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# PIONEERS OF AMERICAN FREEDOM

ORIGIN OF LIBERAL AND RADICAL  
THOUGHT IN AMERICA

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BY RUDOLF ROCKER

*Translated from the German  
by Arthur E. Briggs*

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ROCKER PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE  
(A Non-Profit Organization)

2101 SOUTH GRAMERCY PLACE

LOS ANGELES 7, CALIFORNIA



Russell Rocker

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY J. J. LITTLE & IVES COMPANY, NEW YORK

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

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More recent events, notably the Alliances of World War II, have created great confusion concerning the meaning of democracy, as well as emphasizing the distinctions between free and regimented societies. Fascism, Naziism, and Russian Bolshevism, all have certain popular aspects which tend to characterize them as mass movements. Those who are unclear about democracy may therefore mistakenly describe these totalitarian phenomena as democratic.

In such a state of bewilderment of opinion which one finds even in books of American scholarship, a thoughtful and informed history of American liberalism and radicalism is a much needed discipline for our thinking.

Rudolf Rocker's essay, which I have labored to present here literally in translation, has the dual merit of exhibiting to Americans their country from the viewpoint of one trained in European traditions and of giving his interpretation of America to Europeans in the light of their own knowledge and traditions. Not since de Tocqueville, I dare say, and not even by his most important work, *Democracy in America*, has anyone, native or foreign, had such insight of America.

For the general viewpoint, the first and final chapters are illuminating and definitive. They enable us as Americans to see present disturbances from illiberal and reactionary factions in comparison with similar outbreaks in our past history from the beginning to the present. But the greatest contribution here is the exhibition of our distinguished liberal leaders from Paine to Lincoln as creative persons

who have shaped what there is of distinctive character in American democracy. A yet more unique contribution is that of bringing to attention the little known personalities and work of the creative radicals of America who are shown not to be importations from abroad but very original thinkers native to America who have also had considerable influence in European thought and movements.

Of not less moment, especially at this time of extreme collectivist trends, is the interpretation of the opposite social philosophy which as philosophical anarchism has been so terribly misunderstood and persecuted in this country, and which, though primarily responsible for the cooperative movement, has come under reprobation along with laissez faire individualism. If traditional American democracy is to survive the insidious attacks which come upon it persistently from the totalitarian quarters of opinion, despite two wars that like the mythical Jason's predicament have only produced more antagonists in the place of those presumably destroyed, it will have to be through and because of greater enlightenment concerning the origins and nature of American democracy and American liberalism and also American radicalism.

This work seems to me also to be recommended for the broad and tolerant consideration of facts and opinions which one should expect from a liberal thinker but which is not too often available today in the heat of discussion on debatable subjects. I gather from the book a hopeful outlook for democracy and liberalism which is absent from most contemporary writing.

Here is at least a very challenging interpretation of American social, political and economic philosophy, and it largely answers that absurd but often repeated declaration that what America lacks is a philosophy of its own. The fault as we see here is the neglect of the philosophy which

has been distinctive of the greatest American leaders. In Rocker's viewpoint we may see that American philosophy as an exceptionally gifted European liberal sees it and sees us.

The author's personal experiences as a German exile for long periods of his life with the hardships endured for the sake of his opinions have not embittered him. On the contrary, he is infused and sustained by deep convictions that freedom is an attainable environment that produces the greatest good for mankind, a theme which he has expressed in a larger book entitled "Nationalism and Culture." That work deserves to be better known than the works of Spengler, Pareto, or Toynbee, which are more or less fascistic or reactionary expressions of social philosophy but of like historical scope. He has lived a life rich in friendships amidst his practical labors as an editor, journalist and literary man, as will be related in his forthcoming "Memoirs." It is a refreshing experience to know him as one trained and actively working in the atmosphere of radical movements who has developed and preserved an objective and balanced emotional and intellectual attitude toward all human events, a powerful advocate of a cause who has not lost his head or become clouded in his vision, but rather has attained a consistent view of history which meets contradicting viewpoints with due measure of their significance and undertakes to refute them not with rhetorical clichés but with factual and logical reasons. This important book is only a lesser one of his many profound writings.

Those who have promoted the publishing of this book, which has already become known by translation in Spanish, hope to make the American public conscious as well of the value of Rocker's other writings for interpretation of the concept of democracy not only as an expression of freedom



in the long history of mankind but also as preeminently the best environment for human achievement.

Among those to whom special acknowledgment of assistance is particularly due are H. Yaffe, Cassius V. Cook, Sadie Cook, and Dr. Frederick W. Roman, of the Rocker Publications Committee, who have borne the burden of finance and initiative in producing this and other works of Rocker.

ARTHUR E. BRIGGS

*Los Angeles, California*

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## *PREFACE*

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The story of our pioneers has often been told. The unique characteristic of this volume comes from the author who has offered its pages. Studies on travel and foreign countries have shown repeatedly that only the foreigner can reveal, see and observe traits of inhabitants, ways of living and thought-forms that the native would never notice. "Our ways" are commonplace. Nobody takes note of them. In order to assess the true and all-sided picture, we must enlist the help of the foreigner.

The author, by training, travel and the production of epoch-making studies of liberal Movements throughout the world, brings to this task an equipment that has found no equal anywhere.

Here is a volume that sets forth the contributions toward freedom that were original on our own soil. However, these are given with a proper setting of a European background that adds illumination to the brilliance that seems inherent in creativeness that was afforded on our soil and latent in a population whose forebears carried within their lives and physical make-up the germs of progressive action toward the dawn of a new Age.

The author of this volume, being himself a rare exponent of freedom, a creator and moulder of the advanced thinking and action of our time, has been enabled to produce a work that could not have been undertaken by the regular or typical historian.

In his own right he is the embodiment of the free spirit. He works, moves forward, not by a reflected or borrowed

light. He is one of the "illuminati." He judges men and affairs by a spirit of enlightenment of which he is the symbol. It is a rare circumstance in the history of biography to offer a view and an assessment of a group of great lives by one of their own band.

DR. FREDERICK W. ROMAN

*Editor: Roman Forum Magazine*

*Regent: University of California*

*Director: Associated Forums, Ltd.*

*Director: L. A. Free World Assn.*

*Chairman: Rucker Publications Committee*

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## INTRODUCTION

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It has always been the practice of mediocre minds to brand as "foreign" what they could not understand because it was outside the narrow circle of their own ideas, and to persecute such ideas as "alien influences" whenever they felt themselves called upon to defend the nation against them. This assault upon the thought and feeling of the individual has from the earliest times been the chief source of social reaction, for its champions in their petty arrogance have been unable to recognize the actual prerequisites of social progress.

In the so-called fascist and other totalitarian states, where all political parties and all schools of social thought are ruthlessly suppressed one single party is set up as the sole representative of the "national will." Fortune has so favored that system that today where continuing as in Russia and elsewhere every expression of social life is subordinated to the unity of the totalitarian state, and every expression of individual life is either stifled or made to serve the requirements of the state machine. The mechanical man, who feels himself merely a part of the state and yields unresisting obedience to every command of the national dictatorship is the insensate image of that order. The much-vaunted "leader-principle (Fuehrerprinzip)" becomes for him a cheap substitute for the rich manifoldness of the manifestations of social life. Such hopeless fools as leaders thereby seek to bring everything under "coordination (Gleichschaltung)"—which itself is but the inane expression of their intellectual limitations. And since stupidity

and violence always go hand in hand, unrestricted despotism over their own people—leading naturally to constant threats against foreign nations—is the inevitable outcome of a system which no longer has regard for any human consideration, and their supporters are obsessed by the delusion that they can replace the processes of organic growth by the dead mechanical concepts of power politics.

It is this way of thinking which makes fascism and Russian Bolshevism a world peril today. Tyranny of ideas always leads to tyranny of deeds. For he who believes that he can force every expression of intellectual and social life into definite patterns must as a consequence regard everyone as an enemy who refuses to give up his individual thought and action. And so intellectual independence becomes high treason against the nation, or we should say rather, high treason against those who have the power to proclaim the “will of the nation” as they wish it and to impose it upon the people. Anyone who contradicts this concept is hunted out of the country, thrust into a concentration camp, or rendered harmless in some even more effective way. To justify the use of brutal force against the advocates of inconvenient ideas these are branded as “foreign” or, what amounts to the same thing, as “Jewish” inventions. This calls for no great intellectual effort and always commends itself to those who are unfortunately not equipped for such exertion. In this connection Heinrich Heine, who knew his people, wrote:

Ausländer, Fremde sind es meist,  
Die unter uns gesaet den Geist  
Der Rebellion. Dergleichen Sünder,  
Gottlob! sind selten Landeskinder.

(Outlandish aliens, we all know,

Are almost all of those who sow  
Rebellion's seed. They are, praise God!  
But seldom children of our sod.)

Foreign or Jewish were liberalism, democracy, pacifism, humanism, Marxism, the Catholic Church, capitalism, everything, in short, which did not howl "Heil Hitler!" and refused to recognize in the voice of the Fuhrer the voice of God. In the last analysis it is this conception which makes of the totalitarian state this century's scourge of God, and more than the military menace, constitutes the fascist peril. What makes this new political religion so dangerous is that it is not confined to the fascist states but is more and more finding its way into countries of democratic tradition, and so, consciously or unconsciously, preparing there the soil for the totalitarian state.

All the clamor about the "fifth column" is empty noise so long as we fail to recognize the real root of the evil, the blind belief that the state is everything and the individual nothing. Hitherto every government has been able to protect itself against ordinary espionage, even when conducted on a large scale, but no purely technical measures can avail against the creeping infection which rots the moral power of resistance of whole peoples and leaves them with the conviction that human beings are from now on merely to serve the totalitarian state, or be devoured by it. Here the need is for an inner transformation which can neither be dictated by a government nor based on definite national norms, because it deals with a problem of social culture whose significance is the same for every people.

Modern absolutism can only be overthrown by that same spirit to which we owe the abolition of royal absolutism. This spirit, it is true, still survives even today in our traditions, but it has lost that vital echo in the consciousness of

the people which alone enables it successfully to combat evil. Even in the democratic countries political routine and bureaucratic mechanism have weakened the moral response of the citizen and seriously lessened his interest in public affairs. For many democracy has today become just a problem in arithmetic that merely demonstrates that three is less than four, and that consequently four must be right and three wrong.

But real democracy originally meant something very different. It fought against royal absolutism and defended the right of the citizen to order his social life after his own pattern. Its great champions based the principle of majority rule on the widespread similarity of social conditions. They knew that no constitution is perfect because imperfection resides in the very nature of human beings. It could not have occurred to them while they were combating the absolutism of the monarchy to accord absolutism to a majority, for they well understood that the majority of today will not be the majority of tomorrow.

And they knew too that the right of the majority could prevail only as to questions of administration and in technical matters, and that it had no validity in questions of conscience. No majority can decide what a man shall believe, what shall constitute the basis of his convictions. If nevertheless it attempts this, it is guilty of a crime against the spirit—against the human intellect. A conviction is not begotten of a majority resolution; it is the product of personal mental effort. A human being can change his convictions, but even in that case it is his own reflection that brings him to do so, and no other being can act for him. Where convictions are concerned only experience and the free interchange of ideas are of any use, never external compulsion, and it matters not whether it be the compulsion of one or of many. This was what Thomas Paine meant when

he declared that the tyranny of a majority might under some circumstances be worse than the tyranny of a single despot.

It becomes, then, the first duty of a free man to respect the conviction of his fellow man and to do no violence to it as long as his fellow man observes the same bounds and does not attempt to accomplish by coercion what he could not achieve by persuasion. True democracy is less a matter of the constitution than of the thought and feeling of the people. Edward Carpenter expressed his profound grasp of this truth in these words:

“and the false democracy parts aside for the disclosure of the true democracy which has been formed beneath it—which is not an external government at all, but an inward rule—the rule of the mass-man in each unit-man. For no outward government can be anything but a make-shift—a temporary hard chrysalis-sheath to hold the grub together while the new life is forming inside.”

The silly craze for decrying as “foreign” every idea or concept of life which is not in accord with the views of the government or with those of the great mass of the unthinking in any country is not only a proof of intellectual incompetence and lamentable intolerance, but it is also the best means of smoothing the way for the totalitarian state. For what is commonly referred to as the “genius” or the “mind” of a nation is just a pitiful illusion accepted as truth by the intellectually lazy and artfully propagated and nourished by those who profit by it.

Ideas and expressions of social life are never the result of definite national characteristics, but are the products of the common cultural sphere to which we all belong and which extends far beyond the artificial boundaries of any country. Just as the developments of technology and other



economic phenomena are independent of national boundaries, so also are ideas and social movements always products of that general culture out of which all the peoples embraced in the cultural circle draw their intellectual nourishment. Such developments are often associated with a particular period, never with a particular nation. They may take different forms in different countries, but this is due for the most part to diversities in external living conditions, not to inborn national characteristics, which in any case it would be very hard to establish.

This holds both for those ideas and movements which favor the free development of peoples and for those which affect it adversely and frequently repress it completely for long periods of time. When Mussolini was beginning his career as a fascist he proudly proclaimed: "Fascism is the immediate product of the soul of the Italian people, and no other people can imitate it."—Perhaps at the time he himself believed this senseless dictum. After that, however, fascism grew into a world movement which had and has its followers and its agents even in the countries of the greatest political freedom.

In reality fascism was no special product of the "soul of the Italian people" but a logical result of the first World War. This is true also of its twin brother, Russian bolshevism. But for the war and its inevitable after-effects, both would have been impossible. The war not only provided the economic and political background for fascism; it engendered also the needed psychological conditions. The economic world crisis which was caused, the complete undermining of the economic security of the individual, the terrible destitution of great masses of the people, the decline of the middle class, and the ruthless avarice of a handful of magnates who coined wealth for themselves out of the misery of the masses, these were the conditions

which led to the present confusion as well as to World War II.

Added to this was the widespread brutalization which was the inevitable consequence of a war on that scale. That vast massacre of peoples not only undermined all respect for human life and individual liberty, it fostered also the fatalistic belief that social problems can be solved only by the use of brute force and that any effort to settle controversial questions by peaceful discussion and mutual agreement is to be dismissed as impractical sentimentalism. These are always the conditions under which ambitious demagogues and would-be "great men" flourish and prosper. Fascism was merely the natural prolongation of the brutal and barbaric inhibition of thought which the war had induced.

What we have been saying about the spread of fascism holds good as well for religions, political formulas, social ideas, philosophical systems, moral concepts, and every aspect of art and science. Their intellectual precipitations in all civilized countries are just as inevitable as are meteorological precipitations from the operation of other natural forces. Just as in their material development nations avail themselves of mutual stimulation, so also, and in even greater degree, are they dependent on one another in their intellectual development. Who fails to recognize this misunderstands the most important law of social progress and misses the real creative force in all social construction.

The fact stands out with special vividness in America because the material and intellectual culture of this country was derived directly from colonization, and almost every people of Europe has contributed to it. Its religious development was determined predominantly by forms which the Protestant movement had assumed in England, Scotland, and Holland. Its best political traditions are rooted deep

in the liberal and democratic trends of thought of the mother country. In a new country like America, especially after it had attained political independence, these found a wide field of practical application. But even the conservative tendencies which revealed themselves in this country really derived ultimately from the concepts of English conservatism, as they could but do, of course, in the existing state of affairs.

The attempt, then, to condemn as "foreign inventions" any ideas which are beyond the comprehension of the average of one's compatriots is, therefore, especially unreasonable in a country like America because it is in such violent contradiction to the best traditions of American history. It is, in its narrow-mindedness, in fact much closer to the thought of the theorists of Europe's totalitarian states than to that of Paine, Jefferson, Lincoln, Emerson, Thoreau, Wendell Phillips, and so many other illustrious representatives of American liberalism.

Even the political radicalism which made its appearance here in America under the names of "individualism," "mutualism," or "philosophical anarchism" was closely interwoven at its very root with American liberalism and was in many respects a quite natural out-growth of its basic ideas. Men like Josiah Warren, Stephen Pearl Andrews, Lysander Spooner, William Greene, Ezra Heywood, and Benjamin R. Tucker were influenced in their intellectual development much more by the principles expressed in the "Declaration of Independence" than by those of any of the representatives of libertarian socialism in Europe. They were all "one hundred per cent American" by descent, and almost all of them were born in the New England states. As a matter of fact, this school of thought had found literary expression in America before any modern radical movements were even thought of in Europe.

# PIONEERS OF AMERICAN FREEDOM

ORIGIN OF LIBERAL AND RADICAL  
THOUGHT IN AMERICA



## *Part One*

### AMERICAN LIBERALS

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#### *Thomas Paine*

EUROPEAN INFLUENCES. JOHN LOCKE'S TREATISE ON CIVIL GOVERNMENT. THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. THE THEORY OF LIBERALISM CONCERNING THE STATE. THOMAS PAINE'S APPEAL FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE COLONIES. HIS IDEAS ON SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT. COMMON USAGE AND GOVERNMENTAL LAWS. NATURAL LAW THE BASIS OF CIVILIZATION. A DEFENDER OF FREE EXPRESSION AND FREE EXPERIMENT. HIS FIGHT AGAINST ABSOLUTISM AND THE DESPOTISM OF MAJORITIES. THE DEIST. A FORERUNNER OF ABOLITIONISM AND A DEFENDER OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS. A KNIGHT OF LIBERTY, UNAFRAID AND WITHOUT BLEMISH.

Though undoubtedly American liberalism took its inspiration from the Declaration of Independence, it was nonetheless the legitimate offspring of those great spiritual movements in England and Scotland which had their beginnings in the doctrines of the Scottish humanist, George

Buchanan. He laid down the principle that all power springs from the people and is justified only as long as it continues to be derived from the people. Therefore, the head of the state was to be the foremost servant of the people who could, if they found him acting contrary to their wills, pass indictment, judgment, and sentence upon him.

A whole school of prominent thinkers and social philosophers later endeavored to develop this doctrine and root it in the consciousness of the people. This was done chiefly by John Locke and his numerous followers. Locke saw in the King only an organ designed to execute the will of the people, and therefore denied him the right of lawmaking. According to his concept these powers were only to be given to the representatives of the people as a safeguard against any arbitrary action on the part of the government, and as a protection against any attack on the inherent and inalienable rights of the people. But if the Government should betray the trust of the people and attempt to usurp these inherent rights, then according to Locke, the people have the right to counter the revolution from above by a revolution from below and to arise in defense of their rights. Those were the principles which Jefferson, strongly influenced by Locke, implanted firmly in the Declaration of Independence with the words:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing

its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evince a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security."

Upon this foundation, derived from Locke, was developed that concept of society so typical of liberalism which in doctrine reduced the authority of the state to a minimum. (We are discussing liberalism as a theory as contrasted with the objectives of many so-called liberal parties which have all too often flippantly repudiated its basic principles.) According to the interpretation of liberalism, society was a natural result of the cooperation of men on the basis of free agreements for the satisfaction of their needs. The less this organic relation is disturbed by external influences the freer and happier will become the life of the individual,—and this was for liberalism the measure of all things. Society creates her own equilibrium. Every mechanistic regulation hampers personal initiative and responsibility and endangers the natural bond that living together in society puts around mankind. Therefore, the state should be entrusted particularly with two tasks: 1. To protect the personal safety of the citizens within the community against criminal assaults; 2. To defend the country against hostile invasions from without. Yet it should not be permitted under any circumstances to interfere with the intellectual, religious and private lives of men, or to subject them to one common norm.



Or as one of its modern advocates maintains: "As the skeleton is the frame about which are grouped the tissues, veins, nerves and organs of the body without encroaching upon their functions, so should the state be only the outer frame of society and protect it against wrong." As soon as this frame becomes a straight-jacket it destroys the inner balance and deforms all social relations, which prosper best under the conditions of freedom.

It was particularly Thomas Paine who struck the spiritual fountain from which the ideas of English liberalism reached America. His services for the liberation of the American Colonies are too well known to require any repetition. He was one of the first to recognize that a peaceful settlement with England was impossible and boldly advocated in his pamphlet, *Common Sense* (1776), the independence of the Colonies. His tracts *The Crisis*, which he issued from 1776 to 1783, stirred up the resistance of the rebels with its fiery language and gained the recognition of Washington and Jefferson. Next to Joseph Priestly and Richard Price, Paine was the most outspoken and consistent advocate of liberalism in England and later in America. Paine, who perceived in the social instinct the essential premise for every form of communal life, made a sharp distinction between the organic structure of society and the different forms of authority which have developed in the course of time and have given to the human community its outer political shell. Thus begins his *Common Sense*:

"Some writers have so confounded society with government as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively* by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively* by restraining our vices. The one en-

courages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last is a punisher.

"Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by a government which we might expect in a country without government our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulse of conscience clear, uniform and irresistably obeyed, men would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. *Wherefore*, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit is preferable to all others."

Paine knew that most things which today are ascribed to the state proceed from society and for the most part are unthinkable without the latter. It is the rich diversity of social relations which eternally renews and fertilizes public life and keeps it in motion. The actual functions of government are restricted to a tiny and surely not the best part of social life. Indeed, if the feudal dogma of *Original Sin* which has in the past served as a starting point of every ecclesiastical and political theology, were founded in fact, society would not be secure for a moment, for innate sin cannot be checked by any mechanical means of coercion. The fact is that by far the greater part of man's life is lived outside the political fences of government. Our relations to our neighbors, the arrangements of our domestic lives, all the thousand incidents of every-day life which influence and determine our personal existence are to a greater or lesser

extent the result of our own decisions and can never be pressed into definite molds by a political Providence.

The general course of cultural progress follows the same trail. The impelling power of every social development is never generated by the government, but by the creative energy which springs from the very soul of the people, and cannot be injected by any artificial means. Political rulers can exploit these creative powers in society for their own ends but they never generate them. No priest, no king, no dictator could have commanded the human brain to reckon the courses of the stars, to learn the use of the metals, to write the Iliad, to harness the energy of steam or electricity for the use of man, or to work out the theory of evolution. These cultural phenomena are not dependent upon political forms, which in fact often check and retard them.

The entire social pattern of humanity which its manifold customs and manners, its countless institutions and social bonds, its endless and constantly changing gradations is exclusively the creation of cultural energies of the people, which are frequently destroyed but can never be artificially generated by political intervention from above. Wherever political compulsion has achieved its strongest grip upon society, human culture sank to its lowest ebb, for its natural powers could thrive only in a state of freedom, while they must wither and die in confinement. That is the reason why all periods of great political reaction have also been periods of general cultural decline, often resulting in the retrogression to barbaric patterns of bygone centuries. The fascist reaction of the *totalitarian state* gives us a graphic illustration, which cannot be easily misconstrued.

Paine, who clearly saw how immoderately the influence of government upon the lives of peoples and culture had

been exaggerated gave expression to his conviction in the following words:

"Great part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It has its origin in the principles of society and the natural constitution of men. It existed prior to government, and would exist if the formality of government was abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has upon man, and all the parts of civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation, prospers by the aid which each received from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns and forms their law; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, society performs for itself almost everything which is ascribed to government." \*

Paine, in whom the unlimited optimism of his time was so clearly epitomized, passionately believed in the continuous evolution of humanity and regarded the gradual withering away of state authority as the most dependable indicator of man's cultural development.

"The more perfect civilization is, the less occasion has it for government, because the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itself; but so contrary is the practice of old governments to the reason of the case, that the expenses of them increase in the proportion they ought to diminish. It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and those of such common usefulness, that whether they are enforced by the forms of government or not, the effect will be nearly the same. If we consider what the principles are that first condense men into society, and what are the motives that regulate their mutual intercourse

\* Thomas Paine: *Rights of Man*. Part II, Combining Principle and Practice.

afterwards, we shall find by the time we arrive at what is called government, that nearly the whole of business is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

"Man, with respect to all these matters, is more a creature of consistency than he is aware, or than governments wish him to believe. All the great laws of society are laws of nature. Those of trade and commerce, whether with respect to the intercourse of individuals or of nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal interests. They are followed and obeyed, because it is the interest of the parties to do so, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impose or interpose.

"But how often is the natural propensity to society disturbed or destroyed by the operations of government! When the latter, instead of being ingrafted on the principles of the former, assumes to exist for itself, and acts by partialities of favor and oppression, it becomes the cause of the mischiefs it ought to prevent." \*

Paine was a decided advocate of the right of free expression which he regarded as the sole premise for any kind of intellectual progress. He believed that everyone who would deprive another of this right becomes a slave himself, for he who permits only one opinion to be expressed robs himself of the right to change his own opinions.—"The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall."—In his impetuous and fiery manner Paine opposed the despotism of the majority as violently as the tyranny of hereditary monarchy. Therefore, he entrusted no government with the defense of the rights and liberties of the people, because "The trade of governing has always been monopolized by the most ignorant and the most rascally individuals of mankind." A people can only be assured of its liberties if they are firmly imbedded in its social con-

\* *Rights of Man*, second part.

cepts, and if it is ready to accept the responsibility of defending them at any time.

Endowed with greater political far-sightedness than most of his contemporaries, he understood that the real significance of the American Revolution did not lie in the separation of the Colonies from the Motherland, but in the development of a new political principle, which placed society on a new foundation and which therefore would affect the future of all peoples.

It is characteristic that the abuse which Paine suffered later in England and also in America was much less a reaction to his political ideas than to his criticism of ecclesiastical dogmas. His *Common Sense*, *The Crisis*, and especially the violent polemics of his *Rights of Man*, in which he defended the French Revolution against the attacks of Edmund Burke, were open declarations of war against monarchy, but in the age of Diderot, Condorcet, d'Alembert, Godwin, Jefferson and Franklin, they were hardly considered heretical. His *Age of Reason*, on the other hand, was burned by the executioner in England and its author in America decried as "a dirty little atheist." And yet Paine was not an atheist, but a deist like Washington, Jefferson and Franklin, as Brailsford justly emphasized, but he had the courage to step out boldly for his convictions.—"A better democrat never wore the armour of the knight-errant; a better Christian never assailed orthodoxy." \*

The man who said: "The world is my country; to do good is my religion," was unusually frank in every word he spoke and wrote, but he never was a blind fanatic who fundamentally condemned what he did not understand or did not wish to understand. This same man, who had to

\* H. N. Brailsford: *Shelley, Godwin, and their Circle*, London, 1913.

leave England as an outlaw and was named honorary member of the Convention by the French, who with his pen had inflicted such mortal wounds on absolutism, opposed the execution of the king when he had lost his throne and was merely a prisoner in the hands of his enemies. For the best part of his life he fought against social injustice and oppression and unhesitatingly risked his life in this struggle, but revenge and retaliation were not elements of his nature. His fearless attitude got him into prison for ten months during the Reign of Terror in Paris and at the very edge of the scaffold he was saved only by a fortuitous event. His moral courage is therefore only so much the more to be admired. He was in fact a knight unafraid and without blemish who in his profound humanity put his enemies, the zealots in the camp of Christian theology, far in the shade.

Paine was one of the first to take the field against negro slavery and by his attitude helped to found the first American Anti-slavery Society, in Philadelphia. He also advocated women's rights and was a pioneer for marriage reform and right of divorce.

The exceptionally wide circulation of his writings could easily have made him a rich man, but he sacrificed the entire proceeds from them to the cause for which he strove, and he had to struggle with material want to the very end of his life. Therefore, he could speak with pride:

"If I have anywhere expressed myself overwarmly, it is from a fixed immovable hatred I have, and I ever had, to cruel men and cruel measures. I have likewise an aversion to monarchy, as being too debasing to the dignity of man; but I have never troubled others with my notions till very lately. What I write is pure nature, and my pen and my soul have ever gone together. My writings I have always given away, reserving only

the expense of printing and paper, and sometimes not even that. I never courted either fame or interest, and my manner of life, to those who know it, will justify what I say." \*

\* *The Crisis*, No. 2 (January 13, 1777), *To Lord Howe*.



### *Thomas Jefferson*

"THAT GOVERNMENT IS BEST WHICH GOVERNS LEAST." THE LIMITATIONS OF GOVERNMENT. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AS THE BASIS OF FREEDOM. INDIFFERENCE TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS IS THE CAUSE OF EVERY TYRANNY. LIBERTY OF OPINION AS PUBLIC EDUCATOR. THE PEOPLE ARE THE ONLY CENSORS OF THEIR GOVERNORS. REBELLION AS A MEDICINE FOR THE HEALTH OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS. HIS FIGHT AGAINST ALEXANDER HAMILTON AND THE FEDERALIST PARTY. POLITICAL CENTRALIZATION AN OBSTACLE TO SOCIAL PROGRESS AND NATURAL EVOLUTION. DECENTRALIZATION, THE ONLY GUARANTEE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT. THE RIGHT OF EVERY GENERATION TO FASHION ITS LIFE ACCORDING TO ITS OWN CONCEPTS. STANDARD PATTERNS A CAUSE OF SOCIAL CATASTROPHES.

Next to Thomas Paine, Jefferson was one of the mightiest exponents of liberal thought in America. His well-known saying: "That government is best which governs least," was only a paraphrase of the old liberal principle for the reduction of power of the state to a minimum. Jefferson was an outspoken enemy of every interference of government in the personal affairs of its citizens and he declared every such effort to be despotic and destructive of the inherent rights of the people. Like Paine he had

little faith in a perfect state and did not want to trust the rights of the people to the hands of the government. To the people he said: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

Jefferson contested the right of government to determine the opinions and convictions of men. He was not one of those "hundred per centers" who would abolish thinking altogether if it were in their power to do so, but who, since that is beyond their power, are constantly seeking to impose definite limitations on the written and spoken word. To them Jefferson said:

"It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself. Subject opinion to coercion. Whom will you make your inquisitors? Fallible men; men governed by bad passions, by private as well as public reasons. And why subject it to coercion? To produce uniformity. But is uniformity desirable? No more than of face and stature. Introduce the bed of Procrustes, then and as there is danger that the large man may beat the small, make us all of a size, by lopping the former and stretching the latter."

It was the great service of liberal thinkers like Jefferson and Paine that they recognized the natural limitations of every form of government. That is why they did not want to see the state become a terrestrial Providence which in its infallibility would make on its own every decision, thereby not only blocking the road to higher forms of social development, but also crippling the natural sense of responsibility of the people which is the essential condition for every prosperous society.

The absolutist system with its countless regulations and regimentations of social life which for centuries had hovered like a nightmare over the European peoples taught them to distrust every form of guardianship by the state.

"In every government on earth," wrote Jefferson in 1782, "is some trace of human weakness, some germ of corruption and degeneracy, which cunning will discover, and wickedness insensibly open, cultivate and improve. Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree. The influence over government must be shared among all the people. If every individual which composes their mass participates of the ultimate authority, the government will be safe; because the corrupting the whole mass will exceed any private resources of wealth; and public ones cannot be provided but by levies on the people. In this case every man would have to pay his own price."

Jefferson held to the principle that a sound administration of public affairs is dependent upon the interest taken in them by the man in the street. The greater the readiness of the people to contest any infringement on their rights and liberties, the more government will be compelled to follow the demands of public opinion and to make them the guide for the conduct of its affairs. Indifference of the people to public affairs is the beginning of every tyranny. Public opinion is wholesome only where free speech exists, for truth will be arrived at only where it is possible to weigh one thing against another.—"Error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it."—Wherever the beliefs of a people are dictated from above, its creative spirit is broken and blind fanaticism takes the place of individual thought. Jefferson realized, as did Paine, that "to argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead, or endeavoring to convert an atheist by scripture."—Therefore, he regarded a free unhampered

press of greatest importance for the education of the people. To Edward Carrington in 1787 he wrote to this effect:

"The basis of our government, being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them. I am convinced that those societies (as the Indians) which live without government, enjoy in their general mass an infinitely greater degree of happiness than those who live under the European governments. Among the former, public opinion is in the place of law, and restrains morals as powerfully as laws ever did anywhere. Among the latter, under pretense of governing, they have divided their nations into two classes, wolves and sheep. I do not exaggerate. This is the true picture of Europe. Cherish, therefore, the spirit of our people, and keep alive their attention. Do not be too severe upon their errors, but reclaim them by enlightening them. If once they become inattentive to the public affairs, you and I, and Congress and Assemblies, Judges and Governors, shall all become wolves. It seems to be the law of our general nature, in spite of individual exceptions; and experience declares that man is the only animal which devours his own kind; for I can apply no milder term to the government of Europe, and to the general prey of the rich upon the poor."

