

Egoism Vol. II. No. 6.

Georgia & Henry Replogle

October, 1891

Contents

Pointers.	3
The Philosophy of Egoism.	6
XIII	6
Editorial Slashes.	8
Valid Reasons.	13
Managerial Experience.	14
A Patriotic Peasant.	18
EGOISM'S PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE.	20

Pointers.

Owing to a number of trifling circumstances EGOISM is unusually late this time. We shall try to do better hereafter or have a better excuse for not doing so.

We wish to call the reader's attention in particular to Tak Kak's present article on the "Philosophy of Egoism." He exposes the fallacy which serves Spencer as a turntable to gain the collectivist track that justifies majority rule and makes his conclusion ordinary republicanism while his premises point straight to Anarchism politically and Egoism ethically.

On the 9th of this month another United States steamer happening to be out of port after dark ran aground and was lost. Her crew knew enough to get ashore and stay about the life-saving station. There is nothing like governmental control where efficiency is not desired. The navy department should send its forces about in regular passenger steamers manned by experienced sailors or the clothes racks may all be drowned.

The first number of the San Francisco "Beacon's" successor has come to our den. It is now the "Enfant Terrible," and voices the sentiments of Egoism and philosophical Anarchism. It is published fortnightly, contains four pages somewhat smaller than those of this paper, and is chock full of bright and witty things. The subscription price is 50 cents a year. Address "Enfant Terrible," 101 Fifteenth street, San Francisco, Calif.

It is reported that Hugh O. Pentecost has adopted the law as a profession. This step was taken it is said to more thoroughly secure the certainty of a livelihood such as his family has been accustomed to. Our good will accompanies his person, and so long as people employ lawyers we hope he will be liberally patronized. This also indicates that Mr. Pentecost has learned that men are justifiable in following their ideals only so far as they can afford such a luxury. Otherwise he would not become a legal limb.

The reason why women are by forceful legislation prohibited from wearing men's apparel is something we never could understand. The reason for the women struggling to make that, or some other change, is apparent. But now we learn that men are arrested for wearing women's clothes as well as women for wearing men's. The editor of the Livermore "Herald" was recently arrested in this City because he was found dressed in women's garments. On examination he was found to be temporarily deranged in mind. There will be no need of legislating against the adoption of women's clothes by men, for since it is only crazy men who would think of such a thing they will be cared for otherwise.

Postmaster Backus of this city a few months ago petitioned the department at Washington to permit an electric plant to be erected for lighting the postoffice but was refused on the grounds of economy. The postoffice and appraisers' building run up a monthly gas bill of about \$700, the bulk of the amount coming from the mail department. An electric plant could be put in at a cost which would be saved in three years' gas bills. This is another sample of the efficiency of centralized management of local affairs.

The California coyote scalp crop is too big this fall and the governor believes a large part of it has been imported from Arizona and Nevada, and has refused to pay some of the claims until

they are further investigated. But we fail to see why he should be so mean about it; he was elected on the Republican ticket, and if reciprocity is a good thing why not take some coyote scalps in exchange for the financial ones which congress has pulled from these states to pump the mud from our harbors or rather from the places at which we want harbors dug.

Several months ago we noted in this paper a case in Oakland of a man being arrested on a charge of vagrancy for living off of and with a woman to whom he was not married. It was then claimed that she was under his psychological influence. He is still confined and she has even joined a holiness band hoping to see him when they go to the jail to hold services, but the jailers interest themselves in the petty tyranny of keeping her from getting near him. It is a longwinded psychological influence under the defeat from which the measly press refers to her as the Chambers female.

In speaking of the refusal by Judge Thomas Paschal of Texas to naturalize a Socialist the "Examiner" of this city says: The doctrines of the abolitionists were much less consistent with the constitution as it existed before the war than those of the Socialists and Anarchists are now, but belief in slavery was not usually made a test of fitness for citizenship at that time. The constitution itself by providing for its own amendment, expressly contemplates legitimate opposition to its provisions. As a general rule men who have intelligence enough to think about public affairs and to form their own opinions are not dangerous citizens, even if their opinions be distasteful to the majority.

"Liberty" has moved into new and commodious quarters on one of Boston's principal thoroughfares. Its home now is a large and finely-fronted store which will be the headquarters for Mr. Tucker's general publishing business, the office of his "Weekly Bulletin," and a retail bookstore. The rear of the building will be fitted up for a reading room on the tables of which will be kept all the principal dailies in the English language, the magazines, radical papers, and many periodicals in other languages. We are heartily glad to see this evidence of prosperity with the old folks, and admit that we would ourselves enjoy a boom if it consisted of no more than to pay the cash running expenses of the paper, leaving us to shoulder the labor only.

