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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*

No. 18. SPECIAL ISSUE on
Why Do The Ungodly Prosper?



The Eagle and The Serpent

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

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Principal Contents:

OUR SPHINX'S FATAL QUESTIONS: WHY DO THE UNGODLY PROSPER?

IS MIGHT RIGHT? CAN THE POOR BE SAVED BY THE PITY OF THE RICH?

The Pope, King Edward, the Kaiser, the Prime Minister, Dr. Joseph Parker, Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, and the Archbishop of Canterbury declined to answer.

Answers by Messrs. Benjamin Kidd, G. Bernard Shaw, Benj. R. Tucker, Wm. M. Thompson, George Jacob Holyoake, J. H. Levy, Canon Scott Holland, Bertram Dobell, Thomas Common, Aylmer Maude, Dr. A. R. Wallace, F.R.S., and others.

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EXTRACTS FROM JOHN DAVIDSON'S POEMS.

MESSIANIC DISILLUSIONMENTS OR FINDING MYSELF OUT.

(An Apology for Saving the World).

THE SAINTS AND SAYINGS OF EGOISM.

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Our Sphinx's Fatal Question: Why do the Ungodly Prosper?

Is Might Right?

Can the Poor be Saved through the Pity of the Rich?

The Pope of Rome, the Prime Minister, the King, and the Kaiser refuse to answer. Answers by Messrs. Benjamin Kidd, G. Bernard Shaw, Benj. R. Tucker, J. H. Levy, Aylmer Maude, Ragnar Redbeard, W. M. Thompson, Dr. A. R. Wallace, etc., appear below.

TO JUPITER.

Jove, much I marvel at the way
In which this world thou'rt pleased to sway;
No difference—none, for aught I see—
'Twix knave and honest man with thee.
Nay, if the truth must be confessed,
Full oft, I fear, Vice fares the best,
Of gold, and land, and title brags,
And quaffs his wine, and drive his nags,
Whilst toil-worn Virtue dies in rags.—*Theognis*.

ARE THERE GODS?

Yes! there are gods; but they no thought bestow
On human deeds—on mortal bliss or woe—
Else would such ills our wretched race assail?
Would the Good suffer?—would the Bad prevail?—*Ennius*.

Learned curiosity has at last met with its complete vindication and reward. With the modesty which becomes a great revelation ("The stillest words bring the storm") the Editor of *The Eagle and the Serpent* announces to the world that he has discovered the fatal question with which the Sphinx confounded the ancient Greeks. That question was, "Why do the Ungodly Prosper?" After the lapse of twenty-five centuries this question is still as fatal as ever. We put this question to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, Dr. Parker, the Pope of Rome, the Prime Minister, King Edward the Seventh, and the Kaiser. We hold that these distinguished individuals ought to be able to give a clear answer to this question or else they ought to confess their incompetence for their several positions and resign them. But they have not been able to answer the question, and three of them are now dead; the Pope has had a very grave seizure (it was just about the time that our letter would have been handed to him), and the Prime Minister has been seriously indisposed. This then is the question which the Sphinx propounds and remorselessly devours all who cannot answer it. Aye, let Society beware: this is the question which it must answer or be destroyed.

Our intention is to prosecute this intellectual fight to a "sort of" a finish. We advise those who have not done so to send us an answer to this question at once. We hereby give notice to the Colonial Secretary that we shall send this question (our ultimatum) to him immediately he returns from Africa. Gentlemen Pillars and Saviours of Society: We appeal to you to "interrogate your consciences" and your intellects (to employ the edifying phrase of Monsieur La Guillotine Robespierre) and help us confound the audacious Sphinx.

We append the Questions propounded and the replies received up to date:

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do the ungodly prosper?
2. Do present historical conditions justify the *dictum* that Might is Right? Do you conceive that this assertion ever had or ever will have justification?
3. Can the poor be saved through the pity of the rich?

With reference to question No. 2, do you think the results of the Boer, Philippine, and China wars lend plausibility to the teaching that Might is Right?

Dr. A. R. Wallace writes: "Because the rule of Might has *hitherto* prevailed it does not follow that it must *always* prevail." Do you agree with Dr. Wallace that the rule of Might has hitherto prevailed?

REPLIES:

We thank the authors of the following letters for their courteous replies:

Benjamin R. Tucker writes: (1) It is because the godly are such damned fools.

William T. Stead writes: I am much obliged to you for addressing to me your three questions, but I must beg you to excuse me attempting to answer them. To answer them off-hand would be impossible, and you don't want a treatise. How is your journal getting on? How often do you publish it, and do you sell bound volumes?

J. B. Frost writes flippantly: I do not know why the ungodly prosper, but I am glad to hear that you are prospering.

Robert Blatchford, Editor of *Clarion*, writes: The questions you ask are very interesting, but I am too busy to consider them. My own small task is quite large enough for me. I will, therefore, ask you to excuse me from entering upon so wide a field of speculation.

Dr. A. R. Wallace writes: Thanks for sending me your last *Eagle and Serpent*. Its perusal was refreshing. You are mistaken in supposing that I admit that "might was right" at any time. That it was held to be "right" by those who had the "might" may be true—and also sometimes by the weak who submitted to them—proves nothing whatever. The two words "might" and "right" have nothing in common. They belong to different categories, and you might as reasonably say that sympathy is blue, virtue green, and cruelty red and yellow, as that might is right.

Not the Pope but Mr. G. Bernard Shaw.

We had hoped to present our readers with a Papal Bull on this subject, but can only offer them a few of the Irish variety from Mr. G. Bernard Shaw:

Mr. Shaw writes: Your questions are enough to drive any man out of his senses. There is no more identity or necessary connection between might and right than between chalk and cheese. You had better start a discussion on the morality of Alpine thunderstorms and avalanches. Every man strives for might so that his will may prevail; and when he attains it, his will prevails whether it is right or wrong. That Will, like gravitation, is a force in itself, is true; and that the human race cannot really will its own destruction is a thing that we may at least hope for on the ground that it manages to survive. But under the rule of a standard Morality evolution is limited by the fact that at a certain point of development the individual in whom the advance is manifested (say the Superman) is attacked and destroyed in the name of Right by the other less developed individuals; so that in effect the race does will its own destruction on the plane of the Superman. And the attack presents itself to these less developed ones as an attack of right on might; for to the ordinary citizen right means thinking as he does; and the Superman who goes deeper than he into morals is just as much a rascal to him as the criminal who does not go so deep. It seems clear, therefore, that the only chance for the Superman is to acquire sufficient might to defy the efforts of the average respectable man to destroy him. Hitherto these attempts have not been successful on the physical plane. Napoleon's military system finally reduced itself to absurdity and forced the dufferdom of Europe to combine and destroy him. Cæsar, with immense social talents and moral gifts in addition to moral capacity, bribed the masses into tolerating him, but was killed by a conspiracy of "good" men who killed him on principle as a protest of right against might. So much for the Superman of action! As to the Superman who merely writes and talks, he escapes because nobody understands him. "The triumph of his principles" means their degradation to the common level, the mob accepting his teaching just as a cannibal accepts the teaching of St. John or an Oxford undergraduate the philosophy of Plato or the poetry of Euripides.

You may take it then that right (if you insist on treating it as an absolute, which it is not) can only be effective when it happens to be mighty, and that might is effective whether it is rightly or wrongly.

Mr. Shaw writes further: There is no war between exploiters and exploited. The whole people cordially consent to and approve of inequality, privilege, peerage, and monopoly, because they all have (or think they have) a chance in the lottery. The exploiting system could no more stand to-day without an overwhelming consensus of opinion in its favour—especially among the working classes—than Monte Carlo could stand if people were not willing to lose money there.

(3) That depends on what is meant by salvation. If it means, for instance, can a rich man, drawing his income from the labour of the poor, be trusted to give back enough of it in charity to avert the scandal of having people dying openly and directly of starvation about the streets, Yes. If it means even giving back enough to enable the children of the poor to be qualified by education to produce incomes by skilled industry for future generations of rich men, Yes, *perhaps* (if the rich are thrifty enough). If it means anything more, No. You cannot have a Republic without republicans, or a Commonwealth without common welfare. If the average man wishes to be a slave, the able man can do nothing for him but be a master to him, however strongly he may disapprove of slavery and wish for the society of freemen.