Jefferson believed so firmly in the common sense of the American people that he unhesitatingly conceded them the right to veto the decisions of the government.—"The people are the only censors of their governors; and even their errors will tend to keep these to the true principles of their institution. To punish these errors too severely would be to suppress the only safeguard of the public liberty."—In a letter of James Madison, he went so far

as to defend small uprisings of the people when necessary to re-establish the lost balance between people and government. By contrasting the disadvantage of a weak government with the intolerable oppression in despotic states, he arrived at the conclusion:

“It has its evils too; the principal of which is the turbulence to which it is subject. But weigh this against the oppressions of monarchy, and it becomes nothing. Even this evil is productive of good. It prevents the degeneracy of governments, and nourishes a general attention to the public affairs. I hold it, that a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms are in the physical. Unsuccessful rebellions, indeed, generally establish the encroachments on the rights of the people, which have produced them. An observation of this truth should render honest republican governors so mild in their punishment of rebellions, as not to discourage them too much. It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of governments.”

One of the great contributions of Jefferson was his fight against the political centralization of the country as advocated by Alexander Hamilton and the Federalist Party. He knew that combining power in the hands of a strong central government was a dangerous expedient, for the elements lusting for power are forever seeking a convenient opportunity to overthrow freedom and hard-won rights and to unbalance the natural equilibrium of social forces. The principle of political centralism is openly opposed to all laws of social progress and of natural evolution. It lies in the nature of things that every cultural advance is first achieved within a small group and only gradually finds adoption by society as a whole. Therefore, political decentralization is the best guaranty for the unrestricted possibilities of new experiments. For in such an environment

each community is given the opportunity to carry through the things which it is capable of accomplishing itself without having to impose them on others. Practical experiment is the parent of every development in society. So long as every district is capable of effecting the changes within its own sphere which its citizens deem necessary, the example of each becomes a fructifying influence on the other parts of the community since they will have a chance to weight the advantages accruing from them without being forced to adopt them if they are not convinced of their usefulness. The result is that progressive communities serve the others as models, a result justified by the natural evolution of things.

In a strongly centralized state, the situation is entirely reversed and the best system of representation can do nothing to change that. The representative of a certain district may have the overwhelming majority of electors on his side, but in the legislative assembly of the central state, he will remain in the minority, for it lies in the nature of things, that in such a body not the intellectually most active but the most backward districts represent the majority. Since the individual district has indeed the right to give expression of its opinion, but can effect no changes without the consent of the central government, the most progressive districts will be condemned to stagnate while the most backward communities will set the norm. In a central state there could have been no communities like Athens, Florence, Nuremberg or Laon which have given such an extraordinary impetus to the civilization of their time.

To that must be added yet another circumstance which has the greatest significance for the development of society. In a smaller community, it is far easier for individuals to observe the political scene and become acquainted with the

issues which have to be resolved. That is quite impossible for a representative in a centralized government. Neither the single citizen nor his representative is completely or even approximately competent to supervise the huge clock-work of the central state machine. The deputy is forced daily to make decisions about things of which he has no personal knowledge and for the appraisal of which he must therefore depend on others. That such a system necessarily leads to serious errors and mistakes is self-evident. And since the citizen for the same reason is not able to inspect and criticize the conduct of his representative, the class of professional politicians is given added opportunity to fish in troubled waters and to open door and gate to internal disintegration. Jefferson early perceived this danger, expressing his recognition of it in these eloquent words:

“all know the influence of interest on the mind of man, and how unconsciously his judgement is warped by that influence. To this bias add that of the ‘esprit de corps,’ of their peculiar maxim and creed, and ‘it is the office of a good judge to enlarge his jurisdiction,’ and the absence of responsibility; and how can we expect impartial decision between the General Government, of which they are themselves so eminent a part, and an individual state, from which they have nothing to hope or to fear? We have seen, too, that contrary to all correct example, they are in the habit of going out of the question before them, to throw an anchor ahead, and grapple further hold for future advances of power. They are then, in fact, the corps of sappers and miners, steadily working to undermine the independent rights of the States, and to consolidate all powers in the hands of that government in which they have so important a freehold estate. But it is not by the consolidation, or concentration of powers, but by their distribution that good government is effected. Were not this great country already divided into States, that division must be made, that each might do for itself what concerns itself directly and what it can so much better do than a distant authority.

Every state again is divided into counties, each to take care of what lies within its local bounds; each county again into townships or wards, to make minuter details; and every ward into farms, to be governed by its individual proprietor. Were we directed from Washington when to sow, and when to reap, we should soon want bread. It is by this partition of cares, descending in gradation from general to particular, that the mass of human affairs may be best managed, for the good and prosperity of all."

Jefferson who worked continually for self-government wished to have the powers of the Federal government reduced to a minimum:—"Let the General Government be reduced to foreign concerns only, and let our affairs be disentangled from those of all other nations, except as to commerce, which the merchants will manage the better, the more they are left free to manage for themselves, and our General Government may be reduced to a very simple organization, and a very unexpensive one; a few plain duties to be performed by a few servants."—Above all, he was anxious to avoid standard patterns which could only lead to the burdening of the future with the encumbrances of the past and to block the path for every free development. Like Paine, he conceded the right of every new generation to fashion its life according to its own concepts. For this reason he did not want to load burdens on the coming generations which in time would become intolerable and inevitably lead to social catastrophe. This thought dominated his whole conception of government. He would bequeath to the men of tomorrow no straight jacket but a light garment which would give way to every impulse of popular desire and be no incumbrance to the free movement of the body. The "will to power" was hateful to him; therefore he said: "An honest man can feel no pleasure in the exercise of power over his fellow citizens."



*Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry D. Thoreau*

EMERSON ON GOVERNMENT AND COERCION. FREEDOM THE MOTHER OF ALL SOCIAL ACHIEVEMENTS. THE FORMATION OF NEW RELATIONS AMONG MEN IS A REVOLUTIONARY ACT. THE TYRANNY OF TRADITIONS. "GOOD MEN MUST NOT OBEY THE LAWS TOO WELL." THE FUTILITY OF GOVERNMENT. THE ESSENCE OF POWER. EMERSON'S "INTELLECTUAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE." *THE DIAL*. EMERSON AND FOURIERISM IN AMERICA. THOREAU'S ESSAY "ON THE DUTY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE." THE HERITAGE OF THE PAST. MAN VERSUS THE STATE. THOREAU'S PANTHEISM. WALDEN. RES-PUBLICA AND RES-PRIVATA. THOREAU AND THE ABOLITIONISTS. CONSCIENCE AND INNER CONVICTIONS CANNOT BE TRUSTED TO MAJORITIES. INDIFFERENCE THE GRAVE OF LIBERTY. LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE. THE DUTY OF MAN TO HIMSELF AND THE NECESSITY OF ACTION.

After Jefferson and his adherents had finished the fight against the monarchic tradition in this country, their ideas became the common property of the best representatives of spiritual America. We meet them everywhere in sociopolitical literature, in the speeches and writings of Emerson, Thoreau, Garrison, Phillips, Lincoln and numerous others. All these men warned their fellow-citizens of the disastrous mistake of making the state a terrestrial Provi-

dence. They all believed that the security of every inalienable right, as Jefferson had laid it down in the *Declaration of Independence*, must repose not in government but in the people themselves. Even a man so conservatively disposed as George Washington could not help proclaiming that "Government is not reason, is not eloquence—it is force! Like fire it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master; never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action."

Ralph Waldo Emerson had no good word to say for the organized force of the state. The great poet-philosopher of America who was so firmly convinced that freedom is the mother of all social achievements, also knew that the far greater part of our established social life develops from the voluntary association with our fellow-men, and could never be compelled to exist by any decree of government.

"Every man's nature is a sufficient advertisement to him of the character of his fellows. My right and my wrong, is their right and their wrong. Whilst I do what is fit for me, and abstain from what is unfit, my neighbour and I shall often agree in our means, and work together for a time to one end. But whenever I find my dominion over myself not sufficient for me, and undertake the direction of him also, I overstep the truth, and come into false relations to him. I may have so much more skill or strength than he, and he cannot express adequately his sense of wrong, but it is a lie, and hurts like a lie both him and me. Law and nature cannot maintain the assumption: it must be executed by a practical lie, namely by force. This undertaking for another is the blunder which stands in colossal ugliness in the governments of the world."

Emerson knew that no final issue could be reached whether through political or through social evolution; he was aware therefore of the greatest danger in wanting by

hard and fast rules to freeze all the developments of social life into settled norms. Indeed, even the greatest of social acquisitions have but a relative significance, and at best could respond to our current ideas on the value of things, but could never exhaust the inner urge for new forms of experiments—this eternal source of any and every development. What serves at one particular period as a spiritual goal is never the last word of wisdom: it is only a link in the chain of events.

The formation of new relations among men is a revolutionary act and a consequence of social advance if it removes old forms of life which become burdensome because they lose their substance and yet outlive their time like dead husks of history. But the effort to impart eternal values to new forms of life makes them a barrier for posterity for it does not recognize the inner necessity for further changes which is the stimulus of all social efforts.

“Born democrats, we are nowise qualified to judge of monarchy, which, to our fathers living in the monarchical idea, was also relatively right. But our institutions, though in coincidence with the spirit of the age, have not any exemption from the practical defects which have discredited other forms. Every actual State is corrupt. Good men must not obey the laws too well. What satire on government can equal the severity of censure conveyed in the word *politic*, which now for ages has signified *cunning*, intimating that the State is a trick. Wild liberty develops iron conscience. Want of liberty, by strengthening law and decorum, stupifies conscience. ‘Lynch-law’ prevails only where there is greater hardihood and self-subsistency in the leaders. A mob cannot be a permanency; everybody’s interest requires that it should not exist, and only justice satisfies all.”

Emerson with the fine instinct of the poet and philosopher knew that as in nature only organic growth is stable,

so in society only what comes from inner conviction and is rooted in the ethical experience of man may last. Therefore, he saw in the State not a character builder but only a make-shift of intellectual mechanics and of moral inferiority. Nothing truly great in history is produced by the initiative of government; but in most cases it is established against the will of the leaders who to maintain their positions continually strive to fetter mankind in lifelong bondage.

"This is the history of governments,—one man does something which is to bind another. A man who cannot be acquainted with me, taxes me; looking from afar at me ordains that a part of my labor shall go to this or that whimsical end,—not as I, but as he happens to fancy. Behold the consequence. Of all debts men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on government! Everywhere they think they get their money's worth, except for these. Hence the less government we have the better,—the fewer laws, and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal government is the influence of private character, the growth of the individual; the appearance of the principal to supercede the proxy; the appearance of the wise man; of whom the existing government is, it must be owned, but a shabby imitation. That which all things tend to educe; which freedom, cultivation, intercourse, revolutions go to form and deliver, is character; that is the end of Nature, to reach unto coronation of her king. To educate the wise man the State exists, and with the appearance of the wise man the State expires. The tendencies of the times favor the idea of self-government, and leave the individual, for all code, to the rewards and penalties of his own constitution; which work with more energy than we believe whilst we depend on artificial restraints. The movement in this direction has been very marked in modern history. Much has been blind and discreditable, but the nature of the revolution is not affected by the vices of the revolters; for this is a purely moral force. It was never adopted by any party in

history, neither can be. It separates the individual from all party, and unites him at the same time to the race. . . . We live in a very low state of the world, and pay unwilling tribute to governments founded on force. There is not, among the most religious and instructed men of the most religious and civil nations, a reliance on the moral sentiment and a sufficient belief in the unity of things, to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the solar system; or that the private citizen might be reasonable and a good neighbor, without the hint of a jail or a confiscation."

Emerson became the spiritual center of a small group of distinguished men and women and to which George Ripley, Frederic H. Hedge, James Freeman Clarke, Convers Francis, Theodore Parker, Bronson Alcott, Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth P. Peabody and others belonged. As such he exercised a considerable influence upon American life. His address before the Phi Beta Kappa Society in Cambridge, Mass. (1837), on *The American Scholar* was called the Intellectual Declaration of Independence. Its great spiritual message made it one of the most important contributions to free intellect in this country.

Emerson also had a full understanding of the socialist theories of Charles Fourier and was very close to the Brook Farm experiment (1840-47). He bravely entered the arena for the abolition of negro slavery and indeed at a time when it was at some risk to do so.

His periodical, *The Dial*, ranks among the best examples of its type in America. However, its influence made itself felt in a small circle only. His saying: "If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens around your own," was not merely a creed for his own time, but frames a principle for every free thought.

Henry David Thoreau, a representative of classic American Literature and Emerson's friend, was perhaps even

more outspoken in his blunt defiance of every external compulsion. His essay *On The Duty of Civil Disobedience*, which was first published in 1849, with the title, *Resistance to Civil Government*, is one of the most brilliant things written on this theme. It was the creed of a truly free man for whom tradition could not becloud a lively sense of reality. Like Garrison, Thoreau recognized the unhappy effect of a dead tradition when it becomes a fixed dogma which can provide no new stimulus to any further creative effort. A subtle thinker, he was keenly aware that the greatest danger of the time does not lie in the pretensions to power of living men but in the dogmas and institutions which we have inherited from past generations and which the living in reverence dare not disturb. This silent rule of the living by the dead is, according to Thoreau, a great tragedy to which the present and the future are exposed and in which convictions become mere lip service.

"The mass of men serve the State thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, and the militia, jailers, constables, posse comitatus, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others—as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders—serve the State chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the Devil, without intending it, as God. A very few, as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and *men*, serve the State with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and

they are commonly treated as enemies by it. A wise man will only be useful as a man, and will not submit to be clay, and 'stop a hole to keep the wind away,' but leaves that office to his dust at least:—

I am too high-born to be propertied,  
To be a secondary at control,  
Or useful serving-man and instrument  
To any sovereign state throughout the world."

Like Paine, Jefferson and many others, Thoreau also recognized that the voluntary associations of men for the needs of daily life are the foundation of every social structure and that these will only be disturbed by the interference of political power which always serves the exclusive interests of privileged minorities.

"I heartily accept the motto,—'That government is best which governs least'; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,—'That government is best which governs not at all,' and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient."

Thoreau's unfettered impulse toward freedom, his love of intellectual independence and in individual pattern of life is closely bound up with his pantheistic philosophy which in *Walden* and numerous other writings found such deeply sensitive expression and in its simple beauty frequently echoes Goethe's *Hymn to Nature*. He who felt most deeply the eternal ebbing and flowing of all the phenomena of life and knew how to sip every precious drop from the unending diversity of existence could see in the confining bondage of political institutions the rock on

which everything really great would inevitably shatter while shallow mediocrity was to weave its nets. In his brilliant essay, *Life Without Principle*, he has given to this feeling an imperishable expression which compares with the best ever written.

"If I am to be a thoroughfare, I prefer that it be of the mountain-brooks, the Parnassian streams, and not the town sewers. There is inspiration, that gossip which comes to the ear of the attentive mind from the courts of heaven. There is the profane and stale revelation of the bar-room and the police-court. The same ear is fitted to receive both communications. Only the character of the hearer determines to which it shall be open, and to which closed. I believe that the mind can be permanently profaned by the habit of attending to trivial things, so that all our thoughts shall be tinged with triviality. Our very intellect shall be macadamized, as it were,—its foundation broken into fragments for the wheels to roll over; and if you would know what will make the most durable pavement, surpassing rolled stones, spruce blocks, and asphaltum, you have only to look into some of our minds which have been subjected to this treatment so long."

For Thoreau, as for Henryk Ibsen, the idea of Freedom did not only have a purely political significance. The best of the Constitutions could not guarantee freedom to a man for whom it does not become an inner experience and which is confirmed anew at every moment of his life through his daily conduct. All too often do we take pride in the possession of dead husks, thereby overlooking the real essence of life.

"America is said to be the arena on which the battle of freedom is to be fought; but surely it cannot be freedom in a merely political sense that is meant. Even if we grant that the American has freed himself from a political tyrant, he is still the slave of an



economical and moral tyrant. Now that the republic—the *res-publica*—has been settled, it is time to look after the *res-privata*,—the private state,—to see, as the Roman Senate charged its consuls, ‘*Ne quid res-privata detrimenti caperot*,’ that the private state receive no detriment. Do we call this the land of the free? What is it to be free from King George and continue the slaves of King Prejudice? What is it to be born free and not to live free? What is the value of any political freedom but as a means to moral freedom? Is it a freedom to be slaves, or a freedom to be free, of which we boast? We are a nation of politicians, concerned about the outmost defenses only of freedom. It is our children’s children who may perchance be really free. We tax ourselves unjustly. There is a part of us which is not represented. It is taxation without representation. We quarter troops, we quarter fools and cattle of all sorts upon ourselves. We quarter our gross bodies on our poor souls, till the former eat up all the latter’s substance.”

Thoreau wrote his essay *On The Duty of Civil Disobedience* in a troubled time. It was shortly after the War with Mexico (1846-48) which was very unpopular in the whole country and regarded by all upright liberals as simply a plundering expedition. The War had a more than dubious source. While the Mexican government persistently maintained that American troops had made an invasion of their country which had forced them to an armed defense, the President of the United States in his *Message* asserted that the first blood shed was caused by the Mexican attack “on our own territory.” Contrary to that, General Grant later declared in his reminiscences (*Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*) that the American troops were sent to the Border “to provoke a fight”; and Abraham Lincoln introduced in Congress the so-called “Spot Resolutions” in which the government was requested strictly to designate the place where the first hostile act

occurred and *whether it had not been provoked by a body of armed Americans sent there by order of our government.*

In addition there were the continual persecutions of the Abolitionists, whose cause Thoreau himself enthusiastically espoused. All this convinced him that questions of conscience and of inner conviction cannot be trusted to a majority and can be solved only by courageous opposition to manifest wrong. He himself set an example by refusing to pay to the state of Massachusetts a tax which he considered unjust, preferring to go to jail rather than relinquish his rights. Thoreau was not a man to be satisfied with things which he thought to be wrong. The unpleasant truths which he spoke to his generation because of its moral indifference have today an even greater importance than they had then.

“Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thousand politicians at the South, but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here, who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity, and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, *cost what it may.* There are thousands who are in *opinion* opposed to slavery and to the war, and who yet in effect do nothing to put an end to them; who esteeming themselves children of Washington and Franklin, sit down with their hands in their pockets, and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing; who even postpone the question of freedom to the question of free trade, and quietly read the prices current along with the latest advices from Mexico, after dinner, and, it may be, fall asleep over them both. . . . They will wait, well disposed, for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret. At most, they give only a cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and Godspeed, to the right, as it goes by them. There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to deal with the real possessor of a thing than with the temporary guardian of it. All voting is a sort of gaming, like the checkers or backgammon,

with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions; and betting naturally accompanies it. The character of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority. When the majority shall at length vote for the abolition of slavery, it will be because they are indifferent to slavery, or because there is but little slavery left to be abolished by their vote. They will then be the only slaves. Only his vote can hasten the abolition of slavery who asserts his own freedom by his vote."

When Thoreau brought so deep a reverence for the personality of John Brown, for which we have to thank the two wonderful essays, *A Plea for Captain John Brown* and *The Last Days of John Brown*, it was because he had to do with a man who cared more for the voice of conscience than for the written creeds of men whose bodies were long ago buried in the ground. To stand for a right which came from the very soul was more imperative to him than to obey the laws which could only harm his body. The duty of a man to himself was for him a higher standard of moral value than the duty to a government. That was why Thoreau called upon the Abolitionists of Massachusetts to refuse to pay their taxes, thus preventing a government which regarded slavery as a legal institution to maintain that inhuman bondage. It is not enough to have an opinion, one must also possess the courage to defend it.

"How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely to enjoy it? Is there any enjoyment in it, if his opinion is that he is aggrieved? . . . Action from principle, the perception and the

performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families; ay, it divides the *individual*, separating the diabolical in him from the divine. Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy *is* worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?"

Of all the spiritual representatives of American liberalism, Thoreau was perhaps the most profound and consistent. His so-called individualism was not the result of negative attitude toward society but of a natural relation of man to man. "I love mankind," he said, "but I hate the institutions of the dead unkind. Man executes nothing so faithfully as the wills of the dead, to the last codicil and letter. They rule the world, and the living are but their executors."

*William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips*

THE FIGHTER AGAINST "BLACK DISGRACE." THE MESSAGE OF *THE LIBERATOR*. THE WEAPONS OF DESPOTISM CANNOT BE THE WEAPONS OF LIBERTY. GARRISON AND TOLSTOI. THE NEW ENGLAND NON-RESISTANCE SOCIETY. FREEDOM OF ALL NOT A LIMITATION BUT A CONFIRMATION OF INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY. GARRISON AND THE CONSTITUTION. WENDELL PHILLIPS' IDEAS ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF GOVERNMENT. "THE RAT IN THE STATUE." HIS FIGHT AGAINST NEGRO SLAVERY. FREEDOM AN ATTAINMENT OF ETHICAL CONSCIENTIOUSNESS IN MAN. INTOLERANCE THE BACKBONE OF SLAVERY. ECONOMIC MONOPOLY A DANGER TO DEMOCRACY. PHILLIPS AND THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL. THE LABOR QUESTION.

William Lloyd Garrison, the valiant editor of the *Liberator*, was not only the most important and therefore the best hated enemy of negro slavery in this country; he was also one of the most fearless advocates of a free humanity, for which he sacrificed a life abounding in persecution. Garrison's whole career is characteristic of the man's nature. His was the experience of Frau Alving in Ibsen's *Ghosts* when she began to examine the fabric of her teacher's thought. Only at a single knot would she pluck, but when she loosened this one the whole gave way, and she found that it was but machine-sewed. At first the views of Garrison did not differ in any respect from those of the

average American. It was his acquaintance with the Quaker, Benjamin Lundy, which directed his attention to negro slavery.

Garrison was one in whom thought and deed went hand in hand. He wished to assist in freeing the country from the "black disgrace," but this task soon involved him in a maze of new problems which he had not anticipated. So firmly was he convinced of the innate righteousness of his cause that he believed it needed only an inspiring message to bring mankind around to the consciousness of the wrong. But the sober reality soon proved to him that the matter was not so simple as he had believed it to be. Not only the heads of the church and of the government opposed his propaganda vigorously but the very indifference and sometimes the open enmity of the masses of the people obstructed his efforts; something he had probably expected least of all.—"In New England," he wrote with a sense of personal injury, "I found contempt more bitter, opposition more active, detraction more relentless, prejudice more stubborn and apathy more frozen, than among the slave-owners themselves."

When in 1830 he made his first acquaintance with prison in Baltimore after having openly pilloried a well-known slave-driver, he found that freedom of speech anchored as it is in the Constitution will not assure the dissemination of writings or speech in behalf of an unpopular cause. But this discovery did not make him any more compromising in his views; it only convinced him that "of all injustice, that is the greatest which goes by the name of Law; and of all sorts of tyranny, the forcing of the letter of the Law against the equity is the most insupportable."—Garrison was not the man to surrender his rights without a struggle. He wanted to speak to the conscience of his generation and he was determined to get a hearing. So he

wrote in his first number of the *Liberator* (January 1, 1831):

"I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there no cause for severity? I will be harsh as Truth, and as uncompromising as Justice. On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal and hasten the resurrection of the dead."

Garrison has been called a *fanatic on rights*, but that can be said of any man who holds his convictions seriously and refuses to peddle his conscience. He hated the whole idolatry of statutory law which straps every free flowing thought into the straight jacket of rigid ideas, or which so mummifies thinking that it is no longer capable of responding to its own impulses. In this viewpoint he was wholly at one with Thoreau. Like Thoreau he did not reject the Constitution as such, as his enemies so often charged against him, but he opposed those who saw only the letter but not its spirit, who robbed the living word of its soul and reduced it to the function of a phonograph. Only in this sense can his outburst be understood. "When I look at these crowded thousands, and see them trampling on their consciences and the rights of their fellow-men at the bidding of a piece of parchment, I say, my curse be on the Constitution of the United States."

One can understand that a man so harassed, persecuted and even threatened with death by his enemies as Garrison

was, would not always be discreet in his expression. But no one could accuse him of advocating violence against others in the name of a principle, or of imposing his convictions through the use of physical force.

"I believe in the spirit of peace, and in sole and absolute reliance on the truth and the application of it to the hearts and consciences of the people. I do not believe that the weapons of liberty have ever been, or ever can be, the weapons of despotism. I know that those of despotism are the sword, the revolver, the cannon, the bomb-shell; and, therefore, the weapons to which tyrants cling, and upon which they depend, are not the weapons for me, as a friend of Liberty. . . Perhaps blood will flow—God knows, I do not; but it shall not flow through any counsel of mine. Much as I detest the oppression exercised by the Southern slaveholder, he is a man, sacred before me. He is a man, not to be harmed by my hand nor with my consent. He is a man, who is grievously and wickedly trampling upon the rights of his fellow-men; but all I have to do with him is to rebuke his sin, to call him to repentance, to leave him without excuse for his tyranny."

Garrison like Tolstoi was at heart, a deeply religious man. Therefore, he sought in the principles of the Christian faith the ground for rejecting every form of political oppression. For him as for Tolstoi the voice of conscience within revealed the voice of God; one must obey it rather than the laws of government which, imperfect as they are, can never provide man with a definite course for his conduct. The political law of the State which is always chained to time and to circumstances cannot replace the human voice within, which alone is competent to distinguish between right and wrong.

Together with his friends, Henry C. Wright, Amasa Walker, Edmund Quincy and Maria Chapman, later



joined by Adin Ballou, Garrison in 1837 founded the *New England Non-Resistance Society*, which declared the principle of authority laid down by all political government to be incompatible with the teachings of pure Christianity. Consequently followed his assertion: "No person will rule over me with my consent. I will rule over no man." Or as Henry C. Wright conceived it:

"The powers assumed by all human governments to be essential to their existence and execution, have been proved to be wrong; and the practices of such governments, without which they can not exist, have been proved to be hostile to the spirit and positive commands of Christianity. Therefore, human government is a wrong in itself."

Garrison like Proudhon perceived in the freedom of his fellow-men not the limitation but the confirmation of individual freedom. "Enslave the liberty of but one human being and the liberties of the world are put in peril."—One can say that he was not always consistent in the application of this principle but not that he consciously ever transgressed it. He was by nature a fighter in the fullest sense of the word. His bluntness was only the mark of his intense sense of justice and of his impetuous love of freedom which he never disavowed and which made him an outstanding character of American liberalism.

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Wendell Phillips, who like Garrison, was one of the most courageous opponents of negro slavery and who was one of the greatest orators America has produced, was a most active advocate of free expression of thought. He never let pass an opportunity to speak up against authority, paternalism and suppression of thought. Phillips took the

position that the origin of the State has always been "the usurpation of a few for the oppression of all." He regarded established rights and liberties as only a part of real freedom which is not granted man as a favor from the State but wrested by the people against the will of government.

"Every step of progress the world has made has been from scaffold to scaffold, and from stake to stake. It would hardly be exaggeration to say that all the great truths relating to society and government have been first heard in the solemn protests of martyred patriotism, or the loud cries of crushed and starving labor. The law has been always wrong. Government began in tyranny and force, began in feudalism of the soldier and bigotry of the priest; and the ideas of justice and humanity have been fighting their way, like a thunderstorm against the organized selfishness of human nature."

Phillips knew well that an idea rejected today would be very frequently the basis for public opinion in the next generation. Therefore, it seemed to him that every political compulsion and every intolerance of the ignorant and fanatical masses was the greatest hindrance to further progress.—"Nothing but Freedom, Justice, and Truth is of any permanent advantage to the mass of mankind. To these society, left to itself, is always tending."—But this natural impulse toward new forms of life is continually suppressed and enchained by the authority of short-sighted governments and slavish respect for old ways of living, with the inevitable result that any gains which we might have inherited from the past would be immediately threatened and imperilled by the authority of tradition.

"Hung Fung was a Chinese philosopher well nigh a hundred years old. The Emperor once said to him: 'Hung, ninety years

of study and observation must have made you wise. Tell me, what is the great danger of government?'—'Well,' quoth Hung, 'it's the rat in the statue.'—'The rat in the statue!' repeated the Emperor. 'What do you mean?'—'Why,' retorted Hung, 'you know we build statues to the memory of our ancestors. They are made of wood, and are hollow and painted. Now, if a rat gets into one, you can't smoke it out—it's the image of your father. You can't plunge it into the water—that would wash off the paint. So the rat is safe because the image is sacred.' "

Like Garrison, Phillips was by nature a true fighter; he never feared to speak the truth even when, as often happened in those stormy years of battle against black slavery, it involved real danger to life and limb. Nothing was so hateful to him as to accept quietly a manifest wrong and to leave to the future any reforms which are the demand of the hour. "The manna of liberty must be gathered each day, or it is rotten."—Compromises on questions of conscience were for him a surrender of character and moral suicide. Like Thoreau he too was convinced that to resist a wrong was the first of all duties, even if such wrong is protected by government and sanctioned by law.

"History, from the earliest Christians downward, is full of instances of men who refused all connection with government and all the influence which office could bestow rather than deny their principles or aid in wrong-doing. Sir Thomas More need never have mounted the scaffold, had he only consented to take the oath of supremacy. He had only to tell a lie with solemnity, as we are asked to do, and he might not only have saved his life, but, as the trimmers of his day would have told him, doubled his influence. Pitt resigned his place as Prime Minister of England rather than break faith with the Catholics of Ireland. Should I not resign a ballot rather than break faith with the slave?"

There were many people who agreed with him in principle and looked upon negro slavery as a great wrong, but who held the point of view that one must bow to the present state of affairs, especially since slavery was Constitutionally approved, until such time when through legal means a change could be brought about. Phillips answered them:

"It is necessary to swear to support it *as it is*. What it may become we know not. We speak of it as it is and repudiate it as it is. We will not brand it as Pro-Slavery after it has ceased to be so. This objection to our position reminds me of Miss Martineau's story of the little boy who hurt himself and sat crying on the sidewalk. 'Don't cry,' said a friend, 'it won't hurt you tomorrow.'—'Well then,' whimpered the child, 'I won't cry tomorrow!'"

Phillips, who believed that the ability of man to make his own decisions is essential to any spiritual awakening, had little faith in the salutary influence of government on the conscience of its citizens.—"I think little of the direct influence of governments. I think with Guizot, that it is a gross delusion to believe in the sovereign power of a political machinery. To hear some people talk of the government, you would suppose that Congress was the law of gravitation, and kept the planets in their places."—For this reason, he could not welcome the idea that the leadership of government should be entrusted with so important a question as the abolition of slavery. The attitude of many government leaders at the time was certainly not such as to shake his opinion in this respect. Remember but one instance,—that of Governor McDuffie of South Carolina declaring that slavery "instead of being a political evil, is the cornerstone of our republican edifice."

Freedom to him was not the result of established laws of the State but an attainment of the ethical consciousness in men. It is not what we force on others, but always what we attain by effort proceeding from our own most individual convictions that will persevere. The expression of free opinion is a necessity, and a right we refuse to grant to our fellow men can never become our own.

"Let us believe that the whole truth can never do harm to the whole of virtue; and remember that in order to get the whole truth, you must allow every man, right or wrong, freely to utter his conscience, and protect him in so doing. Entire unshackled freedom for every man's life, no matter what his doctrine—the safety of free discussion, no matter how wide its range. The Community which dares not protect its humblest and most hated member in the free utterance of his opinions, no matter how false or hateful, is only a gang of slaves."

