

LIBERTY



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GOD AND THE STATE.

EXTRACTS FROM UNEDITED MANUSCRIPTS OF
MICHAEL BAKUNIN.

TRANSLATED FOR "LIBERTY" BY "N"

Continued from No. 3.

Jesus Christ is right ; the conception of material riches and the salvation of immortal souls are absolutely incompatible with each other. And if one really believes in the immortality of the soul, is it not better for him to renounce the comfort and luxuries which society offers and to live upon roots as the anchorites did, and thus to save his soul for eternity, than to lose it for some dozens of years of material enjoyment. This calculation is so simple, so evidently right, that we are forced to think that the pious and rich bourgeois, bankers, manufactures, traders who are so extremely successful in business by the means we know and who at the same time always profer the words of the gospels, do not at all reckon upon the immortality of the soul for themselves and generously abandon it to the proletariat, whilst they humbly reserve for themselves this miserable material wealth which they accumulate here upon earth.

Beside material wealth, what else does Society give? Carnal, human, earthly affections; civilization, and culture of the mind: all of which things are immense from the point of view of a passing and earthly humanity, but which are as nothing in the face of eternity, immortality, God. Is not the greatest human wisdom folly before God?

A legend of the Eastern church tells of two anchorite saints, who, by voluntary isolation for some decades on a desert island, keeping apart even from one another and passing day and night in contemplation and prayer, finally arrived at the point of losing even the faculty of language; of all their former vocabulary they had only retained three or four words which, put together, had no meaning at all, but which nevertheless expressed before God, the highest aspiration of their souls. Of course they lived on roots like herbivorous animals. From the human standpoint these two men were idiots or fools; but from the divine standpoint—that of belief in the immortality of the soul—they were far deeper calculators than Galileo or Newton. For they sacrificed a few dozen years of earthly prosperity and secular spirit, to win eternal happiness and the divine spirit.

It is therefore evident that man, if endowed with an immortal soul, and with infinity and liberty inherent in this soul, is an eminently anti-social being. And if he had been always wise enough to despise all secular good things, feelings, and vanities, concerning himself exclusively with eternity, he should have never abandoned this state of divine innocence or idiocy*, would never have formed societies. In a word, Adam and Eve should never have eaten the fruit of the tree of science, and we should all have lived like beasts in this earthly paradise which God had chosen for their abode. But when once men wanted to know, to become civilized, and humanized, to think, to speak, and to use the material wealth around them, they had necessarily to leave their state of isolation and to form society. For in the measure of their proportion as they are *within themselves* infinite, immortal, free, are they *externally* limited, mortal, feeble, and dependent on the outside world.

The mass of mankind, regarded from the standpoint of their earthly existence—that is, their real and not merely fictitious existence—present such a degraded spectacle, such a melancholy want of initiative, will, or spirit, that surely one must possess a great capacity for illusion to discover in them any immortal soul, or the shadow of any free will whatever. They appear before us as beings absolutely and fatally determined; determined above all by external nature, by the configuration of the soil and all the material conditions of their existence; determined also by innumerable political, religious, and social relations; by customs, habits, laws, a whole world of prejudices or ideas which are the slow product of past centuries, and which men find before them when born into a society of which they are meanwhile, never the creators, being at first the products, later the instruments. Among a thousand men, hardly one will be found of whom speaking from a relative and not an absolute standpoint, it may be said that he wills and thinks for himself. The immense majority of men, not only among the ignorant masses, but equally among the educated and privileged have no aims and ideas than the aims and ideas of those around them. They no doubt believe that they have a will and ideas of their own, yet they only repeat in a servile, routine way, and with quite imperceptible and insignificant modifications, the ideas and intentions of others. This servility, this routine—inexhaustible source of commonplace—this absence of all revolt in the will and of initiative in the ideas of people, are the principal causes of the deplorable slowness of mankind's historical development.

