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Egoism Vol. II. No. 12.

Georgia & Henry Reppogle

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would furnish all with comfortable homes in a short time, and thereafter even with luxuries from like exertion. Following this is its patent privilege, customs robbery, protective tariff, barbarous decrees in social and sexual affairs; its brutal policy of revenge, instead of restitution, in criminal offenses, and finally its supreme power to violate the individual, and its total irresponsibility.

Pointers.

On the second page, note EGOISM's change of address.

Saintly John Wanamaker in his report for 1892 characterizes the shaking up that "Printers' Ink" gave him as a case that has been "indecently pressed upon the public." How about you, John?

John Beverley Robinson of New York has recently undertaken in "Solidarity" to draw its editor into a course of reasoning, but that is impossible for the average Communist-Anarchist. Mr. Robinson can save postage by reading all the manuscripts he intends for those people to his cat. The effect will be just the same.

The millionaires are losing confidence in the militia; its members are too much in touch with labor to properly shoot it down, so the Secretary of War proposes the job for the federal army, as the Indian sham won't work much longer. Republicans are to be commended for the recklessness with which they rush to the destruction of the governmental idea. In that sense the triumph of the Democracy must be looked upon as a great calamity. Interference with commerce, a menacing concentration of troops at the great cities, and a few more charges of treason would have enlightened the masses more in one year in regard to the source of industrial oppression than can be done in ten under the temporizing of Democrats.

The Oakland "Populist" of December 14; finds that there is a circular afloat purporting to have come from the pope of Rome directing the extermination of all heretics in the United States. There is of course nothing remarkable in such a discovery by

such a paper, but it furnishes that disciple of liberty an occasion to get off the following choice piece of primitive rot: "... It is only fair to presume that the charge is worthy of credence and steps should be taken by our general government to prevent and if need be crush out of our fair land all such insurrection, and restrict by the strong arms of the law all persons subject to the caprice of any king, prince or potentate outside of the United States of America." All this and more like it under the flourished and humorously befitting headlines: "Patriotism vs. Priestcraft." This is presumably another "Rationalist" with a Salvation Army frankness regrading his choice of superstitions.

Well can the plumb-liner afford to stand by his irrepressible string ever emphasized by the weight of fact. That persistent little line, like a spider's web in the morning light, annoys even J. W. Sullivan, of the "Twentieth Century." Opportunist, with no action today that he holds himself accountable to consistency for tomorrow; propped like a true politician upon the esteem of numbers by his identity with their errors; in no immediate danger of reaping popular disgust for fooling with a temporizing policy, he is nevertheless found grasping at every shadow of a straw which might tend to fortify his alleged complacent position. Not long ago, finding that George Macdonald was editing a People's Party paper he drew comfort from the fact by concluding that Mr. Macdonald, who is at heart a philosophical Anarchist, likes Anarchism only as a dream; which would mean that he regards State Socialism, of which political Individualism is a negative defender, as just the thing for practical everyday use. The paper with which Mr. Macdonald is identified was previously edited by him as a Republican paper, from which according to Mr. Sullivan's inference, we should conclude that while Mr. Macdonald regarded Anarchism as the pinnacle of political science, he believed protective, supervising, monopolistic Republicanism the thing for everyday use. But the fact probably is, that, unfortunately, Mr. Macdonald had in both cases to turn out such political feed as the public would buy,

the fact that self-pleasure must be the final motive of any act; thus developing a principle for a basis of action about which there can be no misunderstanding, and which will place every person squarely on the merit of his or her probable interests, divested of the opportunity to deceive through pretension, as under the dominance of altruistic idealism. It will maintain that what is generally recognized as morality is nothing other than the expediency deduced from conflicting interests under competition; that it is a policy which, through the hereditary influence of ancestral experience, confirmed by personal experience, is found to pay better than any other known policy; that the belief that it is something other than a policy—a fixed and eternal obligation, outside of and superior to man's recognized interests, and may not be changed as utility indicates, makes it a superstition in effect like any other superstition which causes its adherent-s to crystallize the expediency adopted by one period into positive regulations for another in which it has no utility, but becomes tyrannical laws and customs in the name of which persecution is justified, as in the fanaticism of any fixed idea.

Another part of its purpose is to help dispel the "Political Authority" superstition and develop a public sentiment which would replace State interference with the protection for person and property which the competition of protecting associations would afford. Then the State's fanatical tyranny and industry crushing privilege would torture the nerves of poverty-stricken old age or pinch tender youth no more. The most disastrous interference of this monster superstition is its prohibition of the issuing of exchange medium on the ample security of all kinds of property, which at once would abolish speculative interest and practically set all idle hands at productive labor at wages ever nearing the whole product until it should be reached. The next interference is by paper titles to vacant land instead of the just and reasonable one of occupancy and use, which with the employment that free money would give,

equality depends upon equal resistance, diplomatic or otherwise, what are its chances in an absence of enlightenment in which the individuals of the majority so far from *intelligently* using this resisting power in their own behalf, do not even believe that they should do so? The result of a general conception so chaotic, would naturally be what we find: the generalization from the practical expediency of certain consideration for others, crystallized through the impulse of blind selfishness into a mysterious and oppressive obligation, credit for the observance of which gratifies the self-projecting faculty of the simple, while the more shrewd evade its exactions, and at every step from the manipulation of the general delusions of religious and political authority to the association of sexes and children at play, project themselves by exchanging this mythical credit for the real comforts and luxuries of the occasion, which the others produce. Thus in addition to the natural disadvantage of unequal capacity, the weaker are deprived through a superstition, of the use of such capacity as they have, as may be seen in their groping blindness all about us.

