Herding or Growth?

The minds of many persons who are both bright and powerful have failed to grasp the great underlying principle of growth, or development, and confound it with herding, or worse yet, with regimentation. I say nothing about regimentation, the plan of the State Socialists, as it belongs in the category of political action—of compulsion.

Let us look for a minute at the propositions of those who propose to herd together, calling it a colony, or association, thinking thereby to solve the questions that so vex and perplex all thinking persons at the present time. They propose to "round up" a lot of persons of varying opinions, habits, desires and occupations in a certain place, and by all of these persons working together form a new society, "based on justice and equity" as they put it, and thus show the world a better way to live. Their intentions are as good as need be, and they lack not for energy. Their plans cannot fulfill their dreams, however, and no matter how much they may strive, they cannot succeed as they expect. The reason is simple; it is this: They are attempting to work in an artificial manner. I am free to admit that most that we do is artificial, but growth is a natural process, and cannot be made, but must be allowed.

In order to make clear why the herding process, that of gathering people together promiscuously, is inadequate as a method of beginning the work of reconstruction, it is only necessary to point out the "law" of growth. This work and study of scientists for ages has shown that all growth is due to accretion. An atom exists. Another atom is attracted to it and they become a body. Other atoms are attracted to this body and it grows in size. Thus the work of accretion goes on as long as the vitality necessary to attract other atoms remains in the body. Little by little the growth proceeds from the simple to the complex; from one atom to many; from a single function to numerous ones.

Natural process never "rounds up" a lot of stones, nor tries to herd a lot of incongruent atoms together.

The human race is subject to the same natural processes, and each individual is, in a sense, an atom, and will unite with other individuals when attracted by them, but will fail to unite when they are incongruent. That is why the herding plan—like the Topolobampo and other Colony schemes—will not work. On the other hand where a nucleus is formed, even though it be of but a few individuals, if it contains vitality enough—to attract other individuals it will grow.

With these facts in view it is plain to be seen that in the process of reconstruction it is a waste of energy to try to herd, but directly in line with natural processes to form nuclei, here and there, and let the natural accretion of individuals who are in sympathy with the ideal of such nuclei be the process of growth. The singleness of the individuals composing the group, and their ownness of purpose will insure harmony, and, little by little, the ideal held will become known to others, and as fast as others learn to desire the realization of this ideal they will seek to attach themselves to an existing group, or to unite with a few others and form a new nucleus.

To make a practical application let us point out that colony schemes that propose the indiscriminate gathering of persons into colonies or associations, holding out inducements and charging admission fees, are not in line with natural growth. On the other hand it shows that small voluntary groups, drawn together by a common purpose, holding out no inducement but a realization of the ideal that prompted their union, and charging no admission fee, are directly in the line of growth, and as they grow they will develop from the simple to the complex, not only in numbers but also in occupation.

As their numbers increase the possibility of diversifying their occupations will become apparent, and one industry after another will develop in their midst. This gives rise to the hope of beginning the readjustment of society even now, in the present life system, for, while complete reconstruction cannot take place until the barriers raised by law and custom have been broken down, yet groups living very much nearer the ideal of Anarchists than its members now live can grow up, here and there, and do much to prepare the public mind for the general reconstruction. Not only that, for as the groups grow up they can open up communication with each other, and the toilers in the city can supply the workers in the country with clothes, shoes, gloves and other things as can best be produced in the city. In return the country comrades can supply the groups in the city with butter, eggs, milk, fruit, vegetables, sugar and such things as city people must get from the country folks. These exchanges can be carried on without the use of money, and thus the idea of association without money will grow.

By working in this way a network of work groups can eventually spread all over the country, all in touch with each other, offering ready assistance to all comrades who may meet with calamities, or come in distress; showing to the mentally lazy, by example, what can be done voluntarily and without rules, laws, or compulsion of any form. It would also tend to stimulate fellowship, that sensation which inclines the will toward generosity and forbearance; toward general good-will and kindness for all others.

In localities where transportation is a serious question the comrades can establish a system of transportation-between groups, that will best answer their purpose under the circumstances. If there is navigable water a boat can be built. But all these things will suggest themselves as the number of groups multiply and their sizes increase by accretion.