Although Oakland is a regularly-appointed legal city and does most of the unjust things of legalistic civilization, it is sometimes on important occasions found the scene of common sense justice. In the divorce case referred to in last number, the despicable husband was beaten and the wife secured a divorce on the grounds of cruelty. If the property is to be divided about equally and no alimony granted, this was a remarkably just decision. We congratulate the judge who thus stood out against a crude public opinion. Not many months ago there was another notable case disposed of here upon its merits also. It was a case in which a boy 18 years old in a moment of passion stabbed his friend with whom he had been struggling in a humiliating defeat. The boy repented upon the spot and showed every evidence of the in tensest grief. The murdered man's mother forgave the boy and did not want him punished and, as no good could come of it a jury set him free. His counsel presented him with a purse that started him again in earning a living, and there has been no reason after this severe lesson to complain of his conduct. If he had been sent to prison among professional criminals no one would have felt any better and probably been not a bit safer. His dead victim, though deprived of all pleasure, does not suffer, and safety assured, we would rather be conscious of the penitent killer's freedom from inflicted suffering than know of such suffering. Perhaps a year before this case there was another in which a small man about to be beaten by a larger one, shot him in self-defense, and owing to the prisoner's previous record for quietness, and the heartbroken wife's grief, the jury parted so far from blind obedience to the

letter of the law as to set him free also. His conduct since has given no cause for regret. It is not to be inferred from this that we believe that murderers should generally be set free, but that each case should be disposed of on its own merits with such safety for the community in view as to make it as secure from the party as from other known sources of danger.

The Philosophy of Egoism.

XIII

Self-interest masks itself and says suavely “we seek the good of the species,” instead of saying bluntly “we gladly pick up all that other individuals let slip from their grasp.” Are not we the species as contradistinguished from any individual? When we go so far as to urge sacrifices for the good of the species what are we but beggars and hypocrites? Persuasion is mingled freely with flattery administered to the vanity of the individual, and it is not to be ignored that the Moral philosopher flatters himself as he proceeds to render what he vainly imagines to be a service to his species. Assuming the point of view that he is spokesman for the species, the dictum that that is good conduct which promotes the interests of the species, is a subtle mendicancy or a veiled terror in the supposed interest of the crowd. But assuming an individual point of view the question is differently shaped. It then becomes: what use can I make of the species, of the crowd?

A summary of ethical teachings by Herbert Spencer says that postulating the desirability of the preservation and prosperity of the given species, there emerges the general conclusion that “in order of obligation the preservation of the species takes precedence of the preservation of the individual.” The species, he admits, “has no existence save as an aggregate of individuals,” and hence “the welfare of the species is an end to be subserved only as subserving the welfare of individuals,” but, continues the summary, “since disappearance of the species involves absolute failure in achieving the end, whereas disappearance of individuals makes fulfillment simply somewhat more difficult. ‘the preservation of the individual must be subordinated to the preservation of the species where the two conflict.’”

There are several features of sophistry in this. Let us, however, note first the admission that “the species” is simply a convenient term. Now, where confusion is possible the safe way is to lay aside the term. When this is done it will be found that in restating the foregoing propositions it becomes necessary to speak, instead, either of all the individuals concerned except one or of all the individuals concerned, without exception. But he has seemingly used the term species in both senses or else, with his “order of obligation” he has affirmed an obligation to subordinate the preservation of one individual to that of another. As this is intelligible for the purpose of the crowd dealing with individuals but not for the individual acting for himself with himself as the victim, the immediate inference at this point is that Spencer is expounding the Egoistic logic of the crowd.

If the welfare of others is subserved only as subserving my welfare, it can never be true that I must subordinate my preservation to that of others, for this is to use the general rule, which applies while I am one of the crowd, to the exceptional case wherein I am set apart from the crowd. All conditions of benefit imply at least preservation. When I am counted out for non-preservation, for the good of others, it must be the others, not I, who do the counting out. In the first premise Spencer speaks for the individual treating the crowd from his proper motive; but in the conclusion he speaks for the crowd or some of its preserved part contemplating the sacrifice

of an individual, yet these shifting points of view are included in a syllogism. The welfare of the crowd a mediate end: that is reasonable to the individual. The preservation of the individual a mediate end to the crowd: that is reasonable from the crowd's point of view; but analysis of the diverse points of view is needed, not an attempt to link the two in a syllogism the conclusion of which is merely the crowd's conclusion.

Now examine the second premise of the syllogism: "the disappearance of the species involves absolute failure in achieving the end." Why, in fact? Because the disappearance of all others of the species but myself involves it? Not at all; but because the term species includes myself. But as far as my existence is concerned it would be the same if I alone disappeared. Do you say: the preservation of the alphabet is of no use to A except as A combines with the letters; but the disappearance of the alphabet would involve the disappearance of A; hence the preservation of one letter (A) is less important than the preservation of all the other letters? The letter A answers: "Bosh!"