J. H. Levy, Editor of *Personal Rights*, writes: (1) If I asked: "Why did you kill your grandmother?" you would be justified in replying that this question involves an assumption which I have no right to make. I bring the same complaint against your question. It implies that the ungodly prosper. But this is neither more nor less true than that red-haired people prosper, or that blue-eyed Londoners suffer from indigestion. *Some* ungodly people prosper, as the writer of the 73rd Psalm long ago found out. Why should they not? (2) The identification of Might and Right either means nothing or is a denial of the existence of Right, in the only sense in which existence can be predicated of it. Your own question—"Until the facts of life are ethical, what's the use of talking about ethics?"—is not such a poser as you think. A more difficult question would be: "When the facts of life are ethical, what will be the use of talking about ethics?" We discuss ethics now, and endeavour to inculcate them, in order that the facts of life may be made ethical—or, rather, *more* ethical. "More ethical!" I can hear you exclaim. "Does not Might prevail? and has it not *always* prevailed?" I am not so mad as to deny this. Might has prevailed, does prevail, and, if I do not wind up by the assertion that it always will prevail, it is because I am averse to the use of sonorous phrases which are destitute of signification. For what do we mean by Might except that might prevails?—and what, therefore, does the assertion "Might prevails" mean except "that which prevails prevails?" I need scarcely add that the notion that a time will come when Might will not prevail is begotten of muddle-headedness. What we have to do is, not to substitute Right for Might—which is ridiculous—but to get them on the same side; not to depose Force, but to get it to take the ethical direction. (3) This leads up to my answer to your third question. Riches are so much economic force. If the pity of the rich were united with knowledge and genuine desire for the salvation of the poor—which it very seldom is—it might be made a great factor in the banishment of poverty. At present, millionaire endowments are building trouble in the future.

Benjamin Kidd writes: Assuming the ideas upon which the Christian system of ethics rests to be given up, it appears to me more natural to expect the growth amongst the occupying classes, of that phase of opinion you appear to advocate than the continued ascendancy of the influence of the altruistic ideals to which secularism usually looks forward. I have never been able to regard it as more than a kind of unconscious self-deception (itself a striking tribute to the all-pervading influence of the Christian ideals) to think that if we hold the universe to be a mere clash of blind forces, the intellect could really supply a vigorous mind with any reason for that subordination of ourselves to the interests of our fellow creatures which the conditions of progress undoubtedly require. Your effort to spread the influence of Nietzsche's ideas in England is itself evidence in support of this view—although unexpected; for one does not expect opinions of the kind to reach the propaganda stage, however firmly they may be held in private. I have to some extent made reference to the phase of thought which it seems to me that Nietzsche represents toward the end of Chapter VIII in *Social Evolution*.

Thomas Common writes: (1) This can only be answered properly (if at all) by a treatise on *The Philosophy of History*. (2) This would require a treatise on *Moral Philosophy*. I shall only attempt to condense an answer to (1): The ungodly (the wicked) generally prosper now-a-days because, with the rise of the sinner-saving regime, facilitated by the social changes brought about by the introduction of money and commercialism, the devils (Mammon, etc.) whom the ungodly worship, dethroned the righteous pagan Gods and usurped their place; to such an extent that the devils now disguise themselves as the true Gods, and their worshippers parade as the godly, the good, the just and respectable, in spite of their ungodliness. Besides the great Christian organisations in favour of sinners and the ungodly, all the modern products of the Christian regime of disguised devilry—such as the French revolution, liberalism, radicalism, utilitarianism, secularism, socialism, anarchism, slave emancipation, *laissez faire* policy, commercialism, Mammonism, millionaireism, Adam-Smithism, Hegelianism (in its English form, Green-parrotism and Toynbee-Hallism), Herbert-Spencerism, Benjamin Kiddism, etc.—notwithstanding that they sometimes contain good points, are also generally in favour of the ungodly (the wicked), and are fundamentally hostile to the justice of the true pagan Gods who rewarded each according to his merits. It

is no wonder, therefore, that the ungodly (the wicked) generally prosper in these days.

I think this view of the philosophy of history, which is practically Nietzsche's view, explains the facts of the case better than they are explained by any of the writers yet treated of in Professor Flint's voluminous *History of the Philosophy of History*.

Redbeard versus Tolstoy.

Aylmer Maude writes: (1) The reply depends on what is meant by *prosper*. (2) The apothegm "*Might is Right*" means different things in different mouths. (3) One wants first to know what "*saved*" means in this context. Returning to (2) I do not think the results of wars (known to us *objectively*) can "lend plausibility" to moral or immoral perceptions, for our faculty of approving and disapproving belongs to the *subjective* side of our nature. The fact that murder has been practised for thousands of years does not oblige me to sympathise with murder. I doubt whether Dr. A. R. Wallace, in the remark you quote, meant to say that *Might* has *always* prevailed, and I think discussion of a detached sentence—without precise definition of the terms used—generally leads not to elucidation but to confusion of thought; and confusion of thought is a thing of which we have to-day a superabundance.

Ragnar Redbeard, LL.D., University of Chicago, writes: The ungodly prosper, in my opinion, simply because they are ungodly. They neither think nor act in accordance with cut and dried commands or formulas of any divinity. Indeed, the moral precepts of all gods and pontiffs (whether political or religious) if strictly obeyed by each devotee, tend to subdue his mind and thus render him inefficient in the struggle for existence—the struggle that never ceases and is so merciless. When a man becomes really "godly" he generally develops a "conscience"; and my personal experience tells me that a man with a conscience cannot rise very high.

If engaged in politics, finance, priestcraft, or commerce, he would soon meet with disaster, when brought into competition with men who knew not the meaning of a conscience—that is to say, men wholly "ungodly." When a man is known to sincerely believe in certain ethical precepts, he is like unto the general of an army who openly publishes his strategy to the eyes of his adversary. Thereafter everything he can do may be accurately calculated by his opponent and provided against. Hence he does not prosper. He wins no victory. He conquers no new territory. All his efforts to "do things" are in vain. He is everywhere out-witted and out-generalled, and even what he has is taken from him under one pretext or another. Finally, he is reduced to a condition of poverty and consequent servitude. The ungodly man rides rough-shod over him and seizes all that he has. How long would a nation of Christs last, for example? Christ himself was an abysmal failure, and so must everyone be who attempts to do the like. Just as Cæsar crucified Christ, so all modern rulers crucify his followers. This is the reward of "godliness"—crucifixion.

As a further pointed example, take Count Leo Tolstoy and mine own self. I am thoroughly ungodly. I do not believe in any one of the precepts of Christianity—whereas Tolstoy believes in them all most literally. He proclaims his true-blue Christianity in a dozen volumes, and I proclaim my "ungodliness"—nay, utter Heathenism—in one volume. I say, every one of the teachings of Jesus is false, and foolish, and pernicious. Not only that, but I say the reverse of them is true.

Now place Count Tolstoy on an uninhabited island with me. Let his age be 25 and mine be 25. Let him act strictly upon his own precepts, and in 24 hours I guarantee that he would be my slave, or—dead. If I am any judge of human nature, the chances are that he would submit to my authority, and do what I commanded him to do. He would prefer slavery—just as all his followers now do.

Thus I would reign absolute lord and master—and if he had a beautiful young wife or charming daughter, why should I not covet and take possession of her. Clearly I would prosper mightily and he would not. Hence my argument. The world is to the Stronger, and all that is in it or on it. *Might is lord of all; and I am its prophet.*

Bertram Dobell, the well-known publisher, writes: (1) The first question is something of a conundrum. Do the ungodly prosper more than the godly? I should say that *some* of the ungodly prosper, and also *some* of the godly. Perhaps the question really means "Why does God allow the ungodly (or some of them) to prosper?" Well, that is a question which only those who are more intimate than I am with the deity can answer.

(2) To answer the second query properly would require a volume and not a paragraph. More than one chapter would be required in order to define the meanings of "might" and "right." But, after all, what is the use of discussing the matter? If might always overcomes right when the two are brought into collision (as it must do, for otherwise it would not be might) does it matter whether the fact of its being successful makes it right or wrong? The thing is so, and there is no practical object to be gained by enquiring

whether it ought to be otherwise. The question is merely an academical one. Let us take a concrete case and see what we can make of that. The late war between Boer and Briton will serve the purpose as well as any. But here there is an initial difficulty in the way. Which party was in the right? Well, in my opinion, both were; or rather both were partly right and partly wrong. (So it is indeed in most disputes—which means that there is seldom or never that absolute difference between might and right which the question assumes.) How had the Boers gained their position in South Africa? By dispossessing, despoiling, and exploiting the natives. (Of course we were, and are, open to the same reproach.) Well, if might made right in the case of Briton *versus* Boer, that implies also that if the Boers could have driven *us* out of South Africa they would have been perfectly justified in doing so. That, no doubt, was their object, and they staked their existence as a nation upon its accomplishment. They would have won the game had they been braver, more enterprising, and more willing to pay the price which was necessary in order to succeed. Upon the whole it seems to me that our success in the war does seem to tell somewhat in favour of the notion that might makes right. But, as I have said already, everything depends upon the way in which you define the words, "might" and "right." "Might" is by no means equivalent to "wrong," as the question seems to assume.

