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# Union of Egoists

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## **What is a UnionOfEgoists.com?**

This is an informational resource provided by Kevin I. Slaughter of Underworld Amusements and Trevor Blake of OVO, initiated in February and publicly launched April 1st of 2016. The website initially focuses on providing historical, biographical and bibliographical details of a few their favorite Egoist philosophers. It is also integrating the archives of egoist website i-studies.com, the former project of Svein Olav Nyberg, and the EgoistArchives.com project of Dan Davies. Further, it will be home to Der Geist, a Journal of Egoism in print 1845 – 1945. UnionOfEgoists.com will be the best resource for Egoism online.

## **What is a Union of Egoists?**

“We two, the State and I, are enemies. I, the egoist, have not at heart the welfare of this “human society;” I sacrifice nothing to it, I only utilize it; but to be able to utilize it completely I transform it rather into my property and my creature; i. e., I annihilate it, and form in its place the Union of Egoists.”

– Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*

## **What is Egoism?**

“Egoism is the claim that the Individual is the measure of all things. In ethics, in epistemology, in aesthetics, in society, the Individual is the best and only arbitrator. Egoism claims social convention, laws, other people, religion, language, time and all other forces outside of the Individual are an impediment to the liberty and existence of the Individual. Such impediments may be tolerated but they have no special standing to the Individual, who may elect to ignore or subvert or destroy them as He can. In egoism the State has no monopoly to take tax or to wage war.”

–Trevor Blake, *Confessions of a Failed Egoist*



# The Eagle and The Serpent

A Journal for Free Spirits and for Spirits struggling to be Free.

The proudest animal under the sun and the wisest animal under the sun have set out to reconnoitre.

Edited by JOHN ERWIN McCALL.

Associate Editor, MALFEW SEKLEW.

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## Principal Contents :

FLASHES OF SAVING PENETRATION.

THE DIVINITY OF HATE.

THE DIVINE SHIRKERS or HOW TO SHED ONE'S FRIENDS.

EGOISM : CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS.

THE EGOISTIC NATURE OF THE IDEA OF GOD.

THAT BLESSED WORD ALTRUISM.

THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE HYPOCRISY.

A UNIVERSITY OF LOVE, MUSIC AND WILL-POWER : HOW TO LISTEN TO MUSIC. HOW TO ATTAIN WILL-POWER. HOW TO PLAY THE GAME OF LIFE. HOW TO CURE LOVE.

ANSWERS TO EARNEST LIGHT-SHUNNERS.

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NEXT ISSUE (A THOREAU NUMBER) READY JANUARY FIRST.

## ARTICLES IN OUR PREVIOUS ISSUES.

The following are a few of the articles which have appeared in our previous issues. To secure a selected series of these articles send the titles of those wanted and 3/6 or a dollar bill to JOHN ERWIN MCCALL, Editor The Eagle and the Serpent, 26 Clovelly Mansions, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C. England.

The Wit, Wisdom and Wickedness of Emerson, Thoreau, Montaigne, Rochefoucauld, Chamfort, Nietzsche, Dr. Ragnar Redbeard, etc.

Stirner's Bible for Egoists. The Religion of Egoism. The Egoist's Gethsemane and Calvary. Emerson and Thoreau as Egoists. The Land of the Altruists. Many Letters on Egoism versus Altruism. Finding Myself out. The Altruist Lie in a Nutshell.

Hard Sayings About the Soft Sex. The Infernal Feminine (and Masculine). Love as a War—War as a Love. Should Philosophers Marry? The Value of Virtue. A Sexual Appreciation of Luther, Goethe, Kant, and Schopenhauer.

The Dishonesty of Philosophers. Optimism and Pessimism both Obsolete. Truths which the Universities dare not teach. Is Might Right? Answers by Dr. A. R. Wallace, Redbeard, and many others. What does the Survival of the Fittest mean? My Emotions versus the Cosmic Scheme. Hugo as a Hypocrite. Emerson as an Atheist. The First Part of "Thus Spake Zarathustra." A Nietzsche Bibliography.

Behind the Political Scenes. Lincoln's Indictment of Politicians. Finding the Politicians and Journalists out. Democratic Delusions and Disillusionments. Finding the "Dear People" out. What Shall We Do with the Fools? Landor's Defense of Assassination. Can the Poor be Saved by (? from) the Pity of the Rich? Replies by G. B. Shaw, Tom Mann, Morison Davidson, Benj. Kidd and others.

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## ONE THOUSAND FLASHES OF SAVING PENETRATION.

People of brains are invited to contribute to this column. We can offer only the small reward of immortality. If immortality is desired kindly mention it. Contributors should state name or pen-name and address.

Time cannot bend the line which Truth hath writ.

The passion for destruction is a creative passion.—*Bakounine*.

In Hobbes' system morality is the rationalization of egoism.

Justice is a ruse of the weak to defend themselves.—*Nietzsche*.

We can only be valued as we make ourselves valuable.—*Emerson*.

The indisputableness of eternal injustice is a part of Nietzsche's system.

One must read all moralists with an eye to their motives.—*Nietzsche*.

He who tells the truth is turned out of nine cities.—*Turkish Proverb*.

Justice is an "equilibrium of might," non-existent for the absolutely powerless.—

*Nietzsche*.

Government has nothing to give me except that which it takes from me.—*A. Bellegarigue*.

Nietzsche defined sympathy to be the expression of a force seeking vent, or feebleness seeking support.

Conscience and remorse are the results of our blindness to the real origin of the sentiments called moral.—*Nietzsche*.

Are not all tragedies due to the fact that people do not die at the right time?—*John Erwin McCall*.

He's a slave who cannot be in the right *without* two or three—just by "his own self."—*John Erwin McCall*.

*Ascetic Ideals*.—Ideals should always be fictitious. When they become real they cease to be ideal. All extremes are wrong.—*John Erwin McCall*.

Journalism is the art of selling to other people their own prejudices and false opinions at the highest possible price.—*John Erwin McCall*.

Benevolence is as purely selfish as greed. No one would do a benevolent action if he thought it would entail remorse.—*Dod Grile*.