Moreover Phillips was one of the first liberals in America who saw clearly that economic monopoly was a threatening portent to the future welfare of its democratic institutions. After the Civil War especially his attention was directed more and more to this question. He saw the increasing influence of commercial and industrial corporations and came to the conclusion that "the great question of the future is money against legislation." And he knew that in this battle even more patience and courage would be needed than in the contest over negro slavery. If the coming generation cannot supply such spirit and endurance "then republican institutions will go down before moneyed corporations. Rich men die; but banks are immortal, and railroad corporations never have any diseases."—It is this fight which would shape the near future.

"Our Fathers, when they forbade entail and provided for the distribution of estates, thought they had erected a barrier against the money power than ruled England. They forgot that money could combine; that a moneyed corporation is like the papacy, a succession of persons with a unity of purpose. Now, as the land of England in the hands of thirty thousand landowning families has ruled it for six hundred years, so the corporations of America mean to govern; and unless some power more radical than ordinary politics is found, will govern inevitably. The survival of republican institutions here depends upon a successful resistance of this tendency. The only hope of any effectual grapple with the danger lies in rousing the masses, whose interests lie permanently in the opposite direction."

It was in this spirit that Phillips hailed the efforts of the First International, 1864-1879, devoting himself with zeal to the organization of the working classes, for, as he said, "only by unintermitted agitation can people be kept sufficiently awake to principle not to let liberty be smothered in material prosperity." It was in this manner of thinking that he addressed the Labor Reform Convention in Worcester, Massachusetts, in September, 1870.

"No reform, moral or intellectual, ever came from the upper classes of society. Each and all came from the protest of martyr and victim. The emancipation of the working people must be achieved by the working people themselves. We affirm, as a fundamental principle, that labor, the creator of wealth, is entitled to all it creates. Affirming this, we avow ourselves willing to accept the final results of the operation of a principle so radical—such as the overthrow of the whole profitmaking system, the extinction of all monopolies, the abolition of privileged classes, universal education and fraternity, perfect freedom of exchange, and, best and grandest of all, the final obliteration of that foul stigma upon our so-called Christian civilization—the poverty of the masses. Resolved, that we declare war with the wage system,

which demoralizes the life of the hirer and hired, cheats both, and enslaves the workingman; war with the present system of finance, which robs labor, and gorges capital, makes the rich richer and the poor poorer, and turns a republic into an aristocracy of capital."

## *Abraham Lincoln*

LINCOLN'S TRAGIC ROLE. HIS POLITICAL CREED. LIBERTIES AND RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE MUST NEVER BE ENTRUSTED TO A GOVERNMENT. HIS OPINION ABOUT PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE LEADS TO THE DEGENERATION OF DEMOCRACY. LINCOLN ON THE ROLE OF CAPITAL AND LABOR IN SOCIETY. HIS FAITH IN THE PEOPLE.

Of all the distinguished personalities of American history, Abraham Lincoln has probably left the deepest impression on the people. His name is woven into myth as scarcely another. It is hard to decide what is responsible for that, his great humanity or the unique position in which history placed him. Lincoln was not a simple character whose natural development is easily delineated. Himself a kind of mystic in whom a puritanical conscience always struggled for supremacy with the inherent impulses of his heart, he was perhaps unaware of all the powers that worked in him and of what had come to him by inheritance and tradition. Beneath his greatness as a human being there runs a definite tragic strain which is never entirely lost. Indeed the numerous funny incidents related of him and which formed part of the legend about him perhaps served to screen the loneliness of his inner self.

Lincoln's role in the Civil War is even today much disputed and will likely remain a matter of controversy. It cannot be decided from the standpoint of Constitutional



law alone but must rest also in very large part upon its political results, even if one does not place the question of negro slavery in the center of the historical picture. There is abundant evidence that he wished if possible to avoid the war, but that in the course of time conditions had become so critical that the tragedy could not have been prevented by any single will.

Had Lincoln not been removed by the hand of an assassin after the victory of the Northern states, had he had the chance to heal in his own manner the wounds that the war had inflicted on the country, or had he at least been able to exert his personal influence towards that end, we would have had today a more complete picture of the man and his work. The responsibility for the blind policies of the victorious North after the war did not lie with Lincoln, since such policies ran counter to the trend of his personal thoughts and were contrary to everything which he had thought and advocated during his active life.

Lincoln's whole political concept pivoted on the Declaration of Independence:—"I have never had a feeling politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. The great principle of the Declaration was that sentiment which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but, I hope, to all the world for all future time."—He believed in established inalienable rights which are born with men and which no external power can permanently set aside.—"The authors of the Declaration of Independence meant it to be a stumbling block to those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the paths of despotism."—In his famous debates with Stephen A. Douglas in 1858, he framed this thought in words which in their lofty expression resemble the prophets of the Old Testament:

"That is the real issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles, right and wrong throughout the world. These are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time. The one is the common right of humanity, the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says *you toil and work and earn bread and I'll eat it.*"

He would not entrust therefore the rights of the people to any government, for he knew that their leaders were always moved by special interests.

"If there is anything that is the duty of the whole people never to entrust to any hands but their own, that thing is the preservation and perpetuity of their own liberties and institutions. I fear you do not fully comprehend the danger of abridging the liberties of the people. A government had better go to the very extreme of toleration than to do aught that could be construed into an interference with or to jeopardize in any degree the common rights of the citizen."

Lincoln had little respect for professional politicians:—"Politicians are a set of men who have interests aside from the interests of the people and who, to say the most of them, are, taken as a mass, at least one long step removed from honest men."—One can therefore well understand why he did not want to entrust them with the guardianship of those rights whose beginning and continuance are safe only so long as they find an echo in the consciousness of a people able to defend its own rights. "This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amend-

ing it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it.”

Lincoln was well aware of the danger threatening the democratic institutions of the country because of the economic superiority of a particular class, especially when the leaders of that class get together and put their special interests above the interests of the people. At different times he was criticized that on the whole he had little concern for economic questions. By and large this may be correct. But that is true not only of him but of most representatives of political democracy and liberalism. He did nonetheless perceive with fine intuition that economic dependence was a threat to the harmonious development of society: this was demonstrated by a number of utterances which in clarity leave nothing to be desired.

“It is not needed nor fitting here that a general argument should be made in favor of popular institutions, but there is one point, with its connections, not so hackneyed as most others to which I ask a brief attention. It is the effort to place capital on an equal footing with, if not above, labor in the structure of government. It is assumed that labor is available only in connection with capital; that nobody labors unless somebody else, owning capital, somehow by the use of it, induces him to labor. This assumed, it is next considered whether it is best that capital shall hire laborers, and thus induce them to work by their own consent, or buy them and drive them to do it without their consent. Having proceeded so far, it is naturally concluded that all laborers are either hired laborers or what we call slaves. Now, there is no such relation between capital and labor as assumed. Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital, only the fruit of labor, could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital and deserves much the higher consideration. These capitalists generally act harmoniously and in concert to fleece the people.”

In another connection, Lincoln spoke on this same subject yet more clearly, when he said:

"Inasmuch as most good things are produced by labor, it follows that all such things ought to belong to those whose labor has produced them. But it has happened in all ages of the world that some have labored, and others, without labor, have enjoyed a large proportion of the fruits. This is wrong, and should not continue. To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor as nearly as possible is a worthy object of any good government."

The greatest danger in every democratic community has always arisen from the tyranny of the majority which asserts itself most strongly when the respect for free expression of opinion becomes weak and demagogues lustful for power, or when privileged minorities turn the ignorance of the masses to their own advantage. This danger is greatly increased in a country like America which in its natural development has originally been dependent upon immigration from every possible social strata of Europe. Alexis de Tocqueville, in his well known book on American democracy, had clearly pointed out this situation, and history proved that he was not mistaken.

It was, therefore, to the great credit of American liberalism that its great leaders have never lost an opportunity to foster the principle of personal freedom in the people and have made unlimited independence of thought the starting point of all their endeavors. In this short study we could allow only a few of its most outstanding representatives to have a word, but their views are typical of that whole tendency. The foregoing expressions could easily be supplemented from the writings of Elizabeth Peabody, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, Walt Whitman, Robert G. Ingersoll, and, in our own time, Ernest Crosby,

Horace Traubel, Clarence Darrow and numerous others. They present the spiritual content of ideas expounded by the best brains of the country. In times so trusting in authority as ours, these endeavors are of great import, for they remind us over and over again that the protection of the gains already made and the outlook toward new horizons of our material and spiritual life must come out of ourselves and cannot be confided to the so-called great men of history. Franklin's saying, "they that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety," is still valid today and will not lose its importance in the future. Only faith in freedom makes life worth living.

"Not a grave of the murder'd for freedom, but grows seed for  
freedom, in it's turn to bear seed,  
Which the winds carry afar and re-sow, and the rains and the  
snows nourish.  
Not a disembodied spirit can the weapons of tyrants let loose.  
But it stalks invisibly over the earth, whispering, counselling,  
cautioning.  
Liberty! let others despair of you! I never despair of you.  
Is the house shut? Is the master away?  
Nevertheless, be ready—not wary of waiting;  
He will return soon—his messengers come anon."

## *Part Two*

### AMERICAN RADICALS

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#### *Josiah Warren*

THE ROLE OF THE PIONEERS IN AMERICA. THE REACTION AGAINST ECONOMIC MONOPOLISM. WILLIAM MANNING, JOHN DRISCOL AND J. A. ETZLER. JOSIAH WARREN IN CINCINNATI. ROBERT OWEN IN AMERICA. WARREN WITH OWEN IN NEW HARMONY. WARREN'S REFLECTIONS ON THE CAUSE OF A FAILURE. VARIATION A LAW OF NATURE. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE INDIVIDUAL. THE RIGHT OF MAN TO THE FULL PRODUCT OF HIS LABOR. THE THEORY OF VALUE. EQUITABLE COMMERCE ON THE BASIS OF THE COST OF LABOR AS THE LIMIT OF PRICE. WARREN A FORERUNNER OF PROUDHON AND MARX. THE PRINCIPLE OF WARREN'S TIME STORE IN CINCINNATI. EQUALITY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IS THE ONLY BASIS OF LIBERTY. TRUE CIVILIZATION. *THE PEACEFUL REVOLUTIONIST*. IDEAS ON EDUCATION. FURTHER EXPERIMENTS. THE STORY OF MODERN TIMES. THE *PARLOUR CONVERSATIONS*. WARREN'S INFLUENCE IN AMERICA AND ENGLAND.

That American liberalism had no very great confidence in the regulating hand of the state lay in the nature of the country itself. America was a land of pioneers, a new world which was in a state of creation; to a certain extent it still is. Civilization moved slowly to the West, and wherever the first settlers came they had to rely on themselves and to struggle by the sweat of their own brows for new living conditions. The state could help them but little—it was beyond its powers. Voluntary association with neighbors for their mutual security and for the solution of all problems of practical living assured them incomparably greater protection than government could give. From this condition, typical of a new country, developed a peculiar form of personal initiative and self-reliance characteristic of that chapter of American history.

While the people of Europe bore the burden of hundreds of years of tradition and were aware at every step from the cradle to the grave of their bondage, the American settlers made their start in history unencumbered by superfluous baggage and found in this immense and thinly populated land a thousand possibilities of an independent activity which had long since vanished in Europe. Such a condition was bound to have an unmistakable influence on the intellectual approach to problems in this country, an influence which clearly manifested itself in the deeds and thoughts of the pioneers of American liberalism.

However, the economic development of the country, the monopolizing of huge territories and the growth of industry were instrumental, especially in the thickly settled communities, in subjecting the greater part of the population to the authority of privileged minorities from which no abstract conception of freedom could deliver them. The Constitution indeed guaranteed to every citizen the right to *life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness*, but this right lost

a considerable part of its original meaning for those who were forced by their economic circumstances to sell their manpower or the product of their labor to someone else who dictated the price for it. The principle of political democracy proclaiming the *sovereignty of the people* was thus ruthlessly modified and it was quite natural that this state of affairs soon caused men to think and to realize that individual freedom and happiness could only be assured by the possibility of a secure and independent economic existence.

In fact one finds in the writing of Paine and Jefferson, already numerous indications which mark the influence of the industrial development upon the principle of democracy. An American edition of William Godwin's *Political Justice* had appeared as early as 1796 in Philadelphia. The publication of so voluminous a work which was devoted to the economic and political liberation of mankind is proof that even at that time individuals in America were concerned with these problems. Among native American socialists of the period, William Manning (1744-1814) and his book *The Key of Liberty* may be mentioned. Besides this work, Max Nettlau calls attention to two others, John Driscoll's *A History of Lithconia* and J. A. Etzler's *The Paradise within the Reach of All Men without Labor, by Powers of Nature and Machinery*. The first of these appeared in the deistic periodical *The Temple of Reason* (1801-2) in Philadelphia and came out in book form in 1837. According to Max Nettlau "it undertook to combine the ideas of the time of Thomas Paine and Jefferson with the older communism and contained also an extensive history of the evolution of mankind." Etzler's work was published in 1833 in Pittsburgh and "is a true dithyrambus on the liberation of mankind by the machine." Nettlau thus comments upon this book: "When one reflects what has



become of Pittsburgh, the center of the steel industry, through the machine in the service of centralized capital and what nearly a hundred years ago Etzler's writing hoped to achieve from the union of nature and man with the help of the machine, no sadder contrast is imaginable." \*

Among those who consistently developed the thinking of American liberalism in the direction of industrial freedom, Josiah Warren was without doubt the most significant. Warren was born in Boston in 1798 of an old puritan family which was among the first settlers of this country. The Warren family gave to the state of Massachusetts a whole line of outstanding personalities among whom was General Joseph Warren who was killed at the battle of Bunker Hill in the Revolutionary War against England. Josiah Warren, still very much influenced by the spirit of the pioneers, came when he was 21 to Cincinnati, at that time one of the outposts of the civilization pressing to the West. He lived there as a music teacher and concert master, until the invention of a new lamp enabled him to establish a small factory which assured him a livelihood. Warren was a born inventor and, during his whole life, he was occupied with technical research. He was the father of many an invention. This inventive spirit was also noticeable in his later writings. But the life of young Warren was soon to be directed to a channel which he would not forsake until the end of his days.

In the year 1824 the renowned socialist, Robert Owen, came to America to purchase one of the larger colonies of the Rappists in Indiana where he wished to test his ideas by a practical experiment. Owen, through his enterprises in England, had already won a world wide reputation and was therefore kindly received in America. He gave a series of lectures in Washington before Congress, the President

\* Max Nettlau: *Der Vorfrühling Der Anarchie*, Berlin, 1925.

and the Supreme Court, and then journeyed to all the important cities of the country. On this lecture tour he also visited Cincinnati where Warren, who heard him speak, was deeply impressed by his views. When in 1825 Owen prepared to set about putting his ideas into practice in *New Harmony*, Warren sold the lamp factory and followed him there.

Owen's endeavor ended in a complete failure as so many others did. During the short time of its existence seven different management boards were successively tried out in *New Harmony*, each without success. Most of the colonists lost faith and with dashed hopes went back to the bourgeois world. Not so Warren. A clear sighted philosopher, he tried to discover the deeper causes for the failure. For him the experiment was a lesson which stimulated him to further thought and he eventually arrived at conclusions similar to those reached later by Pierre Joseph Proudhon. That is why he was often called by Benjamin R. Tucker and others the American Proudhon.

Warren agreed with Owen that the character of man is mainly determined by the social environment in which he lives; but so far removed was he from any notion of forming man according to some fixed pattern that in his conviction every effort to restrict life in predetermined forms would lead inevitably to a new enslavement. As in nature the law of variation is the most important of all laws, so in Warren's opinion the variety of forms is the essence of every individual development whose expression is freedom. For harmony and progress without freedom are impossible. Freedom, however, exists not in the conformity but in the individualization of human desires and needs. Freedom is the beginning of human happiness, "and human nature seeks its liberty as the magnet seeks the north, or as water seeks its level."

The idea that unity of conviction can be attained by surrender of personal freedom leads only to degeneracy even under the most favorable conditions. Individuality, experience and self-preservation provide the foundation indispensable to social life. To dispense with one of these or with the three of them must only lead to disorder and chaos; therefore one must be very careful not to tamper with them. But that is just what every government always does. In its endeavor to pattern everything on a common norm, it creates the futile illusion of being able to construct a kind of social looking-glass which will continually reflect the same image.

“there is an individuality of countenance, stature, gait, voice which characterizes every one, and each of these peculiarities is inseparable from the person; he has no power to divest himself of these—they constitute his physical individuality, and were it not so, the most immeasurable confusion would derange all our social intercourse. Every one would be liable to the same name! One man would be mistaken for another! Our relations and friends would be strangers to us, and vice versa! The fact that these peculiarities of each are inseparable from each—not to be conquered—not to be divided or *alienated* from each, is, apparently, the only element of social order that man in his mad career of *policy* and *expediency* has not overthrown or smothered; and this, therefore, is selected as the first stepping-stone in his ascent towards order and harmony. I have spoken only of four of the elements constituting the physical individuality of each person, and yet these are so differently combined in each, that no two are found with the same. What, then, shall we conclude from the myriads of various combinations of impressions, thoughts, and feelings, that make up the mental part of each individual? Every thought, every feeling, every impulse, being at the moment of its existence, just as much a constituent part of the individual as the countenance or the stature! and yet, all human institutions call on us to be alike, in thought, motive, and

action! Not only are no two minds alike each other, but not one remains the same from one hour to another! Old impressions are becoming obliterated—new ones are being made; new combinations of old thoughts constantly being formed, and old ones exploded. The surrounding atmosphere, the contact of various persons and circumstances, the food we subsist on, the conditions of the vital organs, the circulation of the blood, and various other influences, are all combining and acting variously on everyone's different constitution, and, like the changes of the kaleidoscope, seldom or never twice alike, even upon the same individual!"

Proceeding from this principle Warren proclaimed the *sovereignty of the individual* instead of the *sovereignty of the people*. According to his convictions every man in himself presents a distinct and separate physical and psychical entity. Therefore each individual should be his own authority and his own governor. It follows that no one else should have the right to interfere with the shaping of his life. Where, however, the social relationships of men are concerned, they must, according to Warren's conception, rest on the just exchange of the products of their labor which will prevent any undue gain of one to the disadvantage of another.

The prerequisite of this is that all natural wealth such as land, minerals, waterways, etc., should not be a monopoly of a small minority, but that access to necessary raw materials should be open to every man under equal conditions insofar as these may be naturally produced without human labor. But every man is entitled to the full product of his own labor or to his share of what he produces together with others. *This right to the full product of one's labor* is for Warren the foundation of all personal freedom, the necessary condition of all social harmony.

But in order to arrive at a just evaluation of the product

of personal labor, it is first of all necessary, according to Warren, to have a clear understanding that all conceptions of political economy about so-called *value* rest upon arbitrary assumptions. This applies as well to *use value* as to *exchange value*. Value is an uncertain term which depends upon circumstances that in most cases are quite unpredictable and in a constant state of flux. For a hungry man a piece of bread is worth everything. A sick man whose life can be saved by a particular remedy may sacrifice when he has no other alternative all his earthly riches for it. But that does not signify that the *exchange* between the sick man and the possessor of the remedy is a *just exchange*. On the contrary, he who exploits the extreme necessity of such a man for his own gain and dictates an arbitrary price for the remedy conducts himself like a usurer and becomes an unscrupulous exploiter whose behavior violates every principle of social ethics.

But this example portrays the economic principles of our contemporary social systems. The contractor who exploits the economic needs of the workers and robs them of a portion of the product of their labor; the owner of a piece of land which he did not create and who, by virtue of his monopoly, leases it and pockets the rent from it; the money-lender who lends to the producer the sum which the latter needs for his business, and who charges interest on it—all these live at the expense and on the labor of others without creating themselves any social value. By making the need for a product the key to its price, a system of exchange is created which subjects the great masses of the people to the economic control of a privileged minority. As a consequence, in all other matters as well, the free self-determination of one's own individuality becomes impossible.

Warren came to the conclusion, therefore, that the price of a commodity should be determined not by the *principle*

of its usefulness but by the principle of labor. In other words, the time and trouble required for the production of a commodity was to be the only function in fixing its price. Warren called this "*Equitable Commerce on the Basis of Cost as the Limit of Price.*" In his opinion all other methods for fixing *value* could only tend to perpetuate the exploitation of man by man and consequently to make political and social oppression a permanent condition of society.

Adam Smith, in the first chapter of his capital work, *The Wealth of Nations*, had already referred to labor as the standard of value, and proclaimed that labor was the first measure of value originally used as purchasing money. Neither gold nor silver, but labor was the original source of all wealth. Its value for every one who possessed and wished to exchange it for any other product corresponded exactly to the amount of labor he could purchase with it, and could become owner of.

But Adam Smith had not drawn the logical conclusion from this knowledge and in his further dissertations merely concerned himself with the causes which determine value to-day. David Ricardo likewise, starting from Adam Smith, treated labor time as the standard of value. Pierre Joseph Proudhon and Karl Marx were reputedly the first to draw conclusions and show the fallacies and contradictions of bourgeois national economy. Warren, however, had preceded both and had already arrived at the very same result before Proudhon and Marx were prepared to formulate their ideas on the *theory of value*. It is interesting to note that Karl Marx, who, like most economists, made a distinction between so-called *skilled* and *unskilled labor*, approved a higher compensation for the intellectual worker than for the ordinary laborer, so that for example an hour of labor of a physician, teacher, etc., would be equal in value to two or three hours of labor of a sick nurse, weaver or day-

laborer. Warren also made such a distinction, but he desired to give the greater compensation only for those engaged in the performance of more arduous, unpleasant and unhealthy labor.

In 1827, Warren established in Cincinnati his so-called *Time Store* to ascertain how a small enterprise on the basis of the *cost principle* would work out in practical life. The Time Store was a small business in which all the goods offered for every-day use could be purchased and sold at the exact cost price. To the cost of producing the goods was added approximately four percent for the necessary expense of management. The time required for its production was marked on every article. Every purchaser had the right to make a personal inspection of the books and accounts of the business. Warren considered this necessary to establish and maintain continually implicit trust between buyer and seller. So-called labor notes, whose value was rated in terms of working hours, served as a medium for exchange—four labor hours equalling in exchange one customary dollar.

There was neither haggling nor wheedling to influence the purchaser in this Time Store. Every article had its fixed price. The seller was compensated for his pains on the same principle, that is, he was to be paid only for his time, so that there could be no controversy about profit. According to the report of William Bailie, Warren's biographer, the Time Store in Cincinnati was very popular and found a wide circle of customers who were ready to furnish the system of "*Equitable Trading*" with the means for a wider circulation. But Warren, the born inventor and experimenter, was only interested in the practical working out of his idea.

He knew that little efforts of this kind could not change the general economic and social order. These experiments merely furnished him with the means of putting his ideas to a practical test and providing the fundamental premises for

the new doctrine to which he endeavored to convert his generation.

Warren was preeminently a pioneer and lived in a time when Americans were striving toward social reform and when the newborn civilization of the country still offered a range of possibilities for new forms of social life. Warren looked around, therefore, for a broader sphere of activity. —“The public had several months’ notice, all obligations were met, and after two years’ successful operations the reformer found himself in the same position as at the beginning, but morally more than ever convinced of the beauties of Equity and the need of its realization.\*

What he really strove for was the *sovereignty of the individual*. To this end he needed an economic premise which he believed he had found in the *cost principle* securing to every man the full product of his own labor. The freedom of the individual was only possible on the basis of a just arrangement of economic life. But such a condition must be brought about by the people themselves and could not come as a gift from a wise government which for most of the social reformers of the older schools was the source of every blessing. Laws and constitutions do not create social institutions, they spring from life itself. By endeavoring to force the tendencies of social events into settled grooves they often become the greatest hindrance to any new development. Laws can be interpreted in various ways by judges and politicians; it is always the dead formula of law which fetters real life and condemns it to inactivity. Only the mutual relations between men and the equality of social conditions were, in Warren’s opinion, the true stimuli of progress.

Nothing is more dangerous and hurtful to natural de-

\* William Bailie: *Josiah Warren, the First American Anarchist*, Boston, 1906.



velopment than the attempt to bind the future to the laws of the past. Freedom alone strives for a ceaseless renewal of life. The blind acceptance of dead forms which have long outlived their usefulness produces but chaos and death, tyranny and oppression. In reality government protects no one and secures nothing. There is no sphere of social life in which voluntary association would not have been able to accomplish far more than government has done. Under the deceptive pretense of protecting person and property governments have spread mass destruction, hunger and misery over the whole earth. They have shed more blood and have caused more death and destruction in wars against each other and for the exclusive privilege of governing than society without government would ever have had to endure.—“Everyone must feel that he is the supreme arbiter of his own, that no power on earth shall rise over him, that he is and always shall be sovereign of himself and all relating to his individuality. Then only shall all men realize security of person and property.”

In order to attain new achievements one should not persuade men, one must convince them. But the worst means is force which neither persuades nor convinces. In this respect Warren's thinking approaches Claude Tillier's when the latter says: “If we remain under the pressure of force our free will is enslaved and what we do does not come from ourselves but is a result independent of us. We are but a machine which is not responsible for its acts. It is only the man who does violence to us to whom the disgrace of our conduct is a reproach.” Warren, who was principally concerned with convincing men, refrained from unnecessary attacks on particular individuals because it did only harm to the cause he advocated. Thus he declared in a very interesting letter which Bailie quotes as an Appendix to his biography:

"I have said repeatedly that wholesale donunciations of ordinary business men as 'thieves and robbers' because they live on profits is, first of all, untrue because these words, according to prevailing usage, apply only to those who know and profess themselves to be thieves and robbers. It is also untrue in another respect. Men may live on the profits of their business and yet not get a tenth part of an equitable compensation for their time and trouble. It is also philosophically wrong to punish people for being what their birth, training and surroundings made them. And this hostile attitude toward them is unnecessarily offensive and insulting, and tends to repel many of the best of men, and to array them against us; when, if we could get their attention long enough to be understood, they might gladly assist in the saving revolution required. Therefore, these wild denunciations are unjust, suicidal, absurd and ridiculous."

This same man, who rejected the State on principle and declared, that "there should be no such things as the body politic—no member of any body but that of the human family," never attacked any particular government but was firmly convinced that through the establishment of special institutions suited to their personal problems and necessities mankind would in time make every government superfluous. This view-point not only expressed Warren's social philosophy but also found support in the fact that the America of the time of the pioneers gave abundant opportunity for free experiment in the social field. In many respects the pioneer fulfilled in America the role of the social revolutionary in Europe.

In 1833 Warren established in Cincinnati a four-page weekly, *The Peaceful Revolutionist*, which he wrote, set up and printed himself on a press of his own invention. The sheet had only a short existence, but it was the first anarchist newspaper ever to appear anywhere. Thus, anarchism in America was not an alien product, but an idea which already

had convinced adherents and interpreters in this country before Proudhon had published his work, *What is Property—An Inquiry into the Principles of Right and of Government* (1840).

Warren also concerned himself actively with the question of practical education and in this field he was a pioneer as well. He was one of the first to use practical observation as a means of instruction and to attempt to link the school to the workshop. True to his ideas, he was opposed to regimentation and regarded the development of the personality of the child as the real foundation of all education. To prepare the child for his future tasks in life, seemed to him the essential thing. In this vein he wrote in his book, *Equitable Commerce*:

“The educating power is in whatever surrounds us. If we would have education to qualify children for future life, then must education embrace those practices and principles which will be demanded in adult life. If we would have them practice equity towards each other, in adult life, we must surround them with equitable practices and treat them equitably. If we would have children respect the rights of property in others, we must respect their rights of property. If we would have them respect the individual peculiarities and the proper liberty of others, then we must respect their individual peculiarities and their personal liberty. If we would have them know and claim for themselves the proper reward of labor in adult age, we must give them the proper reward of their labor in childhood. If we would qualify them to sustain and preserve themselves in after life, they must be given the opportunity in childhood and youth. If we would have them capable of self-government in adult age, they should practice the right of self-government in childhood. If we would have them learn to govern themselves rationally, with a view to the consequences of their acts, they must be allowed to govern themselves by the consequences of their acts in childhood. Children are principally the creatures of example. If we strike them,

they will strike each other. If they see us attempting to govern each other, they will imitate the same barbarism. If we habitually admit the right of self-sovereignty in each other and in them, they will become equally respectful of our rights and each other's."

In the course of his life Warren made a complete round of practical experiments with his ideas which cannot be set forth in their entirety in this short study. His first attempt to establish a *Village of Equity* was undertaken with a half dozen families in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, in 1835, but it soon had to be abandoned because the conditions were unhealthy and most of the settlers were stricken with malaria. After another *Time Store* experiment in New Harmony (1842-44) which at first was received with much hostility by the small business people of the vicinity but finally led to the result that under the pressure of public opinion they had to conform their prices to his cost principle, Warren returned to his old plan to set up a small community on the basis of his ideas. In the meantime he busied himself with some successful inventions, delivered lectures to make his thoughts accessible to the public and in 1846 published his work on *Equitable Commerce*, in which he simply described the various results of his practical undertakings.

The founding of the village *Utopia* in Indiana in June, 1847, was the first effort to establish a small community on the basis of the *cost principle*. The experiment was undertaken with very limited means, but according to the description of Warren and other settlers it stood the test completely insofar as the internal organization and the enterprise might be put in question. Bailie quotes in his book on Warren a writing of a colonist, E. G. Cubberley, who reported that "The labor notes put us into a reciprocating society—the result was in two years twelve families found

themselves with homes who never owned them before. . . Labor capital did it. I built a brick cottage one and a half stories high, and all the money I paid out was \$9.81—all the rest was effected by exchanging labor for labor. Mr. Warren is right, and the way to get back as much labor as we give is by the labor-cost prices—money prices, with no principle to guide, have always deceived us.”

But the undertaking was broken up by outside influences. The price of the surrounding land was driven so monstrously high through speculation that the colony would not extend itself. Therefore, most of the settlers were compelled to emigrate to Minnesota where land could be acquired at more reasonable terms.

Of all the practical experiments which Warren had undertaken the most successful was the settlement *Modern Times* (1850) at Brentwood, Long Island. This settlement continued for approximately twelve years. Its inhabitants supported themselves by agriculture and small industrial enterprises. While in so many other socialistic colonies in this country, the dictatorial tendencies on the part of the leading individuals sooner or later resulted in general discontent, in most cases leading to the failure of the enterprise, in *Modern Times* a harmonious and congenial communal life prevailed throughout. Each lived in his own way and permitted the others to do the same. The maxim, “Mind Your Own Business,” was the only established law. Personal affairs were subjected to no fixed rules. Every one decided matters for himself according to his own disposition, and all social transactions were determined by free agreement. Exchange was consummated on the basis of the *cost principle* and secured to every one the full product of his labor which he could dispose of just as he might wish.

The colony also made a good impression externally: “Broad avenues, tree-shaded streets, pretty cottages sur-

rounded by strawberry-beds and well-tilled gardens, formed the outward appearance of *Modern Times*." A succession of distinguished persons who visited *Modern Times* obtained a very favorable impression of the people and arrangements there. Moncure D. Conway, the well known American clergyman, who made his first visit to the settlement in 1859, described his impressions very sympathetically in the *Fortnightly Review* (1865) and later in his *Autobiography* (1904). What he said about Warren was especially interesting:

"There entered presently a man to whom all showed a profound respect, and who was introduced as the reformer to embody whose ideas the village had been established. He was a short, thickset man about fifty years of age, with a bright, restless blue eye, and somewhat restless, too, in his movements. His forehead was large, descending to a good full brow; his lower face, especially the mouth, was not of equal strength, but indicated a mild enthusiasm. He was fluent, eager, and entirely absorbed in his social ideas. It was pleasant to listen to him, for he was by no means one of those reformers, who, having fought with the world, hate it with genuine philanthropic animosity, but one who had never been of the world at all, had never been stirred by its sins nor moved by its fears—one who was not deluged with negations, but amused with a troop of novel thoughts and fancies, which to him were controlling convictions. —'Every man,' said Goethe, 'is strong enough to enforce his own convictions,' and the assertion had for me a curious illustration in the ability with which this man impressed me with the sense of an essential truth in his ideas and plans for superceding the institutions which have evolved in the slow ages of history."