To secure and maintain equal conditions then, requires a rational understanding of the real object of life as indicated by the facts of its expression. It is plain that the world of humanity is made up of individuals absolutely separate; that life is to this humanity nothing save as it is something to one of these; that one of these can be nothing to another except as he detracts from or adds to his happiness; that on this is based the idea of social expediency; that the resistance of each of these individuals would determine what is socially expedient; that approximately equal resistance makes it equality, and on such continued and a universal resistance depends equality. This can leave no room for any sane action toward others but that of the policy promoting most the happiness of the acting Ego. Therefore EGOISM insists that the attainment of equal freedom depends upon a course of conduct-replacing the idea of "duty to others" with *expediency* toward others; upon a recognition of

and would give Mr. Sullivan little comfort if he were a millionaire publishing his best thoughts on political subjects. Now Dr. De Lespinasse who, as his large patronage of Mr. Sullivan's sociologic opposition indicates is not always ideally consistent, has expressed a desire to "hit heads" with chunks of frozen direct legislation, and Mr. Sullivan congratulates himself on having captured one of the Anarchist class leaders. And he even sucks a little drop of solace of the same kind from Victor Yarros's late political enthusiasm, believing that Mr. Yarros will want to use the "best make" when he goes into politics. If Mr. Sullivan were to separate the thoroughgoing, consistent, definite principle of anti-authoritarianism, known as Philosophical Anarchism, from the men who love to claim its prestige, he would have to congratulate himself upon there not being many Anarchists, instead of that he was capturing Anarchism with his political pain killer. The principle of No Rule will remain just the same when every biped has deserted it, and will be vindicated by its identity with social harmony when they shall seek its shelter. It is the social lesson and not untutored public expression that is needed. When the true lesson has been universally enough taught to make its political expression effective such a vote will be as useless as the untaught one now is. There is no rational excuse for Anarchists in the political camp.

Compensation.

The body and soul are one.—WHITMAN.

Like to the sea-shell's convolutions,
Tinted with dawn's soft fleeciness,
They watched thy graceful evolutions;—

No sister, thou, but "a skirt-dancer"
To be abhorred by "Puritans"!—
Whose purity I call to answer

With those who Salem-witches carted
Unto the burning stake. To whom,
No grace of limb has God imparted.

—DAVID LESSER LEZINSKY.

ANTI-AUTHORITARIANS can have no sympathy with Monarchists as such, but when the physiognomy of the Count of Paris is compared with that of Charles Floquet and the other officers of the French republic, a spontaneous and eloquent plea for the Monarchist arises. The countenance of the Populist looms up about like that of a catfish against that of a greyhound. The monarchial idea is played out, but the heartiness with which its function is accorded to physiognomical apes shows the superstition as sound as ever. Unable to escape being ruled, one fondly lingers over the idea of having the royal prerogative injected by a codfish substitute!

EGOISM'S PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE.

EGOISM's purpose is the improvement of social existence through intelligent self-interest. It finds that whatever we have of equal conditions and mutual advantage is due to a prevalence of this principle corresponding with the degree and universality of individual resistance to encroachment.

Reflection will satisfy all who are desirous of being guided in their conclusions by fact, that as organization itself is a process of absorbing every material useful to its purpose, with no limit save that of outside resistance, so must the very fact of its being a separately organized entity make it impossible for it to act with ultimate reference to anything but itself. Observation will show that this holds good throughout the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and that whatever of equality exists among members of a species or between different species has its source and degree in the resisting capacity, of whatever kind, which such member or species can exert against the encroachment of other members or species. The human animal is no exception to this rule. True, its greater complexity has developed the expedient of sometimes performing acts with beneficial results to others, but this is at last analysis only resistance, because it is the only means of resisting the withholding by others from such actor's welfare that which is more desirable than that with which he parts. If, then, (the self-projecting faculty of mankind is such that it will in addition to the direct resistance common to the less complex animals, diplomatically exercise present sacrifice to further extend self, and it being a fact that

childhood should stay and try it on the public. In a suspensive little while I peeped around the corner of a livery stable and saw the house was there yet and the new sign bravely holding its own to the post. So I walked carelessly down there and went in like a stranger. But one woman had been in, and she inquired for Mr. Joy, as she wanted to see how his polish was put on. My wife's little niece told her that though I bake the biscuit and superintend the housework and herself, that my name was not Feminine and that there was no joy about me these days except that in the bottles to which the sign referred; that it could not truthfully refer to her aunt and herself at present, when I was trying to get out the paper and establish a large trade to support it and its readers. The woman saw her blunder and a smile behind our niece's ears, and said she would call again when I was in, but she didn't—of course she wouldn't. I hope the polish will be a success.

