

LIBRARY OF RATIONAL SOCIALISM

TO
M. P.-J. PROUDHON

ON HIS LATEST WORK ENTITLED

On Justice in the Revolution and in the Church.

Rationem quò ea me cumque ducet sequar.
(CICERO)¹

MONSIEUR ,

I have read, with the most scrupulous attention, your work entitled: ON JUSTICE IN THE REVOLUTION AND IN THE CHURCH. I saw there with happiness: that your premises made you my disciple; or rather, pardon, Monsieur; that your premises made you the disciple of science: the disciple of a man always belonging to a sect; and, science being the repudiation of every sect, as imposing itself equally on all individuals.

Here are those premises.

— “If man,” you say, “were *all matter*, he would not be free. Neither attraction, nor any combination of the different qualities of bodies is sufficient to constitute free will: common sense is enough to make it understood.” (V. II, p. 514.)

— You are perfectly right, Monsieur; one must be deprived of common sense to attribute liberty to matter; liberty, outside of which reason, morality, justice: can only be apparent; can only be purely phenomenal.

You also say:

— “Liberty... is exclusively human, incompatible with the idea of God. In this respect, anthropomorphism is no longer permitted; it becomes a contradiction.” (*Ibid.*, p. 517.)

¹ “I will follow the reason that leads me.”

— This is equally incontestable: with regard to common sense; with regard to science; with regard to reason.

From these premises you should have concluded that man, for his liberty to be real and not merely apparent, must be composed of an immaterial, that is, eternal, individuality, united with a material, that is, temporal, organism. And for this conclusion to be considered truly reasonable, scientific; it would have been necessary to prove first: that there exists in man an immaterial, that is, eternal, individuality.

Instead of following this path, which, I appeal to you, is the only scientific one, you deviate from it, by saying:

— “But man is complex: he is a compound of matter, life, intelligence, passion...” (*Ibid.*, p. 515.)

Allow me to point out to you, Monsieur: that life or movement is the essence of matter; that intelligence, according to you yourself, the intelligence that liberty presupposes, remains purely apparent, phenomenal, material: so much so that you have not demonstrated, scientifically, that intelligence is composed of an individuality, of an immateriality, united to an organism. As for the passions, they are exclusively the tendencies of the organism, the tendencies of matter. To this point, man remains exclusively material.

On the next page you say:

— “Such is man, a marvelous assemblage of unknown elements, solid, liquid, gaseous, ponderable and imponderable....” (*Ibid.*, p. 516.)

— All this, Monsieur, is essentially matter.

Then you continue by saying:

— “Of unknown essences, matter, life, mind...”

— Apart from anthropomorphism, which you repudiate, matter is eternal; what is eternal has no cause; knowledge of a thing is relative: to its cause, and to the reality of its existence; knowledge of that which has no cause is therefore limited to knowledge of its existence. Now, the existence of matter, of life, of that which modifies us is incontestable; therefore matter and life are not unknown essences, but perfectly known.

To this, and in the complexity of man, you add: MIND.

But, sir; the mind, which you suppose, is necessarily: either purely material; or purely immaterial; or a compound of immateriality and materiality.

If the mind is purely material; liberty, according to you, cannot exist. If the mind is immaterial; the reality of this immateriality must be proven before we can scientifically affirm: the existence of real liberty; the existence of more than phenomenal liberty. If the mind is composed of an immateriality united with a

materiality, with an organism; the mind, then: is a real intelligence; is a real man; and, humanity will extend: as far as intelligence.

Then, to the complexity of man, you add:

— “*Of unknown functions or faculties, activity, sensibility, will, instinct, memory, intelligence, love.*” |

— The function, Monsieur, is exclusive to matter. You understand that immateriality, simple in essence, cannot function. The *faculty*, not only apparent but real, implies: reasoning, liberty; and, according to yourself, liberty is incompatible with matter. Faculty therefore belongs exclusively to immateriality united to an organism. You see that *function* and *faculty* are as little identical as *materiality* and *immateriality*.

To the word faculty, you add *unknown*.

We have just seen: that, every real faculty derives essentially from an immateriality. We can even say that if the real faculty exists in man, which implies liberty, and consequently immateriality; there can only exist one faculty, the will; all the rest being: either, a property of matter or a property of the union of an immateriality with an organism, with a materiality. Intelligence itself, if it exists in reality and more than in appearance, is itself: only a property of the union of an immateriality with an organism.