Speaking for the individual, how does the doctrine of subordination of the preservation of the individual accord with evolutionary theory regarding the origin of species? Do species originate by individuals taking care of themselves under whatever circumstances, if possible, or by the contrary rule of the benevolence toward the pre-existing species? The reader can pursue this inquiry for himself; but I should like to suggest that what has been considered regarding the individual and the species can be paraphrased with reference to the species and the genus under which it is classified, thus:

The welfare of the genus is to be subserved only as subserving the welfare of the species, but since the disappearance of the genus involves absolute failure, whereas disappearance of particular species makes fulfillment simply somewhat more difficult, therefore the preservation of the species must be subordinated to the preservation of the genus where the two conflict. The fallacy of this sort of reasoning may appear without comment, in as much as the individual will easily maintain the point of view of the interested species, and will not practically allow himself to slide over to the position of the presuming genus. A supplementary remark may be indulged. The genus never licenses or encourages the origination of new species; but then the verbal sophistry of the genus would not prove to be a preventive.

I pass by the small occasion of confusion in the use of the word "end," the second time, in the foregoing statement. Total failure may be assumed to refer to failure of the ultimate aim.

TAK KAK.

Editorial Slashes.

Like Mr. de Lespinasse, I am anxious to hear one—01’ as many as he can spare—of Mr. Tucker’s “many valid reasons” for making women printers accept lower rates than those paid to men, even when their work is of “exactly equal quality” with that of men.

I readily agree with him that “as a rule, women printers’ work is not of ‘exactly equal quality’ with that of men;” but when it is, which possibility he admits, I cannot think of even one reason why they should not receive the same rates, provided, of course, that piece-work of like quality is the same quantity performed in a given time.

He further says: “If employers were forced to pay the same rates to women that they pay to men, they simply would -not employ them.” This suppositive statement conveys the idea that women are nowhere employed at the same rates paid to men. Now, under the union regulations of course the proprietors are forced to pay the women the same rates they do the men, but while they are forced to pay the same rates, they are in no way forced to employ them. Yet there are at present in this city, out of 518 printers, 55 women receiving the same rates as the men. The employers are not forced to hire them on account of a scarcity of men, for there are many unemployed male printers in the city.

G.

The “American Non Conformist,” in everything else prohibitionist, does not believe in that method of correcting the liquor traffic. It declares that forced morality fails of its object. I am glad to note that it has experienced such a change of opinion since it declared that Moses Harman received his deserts when imprisoned for publishing a scientific term in relating an outrage in sexual relations.

John Wanamaker has added another to the list of innumerable governmental blunders and jobbery in selecting an Out-of-the-way swamp for a postoffice site in this city and paying more than twice the market value. The transaction furnishes somebody a steal of a cool half million. The press is in a frenzy of indignation, but of course it is only the man that is at fault; an attack on the system is beyond press comprehension, and if it were not it would be the same, as politics is its feedpipe. Political papers and politicians and their constituents are a very undelightful wiggle to contemplate.

All instance of individuality developing and asserting itself under the withering hand of ceremonial authority occurred in New York about the first of this month. Twelve Franciscan sisters under the jurisdiction of Archbishop Corrigan laid aside their ridiculous and fanaticism-proclaiming dress and veils, the sight of which fills the Egoist with contempt and pity. These women had not gone through the regular novitiate apprenticeship, which probably accounts for the spark of independence that kindled into a more rational conduct. If under the stimulus of youthful enthusiasm they had forced themselves through the crushing discipline, they would hardly have generated enough snap to make the move even though in their normal moments they secretly desired it. The influence of association reaching over so long a time would have bound them against their reason. Even the walls that enclosed them and the floors they trod would have been embellished with endearing elements exercising restraining powers unconsciously transformed into the supposed virtue of "innate love of duty." And the irrepressible desire for the fullness of variability would have done duty as a devil's advocate in torturing to extinction a mind too large for a sea lion and too small for an average biped.

Ohio statutes require ministers who solemnize marriages to be provided with a license. A swell marriage among the upper ten was lately solemnized by a minister not thus provided, and the press states that considerable alarm is thereby occasioned lest the marriage be illegal. How proud we should be of our dough-headed educated classes downed by such a proposition! Sense for a moment the blood-curdling horror of a couple living together with the customary intentions and the consent of the neighboring women, when the man's name who performed the incantations that pacified the women was not written on a certain book. Only think of the large amount of respectable purity, home and fireside that such an omission has turned into lewd, lascivious, polluted prostitution! However, there is wealth in this case, which is an attenuating circumstance. But it now turns out that many other ministers have been guilty of the same neglect or rather ignorance of the law, and the result is that hundreds of probably poorer people have also sunken a similar depth into the same kind of degradation, and are puzzling themselves to know whether they are legally married. Such idiocy is the direct fruit of enslavement to ideas. It is the parallel of conduct in other directions by people who believe themselves free from the control of irrational ideas. A consistency—developing practice is to turn one's observing faculties also homeward about several times a day.