To us materialists or realists, who do not believe in the immortality of the soul nor in free will, this slowness, however disappointing it may be, appears a quite natural fact. Starting from the state of the gorilla, man arrives with difficulty at consciousness of his own humanity and at realization of his own liberty. At the beginning, he cannot

be possessed of this consciousness, nor this liberty. Born as a wild and enslaved animal, he humanizes and emancipates himself by degrees, and only in society, which necessarily exists prior to the genesis of his ideas, language and will. He achieves his progressive humanization and enfranchisement only by means of the collective efforts of all past and present members of the society, which forms henceforward the basis and natural starting point of his human existence. Hence it follows that man realizes his individual freedom or his personality only by completing himself through all the individuals who surround him, all being due to the work and the collective power of society, apart from which man would doubtless have remained the most stupid and the most miserable of all the wild creatures existing on this globe. According to the materialist system (which is the only natural and logical system), society, far from diminishing and limiting the freedom of individual, creates that freedom. Society is the root; and the tree, with liberty as its fruit, is the result. It follows that man must look for his freedom at the end rather than at the beginning of history; and we may say that the real and complete emancipation of all human beings is the true and the great aim, the supreme goal of history.

The standpoint of the idealists is quite different. According to their system man is produced at the beginning as an immortal, and free being, and he ends by becoming a slave. As an immortal and free spirit, infinite and complete within himself, he does not need society. Hence it follows that if he forms society he only does so by a sort of degeneration, or because he forgets and loses consciousness of his immortality and his freedom. As a contradictory being *within*, an infinite spirit, but *externally* dependent, deficient and material—he is forced into association, not for the needs of his soul but for the preservation of his body. It amounts to real degradation and enslavement of the individual, who is within himself immortal and free, renunciation of, at any rate, a part of his personal freedom.

Well known is the sacred phraseology which in the cant of all partizans of the State and of law, expresses this degradation and this sacrifice, this first step towards human slavery. The individual who possessed complete freedom in his natural state, that is, before having become a member of society, sacrifices a part of this freedom on entering society in order that society should guarantee to him his use of what remains of it. To those who demand an explanation of the phrase, a retort is usually made by another phrase : — "*The freedom of every human being must have no other limits than the freedom of all other individuals.*"

Apparently nothing fairer could be said. And yet this theory contains in germ the whole theory of despotism. According to the fundamental idea of all schools of idealists and in opposition to the real facts, man appears as an entirely free being, so long, and only so long as he remains apart from society. Hence it follows that society considered and understood solely as a juridical and political society, that is as the State, is the negation of Liberty. This is the outcome of idealism, and we see that it is quite opposed to the deductions of materialism, which in accordance with real facts derives the freedom of individual men in society as a necessary consequence of the collective development of humanity.

The materialist, realist, and collectivist definition of liberty, which is quite opposed to that of the idealists, is this; — man becomes man and becomes conscious of and realizes his humanity only in society and only by the collective action of the whole of society. He emancipates himself from the yoke of outside nature, only by collective or social labour, which alone is able to transform the surface of the globe into an abode propitious to human developments. And without this material emancipation there can be no intellectual or moral emancipation for anybody. Man can only emancipate himself from the yoke of his own nature—that is, he can only subordinate the instincts and movements of his own body to the direction of his mind, which becomes more and more developed, by education and instruction, both of which are eminently exclusively social matters; for apart from society man would have remained always a wild beast or a saint both of which expressions mean nearly the same. Finally, the isolated man cannot be conscious of his liberty. To be free for a man, means to be recognized, considered and treated as free by another man, by all other men around him. Liberty, then, is not a matter of isolation, but of reciprocity; not of exclusion, but on the contrary, of combination, since the liberty of each individual is nothing other than the reflection of his humanity or of his human right in the consciousness of all free men, of his brothers, his compeers.

It is only in the presence of other men, and with regard to other men, that I can call and feel myself free. In presence of any inferior animal, I am neither free nor human, since such an animal is unable to conceive of and hence to recognize my humanity. I am myself human and free in so far as I recognize the freedom and humanity of all men around me. Only in respecting their human character do I respect my own. A cannibal who devours his prisoner, treating him as a wild beast might, is not a man, but a beast. Ignoring the humanity of his slaves he also ignores his own humanity. The whole of ancient society furnishes proof of this : the Greeks, the Romans, did not feel themselves to be free as men ; they did not consider themselves to be free by any human right. They believed themselves privileged as Greeks, as Romans, only within their own country, and so long as it remained independent, not subjugated ; and they subjugated other countries under the special protection of their national gods. They were not astonished, nor did they feel they had a right and a duty to revolt, when being in their turn also vanquished they became slaves.

To be continued

* It might be noted, by the way, that the words *crestism* and *Christianism* are etymologically identical; *crestum* in the *Gronde crestum*, in the *Pyrene* – *crestum* being local transformation of the older forms of the French *christen* – Thus *christ* and *Christianity* are somehow connected in the people's mind, the idea of this saint's and sickly innocence and abasourdy described by Bakunin being the connecting link between them – N.