*Origin of Optimism*.—The typical optimist sits in the British Museum, which was built by money stolen from the Spanish, and which the Spanish had stolen from the Aztecs, and piously exclaims, "A good to one is a good to all."—*John Erwin McCall*.

Under the inspiration of adversity it is easy for all men to perceive that this is a godless, christless, justiceless world. But the great man is he who recognises this truth, and acts on it when he is prosperous. To forget it then, and to cant of religion is the way of vermin and of most men. When the wheel of fortune rolls our way, let us still remember that this is a godless world, and that there will always be victims of such godlessness whom it will *sometimes* be proper to assist.—*John Erwin McCall*.

Thus concludes the 98th Flash of the Series.

# The Divinity of Hate.

By JOHN ERWIN McCALL.



I hate and detest that animal called man; I love only individuals.—*Swift*.

I hate, where I looked for a manly forbearance or at least a manly resistance, to find a mush of concession. Better be a nettle in the side of your friend than his echo.—*Emerson*.

How few there are among us not compelled continually to guard vigilantly against the encroachments of those who love us.—(We do not so waste time over those we hate.—*Ed.*)—*J. Wm. Lloyd* in "*Free Comrade*."

Zola, speaking of the failure of *Le Bouton de Rose*, exclaimed, "It has made me feel young again; I feel as if I were twenty. The success of *L'Assommoir* had made my vigour flag. Truly when I think of the list of novels I have still to write I feel it is only the spirit of righteous anger and fierce struggle will pull me through.

You are trying to carry on an heroic policy without using any heroism. You nourish the absurd aspiration that you can do good without doing any harm—can help justice without hurting injustice. Your Love Campaign is sublimely ineffectual. As long as you have a race of cowards willing to pay rent, rent will last. Nothing will be done till Hate is in the saddle—till we have a race which hates rent, hates robbery. There are intellectual grounds for this hatred.—*Address at a Christian Land Conference.*

BRETHREN, we must become more bitter. Bitterness is the best antidote to the Christian slave-pox which for two thousand years has poisoned our blood. Said Emerson (my faithful ally in this and many another matter) "The doctrine of hatred must be preached as the counteraction of the doctrine of love when that pules and whines." We are all pulers and whiners to-day—we are born such and rarely out-grow it. Bitterness is the only thing which can tear the bandage of Idealism from our eyes and enable us to see life as the old unsexed Greeks and Romans saw it. And when we can see life as the Greeks and Romans saw it, perhaps we shall have no further use for bitterness and can then throw it away. When the poison of Idealism is extirpated, then, perhaps, will come to pass the saying of Zarathustra, "Growth in wisdom is measured by decrease in bitterness."—*John Erwin McCall in The Eagle and the Serpent for Dec. '98.*

Is hate more sacred than love? I can only say, as did the accused Dutchman, when asked "guilty or not guilty," "How can I tell till I hear the evidence?" I am at present taking testimony, cross-examining witnesses, &c. I sum up the evidence, thus far given, as follows:—Love plans, hate alone executes. Love dreams things, hate does things. The highest types of love—Jesus and Tolstoi—are non-resistants, non-doers. The greatest doers have been the best haters. Hannibal, Mahomet, Attila, Napoleon, Parnell—hate was their common inspirer. Byron said he owed all his fame to the hatred evoked by the criticisms on the *Hours of Idleness*. Zola acknowledges the power of this unconquerable deity—the God of Hate. Reversing the terms of a silly hymn, the Doers sing—

The only thing I love is hate,  
The only thing I hate is love,  
For love is the unpardonable sin,  
And hate the Holy Ghost within.

There are exceptions, but these are principally confined to the dreamers.

Violence is not necessary to hate. A calm hate is the most sincere and effectual hate.

It is especially incumbent on Free Spirits, on all who desire to live their own life, to cultivate hatred of all impeding agencies, of all the parasites which suck their life-blood or steal their time. "Thou shalt strive after the virtue of the pillar. It ever gets more beautiful and tender, but inside ever harder and more able to bear the load, the higher it ariseth." Must not the pillar hate all the parasites which prey upon and disfigure it?

As a literary inspirer hate holds the record—it has wrought miracles of eloquence, poesy and song. A complete anthology of hate would include many, most, we believe, of the best inspirations of the poets and of the orators—of Shelley, of Byron, of Milton, of Mirabeau, of Danton, of Marat, of Phillips, of Ingersoll, of Æschylus of Heine, of Nietzsche, of Theognis. A few extracts will make clear our point. Consider the *Marseillaise*.

(To be continued.)

# The Brotherhood of Divine Shirkers.

*How to shed one's friends : the greatest problem of practical philosophy.*

By JOHN ERWIN McCALL.

As this is in some respects a new teaching, I would like here to present a few observations respecting the mental attitude most conducive to the reception of new truths. Modern peoples are, as a rule, entirely too serious, too conventional, to accept a new truth at its true value. Serious and conventional folk appreciate only old and highly respected truths. It takes a comedian, a joker, to appreciate new truths. Pilate was essentially a joker when he propounded that venerable and wittiest of conundrums, "What is Truth?" Pontius was jossing with the boys or "jossing" them, to put it more technically.

The new Brotherhood or, more correctly speaking, Anti-Brotherhood, recognises that there exists an eternal and relentless warfare between the individual and the rest of his species. The individual perceives that the rest of mankind are engaged in exploiting him or attempting to do so, and he is therefore compelled to wage an endless warfare with all his fellows. He is compelled to exploit others, or, at least, to resist their encroachments upon his time and money, in order to attain that approximate equilibrium of mutual exploitation which poets and other humourists have called Justice (with an upper case J).