I had been reading so many accounts of mobbings in the South that I had about concluded that that species of insanity was due to the climate, and congratulated myself upon living out of the range in which if one person does a thing different from his neighbors it costs him his life. But when the North loomed up with the Omaha lynching of a negro and stretching and pounding him to death and afterward hanging him, my ideas of line civilization were somewhat modified, and I more definitely sensed the generalization that it is only the absence of an interesting enough occasion that conceals the beast in the most methodical of bipeds. The negro had raped a five-year-old girl and thus touched the sexual, a popular superstition, the fury of which could not be equaled by a pagan mob if its idol had been insulted. Whatever may be the absence of malice, to

rape a little girl is fooling with murder in a way that merits the promptest measures of security, but confinement would have been all-sufficient and averted the encouragement to in the future similarly deal with unpopular acts which are in no sense invasive. Poor as the quality indicated is, it is said the best citizens gave this savagery their sanction and support, and it can easily be only a matter of time when their example may be turned against them in some matter not only in no way invasive, but in the interests of their legitimate happiness and incidentally of general progress. So small a combination of force as that of a single individual cannot afford to help make mob regulation customary. It is too heavy a force to have possibly to meet single-handed sometime. Mobs do not punish acts because they are invasions, but because they are unpopular. Among the thousands of other instances the mobbing of anti-slavery people cannot fail to illustrate this to the most prejudiced.

In an editorial the “Examiner,” of this city, recently tried to prove the dangerous character of paper money by citing the condition of the Argentine republic, which it avers issued enough paper money on landed security similar to the Stanford proposition to make everybody rich, but that soon the balloon bursted and gold went up to a premium of 320 per cent and people were starving in the streets. Indeed! It must have been similar to the Stanford plan only in that the government did the business and that the paper was printed, otherwise it could not have affected gold, as it would have had nothing to do with it further than to be denominated in its terms. Starvation is the necessary result of a premium on gold, and the premium due to governmental interference with mediums of exchange. If, instead of the government issuing the money arbitrarily it had been left to individuals formed into mutual banking companies, and had been made redeemable in products, it would have answered every purpose in trade, and products instead of gold would have tended to premium. And where there is a demand for products people who can work do not starve. The republic has issued a decree limiting the premium on gold to 150 per cent and suspending gold payments for two years. The “Examiner” remarks that if the government could keep it down to that by its mere fiat it should have forbidden the existence of any premium at all. This is true, but unfortunately for that paper’s general position on money, it is just as true that if governments did not senselessly prohibit everything except certain metals from use as exchange medium there would have been no occasion for a premium at all. Gold bugs could not then turn one dollar of gold into three dollars and twenty cents in two years without turning a hand. It is no wonder people are starving when three-fourths of their labor is swallowed up by a monopoly of exchange mediums—a tax on their superstition. It is one of the beauties of slavery to an idea, the source of all slavery. The “Examiner,” with the fortune behind it that this slavery has thrown into its hands, would not be obliged to perpetuate the superstition if it knew it to be such, but it evidently does not, and probably will not in the near future.

Victor Yarros being chased into a knot-hole in the copyright discussion between himself and Mr. Tucker in “Liberty” during the fore part of this year, has now learned a new trick in discussion. He then foolishly attempted to square his position with a principle which he and Mr. Tucker held in common, but in their recent discussion on the use of the word “rights,” Mr. Yarros was

not to be caught by the logical conclusion from accepted premises; he simply repudiated the principle which Mr. Tucker thought they held in common, and the latter came limping home to soothe the sprained muscles of a leg that had with overconfidence sent a ponderous logical boot against uninhabited space. He had quoted some of Mr. Yarros's former excellent Egoistic argument against his present duty dominated position. But Mr. Yarros's "deeper thought and greater familiarity with the facts and factors of evolution" cause him to regard the idea that "enlightened selfishness prompts men to observe the laws of justice," as being "utterly false."

It must then be ignorant selfishness, or a change of heart that is to be preached in the adjustments of social contact. But there had certainly already been a fairly experimental amount of both before Mr. Yarros began doing battle against their results as an Egoist. It seems even his sublime appreciation of his ability should not be equal to undertaking a task that the generations of ages on the right track have failed in. Or perhaps duty championed by Spencer will have the opposite effect from the same championed by Kant. Perhaps the strong and crafty will no longer use it to awe and subjugate the weak and simple while the former skilfully evade its exactions. Perhaps a scientific label on duty will prevent its being more awkward for everybody to lookout for everybody else's interests than for each to lookout for his own, but it looks quite improbable.