THE MANAGER.

WE are delighted to announce that Benj. R. Tucker is publishing a book compiled from his editorials in "Liberty" setting forth and expounding the principles of Philosophic Anarchism. This is what has long been sorely needed, and will undoubtedly mark an epoch in Anarchistic propaganda. There are thousands of people ripe just now for a straight-across-the-field, systematic and condensed statement of the social philosophy which promises to destroy monopolistic privilege without inflicting paternal regulation and secure protection for life and property of citizens without making them victims of the protective agency itself. The publication of the work was suggested by John Beverley Robinson, of New York, and a list of subscribers for it headed by Dr. G. A. F. De Lespinasse, of Orange City, Iowa, who agreed to take a hundred copies. From that generous start the list ran up to over 500 subscriptions in a little more than two months. Dr. De Lespinasse is the gentleman who helped EGOISM off the little hand press upon the steam press by contributing the necessary money for type and other materials to put the whole paper on press at once. While Dr. De Lespinasse does not go without necessary food and clothes to do these things, there are plenty of more pretentious Radicals abler than he to do them, who will not even take a paper.

Egoism Changes Its Address.

On January 1, 1893, EGOISM will be removed to Oakland. Its address will be P. O. Box 366, Oakland, California. This change is a matter of convenience to the publishers and will not affect the character of the paper. For the benefit of the greater portion of our subscribers, who live east of the Rocky Mountains, we may state that Oakland is just across the bay from San Francisco on the east side, and all except ocean mail arrives at Oakland first, and as there is less of it to handle it is distributed more promptly and there is in every way a superior service. We live there and can save a nice item of ferriage and car fare as well as time in getting our mail. Besides we save one cent postage on each paper of a considerable list of San Francisco subscribers; that is, the State Socialistic mail service charges us a cent each for delivering papers that we put in the home office, but it will carry the same papers from Oakland to San Francisco and deliver them for one cent per pound. Don't forget the change of address.

Managerial Experience.

My dear, very dear, almost too expensive readers: It is now early morn, long till daylight and the next day after Christmas. We had apple dumplings and rain for Christmas. I am up and the fire is burning, on one end of the table lie the breadboard and dictionary, and at the other lies my scrawling hand; it is not always well to tell the truth unless you have something pleasant to tell it. On the breadboard I shall soon cut out our breakfast biscuit and from the dictionary (which the lean man who made the Freethinkers' Handbook gave me) learn the meaning of many of these words. I hasten to assure you that with much swear, sweat, and a vacant chemical education I have invented a couple of stove polishes which I am trying to get the race to brighten its way and mine with, and I am therefore too serious this month to greet and prattle to you in my usual light and rollicking manner. My polishes are very excellent indeed, I assure you; one stands on a red-hot stove without stamping a foot, and a great deal of the Other in bottles unsold. It is put on with a paint brush and a splatter on the wall, and polishes very quickly, all of which I copiously remark on large placards swarming about a stove on which I caused the polish to do its best and then put it in a show window Where reflectors glare lamp light against it evenings. I am an original advertiser and can at least attract the attention of a leisurely public. Recently I had a white board painted black in such a cute way as to leave in bold relief the observation, "Feminine Joy," and a hand pointing to the show window when the board should be in position. Before it was dry I nailed it up and escaped down town while my wife's little niece shielded by the innocence of

Communist and Philosophical Anarchists. The former lays down the principle “to each according to his needs;” the latter, “to each according to his deeds,” thus it will be seen that the philosophic anarchist believes in reward in proportion to merit, hence regards the institution of private property, maintained in the absence of force or fraud, as an essential condition of *Individual Sovereignty* and social progress. Johann Most, editor of *Die Freiheit* (German), represents the Communistic element, while Ben R. Tucker, of Boston, editor and publisher of *Liberty*, is perhaps the most zealous exponent of the philosophical school. Victor Yarrows, John F. Kelly, Miss Dr. Gertrude B. Kelly, J. Wm. Lloyd, and Hugh O. Pentecost are representatives of the same school. Their economic demands consist of free land, free banking (through mutual organizations of credit) and free trade. The general assumption in the public mind that *all* anarchists are in favor of applying physical force in furtherance of their ideas, is entirely erroneous.

Editorial Itchings.

Charlotte Perkins Stetson could not live in the communism of marital harness, but no sooner was she out than she began to struggle to get in a communistic harness with the whole nation, from which there would be no divorce. Was a double harness too monotonous or has she never taken the trouble to analyze and see where the individualistic tendencies that cannot stand monogamy consistently lead. I fear the latter is true, and that Mrs. Stetson is wasting some valuable time tarrying in the Collectivist camp.