When *Modern Times* finally dissolved it was principally due to its lack of capital. The settlers naturally were not able to provide themselves with all the products they needed, and the *Labor Notes*, which were quite suffi-

cient in their own circle could not obtain credit for them outside. But Warren's experiment in which was incorporated the everyday experiences of twelve years led to this uncontested conclusion: namely, that personal freedom must be the basis of every new social experiment. Without this freedom, every group of men bound together for social action could be but a body without a soul. Upon this great realization Warren based everything he thought, did and wrote, and he remained true to this idea to the end of his days.

Warren's whole propaganda proceeded from this fundamental idea: He wished above all to convince people. He depended, therefore, less on public demonstrations which although inspiring many give only a few a chance to penetrate to the core of the matter. One of his most important instruments were the so-called *Parlour Conversations*, a regular institution in *Modern Times*. These were informal gatherings in a small circle where it was possible to discuss ideas with more thoroughness than in larger assemblies. Warren was not a mere theorist but a pioneer, a man of deeds. Only after he had convinced himself of the feasibility of his ideas, did he set down his discoveries in writings. He wrote comparatively little, but what he had to say was so much the more important. Warren was by his whole nature the kind of man who worked for his ideas chiefly by practical example. His experiments were undoubtedly primitive, but considering the circumstances under which he lived, it could not well be otherwise. But he carried on with a devotion and self-sacrificing spirit that one can find only in men who are possessed by a great idea and the deep conviction that it would ultimately prevail.

Warren's ideas influenced a considerable number of important people. His first experiment in Cincinnati attracted

the attention of Robert Dale Owen, son of Robert Owen, who was then editing with Frances Wright, the periodical, *The Free Inquirer*. Owen's invitation brought Warren to New York, and his influence can easily be traced in Owen's publication. Frances Wright, the first apostle of women's rights in America, who advocated birth control and agitated against Negro slavery, showed the greatest sympathy for Warren's ideas. Stephen Pearl Andrews and G. T. Fowler were also won over to Warren's cause by the *Parlour Conversations*. There is no doubt too that Henry George was influenced by Warren's ideas.

Experiments along Warren's lines were also started in Boston and Philadelphia. According to Bailie's account the undertaking in Boston had very good prospects. An idealistically inclined man named Keith who owned some property had been won to Warren's ideas in 1850 and opened a House of Equity in Boston. He acquired a seven story building which he stocked with wares of all kinds selling them according to the *cost principle*. At the end of the very first week the House of Equity had a daily turnover of one thousand dollars. Encouraged by this success, Keith planned a larger warehouse in order to give his enterprise a broader basis. In the plan which he had devised, the erection of a large bakery was also incorporated which would provide customers with wholesome bread at cost price. Also a periodical, *The People's Paper*, published by Keith, was to be printed there on his own press. But after the House had opened for business a fire broke out and destroyed the property worth many thousands of dollars. Keith, who about the same time was embarrassed by other financial losses, was compelled to abandon the enterprise so auspiciously begun. This sad event elicited the following editorial comment from the *Boston Post*: "The Boston House of Equity has closed its operations, another evidence



of the uncertainty of human schemes. There was, however, a principle in that store, which, though but partially developed, a thousand failures could not affect."

Warren's ideas found also a response in England. The well known social reformer, J. Bronterre O'Brien, became an adherent of the *cost principle*. A. C. Cuddon, a personal friend of Warren's, who had also visited *Modern Times*, worked for the idea. At a meeting of the *British Association for the Advancement of Science*, William Parr of Dublin gave an exposition of the philosophy and practical experiments of Josiah Warren. John Stuart Mill, likewise, had taken notice of Warren and wrote in his *Autobiography* of "a remarkable American, Mr. Warren, who had formed a system of Society on the foundation of the Sovereignty of the Individual."

Owenite periodicals produced frequent extracts from Warren's *Periodical Letters*. G. J. Holyoake mentions Warren as a correspondent of the *British Co-operator*, and in his book, *The History of Cooperation*, said the following: "He wrote from Cincinnati, January 30, 1830, to recommend a scheme of cheap printing, of which he was the inventor. Considering the power of giving a monopoly by patents absurd, he makes known his scheme and offers it to any one to adopt. . . . Like Paine, Warren made a present to the public of those copyrights in inventions and books, which in Paine's case made others rich and left the author poor. The world, which is apt to despise reformers for being always indigent, should remember how some of them became so." To be mentioned also are the reports from America in the *London Leader*, in which H. Edgar made Warren's ideas known to readers in England. It is very likely, too, that Robert Owen in his experiments with the *London Labor Bazaars* and *Labor Exchanges* was influenced by Warren's *cost principle*.—In America, his moral

influence is clearly discernable in a considerable number of social reformers, and the whole school of philosophic anarchists from Stephen Pearl Andrews to Benjamin R. Tucker were under the spell of his intellectual leadership.

In July 1854, Warren started the publication of his *Periodical Letters*, which appeared with certain interruptions until 1858. The later years of his life were filled with travels, inventions, and propaganda for his ideas. The last volume of his principal work, *True Civilization*, was written in the house of his friend, Ezra Heywood, in Princeton, Massachusetts. Afflicted by severe illness he spent the last months of his life in the house of his other friend Edward H. Linton, in Boston, where he was faithfully nursed to the end by Kate Metcalf, one of the pioneers of *Modern Times*. He died on April 14, 1874, at the age of 76 surrounded by a small group of loyal adherents. Death had come to him as a deliverance since dropsy had made it impossible for him to walk.

### *Stephen Pearl Andrews*

HIS PERSONALITY. HIS FEARLESS FIGHT AGAINST NEGRO SLAVERY IN THE SOUTH. INFLUENCE OF CHARLES FOURIER'S THEORIES. HE BECOMES A CONVERT OF JOSIAH WARREN. HIS LECTURES ON THE SCIENCE OF SOCIETY. GOVERNMENT A DESTROYER OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP. A SYNTHESIS OF PROTESTANTISM, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM AS A BASIS OF FREEDOM. ECONOMY WITHOUT ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IS ONLY A DETRIMENT TO HUMANITY. THE CURSE OF ORTHODOX THINKING. HIS DEBATE WITH HORACE GREELEY AND HENRY JAMES ON LOVE, MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. HIS RELATIONS WITH VICTORIA WOODHULL. ANDREWS ON NATIONALISM. HIS OPINION ABOUT CRIME AND PUNISHMENT. HIS ACTIVITY AS A WRITER AND LECTURER.

One of those who have done most to spread Warren's message in this country was Stephen Pearl Andrews. Born in 1812 at Templeton, Mass., the son of a Baptist clergyman, he was descended like Warren from an old American family. Andrews was an uncommonly gifted man and familiar with many subjects which could not be dealt with in this brief study. He wrote works on legal problems, linguistics, philosophy, religion, economics, etc., bearing testimony to the versatility of his talents. He studied at Amherst College, and while still a young man went to

Louisiana where he became a teacher continuing at the same time his law studies. As a lawyer in Louisiana he had to know Latin, French and Spanish, and this led him to study comparative philology in the process of which he acquired the knowledge of thirty-two tongues, among them Sanskrit, Hebrew and Chinese. He wrote a *Practical Aid in the Acquisition of the Chinese Language* and two textbooks for the learning of French.

Andrews studied with a real passion for learning and to the end of his life endeavored to broaden the scope of his knowledge. After the death of his first wife he married a woman physician and studied medicine so that he might assist his wife in her profession. He certainly was one of the most extraordinary men America has produced. Andrews first practiced law as legal counsel in New Orleans, where he made his name in the famous case of Mrs. Myra Clark Gaines.\*

From 1839 to 1843, Andrews lived in Houston, Texas, active as an attorney and acquired a small fortune by his practice. But his fearless advocacy of the abolition of negro slavery made him so unpopular that his house was attacked by a wild mob. He had to flee at the risk of his life, and with his wife and newborn baby rode some twenty miles over a flooded prairie. Soon after that, he went to London to get the support of the *British Anti-Slavery Society* for his plan to make Texas a free state and to purchase all of the slaves there. This plan was at first favorably received, but

\* It concerned an unusual lawsuit against the City of New Orleans in which a property of the value of twenty-five million dollars was at issue. This proceeding occupied the court for ten years and had special significance in that Mrs. Gaines, after the Supreme Court of the United States had decided in her favor, renounced her claim because otherwise four hundred families in New Orleans would have lost the legal title to their lands. Andrews was the first attorney who had represented Mrs. Gaines' interest.

an acute political situation in the United States which led some time later to the Annexation of Texas and to the War with Mexico upset everything; and Andrews returned to America without completing his mission. At home again he plunged with indefatigable zeal into the fight against slavery.

Attracted by the experiments of Fourierism in America, Andrews earnestly investigated thoroughly the doctrines of the great French socialist. In the course of these studies, his attention was for the first time directed to social questions. Like Emerson he too was strongly influenced by the ideas of the mystic Emanuel Swedenborg. He attempted to bring them into harmony with the views of Charles Fourier in whose writings there was sufficient material to warrant the attempt. For a philosophically gifted thinker like Andrews, the doctrines of the Swedish mystic had an unusual fascination. He was not so much attracted by the hallucinations of Swedenborg as by that mystic belief in the spiritualization of the Universe with its continual flowing from the One to the Whole that manifested itself in the round of the celestial bodies in space, in the movement of the blood corpuscles in the organism, in the ebb and flow of thought, in all of which is perceived the working out of one and the same law, "that comparable with a mighty stream of events for which language has no name yet."

In the year 1850, Andrews first made the acquaintance of Josiah Warren and in the course of a long conversation was won over to his ideas. From then on, he was relentlessly active in this movement and labored to express Warren's thinking in a comprehensive social philosophy which was furthered to a great extent by his wealth of knowledge. Andrews was not only a fascinating personality outwardly, he was also a distinguished orator, and his extensive learning gave his expositions a profound and convincing char-

acter. For the dissemination of the new doctrine, he was the best man that could be wished for.

What attracted Andrews most in Warren's doctrine was the idea of the *sovereignty of the individual*, which was for him the last link of a long chain of reasoning which had first found its expression in Protestantism and through the doctrines of political democracy and of socialism led to complete freedom of mankind.

In the year 1851, Andrews gave a series of sociological lectures in New York, which soon appeared in print under the title, *The Constitution of Government in the Sovereignty of the Individual*, and *Cost the Limit of Price*, which later were put together in *The Science of Society*. Much as Warren, Andrews saw in the manifold variety of all things the essential law of nature, manifesting itself in the smallest and the largest of life's phenomena. Every government, in the modern sense of the word, is essentially a negation of this great law, because it seeks to perpetuate things which are always in flux. Under the pretense of maintaining the equilibrium of society the state constantly destroys this internal balance of social relationships, thus breeding war and perpetual unrest. The consequence is eternal discontent which grows in the degree in which the inevitable results of state guardianship are brought home to the people. The inevitable contest between reaction and revolution is the logical result of this condition. The conscious or unconscious desire of man to live his own life will always prompt him to resist pressure imposed upon him from without and to break the fetters on his natural growth. That is the reason why no form of state can last indefinitely, and why successively increasing concessions to the needs of men have to be made.

"Governments have hitherto been established, and have apologized for the unseemly fact of their existence, from the necessity

of establishing and maintaining order; but order has never yet been ended, public peace and harmony have never yet been secured, for the precise reason that the organic, essential, and indestructible natures of the objects which it was attempted to reduce to order have always been constricted and infringed by every such attempt. Just in proportion as the effort is less and less made to reduce men to order, just in that proportion they become more orderly, as witness the difference in the state of society in Austria and the United States. Plant an army of one hundred thousand soldiers in New York, as at Paris, to preserve the peace, and we should have a bloody revolution in a week; and be assured that the only remedy for what little of turbulence remains among us, as compared with European societies, will be found to be more liberty. When there remain positively no external restrictions, there will be positively no disturbance, provided always certain regulating principles of justice, to which I shall advert presently, are accepted and enter into the public mind, serving as substitutes for every species of repressive laws."

Protestantism was the revolt of mankind against the absolutism of the Catholic Church. Instead of following lifeless dogmas man was to be able to decide questions of conscience for himself. Democracy was the insurrection of mankind against the guardianship of the absolute state and finally led to the expulsion of government from social life. Socialism is the protest of man against economic absolutism which finds its expression in the exploitation of people. It can make mistakes in the choice of its means but not in its aims. Protestantism, democracy, and socialism represent only a half truth as long as they are divided in their efforts. Only a natural synthesis of these three will lead to a real solution of the problem that today concerns everyone. The socialist is correct when he asserts that everything for which he ultimately strives must redound to the benefit of humanity. He is wrong when he tries to sacrifice personal freedom for the

sake of so-called *general interests*. The democrat is wrong when in his program he ignores the necessity for harmonious economic relations, for in order to bring about a true realization of its own principles democracy is wholly dependent upon the solution of the economic problem.

The Protestant, the democrat, the socialist are all enemies of one form or other of absolutism; the first opposes the absolutism of the Church, the second that of the State, and the third that of Capital. If absolutism is wrong, based as it is upon the dogma of its own infallibility, it follows therefore that it is wrong in every sphere of human activity. Only that man can be free who takes his fate into his own hands and accepts responsibility for his own conduct as the sole basis for relations with his fellowmen. Therefore, the sovereignty of the human personality is the best foundation for a society based on justice.

Freedom is achieved not by submitting everyone to the same compulsions, but by securing for everyone the possibility of obtaining happiness and contentment in his own fashion. Not equality of men but equality of social conditions under which they live creates true moral unity. All ethical principles of religion, all rights which the constitution of the state guarantees to the citizen lose their meaning so long as men are forced to live under conditions which give to some the prerogative of determining the fate of the others. Under such a condition the best ethical perceptions change into their direct opposite. Toward his master who has treated him well, the slave feels little or no gratitude, for he knows the fundamental injustice governing his relations with him. He realizes that his master owes him more than he indulgently grants him. This seeming lack of gratitude works from the slave back to the master, who then despises the slave and deplores his low ethical state. The



cause for this is that justice which alone inspires goodwill, awakens gratitude, promotes friendly relations and keeps them firm is wholly lacking. It is always an insult to receive benefactions from a man who refuses to remedy an obvious injustice.

Most social reformers waste their efforts in attempting to change the dispositions, habits and characters of men, an impossible task since the natural inclinations of men show as much variety as nature itself. The attempt to alter the individuality of man must always lead to a new despotism.

“The doctrine of the Sovereignty of the Individual—in one sense itself a principle—grows out of the still more fundamental principle of *Individuality* which pervades universal nature. Individuality is positively the most fundamental and universal principle which the finite mind seems capable of discovering, and the best image of the infinite. There are no two objects in the universe which are precisely alike. Each has its own constitution and peculiarities which distinguish it from every other. Infinite diversity is the universal law. In the multitude of human countenances, for example, there are not two alike, and in the multitude of human characters there is the same variety. It applies equally to persons, to things, and to events. There have been no two occurrences which were precisely alike during all the cycling periods of time. No action, transaction, or set of circumstances whatsoever ever corresponded precisely to any other action, transaction, or set of circumstances. Had I a precise knowledge of all the occurrences which have ever taken place up to this hour, it would not suffice to enable me to make a law which would be applicable in all respects to the very next occurrence which shall take place, not to any one of the infinite millions of events which shall hereafter occur. This diversity reigns throughout every kingdom of nature, and mocks at all human attempts to make law or constitutions, or regulations, or governmental institutions of any sort which shall work justly and harmoniously amidst the unforeseen contingencies of the future.”

The problem, therefore, is not to change man's individuality, but to create social conditions which place the economic and general relations of men to one another on a just basis and permit each one to arrange his own life in every detail. Coercion here will always be regarded as despotism and will unerringly lead to rebellion.

National economy as it is today does not concern itself with proper distribution of the wealth which is produced by labor; it is therefore inadequate. Its exponents regard wealth as an abstract thing with interest essentially different from those of its creators. Only if we consider political economy as a part of a comprehensive social philosophy which brings into its range not merely the conditions of production but also a just distribution of the products of labor will it achieve its real significance, because ethics and economy must go hand in hand. An economic order which is not founded on ethical principles can be only a detriment to humanity. It is an essential of justice that a man cannot on any pretext take more from the labor of another man than he returns by his own labor. It follows that every man has a right to the entire fruit of his own labor and that the price of every article of production is fixed not by its so-called *value* but by the *cost* which is necessary for its production.

According to Andrews, and also to Warren, the specific cause of the economic evil is founded not on the existence of the wage system but on the unjust compensation of the worker. As long as the worker obtains a just pay for the time and trouble embodied in the product of his labor and is not compelled to surrender to another a portion of the fruit of his toil, the relation is altogether just, provided that the same conditions apply to everyone in the exercise of his economic activity. It is not wage as such that creates the evil, but the unjust compensation which the producer receives

and which deprives him of a part of the product of his labor.

In the second part of his sociological masterpiece, *The Science of Society*, Andrews developed the doctrines of the *cost principle* he had taken over from Warren, in so lucid and convincing a manner that his exposition on the subject belongs to the best that has ever been written on it. It was through *his* presentations and writing that Warren's ideas became known to wider circles. Yet it should be remembered that Andrews did not regard the right of the worker to the full proceeds of his labor as the last word in social progress. In this respect, he always remained a philosopher of evolution who truly believed in the everlasting change of social institutions towards higher forms. Benjamin Tucker and many others of his tendency made the *right to the full product of one's labor* the corner stone of anarchism and denied every libertarian movement which deviated from their tenets the right to this name. Andrews, on the other hand, never adopted this attitude, demonstrating again his complete tolerance and open-mindedness.

He did not reject communism as a form of social economy on grounds of principle. He opposed mainly the methods of many communists of his time who believed that they could reach their goal at one bound, when, according to his opinion, only a very gradual approach was possible. He believed that a modified and practical communism would develop as man would relax his hold on property, a course which advances in science and engineering will be sure to bring about. The constantly increasing abundance of production may well lead to a point when every price reckoning becomes superfluous, and men will perform their labor according to their own inclinations. A drink of water, a pin, a match already have ceased to be objects of price fixing. We may assume then that to the extent in which social pro-

duction permits man to satisfy his material wants the notion of price will gradually disappear.

The *cost principle* is only a starting point, not an aim. He propounded it as a means of bringing justice and integrity into the economic affairs of men, of strengthening their ethical sense, thus constructing a higher form of communal life among men.—“the equitable interchange of the products of labor, measured by the scientific law relating to that subject to which I have referred, and the consequent security to each of the full enjoyment and unlimited control of just that portion of wealth which he or she produces, the effect of which will be the introduction of general comfort and security, the moderation of avarice, and the supply of a definite knowledge of the limits of rights and encroachments.”

For Andrews, the *cost principle* was therefore not a goal in itself but a connecting link in the given conditions of life and above all a means to achieve a generally higher form of social life. His philosophical breadth of vision prevented him from laying down fixed norms, for he knew that the best idea is killed when it becomes a lifeless dogma and clothes itself in the garment of absolute truth, and when its advocates forget that everything on earth has only a relative meaning. If one compares this viewpoint with the rigid biblical beliefs of the Marxist school, whose representatives presume to interpret every event in accordance with the pattern of dialectical sophistry and believe to have found in it the key to all the ups and downs of history, one may understand of how much of its vital content socialism has been drained. It is the curse of every absolute idea that it is never touched by changing conditions, but forever continues to follow its own course. The experiences of history have always shown that such conceptions must become a hindrance to the attainment of higher forms of life because they root

in a fruitless fatalism which perceives every event as fulfilled by reason of some *historical necessity*. Andrews did not belong to this class. His intellectual far-sightedness never permitted him to forget that while he was engaged in resisting the tyranny of dead institutions he must beware of binding the future to other forms which may, in turn, outlive their usefulness. He clearly recognized that eternal cycle in which changing conditions generate certain thoughts and ideas only to render them obsolete again as time progresses, and it is here that his superiority as a thinker and a man becomes evident.

Andrews became one of the most ardent champions of the emancipation of women, a cause to which he was inevitably drawn by his whole outlook. The woman question played at that time an important role in the intellectual circles of America and became the subject of numerous lectures and writings, especially after the appearance of the so-called *Free Love League*. In 1853 a long debate went on in the columns of the *New York Tribune* between Andrews, Horace Greeley and Henry James about *Love, Marriage and Divorce*, and it aroused a good deal of attention. Andrews took the position that all attempts hitherto made by the church and the state to anchor the sexual relations of men in the family were failures, as was proved by the very existence of prostitution. The attempt to force the sexual life of men into prescribed channels leads inevitably to the same result as political and economic despotism and destroys the foundations of social morals because it breeds hypocrisy and poisons all natural relations between the sexes. If the right to one's own person is to be the premise for freedom, it follows that sexual behavior is man's private affair in which his own sense of responsibility is the arbiter. The sexual bondage of women has the same origin as economic and political bondage. Of all human relationships love is least able to en-

dure interference from the outside world. The sexual life of man can truly enough be forced into definite grooves but that will never prevent him from seeking continually for secret escapes from the troublesome barriers which law and public opinion have raised around him.

"I have no special doctrine on the subject of marriage. I regard marriage as neither better nor worse than all other of the arbitrary and artificial institutions of society—contrivances to regulate nature instead of studying her laws. I ask for the complete emancipation and self-ownership of woman, simply as I ask for the same for man. The *women's rights women* simply mean this or do not yet know what they mean. So of Mr. James. So of all reformers. The *Observer* is logical, shrewd, and correct when it affirms that the whole body of reformers tend the same way and bring up sooner or later against the legal or prevalent theological idea of marriage. It is not, however, from any special hostility to that institution, but from a growing consciousness of any underlying principle, the inspiring soul of the activities of the present age—the sovereignty of the individual. The lesson has to be learned that order, combining with freedom and ultimating in harmony, is to be the work of science, and not of arbitrary legislation and criminal codes."

"My doctrine is simply that it is intolerable impertinence for me to thrust myself into your affairs of the heart, to determine for you what woman (or women) you love well enough to live with, or how many you are capable of loving. I demand that you simply let me alone to settle the most intimate and delicate and sacred affairs of my private life in the same manner. You publicly notify me that you won't. Another generation will judge between us as to the barbarism and the culture of those two positions."

His position on women's emancipation brought Andrews for some time into close contact with Victoria Woodhull who made a great sensation at the time but who later proved

to be a mere adventuress. A great part of her speeches and articles reflected the influence of Andrews; many of them were directly written by him.

It is no accident that in the social reform movements of America, the issue of sex relationships played a far greater role than in those of the European countries with the exception of England. This is due to the puritanical tradition which in Anglo-Saxon countries exercised on public life, a moral pressure unknown in the Catholic states. The natural result was a *dictatorship of public morals* such as one could only have found in Geneva under Calvin's regime. Churches, religious sects, and moral bigots were forever trying to bring chastity to their fellowmen by the use of the cudgel and all the other means of physical and moral coercion calculated to awaken their responsiveness to the *Kingdom of God*. In no other country have so many crusades against sin been conducted as in America. As could only be expected, the practical results of these movements were always negative. Neither the notorious *Comstock Laws* of 1873 nor the so-called *Prohibition Laws* after the first World War have contributed to the raising of public morals in any way. They have merely created an atmosphere of bigotry, and encouraged informers and snoopers, thus substituting the evils they wished to uproot with others even worse. The sinister development of organized gangsterism which followed Prohibition in the course of years grew to a public danger apparent to everyone not blinded by prejudice and could not fail to convince them that the results achieved were the very opposite of those they had hoped for.

The forty years of Anthony Comstock's activity in this country were a period of unexampled intrusion into the private lives of citizens in the name of public morality which is almost incomprehensible to Europeans. In order

to prevent the dissemination of literature of an *indecent character*, books like Leo Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata*, Oscar Wilde's *Salome*, and the works of Emile Zola, Theophile Gautier, George Bernard Shaw, Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair and many others were blacklisted and the paintings of distinguished artists reviled as an offense against good morals. The mutilation of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* was only one example of the monstrous lengths this censorship went to. Hundreds of persons were arrested and many were subjected to indictment, trial and sentence.

Asceticism in most cases is either the result of a sordid imagination or of passion diverted from its natural course, and experience has shown that when the protection of public morals is entrusted to its votaries, the consequences are usually appalling.

Under these circumstances, it ought to be easily understood why the idea of *free love* received so much more attention in America than in any other country. It was merely another case of pressure causing counter-pressure. Andrews expressed his protest against the meddling of the bigots in private concerns in these words: "Except in the case of actual encroachment, society has no more right to interfere with the morality of individual conduct than it has to interfere with the orthodoxy of individual belief. *Neither comes within the jurisdiction of third persons except at the point where encroachment begins.*"

Andrews believed that with the expiring of political authority nationalism also would disappear. Modern civilization brings men of all countries into ever closer relations, making them more and more dependent on one another in every sphere of social and spiritual life. As they become conscious of this, they will make an end of war which is always the result of artificially developed antagonisms.—



"But with the cessation of war there will be no foreign nations, and consequently the state or foreign department may in turn take itself away. Patriotism will expand into philanthropy. Nations, like sects, will dissolve into the individuals who compose them. Every man will be his own nation, and, preserving his own sovereignty and respecting the sovereignty of others, he will be a nation at peace with others."

Concerning the current criminal procedure of the state which he regarded as *organized vengeance* pure and simple, Andrews has written beautiful and convincing words in which he repeatedly emphasized that crime in most cases should be regarded as a social phenomenon rather than something the criminal is born with. Consequently, it has its origin in the very defects of present day society.—"Statesman and jurists have hitherto dealt with effects instead of causes. They have looked upon crime and encroachment of all sorts as a fact to be remedied, but never as a phenomenon to be accounted for. They have never gone back to inquire what conditions of existence manufactured the criminal, or provoked or induced the encroachment. A change in this respect is beginning to be observed, for the first time, in the present generation. The superiority of prevention over cure is barely beginning to be admitted,—a reform in the methods of thought which is an incipient stage of the revolution in question."

Andrews was a member of the *Liberal Club* in New York where he delivered quite a number of lectures. He had connections with many outstanding men of his time like Prof. J. S. Sedgwick, Prof. Louis Elsberg, Rabbi Huebsch, Rev. N. Simpson, etc., who did not share all of his convictions, but who were attracted by his knowledge and above all by his unusual personality. Besides his books he wrote for different periodicals. He was also a member of the

*Academy of Arts and Sciences* and was active in the *American Ethnological Society*. Stephen P. Andrews was one of the most versatile and significant exponents libertarian socialism ever had in this country. He died in 1886 at the age of seventy-four.

## *Lysander Spooner*

BENJAMIN R. TUCKER'S TRIBUTE TO LYSANDER SPOONER. A GREAT JURIST. HIS OPPOSITION AGAINST THE POSTAL MONOPOLY OF THE GOVERNMENT. HIS WORK THE UNCONSTITUTIONALITY OF SLAVERY. CUSTOMARY LAW AND STATES LAW. TRIAL BY JURY AS IT SHOULD BE. THE IRRESPONSIBILITY OF REPUBLICAN LEGISLATORS. SPOONER AND JEFFERSON. CONSTITUTIONS ARE NO PROTECTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE. THE "RIGHT OF REVOLUTION" IS ONLY A KNIFE WITHOUT AN EDGE. SPOONER'S LETTER TO GROVER CLEVELAND. HIS ECONOMIC IDEAS.

A most militant champion of individualistic anarchism in the United States arose in the person of Lysander Spooner, a lawyer by profession. Spooner was born in 1808 on a farm near Athol, Mass. He studied law in Worcester, Mass., and completed his studies with Charles Allen, who at the time was one of the best known law teachers in that state. Spooner was an early opponent of monopoly and, indeed, of every restraint upon personal freedom. It was said in praise of him that he knew the Constitution and constitutional rights better than many of the greatest judges of the nation. Spooner was, in fact, an exceptionally able and intelligent writer, yet at the same time a man of action

who never missed an opportunity to stand up for his own rights or the rights of others.

Benjamin R. Tucker who knew him intimately portrayed him "as a man of intellect, a man of heart, and a man of will; that as a man of intellect his thought was keen, clear, penetrating, incisive, logical, orderly, careful, convincing, and crushing, and set forth withal in a style of singular strength, purity, and individuality which needed to employ none of the devices of rhetoric to charm the intelligent reader; that as a man of heart he was a good hater and a good lover—hating suffering, woe, want, injustice, cruelty, oppression, slavery, hypocrisy, and falsehood, and loving happiness, joy, prosperity, justice, kindness, equality, liberty, sincerity, and truth; that as a man of will he was firm, pertinacious, tireless, obdurate, sanguine, scornful, and sure; and that all these virtues of intellect, heart, and will, lay hidden beneath a modesty of demeanor, a simplicity of life, and a beaming majesty of countenance which combined with the venerable aspect of his later years, gave him the appearance, as he walked our busy streets, of some patriarch or philosopher of old, and made him a personage delightful to meet and beautiful to look upon."

As a young man, Spooner began his first fight against an unjust decision in the state of Massachusetts which denied to the pupils in the so-called reading courses the right to practice as public legal assistants if they had not been prepared by three years' study even though they were fitted for their calling. His efforts were responsible for the final repeal of this statute.

In 1844 Spooner led a vigorous opposition against the postal monopoly of the government which enabled it to levy an exorbitant charge on the forwarding of mails. In those days it cost 12½ cents to send a letter from Boston to New York and 25 cents from Boston to Washington. Spooner

fought this encroachment of government on the social relations of citizens not only on the ground of high postage rates but because he regarded it as an infringement on the rights of free speech as guaranteed to the citizen by the Constitution. Not satisfied to be merely a critic, he established a private post in order to prove that a 5 cent postage rate was sufficient to support the enterprise. His venture made splendid progress, but the continual prosecution by the government finally compelled him to abandon it. However, he did accomplish something by his resolute procedure, for shortly after an Act of Congress was passed sharply reducing the rate of postage.

Spooner took a lively part in the struggle against negro slavery and published in 1845 a book, *The Unconstitutionality of Slavery*, which made a stir; it ranks among the best things written on this question. Wendell Phillips dedicated a pamphlet to him, and well-known abolitionists such as William Goodell, Gerrit Smith and many others cited Spooner's work as the best proof that Negro slavery was incompatible with the principles of the *Constitution* and the *Declaration of Independence*. Only Garrison and the adherents of the *Non-Resistant Society* held themselves aloof from Spooner because they regarded the abolition of slavery not as a question of constitutionality but of ethical principles.

Spooner's extensive legal knowledge, so clearly revealed in his great work, *Trial by Jury*, made it possible for him to attack the system of political government from a side where, in the eyes of the average citizen, it finds its strongest moral basis, namely as protector of the rights of the people. This, according to Spooner, is a delusion which bolsters the state more potently than any physical force. A law is by no means the result of an abstract conception but always an expression, set in words, of particular social

customs which have become established among the people in an unwritten ethical code. The social life of the community creates in this way a set of natural laws which find their expression in man's elementary sense of justice and therefore rest on purely ethical foundations. Man thus becomes his own judge to decide what is useful or harmful to him in his relations with his fellowmen. The ethical concepts of men thus correspond to their natural needs and change with them. This change proceeds quite gradually and almost imperceptibly as long as it is not artificially disturbed, and has always been the natural expression of every social development. The law of custom is therefore the first achievement of human conception of right or wrong. It established natural agreement in the relations of men long before written ordinance of the state began to prevail.

As soon as government brings these laws of custom into circumscribed forms and makes them permanent, it proclaims itself the protector of the new status. In this way the organic development of society is forcibly interrupted and the past is made the judge of the future. The natural sense of justice is substituted by the dead letter of legal force which in time leads to such disastrous consequences that in most cases open revolt becomes the only remedy. People can be compelled by brutal force to obey a law for a certain period of time, but the spirit of the law will never become a vital part of their ethical convictions. The laws of custom, on the other hand, have their roots in the conscience of human beings. Instead of treating each case in the same mechanical and stereotyped fashion they are able to do justice to every situation that arises.