KING GOLD.

By W. A. WHITTICK.

King Gold reclined on his lofty throne,
And his face was red with wine;
He laughed with glee, "Aha," said he,
"Aha, the world is mine.

The millions may toil in mine and field,
In store and factory;
They sow the seed and pluck the weed,
But the harvest is for me.

For me and the few who feast with me
And join in my revels gay;
We never need soil our hands with toil,
While I my sceptre sway.

Then fill up the cup, my jolly friends,
For a jolly crew are we;
We are all in luck, and can say with Puck,
'What fools these mortals be!'

APPEAL.

Oh, why do we worship this tyrant king,
And how does it come to pass,
That we bow before gold whose worth all told
Is eclipsed by a blade of grass.

NEMESIS.

King Gold reclined on his lofty throne,
But his face was blanched with fear;
For he heard the shout of the crowd without,
And knew that his doom was near.

On the millions of slaves the truth had dawned,
A grand awakening.
They rise in their might, and girded with right,
Dethrone the tyrant King.

Now he who creates may freely consume,
And he that hath plenty will scorn
To guard it with locks, to muzzle the ox—
The ox that treadeth the corn.

The drone and the usurer out of the way,
Humanity's heart will expand;
While wealth shall increase, and plenty and peace,
Redeem all this beautiful land.

PHYSICAL FORCE.

It was with the heartiest satisfaction that I read the letter of our Paris comrade disapproving of the resort to physical force now being made by some of our comrades on the Continent, and seemingly gloried in by many more here at home. Although not troubled with any maudlin sentiment against the use of physical force on behalf of our cause, and although believing that it will, ultimately, have to be resorted to before the established order of things can be overthrown, I nevertheless entirely disagree with those who now deliberately adopt it as a means of Anarchist propaganda. To me it seems incomprehensible how anyone can defend the recent explosions on the ground that they are helping forward the movement. It will hardly be denied that the theory of Anarchist-Communism, as a basis of Society, is practically unknown to the great masses of the workers, and, while they are thus ignorant of its meaning, I cannot see any useful purpose to be served by such acts. To let the workers gain their first ideas of Anarchy from a series of bomb explosions, having for their object the destruction of life, is not, to my mind, the way to impress them most favorably towards its principles or its advocates. Had we got so far in our propaganda as to have aroused the toilers to a sense of the injustice they are suffering; got them to understand the true purpose for which governments exist; had we created among them a desire for freedom and the hope of attaining it; then such acts of violence would, at least, have been understood by them. But, as it is, they are meaningless, and, therefore, wanton outrages upon human life in the eyes of the oppressed masses in whose very interest they were committed!

Is it then to attain this end, to make the workers—whom we are striving to win,—our worst enemies; to have our meetings and publications suppressed; to justify the malignant misrepresentation indulged in against us, and to have our bravest comrades lost to the cause by imprisonment or death, that we have adopted this policy of Dynamite?

Those who argue as some of our comrades are now doing, that governments only yield to force, fail to see the wide distinction there exists between those successful appeals to force which they refer to, and those acts of violence now being perpetrated by our comrades.

Wherever force has been associated with past causes, we know that millions of the people were as sincere, and as determined in their zeal for the cause, as the few who indulged in violence for it; and it is to this fact, and not to such isolated acts, that we must ascribe the concessions of governments. It should not be forgotten that while we,

as Anarchists, may be quite satisfied that mankind could get along much better without government than with it, mankind, on the whole, has not reached that desirable stage of confidence in itself as yet. And it is to the encouraging of such confidence in our fellowmen, by Anarchist teaching, that I think all our energies ought to be devoted.

JOE. BURGOYNE.

LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND FRATERNITY.

The Editor of the *Liberty Review* means by liberty something very different from what we understand by that word.

He believes in those possessing power, cunning, and position, being free to use these for their own benefit, irrespective of the results to those who happen to be without them.

He possibly may be sorry for them, but thinks it their duty to accept the position in which providence or fate has placed them.

He quotes Moneure Conway with approbation for saying he has no sympathy with the popular cry, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and that those who use it have not the faintest conception of what they really mean, that those who fancy these words have any related meaning are summarily dismissed with the dogmatic statement that they "are really and essentially very different," "that social equality cannot co-exist with liberty."

