

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Money

Freedom Press (London)

September, 1889

(By an Individualist Anarchist.)

THE two primary purposes for which the State exists are these: (1) the maintenance of legal property, from which arises an monopolies of land and means of labor; (2) the manufacture of the so-called legal currency, or medium of exchange; and practically speaking Anarchists attack these two monster evils.

The State has arisen out of and still embodies the principle of Mutual Distrust, and it can only be abolished by replacing this principle by that of Mutual Confidence. Doubtless there is a tendency towards a growth of this latter principle, and hence the hope of the Anarchist.

People who are not accustomed to question the present order of things, treat as perfectly chimerical or utopian the idea of doing away with money; indeed the belief in money and the belief in property are probably the two most deeply rooted superstitions that have ever occupied the human mind. Nevertheless they are but superstitions, and until they are eradicated the progress of mankind towards happiness will be very slow indeed. These two superstitions produce much misery in society, perhaps one half of the existing misery, the other half being

Freedom Press (London)
Money
September, 1889

Freedom: A Journal of Anarchist Socialism, Vol. 3, No. 34,
online source RevoltLib.com, retrieved on April 12, 2020.

theanarchistlibrary.org

produced by our social customs regarding the sexual relationship, and these being the prime causes of social misery, there is no prospect of its alleviation until these causes are removed.

I give a person a piece of gold or silver stamped by the government, in exchange for something which he gives me. This arrangement simply implies an absence of all mutual confidence between us. We require the State to make these coins because we cannot trust one another, but see what this want of mutual confidence implies. It means that no exchanges of commodities or services can take place except among people who happen to have got hold of these pieces of gold and silver. -This means:

(1) That the exchanges of commodities and services must be considerably fettered.

(2) That those who have no money must ever be at the mercy of those who have.

Money therefore, simply fetters exchange of commodities and services and consequently hinders the final cementation of society. This is so true that I don't suppose many people will heed it.

I quite agree with Sir Thomas More, and indeed every day's experience of life impresses its truth more and more upon me, when he says, "So easy a thing would it be to supply all the necessities of life if that blessed thing called money, which is pretended to be invented for procuring them, were not really the only thing that obstructed their being procured."

Exchange is the life-blood of human society, and money which is an obstacle in the way of exchange is a vampire draining that life-blood.

But how can we do without money I Plainly enough. Start exchanging on any mutual principle upon which you and others can agree either by a Free Currency representing your goods or on a principle of Free Communism, meaning the free giving and taking of services, or by any other mutual arrangement you may devise.

A. TARN.