If, therefore, there exist real faculties; they are immaterial, eternal; and, can only be exercised: when united with organisms. But, as eternals, they have no causes; and, in order to be known, perfectly known, it is enough to demonstrate the reality of their existence; but, also: this demonstration must be made, scientifically; before, being able to affirm, scientifically: the reality of liberty.

Then, you add to the number of elements of man: ACTIVITY.

Activity, Monsieur, is real or apparent. For a Greenlander: a clock is really active; a steamship is really active. In relation to science, real activity implies reason, liberty. Everywhere, where there is no real liberty demonstrated; science can see there: only apparent activity; only, function inherent in matter; as, in the clock or the steamship.

Then you add: SENSIBILITY.

Sensibility, Monsieur, is material or immaterial. If, it is material, it cannot, according to you yourself, serve as an essential source of liberty. If, it is immaterial, you can use it as a source of liberty, only after having demonstrated: the reality of this immateriality.

There is more: sensibility, whether it be material or immaterial; whether it be a resultant of forces, a resultant of organism, a resultant of matter; or, whether it be an immateriality; sensibility, I say, is necessarily: the basis of

reason, the basis of intelligence, the basis of liberty; because, reason, intelligence, liberty can only derive: from modifications of sensibility.

Now; if sensibility exists, in reality, across the whole series of beings; it is, in reality, a resultant of the organism, a resultant of matter. In this case, again, you cannot give sensibility: as immateriality, as a source of liberty.

To sensibility you add: WILL.

There is: apparent will, that of the steamship; and, real will, perhaps, which is to be demonstrated. The apparent will is only a function: a function, like the operation of the steamship; a function, like the eruption of a volcano. The real will, according to you yourself, can only derive from materiality; since, real will, implies liberty; and, according to you yourself, any collection of matter is incapable of liberty.

Then you add: INSTINCT.

Instinct, Monsieur, for every purely phenomenal being, is the expression: of the eternal laws of matter. The stone falls *by instinct*; the pear tree bears pears, *by instinct*; and, everything functions, by instinct, everywhere, *according to yourself*, where there is no immateriality; since, *according to yourself*, there is no liberty, there where there is only matter. Instinct, *according to yourself*, is the expression of necessity; as liberty, still *according to yourself*, is the expression of an immateriality united with materiality. If there is no immateriality in the monkey, there is only instinct; and, if there is no immateriality in man, reason, intelligence, liberty are only apparent there; and, with regard to reason, always *according to yourself*, there is only INSTINCT.

Instinctively, you add: MEMORY.

Memory, sir, is a *function*; or, it serves *actions*. For memory to serve *actions*, liberty must exist; and, according to yourself, liberty is incompatible with man being all matter. Before, having proven the reality of immateriality in man; memory can therefore only be considered there as a pure *function*; and, this is how the stone has the memory of falling; as, the pear tree has the memory of bearing pears; as, the dog has the memory of recognizing its master; as, man has the memory: of believing himself to be *reasoning*; of believing himself to be *intelligent*; of believing himself to be *free*.

If you are kind enough to take a look at my fifth volume of the work entitled: *Social Science*; you will find this explained more fully on pages 171 to 189. I even dare to ask you to do it. And, as my fellow student, under the rule of science, under the rule of reason, our common mistress; I am certain: that you will not refuse me.

To memory you add: INTELLIGENCE.

Intelligence, Monsieur, is real or apparent.

Real intelligence implies liberty. Intelligence, from *intelligere*, from *inter-legere*, implies choice; and, real choice implies liberty. Thus, before having demonstrated the reality of immateriality, in man; intelligence can only be considered as material; consequently: only, as purely apparent, purely illusory.

To intelligence, you add: LOVE.

Love, Monsieur, is exclusively relative: either to liberty; or to necessity; or to real intelligence, if it exists in reality; or to the organism, to matter, if intelligence is only apparent. Before having demonstrated the existence of immateriality in man; love can therefore only be, scientifically, considered: as a function, a passion; and, love then is exclusively material; like, the love of iron for the magnet.

Here then, is the group that you give as composing man, reduced, scientifically considered, to being exclusively matter; until, in him, you have demonstrated: the reality of the immateriality,

So, logically, your conclusion should be: *the negation of liberty*.