(3) There is a musty old saw about pity, which I need not quote. Of course, pity without practical help is as useless as a canvas tent in a whirlwind: but pity *with* relief is not much better. Pity or charity in all its forms is little better than a modified evil, and often does more harm than good. The man or woman who accepts pity or charity has in some degree lost part of his or her manhood or womanhood. The human race will always be wanting in nobility and self-respect until there is neither pity nor charity, because they are no longer wanted. But that time will arrive, I suspect, only when the Greek Kalends are about due. As things are at present, charity is the conscience-money paid by the exploiters to the victims of their greed; or it is the bribe paid by the fortunate to the unfortunate with the secret persuasion that, by sacrificing a little, they are securing the continuance of their own good luck.

W. M. Thompson, Editor of *Reynolds*, writes: (1) As many of the "godly" prosper as of the "ungodly." The difference between the two is that the latter are somewhat less hypocritical than the former. Yet Satan, in the end, came off second best. (2) Might is right in the estimation and practice of mankind—in the past, in the present, and will be in the future, until the dreams of supernatural Paradises are realised. And, even then, those who profess to know tell us that there is an omnipotent and irresistible power, whose will none can resist. The recent wars are mere illustrations of the foregoing statement. (3) No. The poor can only save themselves. If the poor knew enough they would act on the principle contained in Query 2. Criminals do not come within this category any more than mice, rats, wasps, or other furtive and annoying creatures.

William J. Robins writes: The poor cannot be saved by any one save themselves; and that only in so far as they acquire "wisdom and self-reliance": two things which the Eagle and the Serpent came down upon the earth to give the children of men. The great mass of human beings are to-day but the manure out of which the free individual of the future must fructify. But even now the individual who has intellectually emancipated himself from every superstition, is materially fettered by the various State and State-granted monopolies which impede social and economic intercourse between man and man. When men have self-educated themselves into the knowledge that all governmental agencies, both local and national, are nothing but artificial barriers to the infinite ingenuity of humanity—then will the day of the legislator, the county councillor, and the labour bleeder be gone. Till then we egoists must frankly and persistently practise our egoism, regarding all the unconverted as our natural prey whenever we get the chance. Meanwhile we can give the following good advice to the poor: "Do not trouble about being saved *by* the pity—but rather *from* the pity of the rich."

Canon Scott Holland writes: The poor will only be saved through the pity of the rich when that pity takes the form of enabling the poor to save themselves. All "salvation" is from within. That is what we Christians hold in the Incarnation. Man must be saved by himself. Pity, therefore, becomes man, that man may have power to win his own salvation.

Rev. John Glasse writes: I think the term "egoism" is unfortunate, especially as you very properly distinguish between a noble and an ignoble egoism. I am a Socialist, but I quite agree with you that the best rule of morals is to be true to yourself. We cannot know what is good for others except in so far as we know what is good for ourselves, and to suppress the desire for our own good is thus to arrest the forces of progress. At the same time man is a social being, and can only realise himself in and through others. The exploited have no prospect of success except through union, and could make nothing of their triumph except through union. The individual by himself is helpless. The age of alms-giving is past. It is not sufficient for the evils of our society, and is often demoralising to the reci-

pientis. Love is the queen of the virtues, but charity as a substitute for justice is hypocrisy.

In spite of these answers I sympathise to some extent with your position. I have often heard it said, for example, that my expectations as a Socialist for the future are too sanguine. It may be so. It is quite possible that society may not be able to realise such a system, but with that I have nothing to do. I must live my own life according to my own ideas, and am not going to pass the time in a pig-sty because others are willing to do so. It is the same with Democracy. I believe this to be the best form of government, but I have not, in consequence, any faith in the infallibility of majorities, nor would I submit to their tyranny.

E. Leggatt writes : (1) Because a man is less likely to succeed in life who has no abolished entirely the belief in gods or bogies. Therefore the *ungodly* prosper. (2) Might is not *always* right, but might will *always prevail* at all times, whether used physically or mentally. (3) The poor can never be saved through pity of *any one*. They will have to work out their own emancipation, or else always be the victims of their masters.

William Platt writes : The difficulty of answering these questions lies in this, that life is infinitely too complex to be summed up by any one rule—whoever tries to do this, fails all the time. Man is, and must be, swayed both by Egoism and by Altruism, at variant times and in variant degrees ; “Morality” is not so much a fixed standard as an unconscious attempt (led up to by our good and needful qualities of Idealism) to get the best developments out of any given set of circumstances. That is why practical morality always differs from theoretical.

The question : “Why do the ungodly prosper ?” admits of but one answer. Bad people are never happy—the happiest person is always the Idealist. A confusion of thought as to what is wickedness and what is prosperity have led to the shallow view suggested by the question.

“Can the poor be saved by the pity of the rich ?” There is a class of stalwart hard-working poor who are much better off in point of happiness than the average of the over-rich ; such men achieve their own salvation ; but if the question refers to the submerged class, most of them deficient in ability or stamina, then surely it is evident that the only thing which prevents this class from being entirely crushed out is the aid constantly extended, either nationally or individually, from the wealth of others.

George Jacob Holyoake writes : The ungodly prosper because they attend to the business of sin, while the godly neglect the business of duty. No condition, present or past, ever justifies might as being right. The poor never are saved by pity.

Graham Wallas, M.A., writes : I am too busy to give proper thought to answering your questions, and am unwilling to answer them without thought.

(To be continued.)

Æschylus at Marathon.

Are we Saved by Love or by Hate ?

Once for all, let us clear our minds of cant. Let us rise to the noble honesty of the Greek attitude which faithfully reflected the sanity and the sanctity of Hate. Can we find a more faithful or more inspiring embodiment of this noble pagan position than in the beautiful, hate-breathing epitaph which Æschylus wrote for himself ? Here it is :

Athenian Æschylus, Euphorion's son,

Buried in Geta's fields these lines declare ;

His deeds are registered at Marathon,

Known to the deep-haired Mede, who met him there.

We wish to offer a few observations on one phase of the opinions elicited by our Symposium. We desire to reason in the most patient manner possible with the most misguided beings who have ever obstructed human progress, we mean the well-meaning but deluded Tolstoyans. The Tolstoyans tell us that Love is the only remedy for social misery. When the Tolstoyan stands before the victim of oppression and outrage, it is thus that he addresses the suffering man : “It is true that the oppressor has robbed you not only of the chance of a decent existence, but has condemned your wife to life-long starvation and your daughters to prostitution ; nevertheless you are still more blessed than your murderer and exploiter because you have done no evil ; and you must still love the instrument of your afflictions. You are far more prosperous than he is, although you are in this sorry light, because you have the approval of your conscience even while you are starving, and

if you continue to love him till you starve to death, you will be numbered with the saints: in glory everlasting." When the Tolstoyans mock our miseries with such precious consolations (for I have but reduced their doctrines to their logical conclusion) I am compelled to say to them that it is such unutterable imbecilities as these which drive us to despair of humanity. Against such stupidities omnipotence itself must contend in vain. While these insanities meet us at every turn, progress is all but impossible—our perpetual damnation is the only thing of which we can be certain. Tolstoyans tell us that social syncope exists because men do not love enough. We believe in the antithesis of this statement—we believe that, so far as it is not inherent in human nature, social misery exists because men do not hate enough. Love rarely inspires thought, and indeed its apostles tell us that with love no thought is necessary, that love is a substitute for thought. No apostle of Hate has ever talked such nonsense—it has never been alleged that Hate is a substitute for thought, but we have abundant proof that profound hatred has inspired some of the most impressive streams of thought, some of the most powerful intellects of all time. Karl Marx, quoting George Sand, declares "On the eve of each general reconstruction of society, the last word of social science will ever be

"Combat or death; bloody struggle or extinction,

"It is thus that the question is irresistibly put."

H. M. Hyndman wrote: "It is precisely the hatred and disgust I feel for the misery, degradation and physical deterioration around me which had more influence in making and keeping me a Social Democrat than anything else." William Morris, writing on "How I Became a Socialist," says: "To sum up then, the study of history and the love and practice of art forced me into a hatred of [the existing] civilisation."