It is not hard to understand how more primitive man, glancing unanalytically over conduct and observing the quieting effect of concession, should finally come to vaguely regard it as duty to others without discovering that instead of such, in its rational form, it is only an incident in the promotion of self-interest. But it is hard to see how a trained mind that has once clearly analyzed the idea should afterward get the generally accepted desirability of the incident formed into a positive obligation, annulling the free will of the principals whose convenience developes such incident. This is what the position amounts to, and it is the father of all the tyrannies of majority rule. For a measure is first deemed expedient, then generally desirable, therefore obligatory and of course compulsory, after which discussion of its expediency is useless. It is infinitely easier to replace a poor expedient, acknowledged as an expedient, with a better one than to replace an acknowledged obligation with an improvement, for it is the essence of an obligation to be preserved, while it is the essence of an expedient to expedite and of freedom to choose the expedient for its own sake.

Mr. Tucker mourns Mr. Yarros's renunciation of Egoism and wonders how long it will be till he abandons Anarchism. To me it seems a logical extension of his present position to abandon Anarchism. He is certainly preaching the doctrine of the Individualists if he is not really in their camp. Let obligation once be admitted to be superior to the will of its contractor and all the absurdities of majority rule are at once accepted. To exact obligation is to rule, and to acknowledge that prerogative is to repudiate the no rule principle. From this there is no escape.

H.

PRESIDENT HARRISON has received a box of tin plate from one of the tariff-protected establishments that are now to be partly supported by taxing the consumers in this country. He discovered that the tin was bright, which penetration is equaled only by that which prevents his seeing how an American can doubt that we have the mechanical skill and business capacity to

successfully establish the manufacture of tin plat-e here. Why, Bennie, that is real easy. If you had to be licked by a somewhat weaker man and had to have your hands tied behind your back to enable him to do it, you could understand why people would doubt that man's fighting capacity, since his antagonist must be disabled to insure success. That is why some Americans doubt the business capacity of men who must have competitors shut out in order to establish themselves in business. The president can understand how a failure of this protection experiment should be received with satisfaction in Wales, but not how an American can take that view of the matter. This also is easy. There is a feature about protection, and about patriotism in particular, that indicates a selfishness on the part of the American quite the equal of that which in the Briton would rejoice at regaining a lost industry. And it is this selfishness which causes some Americans who are out of the swim, to desire the failure of the experiment. When they have to go short on canned goods because cans cost more, and pay higher rents because building costs more, and have to wear threadbare clothes and shiver between cotton sheets because cloth and blankets cost more, and see the tin plate manufacturers rolling about behind splendid teams by reason of this higher cost, these Americans become unpatriotic and would rejoice at the failure of the protective scheme that raises the price of all they buy and lessens the demand for their products. Their beloved country uses them badly and they cease to love it patriotically. A few others, more consistent, and therefore more wicked, retaliate in the same way because their country similarly protects gold owners in securing to them a monopoly of supplying credit by prohibiting the competition that other kinds of property would afford if it were allowed to bear certificates as gold is. Many of us regard the manufacturing of a subsistence even more important than home-spun tin.

H.

Valid Reasons.

In No. 199 of “Liberty” the following statement was published:

As a rule women printers’ work is not of “exactly equal quality” with that of men, and even where it is, there are many valid reasons for *making them accept lower rates* than those paid to men.

[Italics the writer’s.] What is the *valid reason* that women should be made, forced, to accept lower rates than men for the same quality of work? We will take it for granted, as based on that writer’s experience, that the average male printer is superior to the average female. That therefore the average male should receive higher pay than the average female stands to reason. But according to the same authority there are exceptions: “and even where it is.” Why should the exception be made to conform to the rule? Should not a woman who stands higher in her trade than the average of her sex receive the benefit of her better performance? Is it not an unjust discrimination to pay to a woman less for as steady and as well performed labor as is paid to man? Does it not savor of bourgeois rule to draw a distinction between male and female labor simply because by doing it we can make—*force* the female labor to accept lesser wages ?

Are the same “valid reasons” as *valid* in other occupations? Suppose that in the translating business a female performed as good a job as a male, would it be justice to “make her accept lower rates” than those accorded to man, because being a female and having less power of resistance she is forced to sell her labor for whatsoever she can get?

Suppose the woman did a superior job; I have known women to do better jobs than the average man in my line on several occasions, would it be equity to “make her accept” a lesser fee because her sexual apparatus and strength in fisticuffs is different from man’s? which seems to be the only real difference there is between the two. What is the *valid* reason that a woman should receive less remuneration for her work, “even where it is” of exactly equal quality with that of a man?

DE LESPINASSE.

Managerial Experience.