And why, think you? Because "people are unequal in abilities and advantages, and if free will seek the best society available to them; will associate with those who can exchange advantages; develop their superiorities with those congenial, not with inferiors." Thus, "legal equality is steadily attained; social equality or fraternity in any similar sense cannot exist in a free community."

The Editor says: "Here we have the assertion of an unpalatable truth to ultra-democrats."

We admit the fact of personal inequality, nay, we rejoice in this fact, and never expect to alter it, and do not want to. But we have also the desire for the best society, for associates with whom we might exchange advantages, develop our superiorities, *even develop our personal inequalities*. We still realize that at present this is only open to the few, we are determined to give it to all as a right. And how can it be done, except by the social power limiting the individually powerful and cunning from dominating their less well equipped associates?

We hold that personal inequality teaches us the need of social equality. And the present system of privileged classes, made legal by those in power, must be broken by the communal social power, which, when organized, will destroy the power of the present organized tyranny of the few over the many.

Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity are essentially the same in meaning. Brothers are equal in relation to their Parent, who is their Superior. Men are equal, so children, when come to man's estate, are equal to their parents, they become free of Parental control. So we desire and intend to grow out of servitude to our masters, and are determined to be free. This only can be, when the social power destroys individual or class rule.

Personal inequality, then, is the true basis upon which Social Equality is built. The patent evils of Privileged Inequality are the cause producing the desire for Social Equality. By this alone is Liberty for all possible.

The Condition of the Masses.

There was an increase of wages averaging 50 per cent. from 1840 to 1880, but since the latter year much of that advance has been lost. Wages are nominally as high now as in 1880, but the number of men working full time is less. The actual earnings may be stated thus:

	1840	1880	1886
	Shillings per week		
Blacksmith	21	32	27
Mason	23	35	29
Carpenter	20	30	25
Plumber	22	35	29
Average	22	33	27

After making all deductions we find the working-man earns 20 or 25 per cent. more than in 1840, and the prices of necessities have mostly fallen. These advantages are counterbalanced by the rise in rent, for whereas house-property in 1840 averaged a value of £30 per inhabitant it now stands for £75, a proof that rents have risen exactly 150 per cent. —MULHALL, "Fifty Years' National Progress."

The Moral Frontier.

Why do you kill me? What! do you not live on the other side of the water? My friend, if you lived on this side, I should be an assassin, and it would be unjust to kill you; but since you live on the other side, I am a brave man, and it is just. —B. PASCAL.

A Usurpation of Function.

JUDGE.—"You have been caught stealing goods from a window."

PRISONER.—"I did not steal."

JUDGE.—"Why lie?—(after a pause)—you have a lawyer."

WHY I AM AN ANARCHIST.

By W. A. WHITTICK.

You wish me to tell you why I am an Individualist-Anarchist. I take exception to the caption, preferring, simply, "Why I am an Anarchist." Individualist-Anarchist is to me tautological, as Communist-Anarchist is contradictory.

Individualism and Anarchism are synonymous, both asserting the sovereignty of the individual—the autonomy of self. Each man his own autocrat! Communism is the sovereignty of the commune. Individualism is the natural boundary of authority. Outside of the individual, authority is invasion.

I am an Individualist because I have a profound respect for myself, and a respect, equally profound, for my neighbor.

From time immemorial human beings have been the victims of two invasive forces. Firstly, the force that openly defies right with might. Secondly, the force that invades under a solicitude, real or assumed, for the welfare of the invaded, under a mangled rendition of the golden rule. The former finds its area narrowing in the face of growing love of justice. The latter is expanding its area of pernicious meddlesomeness, and the poor individual withers in the embrace of unsought affection. From the maudlin dream of invasive Socialism, to the edict of the autocrat, the same (superficial at least) desire for his welfare threatens the individual, and he is forced to swallow nauseous prescriptions, in the shape of laws and taxes, for the public welfare, public credit, national honor, etc., with the result that the individual welfare, individual credit, individual honor, etc., are banished for miserable abstractions, which pamper the commonplace and feed the bull-dog propensities of virtuous bigots.

As an Individualist I protest against this invasion of my Ego. I write upon my forehead, "No trespassers allowed."—I say to the invasive golden-rulists, "Mind your own business."

As an Individualist my thoughts are "Murder to the State," for I behold with terrible distinctness the crimes of legislation.

The monopoly of natural opportunity, natural *capital*, (land), the monopoly of the medium of exchange (money) are both creations of law. Their offspring are poverty and crime.

Legal restrictions of social relations breed prostitution and its resultant pestilence, which is sapping the vitals of the human race.