In a world whose characteristics were prevailing "lovely," love would best become a man, but in a world whose leading features are to the last degree unlovely, hypocritical and hateful, hate is the only sentiment an honest man can entertain. Hence it follows that in this predominantly hateful world, men of hate leave their impress on every page of history, while men of love, with their pale and ineffectual negations, have their day and cease to be. Hannibal, Napoleon, Nelson, Danton, Mirabeau, Byron, Attila, Morris, Marx, Proudhon—these names stand as sublime co-efficients of vast streams of Hate.

What are the greatest events in modern history, its most inspiring episodes? They are: Tell, Hampden, Milton, or Cromwell, hating and resisting the tyrant to the death; Nelson's exploits with his middies, inspired to glorious deeds by their hatred of Napoleon and the French; Napoleon's achievements with his Grenadiers, whose inspiring motive was hatred, first, of their own aristocracy, and then of the enemies of the Eagle; Paris razing the Bastille, France liquidating eight centuries of misery, Patrick Henry exclaiming "If this be treason make the most of it"; the embattled farmers firing at the Bridge of Concord (Discord rather) the shot heard round the world, the shot of which Emerson wrote: "Their deed of blood all mankind praise, Even the serene reason says, It was well done"; Victor Hugo pouring the vials of his hate upon Napoleon the Little. These are the inspirations of Hate and they are among the noblest chapters of human history.

The great Haters are the great Lovers. Love which does not hate the hateful as profoundly as it loves the lovely is mere hypocrisy. Let us seriously ask the question, Do the predominant characteristics of the present age attract or repel an honest soul—in other words, is our present age hateful or the reverse? We ought to base our answer upon the opinions of those whose honesty, capacity and experience entitle them to pronounce judgment on this issue. We present a series of such opinions in the article VIA HELLOROSA (see below). Those whom we have quoted are not journalists, statesmen, or Doctors of Divinity—but perhaps are not less trustworthy on that account. We believe that a consideration of the unbought opinions of Hugo, Heine, Lemennais, etc., will convince any free mind that the world has now reached the most murderous, most hypocritical, most hateful stage of social evolution known to history. Shall we love or shall we hate this horrible epoch which has been cursed by the united execrations of Heine, Hugo, Marx, Proudhon, Nietzsche, Shaw, Tucker, Morris, Redbeard, and Wallace? Surely, not to

hate in the profoundest possible manner, such an era, which presents an apotheosis of legitimised assassination and worshipped hypocrisy, is to confess oneself a defender of assassins and a devotee of prostitutes and pirates. When one considers the systematic slaughter of the young and helpless, when one ponders the malign influence of our boasted institutions upon thousands of young men and young women, robbing them, as it does, of their unreturning May time and condemning them to lives of unescapable ignorance, bitterness and vice, institutions which murder thousands to give to a few, luxuries as maleficent as the evils they rest upon, when one has circumnavigated this continent and sub-continent of misery, then one asks oneself the question, How can I sufficiently hate and curse this frightful epoch with which I am fatally contemporaneous?

Let us then, like Æschylus of old, go forth to meet the Mede which threatens the self-realisation of the Free, with a spirit of Hate as unalterable as his own laws, and in a manner that he will be able to appreciate. If time permit, let us give our enemy a decent burial on the field of our vindication, and if time do not permit we shall leave the dead to bury their dead. But on our field of Marathon we shall erect, with due libations, a trophy of accomplished Hate and Love—of Love for ourselves and our own, of Hate for all that threatens us and ours.

JOHN ERWIN MCCALL, Founder of the Religion of Hate.

Via Hellorosa.

Scenes on the Way to Hades by Our Special Artists.

The Engines of Hell running full blast, day and night.

Watchman what of the night? And the Watchman said, "I see a great light—in fact, I see the flames of Hell."

One cannot bring the masses to shout hosanna until one rides into the city on an ass.—*Nietzsche.*

Between the government which does evil and the people who accept it there is a certain shameful solidarity.—*Victor Hugo.*

Within the memory of man the trade of governing has always been monopolised by the most ignorant and most rascally individuals of mankind.—*Thos. Paine.*

We shall have an Emperor in Washington within 25 years unless we can create a public sentiment which, regardless of legislation, will regulate the trusts.—*A. T. Hadley, Pres. of Yale College.*

We have among us people who would like to abolish radically everything that exists and carry us back, by violence if need be, to a régime discarded and condemned more than a century ago. They are called conservatives.—*Paul Masson.*

With the development of capitalistic production, European public opinion has stripped the last rag off conscience and modesty. Each nation glories cynically in all the infamy that goes to hasten the accumulation of capital!—*Flaubert.*

This old society has long since been judged and condemned. Let justice be done! Let this old world be broken into pieces! . . . where innocence has perished, where villany has prospered, where man is exploited by man! Let these whited sepulchres, full of lying and iniquity, be utterly destroyed!—*Heine.*

We say that your society is not even a society, that it is not even the shadow of one, but an assemblage of persons that can be given no name: administered, manipulated, exploited at the will of your caprices, a warren, a flock, a herd of human cattle destined by you to glut your greed.—*Lamennais.*

What kind of society is it which, at this period, has, for its base, inequality and injustice? Would it not be well to take the whole by the four corners and send it pell-mell up to the ceiling, the cloth, the feast, and the orgy, the gluttony and the drunkenness and the guests; those who have their two elbows on the table, and those who are on all fours under it, to spew the whole lot in God's face and to fling the whole world at heaven? The hell of the poor makes the paradise of the rich. Not only has happiness not come, but honour has fled.—*Victor Hugo.*

Imperialism is a depraved choice of national life, imposed by self-seeking interests which appeal to the lusts of acquisitiveness and of dominion surviving in a nation from centuries of animal struggle for existence. Its adoption as a policy implies a deliberate renunciation of that cultivation of the higher inner qualities which for a nation, as for an individual, constitutes the ascendancy of reason over brute impulse. It is the besetting sin of all successful states, and its penalty is unalterable in the order of nature.—*J. A. Hobson's "Imperialism."*

A Practical Programme.

Ragnar Redbeard, speaking from his 3 years' experience in the Boer War, asserts that if he had 10,000 good guerrillas behind him he could paralyze the greatest standing army on the earth and make all the engines of battle ridiculous by use of the torch alone. He says *that* is exactly what will happen someday—that no reforms are any longer possible—and that therefore civilisation will have to be entirely destroyed like the old civilisations that preceded it—all of which, he affirms, were destroyed by fire.—*Chicago Letter.*

Property is Liberty. To have provisions, garments, and a house of one's own is to have the liberty, power, and certainty of eating, dressing, and lodging. Property—that is a firm, solid, palpable, concrete basis for abstract rights. Do you possess only your arms, your knowledge, your intelligence? You have but one right—that of choosing between dying of hunger and taking a master; between utter want and sacrificing your dignity, extending your hand for a little bread after having done a great deal of work; between not being clothed and wearing the livery of another. Not to have a share in property—that has been slavery, that has been servitude, that is the proletariat.—*Ernest Lesigne in "Liberty."*

Scene in the American Congress.

Opening. Prayer. House proceeds to important business. Congressman A says that Congressman B is a fraud and horse thief. Congressman B replies that Congressman A is a damned liar. Congressman A questions Congressman B's legitimacy. Congressman B fires inkwell at Congressman C. They come to blows; friends part them. Time. Congressman C (drunk) says that he can lick Hell out of any damned Democrat. Congressman D (Democrat) smashes Congressman C on the nose. First blood for Congressman D. Congressmen E, F, G, H, I, J, K, etc., rush to assistance of Congressman C. Quartette fight to finish. Time. House then proceeds to transaction of less important business.—*Liberty.*

He who would give the name of robbery or parricide to the iniquitous invention of interest would not be very far from the truth. What, indeed, does it signify if you have made yourselves masters of the wealth of another by scaling walls or by killing passers-by, or if you have acquired what belongs to you by the merciless method of the loan?—*St. Gregory of Nyssa.*

"A day will come, O St. Gregory, when that which thou treatest as robbery and assassination will become the law of the world, and when the Attorney-General will indict in the Assize Court the writers who share thy opinion. The whole of society will be founded upon usury. They will build a temple which they will call the Stock Exchange. This temple will fill the place of thy cathedrals even as thy cathedrals have filled the place of Jupiter or Venus. The priests serving in this temple will be called Levi, Arton, Reinach, Hugo Oberndoerffer. They will swindle others out of all the gold that will insure to them omnipotence. They will buy everything that is buyable, and some of the things that are not. And vain revolts against their frightful empire will serve only to make more manifest its terrible solidity."