And, this would be in accordance with your doctrine. In one of your previous works you have said:

— “We are completely ignorant of what you mean by the words *soul, spirit, intelligence*.”

— So why do you use expressions to which you attach no specific value?

— “Philosophy,” you say again, “knows today: that all its judgments rest on two hypotheses that are *equally false, equally impossible*, and yet *equally necessary and fatal*: MATTER and SPIRIT.”

— *Matter*, or that which modifies us, is not a hypothesis. *Spirit*, as immaterial, is a hypothesis: as long, as the *hypothesis* is not demonstrated to be *true*. But, that is not a reason to affirm: that, this hypothesis is false. So, until demonstrated, you must only conclude: to nothingness of liberty. And, that is what you do, even before having demonstrated anything, by saying:

— “All of us, as long as we live, are, without realizing it, and according to the measure of our faculties and the specialty of our industry, THINKING SPRINGS, THINKING WHEELS, THINKING COGS, THINKING WEIGHTS, etc., of an immense machine WHICH ALSO THINKS and WHICH RUNS BY ITSELF.”

— This, sir, is UNIVERSAL AUTOMATISM; the NOTHINGNESS OF LIBERTY. And this materialist conclusion would be correct; if every conclusion, which implies liberty, were not absurd: within automatism.

Now let us see your own conclusion:

— “Now,” you say, “wherever there is a group, a resultant is produced, which is the *power* [*puissance*] of the group...”

— There is, Monsieur: *power* literally; and POWER figuratively. Power, *literally*, implies liberty; and, a resultant cannot be *power* literally, *according to yourself*; except in a group, where immateriality is included. Before having demonstrated, in man, the reality of immateriality; your resultant, *according to yourself*, cannot be considered: except as a resultant of forces, a material resultant; except as a power: figuratively speaking; but not, properly speaking.

— Pardon me, Monsieur, I will continue your conclusion.

— “...which,” you say, “is the power of the group, distinct not only from the *forces* or *powers*...”

— Again, sir? So you like to confuse: force, which is matter; with real power, which derives essentially, and, *according to you yourself*, from immateriality!

I continue.

— “...particular forces or powers,” you say, “which compose the group, but also their sum, and which expresses its synthetic unity, its *pivotal*, *central function*.”

— Yes, Monsieur; but it is a resultant of forces, not of powers; a purely material resultant, like the resultants of mechanics; since the group must be considered as totally material, until you have, scientifically and *according to yourself*, demonstrated its immateriality. Your resultant, from then on, is essentially: the expression of NECESSITY.

Let's see your conclusion! Here it is:

— “What is this resultant in man,” you say? “It is LIBERTY.”

— I defer to you, Monsieur, for such a conclusion; is it scientific; after having posed as premises; that liberty is incompatible: with anthropomorphism; and, with materialism?

From this theory of liberty, which you will allow me to call unscientific, you conclude that religion is incompatible with the existence of morality.

I will start from the same premises as yourself. I will arrive, by walking straight ahead, as Romiguière said, at a directly opposite conclusion. If I stumble along the way; please, Monsieur, be so kind as to help me up. What follows is the summary of my works, as regards the moral part of society,

“Religion² is the link of the ACTIONS of one life to another life..

² What follows was communicated to the *Revue mensuelle* with the title: LA VIE HUMAINE.

"For religion to have a real existence it is therefore necessary: that, in man, there really be ACTIONS; that is to say: that, what appear to be REAL ACTIONS, are not *pure functions*.

"What are, with respect to reason, the only possible judge for those who are not mystics, individuals with whom rational doctrine has no business; what are, I say, the absolutely necessary conditions, so that, in man, there are real actions, and not only functions?

"The condition, *sine qua non*, is: that there be, in man, a *real actor*; and not only an *apparent, phenomenal actor*, which is only the result of forces foreign to man.

"What are the necessary, absolutely necessary conditions, with respect to reason, so that, in man, there is a real actor, an actor who is not only apparent, and who would only be the result of forces foreign to man?

"There are two cases, exclusively two cases, where, in man, the actor is necessarily apparent, phenomenal, and is only the resultant of forces which are foreign to him.

