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J. A. Maryson
The Principles of Anarchism
1935

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J. A. Maryson

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tions of a real revolutionary party, functions which must go hand in hand with a widely disseminated propaganda for personal, individual freedom in all the relationships of life.

Anarchism is the philosophy and ideal of individual liberty in human society. But true individual liberty is not possible without economic independence, and, therefore, the theory and philosophy of anarchism embrace the ideal of the economic independence of every individual. The conception of individual liberty excludes all social domination and all state coercion; the conception of economic independence precludes every form of exploitation and all special privileges.

Anarchism differs from the accepted basic principles of socialist in that socialism makes society the provider for individuals; society through its managers (more correctly bureaucrats!) will provide the individuals with all the necessities of life. Anarchism on the other hand strives towards that social life in which each individual, alone or in cooperation with others, shall be enabled to provide for himself whatever he deems necessary.

Who ever undertakes to provide for another must assume the right to order him what he must do and how it must be done. A society which carries on its production thought managers must necessarily wield its authority to dictate to every one as to where, how and under what conditions he must do his work for the benefit of society. In practical life such an arrangement of affairs borders very closely on slavery, and there is no scarcity, indeed, of facts and instances, whether in ancient or in the most recent types of State Communism, to prove that such is the outcome. Anarchism renounces such a social arrangement in the name of personal liberty. Anarchism does not conceive of liberty as does the Marxist Kautsky, when he claims that "all that socialism has to offer to the human being is freedom from starvation." Anarchism demands freedom not only from starvation but also from domination and force, from subjection to the will of another, even if that other be the majority or the entire social group.

What is Individual Liberty?

A great many of the conflicts that arise among the members of a social group over what one may or may not de in his relations with others, are the result of economic inequalities which grant numerous privileges to those who have, and serve to rob those who have not of their inalienable rights. Under a system of economic independence the problem of personal liberty is of less significance, but is not entirely done away with, particularly in the political relations between the individual and the community.

The expression "individual liberty" is frequently misused. The bourgeois elements in society defend the very slavery of our time as well as the right of the wealthy to exploit the poor, in the name of "rugged individualism." They make use of the body that anarchism means unbridled freedom, confusion and chaos, which will work havoc in any society or social life. At the same time the anarchists, too, lack unity and common ground in their definitions of liberty. The so-called philosophical or individual anarchists are thoroughly satisfied with the Spencerian formula of "equal freedom," which simply means that everyone is free to do as he sees fit, provided he does not disturb or infringe upon the "equal freedom" of his fellow beings. On the other hand, certain anarchist-communists are not satisfied even with the liberty to do as one sees fit, as long as the individual is not given the liberty to enjoy everything he might desire, regardless of how little he himself may have contributed to the creation of the things he desires.

Both of these views fail to grasp the real essence of the anarchist conception of individual or personal liberty. Equal freedom is the slogan of democracy, which has done away with the tyranny of autocrats and with their oppression of the masses for the benefit of privileged individuals or groups. This principle is indubitably a progressive and a just one, if it is applied to the relationships of human beings who enjoy economic equality. In a society, however, which rests on the exploitation of the economically helpless, "freedom of

for a speedy realization of this ideal. Proudhon looks to the peaceful revolution and hopes that it will be the good fortune of France to avoid a bloody struggle. He would, nevertheless, certainly refrain from advocating a cessation of the people's uprising against the power of the capitalist rulers, even if that uprising should be anything but peaceful.

Kropotkin, on the other hand, is far from being an advocate of bloodshed, and would do everything in this power to avoid a bloody struggle. But since it is his belief that ultimately it will come to that, he would like to see it come sooner and would therefore provoke frequent uprisings as a prelude to the eventual great revolutionary drama which will once and for all bring an end to the incessant bloodshed of the downtrodden and the robbed in our present order of society.

It seems likewise that on the point of propaganda the two schools of anarchism could unite on the same rational tactics. All anarchists acknowledge the fact that a social revolution for the anarchist ideal cannot nowadays be brought about with one stroke. Even Kropotkin, the advocate of revolution, state that all revolutions had their starting point among the masses, not in small conspirative circles, and that they all had their periods of development. Even if it should be conceded that a revolutionary outbreak can sometimes come unexpectedly; it is far from certain that the spirit of the masses is sufficiently developed for a free human society on an anarchist foundation. It must, therefore, be clear also to the adherents of the Kropotkin revolutionary school that the propaganda of the anarchist movement must embrace all that is practical and useful in the proposed peaceful activities of Proudhon and his followers, the mutualists.