We are living in an age of decadence, and we pretend not to know it. Not a feature is wanting, though we cannot mention the ugliest of them. We are Romans of the worst period, given up to luxury and effeminacy, and caring for nothing but money. Courage is so out of fashion that we boast of cowardice. We care no more for beauty in art, but only for a brutal realism. Sport has lost its manliness, and is a matter of pigeons from a trap or a mountain of crushed pheasants to sell to your own tradesman. Religion is coming down to jugglery and table-turnings, and philandering with mysteries, brought, like the rites of Isis, from the East; and as for Patriotism, it is turned on like beer at election times, or worked, like a mechanical doll, by wire-pullers. There is not an ounce of manliness in the country; and as for the women, nothing draws the gentle sex like a child hanging by its toenails to a trapeze, or the chance of a wounded pigeon in their laps. If there were a gladiator fight in the Albert Hall next season, and the beaten man went down, the women would want his blood. We have the honour of belonging to one of the most corrupt generations of the human race. To find its equal we must go back to the worst times of the Roman Empire, and look devilish close then.—*G. W. E. Russell.*

How Nations Die of Indigestion.

By One of the Brotherhood of Thieves.

It is no libel on the characteristics and tendencies of the present or any other age to say that the rich are growing richer and the poor poorer, for such is the inevitable result of the natural law of financial gravitation. Just as easy and naturally as a moist snowball gathers size by rolling down hill, does money gather accretions of interest by steadily descending the gentle declivity of time. The farmer who mortgaged his place complained that, while he worked hard every day in the week, the mortgage worked nights, Sundays, week-days, and all, and so in the end beat him. It always has been thus, and always will be thus.

Money makes money with but little or no effort on the part of the owner, and the larger the sum of money, the larger, of course, are its aggregate gains—the huge pile amounting higher and higher by a never-ceasing arithmetical progression. In getting rich the chiefest obstacles are encountered in securing the first five or ten thousand dollars—the first snowball to start down the hill.

Various moral, economic, and social questions arise in view of these facts ; but there is no good in discussing them. The facts are before us, and they cannot be annihilated or ignored. It would be better for all parties to accept them, and govern their actions accordingly, than to spend time, breath, and energy fruitlessly, in trying to fight against fate.—*Bankers' Monthly*.

(And so civilisation is doomed just because Karl Marx did not understand the money question).

LITERARY NOTICES.

We have received from Mr. Grant Richards "The Story of Mary MacLane." By Herself. (5/- or 1 dol. 25 cts.) Mary agrees with us that the Devil alone can save the world. The following extracts will indicate that Mary belongs to the glorious company of the true apostles :

Nature is one long battle, and the never-ending perishing of the weak,—I know the world quite too well to put the slightest faith in its voluntary kindness of heart.

In my intensest desires—in my wildest longings—I never go beyond *self*. The ego is the all. Always I talk about myself on an occasion of this kind. Indeed, my conversation is on all occasions devoted directly or indirectly to myself. When I talk on the subject of ethics, I talk of it as it is related to Mary MacLane. When I give out broad-minded opinions about Ninon de l'Enclos, I demonstrate her relative position to Mary MacLane. When I discourse liberally on the subject of the married relation, I talk of it only as it will affect Mary MacLane. An interesting creature, Mary MacLane. As a matter of fact, it is so with every one, only every one is far from realising and acknowledging it.

Why the world should condemn any one for being a thief—when there is not within its confines any one who is not a thief in some way—is a bit of irony upon which I have wasted much futile logic.... The art of Good Eating has two essential points : one must eat only when one is hungry, and one must take small bites.... I find that the Devil rules and owns the earth and all that therein is.

Happiness is its own justification, and it should be eagerly grasped when it comes. A world filled with fools will never learn this.

From Mr. Grant Richards (Leicester Square, London) we have also received John Davidson's "Self's the Man" (5s.) and his "Testaments" as far as issued. The following extracts from these works establish Mr. Davidson's position as one of the master legislators of the Future Race :

I have told you The Testaments of the Vivisector and of The Man Forbid. I am now about to tell you THE TESTAMENT OF THE EMPIRE-BUILDER. Afterwards I wish to tell you the Testaments of the Harlot, the Artist, the Christian, the Mendicant, the Criminal, the Millionaire, the Proletarian, the Convertite, the Evolutionist, the Deliverer, and others that are eager to be told. I understand that these Testaments are likely to displease religious and irreligious minds, the pessimist and the optimist alike. I therefore invite the attention of free intelligences, and, if it may be, of intelligences which, although not free, are yet able to elude the vigilance of whatever creed, system, or theory has them in charge.

Excerpts from John Davidson's Poems,

Unless otherwise stated the extracts are from
"Self's the Man."

Materials of Hell? The altruists;
Agnostics; dreamers; idiots, cripples,
dwarfs;

All kinds of cowards who eluded fact;
Dwellers in legend, burrowers in myth;
The merciful, the meek and mild, the poor
In spirit; Christians who in very deed
Were Christians; pessimistic celibates;
The feeble minds; the souls called beautiful;
The slaves, the labourers, the mendicants;
Survivors of defeat; the little clans
That posed and fussed, in ignominy left
By apathetic powers; the greater part
Of all the swarthy, all the tawny tribes;
Degenerates; the desultory folk
In pleasure, art, vocation, commerce, craft;
And all deniers of the will to live,
And all who shunned the strife for wealth
and power:

For every soul that had been damned on earth

Was damned in Hell—set there, replete with pangs,

To watch eternally the infinite
Delight of Heaven, extorted from himself
And those beside him in the rampire built.
Eternal justice, it was good to see
Dives in Heaven and Lazarus in Hell
Maugre two thousand years of Christendom!

A dream of blasphemous inspiration? No;
If Justice is, then there is Justice now;
What is, will always be, if Justice is.

Do I believe in Heaven and Hell? I do;
We have them here; the world is nothing
else. —*The Empire Builder.*

'Good people, honest people, cast off your books,
'And stand erect, for few are helped by books,
'What! will you die crushed under libraries?
'Lo! thirty centuries of literature
'Have curved your spines and overborne your brains!
'Off with it—all of it! Stand up; behold
'The earth; life, death, and day and night!
'Think not the things that have been said of these;
'But watch them and be excellent, for men
'Are what they contemplate.'

—*The Man Forbid.*

'The quaint abortion, Man,
'Possesses conscience. Hearing, feeling,
taste,
'Sight, scent are shared alike by Him and us,
'But what this conscience is no beast can tell—
'Unless it be some special cowardice
'In honour held by Man's perverted heart.
'Certain it is that necessary deeds,
'The lustful propagation of His kind
'Or happy slaughter of His enemies,
'This mouldering conscience turns to mortal sin.
—*The Empire Builder.*

All these I saw at home in Heaven. All these!
And all who challenged fate and staked their lives
To win or lose the prize they coveted,
Who took their stand upon the earth and drew
Deep virtue from the centre, helped themselves,
Desired the world and willed what Matter would.
—*The Empire Builder.*

'Tis cowardly to say, "Thus fate ordained!"
Defeated men must fester in disgrace,
Or cut their throats, or die contending still:
Oh, learn to love yourself;
Consider how the silent sun is rapt
In self-devotion! All things work for good
To them that love themselves.

Urban. He has another use for his mishaps
Than to regret them.

Pasqual. What may that be?

Urban. Why,
To digest them, Pasqual. Hence have we brains!

A mental mastication, slow and sure,
Eupeptic consciences and wilful blood
Transform our blunders to experience, sinew
And staple of all wisdom.

Learn to forgive yourself;
Though you were Judas, learn to forgive yourself.

You grant humanity consists of men?
I am a man; so when I serve myself
I serve humanity.

My Lords, it is with nations as with men:
One must be first. We are the mightiest,
The heirs of Rome; and with the power
there lies

A ruthless obligation on our souls
To be despotic for the world's behoof.
Ruthless, I say; because the destinies
Admit no compromise: We must be first,
Though everlasting war cement each course
Of empire with our blood; or cease to be,
Our very name and language in dispute.

Egoism and Altruism.

Definitions and Illustrations from "Liberty."