And from this State, this Pandora's Box, from which even Hope has fled, huge systems of debt, taxation, and officialism proceed, which can only be overthrown by violence, because, inevitably, *reigns of injustice precipitate reigns of terror*.

And when the Goliath of Government asks me, "Do you believe in force?" I reply with poor Lingg, "if they use cannons against us, we will use dynamite against them."

This appears to me eminently fair, and I rejoice that science has not overlooked the poor Individualist in her dispensations, but has armed him with a weapon, with which, one man is as ten thousand.

Oh, Goliath, backed by army, navy, police, judge, sheriff, and hangman, you are the incarnation of violence, and it is written, "They that use the sword shall perish by the sword."

It is *you* who render a peaceful solution of social problems impossible.

Carthage must be destroyed!

The State must go!

In its place will come free association of free individuals for the common weal.

Liberty is the mother of order.

Property, or that part of wealth which now exploits its producers, will naturally cease, will be impossible under freedom.

Property (now called capital) is the product of inequitable contract between man and man. Render equitable contract possible, and property vanishes to make room for equality.

Anarchist-Communism overlooks the above fact, and goes further than freedom, becoming *invasion*.

It says that "all belongs to everyone"—because all wealth is the product of the labor of past and present generations. But as the product of the past would be open to each and all in the present, some may neglect these stores of wealth and wisdom; while others, with infinite pains, may adapt them to present purposes for humanity's and their own good. Shall the drone share with the worker? The producer is entitled to his product.

Besides, Communism necessitates administrators, and administration breeds government, from which "inevitable hell" we seek permanent deliverance.

Anarchy thus becomes the exponent of just ownership, and its only guarantor.

Thus, as an Individualist, repudiating the government of man by man, and asserting my autocracy, the autonomy of self—I say to all good-intentioned and evil-intentioned, as Diogenes said to Alexander, "Get out of my sunlight!"

Every man his own autocrat!

Tyranny's Hatred of Thought.

It troubles the church people, in all countries, to think that men have eyes; they would like to be at the head of a society of blind men. But it is more honorable to be approved by men who reason than to dominate over people who do not think.—VOLTAIRE.

SOCIALISM AND INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

By TOUZEAU PARRIS.

These words are usually understood as representing antagonistic principles at work in modern Society. And by many who pride themselves upon carrying out their principles to their logical conclusions as mutually exclusive one of the other. But men are influenced both by love of personal freedom and a strong desire for association.

Now these diverse views held by Anarchists and Communists depend largely upon their individual tendency, being either towards the benefits derivable from the one or the other principle.

The Anarchists making most of Liberty.

The Communists of the benefits of Association, both see the evils of the present system, seek its overthrow, and want something better in its place.

They differ mostly as to the means likely to bring about their desires. Their methods have been defined as Evolutionary and Revolutionary. These terms apply equally to Anarchists and Communists.

Class governments, or rather the patent evils of class governments, have generated both Anarchism and Communism.

The earlier forms of Communism were imperfect attempts to modify Social Inequality by very limited attempts at co-operation. The later form is the definite purpose of seizing the governmental machine; because Communists realise the futility of all small attempts against the organised forces of class governments.

The Communists have concentrated their minds and efforts more distinctly towards the material improvement of the masses—their housing, clothing, feeding; and, probably from association and habit, ordered their scheme too much upon the military, or master and ser

vant style, too suit the spirit of the growing democracy. This has led some to fear that the rule of the majority might be as tyrannous, as other forms of Governments have been; certainly, there is the possibility, but not probability, that this may be so.

The Anarchist says that Government, in every form must tend to tyranny, there is truth in this assertion.

The Individualist says that Communism must be tyrannical; we are not so sure this is the case.

Does it necessarily follow, because past and present forms of Personal, Oligarchic, and class governments have been tyrannical, therefore all forms of governments in the future must also be tyrannical?

Has our experience of Individualism, proved liberty to be an evil? We think not.

The present Individualistic Society, yields liberty only to some few, but entails slavery upon the many.

It may be objected that as yet we have never had an example of true Individualism, because the social and legal restrictions from the dead past, fetter the present too much, for the manifestation of the best form of Individualism, we readily admit.

The Anarchists demand liberty for all, not for some.

Communists and Collectivists, most certainly desire and work for liberty as much as Anarchists.