"There is only one possible case for the actor to be real, and not merely apparent, phenomenal. If the creator God exists; if man is created; if he is the earthen vessel, of which the creator God is the potter; man, according to Saint Paul, according to Saint Augustine, according to most theologians, according to all philosophers, Descartes at the head; man, I say, is not free; in him, real reason, which implies real liberty; in him, I say, this reason is only phenomenal, is only apparent; he is only the resultant of God, of the being of beings, of the being then unique in reality; the rest being only appearance, only phenomenon. In this case, man is only a machine.

"If there only exists the *Matter* God; if man is the result of matter; man, according to all philosophers who have not been either mystics or hypocrites; man, I say, is not free; in him, real reason, which implies real liberty; in him, I say, reason is only phenomenal; is only apparent; he is, then, only the resultant of the *Matter* God, of the being of beings, of the then unique being; and again of an exclusively phenomenal being: *reality* belonging to real individuality; and, matter being divisible by essence, In this case, man is therefore still only a machine: as, in the first case, with an appearance of reason, with an appearance of liberty.

"In order that, in man, there may be a real actor; in order that, in him, there may be real reason, real liberty; in order that, in him, there may not be exclusively *function*; in order that he may not be exclusively a machine, a resultant: either of the forces of God; or of the forces of matter; it is therefore necessary, with respect to reason, that, in him, there be a real actor, an actor independent of the creator God, an actor independent of matter; that is to say: an ETERNAL, ABSOLUTE, IMMATERIAL actor.

“This real, eternal, absolute, immaterial actor; who alone can make reason real, liberty real; who alone can make man not a machine; let us call it SOUL, without knowing yet if the soul exists in reality.

“And, in man, what can the soul be; if it exists in reality; the soul, which alone can be the basis of real reason, of real liberty; the soul, which alone can make: that, man not be a machine?

"The soul, which alone can be the basis of real reason, of real liberty; the soul which must be eternal, absolute, immaterial, can only be sensibility, outside of which: neither reason nor liberty can exist.

“And, what is necessary for SENSIBILITY to be demonstrated, in relation to reason: being ETERNAL, ABSOLUTE, IMMATERIAL?

“It is necessary to prove precisely the opposite of what the so-called current science claims to prove, which makes sensibility: TEMPORAL, RELATIVE TO THE ORGANISM, TO MATTER; consequently, PURELY MATERIAL.

“And, how does the so-called current science, essentially materialist, as I have demonstrated superabundantly in my first volume of *Social Science*; how does this science claim to prove: that, sensibility is a result of organism, a resultant of matter?

“By claiming to prove: that sensibility exists, is spread throughout the entire series of beings. And, indeed: if, this proposition were demonstrated in a scientific manner, in reality and not in appearance; no doubt, that materialism was TRUTH. But then: farewell real reason; farewell real liberty; man, then, is nothing more than a machine; and, then, this truth would be: the nothingness of reality.

“Social science proves, in a rationally incontestable manner:

“That REAL sensibility exists exclusively in man; and that, consequently, it is: ETERNAL, ABSOLUTE, IMMATERIAL;

“That, consequently, real reason, real liberty, exists exclusively in man;

“That, consequently, there are, in man, REAL ACTIONS; and, that everywhere else, there are only FUNCTIONS;

“That, consequently, finally, real religion, or the link of actions, from one life to another life, can exist.

“Let us see: if real religion exists:

“The soul, or real sensibility, being: eternal, absolute, immaterial; being the *sine qua non*: of real reason; of real liberty; the soul, in its immaterial quality, cannot reason, cannot be free, except when united to a material organism, which can modify it, and receive external modifications; organism on which the soul can also act, in given circumstances; modifications and actions which constitute: real reason; real psychological liberty.

“Therefore, there are, in man, two tendencies: one, of organism or passion; the other, of intelligence; intelligence composed of immaterial sensibility, united to a material organism: tendency of reason. And, it is the power, for the soul, to choose between these two tendencies, which constitutes: liberty of actions, moral liberty. Outside of the immateriality of souls, there is therefore nothing possible, in man: only illusory reason; only illusory psychological liberty; only illusory moral liberty.

“As soon, as the existence of reason is scientifically demonstrated, to be ETERNAL; the moral order, that is to say, the order of liberty, really exists; and, the expression of this order is: conformity to ETERNAL REASON; which, in relation to the sanction of actions, takes the name: ETERNAL JUSTICE.

“Conformity, to eternal reason, is: that eternal souls, which can only exist in time united to organisms, pass eternally from one organism to another.