I have recently been meta4ically knocked end over end and brought up standing on the lower and larger one gazing in verbose muteness at my blaring stupidity. But a thump from a met-a-4 is not so impressive as from a condensed manus, and since my readers have refrained from administering the latter 10, these many months, perhaps I shouldn't complain. The felineastrophe was due to a suggestion committed by George Forrest. He sent it here by mail and the 26th of September in an envelope, and when I broke that suggestion's seal skin it flew up and hit me square in the eyes and thus penetrated clear to the marrow of my skull and I now have it. I have it about thus: "Now that EGOISM is printed on a steam press, I take it that you do not spend any of your valuable climate worrying over the possibility of your subscription list reaching a thousand while you would be obliged to have them all by the Columbian process. Instead of spending your duration and brown locks inventing elevated railroads, I should think you would exert them at producing a machine for getting subscribers for your paper. A simple and light-running device of this kind with a positive motion—seconded by the popular purse and well patented, would monopolize the market for you and EGOISM would soon become the most circulatorious journal on the face of real estate. Other papers employing the ordinary slow and expensive hand-sewed process could not compete with you, and soon you could retain Mr. Tucker to read your proofs and suggest thoroughbred ideas on their margins to be interjected under "ring"ular auspices into the editorial matter, thus touching out the freshness of originality with the strength of experience and the polish of scholarship. Mr. Yarros would make a first-rate met-a-physician and long-suffering book reviewer. Mr. Walker would be matchless as master of poetry, sarcastician, and to list tracts at prices to suit the number ordered. George Macdonald's services could perhaps be bought to upbolster your Managerial Experience and fight your duels. Tak Kak might be induced to act as venerable sage and general reviser. Then Lloyd, your spontaneous poet, could devote his whole time to touching in song the special tenets of your philosophy. You would become the Fulton of Egoism and Anarchism, and your wife could work in her own office. You could hire a cook and get your washing done at the laundry. Besides, you could hire a tractable and muscular girl to keep your apartments excavated and arms exercised. In short, you could live like and pass for a great man, instead of a lean aspirant scratching in the would shed of journalistic endeavor. Here is a prospect, if no more, challenging if possible even a greater ambition than your derby has caged. What do you want to elevate railroads for anyway; you can't get one higher than the Pike's peek road either in altitude or fare. I earnestly hope you will sagely lose no thyme in putting this suggestion in operation. Before you is a populous world to conquer."

I have often noted the populous character of the world, especially in regions where I tried to get a job or a seat on a car, but the balance of the suggestion, and especially the conquer, has me well down. Here I have at hard study on the railroad blanched the complexion of several of my very best hairs, and sat upon my stomach on the edge of the imposing stone evening after evening making marks which I for hours vainly tried to get my wife's imagination to form into a picture of rails, wheels, coach bodies, and a voluptuous future. At the conclusion of my elucidation she

asked, with “case”hardened cynicism, what the fare would be and if the men would vacate seats in favor of the women. And in the end I will probably find that most or some part of it is patented as a clotheshorse and balloon route. Then I will realize that I have wasted invent enough to have made me a great man in which my success does not differ fundamentally from the rest of the waisted race.

As I have stated, this subscriber reaper is a stunner and mower, and I could get no more—of an idea at first how to commence to think about it than I have of fortune. But far as the definitely negative is from the definitely positive, I have at least established the former; that is, I am settled on that I must not make a machine like myself, for instance, or for subscribers, for I cannot get them at all. I have been slow to attempt such an experiment anyway, for besides the necessary material waist one has the failure to bother with afterward. This my father learned, and during the fifteen years since I have taken it off his hands *I* have been jumping busy impressing myself with the same fact and a little fodder. It must have been a subscriber machine or something of the kind that was aimed at in my case, for I have a strong hereditary transmission for subscribers which has so far not borne out the adage, “where there is a will there is a way,” save a wretched poor way. The proper interpretation of this privilege robbers’ taunt evidently refers to the probated will of a rich relative, for facts will not bear it out in any other sense.

But, returning once more to the machine, I think that if I had the use of the machine shop of my friend Irving Fox of Rochester, Minn., and some currency, I could complete a good machine before corn planting, for I am getting the principal features in mind already, and will be very grateful to Comrade Forrest when it succeeds.

With patriarchal assurance and a stubby pencil I instruct a patient and inoffensive constituency not only in political, social, and sexual science, but in that of a respectable and hard chaste domestic economy. I have lately with the help of Mr. Bell’s spavined egg-beater and a great sagacity, evolved for our midst a new culinary departure—departure, at least, is eminently if not imminently descriptive of it when placed in its final perfection and a dish before my wife and her perpendicularly extending relative. It is pancakes—not the pockmarked and melancholy variety of the restaurant, but antique-oak-complexioned sea-foamers as light as cotton and brittle as a young girl’s laugh. It was with considerable profanity and other difficulty that I acquired the habit of congealing them. At my first attempt, having built a fire a good while before, I maternally wound the flour through the fly screen bottom of a quart cup with a crank. I then dumped a teaspoon heaping full of Royal baking powder and a pinch of salt into the quart of flour and stirred them in the thirsty state accurately together. (“Royal is the best,” information for which I am indebted to the can label.) Next I added some good unbolted Jersey milk and with the egg beater churned it all into a light-dun mortar. Then I strode confidentially to the stove to bake and splash batter, but the griddle wasn’t on and the fire was nearly out. Finally the fire was revived and I tried a cake, but it was fit for nothing except felt hats and even more uncomfortable feelings. My wife’s face hopefully expectant, now drew up like a tobacco pouch, and she declared the batter had fallen. I assured her that it hadn’t and substantiated the statement by pointing to the pan still sitting on a chair where I had at first placed it. She sarcastically explained that relating to batter, the term “fallen” is cooknical, and means that the leaven has grown so weary that it don’t amount oven to one. She then discoursed in a tone