I have said that the individual is compelled to resist these (usually absurd) encroachments upon his time and money. But I deal now only with the frightful loss of time involved in a blind obedience to conventional duties and obligations. Professor Saintsbury tell us that the cream of the Carlylean doctrine is "Don't care one rap, or the ten-thousandth part of one rap for the majority. You may be—you very likely are—a fool your self, but it is as nearly as possible certain that the majority of the majority are fools, and therefore, though you need not necessarily set yourself against them, you are absolutely justified in neglecting them." Emerson wrote: "Society is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members." When we attempt to adjust our lives to these sublime teachings we make the astounding discovery that it is our friends who are our worst enemies, being the most inveterate exploiters of our time. It follows then that the great problem of practical philosophy is not how to attract friends but how to get rid of them. Perhaps we should say that that which distinguishes and divides little souls from great souls is that the little soul is feverishly seeking at all times to attract new friends, while the great man is seeking at all times to get rid of his friends.

This, then, is the inspiring ideal which the true and conscientious Shirker has ever before him. But it is in the art of attaining this loftiest of goals that I claim to have invented such an absolutely original and infallible system that I can think of myself only as the Newton in this field of practical philosophy who has picked up all the best shells on the shore. My system is simple, but it is based on a dauntless study of the motives under which all men act, more often unconsciously than consciously.

In my Christian work of getting rid of my friends I have found the following device to work almost invariably. When a man has been robbing me of my time (that which no man can create, and no man ought to take away from us) I proceed as follows:—I can generally tell by an instinct which has been patiently cultivated, how much money a particular man will lend me, and I ask him to lend me twice that sum. After this request you will usually find that you can add another chapter to your experience of our noble humanity. The simple plan then is to ask for more money than he will let you have: he will not come near your door as long as this sword of Damocles is hanging over his devoted head.

I have found the system to fail in those rare cases where the borrowee is sagacious enough to read your motive, and lends you the money. This, of course, puts you in an awkward predicament. Then your only resource is to reverse the plan, and refuse to return the loan. Like the old "nigger's" coon-trap, my system catches em "a gwine and a comin."

Those who prefer not to take the risk of having the money lent them will find the following variation of my scheme no less effective: Write a letter detailing a host of imaginary financial distresses—have this run off on the mimeograph, and autograph it to all your friends. They will not, as a rule, disturb the imperturbable tranquillity of your apartments.

[ To be continued. ]

## Extracts from Our Correspondence.

I send a dollar bill. I want the file of E. & S. I hope to brighten my wits by reading it. Actually you are publishing the brightest thing—at this time—in the world. Who are you anyhow? And why so modest as to withhold your name? Your deeply interested friend,

HELEN WILMANS, Editor *Freedom*.

You ask "How to make a pile of money?" That is the very question that troubles us all. That is the Great Social Question. I daresay if we keep on asking it (and happen to live long enough) an answer may be forthcoming, perhaps even a satisfactory answer.

ADOLPH MUELLER, Chicago.

I had a discussion with a lot of so-called radicals. Any reading more substantial than the gives them mental indigestion. One little animated miscarriage wanted to know why he should be put to death, as he certainly would be if the rule of the survival of the fittest was in direct practice. I replied that if it was in practice he would never have been born, which caused the lot of them to set up a chorus of indignation making as much noise as a troop of howling monkeys.

M. HANLEY, Gateshead.

It seems at times as if the E. & S. taught absolute selfishness and even encouraged people to exploit all those around them indiscriminately, friends and foes alike. That is certainly the very antithesis of Nietzsche's teaching. If that is not what you teach you should make it plain what you wish people to believe with regard to the matter. As the Logicians point out there are always four propositions, for example : All selfishness is right; No selfishness is right; Some selfishness is right; Some selfishness is not right.

You seem to teach the first, which I regard as false, as I also regard the second; the third and fourth are true in my opinion. You might publish the American Declaration of Independence and see if anyone has anything to say in favour of it nowadays. It seems to me that the ideas expressed in it are thoroughly false and mischievous—it is entirely based on Christian Ethics. A lively discussion might be raised by assailing it. THOS. COMMON.

I never harm anything in the animal kingdom unless it invades my rights. When it does—be it bishop or bedbug, louse or legislator—its parents are liable to be left orphans when it goes too far. Am an autonomist. Wouldn't govern a pig, pigeon, or perch—or be governed by pope, prince, president, or pirate. Scorn all majorities, detest all authorities. Know some things. One of 'em : that the only certainty is *uncertainty*. Another, that what is, *is* ; and that what is, is the opposite of what is said to be. Farther, that popular opinion is the greatest lie in the world. That all things are the opposite of what they are called. Feel certain that I shall find Sheol fearfully frigid. Am an optimist—the chiefest out of 10,000. Firmly believe that in the coming race men will be found that can distinguish a lion from a louse ; who will prefer the odor of the pink to that of the polecat ; and the music of the Æolian harp to that of a snare drum. And some other improvements. And all this, too, in the near future ; say in the next seventy-seven septillian centuries. And they will soon pass. In the presence of eternity the hills are transient as the clouds. "Yes! you asked for wit;" Montesquieu said, "When we seek after wit, we discover only foolishness."

DR. C. E. NICHOLS, Boston.

The great struggle of the future is neither for reform nor for religion but for the plunder of the Jew, and in this struggle half the capitalists will join, for the Jew is detested even by the rich. In France the great financiers and proprietors of things are divided into two camps, whilst discussion of all kinds booms and the social damnation ripens like a Georgia melon in the midsummer sun. France again leads the world in things social even as she did 100 years ago. The Peace Congress at the Hague is really a league for war against the social upheaval that is likely to break out first in France : the Jew controls the Great Empires and will move them like sections of a vast army to the reconquest of rebellious France and repudiating France.

SMITH.

With regard to "Moribund Society and Anarchy," there is no doubt whatever about society being in a very bad state at the present time ; no one, surely, who has any intelligence, and has looked into the subject, can deny it. In so far as the book brings these evils to light, it is all right ; but when it recommends Anarchy as a cure for the evils, it is undoubtedly all wrong, just as the Socialists are wrong in recommending Socialism as a cure. Jean Grave very foolishly wishes to give *absolute liberty to knaves, dastards, and fools*, who have already far too much liberty, and have gained the upper hand, and brought about the very evils against which the Anarchists protest. Carlyle, who was far more alive to the evils of society than the Anarchists, knew the proper remedy—namely, *the arrest of the knaves and dastards*, the very reverse remedy of that of the Socialists and Anarchists.