“Conformity to eternal reason, which then takes the name of eternal justice, is: that real actions, freely performed in reality, are punished or rewarded, according as they have been performed: contrary to or in accordance with reason, with the conscience of each; consequently: that actions which have not been punished or rewarded, in the life in which they were performed, are punished or rewarded, in a later life. It also follows: that all suffering or enjoyment experienced, in this life, result: from actions performed, contrary to or in accordance with reason, with conscience in another life; if they do not result from actions performed in this same life.

“This ETERNAL HARMONY BETWEEN THE LIBERTY OF ACTIONS AND THE FATALITY OF EVENTS, made scientifically incontestable, with respect to reason, is the demonstration: of the reality of religion; of the reality of moral order.

“The knowledge, truly scientific, of the reality of the moral order constitutes the annihilation of primitive ignorance: of the reality of reason; of the reality of right; of the reality of eternal justice.

“But, like order, SOCIAL LIFE, can only exist: based on reason, on right, on a justice superior to force, and consequently eternal; and, as this basis can only be: socially demonstrated as real by *science*; or, socially accepted as real, by a FAITH: as long as the demonstration remains scientifically impossible; society, that is to say the strongest in society are obliged, as long as the demonstration remains impossible: to suppose that reason, right, eternal justice exist in reality; and, to have this hypothesis accepted socially: by seizing education; by subjecting all instruction to this education; and, by basing this whole on an inquisition: in order to prevent the examination of the hypothesis; examination, which necessarily overturns any hypothesis: as long as a demonstration, truly scientific, does not transform this hypothesis into truth. Now, the annihilation of this hypothesis, as long as science does not demonstrate its reality, is none

other than: the annihilation of order, SOCIAL LIFE, that is to say: the annihilation of humanity.

“Printing, and the knowledge that it developed, came to destroy, socially, any possibility of suppressing the examination.

“Printing would therefore have come to cause social death, the death of humanity; if the anarchy that it must cause did not necessarily lead to seeking the means of demonstrating, by real science, what social necessity had obliged to be established: on faith.

“The *Social Science*, which I publish, is the exposition of this demonstration. I have, in this: only the merit of having occupied myself with it with constancy; and, during a long life. A thousand others would have done it as I did: if, like me, the necessity of this exposition had been demonstrated to them.

“H. COLINS.”

Now, Monsieur, allow me a reflection.

You have done your work to demonstrate the immanence of justice in man; and, scientifically, you have arrived, in spite of yourself, at establishing: the absence of all justice; the absence of all morality; absence of all liberty; consequences, according to you yourself, of man being *all matter*.

From this false science you have concluded: the incompatibility of morality with all religion.

I, Monsieur, have proven, *scientifically*, and in a rationally incontestable manner: I have proven, I say: the *immanence* of justice in man; and, equally proven: that, from this immanence, derived scientifically: the reality of religion.

It is to you, Monsieur, that I appeal, to tell the public: which of you or me is in error, with regard to the theory?

Your book is also titled: *New Principles of Practical Philosophy*.

You know, Monsieur, that in matters of social order, all *practice* depends essentially on *theory*; unless there is automatism; and, then, there is neither theory nor practice properly speaking.

Allow me, before I finish, to say a word about practice; I will be as brief as possible.

— “A writer,” you say, “whose turn of mind makes him little capable of philosophical work, but who possesses a singular agility of intelligence when it comes to reducing the jumble of current opinions to a lively and simple expression, M. de Girardin has taken as his motto LIBERTY.

“Liberty, with the talent of M. de Girardin, made the fortune of the *Presse*.

"Now, what does the famous journalist mean by this word? I asked him one day: he frankly admitted to me that he KNEW NOTHING ABOUT IT. Liberty, for him, like right, is a word that awaits its interpreter."

— At a time, Monsieur, when a so-called science, implicitly and explicitly, denies liberty, right; and, supports its negations on sophisms, the error of which social ignorance has not yet been able to demonstrate; do you believe that saying: *I do not know*, is not the *ne plus ultra* of good practical philosophy?

— "But," you continue, "there is one thing that M. de Girardin has perfectly understood: that everything in society has become doubtful through criticism, religion, government, property, justice, there remains only the arbitrariness of each individual, his good pleasure, his whim, and that such is the power with which the statesman must reckon."