subject to a, disappointed stomach upon how I must have everything ready first, then mix the batter and bake at once. The next morning I did so, and having laid the first batter, set the dish down and intently baked the cake with the former result, for when I looked up the batter had fallen again—this time into the coal box. I could see just where I had missed and the batter hit it, and I didn't give up. The next morning I posited the batter pan squarely on the middle of the chair and proceeded to bake with a hand-knit brow and sizzling griddle, but it was too hot and burned the cakes outside while inside the mortar did not set and had to be fired—into the back yard. I now poured water on the coals which cooled them off nicely, but raised a blizzard of ashes that drifted upon the batter and wouldn't brush off. I have finally overcome the difficulty of unmanageable heat by baking on the gasoline stove. (On this the heat can be regulated to a hair, which I hook out of the batter with a fork. With everything down thus diminuatively, I like to put on my big be battered office apron and grease, the griddle with the protruding ends of the fork tangs while the bacon dangles merrily at their hilt, foiling my most frantic efforts to make it touch the griddle. I would almost rather bake the auburn beauties than eat them, while my wife and her hollow relative would rather eat than bake. It is a pleasure to see the outside of my devoted wife's face beam as she blandly places these delicakecies on its inside and extends anteriorly toward the table leaf. They were good for me too, as I gained five pounds in ten days. Before I began taking them the back of my countenance was so sharp and piercing that I could sit on nothing but a marble slab without penetrating and becoming so attached to it that I had to buzz a long time to get loose—if any conversative person was near. Now I can sit in so pliable a thing even as judgment and come off and cackle without difficulty or a bill unless the latter be handed me by the landlord or dairyman. I advise the lean reader to quit leaning on a vacated and stimulated stomach, and to fill up on such pancakes and pleasure. He will then rise up and call me blessed and his friends to subscribe.

As manager of this paper I took a walk one afternoon this month. I went out along the county road in Oakland where some of our nabobs make it count building them frugal front yards on five-acre lots at several thousand dollars per acre. Their hired men have planted low-cussed trees along the sidewalk, and as I was too torrid, it seemed delightful to soak up these nabobs' nice cool shade with my coat and help the naboblets and plump young nurses smell up the good stink that blew from the flowers through the fence. There were no "Rooms to Let" cards in the windows, though the houses were quite roomy and occupied mostly with simply standing there. But I caught many other more convenient pointers in economy. I found the hind legs of horses sticking up out of the ground all along the sidewalk and being used for hitching posts. This illustrated to me the get-there-ative superiority of the capitalistic brain. If his horses bloat up and burst from eating wet clover, instead of dragging them with a log chain and cheerless countenance to the woods and digging a hole fifteen feet square in which to bury them on their sides, he buries them on their backs in a 3x9 feet hole and lets their rear legs stick out for the purpose indicated. This saves digging, continues the use of the horse, gives him a new experience, and is mental as well as ornamental. I noticed another adaptation of means to ends (except the latter ends of apple thieves) that further evidences his insight and combining powers; he uses cast dogs instead of the ordinary howling brute. These are a great advantage over the others, for they maintain a select pose, stay where they are put, feed on scenery, and breed no fleas; they do not rear up on

one's new suit with dirty hands, nor keep him awake nights with barking; they never tear up the garden, kill chickens, come in the house, nor follow one to town, nor require a tag to keep the half-poundmaster from getting them. I wish all the cuts of our neighborhood were Of the same breed.

Many of the nabobs' lawns have only gravel walks with eavestroughs, but some have asphaltum walks, though in icy times such a sensation is not beyond the experience of even poorer folks. Thus, as in death, the rich and the poor come to the same level by different routes. Different rooting is a source of much social friction.