The agitation and propaganda against state created monopolies and for a free credit, the encouragement of cooperative enterprise in the field of production; the introduction of all possible economic improvements through self-initiation and effort, seeking no assistance from the state; there are the necessary and desirable func-

show preference for a different type of economic arrangement; and since Proudhon as an anarchist cannot interfere with any group or community which desires to arrange its life on the principles of communism, the question of communism or non-communism must not be regarded as a conflict of principles. It must be left to the voluntary choice of every individual who will decide for himself which group to join, or even satisfy himself with the results of his won labor, by working for himself.

The fact that both of these anarchist teachers contend that contracts must be observed, and that no one can claim a prerogative to tell his neighbor into what contracts to enter or not to enter, make it readily conceivable that there will be, in the future, communist as well as individualist contracts. Since all contracts must be observed and carried out, there will be no question of only one system of economic arrangements. With reference to property the two schools differ. According to Kropotkin the community is the owner of all property in its possession and it aims to provide therewith all its members who do useful work. According to Proudhon the community property belongs to no one, but—which is actually the same thing—to all the members alike, so that anybody in the community may make use of a share of that property for the work he has in hand.

The difference then is clear and definite, and it may be stated that the Proudhonian view is nearer to anarchism. The distinction, however, is a theoretical one, for the results are practically the same; everybody receives his means of production, whether he works by himself or with others; if he works in a group the products are divided according to a previous agreement, with or without bookkeeping.

As to the tactics of the anarchist movement, the means and methods for its propaganda, these are in no sense a question of principle. In these the anarchist movement must absolutely depend upon the circumstances of the political and social life; tactics must be carefully considered from the standpoint of what is more helpful

action" is an empty phrase, whereas the "provided" that goes with it fills thousands of volumes of restrictive laws.

On the other hand, in the conception of liberty there can be no room for the condition of unlimited enjoyment. Freedom in the economic sense can assure everyone the possibility to secure all the enjoyments of life, but no principle of liberty justifies any full grown individual, under normal circumstances, to *take* if he refuses to *give*. To enjoy the product of another's toil, without his consent, is unquestionably an infringement on the other's liberty. And even if it were true that society owes every individual an enjoyable life, then, by the same logic, it would be undeniable that, in order to enable society to provide the individual with all the good and necessary things in life, the individual, in turn, would have to bear an adequate share of the responsibility in the production and creation of all the good things, which, after all, do not fall down like manna from heaven. Further, the individual would have to carry out the orders and directions given by the great provider—society.

The anarchist conception of individual liberty goes much further, and is more profound, than the conception of equal freedom, even in a socialist society in which every individual is assured a livelihood. In the interrelations of individuals, equal freedom is a just and important principle. No true social life is possible if anyone may take the liberty to do things that can harm his neighbor. But in the relations of the individual in society, in the decisions made by society through majority votes, equal freedom can be no protection for the individual who is displeased with the decisions of the majority. At this point there enters the anarchist principle of individual liberty—the right *not* to do what does not meet with one's favor, not to submit to the decision of the majority, and, without interfering with others, to reserve the right to withhold his cooperation.

The conception of individual freedom is, in its essence, a negative one: freedom *from*, not freedom *to;* freedom from another's coercion, from restraint by another's will; not freedom to do as

one pleases, in relation to others, not freedom to take whatever is in one's power, as Stirner maintained. For freedom precludes aggression, coercion and restraint.

It must also be understood that not every behavior of practice, which certain anarchists link with the conception of freedom, has essentially anything to do with anarchist principles. A practice like free love, in the vulgar sense; the liberty of satisfying all sorts of lust; the liberty of blasphemous heresy, or even the precept of extreme freedom in the education of children, may, under certain circumstances, be admitted into the scheme of a free life. But they are, by and large, not principles of anarchism; non-anarchists, too, might be inclined to such "liberties." And, conversely, not every anarchist must necessarily sanction promiscuous sexual relations, be lustful, deny divine power, or agree to the ultra-radical methods of education.