While the state, by its very nature, perpetually seeks to create, protect and maintain social privileges, its administrators will on one hand never fail to give that interpreta-

tion even to the most equitable law which suits their purpose best, and on the other will strive to enact such laws as will be most favorable for the maintenance of these privileges. Thus the state, supposedly created to protect the rights of the people, *will be plotting with the privileged against the people*. It does not make any difference whether the State pretends to be a *free government* or not, for "all governments, the worst on earth and the most tyrannical on earth, are free governments to that portion of the people who voluntarily support them."

Indeed Spooner came to these conclusions very early. Thus he declared already in his booklet, *Poverty: Its Illegal Causes and Legal Cure* (1846):

"Each man has the natural right to acquire all he honestly can and to enjoy and dispose of all that he honestly acquires; and the protection of these rights is all that any one has a right to ask of government in relation to them. It is all that he *can* have, consistently with the equal rights of others. If government give any individual more than this, it can do it only by taking it from others. It therefore, in doing so, only robs one of a portion of his natural, just and equal rights, in order to give to another more than his natural, just and equal rights. To do this is of the very essence of tyranny. And whether it be done by majorities, or minorities, by the sword, the statute, or the judicial decision, it is equally and purely usurpation, despotism, and oppression."

In his great work, *Trial by Jury*, Spooner shows with remarkable clarity what happens when the government attempts to protect the rights of the people. If the government really had the intention only to watch over these constitutional rights, it would *never* interfere with the exercise of these rights but only take care that they are not infringed upon. The law of the people would therefore have to be the law of the country and not that of the gov-

ernments. But the government requires the jury to make their decisions in accordance with the laws prescribed by the state instead of permitting them to determine whether or not a given law does justice to a case. Thus the right of open trial only exists on paper and is not worth a cent as far as the people are concerned. Law becomes an instrument for organized vengeance, and instead of being exercised by the people remains a function of government.

“so, also, if the government may dictate to the jury what laws they are to enforce, it is no longer a trial by the country, but a trial by the government; because the jury then tries the accused not by any standard of their own, but by a standard thus dictated to them by the government. And the standard thus dictated by the government becomes the measure of the people’s liberties. If the government dictates the standard of trial, it, of course, dictates the result of the trial. And such a trial is a trial by the government. In short, if the jury has no right to judge of the justice of a law of the government, they plainly can do nothing to protect the people against the oppressions of the government; for there are no oppressions which the government may not authorize by law. By such trials the government will determine its own powers over the people, instead of the people’s determining their liberties against the government; and it will be an entire delusion to talk, as for centuries we have done, of the trial by jury as a *palladium of liberty*, or as any protection to the people against the oppression and tyranny of the government.”

According to Spooner’s conception every government which can put its own laws into effect even for a day without asking the consent of the people may theoretically be considered an absolutist government, not responsible to the people and able to expand its power at will. Spooner developed this viewpoint with an uncompromising logic and



applied it to all political institutions of the country: to Congress, the Senate, the Supreme Court, and to the Presidency itself. His criticism is as penetrating as anything ever written on the subject of representative government. He pointed out that under this system the best of constitutions will fail so that the only right that finally remains is that of electing men into office who, once they are in power, become autocrats.—“No despot was ever more entirely irresponsible than are republican legislators during the period for which they are chosen. They can neither be removed from their office, nor called to account while in their office, nor punished after they leave their office, be their tyranny what it may.”—Constitutions are no protection for the safeguarding of a people against the tyranny of a government. They are effective only when the people are in a position to compel the government to keep within the limitations imposed by the Constitution.—“Practically speaking, no government knows any limits to its power except the endurance of the people.”—Even the resort to law is in this case only an illusion.—“Those who are capable of tyranny are capable of perjury to sustain it.”

Spooner in his courageous defense of trial by jury followed Jefferson's leadership and developed those ideas to their ultimate conclusion. Jefferson had already written in 1789 to Colonel Humphreys:

“There are rights which it is useless to surrender to the government, and which governments have yet always been found to invade. These are the rights of thinking, and publishing our thoughts by speaking or writing; the right of free commerce; the right of personal freedom. There are instruments for administering the government, so peculiarly trustworthy that we should never leave the legislature at liberty to change them. The new constitution has secured these in the executive and legislative department; but not in the judiciary. It should have

established trials by the people themselves; that is to say, by jury. There are instruments so dangerous to the rights of the nation, and which place them so totally at the mercy of their government, that those governors, whether legislative or executive, should be restrained from keeping such instruments on foot, but in well-defined cases."

Spooner believed that so long as the people have no support in their institutions, of which an independent jury ranks among the foremost, everyone who opposes an unjust law will remain without legal defense and stand convicted before judgment is pronounced upon him. Also, the right to resist, which the Constitution guarantees to the citizen, does not affect this condition in the least because the people can make no legal use of it. The *right of revolution* which is expressed in the *Declaration of Independence* is never recognized by a government and only becomes a right when the government is overthrown. Rights which cannot be put to practice are only a knife without an edge or at best a beautiful ornament which dazzles the eye but serves no useful purpose. In this case, it amounts to a *right* which clearly is not a right at all.

"The right of revolution which tyrants in mockery accord to mankind is no *legal* right *under* a government; it is only a right to overturn a government. The government itself never acknowledges this right. And the right is practically established only when and because the government no longer exists to call it in question. The right therefore can be exercised with impunity only when it is exercised victoriously. All unsuccessful attempts at revolution however justifiable in themselves are punished as treason. The government itself never admits the injustice of its laws as a legal defense for those who have attempted a revolution and failed. The right of revolution therefore is a right of no practical value except for those who are stronger than the government."

As long as the defense of the rights of the people is not anchored in the jurisdiction of the people, the free exchange of opinion and even the exercise of the franchise can be of little aid to the public if the expression of opinion is not bolstered by open resistance.

"Tyrants care nothing for discussions that are to end only in discussion. Such discussion as does not interfere with the enforcement of their laws is but idle wind to them. Suffrage is equally powerless and unreliable. It can be exercised only periodically, and the tyranny must at least be borne until the time for suffrage comes. Besides, when the suffrage is exercised, it gives no guarantee for the repeal of existing laws that are oppressive and no security against the enactment of new ones that are equally so. . . . The right of suffrage, therefore, and even a change of legislators, guarantees no change of legislation—certainly no change for the better. Even if a change for the better actually comes, it comes too late, because it comes only after more or less injustice has been irreparably done."

In his *Letter to Thomas F. Bayard*, Senator from Delaware, and even more in *A Letter to Grover Cleveland*, the President of the United States, Spooner developed his viewpoint concerning the political institutions of the country with a boldness and pungency of expression not often heard even in America. In his open letter to the highest dignitary of government, he arraigned all the sins of contemporary society, pointing out that the present state did not essentially differ from royal despotisms of former centuries. Also in this country, he declared, despite the fact that it had a different form of government than most European countries, the public representatives of power have constantly endeavored to undermine the rights of the people and "to keep the producing classes as poor here as they are there."—Spooner demanded that the President seek

new means and ways to eliminate such conditions and at last put to him the question: "Unless you do that, is it not plain that the people have a right to consider you a tyrant, and the confederate and tool of tyrants, and to get rid of you as unceremoniously as they would of any other tyrant?"—Only a jurist, thoroughly familiar with all the technicalities of the law and the functions of governmental institutions, could produce so devastating a criticism of our modern political and social institutions.

Like Josiah Warren and Stephen Andrews, Lysander Spooner based the sovereignty of man on the security of his person and the right to the full product of his labor. He set forth his economic ideas in numerous essays and books. In contrast with many other social reformers who regarded the development of big industry and the proletarianization of the masses as a necessary premise for the realization of socialism, Spooner saw in the constant growth of industry and financial monopoly one of the greatest dangers for human freedom and an important cause for the decline of all social institutions in the country. He foresaw many later excrescences of the contemporary economic system with an astonishingly clear vision. He early recognized that the overwhelming industrialization of society is not merely an economic but also a psychological problem. Unlimited exploitation of the masses, the alarming decline of all social consciousness, the conformity in material and spiritual life, and above all the vanishing instinct for freedom were to him signs of a new absolutism, whose effect on human development no one could foresee. His ideal was a society of small property owners who control their economic and social affairs by the assurance of full compensation for their labor, a system of free banking and mutual agreement, and who in all other respects fashion their

lives according to their own judgment, free of any interference by others.

How far this conception may harmonize today with the evolution of modern economy, even if one never loses sight of the quest for a more equitable social order, is quite another question which does not concern us here. The advancing decentralization of industry brought about by technical advances which have also affected agriculture, a close relationship between industry and farming on the basis of cooperative labor such as Peter Kropotkin envisioned in his work, *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, undoubtedly offers more promise of a social transformation along libertarian lines of socialism than Spooner's ideas. That however cannot lessen the significance of Spooner as a thinker in social philosophy and his deeply penetrating criticism of our political institutions.

Spooner was a prolific writer as the Appendix to this work clearly shows, for he retained his vigor of mind even in the closing years of his life. Towards the end of his career he attempted to epitomize his ideas in an extensive book of which the first part only appeared in 1882 under the title, *Natural Law, or the Science of Justice*. The rest of the manuscript, together with numerous other notes which Spooner left behind him, came after his death into the possession of Benjamin R. Tucker and was later destroyed in the great fire which ruined his publishing establishment and caused him to give up the publication of his paper, *Liberty*, and to go to Europe.

Spooner died on the 14th of May, 1887, in Boston, at the age of seventy-nine.

*William B. Greene*

INFLUENCE OF ROBERT OWEN AND CHARLES FOURIER'S IDEAS IN AMERICA. CHARLES A. DANA ON PROUDHON'S BANK OF THE PEOPLE. WILLIAM GREENE, THE PIONEER OF MUTUALISM IN AMERICA. HIS MILITARY CAREER. HIS ACTIVITY AS PREACHER OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH IN WEST BROOKFIELD, MASS. T. W. HIGGINSON'S DESCRIPTION OF GREENE. GREENE AS ORATOR. HIS SPEECH TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION OF MASSACHUSETTS ON THE EQUAL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN. GREENE IN PARIS. HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE CIVIL WAR OF THE UNITED STATES. HIS ACTIVITY IN THE MASSACHUSETTS LABOR UNION AND IN THE FRENCH SECTION OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL IN AMERICA. GREENE'S ECONOMIC IDEAS INFLUENCED BY PROUDHON'S THEORIES. MUTUAL BANKING VERSUS THE MONOPOLIZATION OF THE MEANS OF EXCHANGE BY THE STATE. THE ROYALTY OF GOLD. THE PRINCIPLE OF ASSOCIATION AND COOPERATIVE LABOR. MUTUALISM AGAINST COMMUNISM AND STATE AUTHORITY. THE MOVEMENT FOR MONEY REFORM IN AMERICA. J. K. INGALLS AND HUGO BILGRAM. EZRA HEYWOOD AND *THE WORD*. HIS PERSECUTIONS UNDER THE COM-STOCK LAWS FOR CIRCULATION OF "OBSCENE" LITERATURE. MOSES HARMAN AND HIS CIRCLE.

While Warren, Andrews and Spooner in the development of their political and economic ideas rooted firmly in the actuality of American conditions and were greatly influenced by the liberal traditions of this country, there developed after 1848, a new tendency which found its main spiritual support in the doctrines of the great French thinker, Pierre Joseph Proudhon. It is significant that of all socialist schools which at the time were transplanted from Europe to America only those found a stronger response which were carried by a free spirit. Thus the ideas of Robert Owen and Charles Fourier were more readily understood by Americans of the old stock than, for example, the authoritarian ideas of Etienne Cabet, in spite of many practical efforts of the Cabetists in this country which had aroused much interest in the whole socialist world.

Owen's ideas were not only instrumental in starting Josiah Warren on his study of social questions, they also found a ready response among a large number of outstanding Americans like William MacLure, one of the most significant geologists of his time and a founder of the *Academy of Natural History* in Philadelphia, of the zoologist Thomas Say, of Dr. Gerard Troost, of Professor Neef, who had worked with Pestalozzi, Frances Wright, and many others.

Fourierism likewise found a considerable number of followers among the intellectual vanguard of America. It was transplanted to the United States by Albert Brisbane whose work, *Social Destiny of Man, or Association and Reorganization of Industry*, appeared in 1840 in Philadelphia and made Charles Fourier's ideas known in America. The conversion of Horace Greeley, founder of the *Tribune* in New York, to the doctrines of the French thinker, gave a strong impetus to the spread of his ideas. Among other outstanding representatives of Fourierism in this country are to be

mentioned Charles A. Dana, Perke Godwin, author of the celebrated work, *Democracy: Constructive and Pacific* (1845), the poet William Cullen Bryant, the distinguished orator William H. Channing, T. W. Higginson and Henry James. Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Russell Lowell, Margaret Fuller, and Henry D. Thoreau were also in close sympathy with these tendencies.

Among the practical experiments of Fourierism in America, the *Brook Farm* episode was the most interesting. This enterprise had its origin in the philosophic humanitarian current radiating from Boston and which for some thirty years was known as the *Club of Transcendentalists*. To this circle belonged men and women whose names figure prominently in the gallery of American thinkers and writers, such as Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, J. S. Dwight, George and Sophie Ripley, Elizabeth Peabody, and many others. The Club carried on free discussions about religion, philosophy, politics and social reforms, and published a celebrated periodical, *The Dial*.

Under the influence of Ripley and some others of this group the well known *Brook Farm Institute for Agriculture and Education*, was established. Its history was later written by John T. Codman in his book, *Brook Farm: Historic and Personal Memoirs*. *Brook Farm* published and circulated its own periodical, *The Harbinger*. The enterprise was conducted in a time of social experiments strongly influenced by the agitation against slavery.

After the Revolution of 1848, the ideas of Pierre Joseph Proudhon were widely circulated in America. A large number of the earlier adherents of Robert Owen and Charles Fourier came under the influence of this great French socialist. In 1848, Charles A. Dana, then a Fourierist, wrote in the *Tribune* a number of articles on Proudhon and his Bank of the People, which were later reproduced by W. H.



Channing in *The Spirit of the Age*. Albert Brisbane was also strongly attracted by Proudhon's ideas and visited him in Paris at a time when Proudhon had to take up his involuntary abode in the prison of Mazas in Paris.

William B. Greene, however, was the man who rendered the most valuable service to the dissemination of Proudhon's ideas in America. Greene was born in Haverhill, Mass., in 1819. His father, Nathaniel Greene, was the publisher of the *Boston Statesman*, the most eminent Democratic daily newspaper in the State of Massachusetts. Young Greene prepared himself for a military career and attended the Military Academy at West Point. He took part in the campaign in Florida, but soon after the war, he obtained his discharge and then turned to theology. In 1842 he entered the *Harvard Divinity School* and graduated there in 1845. After the conclusion of his studies he occupied for some years the position of preacher in the Unitarian Church in West Brookfield, Mass., but his new activity did not give him any more satisfaction than his past career as a soldier, for he felt himself drawn to other problems. It is likely that his determined attitude against slavery and his sympathy with the cause of the Abolitionists did not have the effect of endearing him to the hearts of his Christian colleagues, and only hastened his break with the theological career.

Greene's interest in social questions began very early. As a matter of fact, he supported the *Brook Farm Experiment* before he took up his theological studies, yet there is no sign that he had any contact with Josiah Warren and his circle. Of all the outstanding representatives of libertarian socialism in America, he was the only one who drew on European sources for his ideas. His first writing, *Equality*, a brochure of seventy-four pages, which appeared in 1848 in West Brookfield, Mass., without his name, shows clearly

the influence of Proudhon's doctrines. It is quite possible that Greene wrote this under the stimulus of Charles Dana's articles in the *New York Tribune*. His second work on economic questions, *Mutual Banking*, which first appeared in a series of newspaper articles and in 1850 came out in book form, rests squarely on Proudhon's principles. Of all his works this is the best known, having had quite a number of editions, and it established him as the founder of American Mutualism.

Greene was a very clever and inspired orator who knew how to present his ideas in an impressive manner. He must also have been a man of an extraordinary appearance. Henry Cohen, in his Introduction to Proudhon's *Solution of the Social Problem*, quotes a description of Greene by T. W. Higginson which, among other things, includes the following passages: "A young man who seemed to me the very handsomest and most distinguished looking person I had ever seen; nor could any one ever separate this picturesque aspect from his personality. . . He was more than six feet high, slender, somewhat high-shouldered, but with an erectness brought from West Point, where he had been a cadet though not a graduate. He had served in the Indian Wars in Florida, and his whole bearing was military and definitely self-assertive. He had a mass of jet black hair, and eyes that transfixed you with their blackness and penetration.—Greene married a Miss Shaw, one of the most admired belles of Boston, a woman as fair as he was dark, nearly as tall as himself, quite as distinguished in appearance. . ."

That Greene had a reputation as an orator is evident from Higginson's account that in 1850, he spoke to the *Town and Country Club* in Boston of which Longfellow, Emerson, Hawthorne, Lowell and other well known representatives of American literature were members. Elected

as a delegate to the *Constitutional Convention of Massachusetts* which had been convened in 1853 to consider proposals for a change in the Constitution, he made a brilliant speech for equal social and political rights for women, which made a great impression. It was one of the best addresses of the Convention. Soon afterwards he followed his father to Paris where, according to Benjamin Tucker, he became personally acquainted with Proudhon. Greene remained in France until the outbreak of the Civil War, in which he subsequently participated. Soon after his arrival in America he offered his services to the government of Massachusetts and was appointed Colonel of the *First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery*. This regiment for a time was entrusted with the defense of Washington when an attack by the Confederate armies seemed imminent. Later Greene was transferred to the command of an artillery brigade under General Whipple.

In October, 1862, Greene obtained his discharge and returned to Boston. From then on he devoted his entire activities to the dissemination of his ideas and worked especially in the labor unions in behalf of Mutualism. He was elected Vice-President of the *New England Labor Reform League*, which at that time was strongly influenced by Proudhon's ideas and whose secretary, Ezra H. Heywood, was an old friend of Josiah Warren. In 1869 Greene became President of the *Massachusetts Labor Union*. When the *International Workingmen's Association*, known as the First International, was introduced in America, he joined the French section where he advocated the ideas of Mutualism. At about that time (1872) his famous debate with the conservative economist, Edward Atkinson, took place in the City Hall of Brookline, Mass., in which the questions of money and the principle of free credit through Mutual Banking were discussed. This debate at the time caused

considerable interest and occupied the attention of the press for several weeks.

Green's ideas about solving the social question were substantially in accord with the views which Proudhon had developed in his remarks on *the solution of the social problem*, with the difference that Greene tried to adapt his thoughts to the economic and social conditions prevailing in America.

Like Proudhon he believed that the time of feudalism had not yet vanished, although its forms had changed. For the producer of economic values still pays his tithe to the state, the landlord, the owner of the means of production, or to the bank which lends him the money he needs for his labor. There are many whose knowledge of Proudhon is confined to his saying that *property is a theft*. They have made no effort to penetrate deeper into his ideas and grasp what he actually wished to express with these words. Proudhon made a distinction between property as monopoly and the natural right of a man to the full product of his own labor or to the share of land which he needs for his own use. The monopoly of property which is at the foundation of our contemporary economy is based on the principles of Roman law which gives the owner the right to *use and abuse* his property without regard for any one else. Labor alone creates capital in order to consume it. Capital itself creates nothing, but can only serve labor as a means to create new capital.

When capital becomes a monopoly, it is able to produce, but only by artificial means since its owner does not do productive work but by using his economic superiority forces the producer to surrender a portion of the product of his labor for the use of the land, the means of production or the loan of money. Proudhon described the consequence as follows:

“From the fiction of the productivity of capital and the numberless prerogatives which the monopolist arrogates to himself there results always and of necessity one of these two things: First, the monopolist takes from the wage-laborer, a portion of his social capital. B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, and L have produced the year for ten, and have consumed only for nine. In other words, the capitalist has eaten up one laborer. Further, the interest being used as new capital, the situation of the laborers grows worse and worse year by year; so that if we push the argument to its logical extremity, we shall find that, towards the seventh year, the entire original investment of the laborer will have passed, in the name of interest and profit, into the hands of the proprietor-capitalist-contractor, showing that the wage-laborers, in order to pay their debts, must work every seventh year for nothing. Or, second, the laborer, being unable to pay a price for his product larger than that which he has himself received, compels the monopolist to lower his price, and consequently to disgorge the whole amount of interest, rent and profit which the exercise of his right of property entitled and obligated him to take.”

Like his great teacher, Greene also believed that such a condition could come to an end only when the producer is assured the full product of his labor, that is to say, when he is able by mutual credit, free of charge to gain access to the necessary raw materials and instruments of labor and to exchange the products which he has created either himself or in association with others for articles of equal value, equal value in this case meaning, of course, an equal amount of work involved in their manufacture. The regulating agency for this exchange would be the *People's Bank* or as Greene called it, the *Mutual Bank*. It functions by means of a new currency which no longer represents value in the sense of present day money, but rather indicates values in terms of labor, serving exclusively as a medium

of exchange. Capital then loses its strangling power and the products of personal or social labor instead of serving the interests of a few individuals or privileged groups will benefit all members of society.

Greene developed these economic ideas best in his work on *Mutual Banking* (1850) which undoubtedly belongs to the best things written in this country on the subject. Like Proudhon, Greene recognised that money as such possesses no commanding influence upon production; only when it is used as *merchandise money*, as Greene called it, does it assume that power, for then it becomes a fictitious measure of value not determined by the cost of labor but by artificially produced conditions which enable the landlord, the contractor or the banker to enrich themselves at the expense of labor. The monopolization of the means of exchange by the state and certain privileged groups makes money today an instrument of production, without the possession of which as little social labor can be had as without the use of the instruments of labor. Greene described very clearly this condition and its immediate consequence for society in the chapter, *A Parasite City*:

“Suppose 5000 men to own \$30,000 each; suppose these men to move their families to some desolate place in the state where there is no opportunity for the profitable pursuit of the occupations either of commerce, agriculture, or manufacturing. The united capital of these 5000 men would be \$150,000,000. Suppose, now, this capital to be safely invested in different parts of the state; suppose these men to be, each of them, heads of families, comprising, on an average, five persons each, this would give us in all, 25,000 individuals. A servant to each family would give us 5000 persons more, and these added to the above number would give us 30,000 in all. Suppose, now, that 5000 mechanics—shoemakers, bakers, butches, etc., should settle with their families in the neighborhood of these capitalists, in order to

avail themselves of their custom. Allowing five to a family, as before, we have 25,000 to add to the above number. We have, therefore, in all, a city of 55,000 individuals, established in the most desolate part of the state. The people in the rest of the state would have to pay to the capitalists of this city six percent on \$150,000,000 every year; for these capitalists have, by the supposition, this amount out at interest on bond and mortgage, or otherwise. The yearly interest on \$150,000,000 at six percent is \$9,000,000. The wealthy individuals may do no useful work whatever, and, nevertheless, they levy a tax of \$9,000,000 per annum on the industry of the state."

Greene then describes the further development of this city. The possessor of capital employs one half of the received interest for his own use, while the other half is used as invested capital. By the building of railroads, canals, etc., the interest on this capital is extended to other enterprises. The result is:

"The capitalists would furnish money, the people of the state would furnish labor; the people would dig the dirt, hew the wood and draw the water. The intelligent men who devised the plan would receive a salary for superintending the work, the people would receive day's wages, and the capitalists would own the whole; for did they not furnish the money that paid for the construction? Taking a scientific view of the matter, we may suppose the capitalists not to work at all; for the mere fact of their controlling the money would insure all the results. . . We ask now, is there no danger of this new city's absorbing unto itself the greater portion of the wealth of the state? There is no city in this commonwealth that comes fully up to this ideal of a *faineant* and parasite city; but there is no city in the state in which this ideal is not more or less completely embodied."

In this manner interest bearing capital becomes an instrument of usury and exploitation of the people. The abolition

of money monopoly and the introduction of a pure medium of exchange which establishes only the cost price of labor is, according to Greene's and also in Proudhon's opinion, the real foundation of every social reform. Furthermore, such a medium of exchange is no longer based on the fluctuating price of the precious metals (gold and silver) but retains its stability which changes only with the development of productivity. As long as the medium of exchange is founded on the fictitious value of gold, it is inevitable that the possessor of gold will dictate the price of every commodity. The more gold is concentrated in every country in the hands of a few, so much greater must the influence be of an international financial oligarchy on the whole economy, and not only on the economy but also on its entire political and social structure. If one considers the powerful development which finance capital has since then taken and its overwhelming influence in the economic, political and social spheres, it must be conceded that men like Proudhon and Greene judged the matter more correctly than those socialists who regarded *industrial capital* as the most important factor of exploitation of the masses.

"We have driven out the last of our kings," said Proudhon, "we have cried: 'Down with monarchy! Long live the Republic!' But you can believe me, if the doubt has come to you, there are in France, there are in all Europe only a few lesser princes. Royalty is always in existence. Royalty will subsist as long as we will not have abolished it in its most material and most abstract form—the royalty of gold. Gold is the talisman which congeals life in society, which binds circulation, kills labor and credit, and makes slavery mutual. We must destroy the royalty of gold; we must republicanize specie, by making every product of labor ready money."

"That which, in general, renders the bill of exchange insecure is precisely this promise of final conversion into specie,



and thus the idea of metal, like a corrupting royalty, infects even the bill of exchange and takes from it its certainty. Now the whole problem of the circulation consists in generalizing the bill of exchange; that is to say, in making it any anonymous title, exchangeable forever, and redeemable at sight, but only in merchandise and services. Or, to speak a language more comprehensible to financial adepts, the problem of circulation consists in *basing* bank paper, not upon specie, nor bullion, nor immovable property, which can never produce anything but a miserable oscillation between usury and bankruptcy, between the five-franc price and the assignat; but by basing it upon *products*."

Greene emphasized more strongly the *principle of association* than did Josiah Warren and more so than Spooner had done. Here too Proudhon's influence asserts itself. Warren, whose practical experiments were concerned with the business of small owners who produced for themselves and brought their products to market was above all interested in securing for them a just exchange. He did this by making the *cost principle* the basis of price while his *labor notes* were the practical means by which this exchange could be accomplished. In principle there is essentially no difference between Warren and Proudhon. The difference between them arises from a dissimilarity of their respective environments. Proudhon lived in a country where the subdivision of labor made cooperation in social production essential, while Warren had to deal with predominantly small individual producers. For this reason Proudhon emphasized the *principle of association* far more than Warren and his followers did, although Warren was by no means opposed to this view.

Greene, whose practical activities were confined to the Eastern part of the country which was much farther advanced economically and culturally than the country of the

pioneers in the Middle West, attempted naturally to adjust himself to his environment. His stay in Paris had made him acquainted with social environment of an entirely different character. Although, while Greene stayed in France, the coup d'état of Napoleon III had already practically put an end to the French *Working Men's Associations*, he could not overlook these organizations of associated labor, which had borne so many sacrifices in the course of their history and whose number in France was close to two thousand before the establishment of the Second Empire. Hence his strong sympathy for the *principle of association*. In fact, the theory of Mutualism is nothing less than cooperative labor based upon the cost principle.

Greene saw in the mutual association of mankind which is the foundation of all social life no limitation of personal freedom but a guaranty of it, because freedom only gains its full significance through the bond of solidarity. Individualism is an important and necessary condition of our life, but solely when it finds an effective counterweight in socialism. Individualism stripped of its social bonds, socialism without individual freedom are both alike corruptible and lead inevitably to political and social disaster.

"To the true philosopher, society is a living being, endowed with an intelligence and an activity of its own, governed by special laws which are discoverable by observation, and by observation only, and whose existence is manifested not under a material aspect but in the concert and in the close mutual dependence of all the members of the social body. . . . We are all mutually dependent, morally, intellectually, and physically, upon each other. What we possess, we owe partly to our own faculties, but mainly to the education and material aid received by us from our parents, friends, neighbors, and other members of society. A child exposed, at birth, on a doorstep in Beacon

Street, and a child exposed on a bleak rock in a desolate island, will experience the results of different social conditions." \*

Thus for Greene, Mutualism was a synthesis of freedom and order, and the basis of a new social way of life which broadens as the functions of government diminish. Abrogation of the power of the state is the measure of human freedom until finally a condition arrives in which all ruling is supplanted by an administration of affairs to which everyone is an equal partner. Like Proudhon, Greene also objected to communism as a solution of the social problem because in his opinion communism was a condition of the past which was rooted in the original uniformity of primitive society to which the continually advancing complexity of modern life can make no return.

"The individualities of the associates are, among communistic men, as among sheep, numerical only. Each individual is just like all the others, and does just what the others do. The first very marked step in human progress results from the division of labor. It is the characteristic of the division of labor, and of the economic distribution of tasks, that each individual tends to do precisely what the others don't do. As soon as labor is divided, communism necessarily ceases, and Mutualism, the negation of communism, and the reciprocal correlation of each to every other, and of every other to each, for a common purpose, commences. The march of social progress is out of communism into mutualism. Communism sacrifices the individual to secure the unity of the whole. Mutualism has unlimited individualism as the essential and necessary prior condition of its own existence, and co-ordinates individuals without any sacrifice of individuality, into solidarity. Communism is the ideal of the past; mutualism of the future. Under the mutual system, each individual

\* W. B. Greene: *Socialistic, Communistic, Mutualistic and Financial Fragments*, Boston, 1875.

will receive the just and exact pay for his work; services equivalent in cost without profit or discount; and so much as the individual laborer will then get over and above what he has earned will come to him as his share in the general prosperity of the community of which he is an individual member. The principle of mutuality in social economy is identical with the principle of federation in politics. Make a note of this last fact. Individual sovereignty is the John the Baptist, without whose coming the mutualistic idea remains void. There is no mutualism without reciprocal consent; and none but individuals can enter into voluntary mutual relations. Mutualism is the synthesis of liberty and order."

Although Greene in his ideas was influenced by Proudhon, yet he was not a foreign element in this country, but was firmly rooted in the American scene and in the liberal traditions of the United States. This is particularly shown in his work, *The Sovereignty of the People* (1868). He saw in the decentralizing tendencies of Jefferson and his followers a definite phase of political and social development which must lead gradually to the abolition of all the functions of government and make the administration of the economy the corner-stone of society. In this sense he regarded Mutualism as the natural continuation of a line of social development which he believed must lead to a new form of social life.—"Mutualism operates, by its very nature to render political government, founded on arbitrary force, superfluous; that is, it operates to the decentralization of the political power, and to the transformation of the state, by substituting self-government in the stead of government *ab extra*."

Much as Proudhon, Greene regarded the establishment of the economy on Mutualist lines not only as an economic question but principally as an ethical and cultural problem. For this reason he rejected not only every mechanical de-

termination of *value* but also the designation of labor as a *commodity*, as it is used by bourgeois economists and also by Karl Marx.

"The value of labor is figurative expression, and a fiction, like the productiveness of capital. Labor, like liberty, love, ambition, genius is something vague and indeterminate in its nature, and is rendered definite by its object only: misdirected labor produces no value. Labor is said to be valuable, not because it can itself be valued, but because the products of labor may be truly valuable. When we say, 'John's labor is worth a dollar a day,' it is as though we said, 'The daily product of John's labor is worth a dollar.' To speak of labor as merchandise is treason; for such speech denies the true dignity of man, who is the king of the earth. Where labor is merchandise in fact (not by a mere inaccuracy of language), there man is merchandise also, whether it be in England or South Carolina." \*

It is to Greene's lasting credit that he constantly endeavoured to introduce his ideas into the youthful labor movement of the country so as to prevent the social problem from being regarded by labor as only a question of wages. That his success in this direction could not be very conspicuous at the time is easily understood. Nevertheless, his conceptions have greatly influenced a not inconsiderable number of men in this country. Besides social questions, Greene also wrote on philosophic and metaphysical problems. He also tried his hand for a time at poetry but without success. In 1873 he went to England where on May 30, 1878, he died at Weston-Super-Mare.