They do not talk so much about liberty, but certainly their efforts tend decidedly in this direction. Both want the same things, the destruction of privileges, equality of opportunity, and surely this is the true way to Liberty.

Their differences are rather that of method. The Anarchist would destroy all forms of government, and leave the people to settle down anyhow; to form voluntary associations or not, just as each individual chooses, thinking that circumstances and natural tendencies will lead to associations only of the useful kind.

The Collectivist perceives the present power of the governing few is through organisation, and supposing the present governments were destroyed, that without organisation, Society would become the prey of any and every ambitious adventurer, who would and could use the ignorant for his purpose.

Vagaries and excesses manifested by the populace in communities on the fringe of civilisation, under what is termed mob law, are by no means encouraging.

Moreover the Collectivists perceive the futility of guerilla warfare, samples of which some so-called Anarchists occasionally yield us, and which we think tend to strengthen rather than weaken class governments.

Collectivists are deeply impressed with the strength of Social Organisation, and think it best, in every sense, to seize, whenever able, the present organisations and use them for Socialistic purposes and ends.

There are risks and difficulties in so doing, we are aware, but the chances of success are much greater than by merely gad-fly teasings.

The Anarchist abominates Opportunism.

The Collectivist is a most thorough going Opportunist. The simple question to be resolved is, which is the wisest course and most likely to succeed. The decision in all cases we find depends more upon likes and tendencies, than reasoning.

It is more than probable the chief cause of difference arises from so many Reformers basing their theories upon *a priori* principles, and innate ideas of right and wrong, instead of upon the facts of social life.

The earliest notions of Socialism undoubtedly were thus based, and by far too much that goes under the name of Socialism to day.

Socialism to be worth anything, must be the product of the Scientific method, deduced from the completest induction of facts possible.

First, what is it we want?

Socialism is necessarily altruistic, therefore we de-

mand the largest amount of happiness for all, this only can be when all have shelter, clothes, food and liberty, and the latter is as necessary to happiness as either of the former.

Liberty of the isolated individual is meaningless.

Enjoyment, happiness, pleasure, are terms of little import to the solitary, their fullest, truest meaning are alone realised in association.

Many Individualists seem quite willing to receive any and all the benefits of associative life, but demur to contribute their due share to its support or what the majority deem their due share. There then arises the question, are we right to try and enforce the decision of the Majority.

Let us endeavour to understand in what senses we can affirm it right to enforce the will of the Majority.

Without doubt the original and perennial source of Right is Might, (Physical force) this was afterwards modified by knowledge or cunning, ability of various kinds was accepted as having rights only secondary to physical force. Lastly we have the ethical element of right, which modifies the uses of physical force and knowledge; this is the product of Social Relations.

The family life widening into tribal, municipal and national life, and eventually international life.

It is the social power that puts limits to the individual use both of physical force and knowledge; permitting their use for general good, denying their use for individual profit, at national loss or cost.

It is this growing ethical element, which has produced modern Socialism, has led to the realisation of the causes and nature of the evils of the present systems of governments. Which conserve the privileges of those possessing and using might and knowledge, at the cost of the unorganized ignorant masses.

The customs and laws of Society have hitherto been chiefly the enforcement of the rights of privileged classes.

The Socialist sees and says that this is inequitable. That the proper action of the Social power is to limit the use of individual might and knowledge, from being exercised to public detriment.

We have all heard, that the Kingly power was for the good of the people, also, that Aristocracies, Landlords, and Capitalists are for the peoples' good but fail to find either the good or benefits flowing from these. we rather find in them, the causes of the evils, under which the people suffer.

And, is it not more than likely all these evils of governments, have been, because they are the conservators of Autocratic power, Landlordism and Capitalism.

When there exists a truly Democratic Government, which instead of supporting privileged classes and monopolies, uses its power to keep in check individual and class power and ability, from injuring the less powerful, educated or able, thus giving equal opportunities to all.

We shall then have, not the semblance of liberty such as the Individualistic System of to-day gives us, but the real thing, with "the least possible government."

Is it a paradox, a contradiction, as at first sight it might seem, that we must use coercion to get and keep Social Liberty?

The Anarchist gives away his case, as against governmental coercion most emphatically, by using force to obtain Liberty.

The Collectivist, if necessary, to get the good he desires, is prepared to use force, because he knows force will be used against him.

If it is necessary to use force to get the good we desire, it may be equally necessary to use force to keep it. For whilst there are fools and madmen, as well as masses of men, so ignorant, as to be easily led into folly by ambitious men, who flatter them, Society being the majority, and organised, will use the power it possesses to repress, all forcible attempts to resist its authority.