When Hugh O. Pentecost vacated the editorial chair of the “Twentieth Century” and Joseph Fitzgerald sat him on the warm place I could, upon reading the new editor’s first number, feel it in my bones that he would do something great for illiterate labor, and sure enough he has. In the issue of October 13 he reveals with a lavish hand to the People’s Party a brand new name, just imported from the Greek. It is “Laocracy,” and means rule of the people at large by themselves; not only this, but government by the laity not the professionals. Now the party can go ahead all right. I thought it strange that Weaver carried so few states, but the name probably had not soaked in well, as it had little more than three weeks to penetrate the marsh scale of the American mudsill. Next time the party is sure to win if the “experienced” editor gets the Laocratic salve rubbed in with a deft M. A. swipe.

Ambrose Bierce will now have mountains of vindication as a kind of unearned increment accruing to the prods he has given the Women's Press Association of this coast. Charlotte Perkins Stetson, who is a prominent member of that mutual amusement club, is the victim of attempted divorce by her husband, and her sister thought-radiators are glaring out their intensest rays on the subject along with their opinions on whether a literary woman can be a first class article as wife. Mrs. Nellie B. Eyster thinks they can if the husband is in sympathy with his wife's work; that the "practice of self-denial in the home-circle by the wife and husband will always result in true domestic happiness." Of course it will; how could it fail; there's nothing else to true domestic happiness but "self-denial by the husband and the wife." A Mrs. Hannah Neal says, "this city is full of women who perform literary work at home in addition to their household duties." Some were greatly worried about the divorce case, most of them deplored it, and all breathed that if literary pursuits did interfere with the incubating function they should of course be promptly abandoned. Now Ambrose, don't fire into this flock again; let the children catch them under a sieve baited with the laurels of temperance literature.

The most outrageous and inexcusable crime that has in a long time been committed in the name of the State was the late butchery and extermination of a tribe of Indians in Mexico by the order of its militant Freethinker president. This man who loves to coerce the assumption of church authority with another quite as absurd, gave away for the surveying of it, some land that did not belong to him. The occupants and therefore just owners refused to give their homes to men who had no other claim to them than that of gift by a man who did not own them. So on the strength of as plain a superstition as ever

Anarchism per the Encyclopaedia.

EGOISM'S friend, George O. Lee of Fresno, Cal., lately discovered in the Americanized Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. X., page 6038, by Belford-Clark Co., Chicago, 1890, the following surprisingly accurate popular interpretation of Anarchism:—

Anarchy is that system of voluntary Socialism—sometimes called individualism or mutualism—whose battle-cry is "Down with the State." Its earliest exponent in America was Josiah Warren. He was an associate of Robert Dale Owen at New Harmony, Ind., where in 1825 a Communist society was started under the most favorable auspices. But it was not until the failure of his experiment that Mr. Warren worked out his new principle of "cost the limit of price." Mr. Warren maintains that labor expended forms the only equitable element in the cost of an article, and insists that all natural elements, such as land, should be free to all, and that interest on money could be abolished by issuing labor notes based on labor performed. His ideas are treated by Stephen Pearl Andrews in his work *Science of Society*. Proudhon, the French economist, arrived at the same conclusions about the same time; the only difference between Warren and Proudhon is in the application of some of the details. Anarchists are divided into two schools, namely, the

Whether people holding my view are less highly evolved, or less philoprogenitively superstitious, is a question which, happily, they may help decide for themselves. The utility of one method or another method is to be decided by the circumstances of the occasion.

G.

racked an early-day Christian, he made many hundred other men go out there and kill the people who refused to recognize his right to give away their homes. This handful of State victims, men, women, and children, fought to the death with a heroic desperation that is the peer of anything in history. And this piece of modern feudal slaughter and conquest is based on the idea that society has defensible rights which its individuals have not; that a number of individuals with each admittedly no authority over his neighbor, can in some mysterious way confer upon another man of similar prerogative the right to dispose of one of these same neighbor's affairs. No God-head, three in one or one in three, ever outdid such absurdity or engendered more ferocious tyranny than that of this Mexican "Rationalist" ruler.

I recently enjoyed the pleasure of meeting Hamlin Garland. Although it only took us a minute and a half to get into an argumental skirmish, I like him very much. His easy unpretentious, genial, democratic and quiet manner coupled with his earnestness and his sympathy with the down-trodden make him delightfully companionable. He has deep, spiritualistic eyes, or the kind that open into a back parlor, a full emotional nature, and is a natural people's man who will undoubtedly make much more stir in the world than he has already done. He espouses Individualism, and discovering EGOISM under the favorable auspices it enjoys at the Los Angeles public library, thought he would like to see its publishers. So our friend and prospective Egoist, David L. Lezinsky, ran me, the loose one, down and kindly brought me before Mr. Garland. But like other mortals the latter is subject to disappointment, for in addition to any possible deficiencies, he soon found me a "Tuckerite," whom he regards as not as effective workers as they might be if they would only get into the procession and

help boost it up the hill of liberty by the winding and zigzag path of politics. His Individualism allows him to work for its realization with the People's Party. I, however, have grave doubts about its being thoroughly consistent, and believe that if he would revise it with me a few months he would be too tired to speak before Single Tax clubs and Populists as he now does.