Altruists build in the air. I have unbounded faith in what is called human selfishness. I know no other foundation to build upon. When we cease quarrelling with this indestructible instinct of self-preservation and learn to use it as one of the greatest forces of nature, it will be found to work beneficently for all mankind, and "the stone which has been rejected by the builders will become the chief corner-stone."—*Mrs. E. D. Linton.*

The discussion of Egoism *v.* Altruism in *Liberty* has been very interesting. To me there is no such thing as altruism—that is, the doing of anything *wholly* for the good of others. We do things for self-satisfaction. I wonder if there are any altruists who would go to hell (presuming there be a hell) in order that their neighbours should go to heaven (presuming there be a heaven)? There is no hope of reward in hell, and a true altruist must expect no reward for his acts. One who would undergo all the tortures of hell so that his neighbours could enjoy all the pleasures of heaven would be an altruist indeed.—*J. A. Labadie.*

Egoism is not merely an idea. It is a fact—the force of a man untrammelled by superstition. It may be more or less generous or ungenerous; thus he may be called selfish or unselfish in the common speech. He may be more or less impulsive, more or less deliberate and reflecting. He may so feel and act as to be called very dutiful, but the Egoist relation to all objects is conditioned quite differently from that of the mentally unfree man. If he cares for others it is not because he is taught that it is his "duty"—a teaching which puts a fetter in place of attraction; but it is because he is built that way, and this he knows.—*Tak Kak.*

George Eliot on the Moral Littleness of Non-Egoists. In proportion as morality is emotional—i.e., has affinity with art—it will exhibit itself in direct sympathetic feeling and action; and not as the recognition of a rule. Love does not say, "I ought to love"; it loves. Pity does not say, "It is right to be pitiful"; it pities. Justice does not say, "I am bound to be just"; it feels justly. It is only where moral emotion is comparatively weak that the contemplation of a rule or theory mingles with its action, and in accordance with this we think experience, both in literature and life, has shown that the minds which are pre-eminently didactic, which insist on a "lesson," and despise everything that will convey a moral, are deficient in sympathetic emotion.

"Duty" never would be missed. The genius performs his benefits for mankind because he is obliged to do so and cannot do otherwise. It is an instinct organically inherent in him which he is obeying. He would suffer if he did not obey his impulse. That the average masses will benefit by it does not decide the matter for him. Men of genius must find their sole reward in the fact that thinking, acting, originating, they live out their higher qualities and thus become conscious of their originality, to the accompaniment of powerful sensations of pleasure. There is no other satisfaction for the most sublime genius, as well as the lowest living being swimming in its nourishing fluid, than the sensation, as intensive as possible, of its own Ego.—*Nordan.*

I use the term Egoism, like Stirner for acts of normal self-possession and self-expression, excluding blind crazes, fanaticism, the influence of fixed ideas, hypnotism dominating the subject and rendering him more of an automaton than an individual, although he goes through the motions. Rewards and punishments, promised and threatened, appeal to the Egoism of ignorant believers, but there is also an anti-individualistic craze or fascination in religion, and love and business, when the idea rides the man. In the last analysis it is a question of sanity or insanity. Egoism is sanity. So we use the term, and as Stirner's book, "Der Einzige und sein Eigentum," has long been before the world, his admirers have a good possessory title to this term.—*Tak Kak.*

[The file of *Liberty* contains elaborate and most interesting discussions on Egoism and Altruism. Send stamp for terms for loan of this file.—ED.]

Messianic Disillusionments.

The Confessions of a Disgusted Saviour.

A Reformer's Discouragements and Consolations, or Finding Myself Out!

Life is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel.—LANDOR.

Learn to laugh at yourselves, ye higher men, as one must laugh. All good things laugh.—NIETZSCHE.

We resume our apology for saving the world—there is nothing, perhaps, which calls for more apology. Will the rest of mankind pardon us for assuming that *they* need to be saved

Every reformer must have often thought of himself, in the apt language of Nietzsche's "Zarathustra," as a "kind-hearted old fool." This epithet (minus the adjective) is an old friend of ours, familiarised to our ears by the patient iteration of a mother-in-law, to whose soul Reform is Prison—that the Devil is the author of all progress is, in fact, the only belief which we hold in common with this legal chum. There is no ambiguity in our mother-in-law's attitude towards reform movements. Having sent to our energetic contemporary, the "Truth Seeker," a somewhat advanced article, we asked our lawful parent whether she thought Mr. Cohen would publish it. "I dare say he will," she replied; "A man who will seek truth will do anything."

We have in our possession several bulky envelopes unknown to history by the titles, "Hints to Reformers," "Confessions of a Reformed Reformer," "Cautions to Cranks," and "Advice to Would-be Saviours." As money is rather scarce with us, we offer the whole of this job-lot of bagged illusions to a cold and cruel world at less than the cost of the old butter-paper, envelopes, and Beecham's Pills ads. on which they are written. No doubt every kind-hearted old fool has his own bag of analysed illusions—if not let him start a reform journal and his candid friends will start the bag. For instance, here is a letter written us by a very successful and distinguished London author:

I fear that my own experience, extending over several years, of the work to which you appear to have devoted yourself does not warrant me in giving you either encouragement or support. It is ploughing the sand. I have been in some waste places of the earth where something does grow on sand—but nothing grows on this sort of sand.

I notice that you speak in your letter of publishing Radical literature at your own expense. Keep the money in your pocket or give it to the first poor devil you see cold or hungry in the streets. You will then do some good either to yourself or someone else.

Yours faithfully, GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Why do reformers plough the sand, indeed? (Do not tell me, cynic, that it is because there is nothing else for a reformer to plough). Being an egoist, I cannot tell a lie about this matter. Ploughing the sand is just our way of having fun—that is all there is to it—it is merely a dissipation or orgie with us—to save the world. We admit that now and then we yearn for the old-fashioned Roman orgie which was certainly more thrilling, but egoism, alias wisdom, counsels us to avoid thrills unless medically prescribed by ourselves or other trustworthily guide. Will the reader observe that I am finding myself out and telling myself out?

[Announced Articles are necessarily held over.]

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Announcement Extraordinary.

Mr. J. J. TERRETT as Associate Editor.

Editorial Duëlsm: A New Departure in Journalism.

If a striking proof of our disinterested (but not uninterested) devotion to Truth were needed, it will be found in the instalment, in our next issue, of a permanent opposition staff with Mr. J. J. TERRETT in supreme command thereof. With characteristic self-suppression we have applied to Mr. TERRETT the proud title of the DEVIL'S ADVOCATE, a gracious act which must not be interpreted as any derogation of our personal claims to the same epithet. For what is the Devil's Advocate but a champion of forlorn or unpopular causes? And what truth can hope to flourish until smug Conventionality has branded it as diabolical?

We do not doubt that our readers will perceive the immense advantages of the controversial regime which will begin with Mr. TERRETT'S induction into the Editorial chair. For, while the two Editors are in complete agreement in their devotion to Egoistic and Individualistic ideals—are one in the enthusiasm with which they hail the Nietzsches, the Emersons, the Thoreaus, the Stirners who have proclaimed the Sovereignty of the Individual, they are as far asunder as the poles with respect to the economic measures necessary to realise the Paradise of the Free. For instance, while Mr. TERRETT looks upon the article below, "Socialistic Stupidities," as the inconsequential vagaries of a visionary, his co-editor accepts the same article as a fair appreciation of the Collectivist tendencies of the day. We do not hesitate to claim originality of conception in the scheme of a Competitive Editorial Chair, and we are equally certain that our readers will reap untold advantages in the representation in our columns of the two great schools of economic thought. The innovation is so striking a one that we have found it necessary to coin a word for its due expression (duëlsm which means dualism plus duelism) which word we herewith present to the learned philologists with our compliments.

Mr. TERRETT requires no introduction to London radicals, but our foreign readers ought to know that he is an ex-West Ham Town Councillor, a Labour Stalwart, a champion of open spaces and public rights of way whose record as such is written in deeds, a practical stormer of closed Senates who is usually represented by East London political cartoonists as armed with a crowbar of a healthy business appearance which he wields unmercifully against closed Town Halls and public galleries—an allusion to an incident in Mr. TERRETT'S career which Mr. Harmsworth's journal, the *Evening News*, described in the flaming bulletin: WEST HAM COUNCIL STORMED AND TURNED OUT.

However much the Editors may differ on other points, they yield undivided allegiance to Benj. R. Tucker's inspired utterance, "In every intellectual contest, he is the real victor who gains the most light," and they are one in their adoption of the battle cry, Lay on, Macduff, and damned be he who does not cry "Enough"—if beaten in fair controversy.

JOHN ERWIN McCALL.

SOCIALISTIC STUPIDITIES.

The Thirty-Six Trades of the State.

By ARSENE ALEXANDRE (translated from the French by BENJ. R. TUCKER).