The fundamental characteristic of the anarchist philosophy is freedom of the individual from the binding decisions of the many, which freedom all socialist plans for social reconstruction refute and vigorously oppose. Anarchism stands for freedom from majority rule, not indeed for active obstruction, for impeding the execution of the plan of the majority with which one happens to disagree. This does not imply that anarchism in principle stands for the rejection of everything proposed or introduced by the majority for the welfare of all. Anarchism rejects merely the element of coercion that accompanies the effort. When an individual, at first an opponent, determines, by his own free will, because of a social motive, to stop opposing and to cooperate with the majority, he does not renounce thereby his freedom, since he was not forced to modify his opinion.

The anarchist ideal is, therefore, a society based upon voluntary cooperation without any coercion or regimentation on the part of centralized governmental or managerial bureaus—a cooperation condition by the complete and equal opportunity for *all* to secure economic freedom according to *one's* ability and efforts. The

lacking in fighters. It had taken measures for the separation of the church from the state, but regretfully overlooked the need, till it because too late, of finding ways and means to provide bread for the starving populace."

Kropotkin cautions us: "Let others busy themselves with proclaiming high-sounding issues. Our duty must be, from the first day of the revolution to the last, to see to it that no one of those who are in the battle for freedom shall go hungry. We have the temerity to insist that everybody is entitled to bread, that there is enough bread for all, and that with the slogan of 'bread for all' the revolution will triumph."

to those wise words for the future, the following may be added for the present: Let others be preoccupied with shouting "revolution"; our duty must be to develop the spirit of the masses in the direction of anarchist freedom and economic independence, so that the anarchist revolution may be made possible.

A Synthesis of Both Anarchist Schools

There should be no difficulty at this pint in arriving at a synthesis of the two schools of anarchist thought. As an ideal of social reconstruction, anarchism is based upon the cardinal principle of individual freedom, conditions by equality of economic opportunity. This is the very essence of the anarchism of both Proudhon and Kropotkin.

As a study of social organization, anarchism must present a plan for the production and distribution of all the necessities of life, physical as well as mental, on the basis of freedom.

The Kropotkin school contends that anarchism leads to communism; the Proudhonian school maintains that anarchism takes us further away from communism. But since Kropotkin as an anarchist cannot defend the exclusive establishment of one type of economic system for all groups and communities, even for those who

The anarchist movement must popularize the idea of all possible cooperative ventures, in order mainly to develop the spirit of self-activity among the people and their independence of the capitalist profiteers. The anarchist movement must endeavor to gain the sympathy of the masses, putting forth practical, timely demands which will directly help to abolish starvation and want. With the abstract and general condemnations of the existing order, with the general panacea of revolution which will solve all problems, "the collective spirit of the masses" cannot be developed. "To assert," declares Kropotkin, "that our mission is merely to destroy and it will remain for others to build, is no more than a bad jest."

Most assuredly, the anarchist movement, no less than any other social movement, cannot and must not give up hope of seeing the ultimate victory of its ideals and aspirations. And it is certainly not asking too much that it should do some serious thinking over the role which anarchists will have to assume in the social revolution when it will finally come. Kropotkin has expressed, regarding this point, some very important and practical thoughts. Having made a study of the causes of the failures in the three great mass movements in France—the Republic of 1793, the workers' revolution in 1848, and the commune uprising in 1871—he came upon one characteristic blunder of which they were all guilty. "The leaders of the Great Revolution," declares Kropotkin, "had discussed all shades of political questions, but they had forgotten to discuss the bread-question. Marvelous ideas were enunciated in those days; words and sentiments were expressed in the course of a century or more that do even now stir our emotions and spirit. But human beings starved to death in the quarters of the poor. The people's patience gave out, reaction raised its head, the revolution lay prostrate, dead, and white terror raised its head.

"In 1848 the workers in Paris had served the revolution with three months of starvation, and when they were unable to hold out any longer they made a final desperate effort which was drowned in blood. In 1871 the Paris Commune capitulated because it was

ideal is the basic principle of the two schools of anarchist thought, notwithstanding their apparently divergent view concerning the economic structure of society, or the methods of bringing about the great change.