— Do you not find: that this practical philosophy is the least unreasonable, in an age when we do not know: neither, if reason exists in reality; nor, if it exists, how to distinguish good reason from bad; nor, whether what reason says can have any sanction other than force?

— "Hence," you continue, "this original theory, which equates crime with a risk, liberty with insurance, the right to compensation, and which has not failed to win over its author with a host of supporters."

— But listen, Monsieur! When society does not know at all: if liberty; if right exists; when, in society, religion, government, property, have become doubtful through criticism; any social theory is as good as any other, as long as it can be supported by force. It is therefore not a question of knowing: if, M. de Girardin's theory is good; which is impossible, as long as doubt is not annihilated; but, of knowing: if, in the presence of the incompressibility of the examination, force alone is capable of serving as a basis: for the existence of ORDER, *social life*.

— "So," you continue, "this is what remains to us from so many and such learned controversies! Instead of the knowledge of the divine order and the conformity of our will to this order, the faculty of believing what seems good to us, and of acting as we please, except by reciprocal assurance: there is no other right for man, if we are to believe M. de Girardin, no other duty, no other morality, no other liberty, no other reality, no other law!.... O philosophy!"

— It is sad, Monsieur; but, as long as doubt is not annihilated, annihilated in a rationally incontestable manner; as, it is annihilated for the proposition *one is one*; as long, I say, as doubt is not annihilated: on liberty, on right, on religion, on government, on property, on justice; each one can only believe: what he pleases; and, can only act: as he pleases. Well! Monsieur; have you annihilated doubt? I have shown you: that, far from having annihilated it; you have changed it: into

negation. Alas! Monsieur; M. de Girardin's doubt is on the path to truth. But, negation!

— “And now,” you continue, “what is this final arbitrariness to which universal skepticism drives us? This good pleasure which constitutes our individuality, and makes up our whole being? This right of fantasy which remains to us, when all justice, and all truth have disappeared?

“Listen to this, good people...”

— We are listening, Monsieur, and very attentively; for it is a matter of the life of humanity: ORDER.

— “Listen to this, good people, who imagine that philosophy, like speech, has been given to man to clarify ideas, not to confuse them: this shameless runner that you religiously call free will, but against which the conscience of the people protests, religion fulminates its anathemas, the State organizes its forces, philosophy twists its impotent phrases, it is sin, always ORIGINAL SIN!...”

— Let us leave aside what is obscure and indeterminate in this paragraph; and see only what you accuse of being the source of M. de Girardin's errors, ORIGINAL SIN.

Would you be so kind, Monsieur, as to give me a little attention; as, I have devoted all of mine to you; it is a question, in connection with original sin: of the existence of the moral order; of the existence of liberty, of right, of duty, of morality finally. Let, this beginning not frighten you; I will speak: neither of the earthly paradise; nor of the apple.

The moral order is the order: of *liberty*, of *reason*, of *justice*; as the physical order is the order: of *necessity*.

The moral order exists; or, it does not exist. Take it or leave it; isn't this true? And with anyone who disagrees on the correctness of this dilemma, we must stop arguing.

If the moral order, the order of reason, of liberty, of justice, exists in reality; all punishment, all suffering is deserved. Otherwise, the moral order is an invention of force, to exploit the weak; if, however, outside the order of real reason, a real invention were possible; if, all apparent invention were not, then, the necessary result: of UNIVERSAL AUTOMATISM.

Is it true, yes or no, Monsieur; that there are a multitude of individuals, who, without having deserved it in any way, during this life, pass this life in suffering that is, so to speak, perpetual? The Book of Job, which I remind you of here, without attaching any importance of revelation to it, is the expression: of this truth.

Conclude, Monsieur: either the moral order does not exist; or the only existing order is *universal automatism*; or the individual who, in this life, suffers without having deserved it, was guilty in another life.

Do not forget, I beg you: that, I do not give this as a proof of the reality of original sin; but, as a necessary condition of the reality of the moral order. The proof, of the reality of the moral order, consists: in *the demonstration of the eternity of souls*.

– “Now,” you continue, “sin calls for repression...”

– Without a doubt; will you deny: sin; and, its inevitable repression; if, the moral order exists? I repeat the sentence.

– “Now,” you say, “sin calls for repression, INSURANCE, if you prefer.”