THOS. COMMON.

# Egoism: Conscious and Unconscious.

By MORSE MONROE.

By A. B. Tilton, Truthseeker  
1.

**C**ERTAIN men, who have had the courage to probe down to the very bottom of their own minds, have come to the conclusion that self-interest is the one motive of all human action; I might say of all action that is not merely mechanical and has life at the root of it.

This belief, conviction, or conclusion—term it what you will—forms the whole sum and substance of the philosophy called “Egoism,” and the man who, after due reflection, subscribes himself to it, becomes a “Conscious Egoist;” conscious! mark you—in that alone lies the difference between himself and the unbeliever; for, according to his philosophy, all men are Egoists by an inevitable law—the Supreme Law of Nature.

The question is then, with regard to Egoism, not “Are you an Egoist?” but “Are you conscious of the fact that you are an Egoist?” Call yourself what you will, if you are not a Conscious Egoist, you are merely an unconscious one.

This may seem a revoltingly dogmatic philosophy to those who are still floundering about in the shallows of ancient reasoning, like little boys just learning to swim and afraid to go more than a yard or so beyond the land. But let these good people come out into the broad sea of self, let them realise their own nature, find what is best and most pleasing within them, draw it out to the full, and not be ashamed to say, or think, that by so doing they are serving self and self merely; then, in the opinion of the Conscious Egoist, they will become wise and sensible beings.

The Conscious Egoist asserts that all actions of all men are taken either in the quest of happiness or in the avoidance of pain. This is the groundwork upon which he builds up his reasoning.

Says he, “Whenever a man performs what the world might term a self-sacrifice either he finds pleasure in it or avoids pain. For instance, the philanthropist who spends his time and money in relieving the poor and needy, does it either to gain the pleasure or self-satisfaction of having done a good and charitable action, or to avoid the pain, as far as it is possible, of seeing his fellow-creatures suffer.

Or take another instance, that of the man who risks or definitely sacrifices his own life to save that of some other person. Either he does it from a natural desire to be courageous, or else the thought of seeing another creature die is more painful to him than is the thought of dying himself.

Hence we see that in these two instances the term “self-sacrifice” is not admissible; for both the philanthropist and the hero are plainly serving and not sacrificing self.

The Altruist (who is merely an unconscious Egoist) will most strenuously deny this because it would hurt his vanity to admit that his own actions are self-serving and not self-sacrificing. Says he, “It is possible to do an action which shall give pleasure to or detract from the pain of another, and yet neither attain pleasure oneself or avoid pain in the doing of it. Rather the reverse,” he argues. “It will detract from one’s own pleasure, and add to the burden of one’s own pain.”

“And yet,” says the Conscious Egoist, “You would assert that Virtue is its own reward?”

“Yes, I would,” says the Altruist.

“And you are more pleased, let us say satisfied, in being what you call unselfish than you would be if you knew you were what is called selfish?” the Conscious Egoist questions.

“Certainly,” says the Altruist.

“Then,” says the Conscious Egoist with a smile, “Your Altruism (which you call unselfishness) is merely the outcome of selfishness. Do you see the contradiction?”

The Altruist shakes his head. He will not part with his false philosophy so easily. He has grown to love it because it has flattered his individuality by representing his actions to be that which they are not. “I fail to see your point,” he says in an emphatic voice, as though his failing to see a thing proved that the thing was not there to be seen. And the Conscious Egoist is seized with an exceeding great pity for the Altruist, who is very blind indeed.

## 2.

You will observe that I am sticking to the phrase "Conscious Egoist" in alluding to the believer in Egoism. The whole virtue of reasoning upon the subject lies in that word "conscious," which so many professed Egoists forget to prefix to themselves when arguing with the benighted ones. Says the Conscious Egoist very often to the so-called Altruist, "I am an Egoist and you are an Egoist; there is no difference between us." And the Altruist at once thinks that there is something wrong with the statement, for he sees a great difference somewhere, though he hardly knows where it is. And in this instance the Altruist is right. Both men are Egoists, certainly, and yet there is a difference between them. The one is a Conscious Egoist, the other a very unconscious one. In the case of one Egoism is recognised, in the case of the other it is strongly denied, although it exists just the same.

Here the Altruist might throw in what would seem to him a weighty argument. "There is," he might say, "a greater difference between man and man than this consciousness and unconsciousness. For instance, between two persons who call themselves Conscious Egoists there may be a vast difference. The one may be a fairly good fellow, one to be tolerated in spite of his opinions, while another may be a rogue, a vagabond, and a disagreeable fellow to boot. How do you account for that?" Very easily. The difference in this case is the difference that is always between man and man, and it lies in a man's ego or self, and not in his Egoism, which is merely the natural law of the ego. The ego of a man, or his individuality, is more or less limited. He is born strong in certain powers and weak in others. Even his mentality is never perfect. Sometimes a portion of it will attain or closely approach perfection, and then the man is called a genius; but this development of one portion is nearly always at the expense of another portion. Hence is genius so irregular. Well, there being, as I have said, a difference between man and man, and all men being, by a law of nature Egoists, it stands to reason that the difference between man and man is the difference between Egoist and Egoist. The same difference would be apparent if all men had the misfortune to be born Altruists (which is an impossible supposition as in reality Altruism is only an imaginative quality). But supposing that Dame Nature for a moment changed the unchangeable law, and in a fit of cruelty made all men Altruists; I doubt whether she would have the consistency to make them all alike.

Thus, the only thing in which men may not differ, according to the philosophy of Egoism, is motive. This alone is unchangeable. Christ dying in agony on the Cross, and the drunken wifebeater beating his wife to death in a fit of passion, are inspired by one and the same motive—self-satisfaction. Christ felt that out of respect for himself, or for his principles, which means the same thing, he must suffer this terrible death. The wife-beater feels that out of respect for himself he must assert his mastery over his wife. That is the way I look at it.

"But," argues the Altruist, "if you assert that their motives are the same, you seem to me to be putting Christ and the wife-beater on a level. I fail to see how you can make any distinction between them."