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The money question played a very important part in America at the time of Greene's activity. The government

\* W. B. Greene: *Mutual Banking*, West Brookfield, Mass., 1850.

had issued during the Civil War a paper currency called *greenbacks*, which received its name from the green reverse side of the notes. These notes which the government put into circulation in order to defray its enormous expenditures during the Civil War nominally had the value of gold dollars, yet they soon fell in exchange so that in the summer of 1864 three greenbacks had the purchasing power of one gold dollar only. When at the end of the War the government undertook to redeem its obligations, the greenbacks rose again in exchange value. But when, in 1873, the great financial crises set in, the report spread that the bankers and debtholders of the country conspired to depreciate the value of the greenbacks and intended to buy up the obligations of the states with these depreciated notes, with the purpose of compelling the government to redeem these obligations in gold.

The excitement which these machinations aroused among the people led in 1874, to the founding of the so-called *Greenback Party* which held the spotlight for some time. The new party stood for cancellation of National Bank notes and demanded that the government should declare paper money to be the only standard of value with which all interest bearing debt securities could be redeemed. The party at first found its adherents mainly among the farmers and small business people, but in 1877 broadened its program as a result of the influx of large groups of workers, and from then on called itself the *Greenback Labor Party*. After the presidential election of 1888 it vanished from the scene. Its appearance, however, showed how strongly America was then interested in currency reforms. Of course, the movement of the Greenbackers had nothing to do with the idea of mutualistic banking systems, yet it is obvious that a number of its leaders had borrowed many an argument from Mutualism.

The question of money reform and the idea of free credit found a very favorable reception at the time and drew many talented persons into its fold. As early as 1839, William Beck had conceived a plan for the establishment of a *Mutual Bank* which stirred up a good deal of discussion. Beck's plan, however, differed essentially from Proudhon's and Greene's conception.\* "Mr. Beck," as Greene said, "thought out a Mutual Bank by generalizing credit in account; Proudhon, by generalizing the bill of exchange."

A very able representative of the new idea was J. K. Ingalls who in the 70's and 80's elucidated these principles in a series of writings. A new edition of his principal work, *Social Wealth* (1885), was later published by Benjamin Tucker.

Hugo Bilgram of Philadelphia must also be named here. During his whole long life, he had taken an active part in the advancement of Mutualism. His book, *Involuntary Idleness* (1889), was in Tucker's estimation "the best treatise on money and the relations of money to labor that has been written in the English language since Colonel William B. Greene published his *Mutual Banking*." † Bilgram's book, *The Cause of Business Depressions* (1914), which he conceived in joint authorship with L. E. Levy, belongs certainly to the most significant productions which in later years have been written on this question.

Henry Appleton, a regular contributor to the *Irish World*, published in it a whole series of valuable articles.

\* *Money and Banking, or their Nature and Effects Considered: Together with a Plan for the Universal Diffusion of Their Legitimate Benefits Without their Evils.* By a citizen of Ohio. Cincinnati: Published by William Beck, 1830.

† "A Book that is not Milk for Babies," *Liberty*, November, 23, 1889.

His writing *What is Freedom and When Am I Free?* is a very intelligent attempt to give a rational foundation to the conception of freedom. This writing appeared in the middle of the 70's and was published anew in 1888 by Benjamin R. Tucker.

Charles T. Fowler takes an important place in the propaganda for the Mutualist cause. Fowler, a personal friend of Josiah Warren, was in the 80's a leading writer on *The Sun* in Kansas City, a semi-monthly publication which was an ardent advocate of the principle of cooperation. It brought forth a whole series of his articles on the land question, the meaning of cooperative labor, rent and profit, etc., most of which were later printed as separate pamphlets. (See Appendix.)

Ezra Heywood deserves special consideration. For many years he was a militant representative of American Mutualism and was the object of repeated persecution by the Comstock dictatorship which made his name known throughout the United States. Heywood, a man of old American stock, was a pupil and personal friend of Warren's, who especially in the last years of his life often stayed in Heywood's house. Heywood took an active part in the growing labor movement of the 60's and was Secretary of the *New England Labor Reform League*, to which William E. Greene and Benjamin R. Tucker also belonged.

In 1872 Heywood established in Princeton, Mass., a periodical, *The Word*, which lasted for more than twenty years. This publication, in which practically all the known representatives of libertarian socialism in America collaborated, very ably and intelligently presented the ideas and methods of mutualism. On the occasion of the great railroad strike in 1877 which tied up seventeen states and which developed in many places, especially in St. Louis, into open insurrection resulting in the shooting of many



workers, Heywood wrote in the *Radical Review* a brilliant article, *The Great Strike, its Relation to Labor, Property and Government*, which in the same year was published as a special pamphlet.

Heywood applied himself with particular zeal to the freeing of woman and to birth control, particularly in his writing, *Uncivil Liberty, an Essay to Show the Injustice and Impolicy of Ruling Woman Without Her Consent* (1873). Through the publication of two writings, *Cupid's Yokes* and *Sexual Physiology*, he was repeatedly indicted under the Comstock laws for circulation of obscene literature and sentenced to prison. Reports on his lawsuits which at the time caused great interest, appeared in 1878 and 1883. The last action against him on these grounds led Julian Hawthorne to the writing of his well known *In Behalf of Personal Liberty* (1891). The fact that these things today can be freely expressed everywhere in America, is not only an evidence of a complete reversal of public opinion on this subject but also demonstrates the entire futility of laws intended to establish hard and fast rules for the future.

Very close to the ideas of individualist anarchism and of American Mutualism were Moses Harman, his daughter Lillian and E. C. Walker, whose activities, however, were almost exclusively confined to the propaganda for Sexual freedom. Harman was the author of *Autonomy, Self-Law: What Are Its Demands? A Brief Exposition of the Basic Principles of Individualism in its relation to Society and Government*. He also was the editor of the well-known periodical, *Lucifer*, which in the first half of the 80's was established in Valley Falls, Kansas, later published in Topeka, Kansas, and at last in Chicago. It continued its existence for twenty-five years, in spite of the fact that its editor and his associates, Mr. M. Bennet and E. C. Walker were

victims of repeated persecution under the Comstock Laws. The whole Mutualist literature of that time is almost completely out of print, and practically available only in second-hand stocks although many of those writings had several editions. The reader will find a further account of them in the Appendix.

### *Benjamin R. Tucker*

TUCKER'S EARLY DEVELOPMENT. HIS ACQUAINTANCE WITH JOSIAH WARREN AND WILLIAM B. GREENE. THE FOUNDING OF *LIBERTY*. WILLIAM LLOYD'S PORTRAYAL OF TUCKER'S PERSONALITY. TUCKER'S FIGHT AGAINST THE COMSTOCK LAWS. G. BERNARD SHAW'S TRIBUTE TO TUCKER AND HIS CRITICISM OF MAX NORDAU'S *DEGENERATION* IN *LIBERTY*. TUCKER AS EDITOR, PUBLISHER AND TRANSLATOR. HIS SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY. HIS PRESENTIMENT OF THE TOTALITARIAN STATE. THE RIGHT TO RESIST OPPRESSION. *LIBERTY* AND VIOLENCE. THE BELIEF IN THE BALLOT. TUCKER ON CRIME AND THE NECESSITY OF DEFENSE AGAINST INDIVIDUAL INVASION. HIS POLEMICS AGAINST OTHER SCHOOLS OF ANARCHISM. THE END OF *LIBERTY* AND TUCKER'S ACTIVITY IN AMERICA. HIS LATER VIEWS AND DEATH IN MONACO.

The greatest furtherance of all above described ideas came later through Benjamin R. Tucker who, with Warren, Andrews, Spooner and Greene, belonged to the most gifted exponents of *Scientific Anarchism*, as he named his doctrines. Tucker's influence was in fact so significant that Dr. Paul Elzbacher in his well known book *Anarchism* gave him a place among the seven great founders of anarchistic doctrines, a rank to which Josiah Warren undoubtedly had a better claim, for Warren with his early criticisms of the *theory of value* and his principle of *cost price* as the

basis of the exchange of labor made an original contribution which placed him unquestionably alongside Pierre Joseph Proudhon and Karl Marx, even though he lacked their versatility in the fields of economics and social philosophy. Benjamin Tucker was actually the successor of Josiah Warren. His main contribution lies in the fact that by reason of his abundant knowledge and exceptional journalistic gift he was able to acquaint many with Warren's doctrines who previously had no access to them.\* Moreover, he never denied his intellectual dependence on Warren and constantly and ardently pointed to him as his teacher. He prefaced his work, *Instead of a Book*, with the following words: "To the memory of my old friend and master, Josiah Warren, whose teachings were my first source of light, I gratefully dedicate this volume."

Benjamin R. Tucker was born in 1854 in South Dartmouth, Mass., as the descendant of an old American family. His father was engaged in the business of equipping whalers and later became a dealer in spices and groceries. In 1870, Tucker entered the *Massachusetts Institute of*

\* Elzbacher as he acknowledged to me, had read nothing of Warren before the publication of his book and knew the name only from Tucker's *Instead of a Book*. Before the appearance of his book, I was in correspondence with him for some time and sent him from England a considerable number of older writings and newspapers in which he was interested. When after the war I learned to know him personally in Berlin he showed only a slight interest in his earlier studies and had sold his rich compilation of anarchistic writings to the Marx-Engels Museum in Moscow. He was at the time the intellectual leader of the so-called *National Bolsheviks*, a conservative group, which strove toward a political alliance between Germany and Russia in order to break the Treaty of Versailles, and to this end he was ready to support the nationalization of land and industry.

Elzbacher, as is known, was never an anarchist and wrote his book as a jurist. An English translation by Stephen T. Byington was published in 1908 by Tucker in New York.

*Technology*, but according to his own account he had neither the desire nor the intention to make engineering his profession. In his early youth he already came under the influence of the radical preacher, William J. Potter, who at the time caused great sensation by his sermons in the Unitarian Church in New Bedford, Mass. According to his own narrative, Tucker started to read the New York *Tribune* from his twelfth year and remained a constant reader until the death of its editor, Horace Greeley. At fourteen years of age, he had already studied Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, H. T. Buckle, John Stuart Mill, Huxley and John Tyndall. He also attended regularly the lectures of Wendell Phillips, W. L. Garrison, G. W. Curtis, Anna Dickinson and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the Lyceum at New Bedford.

In 1872, Benjamin Tucker made the acquaintance of Josiah Warren in Boston and a little later was introduced to W. B. Greene who turned his attention for the first time to Proudhon. The acquaintance with these two men had a marked influence upon his later development. In Boston Tucker also became acquainted with Victoria Woodhull, with whom for a time he was closely connected until he discovered that she walked a path he could neither approve of nor justify; so this friendship came to an end. In 1874, Tucker travelled in England, France and Italy. After his return he learned the printing trade and in the meantime studied earnestly the newest literature of current social philosophy. When in 1877, Ezra Heywood served his prison term, Tucker took over the editorship of his periodical, *The Word*. In the same year he received a small inheritance which placed him in a financial position to publish in New Bedford the *Radical Review*, an excellent quarterly of which only four issues appeared. Among his contributors at the time were Elie Reclus, John Fiske,

Stephen P. Andrews, C. B. Frothingham, Lysander Spooner, Ezra Heywood, Dyer D. Lum, and quite a number of other well known persons. After his magazine had ceased to appear, Tucker became a member of the editorial staff of the *Boston Globe* where he remained until 1889. During this period of his editorial work, he founded his paper, *Liberty*, which made his name known in much wider circles.

*Liberty* appeared at the start as a semi-monthly periodical in Boston, and was later transferred to New York. The paper appeared with few interruptions for twenty-seven years and was certainly one of the most original periodicals ever published. The first issue appeared in August, 1881, and opened with the announcement: "This journal will be edited to suit its editor, not its readers. He hopes that what suits him will suit them; but, if not, it will make no difference."—In the brief statement of program the purpose of the paper was set forth in a few words. "*Liberty* insists on the sovereignty of the individual and the just reward of labor; on the abolition of the State and the abolition of usury; on no more government of man by man, and no more exploitation of man by man; on Anarchy and Equity. —*Liberty's* war-cry is 'Down with authority,' and its chief battle with the State—the State that corrupts children; the State that trammels law; the State that stifles thought; the State that monopolizes land; the State that limits credit; the State that restricts exchange; the State that gives idle capital the power to increase, and through interest, rent, profit and taxes robs industrious labor of its products."

*Liberty* was preeminently a paper of propaganda and discussion, brilliantly edited, for Tucker was a distinguished journalist, an active spirit and an exceptionally keen and uncompromising debater, often very one-sided in his attitude towards matters and personalities, but always very

suggestive and readable. He had always a staff of distinguished associates around him such as Lysander Spooner, Henry Appleton, Dyer D. Lum, Oliver Wendell Holmes, M. E. Lazarus, J. W. Lloyd, C. M. Hammond, A. P. Kelley, Victor Yarros, Henry Cohen, Clarence Lee Swartz, John Beverley Robinson, E. C. Walker, S. T. Byington, George Schumm and his wife Emma Schumm, Florence Johnson, and many others, some of whom later went other ways, but at that time every one of them contributed to the paper and helped to give it such a rich content.

*Liberty* had a circulation in all parts of the country and its influence was also felt to some extent in Europe. Tucker took a stand on all issues concerning social life. His uncompromising logic, his strength of character, his personal courage, his destructive criticism, gave his paper a powerful attraction. The publication was certainly no food for the average reader, but the greater was its influence on thinking men of all progressive schools.

A remarkable portrayal of Tucker's personality is made by J. William Lloyd in a very interesting article, *Memories of Benjamin R. Tucker*. Lloyd describes Tucker in the prime of his life, and the article possesses the merit that it was written when its author, who for a number of years ranked among Tucker's most gifted associates, had entirely separated himself spiritually from him.\* He was able therefore to review his personality more clearly and impartially than would have been possible at the time of their partnership. The following excerpts from this essay particularly characterize Tucker's personality:

\* This article appeared in a special Benjamin R. Tucker symposium number of *Free Vistas* edited by Joseph Ishill (Vol. II, Berkeley Heights, N. J.), which also contained articles about Tucker by G. Bernard Shaw, E. Armand, George E. MacDonald, Clarence Lee Swartz, Henry Meulen and H. L. Mencken.

"Tucker had tremendous influence on us young Anarchists in those days and was our hero. Handsome, a brilliant translator, an editor of meticulous care and finish, a trenchant reasoner, with a faith and enthusiasm for his 'ism' that had no bounds, he was like a strong current that swept us along. Josiah Warren, J. P. Proudhon, Wm. B. Greene, Lysander Spooner, were given us for our Gods, with Auberon Herbert, Herbert Spencer, Stephen Pearl Andrews, and a few others almost admitted to the pantheon.

"Tucker's manner of writing was what chiefly attracted attention to him. No more fiery and furious apostle ever put pen to paper. A veritable Berserk of dialectics. He was dogmatic to the extreme, arrogantly positive, browbeating and dominating, true to his plumb-line no matter what was slain, and brooked no difference, contradiction or denial. Biting sarcasm, caustic contempt, invective that was sometimes almost actual insult, were poured out on any who dared criticize or oppose. In this he reminded me of my old-time medical teacher, R. T. Trall, M.D. He regarded all who did not accept Anarchism as fools, or nearfools, and was not slow to let them know it. There was nothing he hated more than communism, and the Communist-Anarchists used to call him 'the Pope.' One could not read *Liberty* without getting the impression that he was a fireater, most of the time angry.

"This tended to scare off Opponents, no doubt, but as positive assertion and burning faith convince many people more than any argument, it also brought him many converts, and a reputation of being a sort of dragon, breathing fire and smoke.

"And no doubt he affected all of us. For I recall some commentator, at that time, writing of the 'three slashing critics of *Liberty*—Tucker, Yarros, and Lloyd,' so I must have been implicated.

"But life is full of contradictions and Tucker soon became a conundrum to me. Was he a Jekyll and Hyde? For this swash-buckler, on paper, when you met him in person was the most genial, affable and charming gentleman that you could possibly imagine, kind, gentle and always smiling. I discounted this as



toward myself, but I could not learn that anyone had ever had a hard spoken word from him and I have never to this day heard of one who had. Face to face, this tiger was a dove. I remember my friend, Albert Chavannes, telling me of his interview with Tucker when he visited New York. 'Why,' he said, laughing delightedly, 'I found him the mildest mannered pirate that ever cut a throat or sunk a ship'.

Lloyd writes of the circle which formed around Tucker in a very sympathetic manner and tells why in the course of time he separated from him and later gave up his Anarchism. He then continues:

"However, Tucker and I remained good friends personally. I always admired, honored and respected the man for his absolute sincerity, his fine abilities, his real courage, he was very lovable, and always all right in his intentions, and I still think so. He seemed to me so much better than his ideas, which held him like a suit of iron armor locked on him and from which he could never get out.

"Beautiful Pearl Johnson, with the classic face, became his mate, and as she was a devoted friend of my daughter, Oriole, she named her baby, when it came, Oriole also. And what remarkable eyes that little Oriole Tucker had. They have always haunted my memory, for I never saw eyes like them."

All those who passed judgment on Tucker are united on one point: They all recognize his great intellectual talent, his unbending straightforwardness and his personal courage, which never forsook him when he undertook to defend a cause which he felt was just. His fearlessness brought him success where cowardly yielding would have accomplished nothing. Thus he battled Comstock with a vigor which left nothing to be desired for clarity of expression. When Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* was censored by the Comstock Law, the public sale of the unabridged edition prohibited

and its use of the mails banned, Tucker opposed the law with virile determination and circulated the book wherever he could. And he did not do this surreptitiously, but with full publicity. In an open letter to Comstock which in biting acerbity and deadly contempt surpassed anything that could have been imagined, he informed him of his intention to defy the law: he remained unmolested, while others who worked with greater circumspection were caught in the meshes of the law. His courageous conduct led others to imitate him and secured for the book a distribution in spite of legal hindrances. Walt Whitman never forgot that, and in later years he wrote: "Tucker did brave things for *Leaves of Grass* when brave things were rare. I could never forget that. . . I love him: he is plucky to the bone."

A great sensation was caused by the publication in *Liberty* of Bernard Shaw's criticism of Max Nordau's book, *Degeneration*. Nordau who cited nearly all the significant artists of modern time such as Henrik Ibsen, Emile Zola, Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Wagner, Dante Gabriel Rossetti as examples of the social degeneracy of our period, produced a great stir at the time and received extensive comment in the press of all countries. Tucker, who felt Nordau was wrong, did not wish to write a criticism of his book himself because he thought that his knowledge and understanding of art were insufficient. He therefore requested Shaw to perform this task, and Shaw accordingly proceeded to tear Nordau to tatters. George Bernard Shaw wrote later in his essay, *William Morris as I Knew Him*, the following about this incident:

"This exploit greatly improved my relations with William Morris, but it nearly ruined Benjamin Tucker. As I would not let him pay me for my contribution, which occupied a whole number of *Liberty* plus a considerable embolism, he printed an

edition large enough to enable him to send a copy gratuitously to every editor in America and perhaps to several in Europe. It was the biggest thing I ever heard of an editor doing; and it succeeded completely, for Nordau and his *Degeneration* were never mentioned by the Press again, as far as I know. But it must have strained Benjamin's resources, for *Liberty* soon ceased and he retired to Monte Carlo, where I found him quite lately fresh as a daisy in spite of his advancing years."

And in a note to Joseph Ishill of September 23, 1936, Shaw remarked: "This is my latest published account of the Nordau-Tucker incident. It hardly does justice to his really great feat of editorship, for what he did was what all the leading London editors ought to have done. But they couldn't grasp the situation nor pick the man. Benjamin did both." \*

Tucker was not only active as the editor of his paper—and a brilliant editor, indeed, he was—but also as translator and publisher. He published new editions of Warren, Andrews, Greene, Spooner, Ingalls, Edmund Burke, William Godwin, and many others. His translation of Proudhon's *What is Property?* and of the first part of *The System of Economical Contradictions, or The Philosophy of Misery*, were masterful. The same can be said of works like Michael Bakunin's *God and the State*, Leo Tolstoy's *Kreutzer-Sonata*, Claude Tillier's *My Uncle Benjamin*, Nicolay Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done*, and many others. Among his publications were also English translations of Paul Elzbacher's *Anarchism*, Max Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own*, rendered into English by Steven T. Byington, and John Henry Mackay's *Anarchists*, translated by George Schumm.

\* We take this selection from the Tucker number of Joseph Ishill's *Free Vistas* of 1937.

In 1888 Tucker made an attempt to extend his influence among the German reading public in America by the establishment of the paper *Libertas* in Boston, of which, however, only eight numbers appeared. The German element in America, so far as it tended toward anarchistic ideas in those years, was almost wholly under the influence of John Most and partly also of Joseph Peukert and his followers and was hardly affected by Benjamin Tucker's individualistic anarchism.

Tucker's social philosophy is a synthesis of Warren, Proudhon and Stirner. For him the state was not a result of economic enslavement, but the cause of exploitation of man by man since it created the opportunity for every kind of usury to cheat the producer of a portion of the fruit of his labor. For the state is the creator of monopoly. It is the source of the money monopoly, land monopoly, tax monopoly, and patent monopoly, and they all lie today at the base of the system of social oppression and economic exploitation. State and society are fundamentally different things. Society is the natural result of the social needs and impulses with which we are born and which prompt us to seek an equitable adjustment of our claims within the group to which we belong. But the state was from the very beginning the supporter of privileged minorities at the cost of the great masses of the people.

The state had sprung from conquest and usurpation; it is the projection of force into the circle of personal and social concerns of man. Therefore, it acts as a tyrant and an oppressor internally while externally it is forever exposing mankind to the dangers of war.

The whole existence of society depends upon mutual understanding and voluntary agreement. Were this not the case, the social bonds would immediately burst asunder, for there is no power strong enough to keep man on the

right path if he does not feel that it serves his own interest to do so. Only where the state interferes will privilege, prejudice and economic and social opposition arise, constantly throwing the social order out of gear.

Following Max Stirner's lead, Tucker rejected every theory which rests on the *idea of duty* or on the so-called inherent rights of man, for "so far as inherent rights are concerned, might is its only measure. Any man, be his name Bill Sykes or Alexander Romanoff, and any set of men, whether the Chinese highbinders or the Congress of the United States, have the right, if they have the power, to kill or coerce other men and to make the entire World subservient to their ends." It is indeed not the result of ethics or the so-called inherent right which brings men to a better understanding, but the principle of usefulness and self-preservation which life itself taught them that leads men to come to an understanding.

"If this, then, were a question of right, it would be, according to the Anarchists, purely a question of strength. But fortunately, it is not a question of right; it is a question of expediency, of knowledge, of science,—the science of living together, the science of society. The history of humanity has been largely one long and gradual discovery of the fact that the individual is the gainer by society exactly in proportion as society is free, and of the law that the condition of a permanent and harmonious society is the greatest amount of individual liberty compatible with equality of liberty. The average man of each new generation has said to himself more clearly and consciously than his predecessor: 'My neighbor is not my enemy, but my friend, and I am his, if we would but mutually recognize the fact. We help each other to a better, fuller, happier living; and this service might be greatly increased if we would cease to restrict, hamper and oppress each other. Why can we not agree to let each live his own life, neither of us transgressing the limit that separates

our individualities?' It is by this reasoning that mankind is approaching the real social contract, which is not, as Rousseau thought, the origin of society, but rather the outcome of a long social experience, the fruit of its follies and disasters." \*

Political oppression and economic exploitation always go hand in hand. The former brings in force, while the latter introduces usury into the natural association between individuals. A man cannot be free as long as he does not have the opportunity to obtain the full reward of his labor and to arrange his life in all other matters according to his own inclinations. This, however, is only possible if a just exchange of the products of labor, the elimination of all monopoly and a free banking system according to Proudhon's and Greene's scheme could be achieved, placing a limit to the profit making power of capital and permitting men to associate on a basis of free agreement.

Tucker recognized the liberating effect of socialism, but only when it puts no new restriction on freedom. For with Proudhon he shared the opinion that socialism without liberty can only lead to the worst tyranny. He, therefore, opposed unrelentingly every form of state socialism. With prophetic vision he delineated the Bolshevistic future of Russia and the frightful effects of the totalitarian state, warning mankind against taking the path which could only lead to disaster.

"Whatever, then, the State Socialists may claim or disclaim, their system, if adopted, is doomed to end in a State religion, to the expense of which all must contribute and at the altar of which all must kneel, a State school of medicine, by whose practitioners the sick must invariably be treated; a State system of hygiene, prescribing what all must and must not eat, drink, wear, and do; a State code of morals, which will not content itself

\* From Tucker's speech on *Relation of the State to the Individual*.

with punishing crime, but will prohibit what the majority decide to be vice; a State system of instruction, which will do away with all private schools, academies, and colleges, a State nursery, in which the children must be brought up in common at the public expense; and, finally, a State Family, with an attempt at stirpiculture, or scientific breeding, in which no man and no woman will be allowed to have children if the State prohibits them and no man and woman can refuse to have children if the State orders them. Thus will authority achieve its acme and Monopoly be carried to its highest power. Such is the ideal of the logical State Socialist, such the goal which lies at the end of the road that Karl Marx took." \*

Tucker's conception of the inevitable outcome of State Socialism, or better expressed, of State Capitalism, was attacked most bitterly by the authoritarian socialists of all schools who upbraided him for having made a caricature of socialism which had nothing in common with reality. The dreadful experiences we have had since then show us very clearly that Tucker not only foresaw things correctly but, if anything underestimated them. Only the most daring imagination could have foreseen happenings like the Moscow trials against the Trotskyites, the systematic annihilation of hundreds of thousands, and the terrible demoralization of a movement which degenerated to mob madness, justifying in its blind submission every crime which is praised as a virtue by its leaders. Indeed the blackest treason ever to sully a movement, the alliance between the Swastika and the Soviet star which unquestionably touched off the recent World War, did not even succeed in freeing the misled masses in every country from their illusion—an ominous proof that the period of emotional mass psychosis has not yet passed. And is not Naziism with its race alchemy and its new spawning laws which degrade love to the level of the

\* B. Tucker: *State Socialism and Anarchism*.

breeding stable but a variety of State Socialism? Tucker was altogether right when he said "that as much as we always abominate bourgeois society we prefer the partial freedom which it ensures to the total enslavement of State Socialism. For the hot seething competition which brings up some but tosses many into the depths, makes some rich and many poor, but never completely enchains anyone or robs him of hope for a better future, is without doubt less painful than the ideal of a uniformed miserable community of oxen yoked in a span and slavishly obedient to their masters."

Tucker expressed the view that a change of present conditions in the direction of a free society is possible only through the systematic undermining of the inherited political and social dogmas which in time will lose their hold on mankind just as have the dogmas of the church. Only when confidence in contemporary political and economic institutions vanishes will these be deprived of the foundation on which they rest. As long as the spiritual preparation for the new order has not matured, every political revolution will lead only to the substituting of the present forms of oppression by others, thus continuing the eternal cycle of blindness. In the present era of great disciplined armies, the danger is doubly great. An anarchistic society will not be established by force, nor can it be maintained by force. Violent resistance is justified only when no other alternative is possible and when the state suppresses every free expression of thought in speech and writing.

"The right to resist oppression by violence is beyond doubt; it is only the policy of exercising this right that Anarchists at this juncture have to consider. In *Liberty's* view but one thing can justify its exercise on any large scale,—namely, the denial of free thought, free speech, and free press. Even then its exercise would be unwise unless suppression were enforced so stringently



that all other means of throwing it off had become hopeless. Bloodshed in itself is pure loss. When we must have freedom of agitation, and when nothing but bloodshed will secure it, then bloodshed is wise. But it must be remembered that that can never be accomplished except by means of agitation, investigation, experiment and passive resistance; and that, after all the bloodshed, we shall be exactly where we were before, except in our possession of the power to use these means. It is because peaceful agitation and passive resistance are in Liberty's hands, weapons more deadly to tyranny than any others that I uphold them, and it is because force strengthens tyranny that I condemn it. War and Authority are companions; Peace and Liberty are companions. It is foolish in the extreme not only to resort to force before necessity compels, but especially to madly create the conditions that will lead to this necessity." \*

Tucker thus put the greatest emphasis upon the education and instruction of the people. To instruct men, to make them susceptible to new ideas and convictions, these are, in his opinion, the most important weapons available to anarchists. The way of freedom will be only gradually covered, for it is not conceivable that men languishing in economic bondage and spiritual darkness will be able to achieve freedom overnight. "Anarchism should be considered not only as a result but as a method." Therefore, it is the function of Anarchists to support all earnest attempts that strike at economic monopoly and really limit the influence of the State upon social life. The rest will come about largely through passive resistance and man's assertion of his personality; for "Power feeds on its spoils, and dies when its victims refuse to be despoiled. They can't persuade it to death, they can't vote it to death, they can't shoot it to death; but they can always starve it to death." As soon as larger minorities are determined to show the door to the tax collector, to

\* "Liberty and Violence" in *Liberty*, May 22, 1886.

ignore laws which they have come to regard as a nuisance, and their passive resistance reaches proportions which make it impossible for those in authority to put everyone behind lock and key, the great twilight of the Gods which can be postponed but not prevented will have come. It is as impossible to impose artificial bonds on the spiritual growth of humanity as it would be to stop the normal growth of the individual human being. The great change is inevitable, but it will come gradually, and "neither the ballot nor the bayonet is to play any great part in the coming struggle." Slowly but surely will mankind come to the realization that the struggles which are carried on by such means merely become a contest for power and will never materially affect the actual state of things.

"Now, what is the ballot? It is neither more nor less than a paper representative of the bayonet, the billy, and the bullet. It is a labor-saving device for ascertaining on which side force lies and bowing to the inevitable. The voice of the majority saves bloodshed, but it is no less the arbitrament of force than is the decree of the most absolute of despots backed by the most powerful of armies. Of course, it may be claimed that the struggle to attain to the majority involves an incidental use of intellectual and moral processes; but these influences would exert themselves still more powerfully in other channels if there were no such thing as the ballot, and when used as subsidiary to the ballot, they represent only a striving for the time when physical force can be substituted for them. Reason devoted to politics fights for its own dethronement. The moment the minority becomes the majority, it ceases to reason and persuade and begins to command and enforce and punish. If this be true, it follows that to use the ballot for the modification of government is to use force for the modification of government." \*

\* "Mr. Pentecost's Belief in the Ballot," *Liberty*, January 19, 1889.

Tucker thus shows his conformity with the views of Martin Anstey when the latter asserts: "The appeal to the vote was an appeal to might. The cry, 'We have a majority' meant nothing more than 'We can fight you.' But might apart from right settled nothing. Wrong principles would not work, however great was the majority by which they were endorsed."

Since Tucker did not believe in a sudden transformation of society notwithstanding the periodical catastrophies which occur under the pressure of circumstances, and since he was firmly convinced that the way in the direction of a free communal existence would gradually become apparent as libertarian ideas and organizations increase their influence in social affairs, he warned that during this transition to a higher form of social culture, men must guard themselves against attacks by reckless elements. Yet he did not want to entrust the government with this task but rather have it performed by voluntary organizations which would become superfluous in the same manner as the people succeeded in emancipating themselves from the encumbrances of the past and adjusting themselves to freer conditions. Tucker defended this position, which was also that of Josiah Warren, by showing that the so-called criminal, while he may in most cases be a product of the social conditions of the time, must nevertheless be regarded as a parasite who, instead of working for a living, thrives on the labor of his fellow-men. Any action which is calculated to harm others or to deprive them of the fruits of their industry is an open attack on the life, the security and the legitimate claims of man and society. For this reason the community has the right to protect itself against such attack and to deal with the offender as its members see fit under the circumstances. As humanity progresses, even this will gradually become superfluous. "The necessity for defense against individual in-

vaders is largely and perhaps, in the end, wholly due to the oppressions of the invasive State. When the State falls, criminals will begin to disappear."