The Two Main Schools of Anarchist Thought

We often hear the reproach that anarchism is lacking in clarity and definiteness; that every group of anarchist in every land has its own "anarchism." And even that unbiased student of anarchist doctrines, Dr. Paul Eltzbacher, enumerates no fewer than seven fathers of anarchism who disagree with one another on important points. This reproach is wholly without foundation. Different interpretations of cardinal principles or differences of opinion as to tactics are common occurrences in all socialist movement, and even Marxism has it various interpreters. As to the "seven fathers" whom Eltzbacher discovered, there are actually only two or three—Proudhon, and Bakunin-Kropotkin. If the negation of tyranny and state rule, if the preaching, in general, of fairness and justice in human relations can be called anarchism, then the ethical moralist, William Godwin, and the Christian moralist, Tolstoy, were anarchist teachers, too. But they were not the founders of any new and distinct schools of anarchist thought. Further, Stirner ridiculed all ideals and sacred principles, and anticipated the advent of Nietzsche's superman, who cannot possibly fit into an anarchist society. Tucker, it may be noted, in dealing with certain aspects of liberty and justice, has reduced the teachings of Proudhon and Stirner to an absurdity, and has created no school of his own. The "seven," therefore, are actually reduced to Proudhon, the founder of anarchism, and Kropotkin, who is hardly separable fro Bakunin, whose teaching have lately dominated the greater part of the anarchist movement.

The object of this study is to acquaint the reader with the salient features of anarchist teachings as they are found in the works of these two men, paying especial attention to their views on the state, law, property, voluntary contracts, and the ways and means of attaining the anarchist ideal.

Since the Proudhonian school of anarchism is the older and, today, less well-known, we shall first turn our attention to that school, making special mention of an offshoot known as mutualism. the Kropotkin school of anarchism will then be considered, after which there will follow observations on the theoretical and practical differences between the two.

The Proudhonian School

Pierre Joseph Proudhon, the distinguished French thinker and political economist (b. 1809, d. 1865), called his teaching anarchism, in his first work, "What Is Property?", published in 1840. Among the other great works in which he developed his anarchist theories and principles is, of especial importance, "The General Idea of the Revolution in the 19th Century," which he published in 1851, from which passages will frequently be quoted here.

Proudhon's anarchism is throughout consistent in its antigovernmental character and its emphasis upon personal freedom in all political and economic relations. He denies in principle every type of political authority which, in practice, proves to be a domineering government. He rejects the proposals of the revolutionaries of his time for "direct legislation," "direct government," or for "simplified government," and maintains that the revolutionary formula must be none other than *no government whatsoever*. He states: "Direct or indirect, single or complex government—to govern and to rule over the people always means to defraud the people; it always means that one human being commands another, and this is the end of liberty."

for the attainment of anarchist freedom are, as far as the near future is concerned, very doubtful indeed.

Under favorable circumstances, when a government on its last legs loses all its prestige with the people, and a revolutionary party succeeds in gaining the support of a great part of the military element, as was the case in Russia in 1917, it actually becomes possible to effect important revolutionary changes. But even then only those changes could be brought about for which the masses were prepared and only when they fully understood what they wanted. The abolition of the Tzarist autocracy and the confiscation of the land of the nobility were accomplished almost without bloodshed. It was the Bolshevist revolution, attempting to abolish all private property and to force state communism upon the people, changes for which the people were not in the least prepared, cause the shedding of rivers of blood, millions of lives to be snuffed out, and brought starvation and slavery for all the people.

No popular uprising, unless it has the direct assistance of a great portion of the army, has nowadays any chance for actual success. If a powerful minority should at a favorable moment succeed in overpowering the ruling class in a bloody struggle, it is quite certain that such a revolution would wind up in a dictatorship and a new tyranny.

The great ideal of anarchism is in no sense closely bound up with the propaganda of a bloody revolution. The hope for the realization of anarchist freedom and economic well-being is rooted rather in the active, consistent work for social evolution, for the spiritual development of the masses, aiding them in their daily struggles and working with them in the direction of greater freedom and equity in our social life. Ever fully conscious of the ultimate goal—the greatest political and economic freedom possible—the anarchist movement must incessantly carry on a widespread agitation for the abolition of definite, injurious laws, which help to perpetuate the privileges and monopolies of the captains of industry and make possible the exploitation of the toiling masses.

shadowed the end: the revolutionary propaganda overbalanced the clarification of the anarchist teachings. It reached a point where an outstanding anarchist (Tcherkessoff) quite boldly declared: "Revolution plus communism is anarchism." What intense repulsion this formula must have given him when he lived to see how remote from anarchism, revolution and communism turned out to be in Russia!