Answers the Conscious Egoist, "As I have said before, the difference lies in the men themselves, and not in their motives. One man may delight in pleasing others, while the other delights in displeasing others. In this case they will act oppositely, though from a similar motive. It is right and logical to call a man a good man or a bad man; but it is wrong and illogical to assert that there are good motives and bad motives.

A man is a good man or a bad man in our eyes accordingly as we are pleased or displeased by his behaviour. Thus all difference is relative, and we judge an object by the relation that object bears to ourselves. This is why the world loves its Saviours, its Messiahs, its Prophets, its Martyrs, its geniuses, its great inventors and discoverers—simply because they have benefited the world. Gratitude is very clearly the outcome of selfishness, like all the virtues.

## 3.

I am not here to defend that which the world calls selfishness, and condemns so strongly, in theory, that is. I also would condemn it; yet I would not call it selfishness, but narrowness, littleness, baseness. The man who is commonly called selfish is no more selfish than the rest of his brethren; but his mind is stunted, his conception of himself is too limited. His joys are petty, his sorrows are mean. He has misconceived himself.

The secret of good and bad egoism lies in the ego's conception of itself. A man may be conscious of his egoism, and yet sublimely unconscious of a great part of his ego or self. The body has its needs and the mind has its needs. These needs are many and



various, and a man must grasp them all, and strive to satisfy them ere he becomes a perfect Egoist. This seems almost an impossible task—a task for a God, not for a man of flesh and blood and imperfections. But we can try.

It is an unconscious recognition of his own mental need which turns a man to what he calls Altruism. It is a recognition (conscious or unconscious) of mental need which makes a man love honesty, justice, mercy and charity. It is a recognition, again, of mental need, which gives man a longing for wholeness and continence of body and mind, and breeds in him the thing called morality. Also it is a recognition of his own mental need which makes a man rebel against the lack of proportion that exists to-day in Society. He sees one person suffering from want of that which is absolutely necessary to him if he is to live, while another has all that he can wish for, both of the necessities and the superfluities of life. He feels that there is something wrong with the world; and feels also, perhaps without realising that he does it, that the world is part of himself just as much as he is part of the world. Therefore he strives to right the world, because only when the world is perfect can he himself be perfect. Is this unselfishness? Clearly not. It is a broad, enlightened selfishness, which has widened out self so that it includes the whole universe of things. A magnificent selfishness, but not altruism.

## 4.

Usually, the Altruist takes Jesus of Nazareth as his pattern to live by and to perish by; and he argues that Christ preached and practised the doctrine of complete self-abnegation.

This is a conclusion which can only be arrived at by those who have halted half-way in their reasoning. Christ did not preach the doctrine of complete self-abnegation. He may have imagined and even declared himself to have been doing so; but in that case he could not have fully grasped the import of his own doctrine. What Christ really advocated was the abnegation (complete if you like) of one half of self to the other half, of the physical self to the purely mental, or if you will (for to me the two words have a synonymous meaning) spiritual self.

Christ considered that half of man was good and half was evil, and that these two halves of man made perpetual war upon each other. One of them, said he, must conquer in the end and trample the other underfoot, the which depending upon the will of the individual. He preached that it was best for the individual that his evil self should be stifled and his good self cultivated to its fullest extent. Rather a onesided doctrine to him who recognises that only that is evil to an individual which is positively hurtful; yet let us examine it to find whether there is in it a trace of genuine unselfishness.

We find that men are advised to be unselfish because it is best for themselves that they be so, to crush self because self will benefit by it. Clearly, if a man does what is best for himself for the reason that it is best for himself, he is mistaken in calling his action unselfish.

Therefore the term Altruist is a misnomer, even when applied to practical Christianity.

## 5.

As I have said before, there are two kinds of selfishness, the broad and the narrow. Let me illustrate this by giving you two types of men, first the man who is narrowly selfish, then the man whose selfishness is broad and enlightened.

We will suppose both men to be earnestly religious; the supposition is not an improbable one.

The first man, on the promises of the Bible, sacrifices himself, as he believes, on earth, for the sake of an eternity of æsthetic bliss in Heaven. He can never lose sight of the promised reward—if he did he would cease to be religious. His every act of charity is done because he knows that it will be returned to him a thousandfold. I make bold to say that this man is the most common type of religionist. He has taken the narrow view of religion, regarding it as an unpleasant means towards ultimate pleasure.

The broadly religious man believes in and follows a religion for its own sake, at the bottom reckless of eternity. "This religion," he says, "will benefit me here, on earth. It will bring me nearer to what I would wish to be. I am most happy when I am doing good, because I know that it is good. If doing good will take me to Heaven, very well. If not, it has gone towards making a Heaven of earth."

The Conscious Egoist, regarding these two believers, would assert that both were inspired by the same motive, the attainment of self-satisfaction, but there, most probably, the similarity ends, for each goes a different way about it according to his lights. The one whose mind is narrow and ill-lighted may attain a mean kind of pleasure at a great loss. The one whose mind is broad, open and enlightened may gain infinite pleasure at less cost to himself.

## 6.

I hold that if a man makes a sacrifice he does not, nay, cannot, sacrifice himself wholly ; but merely sacrifices one part of himself to another part.

It is a law of evolution that the fittest mental attributes as well as the fittest physical attributes, should survive ; and it is this survival of the fittest which we call the victory of right over wrong, of reason over prejudice.

Man is a creature of conflicting passions ; and it is best, or fittest, for the world that those passions, or impulses, should survive in the struggle which are most congenial or beneficial to the world as a whole ; and it is best for the individual that he should be in complete harmony with the world and the world's spirit, otherwise, like an obstinate cog-wheel in a rapidly whirling machine, he is apt to get broken and to fly off at a tangent, a useless article. Or else, if he is particularly strong as well as particularly obstinate, the machine, by which I signify the world's progress, may be stayed for a while until a stronger power than himself removes him and his influence.

## 7.

But I have wandered a little from the direct course of my reasoning.

