practiced in the world. The custom was, to go to some private place and tell God that they were great sinners, and they hoped he would forgive them; but they never mentioned one crime they had committed, for they supposed he knew their sin already. As this brought no power over sinful desires, nor stopped the sinner's career in sin, I saw no good sense in it. When I understood that the object of confession was to bring the state and condition of our life to judgment through a living witness and to expose the wrongs and follies of human nature as they exist in us, to the light of truth, by an honest confession before those whom we believe have more wisdom and knowledge, or are nearer the fountain of goodness than ourselves, and are able to teach and advise us how to shun the snares and temptations to which we are exposed, I was satisfied and made up my mind to be a Shaker. Have set out many times since. Notwithstanding the many crosses and trials I have encountered, I have never had the first thought of turning back to find comfort and satisfaction in

the ways I had forsaken. By carefully maintaining my union and confidence with those who have been appointed to officiate as Elders over the spiritual interests of our family, I have been abundantly protected from the sins of the world and have also secured the union and blessing of my gospel Brethren and Sisters. In this I have learned the important lesson, that "Obedience is better than sacrifice."

It was during the days of the great outpouring of spiritual manifestations that an impression came over me which I could not resist. I sought an interview with Elder Richard Bushnell, who at that time was senior Elder of the North Family, and solicited of him the privilege to open my whole life, before I came among Believers and since. A corresponding ministration had occupied the mind of good Elder Richard, and he remarked, "I have solicited the same privilege of the Ministry, and after that is granted I will walk in prayer with you." Perhaps it may not be especially interesting to all who may read my simple story to know how this gift influenced my mind. After retiring to rest for the night, I soon found sleep had departed from me and my mind was actively engaged in meditating on my past life that no transgression nor deviation from the light of truth in my soul might escape my careful correction.

Now to return to my younger days. After living here about two years and a half, Abel Knight had business which called him to Philadelphia. The Elders proposed for me to go with him to be gone two or three weeks, and I accepted the offer. When we returned home to Lebanon, we found that there were sixteen of us instead of two. My mother had changed her opinion, and felt differently about the Shakers. She said she felt better satisfied with my being with the Shakers, than she did with the situation of any of the rest of her children and used no influence to persuade me to remain with her. But my grandmother wished me to remain with them and not go back to the Shakers, and as an inducement proposed to set me up with a good shop and a full set of tools. She also proposed for me to start by erecting a building for her, which she contemplated having put up for a dwelling. I was in my twenty-first year, and no doubt it would have been a great temptation, had not my mind been settled to spend my days among Believers. As it was, it had not the least effect upon me. I thanked her for her kind feelings toward me, and told her that I had made my choice for life and must return home. And this is

"HOW I CAME TO BE A SHAKER."

Those who were gathered through the influence of the Valley Forge community and have passed to the Spirit land are:—

John Dodgson, James Wilson, Theophilus Wilson, Israel Knight, Abel Knight, William Justice, John Shaw, Clawson Middleton, Deborah Dodgson, Hannah Rich, Margaret Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Sarah Knight, Jane D. Knight, Ann Busby sr., Ann Busby jr., Elizabeth Justice and Sarah Woodrow.

Those still living, are:—

Levi Shaw, George M. Wickersham, Anna Dodgson, Tabitha Lapsley, Maria Lapsley, Hannah Wilson, Elizabeth Sidel and Eliza Davis.

GREAT MOVEMENTS IN LIMESTONE, WARREN COUNTY, PENN.,

Is the heading of an article sent to me by Rev. A. B. Smolnikar, for publication in *The Present*, which I am obliged to condense, in order to ensure its appearance in this number. Mr. Smolnikar was born of poor parents, in Illyria, and was, from early years, witness of the miseries caused by civil and ecclesiastical oppression. As a Catholic priest, his attention was strongly directed to the prophecies, in which are foretold the coming of the era of UNIVERSAL PEACE, until his whole heart was filled with the hope of aiding in the advancement of the Reign of Heaven on Earth. Under the impulse of a strong conviction, that Providence is working in this generation to introduce the millennial period of Justice, Liberty and Love, and that he was called to minister in this cause, he came to America in 1837; published several volumes exhibiting his views of true Christianity, in which he taught, that they only are Christians, who, in imitation of their Master, are willing to apply all their energies actively, and if necessary, to sacrifice life for the welfare of the human race; and finally, for the purpose of practically manifesting these principles, assembled a band of fellow-workers, and went to settle with them on a tract of 10,000 acres of land in Limestone, Warren County, Penn., eligibly located upon the Alleghany river. The name of this Association is "Friedens-verein," or Peace-Union. They have now, it seems, about twenty active laboring men at work, and are expecting large accessions in the Spring. They are engaged in clearing lands, making roads, completing a saw-mill, erecting buildings, &c. They have constructed a machine on Mr. Etzler's plan, for pulling up trees by the roots, which they intend to apply as soon as the frost is out of the ground, and with highest hopes of success,—though the first experiment with it in October failed, in consequence of using wood in some parts of the machine where iron was needed. This deficiency being supplied, and other improvements added, Mr. Smolnikar seems confident that the "Satellite" will work wonders. They need only a larger investment of capital to ensure their prosperity, and at present are anxious to negotiate a loan, for three months, of \$5,000, for which they will give ample security. A writer in the "People's Monitor," Warren, Pa., uses the following language in relation to this Association:—"From the highly respectable character of its founder, as well as of the leading members of the Society, we are highly pleased with the promise of this valuable accession to the population and wealth of our county. We are highly gratified to learn, from one who has just visited the Society, that their prospects were never better than at present. They are well satisfied and in good spirits. A gentleman of considerable means had come on to satisfy himself about the prospects of the Society, and to make arrangements for himself and a number of his neighbors to join in the Spring. Of their success we have not a doubt; and their neighbors need entertain no fear of their

dispersing and abandoning the rich domain of which they have become possessed." I wish our noble hearted friends the triumph their heroic efforts deserve, and trust that their means will be at once sufficiently enlarged, to allow them, unperplexed and unincumbered, to carry out their improvements. Peace be with this pioneer band of the great army of Peace.

THE HISTORY OF MUTUALISM: Documents from the High Tide of Owenism

Josiah Warren's principles of individual sovereignty and cost-price exchange were a direct result of his experiences in the Owenite colony at New Harmony, Indiana. Though Warren himself hated labels, and mistrusted much of European socialism, his friends and followers recognized the connections between his work and that of mutualist anarchists such as Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and William Batchelder Greene—and Warren's thought and experiments have become, retroactively, an important part of the theoretical and practical heritage of mutualism.

Warren was, of course, working somewhat against the grain with regard to labels. The first half of the 19th century saw the coinage of many of the political keywords that we still use today. As it happens, "mutualism" was among those coined during the earliest days of Warren's career as a radical, and it was coined in the same context—on the fringes of the Owenite community movement in the United States—as Warren's own pioneering work.

This collection—the first in a series—brings together Warren's account of his time in New Harmony, and the series of letters to the *New Harmony Gazette* in which the first self-identified "mutualist" laid out their philosophy, with other documents giving a sense of the diversity, and some of the common ground, of the participants in the "high tide" period of Owenite community experiments.