Many of the comrades have bemoaned their life in the present dog eat dog life of bourgeois society, and enquired concerning colonies. I hope they will not try to herd, but will co-operate along the line of least resistance, by congenial persons, no matter how few, forming nuclei, and these nuclei growing by the natural and permanent process of accretion—the attraction of congenial individuals.

HENRY ADDIS.

A Few Words To The Workers.

FRIEND, have you ever thought of the curious fact that those who tell the hardest and produce the most necessary articles for human needs, are the poorest, and most degraded, whilst those who do no manner of work whatever are rich, cultured and enjoy all the blessings of life?

Just think a little what this means. Can you find any other creature but man who would allow such a condition of things to continue? Do you think, for instance, that the birds, having by their labor collected a quantity of food, would allow a few of their number to store it up in heaps, and give them in return for their labor, a few grains whilst they appropriated the great bulk to themselves? Yet this is what we, who are supposed to be endowed with such superior intelligence, allow to continue in spite of its evident absurdity.

Do we not find that those who produce all the food for the community have the least food in return for their labor; those who weave the silk and wooden garments are clothed in rags; the builders of the magnificent palaces and mansions sleep in the bowels of the slums: Why is this great injustice? If the workers produce such quantities of food, and therefore the beautiful garments and buildings: why do they not enjoy the product of their labor? Because, under the present system of society, a few individuals have monopolized all the land and machinery of production, and the millions of workers are nothing more than wage-slaves, selling their labor for what will barely keep them alive, and allowing these few individuals to reap the rich harvest of their toil. These millions of disinterested workers, from whom the rich have taken the earth (our common mother), cannot take a step to the right or left, cannot eat or sleep, cannot, in one word, give free play to their organs, cannot satisfy their needs and live without permission of other men. Their life is always precarious, at the mercy of the caprice of those who call themselves their masters. Wherever they go they are trespassers. "You must not go into that woodlot, it is so-and-so's." "Don't go into this wood, it belongs to this one." "Don't pick this fruit, don't catch those fish, they belong to that one." And if they ask: "Why then, what have we got?" They will be answered: "Nothing! You have nothing," and whilst quite young their brains have been so fashioned by religion and law that they will accept without murmuring this outrageous injustice.

No man made the land, it is the product of nature, and therefore the birthright of every creature born: it cannot be bought or sold, because no individual has
a right to dispose of it, nor has anyone a right to monopolise it. How can there so-called landowners have bought or inherited from their fathers these immense tracts of land? The first step in the process of creating by geographical revolutions, because at that time there was no human being on the earth, nevertheless it belongs to them, for all, from the depths of the earth and the bottom of the sea to the top of the highest mountains—all belongs to them. But if the disturbed should ask: "What shall we do to live if we have a right to nothing?" they are told: "Concede your lands to labor, and live by the sweat of your brow. The earth will be yours, as long as you till it and honor it."

The Family a Bar to Liberty.

Quoicks frequently while discussing the subject of economics, the questions were raised: Why does a man do so and so, or why are the people bent upon making life as miserable as possible? Why does a man work and work until he dies? Why is the average worker particular not to lose a days work? The answer to all these similar questions was inevitable: "To provide for wife and children." This is an excuse used by everybody no matter what his occupation. The banker, the lawyer, the minister, the merchant, the clerk, the worker, the millionaire, the thief, the burglar, the highway robber and the politician are using the same excuse. Each and every one is using the other for the same purpose as a means to an end, not to provide for the family. Rothchild and Rockefeller are skinning other people's industries for no other reason than to provide for their respective secretes and purposes.

And here, I think, is the kernel of the nut! Every family constitutes a legal conspiracy to subject, dominate, exploit, and exterminate every other family according to the rules of the family-commune, each family is a commune by maintaining the sacredness of the family, thereby precluding any movement for the freedom of the sexual as a whole.

Petroleum V. Nasby once wrote: "An empty barrel looks just as full as a full one, and may serve for a full one if you keep far enough away from the bung. The world is full of empty barrels. Yes, and the emptier barrels give the most profound sound when struck with a stick; these are the politicians; and some people mistake the sound for wisdom, but life is too short and their skulls too thick for them to learn anything better.

Some months ago, in a conversation with a liberal Pozner, the latter called his attention to the fact that while direct legislation would be better than the present plan of legislation it would still be based upon the principle that "might makes right." He says it means that "right makes right." But I couldn't see it that way. I asked him if the majority is not almost invariably the wrong. He admitted this fact, but seemed to think the majority right. When Pozner said that the whole the rights they could appreciate as a whole.