You see, though Egoism is such a vast subject, it does not stand much description. The shorter the description of Egoism, the better and clearer it will be. One might sum it up neatly in a little aphorism, "Egoism is everything, for everything is Egoism." This is what the Conscious Egoist advances against the idea of Altruism. He says, "I could prove to you, if there was time enough in the course of a lifetime to do so, that everything in the world and out of it is Egoism or the result of Egoism. I have proved it to myself already, and such being the case, I do not see how Altruism can exist. There is no room for it. In a vessel that is quite full of one substance there is no room for another."

## 8.

The thing which causes most misunderstanding between the Conscious Egoist and the Unconscious Egoist is that the Unconscious Egoist looks upon Egoism as a doctrine preached by the Conscious Egoist, whereas it is an inevitable fact merely stated by him.

The difference between a fact and a doctrine should be plain to everyone. And yet I have heard it said by people who might reasonably claim to be intelligent that there is no real difference between them. But if a fact and a doctrine are merely one and the same thing, how do you account for the multitudinous number of facts that were in existence ere ever a doctrine was preached or invented. A doctrine is a structure of reasoning raised upon a foundation of fact. The reasoning may be correct or fallacious, but this has nothing to do with the fact upon which it is based. If the doctrine is wrong, and mankind becomes conscious that it is wrong, then the doctrine will die out ; but the fact remains, and another doctrine, more in harmony with it, will be raised upon its foundation.

Were Egoism a doctrine, the Conscious Egoist would approach you with these words, "Be selfish, for it is best that you should be so." Instead of which, he comes to you and says, "You are selfish ; you cannot help it. Therefore you had best recognise the fact."

I say again, Egoism is given forth as a fact and not as a doctrine. The Conscious Egoist asks a man to look into himself and recognise that which is within him. "*Man, know thyself.*" If I do a good action, it is the result of Egoism. If I do a bad action, it is the result of Egoism. I am brave by reason of my Egoism, and cowardly by the same reason.

## 9.

Egoism, then, is merely a mental force which makes a man move, and keeps him moving. It rests with a man's ego in which direction he will move. Men have good egos and bad egos ; strong, healthy egos, and weak, morbid, unhealthy egos. Egoism is not the ego but the law of the ego.

Difference in men's actions is no sign of difference in their motives. It is simply a proof of difference, either inborn or cultivated, in the men themselves. Therefore there is no unreasonableness in saying that good actions and bad actions (by which I mean actions beneficial to the world and actions detrimental to it) are inspired by Egoism, the mere realisation of self.

## 10.

A question was asked in my hearing some little time ago of a lecturer in sympathy with the philosophy of Egoism, which hardly received an adequate answer, the fault being that the answer was too concise and unexplanatory to be convincing to the mind of the inquirer. The lecturer forgot that the inquirer looked at matters in quite a different light to himself, or else he realised that he had not sufficient time to begin at the root of the matter and lead upwar

The question was, as far as I remember, "If Universal Egoism is a fact, how do you account for that feeling of benevolence towards others which exists in the human mind?"

I forget the lecturer's exact reply, but I know that the inquirer was eminently unsatisfied; and I will try myself to answer the question as fully as I can, and as clearly; and, if the inquirer should read these words, I sincerely hope I shall satisfy him that, taking Egoism fully into consideration, the feeling of benevolence he alludes to is not entirely unaccountable.

In the first place, what is this feeling of benevolence? Looked at logically, it is simply a desire for the expansion of self. When there is another person, seemingly outside yourself, whose joys and sorrows affect you just as much as do your own, it is equivalent to your having two selves, for this person's very life becomes a part of your life. Therefore to strive to make that other person happy is to strive to make yourself happy at the same time, because, by reason of your extension of self, you cannot be perfectly happy unless he is in a similar condition.

This is what benevolence practically amounts to, whether it is on a large scale, and, as it does in some highly developed egos, embraces the whole human race, or whether it is on a small scale, and embraces a narrow circle of acquaintances.

Take, for instance, that man whose love is so strong that he will lay down his life to save one he loves. It is because of his love that he does it, and what is this love? It is the merging of his own life completely into the life of another, so completely, that at the time of his apparent self-sacrifice the body which he gave to destruction, his own body, he felt instinctively to contain less of himself than that which he was desirous of saving.

Benevolence is a mild form of love, mild because it is widely diffused. A man with a great capacity for loving may, accordingly as he is circumstanced, concentrate his love upon a single individual, or scatter it abroad among the sons of men. Or he may shed it equally over all living things, as Buddha is said to have done, who voluntarily gave his own body to be a feast for a starving tigress and her cubs, because he could not bear to see their sufferings—the greatest sacrifice I have heard of, even in mythology.

Benevolence, then, is a widely diffused form of love, as passion is love concentrated; and I argue that when a person loves, the objects of his love become part, often the greater part, of that person's own life, therefore practically part of that person's own self. Thus it is that even a Conscious Egoist may derive pleasure from acts of benevolence.

You will admit that one does find pleasure in acts of benevolence, that one is always glad to see those one loves happy and contented. I do not see how you can deny it. And when one is happy, or pleased, it is because one's ego—or self—is to a certain extent satisfied. Therefore self-satisfaction is quite consistent with benevolence, and self-satisfaction is another word for Egoism.

I have gone as far as I mean to go for the present; therefore, to conclude, let me restate my case as briefly as possible. I have said:—

1. That all actions of all men are taken in order to satisfy the cravings of the ego, or self. Therefore all men are Egoists.
2. That some are conscious of the fact and some are unconscious.
3. That among the unconscious ones there are those who assert that it is possible to be the opposite of Egoist, to wit Altruist, and that it is a man's duty to be Altruist rather than Egoist.
4. That this is an impossible theory, because the very thing which they call Altruism springs out of and is nothing more nor less than Egoism.
5. That there is no such thing as self-sacrifice; that the man who gives his life to save another values his life *less* than that other, or he would never do it.
6. That to say all men are Egoists does not put them on a level. It merely gives them a common motive. Widely different actions may spring from this motive. The difference, where there is one, lies in a man's ego, or self. Egoism is the law of the ego.
7. That Egoism is a fact which cannot be escaped from, not a doctrine which may be followed out at will; and it is best and most honest to recognise this fact, thereby becoming a Conscious Egoist. The motto for the Conscious Egoist is "Man, know thyself," or "Find thyself out."
8. That all those actions which it behoves a man to do who would call himself an Altruist may be done by a man who would call himself a Conscious Egoist, without the slightest inconsistency. The only difference between the two men in that case would be that the Conscious Egoist was more alive to the nature of himself than was the Altruist.