The doorkeepers of the chamber of deputies ejected the other day a worthy man wearing a blue blouse and carrying a basket—a peasant who was determined to make his way into the Palais-Bourbon, and who cried with all his might: "But don't I tell you that I want to see the State?" This man was in his right. When they ask him for money, they say to him: "It is for the State," and when he wants to see this State of which they talk so much, especially when the appropriation bill is under discussion, they laugh in his face. After all, perhaps his attention was not evil; he desired to bring the State a goose from his farm, or a pair of ducks, or a toothsome chitterling. But they hustle him about, and he is forced to go back with his basket to his country home, without knowing what the State looks like. Let him be consoled; he is not the only one, and we ourselves should have been much embarrassed had he asked us for the information.

We hear the State spoken of continually; we are not acquainted with it; we have the greatest respect for it; we know that it commits many stupidities, but that it commits them with authority. When an omnipotent king said; "I am the State," we had the resource of representing to ourselves the State in the form of a luxurious and haughty gentleman, with a handsome aquiline nose, holding a globe in one hand and a sceptre in the other. This always gave a feeling of security. Now it has no form; it is formless. It is a mist behind a wicket; it is a prison door or some decorated person. We are at liberty to suppose it to

An Appreciation of

“The Law of Civilization and Decay.”

By The Rev. PHILIP HENRY WICKSTEED, M.A.

Our notice of this very remarkable book has been far too long delayed, and even now must be inadequate. It is impossible to read “The Law of Civilization and Decay” without receiving a powerful impression. But it is very difficult to form a clear and coherent conception of its teaching. Repeated and earnest study leave us by no means satisfied that we have fully grasped its argument, and our attempt to expound its main theses must be taken with due reserve. Of this alone we are satisfied, that the book is capable of doing great mischief if taken as a ready-made key to unlock the mysteries of the evolution of social forms ; and that it is capable of doing great good if taken as a challenge to the reinvestigation of history, and still more to a renewed attempt to grapple with the theoretical aspects of those economic phenomena which are within range of our actual observation to-day.

We understand Mr. Adams to maintain that the two main factors in history are Fear and Greed (p. ix.). But this statement will be entirely misleading unless we understand the wide scope which he gives to the workings of fear ; for we must place to its credit not only the whole range of religious phenomena, but also the most striking manifestations of personal valour and the artistic impulse. In a word, by Fear Mr. Adams means belief in the unseen.

In France the churches long were miracles ; the chronicles are filled with the revelations vouchsafed the monks ; and none can cross the threshold of one of these noble monuments and fail to grasp its meaning. They are the most vigorous of all expressions of fear of the unseen. The Gothic architect heeded no living potentate ; he held kings in contempt, and oftener represented them thrust down into hell than seated on their thrones. With the enemy who lurked in darkness none but the saints could cope, and them he idealized. No sculpture is more terrible than the demons on the walls of Rheims, none more majestic and pathetic than that over the door of the Virgin at Paris, while no colour ever equalled the windows of Saint Denis and Chartres.

To Greed, on the other hand, we are not to give any corresponding expansion. We are not to take it as including the primitive forms of industry by which man extracts from nature the things that he desires, nor even the primitive forms of rapacity ; but we are to confine it to the more elaborated and higher ranges of the acquisitive instinct which the usurer in ancient Rome or the great financier in modern London illustrate.

History, since the rise of Christianity, is very largely the story of the conflict between the imaginative type inspired by fear and the economic type inspired by greed. A society living in dispersion and poverty, and in the main satisfying its own wants, favours the imaginative type. A concentrated society, with an elaborated system of division of labour and exchange of products, evolves the economic type. When in war the arts of defence are in advance of those of attack, there is an obstacle to effective concentration, and we have such social forms as characterise the early Middle Ages in which isolated independence is always possible and systematic concentration difficult. Hence the imaginative glories of mediæval society with its poetry and chivalry. When the financiers are able to control the government and keep vast armies, the members of which are mere wage-earners, the wielding of this irresistible police makes their rule absolutely despotic, whatever may be the political forms under which it is veiled. The most elaborate and subtle of their engines which has been evolved, or at least perfected, in quite recent times is the control of the currency. The financiers constitute, of course, the class of creditors, and a contracting currency favours them. By successive limitations of legal tender they can thus perpetually strengthen their position. The gold mono-metallism introduced by the financiers of England at the beginning of this century, and by the financiers of Germany after the Franco-German war, constitutes the master-stroke in this policy. We note in passing, therefore, that the bimetallist will find a most effective ally in Mr. Adams. But the control of paper money and legal tender is only the last phase of the strategy of the usurer. In earlier periods what he aimed at was the actual control of bullion, and accordingly a large part of Mr. Adams' work consists of an attempt to track the movements of bullion. Behind this movement, however, lies a commercial history which covers the movements of Wealth in the larger sense, and of this distinction Mr. Adams is perfectly aware, though we think he fails to give it due emphasis.

When in conflict with the religious or imaginative type the economic type is invariably victorious. But there are other forms of energy of a tougher and more elemental character,

and perhaps more akin to greed itself, with which it has to fight harder for victory. Thus when the usurers of early Rome were in conflict with the farmers, on whose energy both in peace and war they were forced to depend, they were obliged to make large concessions, until the very energy which they had liberated by the emancipation of the Plebeians brought about vast conquests and concentration, which again made the economic type supreme. But the wealth of Rome was based simply and solely upon plunder. Italy was never the centre of exchanges, and as there was no real commercial or industrial basis to her prosperity, it could only be maintained as long as there were healthy countries to conquer, and an un-failing stream of plunder to enrich her. Indeed her conquests and the resultant concentration at Rome actually impoverished Italy so far as her natural resources were concerned. For, according to Mr. Adams, there is a relentless law by which the lower organism always beats the higher in the basal strata of industry. The well-known Graham's Law declares that bad money will always drive out good, which simply means that if two coins will perform functions of currency equally well, but one of them will perform the art or other functions of metal better than the other, the coin more worthless for other purposes will be the one selected to perform the functions of currency. It is really no more than a special application of the principle that men will prefer the cheaper method of accomplishing their purposes rather than the more expensive. If then we once admit that workmen are helpless counters moved by the capitalist or usurer, we shall perfectly understand the extension of Graham's Law, by which Mr. Adams declares that the more tough and submissive type of labourer whose standard of life is low, will always beat the more vigorous and exacting type. Hence, when Egypt and the East became one whole with the West, the Italian farmer was ruined. Indeed, almost the only Nemesis, according to Mr. Adams, that ever waits upon the usurer is due to the fact that he seldom has self-restraint enough to allow his victim to remain alive in order to feed him with his blood. At last the wealth of Rome was exhausted and the great capitalists were compelled to shift to a place that was, at any rate, somewhat nearer the actual centre of exchanges.

The city which Constantine planted in 324 on the shore of the Bosphorus, was in reality a horde of Roman capitalists washed to the confines of Asia by the current of foreign exchanges; and these emigrants carried with them, to a land of mixed Greek and barbarian blood, their language and their customs.

Here, after certain fluctuations, an unusual state of equilibrium was reached, for the new aristocracy consisted of Armenians, "as strong an economic type as ever existed in western Asia," whilst the Slavic peasantry beneath them belonged to a type "amongst the most enduring of mankind." Thus there was no lower type by competition with which the peasantry could be further impoverished, and no higher type by which the financiers could be supplanted. But the Crusades put an end to all this. For, by opening up the sea-ports of the Levant, they withdrew the current of trade from Byzantium, and caused the rise of the great Italian commercial cities. But later on the development of the mariner's compass, diverting commerce from the overland to the ocean tracks, again shifted the commercial centres from Italy to North-Western Europe. Spain and Portugal bringing the mines of the New World and the new hoards of India within range of European greed, rose to brief eminence. But they were too thoroughly imbued with the imaginative and military spirit to be able to hold their own against the economic type developed by England. England founded her supremacy first on the spoliation of the church, second on piracy, and finally on the shameless plunder of the wealth of India—the land to which precious metals had been steadily flowing from time immemorial. And now all the phenomena that heralded the fall of Rome are to be read large in England. The "stagnant pools" of the unemployed are an exact reproduction of the Roman proletariat that had perforce to be fed at the public expense. There is only one difference, but that a vital one. Rome replenished herself from the provinces, and what we call the barbarian invasions were simply the proclamation that the police regulation of the necessary immigration had ceased to be efficient. There are no sources from which we can replenish our exhausted stock.

Such is the picture presented to us by Mr. Adams. Before proceeding to a few critical remarks, let us once for all express our admiration of the picturesque vigour with which the book is written. The passages that we have incidentally quoted have already amply illustrated this characteristic, and the following brief summary will serve as a further example.