The State is the State still, no matter by whom manipulated. The air was not yet clear of the odor of bad breaths jubilant over Cleveland's election, when the San Francisco "Examiner" began bidding for an alliance between the Republican and Democratic conservatives against the Populists and radical Democrats for the avowed purpose of preventing "any wild experiments with monetary legislation." It is power every time that lies at the bottom of politics. Note these bitter enemies smirking overtures preparatory to a mutual defense of their feudal privilege. To all except the most superficial observers this ought to reveal the weather-tanned throat that authority is most anxious to keep its subtle clutches on. It will allow popular regulation of almost anything else, because all other things are of minor importance to the money monopoly; it must not be disturbed at any cost. This is the hinge upon which swings the whole autocratic institution, and the one which will place the lily monopolistic claw on the trigger of the deadly Winchester should popular awakening be of a nature to offer a ray of hope in that direction. But so long as agitators are content to spend lung and pencil on better methods of taxing, government ownership of railroads, and such other matters as are unlikely to be accomplished, or if accomplished still of little importance beside the money monopoly, so long will the old political masks do. The fiat-money cry did not trouble the great beast, but when there is talk of repeal of the prohibitory ten per cent tax on state

parent, just as the conduct of other non-invasive people is. Or perhaps the child serves the parent in return more willingly, and makes the burden lighter. Such slavery is desirable even among equals.

The impulse that prompts interference with the suppression of children by parents is not an expression of equal freedom, but of the steam which regulated by competition makes a corresponding equal freedom; it is the desire to arrange the universe to suit ourselves. Equal freedom as I see it, is the terms of a compromise which allot equally each his own according to a rule which the necessity of all would spontaneously maintain; and it rests upon more or less equal strength tempered by the degree of completeness with which each contending party subjectively appropriates the condition of the other, and finally, by the completeness with which the onlooker appropriates the condition of each. He is the irresponsible, all-powerful majority. If he completely senses the condition of both, he will not side with one more than the other, and will set an ideally just compromise, becoming in his might a pillar of the only justice we can conceive. If he fails to searchingly appreciate both sides, and asserts the preference of his own prejudices, he becomes an irresistible tyrant instead, as ruthlessly arranging things to suit himself as one of the subjects might have done upon conquering. So I readily appreciate how one looking on punishment prefers no pain inflicted when he does not himself feel the pangs of invasive conduct by children. But that is a refusal to appreciate the condition of *both* sides and is turning a deaf ear to pain caused more deserving folks who had not aggressed; it is only the freedom without the equal. It may be remembered that a child is as brutally indifferent to justice and responsibility as inexperience and animality can make it and, as a parasite, has less claim to equal freedom at the hand of its parent so far as right of claim goes, than a horse or cow who *pay* their respective ways. Interference with cruelty to lower animals is more justifiable in the sympathetic sense.

child proscribed by its parent and existing at her expense, does not disturb me half so much as it would to contemplate a parent obliged to either sustain a child and let it do as it pleased or abandon it, the only condition consistent with that devotion to abstract liberty which cannot bear the idea of restraint even to the extent of responsibility. I am not so disturbed at witnessing a blow from the mother's hand to prevent her babe from touching a red-hot stove that I regard the blow as unwise, because it forestalls the experience resulting from the pain, and at the same time conclude that a blow so given is represented by the minus sign while it gives more of the required pain than the burn which could impart experience only by the pain it gave. It strikes me that a red-hot stove can inflict a wound infinitely more painful than any blow which does not break bones. And if the blow with less pain could mean as much don't; to the babe's mind as the burn so much gain for the babe. It is on this line that reasoning from cause to effect saves us much useless pain; we sense the consequence without so much physical destruction as is otherwise necessary. It is the easy side of this principle which is in my opinion the only defensible part of my friend's position on restraint. But that is a question of "does it pay" the parent; here comes in her right to economize by making the treatment more severe for the child, which will force it to realize its position before it is too late for anything besides a regret. There may be numerous ways of seeping in experience without pain, as seductive as the painless dental operation, but such things may easily be beyond the reach of a normal income, and more shocking education may have to take their place. Otherwise the rearing of a child might necessitate absolute sacrifice of the parent. And the idea of a slave whom one is suffering for and toiling to maintain is slightly absurd. To enslave in any legitimate sense requires the subjugation of someone at least capable of independent existence. If a number of children are maintained at a parent's expense and one is less invasive than the rest his conduct is more commended by the

banks, and other agitation looking to a system of credit with all the advantages of coin, and limited only by the labor product to base it on, the bristles begin to rise, and even defeated Republicans will do better. And yet, we have Democratic voting Anarchists in Boston! Verily, our "Over-Man" is yet a long way off. It is a little gratifying to EGOISM's illiteracy though, to see the conventionally educated folks who love to ignore it, make all the most ridiculous divergencies from the plumb-line and cling to them.