[An Altruist will reply in our next issue.]

Our associate-editor, MALFEW SEKLEW, informs us that the *Clarion* declined to publish the foregoing essay. He adds : "The *Clarion* appears to be afraid to let its Kindergarten School of Reformers hear of Egoism. I find that all Socialist Journals put Egoistic works on the Index. These be your reformers, Oh Israel !"

## The Idea Of God.

### Its Egoistical Origin and Nature.

[ *Extract From an Essay by Morse Monroe.* ]

After conceiving the idea of God in the abstract, man could not rest satisfied, but must needs seek to know the unknown and make definite the indefinite. It annoyed him to have always in his mind a sense of mystery—to be haunted by a huge shadow, the form and nature of which he could not even guess. His first conception of God was of an impersonal being, indefinite in form. Now he began to feel, but vaguely, that it would be better and more comfortable to his understanding if his God were personal and of definite form. Comfort of mind is as essential to man as is comfort of body. To make his mind comfortable on the subject he endowed God with a personality and with a definite form. Having invented God, he thought, perhaps, that he had a right to do as he pleased with him.

Let us see how he accomplished this fact of endowing God with personality and form. Knowing what an egotistical creature he was, we can make a very good guess as to how he managed it. It was something in this way. He said, "My soul is from God and is part of God. Therefore the nature of God must be as the nature of my own soul. Only he is greater and more powerful. As to his form, it must be very beautiful, something like my own, in fact. Ah ! I have it ! When God made our bodies of the earth he made them like himself. His own shape was the most beautiful thing he could think of. That was why he used himself for a model in making us. God is very like us in appearance, only he is bigger and a trifle more beautiful."

You will notice that in endowing God with a personality, man gave him his full share of egotism.

We find it somewhere in the Holy Bible (which men have a habit of looking upon as the Word of God) that God made man in his own image. My own conclusion, which I have already given, amounts to the exact opposite of this, namely, that *man* made *God* in his own image.

I think I have been sufficiently clear upon this point, that when man granted God a form he could think of nothing better than the form in which he happened to find himself ; and when he granted God a personality it was simply that personality which he felt to be his own.

In inventing God man gave himself a certain amount of egotistical satisfaction. In endowing God with attributes in the manner I have tried to explain, he satisfied his egotism still further. In making God like himself he glorified himself. Self-esteem is a man's mental and moral food ; self-glorification is like wine to him. This is why men cling to the personal Deity in spite of knowledge and reason. They cling to the glorified self. Knowledge and reason might prove to them that the real self—what they deem the little self—is the only self. They like the idea of the magnified self, the glorified self, better than this ; and so, instinctively, in this particular matter knowledge and reason are ignored.

Every believer in the personality of God unconsciously glorifies himself. He throws out a magnified and idealised picture of himself—himself as he could wish to be, immeasurably greater and stronger, with all his conscious weaknesses gone from him, but at the bottom the same man. He looks on the picture with admiration ; which, as he appreciates more and more the grandeur of it, grows into adoration. At last he falls down and worships. But he is not worshipping God : he is worshipping the ideal of himself, which he calls God for want of a better name.

Not long ago I came across a quotation which seems to support this statement of mine. It is a fragment of a dialogue, and is apparently taken from a Play called "The Idolater," concerning which I can learn nothing beyond what this fragment tells me. The dialogue is between a Christian and a Pagan, though I take it the word Pagan means here not a worshipper of idols, but a philosopher. The subject of the Dialogue is God. I do not give the whole of the quotation as I found it, but merely the latter part of it, which bears directly upon my reasoning, and runs thus :—

Christian : Is not His glory my glory, for, lo ! He dwelleth in me, and I in Him ?

Pagan : Even so. Thus hath it ever been, O worshipper of thine own soul.

If we look, cursorily, at a few of the great religions of the world, chiefly those of the ancient world, because they stand out plainer to us, being so far away that their vastness is lost in the perspective of time, and the outline has become clearer and more measurable to the understanding, we shall have some confirmation of this idea that God-worship is at the bottom unconscious self-worship.

The old Jewish conception of God is perhaps the most familiar to us, because it is embodied in the Old Testament, a book most of us, if not all of us, were taught to look upon with superstitious reverence as the only true revelation of God, a knowledge of which was supposed to be indispensable to our happiness and virtue.

Here we have the Jewish conception of God ; and it is easy to see that the Jewish God is, in himself, a Jew, with all the national characteristics strongly developed. Great stress is laid upon his sense of justice ; and little or nothing is said of his generosity. He is slow to anger ; but if his anger is aroused he is a terrible fellow to deal with. He nurses his enmity, and will be revenged upon his foe if he waits until the millenium. He is jealous of his power. His first commandment is "Thou shalt have none other God but me." Above all things he is narrow. He has his own particular people (the Jews), and all the rest of the world is as dirt beneath his feet. The Jews must flourish ; all other peoples must, if it is necessary, be sacrificed to their well-being. His one great passion is race-prejudice.

These characteristics are Jewish to the core. Taking the Jews broadly as a nation, even to-day, they are as their God was supposed to be in the days of the patriarchs. They have changed outwardly, but inwardly, after thousands of years, they are unchanged. One of the characteristics of their God is immutability. He does not change. In this also he is like his own particular people. They are immutable as a race. They do not change. It is because of their narrowness and race-prejudice.

[ To be concluded.—The Thesis is maintained by a consideration of many religious cults. ]

## That Blessed Word Altruism.

By JOHN ERWIN McCALL.