I asked him what good that did a more intelligent majority to be in power, but he failed to reply to it. He says that we must not expect too perfect a society; that we must content to stay with the majority. And Pozner is an exceptionally intelligent politician; he has no idea of the meaning of freedom; or of justice.

The Chicago Journal, in an article on postal savings banks, says: "The people would have a large stake in the government. Anarchists would find it hard work to incite people to attack a bank in which their savings were.

All true enough, but the journal is ambiguous; this is what it meant to say: "The depositors would be in a powerful position; they would have a hard time to induce the footpad to give up their ransacks." That is much plainer and would be better for the papers, but the State Socialist element prefers to deal in fine words; they are more beguiling.
Note and Comment.

In last weeks issues P. H., speaking of justice, says: "If we are a community of just people we do not need any government." The fact is we do need so much "just people" as disinterested people and proper considerations. The government is simply the best and most justice-loving people are liable and are often compelled—as a matter of self-preservation—to be unjust because the conscience is not essential to them, but an animal has to associate with any man in a condition of social and economic freedom, as the incentive and opportunity to take advantage of my honesty and to control my action would be wanting. 1.

Souls of the English speaking comrade in New York have started the New York Debating Club. At present evening's meeting their program was the calling of their addresses, and the result was a great success, and the club is in the most prosperous condition.

Clippings and Comments.

We still survive, but if some persons should have the attack made on them that was recently made on us in the local "reformer" papers in Frederick, we shall have a chance to go. We do not believe in playing a game of life with the prophecies of the newspapers.

The Theatrical Journal.

Anton Niedermeier, Trenton, N. J.—Friends and Comrades, there are many, many many 'papers' in the United States, but there are but few very few of which is any value to the working classes and which deserve to be read. The New York Journal of Commerce is one of these few, and I want to recommend it to you. The journal is published every week, and it is the most valuable paper I know. It is the best paper I have ever read, and I would recommend it to you if you are interested in politics.

The Propaganda Fund.

A. McDonald, S.I.O. N. Nicks for P.O. box rent, S.I.O. Bogg, Hornell, etc., each $2.00.

We have now raised $100, and we are only $50 short of our goal of $150. We shall continue to solicit donations until we reach our goal. Thank you for your support.

Woolen Back's Relief Fund.

Previously acknowledged

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A Chicago Movement.

For we who have dispensed with the prophecies of political infatuation of propaganda there often arises the question, can the masses be reached by us at all and how? A bit of propaganda of realistic tone will elicit some light on this question.

Upon the arrival in this city of comrades N. M. Kelly several of us discussed the situation here and with a calm and indifferency with which these last day flowers of governmentalism have been received by the radicals of this city, it appears that the more positive news reached us from Philadelphia of a propaganda taken up on the same matter by the comrades there, who succeeded in publishing quite a decent pamphlet explaining and pointing out the most salient points in the tragedies enacted in Spain.

We conferred with several of the educational societies here and as a result a new body, The Humanitarian League, has been formed. It will take over the work of our comrades and meet with a ready response from those who have still something of the human about them. A plan of work has been agreed upon and having constituted ourselves into a bunch of crusaders we began to visit the trades unions and other reform bodies in the city, inviting them to join us in our fight against the fare-paying the police of political prisoners by the Spanish government. The field we met on was a broad one; that of the conduct of the practice of torture of man by man.

For over two weeks, night after night, we called upon the organizations and had in that way reached about fifty of them, including the central bodies of Chicago, receiving a hearty welcome, as well as a moral and practical financial support. In a moment of our meeting which took place on Monday, June 15, in Skandia Hall, all the trades unions participating in it.

We also distributed pamphlets of some of the newspapers. We have also succeeded in distributing 3,000 pamphlets of those published in Philadelphia. All the work at the present moment is the making up and purchase of pamphlets, etc. have been fully covered and a small surplus is left which will be used for further propaganda.

I feel it incumbent upon me before closing this correspondence to point out an evil which makes itself felt, and which threatens to alter the aspect of our proceedings along that line. It appears that a good deal of hard work are the necessary components. And these we may expect from half-wilful intelligent and right-minded people.

The FIREBRAND