The People's Party in Kansas recently sat down upon the proposition to have the usual inaugural ball when its governor is seated, because it is an expression of a fashionable life that can exist only by monopolies and plundering of the common people. So far well enough. But the cloven foot was betrayed when some old fanatic with but one faculty declared that dancing was immoral and that when a woman went on the floor to dance she departed from the path of virtue. This is true or not according to the standard used in measuring such an imponderable idea as virtue. If exercising in any degree the faculty which enjoys opposite sex is unvirtuous, then dancing is not virtuous, for the magnetism and *mingled*, promiscuous magnetism of opposite sex is one if not the main inducement to dance. But if a mild form of such exercise is immoral what is to be said of the more ardent one suggested by swarms of unmortgaged children on mortgaged farms. Dancing is pleasant and pleasure is happiness while it lasts. If the common people of Kansas think pleasure immoral why didn't they toil away and suffer all they could while the old parties practiced pleasant vice. But the sting of this criticism is not that inconsistency; it is that these people are crude enough to believe that Statecraft can save them, and being so are fanatical enough to devote their power to enforcing the prejudices which constitute their ethics, while the solution of the great industrial question which their votes were to settle is untouched. So long as bipeds carry "sacred" things about them to protect, so long will they

fail to penetrate the political sham, and so long will monopolists be safe. Let people be rakes and whores and practice all the private vices they can pay for, while you do us the industrial freedom you have promised. We are waiting for the failure of your scheme and a trial of ours. Don't keep everybody waiting while you spend your time preserving the virtue of a few of the enemy's dough-faced women.

H.

When it is self-supporting it is independent of its parent, and outside alliances possibly conflicting with the parent's desire cannot violate, as before, the terms previously contracted with the parent regarding property. The child then bears no different relation to the parent from that of any other creditor so far as the right of disposal is concerned, and society may consistently interfere on the grounds of liberty coupled with responsibility. And with this concession to society comes its obligation to help collect debt, to which interference its new member is subject if the parent presses her account. It is the parent's guarantee of control of her product that gives her disposal of the child as against society, and such control must be absolute so far as such product extends. As the child's product takes the place of the parent's in its maintenance, in that degree does the child become a partner until the parent no longer furnishing capital, shall control none. And it is this and this only that can under equal freedom consistently stand between the child and absolute destruction by the parent if she so desires.

Holding this general view, I have found my friend's deduction from the "no duty" idea too mechanical, and of course on the other hand I find her position on punishing or placing consequences for the undesirable conduct of children too dominated by a kind of blind devotion to the idea of abstract liberty. For instance, I do not reluctantly *admit* that others must for a time decide what is for a child's welfare, I proclaim it. It serves the child at once with a half a lifetime's experience, and gives the parent control of her own. I am glad that necessity will if nothing else can teach people to assume control of their own. If I have a regret about the parent dictating the child's course, it is because the parent must take so much trouble in addition to providing food and shelter, and not because the child cannot succeed better in doing as it pleases at somebody else's expense. I love liberty for its convenience, and *equal* liberty because it has more of that convenience than the short end of *unequal* liberty. Therefore subjectively appropriating the condition of a

or resistance are the very basis of the concept. This then leaves the relation between parent and child to be determined by its relation to those between whom conditions of equal freedom do exist—the parent and those who might interfere.

After guaranteeing immunity from violent destruction of life, if equal freedom secures a benefit more doted on than another, that benefit is the possession by each of his other awnings, and the unquestioned right to use, abuse, or dispose of them to suit himself. In the absence of a contract for maintenance conceding to someone else a share of control, this right is openly and unconditionally violated by interference with a parent regarding her child. It is her property—the product of her labor as clearly as any implement or garment made and paid for by her could be. To a germ generated at her own expense, she has added particle after particle and provided condition after condition until it is a more or less self-sustaining individual and, so far as outsiders are concerned, in the degree that it consists of her product it is hers to preserve or destroy, assault or caress. They *own* nothing in it and they cannot, without violating their contract to grant property rights to the parent, form an alliance with the child against the parent, as they might with an independent equal against assault from the parent. They have conceded her right to dispose of her own, and to resist that disposal is a clear violation of the concession. So far as society was concerned, the germ was hers to nurture or destroy at any stage, and under absolute dependence that relation does not change from one stage to another of growth. To deny her right of attack after birth and before independence, could be equaled only by denying her right to “commit” abortion, which can be equaled only by denying her right to prevent conception, all of which, indeed, superstitious, Archistic society frankly enough does. Can we make a few exceptions and move gravely on without laughing out? Under the closer analysis of equal freedom the child’s right to form alliances will be found to come *through* its independence of the parent.

Children and Equal Freedom.

It was to me an occasion of great surprise, gratification, and admiration when Benj. R. Tucker acknowledged in “Liberty” of September 3 that he had not hitherto held that parents were under no obligation to their children. I was surprised that he had not, gratified that I had done so a year or more ahead of him, and filled with admiration for the largeness of mind that can so frankly acknowledge an error. It took me half the night to get the universe back in proper relation to myself, and to Mr. Tucker without that idea. However, when I remembered that the nature of his complex pioneer work in Anarchism had kept his mind on other departments, I could easily understand how he could overlook what had held my attention as one of the sex whose task it is to be mother of the race.