I may have too much prejudice against this blessed word Altruism, but there is perhaps reason for it. The Altruists (genuine brand) I have met have been, as a rule, so infernally theoretical. An instance: When at college I knew a lovely youth who was always chanting the praises of Altruism. One day he read a little essay, "The girl that nobody would dance with," which painted such a desolate picture of this girl, sitting through a ball without an invitation to a single whirl, that I was compelled to weep. The essayist exhorted the rest of the students to look after this girl at our next ball, and ask her to dance early and often—in fact, I think he wanted to get her engaged through the whole evening, in order to avoid any spectacle that might have marred his enjoyment with the more popular girls. "Think," said the enthusiastic Altruist, "of the great pleasure you give the poor girl, so long neglected and spurned of men!" It was an unprincipled thing to do, but I decided to keep my eye on this Altruist, and I learned much more from his eloquent example than I did from his eloquent exhortation. Did he dance with "Patience on a Monument"—did he marry her? Alas! no. He married the most voluptuous maid that he knew ; and I at once inferred that his nature was surcharged with a deep vein of poesy or liesy, and I considered myself "onto the game."

Another and a sadder case of Altruism in theory :—Once I found myself in St. Louis worse off than John the Baptist—not even one cent. ahead. My conscience would not permit me to think of stealing—while so many policemen were about—and it began to look anything but "salubrious" for one of Nature's noblemen, as I had once been called by a fellow-student who borrowed five dollars from me the next day. In this state of complete spiritual and financial collapse, while wandering (aimlessly, as I thought, but, providentially, as the event proved) along 5th Street, in St. Louis, I saw the sign—

OFFICE OF THE "ALTRUIST."

Paul's light at Damascus was a farthing candle compared with the rainbow I saw above the blessed word. I spelled the word backwards and forwards. I took out a Webster's Pocket Dictionary, which I had sold roastin' ears to buy, in order to make sure that I understood the term. (Alas, there are so many things in heaven and earth that are not dreamed of in your dictionary, Master Noah!). I was afraid that, like Æschylus, I would die of joy, or else, like Otway, kill myself by overeating. I conjured up repasts at all the leading hotels ; and never dreamed that I would be asked to anything less than the Lindell or the Southern Hotels. At the very least, here was an open sesame to a picnic of interminable lunch counters. I was convinced, for the thousandth time, that I, too, was a

man of destiny, and that the same power which had protected other great men in ages past was now miraculously exerted in my behalf, directing me to the office of the "Altruist." I wonder if the Editor of the "Altruist" still remembers my advent. I often think of him and his little printing-press (one of the kind alluded to by Bill Nye, "It would really have made a better cider press—it was too earnest in making an impression"); and often I wish we might meet again in a happier world—one that does not have to be saved every month or so. Well, to cut a long story amidsthips, the editor was as "hard-up" financially, if not spiritually, as myself; and, if it had not been for a dear German friend who ran an Apostle's lunch counter around the corner, and who was in a position to rescue the perishing practically, there would have been two more altruists that night seeking in superfluous exaltation the sympathy of the stars.

## The Right of Private Hypocrisy.

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How They Prolong Their Youth and Preserve Their Beauty.

*Editorial, Subscription, and Consulting Address:*

26, CLOVELLY MANSIONS, GRAY'S INN ROAD, LONDON, W.C., ENGLAND.



**SAYING THE WORLD.****Answers to Earnest Light-Shunners.***These things are a mystery to the ungodly.—McCALL.***Soul-Communion Time-Table.**

We have never had much confidence in the sporadic profanity which has hitherto characterised the efforts of reformers. Believing that the reformer would be much heiped by the consciousness that others are swearing with him we give the following time-table, and ask our correspondents to kindly send us a list of "Things to Swear At." When it is 8.11 p.m. at our office (The Temple of Wisdom), London, it is at

Boston, U.S.A.	3.28 p.m.	Constantinople	10.11 p.m.
Cape Town	9.26 p.m.	Chicago	2.20 p.m.
Dublin	7.46 p.m.	New York	3.15 p.m.
New Orleans	2.11 p.m.	Paris	8.19 p.m.
Rome	9.01 p.m.	St. Petersburg	10.11 p.m.
San Francisco	12.01 p.m.	Washington	3.01 p.m.

**Devilisms By The Yard.***Specially Inspired to John Erwin McCall.*

The wickedest in man is necessary for the best in him.

—Nietzsche.

A. F: Your boyish concupiscentiousness makes me smile.

Poetassteroid: Your owed to Hell lacks local colour.

D: Kitchener's telegram at close of the war read: The Galilean has Conquered.

M: I shud call marriage the greater of two evils; the other is life itself.

A: I can not quarrel with a married man; sympathy swallows up all my antipathy.

R: Readers of "Lucifer" will conclude that the course of free love never did run smooth.

K: That is just like the altruists; they are always doing something "unselfish," and then regretting it.

C: The Devil invented the lie in order that honest men might defend themselves against bores and other invaders.

R: Yes, Jean Grave believes in the divinity of human nature: as respects myself, he is totally mistaken.

P: The world is so far damned that we fear it can now be saved only by the most heroic hypocrisy.

T: The syllogism is as follows: A dollar saved is a dollar earned; a dollar stolen is a dollar saved; argal, a dollar stolen is a dollar earned.

G: A truly grateful mind can always see something to be thankful for. I see dozens of women every day which I am profoundly grateful that I am not married to.

T: Glad to know you are over your prepossessions. Hope you won't have any more. I've had them, and I don't want them again—would rather have any other fever.

N: Congress has decided to appoint two new members of the Cabinet—a Secretary of Peace and a Secretary of Hypocrisy. Roosevelt offered us the latter Portfolio, but we declined in your favour.

D: You are quite right; God and I are both engaged in saving the world. He has been in the business longer than I have, but He has not done any more at it than I have.

P: You say you dislike our paper; many thanks. We do not deem it our Divine duty to edit a paper which shall reflect *all* your prejudices. Try the "Daily Mail," which does not cater to a select few like ourselves.

H: The error of almost all social reforms is that they are based on logic or mathematics, and not on human nature. Humanity is not yearning for the kingdom of heaven; it does not want justice, but just wants to raise hell.