Tucker's literary activity was exclusively confined to his articles in *The Word*, *The Radical Review*, *The Globe*, and *Liberty*, except for a few contributions which he furnished to other periodicals. Like his correspondence in *The New York Tribune* of November 28, 1898, in which he gave a review of Individualistic Anarchism in America, he was an excellent journalist and as an editor, unique in his way. A collection of his best articles and polemical pamphlets appeared in 1893, under the unusual title, *Instead of a Book by a Man Too Busy to Write one*. The book is divided in various chapters such as *Anarchism*, *Money and Interest*, *Land and Rent*, *Socialism*, *Communism*, *Methods* and *Miscellaneous*, and gives a good idea of Tucker's literary productivity.

Besides his literary work, Tucker was active as a speaker for his ideas and although he lacked the inspiration of a born orator, he was always able with the help of carefully prepared manuscripts to present his views in an eloquent and impressive manner. The incisiveness of his argumentation and the acuteness of his logic, which appealed not to the heart but always to the intellect, could never fail to impress thoughtful listeners. Tucker was mainly a man of reasoning and although his personal life was not wanting in purely human and sympathetic traits, he lacked in his public relations the deep emotional warmth which gave highly intellectual men like Peter Kropotkin, Elisee Reclus or Errico Malatesta such irresistible charm. He regarded it perhaps as a weakness to make any concession to the emotions, and it is not improbable that this was partly due to the influence of Max Stirner. That was also a reason why his controversies with Anarchists of other schools always were so bitter and

uncompromising. Max Nettlau was not incorrect when he said: "Tucker, in his polemics with other schools of Anarchist thought, invariably refused to make the slightest concession with regard to the legitimacy of an opposing view and he would have isolated his position altogether if others had possessed the same implacability." \*

In contrast with Andrews, Greene and many other representatives of individualistic Anarchism in America who were strongly influenced by the school of the so-called Transcendentalists and by Emerson's circle, Tucker was an outspoken rationalist who stood remote from all influences of religious ideas.

Tucker published his *Liberty* until 1907. A big fire broke out in his establishment in the last month of that year destroying a considerable portion of his investment in books, etc., and as a result he went to Europe in 1908 never to return again. A number of friends offered to help him make good his loss so that he could continue his activities, but he declined their aid. There is no doubt that the comparatively small success he had achieved during his thirty years of activity in America discouraged him to a certain extent, although he remained true to his ideas to the end. Thus he wrote in a letter to Joseph Ishill, dated January 24, 1935: "I put the Anarchist case as a goal that humanity moves towards. But the exact routes? Ah! It is not easy to map them!"

That Tucker doubted if monopoly could be abolished in America by the methods he proposed is revealed in a postscript which he wrote in August, 1929, for a selection of his writings edited by Clarence Lee Swartz. He declared there that the method proposed by the Anarchists against the growth of monopoly seemed promising forty years ago. "Today the way is not so clear." For monopoly had de-

\* Max Nettlau: *Der Vorführung der Anarchie*, Berlin, 1925.

veloped during this time to such proportions that the efforts of free cooperative groups cannot prevail against this power. "The four monopolies, unhindered, have made possible the modern development of the trust, and the trust is now a monster which, I fear, even the freest banking, could it be instituted, would be unable to destroy." \* He demonstrated this by the development of the Standard Oil Company during the last forty years and came to the conclusion:

"If this be true, then monopoly, which can be controlled permanently only by economic forces, has passed for the moment beyond their reach, and must be grappled with for a time solely by forces political or revolutionary. Until measures of forcible confiscation, through the State or in defiance of it, shall have abolished the concentrations that monopoly has created, the economic solution proposed by Anarchism and outlined in the foregoing pages—and *there is no other solution*—will remain a thing to be taught to the rising generation, that conditions may be favorable to its application after the great levelling. But education is a slow process, and for this reason we must hope that the day of readjustment may not come too quickly. Anarchists who endeavor to hasten it by joining in the propaganda of State Socialism or revolution make a sad mistake indeed. They help to so force the march of events that the people will not have time to find out, by the study of their experiences, that their troubles have been due to the rejection of competition. If this lesson shall not be learned in season the past will be repeated in the future, in which case we shall have to turn for consolation to the doctrine of Nietzsche that this is bound to happen anyhow, or to the reflection of Renan that, from the point of view of Sirius, all these matters are of little moment."

During his absence from America, Tucker produced little, although he took to the last an interest in current affairs.

\* *Individual Liberty, Selections from the Writings of Benjamin R. Tucker*, New York, 1926.

During the first World War, he vigorously defended the cause of England and France, for he regarded the whole policy of Germany as a deliberate preparation for the conquest of Europe. Always an ardent friend of French culture, he regarded a German victory as a real disaster for Europe's future, and the beginning of a reaction whose end none could foretell.

In 1927, he wrote a long dissertation upon his relations with Victoria Woodhull which Emanie Sachs published in her book, *The Terrible Siren—Victoria Woodhull 1838-1927*, together with an early portrait of himself. During his residence in Monaco, whither he had retired, Tucker for some time played with the idea of writing his memoirs. As it appears, he had notified several of his friends in America of his intention, and several of them were impatiently waiting for the appearance of this work. Unfortunately, it remained but a project, for as I personally learned subsequently through his widow, the work was interrupted after some insignificant preparatory studies. This is certainly a great loss, for Tucker had a wide range of acquaintances and his remarks and descriptions would have been very interesting. He would have been able to reveal much of what is today almost or entirely forgotten.

Tucker died on June 22, 1939, in Monaco, at the age of eighty-five. With him disappeared the last of the great representatives of philosophic anarchism in America, and a man whose influence was greater than that of any of his predecessors.

*Benjamin R. Tucker's Collaborators and other  
Exponents of Philosophical Anarchism in America*

JAMES L. WALKER AND HIS *PHILOSOPHY OF EGOISM*.  
C. L. JAMES, AUTHOR OF THE *ORIGIN OF ANARCHISM*.  
JOSEPH LABADIE AND HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE  
LABOR MOVEMENT. E. H. FULTON AND HIS ACTIVITY  
AS WRITER AND PUBLISHER. FRANCIS D. TANDY ON  
VOLUNTARY SOCIALISM. HENRY BOOL IN ITHACA, NEW  
YORK. JOHN BEVERLY ROBINSON, THE TRANSLATOR  
OF PROUDHON AND AUTHOR OF "*THE ECONOMICS OF  
LIBERTY*." HUGH PENTECOST. DYER D. LUM AND  
VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE. WILLIAM HOLMES AND HIS  
ATTEMPT FOR A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP OF THE  
VARIOUS TENDENCIES OF LIBERTARIAN SOCIALISM.  
CHARLES LEE SWARTZ, HENRY COHEN AND CHARLES  
T. SPRADING. J. P. WARBASSE ON THE RELATIONSHIP  
OF ANARCHIST PHILOSOPHY AND CONSUMER'S CO-  
OPERATION. LIBERTARIAN TRENDS IN THE THEORIES  
OF HENRY GEORGE.

Tucker's doctrines found a whole line of distinguished  
representatives in America who collaborated with him either  
directly or indirectly, and of whom only some of the best  
known can be mentioned. A number of these supporters have  
already been described in the foregoing chapter. To those  
may be added: Dr. James L. Walker, one of the writers



of the *Galveston News* and an industrious associate of *Liberty* where he wrote under the name of Tak-kak. Walker wrote for the periodical *Egoism* in San Francisco a long series of articles which in 1905 were published as a separate booklet under the name *The Philosophy of Egoism*. It is interesting that, according to Tucker's statement, Walker had come to his conceptions before he had read Max Stirner's book, *The Ego and His Own*.

One of the most gifted representatives of philosophic Anarchism was C. L. James, author of the *Origin of Anarchism* (1902), and of a whole series of other writings and articles, among which was a fairly large *History of the French Revolution*. C. L. James at first stood closer to the individualists, especially to the movement led by Greene but was sufficiently broadminded to collaborate with periodicals which propagated communist Anarchism such as *Firebrand*, *Free Society* and *Mother Earth*. His strongest sympathies, however, lay toward mutualism.

Joseph A. Labadie was a lively exponent of the individualistic tendency of Anarchism. His numerous articles were later published anew in Detroit in a collection of *Essays*. Labadie took also an active part in the labor movement. He was the first President of the *Michigan Federation of Labor* and organized in Detroit in 1888 the first local group of the *Knights of Labor*. He bequeathed his very extensive collection of books, brochures and periodicals which he had collected during half a century to the University of Michigan where it is known as the *Labadie Collection* and is placed in the charge of Agnes Inglis. It may be added, in this connection, the late Samuel Gompers, President of the *American Federation of Labor*, also came from the camp of individualistic anarchists.

E. H. Fulton spent an active career in the libertarian movement. He was the editor of the periodical, *The Age of*

*Thought*, at Columbus Junction, Iowa, in the middle of the 90's. Fulton was the author of *Land, Money and Property* (1896). He published also a whole series of reprints of William B. Greene's *Mutual Banking*, Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Michael Bakunin's *God and the State*, Herbert Spencer's *The Coming Slavery: The Sins of Legislators* and *The Great Political Superstition*, Joseph A. Labadie's *Anarchism*, Elisee Reclus' *An Anarchist on Anarchy*, and many others.

A very intelligent writer was Francis D. Tandy who worked in Denver and whose fruitful activity was abruptly ended by an early death. Tandy was one of the most lucid interpreters of Mutualistic Anarchism in America and expressed his ideas both in speech and in writing. His principal work, *Voluntary Socialism* (1896), which he dedicated to Benjamin R. Tucker, is distinguished by its clarity of style and the perspicuity of its ideas and ranks with the best literary productions of libertarian socialism of that period.

Tucker found an ardent adherent in the person of Henry Bool who was born in England but lived for many years in the United States. Bool had a small furniture business in Ithaca, N. Y., and was at first a supporter of Henry George's *Single Tax* movement. The Haymarket Affair in Chicago (1886-7) led him to study Anarchism and he became a follower of Benjamin Tucker. He established a free library in his home and organized the so-called *Soirees*, informal discussion evenings in a restricted circle to which belonged notable intellectuals. Bool was also active as a writer for his ideas. When after the assassination of President McKinley (1900) the laws against criminal Anarchism were enacted, Bool became the victim of severe and entirely unwarranted persecution and it helped him but little to point to the peaceful aims of Tucker's propaganda as he had done in his writing, *Apology for His Jeffersonian*

*Anarchism.* A local paper in the town where he resided stamped him "a bloody anarchist" which at that time of general confusion and blind folly sufficed to make life impossible for anyone. Bool returned to England in 1907 where he died in 1924. J. A. Labadie dedicated to him his *Essays* with the words, "Henry Bool, Lover of Justice, Equity and Freedom."

Frank I. Stuart, author of the pamphlet *Natural Rights, Natural Liberty and Natural Law*, has often been erroneously referred to as an Anarchist. Stuart called himself an Individualist and edited for a certain time, a paper under the same name, but he attacked Anarchism and especially Tucker, as his article, *Why I Am an Individualist* \* clearly shows.

An ardent associate of Tucker was John Beverly Robinson, the translator of Proudhon's *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century* and author of the remarkable work, *The Economics of Liberty* (1916), perhaps after Greene's *Mutual Banking* the clearest exposition of Proudhon's ideas.

Hugh O. Pentecost must also be mentioned here. He achieved wide fame for a time as a brilliant orator. After his conversion to Anarchism the periodical, *Twentieth Century*, in New York, then edited by him became anarchistic too. Many of his speeches were also published as pamphlets. Pentecost later attempted to combine his anarchistic ideas with the theories of single tax, but soon disappeared wholly from the movement.

Dyer D. Lum, Voltairine de Cleyre and William and Lizzie Holmes, the friends of Albert Parsons, also came from the school of individualistic anarchism, but modified

\* See *The Why I Ams*, No. 11 of the series *Unsettled Questions*, New York, 1892. This number contains also articles by Benjamin Tucker, John Most, Dyer D. Lum, Wm. Holmes and Victor Yarros.

their views in later years. Lum always remained a Mutualist but after the Haymarket Riots in Chicago declared himself for revolutionary methods in the battle against monopolism, while Voltairine de Cleyre, one of the most gifted women which America has produced, turned to the ideas of Peter Kropotkin and of communist anarchism. William and Lizzie Holmes, who were very active for many years in Denver, Col., worked strenuously for the achievement of a harmonious relationship among the various libertarian tendencies and therefore rejected the rigid inflexibility of Tucker, Yarros and others who categorically refused to co-operate with other tendencies. Also to be mentioned here is William E. Whittick, the poet of individualism, whose poems Tucker published under the title, *Bombs: The Poetry and Philosophy of Anarchy*.

Tucker's way of thinking and Mutualist Socialism have found representatives in America down to the present time. Noteworthy writings of recent years are *What is Mutualism?* (1927) by Charles Lee Swartz, a booklet distinguished by a wealth of expert knowledge. Swartz, who died a few years ago in Los Angeles, also edited a new edition of Tucker's best writings which appeared in 1926 under the title *Individual Liberty*. He was a personal friend of Tucker, and dedicated a very fine article to him in Joseph Ishill's *Free Vistas* (1937). Swartz was also the editor of several papers and a regular collaborator of practically all publications of this tendency. Henry Cohen, an old friend and associate of Tucker, and Charles T. Sprading must be mentioned here as well. Cohen published in 1927 a new edition of Proudhon's *Solution of the Social Problem* and Greene's *Mutual Banking* with a valuable introduction and additional notes. Sprading is the author of *Liberty and the Great Libertarians* (1913), *Freedom and its Fundamentals* (1923) and *Mutual Service and Cooperation* (1930).

J. P. Warbasse, educational President of the *Cooperative League of the United States of America* and author of the book, *Cooperative Democracy* (1927), likewise based his views on the ideas of philosophic Anarchism. Thus he wrote in *Consumers' Cooperation Magazine* of July, 1938, in a criticism of "Nationalism and Culture": \* "Understanding of anarchist philosophy is a prerequisite to understanding of the nature of the state. And no one fathoms the meaning of consumers' cooperation who is not equipped with a comprehension of the principles of anarchist libertarianism because consumers' cooperation is essentially anarchistic."

Although Tucker and his school vigorously opposed Henry George's doctrines and the Single Tax movement, as is shown by numerous articles in *Liberty*, and also in John F. Kelley's essay, *Taxation or Free Trade? A Criticism upon Henry George's Protection or Free Trade* (1887), it can not be denied that Henry George's ideas had many points of resemblance with the libertarian point of view. A considerable number of well known Single Taxers were without doubt strongly influenced by libertarian ideas which are especially noticeable in the later writings of William Lloyd Garrison and the works of Bolton Hall. That the present *Social Credit* movement in Canada and the United States was at least strongly influenced by William B. Greene and the American Mutualist is undeniable.

Individualistic and mutualistic anarchism in America has in the course of time brought forth a succession of periodicals which are listed in the bibliography.

\* Rudolf Rucker: *Nationalism and Culture*.

*Influences of American Individualist Anarchism  
in Europe*

P. J. PROUDHON'S PREDOMINANT INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIBERTARIAN SOCIALISM IN EUROPE. HIS FIGHT AGAINST POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SPIRITUAL MONARCHISM. HIS IDEA OF A FEDERATED EUROPE ON THE BASIS OF COOPERATIVE LABOR AND FREE EXCHANGE. TUCKER'S INFLUENCE IN ENGLAND. HENRY SEYMOUR AND THE FREE CURRENCY MOVEMENT. HIS RECOLLECTIONS ON THE GENESIS OF ANARCHISM IN ENGLAND. AUBERON HERBERT AND HIS THEORY OF VOLUNTARISM. INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHISM IN BELGIUM AND FRANCE. E. ARMAND'S ACTIVITY. HIS ESSAY ON B. R. TUCKER'S INFLUENCE IN FRANCE. IN GERMANY. JOHN HENRY MACKAY, THE REDISCOVERER AND BIOGRAPHER OF MAX STIRNER. HIS LITERARY ACTIVITY. B. ZACK'S "*LEAFLETS FOR INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHISM AND OTHER PERIODICALS*."

Oddly enough, the ideas of Tucker and of his predecessors have never found any wide circulation in Europe, and even were unable to gain a foothold in America among the radical circles of the immigrants. Individualistic anarchism as represented by this school remained a purely American movement and scarcely influenced other countries. One

might point to Proudhon's influence in Europe, especially among the peoples of the Latin countries, but this example is not sound. Proudhon was firmly rooted in European conditions and he thought in European terms. What his American admirers regarded as his major accomplishment, the solution of the social problem by the *People's Bank*, does not exhaust his far reaching significance as a thinker and guide of socialism. The project of the *People's Bank* was merely an episode in the life and thinking of Proudhon which can only be understood when viewed against the background of the conditions prevailing at that time and their historical causes, but this would be too involved a subject to be included here.

Of all the older socialists, Proudhon was the one who rejected the belief in a universal remedy for all social wrongs most emphatically. He knew the problem which socialism had to solve was no Gordian knot which one could cut with the slash of a sword. It was this very reason which made him thoroughly discount all so-called universal means which, as many believed, would achieve a general transformation with one stroke. His penetrating and convincing criticism of all the socialist tendencies of his time bears witness for that. Proudhon was a man without firmly anchored presuppositions, for he clearly realized that in the constant movement which eternally changes the pattern of society is to be found its true essence. In this sense he said at one time that society resembles a clock-work which has its own pendulum stroke and needs no outside aid to remain in motion. Social freedom was for him a path, not a goal, for with Ibsen he recognized: "He who thinks that freedom is more than a quest, that it is something to be grasped and retained, will only possess a dead and spiritless thing, for the conception of freedom has indeed that strange quality that it forever seeks to expand after it has been acquired. If therefore

one should say, 'Now I have it,' he merely shows that he has lost it."

Among the great champions of socialist thought Proudhon was practically the only one who had profoundly understood the historical meaning of socialism. With unusual perspicacity he saw that the work of the French Revolution was only half done and that it would have to be the task of the Revolution of the nineteenth century to continue this work and bring it to fulfillment if the development of Europe were to be given a new direction. For the whole significance of the great Revolution lay in the fact that it put an end to monarchistic guardianship and prepared the way for the people to take their fate into their own hands after they had served for centuries as an involuntary herd and by their labor assured princely absolutism of its existence.

Here was the great problem of the time which Proudhon had recognized better than any of his contemporaries. The great Revolution had indeed done away with the political and social regime of the absolute monarchy, yet as Proudhon said, it had not succeeded in getting rid of the *monarchistic idea* which came to new life in the endeavors of the Jacobins for political centralization and in the ideology of national state unity. It is this disastrous inheritance which a vanished era has left with us and which today has found its rebirth in the so-called *principle of the Leader* (fuehrer, duce, or dictator) of the totalitarian state. An old idea in a new guise.

Proudhon had recognized that absolutism, this eternal principle of authority for a God-ordained purpose which is deaf to any human appeal has always been the chief obstacle in the path of humanity toward higher forms of social existence. Socialism was for him not only a question of economy but a cultural question as well, covering all spheres of human activity. He knew that if the cause of liberty was



not to be sacrificed to a new despotism it was essential that the authoritarian over-lordship of monarchy be removed not from one sphere alone but from every sphere of life. He regarded economic exploitation, political oppression, and spiritual bondage merely as different symptoms of the same disease. Proudhon saw in monarchy the symbol of all human enslavement, for it was not merely a political arrangement but a social condition with inevitable psychological and spiritual effects which make themselves felt in every sphere of social life. That was what he meant when he called capitalism the *monarchism of economy* which makes labor pay tribute to capital in the same manner that society yields its tithes to the state and the spirit of the church.

"The economic notion of capital, the political idea of the State or of authority and the theological conceptions of the Church are identical concepts which reciprocally complete and support one another. We cannot therefore oppose the one and leave the others alone. This is a matter on which all philosophers today agree. What capital today does to labor, the State does to freedom, and the Church to the spirit. This trinity of absolutism is in practice just as dangerous as in philosophy. In order to effectively oppress the people one must put their bodies, their wills and their intelligence in bonds. If socialism has the purpose to reveal itself in its complete and universal form freed from every mysticism, then it need only bring the significance of this trinity to the comprehension of the people."

Proceeding from this realization Proudhon saw in the development of the modern great powers and in the continually growing influence of economic monopoly the greatest danger for the future of Europe and he sought to guard against it by an intelligent and well planned scheme for a federation of free communities on the basis of similar economic interests and mutual agreement. He knew very well

that this new condition of life could not be achieved overnight, but that first of all it would be necessary to break the yoke of authoritarian traditions and by constructive work make men receptive to new ideas. Only thus could their aspirations be given a direction which would enable them to meet the danger that threatened them. Every tendency to divorce power politics from the social organism and to impose narrower limits upon monopoly was for Proudhon a step on the way toward social freedom. Everything working against this great idea and contributing consciously or unconsciously to the strengthening of spiritual, economic and political *monarchism* by demands for more power and by working into the hands of social reaction can only lead back to the past, even when this happens under the pretentious name of revolution.

The representatives of authoritarian socialism in Europe in their opposition to liberalism took their weapons frequently from the armory of absolutism although they were for the most part unaware of the fact. Most of its adherents in Germany had passed through the school of Hegel, Fichte and other advocates of absolute state omnipotence. Others were influenced by the theocratic way of thinking of the Saint Simonists or followed the authoritarian traditions of French Jacobinism and believed in dictatorship as the necessary transition to socialism. Proudhon was one of the few who connected Socialism directly to the liberal stream of thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which had struck heavy blows at political and social absolutism. It is here where his extraordinary significance lies and the reason why his influence still makes itself felt in the socialist movement of the Latin countries right up to this day even though the economic conceptions have changed.

What individualist anarchism had given to America in its criticism of the state and of monopoly, libertarian socialism

in Europe has learned from Proudhon. But so far as his practical proposals and methods were concerned the economic and social conditions in every country of Europe were so different that the ideas of the American individualists could scarcely have had any important success there nor have altered the course of the already existing anarchistic movements. In America, however, the situation was quite different. There a practical proposal like Proudhon's bank project was sure to meet with a certain response in the time of Greene when men were ready to try all kinds of experiments. On the other hand that feature which gave Proudhon's doctrines their big and influential significance in Europe, his logical extension of liberalism and its enrichment with the ideas of socialism, had less importance for America, for most of the radical reformers there rooted in the liberal traditions and conditions of their country and found in men like Paine, Jefferson, etc., their natural predecessors, so that Tucker was right in calling the Anarchists "simply untterrified Jeffersonian democrats."

Nevertheless, the ideas of Tucker and his adherents did find a certain, if only weak, response in Europe, especially in England, where Henry Seymour, a printer by trade, was strongly influenced by Tucker. He founded in 1885 a paper, *The Anarchist*, which appeared until 1888 and contained original contributions by G. B. Shaw, Elisee Reclus, Henry Appleton, and others. Also the American Lothrop Withington who about that time came frequently to England and met his death in the sinking of the Titanic, often wrote for this paper. Withington followed Tucker's course of ideas, but like Dyer D. Lum advocated more revolutionary methods. Seymour later wrote an interesting article, *The Genesis of Anarchism in England. A Few Recollections of My Early Life in That Movement*.<sup>\*</sup> He related there how

<sup>\*</sup> See Joseph Ishill's *Free Vistas*, 1937.

through his acquaintance with Peter Kropotkin, Saverio Merlino, Mrs. Wilson, Sergius Kravchinsky (Stepniak), etc., *The Anarchist* for a time (1886-1887) took another direction but later assumed its original character again. Other notable representatives of the individualistic tendency in England were Ernest Lesigne, A. Tarn, Wm. Gilmour, Robert Harding, G. O. Warren, and J. G. Fisher. Henry Seymour established the group known as the *English Anarchist Circle* and published besides his paper a considerable number of brochures, among others the *Liberty Leaflets*. In 1889 he published the *Revolutionary Review* but had to discontinue its issue that same year. In conjunction with J. Armsden, J. Badcock and G. O. Warren, Seymour carried on the *Free Currency Movement* and published the periodicals *Free Trade* and *Free Exchange* (1892). All these activities were only short lived and disappeared after some time or lost themselves in other movements. Among other papers of this tendency, there appeared *The Revolutionist* (1887 only one issue) and Albert Tarn's *Herald of Anarchy* (1890-92). Close to the ideas of individualist anarchism was Auberon Herbert, the founder of so-called *Voluntaryism*, who in several brilliant essays and in his magazine, *The Free Life*, founded in 1890, aligned himself with its objectives. Also in Australia Tucker's ideas found a certain footing and were chiefly represented by W. R. Winspear and David A. Andrade. In Melbourne the paper *Honesty* (1887-89) was published and in Hamilton in the 90's *The Australian Radical* began to appear. This paper was published by Winspear, but enjoyed only a brief existence.

In Belgium and France, the libertarian movement was and still is strongly influenced by Proudhon's ideas. Tucker's concepts and American individualism never found a strong foothold there. Mutualism which played a dis-

tinguished role in the first period of the *First International*, was gradually supplanted by the movement of collectivist and communist anarchism, which took up the free ideas of Proudhon and molded them to its own manner. In Belgium individualist anarchism was represented for a short time by the periodical *La Question Sociale* (1891) but without notable success. Individualist anarchism found one very ardent representative in France in E. Armand. Armand was the editor of quite a number of periodicals like *L'Ere Nouvelle* (1909-10), *Hors du Troupeau* (1911), *Les Refractaires* (1911). During the first World War, he published *La Mêlée* (1915-17). After an imprisonment of some duration, he founded in 1922 the periodical *L'en dehors*, which appeared in Orleans until the outbreak of the late war. Armand published during his journalistic activities quite a number of writings, among them his chief work, *L'Initiation Individualiste Anarchiste* (1924). He was largely instrumental in making Tucker known in France, and according to his own statements Tucker's ideas were the leitmotiv of all his many years of activity.\* However, it must be remarked here that Armand often represented views Tucker would never have approved of.

In Germany, it was chiefly John Henry Mackay who devoted himself to the dissemination of individualist anarchist ideas. Mackay who at first belonged to the communist anarchist school was led to individualism through his rediscovery of Max Stirner, whose work, *The Ego and His Own*, had fallen altogether into oblivion in Germany. His ideas constitute a kind of synthesis between Proudhon and Tucker and found their best expression in the works, *Die Anarchisten, Kulturgemälde aus dem Ende des XIX Jahrhunderts* (1891) and *Der Freiheitssucher, Psychologie*

\* E. Armand: "The Influence of Tucker's Ideas in France" in the Tucker number of Joseph Ishill's *Free Vistas*, 1937.

*einer Entwicklung* (1920). The second book is dedicated to Benjamin R. Tucker, of whom the author in the introduction to his work says: "I dedicate this book and also its predecessor which I was afraid to do then to the name of a man who in a long and unexampled life full of courage, activity and perseverance has done more for the cause of freedom than any other living person, a name which instead of being celebrated throughout the world today is known and loved by so few, who however may take some comfort in seeing that in the fathomless stupidity and frightful brutality about us there still are individuals like the man who bears this name."

Mackay was a poet of distinction and his work, *The Anarchists*, was translated in all principal languages. He was also the first biographer of Max Stirner, whose history he told in the book *Max Stirner: His Life and His Work* (1898). His collection of poems, *Sturm*, which are dedicated to the ideas of Anarchism likewise found a wide circulation.\*

From 1903-04 B. Zack published in Berlin the periodical, *Flugschriften für den Individualistischen Anarchismus*, of which in all four numbers appeared and which in 1911 had a short resurrection in the *Korrespondenzblatt*. Zack also published German translations of Tucker's *State Socialism and Anarchism*, *Are Anarchists Murderers?*, *Relations of The State to the Individual*, *What is Socialism?* and *The Attitude of Anarchism Toward Industrial Combinations*. He also published in German *The Woman Question*, a discussion between Victor Yarros and Sarah E. Holmes, and *The Tyranny of Social Democracy* by Saint Georges de Bouhelier, translated by Mackay. A German transla-

\* An appreciation of John Henry Mackay, was recently made by Thomas A. Riley in his essay, "New England Anarchism in Germany," in the *New England Quarterly*, March 1945.

tion of Stephen Pearl Andrew's *The Science of Society* also appeared in 1904 in Berlin.

Before and after World War I there were still some periodicals of an individualistic anarchistic tendency published in Germany, like *Der individualistische Anarchist*, *Der Eigne*, etc. In Germany, the ideas of Tucker and his adherents perhaps found a greater circulation than in other European countries, but even there they were short lived, and their influence was limited to a very small circle. Individualist anarchism remains in essence an American product which could not find a foothold in Europe.

### *Anarchism and the American Tradition*

WHERE AMERICAN ANARCHISM DIFFERS FROM EUROPEAN LIBERTARIANISM. AMERICAN ANARCHISTS REGARDED THEIR IDEAS AS A LOGICAL EXTENSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN TRADITIONS. THOMAS PAINE AND JEFFERSON'S IDEAS ON SOCIAL REFORM. COMMON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF AMERICAN ANARCHISTS.

This history of individualist or, as Benjamin Tucker called it, philosophic anarchism, differs essentially from the libertarian ideas brought to America by the European emigration which almost exclusively followed the concepts of Peter Kropotkin, Elisee Reclus and their followers by its genuine American origin. The anarchism which developed on American soil has its starting point in the philosophic ideas of the Eighteenth Century which circulated in England and were brought here by the Fathers of this country and modified under the influence of a new environment. But above all it is rooted in the peculiar social conditions of America which differed fundamentally from those of Europe. Warren, Andrews, Spooner, Greene, Heywood and Tucker all came from Massachusetts, and were therefore genuine Yankees, for this word which today serves as a nickname of all Americans, was originally applied only to the inhabitants of the New England states who regarded themselves as the elite of America.

They were not only American because the accident of birth made them so, but because they were deeply rooted



and nurtured in the history and traditions of their country. For this reason they regarded their ideas only as a logical extension and development of those traditions and worked quite deliberately in this direction. C. L. James, one of the gifted representatives of this tendency wrote in his, *Origin of Anarchism*:

"Thus purely indigenous English and American Anarchism is much earlier than the French, German or Russian kind. It is, therefore, quite a mistake to regard Anarchism as a peculiarity of the *foreigners* against whom there is so much foolish prejudice. Anarchism is the child of our own insitutions; and they have got to rear it."

C. L. James points out that since the appearance of Edmund Burke's *Vindication of Natural Society* (1760) England and America have never been without thinkers of an anarchistic viewpoint and that immediately after the publication of the famous *Junius Letters* in England and their leitmotive: "It is not the disorder, but the physician; it is the pernicious hand of government alone which can make a whole people desperate," Paine and Jefferson came forth with their first political doctrines and shattered the blind belief in the inviolability of the state.

William B. Greene in his book, *The Sovereignty of the People* (1863) based his entire criticism of the political and social conditions upon the historical traditions of America when he wrote as follows:

"In theory the government of a free people is not one which shall in all circumstances govern, but one that shall effectually govern while it is maintaining right against wrong, and shall begin to fall in pieces as soon as it begins to maintain wrong against right. No country is truly free whose constitution does not furnish the citizens with protection against the wrong-doing

of other citizens, and also guarantees him against the wrongdoing of the government itself. No oppressor is so intolerable as an oppressive government; for the private oppressor acts with his own force only, while the governmental oppressor acts with the irresistible force of the whole people."

Ezra Heywood wrote in his article, *The Great Strike*, in Tucker's *Radical Review*, that Anarchism is "only a new assertion of the ideas of self-rule and self-support which Jefferson put into the Declaration of Independence, 1776, and that Josiah Warren's doctrine of the *sovereignty of the individual* on the basis of the *cost principle* only set forth a natural proposal of this fundamental."