– What relationship can there be: between an inevitable repression, superior to all force; and a material insurance, exclusively subject to the sanction of force? If, M. de Girardin's assurance was never contested: as a derivation from original sin; it would be quite sure to triumph.

– “M. de Girardin,” you continue, “who speaks as an economist, reasons, basically, like theologians.”

– That would be true, Monsieur; if M. de Girardin's material security derived from original sin. But it does not derive from it any more than justice derives from force.

– “In summary,” you continue: “negation of all principles, of all morality: that is the theory.”

– I beg your pardon, Monsieur; but, M. de Girardin says: I DO NOT KNOW. And, to say I do not know whether liberty exists; whether right exists; is not to say: liberty, right do not exist.

– “Agitation in the void,” you continue, “without ballast or compass, without reason or goal: that is the practice.”

– Doubt, Monsieur, is only moral emptiness. As long, as this emptiness is not filled by the knowledge of the truth; in what, do you want, agitation to be made?

– “These premises established,” you continue, “organization of a general insurance, with courts, police, gendarmerie, centralized administration, and all that follows, of course, to serve as a counterweight to the fantasia, prevent risks, and repair losses: that is it for the government.”

– When, the government is doubted, relative to reason; it must, put itself beyond doubt, relative to force, under penalty: of seeing society perish, amidst the convulsions of anarchy. As long, as doubt exists, we must bless force, which maintains life for humanity; until truth, by the annihilation of doubt, can succeed it.

— “Such,” you continue, “is the system of which M. de Girardin one day believed himself to be the inventor, and of which the reader has just seen the genealogy. So, M. de Girardin, despite his motto, does as Hobbes, Spinoza, Hegel, and *tutti quanti*, he is, above all, *a man of authority, a statesman*.” (V. II, p. 500, 501.)

— But, Monsieur; in terms of social order, nothing is possible: except a man of religion, relying on a religious sanction superior to any force; and, statesmen, relying exclusively on force. Apart from, these two kinds of men, nothing is possible: but anarchy or social death. You have said, and it is the truth: that all religious sanctions, having existed until now, have become socially powerless, in the presence of the incompressibility of examination; there are therefore: only statesmen who can preserve the life of society, until doubt is annihilated. M. de Girardin, being a statesman, therefore belongs: to the only preservers, currently possible, of humanitarian existence.

Thus, the authority of force is the only practical philosophy currently possible, with respect to reason; while waiting: for the reign of reason to dominate force; and become: the practical philosophy of humanity.

M. de Girardin took, for motto, the word LIBERTY; and he said, what is true: the words *liberty, right*, await their interpreter, whose interpretation must be rationally incontestable, with regard to each and everyone. In the meantime; and, as there is nothing possible: but force; or, but liberty; or, but an absence of liberty and force more than ephemeral, leading to social death; I make myself a statesman, a man of force; and any means that will make force more than ephemeral, insurance or otherwise, will be mine. In my opinion, insurance is the best; let someone show me another that is preferable to it; and I will recognize it as such.

In the presence of doubt, which you recognize to be universal, this practical philosophy, does not seem to me to be worthy of disdain.

And you yourself, Monsieur, have recognized: how much doubt, negative doubt, doubt denying the possibility of knowing: if religious sanction exists; how much, I say, this doubt is horrible, unbearable and devouring the heart, For, in one of your previous works, you said:

— “THAT I WOULD RECEIVE WITH LOVE, THAT I WOULD EMBRACE WITH TRANSPORT, THIS CONSOLING UTOPIA,³ IF IT WERE POSSIBLE, I DO NOT SAY TO MAKE ME SEE SOMETHING OF IT, BUT ONLY TO MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE TO REASON.”

³ The eternal connection of lives, of each individuality, by the eternal harmony: between the liberty of actions; and the fatality of events.

— To SEE, through reason, the eyes of the soul; that is, to see with certainty. To SEE, with the eyes of the body, is never anything but a doubtful sight. This perception of other lives: necessary, for the happiness of each, since it is the basis of order, within oneself; necessary, for the happiness of all, because it is the basis of order, within the whole; perception that the false glimmers of theology and philosophy had made you reject as error; I have just made it evident, to your own reason, under the celestial light of incontestability. Please: receive it with love; embrace it with transport! May it make you happy; and, I myself will be happy with your happiness.

H. COLINS.

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