At one of the places there was a social and a high wire fence behind which girls with shoulders and boys with cuffs were cutting a ball with cane-bottom chairbacks and spoony glances. The papers state that "chicken salad and punch were served." Not chicken punch, I presume, but I don't know what kind of punch it was. And as for salad, the wings and breast, so far as I could see, and that was almost to the waist, looked very nice. Many of the girls wore, above the hips, only broad galluses with the sleeves and basque cut out. This was in fact the principal fairly observable feature of the occasion, and I ocularly devoured its shape with absorbing voracity and impromptu pose. These nude basques, inadvertently exposing French Norman shoulder blades and a flesh-padded collar bone, are soulrendingly seductive. Then add the clean, full white neck set off with buffalo kinked mane, and the cerebellar effect is such that I want to fly up and kick the moon over and hook the absence of that basque with my cheek and chew that neck on the cob for gum—but I won't. However, I would chew lightly, and my cheek could not injure that absence and if the paint were dry would not be injured by it. Indeed, it would not be considered check but for the presence of similarly impelled and repulsed individuals called society. Thus I reflected, and then I looked from the absent basques into the waxen faces and taxidermic eyes, which like a doll's respond only to the touch of the conventional spring. And I noted the consciousness of demeanor, and after that I didn't want to be one among them. Thus I was enabled to conclude my managerial walk with my feet while on the much scratched walls of my imagination I crayoned a picture of a social participated in by a list of widely-scattered radical women and men whose bearing and diversion pleased me immensely, and from which my declining raiment and seedling manner would not decline me. I drew the upholstered women with the appreciable suspenders, while I allowed those in smoked leather binding to wear shirred waists reinforced by rolls of cotton. I admired the ideas of the one kind and the necks of the other, and all were pleased—more or less. But I just like to like shoulders and necks and throats and mouths and eyes with foreheads above and flesh that is much and fine and firm and warm.

Yours reflectively,

THE MANAGER.

A Patriotic Peasant.

BY GEORGE FORREST.

Many, many years ago, when people were not so wise as they are now, and when they did not enjoy the glorious freedom which is our common birthright (for are we not great, free, and glorious?) there lived a peasant.

And he was happy (as peasants invariably are), and he was also fat and healthy (which is also always the case). He lived contentedly in a little cottage of his own, which had one large and beautiful room, and, besides owning the cottage, he was the happy possessor of a wife, and of a dozen children of assorted sexes and sizes. His wife he had obtained himself, and, in due course of time, the children had been provided by a wise and beneficent providence.

Thus he lived in peace and quiet, as became a good, law-abiding peasant, until a war broke out. When he heard the news he instantly buckled on his sword and went out to do battle for his country; for he was a patriotic peasant, and he almost shed tears when he thought to himself "this is my native land, my fatherland," and his breast heaved.

Before departing he had counted and kissed his children and bade his wife be a father to them, for perhaps he should never see them again. Then, as has been stated, he had buckled on his sword and gone forth like a brave soldier.

New, it so happened that the land where the peasants house stood was the boundary line for the two countries, and the west side of the house was in one country and the east side in another, and the party the peasant joined was the party of the west side; for it so happened that when he heard of the war he was on that side of the house.

Well, all day he fought like a patriotic peasant, and all day he had burned houses and barns and crops in the enemy's country, and when night came he was tired and weary and worn out and exhausted (as he well might be; and who will deny it). So, with victory written on his forehead, he hied himself to his happy home, where his peasant wife and twelve little peasants of varying degrees of littleness awaited him.

And he thought to himself thus, thus thought he to himself "Ahh! I am a brave man; I am a hero." Then he strutted along in the middle of the road and turned out for no one.

Thus he walked along toward his cottage and (as was quite natural, seeing that he was going in that direction) finally reached it.

But it was not the happy home of the morning for the east side of the house, which was in the enemy's country, was burned to the ground.

When the peasant saw this he struck his forehead and shouted "Woe is me!" and no contradicting voice answered him. Then from the house he heard sounds of sorrow, and he rushed in. Carefully he counted his children; and then he struck his breast in agony, for where there had been twelve children and one wife in the morning, there were now but six little peasants and one-half a wife. Thus he lost fifty per cent of family.

Then his anger was terrible to behold, and all night long he strutted up and down before his house (west side) and when the morning came again he buckled on his sword, and again he went forth to battle for his country, only today he fought for the east country.

Before going out he counted his children, but he could not count his wife (being a peasant, he was not familiar with fractions). Then he kissed them all, and, as has been stated, went out to do battle for his country.

All day long he fought in the enemy's country, and all day long he burned houses and barns and crops, and when night came again he hied himself in the direction of his humble cottage. As he walked along the road he thought to himself "My country, 'tis of thee" (which was very patriotic of him). When he reached his cottage he found that it was not there (he did not even see the hull), and he struck his forehead and cried "Woe is me."

No longer were there any happy children, and not even a portion of happy wife; all, all were gone, and his capital was one hundred per cent less than it had been two short days before.

In those days there were no pensions to (over his case, so all he could do was to sit on the ground and think and muse, and muse and think, which (to his honor be it said) he did.

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 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 not-hing 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 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, 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.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Georgia & Henry Reppole
Egoism Vol. II. No. 6.
October, 1891

Retrieved 02/19/2023 from catalog.hathitrust.org

theanarchistlibrary.org