We rest assured that Might is the basic element of Right, we may put knowledge with it, and modify the physical force element, and in the ethical element of Right, we shall find that which will modify the uses of both physical force and knowledge, but only that, however powerful, which will temper their uses, not destroy them.

If force is used according to our best knowledge, tempered by the Ethical spirit of the age, what objection can there be to its use.

Of course Majorities are liable to mistakes, but if we have the safe guards, the fullest freedom of expression, and minorities are treated with consideration, realising that after all they may be right, and that a majority vote is no proof they are wrong. Every opportunity for discussion, and propagation of the minorities views being given, surely there can be no other way whereby organized society can be carried on.

When the majority are seeking the good of the community, with the best knowledge at their command they certainly would be dastards not to use the force they possess to carry out their desires, more, they must be fools who expect them to do anything else.

Now we hold that whatever antagonism there has been between Governments and Liberty, Socialism will in its more perfect forms make a synthesis of these.

Autocratic, Oligarchic, and Class Governments have produced necessarily Anarchists.

The social growth has evolved the ethical principles which produces Socialism. We cannot go back to primitive nature and don't want to if we could, the good of civilization we must retain, the benefits of organization, it would be stupid to discard, the natural resources, the fruits of our labour, the full exercise of our faculties, must be open to all equally.

This is true Liberty, organization with the fullest personal liberty compatible with the general weal.

What more can reasonable beings expect or ask?

MY UNCLE BENJAMIN.

CHAPTER II.

My grandfather was up before daylight. When he had scribbled off his writ and written at the foot: "The cost of which is six francs four sous and six deniers," he wiped his pen on the sleeve of his coat, carefully put away his glasses in their cases, and went to wake Benjamin. The latter was sleeping like the Prince de Conde (provided the Prince was not pretending sleep) on the eve of a battle.

"Hello there, Benjamin, get up; it is broad daylight."

"You are mistaken," answered Benjamin, with a grant, and turning over toward the wall, "it is pitch dark."

"Lift up your head, and you will see the sunlight on the floor."

"I tell you that it is the light of the street lamp."

"Oh, then, you do not want to go?"

"No, I have dreamed all night of hard bread and sour wine, and if we start some misfortune will happen."

"Well, I declare to you that, if in ten minutes you are not up, I will send your dear sister to you. If, on the other hand, you are up, I will open that quarter-cask of old wine you know so well."

"You are sure that it is from Pouilly, are you?" said Benjamin, sitting up in bed; "you give me your word of honor?"

"Yes, upon my word as a summons-server."

"Then go open your quarter-cask; but I warn you that, if we meet with any accident on our way, you will have to answer for it to my dear sister."

An hour later my uncle and my grandfather were on their way to Moulot. At some distance from the town they met two little peasants, of whom one was

carrying a rabbit under his arm and the other had two hens in his basket. The former said to his companion:

"If you will tell M. Cliquet that my rabbit is a warren rabbit, and that you saw him taken in the trap, you shall be my comrade."

"Willingly," answered the latter, "but on condition that you will tell Mmc. Deby that my hens lay twice a day and that their eggs are as big as ducks' eggs."

"You are two little thieves," said my grandfather; "I will have your ears pulled one of these days by the commissary of police."

"And I, my friends," said Benjamin, "I beg you each to accept this twelve-denier piece."

"Well, that's generosity well placed," said my grandfather, shrugging his shoulders; "you will undoubtedly give the flat of your sword to the first poor honest man that you meet, since you prostitute your money on these two scamps."

"Scamps to you, Machecourt, who see only the surface of things; but to me they are two philosophers. They have just invented a machine which, well organized, would make the fortune of ten honest people."

"And what machine is that, pray," said my grandfather, with an air of incredulity, "which has just been invented by these two philosophers, whom I would thrash soundly if we had the time to stop?"

"It is a simple machine," said my uncle; "this is how it works. We are ten friends who, instead of meeting for breakfast, meet to make our fortunes."

"That is something worth meeting for," interrupted my grandfather.

"All ten of us are intelligent, adroit, and, if need be, shrewd. We have loud voices and are wonderful debaters. We handle words with the same skill with which a juggler handles his balls. As for morality, we are all capable in our professions, and well-meaning persons may say, without seriously compromising themselves, that we are superior to our rivals. We form, with the most honorable intentions, a society to puff each other, to inflate our little merits and make them froth and foam."