Voltaireine de Cleyre in her illuminating essay, *Anarchism and American Traditions*, traced the whole idea of the anarchistic conception in America to the liberal traditions of this country, drawing the conclusion:

"As to the American tradition of non-meddling, Anarchism asks that it be carried down to the individual himself. It demands no jealous barrier of isolation; it knows that such isolation is undesirable and impossible; but it teaches that by all men's strictly minding their own business, a fluid society, freely adapting itself to mutual needs, wherein all the world shall belong to all men, as much as each has need or desire, will result. And when Modern Revolution has thus been carried to the heart of the whole world—if it ever shall be, as I hope it will,—then may we hope to see a resurrection of that proud spirit of our fathers which put the simple dignity of Man above the guards of wealth and class, and hold that to be an American was greater than to be a king."

Stephen P. Andrews, Lysander Spooner and others have said the same thing in different words. The truth of the matter is that whenever American Anarchists of that time were influenced by foreign ideas these had their origin in

the same source which gave birth to the *Declaration of Independence* and guided those English thinkers who, following Locke, progressed in a similar direction as for instance Joseph Priestly, Richard Price, Jeremy Bentham, and later John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. Max Stirner had a certain influence only on Tucker and his circle. The only foreigner who made a deep impression on this school of thought was Pierre Joseph Proudhon, and that was due to the fact that his ideas were so close to the concepts of the older English-American radicalism, and his practical proposals so full of promise for a young country like America.

On the other hand one must never overlook that the founders of American liberalism were not in any way satisfied with the political principles laid down in the *Declaration of Independence*, but endeavored in their fashion to anchor those principles in the social and economic conditions of the country. Thus Tom Paine propounded already in the second part of his *Rights of Man* a far reaching social reform which had particularly in view a modification of the system of taxation, the relief of unemployment, and old age pensions for impoverished veterans of labor. In his *Agrarian Justice* he went deeper into these ideas and declared that since man did not create the earth he could have no permanent title to the land, for it is not recorded that God, the Creator of all things, ever made a business of selling property rights. Therefore, he demanded that those robbed of their natural right to the earth have their claim restored in such a way as to remedy the wrongs of the past and to this end he developed a very detailed plan.

Thomas Jefferson, greatly influenced by Paine, declared: "I set out on this ground, which I suppose to be self-evident, that the earth belongs in usufruct to the living; that the dead have neither powers nor rights over it. The

portion occupied by any individual ceases to be his when himself ceases to be, and reverts to society."—It is also known how hostile Jefferson was to the financial speculation of the banks Hamilton had established, as a letter of January 16, 1814, to Dr. Thomas Cooper shows: "It is cruel that such revolutions in private fortunes should be at the mercy of avaricious adventurers, who, instead of employing their capital, if any they have, in manufactures, commerce and other useful pursuits, make it an instrument to burden all the interchanges of property with their swindling profits, profits which are the price of no useful industry of theirs."

One cannot pretend therefore that Paine and Jefferson had no understanding of economic and social reform. Daniel Webster's declaration, "The freest government cannot long endure when the tendency of the law is to create a rapid accumulation of property in the hands of a few, and to render the masses poor and dependent," shows too that they were well aware of the danger of such a development. But later liberals as well displayed a definite interest in social reforms, which would serve as a support for their political principles. Ralph Waldo Emerson's study of the ideas of Fourierism and his interest in the Brook Farm Experiment, is well known. The same is true of Wendell Phillip's propaganda for currency reform and W. L. Garrison's activity as a single taxer. Thus even in this respect there is no definite boundary line between the great interpreters of American liberalism and the first Anarchists in this country. Just as in England where William Godwin's work, *Political Justice*, was the logical result of that great spiritual tendency which would draw the narrowest bounds around the power of the State and refuse to let it control the spiritual and social life of man, so too were the ideas of Josiah Warren and his followers only the natural result

of that social and political tendency to which America was indebted for the *Declaration of Independence* and which in Jefferson, Paine and their followers had found its greatest advocates.

The whole activity of individualistic anarchism in America from Warren to Tucker and his adherents was exclusively conducted within American circles. Their endeavors, therefore, represent a definite phase in the intellectual evolution of this country, as real as the spiritual influence of Paine, Jefferson, Emerson, Thoreau, Phillips and Garrison.

Like every intellectual movement, the individualistic Anarchists of America have their various shades of opinion. Yet it is not difficult to discover certain fundamental principles which are common to all of them and which divide them sharply from all other varieties of socialism. They all agree on the point that man be given the full reward of his labor and recognize in this right the economic basis of all personal liberty. They all regard the free competition of individual and social forces as something inherent in human nature, which if suppressed will inevitably lead to the destruction of the social equilibrium. They answered the socialists of other schools who saw in *free competition* one of the destructive elements of capitalist society that the evil lies in the fact that today we have too little rather than too much competition, since the power of monopoly has made competition impossible. Starting from this viewpoint they rejected fundamentally every communistic solution of the social problem and opposed just as intensely the ideas of state socialism as the tendencies of Kropotkin and communist anarchism. This is particularly true of Tucker and his circle.

Nevertheless, there were also among the so-called individualists a considerable number of men who in this respect were broader in their views and rightly believed that

mutualism, collectivism and communism represent only different methods of economy, the practical possibilities of which have yet to be tested, and that the first objective is to secure the personal and social freedom of men no matter upon which economic basis this is to be accomplished. They therefore did not follow Tucker's example and condemn every other tendency as *archistic* but only reserved for themselves the right of expression, to go their own ways and let others do the same. To this group belonged especially Wm. Holmes, C. James, and Dyer D. Lum, author of *The Economics of Anarchy*, whose life and work Voltairine de Cleyre has so eloquently described.

The second point on which all adherents of individualistic anarchism in America were in agreement was their strong emphasis on the equal rights of the sexes and their support for *sex freedom*. In the controversy over these issues, they showed far more militancy than any similar group in Europe. Some of them, including Tucker himself, repudiated monogamy on the grounds that it is contrary to human nature and imposes on the gratification of the sexual urge restraints which in the long run can be only harmful. But all recognized that the mutual sex relations cannot be governed by any fixed system and must be left to the judgment of the people concerned. A considerable number of them, as Ezra Heywood, Moses Harman, D. M. Bennet, E. C. Walker and others were subjected to severe persecution in the time of the Comstock regime, occasionally receiving prison sentences on account of these views.

The third point on which they were all agreed was their rejection of any propaganda of violence. None of them was an adherent of absolute pacificism which on purely ethical grounds rejects every use of force. They all recognized the right of using force in resisting a despotism which had become intolerable, a right Jefferson himself had written into

the *Declaration of Independence*. But they realized that anarchism can be neither achieved nor maintained by force. Therefore they laid the emphasis of their propaganda upon the education, instruction and persuasion of men so as to prepare them for a condition where authority would no longer rule. They rejected therefore the use of all coercive means on tactical grounds so long as society was granting them the right to work for the propagation of their ideas and to seek a peaceful transformation. They felt that passive resistance had more prospects of succeeding than violent insurrection, and justified the latter only when the growth of despotism made impossible the use of other means. Each of them placed the greatest emphasis on man's sense of responsibility and believed in the gradual vanishing of all forms of compulsion by the ascendancy of ideas and the free compact among men.

And there was also a fourth point common to all of them. They believed in the effectiveness of practical experiment, which is particularly evident in Josiah Warren and his adherents. But contrary to the exponents of earlier experimental socialism they did not believe in the success of small communities which separate themselves from society in order to practice their own ideas in the hope that the world will follow their example. They rather felt that such experiments must be undertaken within society through individual or cooperative enterprises to be financed by a banking system of mutual credit free of interest charge. These ideas found particularly strong advocates in Greene, Spooner, Heywood, Tucker, Fulton, and Tandy.

It is not the purpose of this study to provide a critical survey of the ideas and methods of the individualistic anarchists or to press the strong or weak points of their propaganda. The purpose of this book is rather to present an objective view of their doctrines and especially to show

that Anarchism in America is not a *foreign importation* but a product of the social conditions of this country and its historical traditions. Anarchism existed in America at a time when no indication of an anarchist movement was to be discovered in Europe. Its basic economic and political ideas were already worked out by J. Warren before Proudhon conceived his great historical task. It must be regarded therefore as a part of American history, the recording of which would be defective and incomplete if one should overlook this side of intellectual life in America.

It is true that American anarchism was also influenced later by European ideas; on the other hand, it also had an influence in Europe however slight. This is merely another illustration of the old truth that ideas are not bound by any political boundaries but have their fountain head in the universal sphere of culture to which we belong. To stigmatize an inconvenient idea or movement by branding it *Un-American* is not to uphold the best tradition of this country but to adopt the cheap slogans of Hitler and Mussolini and to prepare the way for the totalitarian state.

The so-called white civilization of this continent is the work of European immigrants. All religious, political and economic institutions in North and South America have developed under this influence, and the elements which were driven out of European countries by religious and political persecution and sought and found new opportunities in this country were by no means the worst.

Once again let it be said: Civilization as a whole is neither European nor American but embodies humanity in its entirety. Its external characteristics may vary according to the conditions it encounters in the different countries, but its essential life content remains the same. It represents the eternal struggle of mankind to overcome the restricting



limitations of primitive natural environment and make its life conform with the higher purposes it has conceived.

The freedom of a people, however, is measured according to the degree of tolerance it shows for the personal conceptions and intellectual needs of its individual members. Every idea, as such, is justified as long as it springs from the honest convictions of its bearers. It will become a despotism only when its exponents attempt to impose it upon others by force and against their will. Even in this case, it is not the idea itself but the instruments of compulsion which justify opposition and make self-defense the order of the day.

If the word Democracy has any meaning at all it is that instead of relying on the power of the State to thwart the designs of despotism it will prevail by virtue of its own moral influence and, as Proudhon said, awaken in man the realization that this freedom find its confirmation rather than its limitation in the freedom of others.

To those, however, whose "hundred per cent" nationalism consists in stigmatizing every idea they do not understand or do not like as an alien product for which the foreigner has to be blamed and punished, I shall reply with Jefferson: "*It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself.*"

### *America in Reverse*

ANTI-LIBERAL TENDENCIES IN AMERICA. RELIGIOUS PERSECUTIONS IN THE COLONIES. CHURCH HIERARCHIES IN NEW ENGLAND. THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE NOT A WAR FOR DEMOCRACY AND ANTI-MONARCHIST PRINCIPLES. HAMILTON FOR CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT "TO AVOID THE VICES OF DEMOCRACY." THE ALIEN AND SEDITION LAWS. MONARCHIST PRINCIPLES VERSUS REPUBLICANISM. JEFFERSON'S LETTER TO THOMAS PAINE ON MONARCHIST TENDENCIES IN AMERICA. THE ANTI-MASONIC PARTY. THE NATIVE AMERICAN PARTY. THE KNOW-NOTHINGS. THE KU KLUX KLAN. THE PERSECUTIONS AGAINST THE ABOLITIONISTS. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM AND THE ENCROACHMENTS ON CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS. THE FIGHT AGAINST ORGANIZED LABOR. LYNCH JUSTICE. THE LAW AGAINST CRIMINAL ANARCHISM. WHAT HAS THE FUTURE IN STORE FOR AMERICA?

It would be false to pretend that the liberal traditions are the only characteristics of this country's spiritual life. It would yet be a greater error, as has often been done, to designate them as the natural product of the character of the American People. Peoples of nations do not possess a uniform character, if by this term, we are to understand a definite spiritual trend by which every single member

of the community is equally influenced. A character can only be found in individuals, not in groups, peoples and nations. The nation has neither a spiritual nor a material unity. As men have divided themselves socially into different classes, castes and ranks which pursue quite separate interests, so have nations divided themselves spiritually in all the conceivable ideas, attitudes and endeavors which frequently are in rough opposition to one another and cannot possibly intermingle. America is not an exception to this general rule. American liberalism is just as little the sole expression of "pure Americanism"—whatever this may mean—as is the code of the Ku Klux Klan or the Holy Book of Mormon.

Along with the great path-breaking currents of liberal thought there existed in this country from the very beginning a whole line of backward and manifestly reactionary tendencies whose influence on the spiritual development of American life should not be underestimated. These currents are by no means to be considered merely as a consequence of the great land monopoly and of the developing capitalistic economy in this country which came more and more into sharp collision with the principles of Jeffersonian democracy. They were already apparent in the first period of America's colonization. They developed and gained strength during the Industrial Revolution. These tendencies were brought over from Europe, just as were Locke's ideas and English liberalism in general.

Taking this fact into account, it becomes clear that in many respects the historical development in America could not have been essentially different than in Europe, even if it did adopt many other forms which are the product of its own environment. Although the Constitution guaranteed to every citizen the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, the backward elements were at the very

outset too powerful to permit of its practical application. The ideas of mutual understanding and of peaceful cooperation advocated by the religious and political liberals soon found a counterpart in the intolerance of those who had, so to speak, the spirit of tutelage in their blood and who were constantly bent on dictating to their fellowmen the forms their happiness and freedom were to assume, even to the point of imposing them by force. This naturally led to serious conflicts which were quite as sanguinary in this country as in most other "foreign" lands. The Civil War, which wrought such terrible havoc in the country, particularly in the South destroying billions of dollars worth of the nation's wealth and sacrificing eight hundred thousand human lives, is but one classical example of our assertion.

The famous saying, that America was a land of refuge for everyone oppressed by tyranny, was in many respects but a beautiful illusion. When William the Silent encouraged in the Old World the religious people of his generation to emigrate to America, since "it is better to enjoy freedom in the wilderness of a distant land than to endure slavery with all the comfort of an unsympathetic homeland," this too was nothing but a mirage. In reality, true religious freedom existed in hardly any of the North American English colonies. In most of the later New England states formal hierarchies were established by which the Church exercised political power and proclaimed that not only Catholics and Jews but even all Protestant sects other than their own were to be outside the pale of their protective laws. The savage persecution of the Quakers and Antinomians whose love for peace and freedom could not protect them against the fanaticism of their contemporaries are gloomy illustrations of the spiritual conditions of that time.

In the state of Massachusetts, especially this persecution assumed a medieval character. The proceedings against

Anne Hutchinson in Boston (1634) and the execution of Mary Dyer (1659) are classical examples of the intolerance of those days. Quakers and other heretics were publicly whipped, stripped of their property and of their citizens' rights and were driven outside the boundaries of the colony, while the return to it was punishable by death. The executions of Marmaduke Stevenson, William Robinson, Mary Dyer, and others were evidence that the law was not to be taken lightly. The people involved in all these cases were by no means atheists and so-called freethinkers; they were followers of Christian doctrine who, as for instance Henry Vane and John Wheelwright, had committed no other breach than to insist upon their freedom of belief or had failed to observe the appointed day for fasting or had expressed an opinion on religious matters contrary to that held by the official heads of the Church.

Even the Revolution of the American Colonies against England and the victory of the colonists over the motherland failed to eliminate the reactionary tendencies in this country; it merely gave them a different form. A whole line of distinguished historians saw in the stand of the Colonies but a battle of democracy against the principles of monarchist state authority. This may have been true of a small number of the leaders, but a far greater portion, including George Washington himself found nothing radically at fault with the monarchist system in England and went to war only because the stupid policy of the motherland became unbearable for the colonies and open rebellion finally proved to be the only alternative. At the outset, the greater part of the colonies could not warm up at all to the idea of separation, and Washington more than once bemoaned the indifference of the Colonists, the chief cause of the war being so tediously drawn out.

With the War finally concluded, the issue concerning the

form of government for the country had to be decided. Two opinions opposed each other from the very outset with widely differing views as to the structure of the state. Before even the army was disbanded some of the most distinguished officers went to George Washington and urged him to solve the matter of the form of government with the help of the army. Prominent among them were Generals Steuben and Henry Knox, who, as Jefferson said, were "trained to monarchy by military habits" and had no mind for a republic. They attempted to persuade Washington to proclaim himself king and promised him their full support; Washington rejected this offer. That was not the only attempt in this direction, for as Jefferson himself reported: "Before the establishment of our present government, a very extensive combination had taken place in New York and the Eastern States among that description of people who were partly monarchical in principle or frightened with Shay's rebellion and the impotence of the old Congress. Delegates in different places had actually had consultations on the subject of seizing on the powers of a government and established them by force; had corresponded with one another, and had sent a deputy to General Washington to solicit his cooperation. He refused to join them."

Jefferson pointed out further how the enemies of democracy set every means in motion in order to prevent an agreement on the system of government:—"They wished things to get more and more into confusion to justify the violent measure they proposed. The idea of establishing a government by reasoning and agreement, they publicly ridiculed as a Utopian project, visionary and unexampled."—In another place Jefferson declared: "The contests of that day (before and during the formation of the Constitution) were contests of principle between the advocates of republican,

and those of kingly government; had not the former made the efforts they did, our government would have been at this early day, a very different thing from what the successful issue of those efforts have made it."

Alexander Hamilton and the party of Federalists who were called monarchists by their opponents advocated the establishment of a strong central government which would put all power in the hands of the President and Congress. Hamilton was also of the opinion that the President and the Senators should be chosen for life, "to avoid the vices of democracy." He was a highly intelligent man and a shrewd politician: he lacked nevertheless a profound understanding of the bonds of social life and distrusted the sound impulses of the people, preferring to place his confidence in the cunning of master politicians in control of the powers of a strong government. It was natural, therefore, that men like Paine and Jefferson appeared to him as hopeless Utopians.

Jefferson and his adherents pledged themselves to the principle of political self-government which would secure to each state in the Union full rights. The Union was for them only a government of delegated powers for their protection and for the promotion of common interest with its limitations fixed in the compact of the Constitution, which did not permit it to meddle in the affairs of the individual states. Against possible encroachment the states were to protect themselves, disobeying if necessary the decisions of the Federal governments if it overstepped its authority. That was the more justified since, according to Jefferson, there can be no natural judge between parties who made a contract, and each therefore has the right to decide for himself if a breach had occurred and what measures were to be taken in the matter.

In spite of the opposition of the Federalists \* in 1789 the Bill of Rights was finally adopted. In it was recognized the equality of all men and their right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Although the opposition of the Federalist Party to the adoption of the Constitution was thus actually broken, its activities and efforts continued to play a prominent part in the life of the country.

Already during the term of the second President, John Adams, who was elected as the candidate of the Federalists, the infamous *Alien and Sedition Laws* were enacted. They practically abrogated all the rights of the citizen guaranteed by the Constitution. These laws gave to the President an almost unlimited power and practically declared every alien in the country to be an outlaw. The President had not only the right to expel from the United States every so-called foreigner who could be proven active against the peace and security of the state but also everyone whom "he should have reasonable grounds to suspect to be concerned in any treasonable or secret machination against the government thereof." By this law any citizen found guilty in speech, writing or other conduct of a false, scandalous and malicious character against the government, the legislative bodies or the person of the President could be punished by a fine not exceeding \$2000 or not more than two years imprisonment. In comparison with this draconic rigor Bismarck's anti-socialist law was relatively mild.

\* The political principle of the American Federalists meant just the opposite of what in Europe would be understood as federalism, namely, voluntary association self constituted on the basis of free compact for a prescribed purpose, in which sense Jefferson and his adherents were the real federalists, while the so-called Federalists of Hamilton's way of thinking were the extreme supporters of political centralization.



The war against France was used as an excuse to justify these laws. Actually it was directed principally against the Republicans who were branded as the "apostles of sedition." John Adams was openly accused by his opponents of being a monarchist. In fact he demanded that as the head of the state he should be addressed with the words: "His Majesty, the President," and Jefferson ascribed to him the statement: "Republicanism must be disgraced, sir!" The legislative assemblies of Virginia and Kentucky in 1789 and 1799 passed resolutions in which the *Alien and Sedition Laws* were declared to be dangerous and "contrary to the Constitution" and asserted the right to refuse obedience to the President in the event he should insist upon such demands.

With the advent of Jefferson's administration the *Alien and Sedition Laws* were repealed, but the movements from which they spring continued to exist; they were a contributing factor among the causes which later led to the Civil War, for this struggle was not only concerned with the abolition of Negro slavery, but also with a whole series of economic and political matters which must of course be left out of this study. Jefferson himself did not place too much faith in the Republican convictions of many of those who had been influential in the war for the freedom of the Colonies; he trusted rather to the determination of the people to maintain this principle. Thus he wrote to Thomas Paine on June 19, 1792:

"Would you believe it possible that in this country there should be high and important characters who need your lessons in Republicanism, and who do not heed them? It is but too true that we have a sect preaching up and pouting after an English constitution of king, lords and commons, and whose heads are itching for crowns, coronets and mitres. But our people, my good friend, are firm and unanimous in their principles of Re-

publicanism and there is no better proof of it than that they love what you write, and read it with delight. Go on then in doing with your pen what in other times was done with the sword; show that reformation is more practicable by operating on the mind than on the body of man, and be assured that it has not a more sincere votary nor you a more ardent well-wisher than your etc."

The fact is that there was a constant stream of organized movements in this country directed fundamentally against the aspirations of American liberalism. Thus in 1830, arose the so-called *Anti-Masonic Party*, which was aimed not only against Freemasonry, but, supported by the churches and numerous religious sects, commenced a veritable crusade against so-called atheism which led to numerous persecutions in spite of the fact that religious freedom was guaranteed to the individual citizen by the Constitution. The immediate occasion for the establishment of this party was the mysterious disappearance of a former lodge member, William Morgan, who had made all sorts of disclosures about Freemasonry and of whom it was alleged that he was put out of the way by his erstwhile brothers of the lodge, although no shadow of a proof in favor of the accusation could ever be produced.

In the year 1834 was created the *Native American Party* which had numerous adherents especially in New York and Philadelphia. This party distinguished itself by a fanatical hate of foreigners and demanded exclusion from public office of everyone not born in America. Although this movement soon disappeared from the political arena, it revived again in 1844 in the party of *Know-Nothings*,\* which in the 50's made a good deal of noise and became a pivotal center for all reactionary elements. The *Know-Nothings*

\* The movement was established in 1852 as a secret order whose members were pledged to answer every question concerning their organization with the words, "I know nothing,"—whence the name.

did a great deal to injure the Democratic cause in the elections of 1855 in Virginia, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas and Louisiana and also succeeded in electing governors in the states of California, Maryland, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York. At the presidential election of 1856 the *Know-Nothings* polled a million votes as against three million for the Republicans and Democrats. This movement was directed chiefly against the Catholics in this country but it also persecuted all liberal tendencies with the same fanaticism thus becoming a public danger to every free expression.

In Maine and Massachusetts Catholic children were whipped and expelled from the schools because they refused to read the Protestant Bible. The era of the *Know-Nothings* was one of the worst of mob terrorism and led to incredible excesses in many parts of the country. Catholic houses and churches were burned, priests tarred and feathered, books destroyed, while the voters were literally terrorized at the polls. In some cities pitched battles were fought in the streets exacting a toll of many wounded and killed.

After a few years this movement disappeared as well from the public scene, but the seeds which had been sown were never wholly destroyed and continued to germinate *sub rosa*. It could be pointed out that the sudden appearance of such movements and their equally sudden evanescence was evidence that they could strike no roots in the people. But this explanation is too simple; the question is not that the life of such movements was generally of short duration, but they continued to appear under one form or another, thus leaving their spiritual stamp on the people. Their failure as political parties was due less to the circumstance that they found little response than to the fact that two great political parties in America had already been

always firmly established—whatever their various names may have been. The setting up of a new party had thus never been an easy task. All this did not alter the fact that the two leading parties were often very much influenced by these reactionary movements, being compelled to reckon with them in one way or another.

In some cases such movements would revive under the same name. This was, for example, the case with the Ku Klux Klan which after the Civil War made its appearance in the Southern States when all those who had taken part in the uprising against the United States were deprived of their citizenship. The activity of the Klan centered then in the terrorizing of the colored people as also of those whites who dared to question the "respectability" of the inhabitants of the Southern States. When in 1870 Congress restored their political rights, the Ku Klux Klan vanished from the scene. Yet it reappeared after the first World War and was very successful throughout the States. But its program had widened and it preached now war against negroes, Jews, and Catholics. It is evident that even today the influence of the Klan has not entirely disappeared.

The incessant fight of these reactionary elements against the liberal movements which runs like a red thread through the whole history of this country has in very great measure retarded every social development which sincere democrats and liberals have dreamed of. The brutal methods used to intimidate political opponents, in which tarring and feathering and public lynching played no trifling role, explain why men like Garrison and Phillips and their adherents were often so unusually bitter in their opposition. The fight against negro slavery was by no means due to a general movement of the people, as is so often represented. It was the fight of a small minority of determined men and women who held the institution of slavery to be in-

compatible with the principles of the Declaration of Independence and fought against it as a manifest wrong. Yet their activity for a long time found no response in the people whether in the South or in the North. Their number hardly increased in spite of the tireless yearlong propaganda, and indeed so uncompromising an apostle as Wendell Phillips declared with evident resignation only a few years before the outbreak of the Civil War that "so far as national politics are concerned, we are beaten—there is no hope." The so-called Abolitionists were not only obliged to fight the slaveocracy of the South but also the open opposition of the church and of the Northern government bodies and above all the deliberately organized mobs to whose lowest instincts the enemies of abolition constantly appealed. Theodore D. Weld who lived through that period from beginning to end drew the following picture:

"Civilization presupposes a government of law. If law is abolished society sinks into barbarism. Sunk thus was this nation then in its relation to abolitionists. Mobs had been for years everywhere in outburst against them. They were victims of an indiscriminate ostracism. Everywhere they were doomed because they hated slavery and lived out that hate. In thousands of cases they were subjected to personal assaults, beatings, and buffetings, with nameless indignities. They were stoned, clubbed, knocked down, and pelted with missiles, often with eggs, and, when they could be gotten spoiled ones. They were smeared with filth, stripped of clothing, tarred, feathered, ridden upon rails, their houses sacked, bonfires made in the streets of their furniture, garments, and bedding, their vehicles and harnesses were cut and broken, and their domestic animals harried, dashed with hot water, cropped, crippled and killed. Among these outrages, besides assaults and breaches of the peace, there were sometimes burglaries, robberies, maimings, and arson; Abolitionists were driven from their homes into the fields and the woods and

their houses burned. They were dragged and thrust from the halls in which they held their meetings. For a quarter of a century our civilization was sunk to barbarism. The law, which to others was a protection, to Abolitionists was sheerest mockery. Yea, more, it singled them out as its victims. Professing to protect, it gave them up to ravage and beckoned the spoilers to their prey. Of the tens of thousands who perpetrated such atrocities not one suffered the least legal penalty for those astounding violations of the law." \*

Garrison, the courageous editor of the *Liberator*, barely escaped death during an attack on the Anti-Slavery Office in Boston. C. Martyn described very vividly this scene, at which the young Wendell Phillips was also present:

"Now some thirty women, pale but composed, came down the stairs and marched in procession along the street and so away amid the hoots and insults of the rabble. But look yonder! A man bareheaded, with rope about his waist, his clothing torn and bedraggled, but with the erect head, calm face, and flashing eyes of a martyr going to the stake, is dragged toward the City Hall, which is just at hand. 'Kill him! Lynch him! Hang the Abolitionist!' These exclamations are hurled at the composed prisoner as though they had been missiles.—'Who is that?' asks Mr. Phillips: 'That?' is the answer of a bystander. 'Why, that's Garrison the d--d Abolitionist. They are going to hang him.' " †

It was quite understandable that despite all constitutional rights of free speech and press, no abolitionist from the North had a possibility of setting forth freely his convictions in the Southern States. The statute book of the State of Virginia declared in 1836 the propaganda for abolition of slavery as high treason. Tennessee and Maryland

\* T. D. Weld: *Eulogy of Wendell Phillips*.

† C. Martyn: *Wendell Phillips—The Agitator*.

adopted similar regulations. Edward Everett, the Governor of Massachusetts, asked in 1835 the legislature in Massachusetts to "abolish free speech as a nuisance," and McDuffie, Governor of South Carolina, who had designated slavery as "the corner-stone of the Republican edifice," went to the extreme in his hate of the working classes as a whole when he declared that "bleached or unbleached it is a dangerous element in the body politic" and that everyone who dared to question the social institutions of the South should be punished "with death without benefit of the clergy." \* Under these circumstances it is no wonder that the press of that state used similar language, while an influential periodical like *The Telescope* in Columbia, S. C., was able to write: "Let us declare, through the public journals of our country, that the question of slavery is not and shall not be open to discussion; that the very moment any private individual attempts to lecture us upon its evils and immorality, in the same moment his tongue shall be cut out and cast upon the dunghill."

The state of Georgia went so far as to offer a reward of \$5000 to anyone who would deliver Garrison, the intrepid enemy of slavery, to its jurisdiction. Senator Preston of South Carolina declared in the Legislative Assembly, "Let an Abolitionist come within the borders of South Carolina, if we can catch him, we will try him and notwithstanding all the interference of all the governments on earth, including the Federal Government, we will hang him"—The number of those who fell victims to this threatened lynch law is uncertain but it must have been considerable. Garrison himself in 1856 estimated in the *Liberator* that it reached a total of over three hundred for the preceding twenty years. Although he failed to advance any proof for

\* O. Johnson: *Garrison and His Times*.

his claim, this number probably comes fairly close to the truth.

Taking all this into consideration it is easy to understand much better Lincoln's hesitant attitude at the outbreak of the Civil War which brought upon him such severe attacks from the Abolitionists. The abolition of Negro slavery was certainly not a popular cause. It was only later, when the war progressed, that it began to fire the public imagination. But a new calamity befell the country. The constitutional and legal rights and freedom of citizens were violated by the leaders of both armies to a greater degree than ever before. The confederates, whose strongest argument was the defense of the rights of the states against the Federal Government, got to the point of proposing to General Lee a military dictatorship so brutally opposed to the very principle of the rights of individual states. This was not carried out because it was by then probably too late. On the other hand, Lincoln had to endure calmly the outrageous transgressions of his generals because he was unable to stop them. War is certainly the last method of protecting and securing any measure of constitutional rights, especially when it is a long war which tends to demoralize and brutalize the masses. This was best shown when, after the Civil War, the South was deprived of its rights, upsetting its social equilibrium for a long period.

The development of capitalism and the influence of the great industrial monopolies affected both home and foreign policies and favored in many ways the anti-liberal elements within the country. That is the reason why conflicts between capital and labor which inevitably followed assumed a violence which was even rarely met with in Europe. A considerable number of frame-up trials which attracted attention far beyond the borders of the United States were a consequence of these anti-liberal tendencies. The Haymarket



trial in Chicago (1886-87), later declared by Governor John P. Altgelt to be a public miscarriage of justice, is one such example. These tendencies found also in the laws of the nation and of the individual states many an expression hostile to every principle of American liberalism. The already mentioned *Alien and Sedition Laws* and the so-called laws against Criminal Anarchism are but two among many other typical examples.

Jefferson had foreseen this development with an astonishing clarity of vision and he devoted all his energies toward establishing the rights of the people in the Constitution so that the latter could protect in the future all liberty loving men in the fight against reaction. These were prophetic words which he wrote in 1781:

"It can never be too often repeated that the time for fixing every essential right on a legal basis is while our rules are honest, and ourselves united. From the conclusion of this war we shall be going down hill. It will not then be necessary to resort every moment to the people for support. They will be forgotten, therefore, and their rights disregarded. They will forget themselves, but in the sole faculty of making money, and will never think of uniting to effect a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war, will remain on us long, will be made heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive or expire in a convulsion."

When examining the spiritual and social development of America in its proper light, this other side of the picture should never be forgotten. He who neglects this sees only a fancy which has no resemblance to the realities of life. It is only by gauging at its true value the lingering danger of reactionary tendencies in this country and by properly estimating their significance that the traditions of American liberalism will be properly understood.

History seems to have once more confronted the world with the choice between a relapse into the medieval bog of absolutism and a revival of the spirit of freedom by building a new foundation for a better future. This holds true not only for Europe but also for America, not only for one people alone, but for all peoples. The choice we will make will determine our immediate future: Will the wheel of history turn backwards or forwards?



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