The Romans amassed the treasure by which they administered their Empire, through the plunder and enslavement of the world. The Empire cemented by that treasure crumbled when adverse exchanges carried the bullion of Italy to the shore of the Bosphorus. An accelerated movement among the semi-barbarians of the West

caused the agony of the crusades, amidst which Constantinople fell as the Italian cities rose; while Venice and Genoa, and with them the whole Arabic civilization, shrivelled, when Portugal established direct communication with Hindostan.

The opening of the ocean as a highroad precipitated the Reformation, and built up Antwerp, while in the end it ruined Spain; and finally the last great quickening of the age of steam, which centralized the world at London, bathed the earth in blood, from the Mississippi to the Ganges. Thus religions are preached and are forgotten, empires rise and fall, philosophies are born and die, art and poetry bloom, and fade, as societies pass from the disintegration wherein the imagination kindles, to the consolidation whose pressure ends in death.

We must resist the temptation to further citations. Whether describing the monied race of Byzantium "who sucked copious nutriment from the pool of wealth in which it lay," or giving a character sketch of individuals such as Thomas Cromwell or Nathan Rothschild, or describing a cathedral, or sketching a movement, Mr. Adams wields a concentrated force of expression which makes whatever he writes fascinating.

We have done our best to present Mr. Adams' case, though, as already said, we are by no means sure that he would accept our version of his story. The truth must be told. Though Mr. Adams' writing is always clear, his thought remains to us involved and self-contradictory. We have found no clear definition of what he means by the "acceleration of movement" which is perpetually figuring as the "mysterious and relentless" power that sways the fate of humanity. And although we fully accept the sincerity of his declaration that he entered upon his investigations free from any preconceived bias, and that his theories are the effect and not the cause of the way in which the facts unfolded themselves to him; yet as we read his book we cannot resist the conclusion that in detail he over and over again reads back from the observed effect to the supposed cause; of which cause he has little or no evidence, except that, according to his theories (however reached), it must be there to account for the effect. Considering the portentous nature of the conclusions at which he arrives, and the small number of the facts on which they are based, we shall do well to give heed to the existence of the *lacunæ* implied in such phrases as "*For reasons which are not understood* . . . the purchasing power of bullion temporarily declined." "What Europe gave to the Europeans in return is *not so well known*." "*Why the short period of expansion which followed upon the re-establishment of the silver standard in the West should have been succeeded by a sharp contraction is unknown*." (The italics are in every case our own). Still more serious is the failure of Mr. Adams' account of civilization to explain some of the most important and some of the most familiar facts of history. It is simply impossible to understand, for example, how the Roman civilization, as here depicted, should have elaborated through century after century that august and admirable system for the regulation of human affairs that is embodied in Roman Law, and so far as we can follow the argument of the book it seems to allow no room for the possibility of that restored prosperity of England under Alfred and his successors, which is none the less a fact. It may no doubt be urged that Mr. Adams cannot be expected fully to substantiate his position and apply his principles to the whole area of history, in a short treatise of 383 pages. But this plea can only be accepted if we find that on his chosen ground at least he is unassailable. And this is as far as possible from being the case. Indeed the argument often appears to us so faulty that we are ourselves amazed at the respect which the author's extraordinary vigour extorts from us. For instance, on pp. 203 and 204 Mr. Adams represents "the strain to which the population of Great Britain was exposed during the 250 years which intervened between the crisis at the close of the 13th century and the discovery of the mines of Potosi in 1545" as extraordinarily severe. Whereas we learn from Mr. Steffen's tables that the greater part of this period coincides with a state of things peculiarly favourable to the English workman, in which his purchasing power was greater than it has ever been again until well on into the 19th century. And again on p. 207 he says:—

Had Potosi been discovered a generation earlier, the whole course of English development might have been modified, for it is not impossible that, without the aid of falling prices, the rising capitalistic class might have lacked the power to confiscate the monastic estates. As it was, the pressure continued until the catastrophe occurred, relic worship was swept away, the property of the nation was redistributed, and an impulsion was given to large farming which led to the rapid eviction of the yeomanry.

Thus it will be seen that the supposed fact of *falling* prices for a generation before 1545 enters into the very heart of the argument. Now, according to Mr. Steffen's laborious investigations a marked *rise* in the price at any rate of the necessities of life had set in exactly a generation earlier—that is in 1500. Again, the splendid passage already quoted as to Gothic architecture, concluding with the declaration that "no colour ever equalled the windows of Saint Denis and Chartres," is followed by the assertion that in the 13th century the glory of the Gothic began to fade. "By the reign of St. Louis it had passed its prime."

Now it is to the 13th century that the windows of Chartres belong, St. Lewis himself being one of the chief and one of the earliest (we do not say the earliest) of the donors. And on p. 367 the author falls into the strange mistake of treating the chivalric worship of women in the Middle Ages as equivalent to developing marriage "into the most solemn of sacraments." No doubt it is an exaggeration to say that the chivalric idea of love absolutely precluded the idea of marriage, but this popular exaggeration is far nearer the truth than Mr. Adams' equating of the two. The statements found on different pages of the book are often extremely difficult to harmonise. Thus on p. 167 we read :—

From the middle of the twelfth to the middle of the thirteenth century was an interval of almost unparalleled commercial prosperity—a prosperity which is sufficiently proved by the sumptuous quality of the architecture of the time. Unquestionably the most magnificent buildings of modern Europe date from this period, and this prosperity was not limited to any country, but extended from Cairo to London. Such an expansion of trade would have been impossible without a corresponding expansion of the currency, and as no new mines were discovered, recourse was had to paper. By the year 1200 bills of exchange had been introduced, and in order to give the bill of exchange its greatest circulating power, a system of banking was created which operated as a universal clearing house, and by means of which these bills were balanced against each other.

Thus the architectural splendour of the period is taken as a proof of the presence of concentrated wealth, whereas on p. 380 we read :—

Before the opening of the economic age, when the imagination glowed with all the passion of religious enthusiasm, the monks who built the abbeys of Cluny and Saint Denis took no thought of money, for it regarded them not. Sheltered by their convents, their livelihood was assured ; their bread and their robe were safe ; they pandered to no market, for they cared for no patron. Their art was not a chattel to be bought, but an inspired language in which they communed with God, or taught the people, and they expressed a poetry in the stones they carved which far transcended words. For these reasons Gothic architecture, in its prime, was spontaneous, elevated, dignified, and pure.

Perhaps there is no positive contradiction here, but the second passage certainly seems to state that there may be a most imposing architecture without a basis of economic concentration. And again, on p. 89 we find the following fine description of a contrast between the eastern and western styles of architecture.

Saint Sophia is pregnant with the spirit of the age of Justinian. There was no attempt at mystery, or even solemnity, about the church, for the mind of the architect was evidently fixed upon solving the problem of providing the largest and lightest space possible, in which to display the functions of a plutocratic court. His solution was brilliantly successful. He enlarged the dome and diminished the supports, until, nothing remaining to interrupt the view, it seemed as though the roof had been suspended in the air. For his purpose the exterior had little value, and he sacrificed it.

The conception of the architects of France was the converse of this, for it was highly emotional. The gloom of the lofty vaults, dimly lighted by the subdued splendour of the coloured windows, made the interior of the Gothic cathedral the most mysterious and exciting sanctuary for the celebration of the miracle which has ever been conceived by man ; while without, the doors and windows, the pinnacles and buttresses, were covered with the terrific shapes of demons and the majestic figures of saints, admonishing the laity of the danger lurking abroad, and warning them to take refuge within.

But we have already seen that on another page the period during which many of the great Gothic cathedrals, such as Amiens and Reims, were built, is regarded as one of *economic* supremacy in the *West*, and we are told on p. 365 that Byzantine architecture did not bloom until the invasions of Aleric and Attila had imported an *imaginative and religious element* into the *East*.

But after all these are comparative trifles. Our main objections are based, first, on the quite exaggerated significance which Mr. Adams appears to us to attach to mere movements and manipulations of specie and currency as distinct from genuine industrial movements ; and, secondly, on his confident belief (contradicted, we should say, by general, if not by universal, observation), that the workman with a high standard of life will be beaten in industrial competition by one with a low standard.

When we note the conflicting interpretations of those phenomena of currency and competition which are before our very eyes, we are impressed with the extremely hazardous nature of a theory of history built upon the interpretation of similar phenomena most imperfectly known to us and often only known at all inferentially ; and we close the book with a deepened conviction that a sound theory of Economics, based on the actual, not the hypothetical, psychology of conduct, is the first requisite for a sound theory of history.

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