"I understand," said my grandfather; "one sells 'Rough on Rats' and has a big drum, the other Swiss tea and has only a pair of cymbals. You unite your means of making a noise, and..."

"That's it exactly," interrupted Benjamin. "You see that, if the machine works properly, each of the members has about him nine instruments that make a frightful uproar."

"There are nine of us who say: Page, the lawyer, drinks too much; but I believe that this devil of a man steepes leaves from the common-law book in his wine, and that he has bottled up logic. All the cases that he wants to win, he wins; and the other day he got a verdict of heavy damages for a gentleman who had beaten a peasant."

"The process-server, Parlanta, is a little crafty; but he is the Hannibal of process-servers. His arrests for debt are inevitable; his debtor could only escape him if he had no body at all. He would lay his hand on the shoulder of a duke and peer."

"As for Benjamin Rathery, he is a careless fellow, who mocks at everything and laughs in the face of fever, a man, if you will, of the plate and the bottle; but it is precisely for that reason that I prefer him to his rivals. He has not the air of those sinister doctors whose register is a cemetery. He is too gay and digests too well to have many death certificates to answer for."

"Thus each of the members finds himself multiplied by nine."

"Yes," said my grandfather, "but will that give you nine red coats? Nine times Benjamin Rathery, what does that make?"

"That makes nine hundred times Machecourt," replied Benjamin, quickly. "But let me finish my demonstration; you shall joke afterwards."

"Here are nine living advertisements, who insinuate themselves everywhere, who repeat to you to-morrow under another form what they have told you to-day under placards that talk and take passers-by by the arm; nine signs that promenade through the town, that discuss, that make dilemmas and enthymemes, and mock at you if you are not of their opinion."

"As a result, the reputation of Page, Rapin, and Rathery, which was dragging painfully along within the precincts of their little town, like a lawyer in a vicious circle, suddenly takes an astonishing flight. Yesterday it had no feet; to-day it has wings. It expands like gas when the bottle in which it was confined has been opened. It spreads throughout the province. Clients come to these people from all parts of the bailiwick; they come from the South and from the North, from the dawn and from the sunset, as in the Apocalypse the elect come to the city of Jerusalem. After five or six years Benjamin Rathery is the owner of a handsome fortune, which he expends, with great noise of glasses and bottles, in breakfasts and dinners; you, Machecourt, are no longer a server of writs; I buy you the office of bailiff. Your wife is covered with silks and laces like a holy queen; your eldest son, who is already a choir-boy, enters the ecclesiastical seminary; your second son, who is sickly and as yellow as a canary bird, studies medicine; I give him my reputation and my old clients, and I keep him in red coats. Of your youngest son, we make a lawyer. Your eldest daughter marries a man of letters. We marry the youngest to a fat *bourgeois*, and the day after the wedding we put the machine away in the attic."

"Yes, but your machine has one little defect; it is not for the use of honest people."

"Why so?"

"Because."

"Because what?"

"Because the effect is immoral."

"Can you prove me that by *now* and by *then*?"

"To the devil with your *nows* and *thens*. You are an educated man, and you reason with your mind; but I, who am a poor server of writs, I feel with my conscience. I maintain that any man who acquires his fortune by other means than his labor and his talents is not a legitimate possessor."

"What you say is very good, Machecourt," cried my uncle; "you are perfectly right. Conscience is the best of all logics, and charlatanism, under whatever form it may disguise itself, is always a swindle. Well, we will break our machine and say no more about it."

While chattering thus, they were approaching the village of Moulot; they saw in front of a vineyard gate a sort of soldier half buried in brambles, the brown and red tufts of which, touched by the frost, fell in confusion like a disordered head of hair. This man had on his head a piece of a cocked hat without a cockade; his dilapidated face had a stony tint, that yellow tint which old monuments have in the sunlight. The two halves of a huge white moustache encircled his mouth, like two parentheses. He was dressed in an old uniform. Across one of the sleeves stretched an old and worn strip of gold lace.

The other sleeve, deprived of its ensign, was nothing but a rectangle distinguished from the rest of the material by a newer wool and a deeper shade. His bare legs swollen by the cold, were red as beets. He was letting a few drops of brandy drip from a gourd on some old pieces of black bread. A poodle dog of the larger type was sitting in front of him, and following all his movements, like a dumb servant listening with his eyes to the orders given him by his master.

To be continued

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