But while I am proud of my friend Clara Dixon Davidson as writer of the most rational and well-written article on the relation of parents and children that I remember of reading, it has nevertheless set me reflecting until I am convinced of its error which we previously held in common in regard to children being under no obligation to parents. The position breathes to my sensibilities a marked dominance of mechanical equal freedom and theological obedience to a “no duty” postulate, “no ‘duty’ is a duty,” as it were: there is no “duty,” therefore parents are under no obligation to their children, and of course the children under none to their parents. Now since children, helpless as such, cannot possibly do anything for parents that could put the latter under obligation, I readily agree with that part of the postulate, but in face of facts I fail to see that the other part

should follow. It seems to me like positing: There is no “duty,” therefore we need not pay our debts.

It is obvious that the parent owes the child nothing, it doing nothing for the parent. But the parent does everything for the child, and if at the age of physical independence it loves life well enough to continue it with a fair degree of persistence, in equity, I see no reason why it should not pay the giver or creditor of its existence the cost of the article it prizes so highly. Let me cite an illustration with all adult principals, that in every way covers the case of parent and irresponsible child and see what becomes of the idea that children are under no obligation to parents:

A man is growing a crop in a field through which a creek flows. A freshet comes and carries away the flood fence between the crop and pasture field while the owner is delirious with a fever. His cattle with spontaneous alacrity and true Columbus instinct discover the opportunity to plunder, and begin to destroy the crop. His neighbor, knowing the owner’s helpless condition drives them out, but finds he is unable to repair the fence alone, and is compelled to hire an indifferent stranger at a high price. In addition, the solicitous neighbor has to stand in rain and water working so that he too falls sick from the exposure. Finally the possessor of the crop recovers and becomes rational, and his neighbor reports the affair. The former appreciates his crop and is glad to have it, but says nothing about reimbursing the neighbor. This irritates the latter and he informs the possessor that he paid out almost his last cent of cash for help and material and had therefore to borrow, and will look to the beneficiary for at least the cash outlay; the necessary sickness and suffering from exposure being incommensurable in money, he will leave to be returned in services in kind when opportunity shall offer. But the owner is avaricious and declares that he cannot pay for such a thing; that neighbors have always done good turns for one another without presenting a bill. The neighbor shows him that this

as others in other cases of indebtedness do, make a mutual arrangement determined by the circumstances we happened to be in. And I should not sit about an almshouse nursing my little sentiment of independence and living off the generosity of those who owed me nothing, while my child went free from a debt he owed me—not of “duty,” but for value received and acknowledged by his refusing to either pay me or give me his body, which I might dispose of at some price; for if one contends that he does not want what I have given and at the same time resists when I attempt to deprive him of it, like Lyndall of the African Farm, “I think he is a liar.”

This view of the obligation phase of children and parents seems to me much more in accord with the *spirit* of equal freedom and of Egoism than I understand my comrade’s to be. It does not engender the getting of something for nothing by making a kind of duty of the “no duty” idea, but would be so clear of the dominance of abstractions as to allow no one to take advantage of the “no duty” idea even without assuming the full responsibility there of as measured by the closest possible approximation to equal freedom.

This brings me to the second general disagreement with my compatriot on the same grounds—that of governing, restraining and regulating children, and the parent’s right to do so. While in the subjective mood I involuntarily resist any apparent domination over others which my own convenience or inconvenience has not dictated, I have by the suffering of bitter experience been brought to reflect upon the subject till I find that my interfering sentiment was at last only a species of blind selfishness instead of a sublime instinct of justice. Returning to the ever recurring social compromise, equal freedom, I can see nothing but the parent’s convenience or to put it stronger, her whim to be considered. As Mr. Tucker has well said, between parent and child there is no relation of equal freedom. The prime condition on the part of the child is entirely wanting, since independence and approximatively equal strength

rationally breed, for with the inducements of showing possible skill in human-making, and of the social bonds of protection and gratitude, and finally of stored care for helpless old age—which loves to observe long after its physical activity is past—they could spend labor and bear anxiety for a child without feeling their efforts had been wasted on one who needs pay nothing for them save the acceptance. Besides securing the parent, such a sentiment and understanding would put a sense of pride, in dependence, and dignity in the matured offspring otherwise impossible, as it realized that his or her strong arms made a shield behind which the object of gratitude reposed with a sense of security felt to be worth all that shield cost. Thus this more penetrating application of equal freedom not only metes out more exact justice for the parent, but projects the selfy instinct of the child by the feeling which loves to look into the eyes of men conscious of holding nothing belonging to them.

While in practice I may be as ridiculously negligent of my ideals as most people are, I am also as ready to parade these ideals as most easily realizable. Commencing with the earliest inconvenience of pregnancy I would keep a book, charging with the most delicate exactness of which I was capable every item of extra expense caused by the presence of the child and crediting it as well with all its services, until it should be able to keep the account itself. Then I should explain the purpose of the book, showing what it had cost to make my hopeful such a living, enjoying being as he might be, and what I desired in return in material cash and care in old age. From this on to the time when he should be self-sustaining, he should have the opportunity to curtail his indebteding by foregoing as many luxuries as his judgment should dictate. Thus he would early begin the lesson of economy and foresight which I have but illy learned even yet. At the period of majority we should balance the account, and while I should insist upon my right to the earliest possible payment of part or all cash expenditures we might,

was no ordinary little turn and meant everything of reward to the grower's season of work; that without the service he would now have no crop; that he rendered it fully expecting that the owner would feel it so; otherwise he should not have put himself in debt and suffering merely to favor another's prosperity. The logic is incontrovertible, and stings the temper of the possessor and he declares he did not hire the other and that the latter had no business to work for another without his consent then come around to collect; that he would rather have lost the crop than be forced to pay for it. Technically the solicitous neighbor is silenced, but his ingenuity comes to his rescue, and he says that defense is only a ruse to keep from paying a just debt, and that if the other will turn the cattle in and leave them until the crop is destroyed, it will be just as it would have been had the neighbor not interfered and he will then have the best of reasons for believing he had really been too swift in his solicitude. But the stickler for conveniently absent contracts shows no proof of the genuineness of his sentiment, and when the other attempts a test himself, the former interferes so violently as to endanger the life of the tester. The latter now appeals to a jury empowered to decide cases upon their merits under the rule of equal freedom. The defendant's advocate urges that all just claims rest upon contract and that no one need pay for that which he has not contracted; that the defendant did not so contract with plaintiff—could not, being totally irresponsible; that plaintiff knew this and must take his chances on getting pay at the will of the irresponsible when he works for them; that since abstract "duty" is an acknowledged myth there cannot be the slightest obligation without a specific contract. But plaintiff's advocate shows that while it is true that no contract was made and that the defendant was incapable of contracting, his actions when capable were conclusive proof that he would gladly have contracted on plaintiff's terms in preference to losing the crop, or he would have taken plaintiff's offer to wipe out the claim

by allowing the cattle to reduce the field to the state it would have been in had plaintiff not interfered; that the bill is only a small portion of the value of the crop; that the service was indispensable and there was no one else to perform it. And while the idea of abstract "duty" is a myth, nothing could be a more abject obedience to such abstraction than allowing the defendant to thus beat his creditor under cover of duty to the "no duty" idea. Therefore plaintiff is entitled not only to the cash outlay, but to labor in kind when he shall need it. Should this jury acquit the defendant and thereby tacitly admit its willingness to be treated as the plaintiff was, or should it decide that while in equity a remuneration of cash and labor expended is due, since defendant did not seize the service by force, it will as the least sanguinary method, not authorize restitution by force, but will recommend that every justice-loving citizen shall boycott the defendant until he shall feel the need of society sufficiently to at least pay this just claim, to say nothing of keenly appreciating so spontaneous a solicitude for his welfare as plaintiff had exhibited by loaning money and labor unsolicited, at that perilous moment.

This case in every way covers that of an irresponsible child and its parent, except that the neighbor did not cause the occasion for indebteding the sick man by causing his helpless existence, but as it is already admitted that a parent's bringing a child into the world does not obligate maintenance, this difference does not disperse in the slightest the force of the comparison. To cause helplessness for an independent equal, a somebody else, is plainly invasion entailing responsibility; to evolve the same from a nobody else, a germ of one's own body is not, for it was no one and besides was indisputably one's own. Like the fever-stricken neighbor, the child is helpless, incapable of even desiring its greatest welfare. Beyond a few years of protection, which no one is under the slightest obligation to give it, lies a life of rich and varied emotions. This chasm is bridged by a separate being—a being with entirely separate interests,

with the exception of an anticipation of grateful social alliance and material restitution. The child soon finds himself in possession of independent life—most coveted of all possessions. The separate being conferred it with all its richness, and asks only cost. Should that person be paid?

In full possession of my faculties, seeing clearly a future profit I contract a debt and am accommodated by my creditor whom I gladly repay. In another case I am incapable of discerning my interests, another invests in my name and lays the big returns at my feet, asking only the original investment returned. I not only cheerfully return the cost, but besides am intensely grateful for the benefit of an act which might have been left unperformed so far as my potency was concerned. If he invests in and puts in my possession something I do not want, or has paid for it a price so high that I would rather be without the article than pay it, he cannot expect me to shoulder the cost of his error. But if on the contrary, I eagerly seize it and will neither pay nor relinquish possession, it is plain that I so positively assume a negative debt that no one need hesitate to let me so uncomfortably alone that I will gladly acknowledge my avarice and pay up. Thus while the "no duty" idea clearly relieves the parents from obligation to children, it does not in the spirit of equal freedom similarly relieve the children by simply turning it end for end, but if they cling to life and its interests with the usual tenacity it leaves them at least under the obligation of a negative debtor.

Severe as the struggle is for existence under these unequal conditions, I feel not only under obligation to repay my parents in kind for their services, but am tenderly grateful to them besides for the privilege of conscious existence. It beats oblivion incalculably and I like it immensely better than being nothing at all. If the decree of equal freedom forces me to pay my debts to my competing fellows, what should it not do regarding my generous parents? If life is worth living it is worth paying the full cost of. Under this conception people might