The Russian Bolsheviki had adopted his formula with but a "minor" change. They substituted Marxism for Anarchism and proved the logic of their equation by their deeds. The anarchist movement, whose main aim was the revolution, has of late yielded its basic stand, to a considerable extent, to the Bolsheviki. A number of anarchist joined their ranks directly, others still sympathize with their revolution, while great multitude of workers, disillusioned or despondent, fall in line with fascists. It is, of course, not the agitation for the need of a revolutionary change in human society that has weakened the anarchist movement, but the exclusive sanctifying of the proletarian uprising as the only method whereby freedom and justice can be ushered in.

"All revolutions," asserts Kropotkin, "had their start in the ranks of the people and they all have had their periods of development." He adds: "The task of reorganizing society on quite a new basis can be achieved only through the collective spirit of the masses." In other words, a real revolutionary party must work for the development of the masses, for the enlightenment of their collective spirit, in order that they may know what they are fighting for. Evolution is a slow process; the process comes when the process has been consummated. Revolutionary agitation is a poor substitute for the needed evolution, which alone can reorganize society on a new foundation. The latest political events have done much to shake the erstwhile faith in the speedy coming of the social revolution. Moreover, the struggle against the ruling classes has become immeasurably more difficult than it had been in the days of barricade fights in the streets, and the possible results of such combats

Law and the State

Proudhon analyses the history of the different forms of government and concludes that even the latest form, the democracy of modern times, is an impossibility and a folly. He says:

"The first form under which this principle is manifested is that of absolute power. This is the purest, the most rational, the most efficient, the most straightforward, and taken together, the least immoral and the least disagreeable form of government. But absolute power, in its simplest expression, is odious to reason and to liberty. The feeling of the people is always aroused against it: following feeling, revolt makes it protest heart. Then the principle of authority is forced to retire: it retires step by step, by a series of concession, each one more insufficient than the other, of which the last, pure democracy or direct government, ends in the impossible and the absurd.

"Humanity asks its masters: whence these pretensions of yours to reign over me and govern me? They answer: because society cannot dispense with order; because in a society it is necessary tat there should be some who obey and labor, while others give orders and directions; because individual faculties being unequal, interests opposite, passions antagonistic, the advantage of one opposed to the general advantaged, some authority is needed which shall assign the boundaries of rights and duties, some arbiter who will cut short conflicts, some public force which will put into execution the judgments of the sovereign. The power of the state is just this discretionary authority, the arbiter who renders to each what is his, this force which assures that the peace shall be respected. Government, in a word, is the principle and guaranty of social order.

"This explanation has been repeated since the origin of societies. It is the same at all epochs and in the mouth of all powers. There is no difference among them except in the proportion of the concessions to liberty that they propose to make—illusory concessions

which add to the forms of government called moderate, constitutional, democratic, etc., a flavoring of hypocrisy.

"Thus government, in its unmodified nature, presents itself as the absolute, necessary, sine qua non condition of order, as if the two were in the relation of cause and effect: the cause is government, the effect is order. but this reasoning is false and the conclusion is inadmissible. There are many ways of conceiving order; but who has proved to us that order in a society is what its masters choose to all it? Liberty is the mother, not the daughter of order.

"On the one had is alleged the natural inequality of faculties which leads to an inequality of conditions, and, on the other, the impossibility of uniting the divergence of interests and to bring about a harmony of opinions. But in this antagonism there is, at most, a problem to be solved, it should not be a pretext for tyranny. Yes, gentlemen, that is precisely what is meant by the social question; and you think to solve it with a club and bayonet! Who authorizes you to think that the problem of opposition of interests and inequality of faculties cannot be solved, that in order to maintain these inequalities force is necessary and legitimate? I affirm on the contrary, and all they whom the world calls utopians, because they oppose your tyrannies, agree with me that the solution can be found. Some believe that they have found it in the community; others in association, yet others in the industrial series. For my part, I say that it is found in the *organization of the economic forces* under the supreme law of *free contract.*

"It is possible to find a form of transaction which, in drawing together the divergence of interests, in effacing the inequality of nature by that of education, solves all economic and political contradictions; under which each individual will be both producer and consumer; under which his liberty steadily increases with no need of giving up any part of it; under which his material prosperity grows indefinitely without sustaining any loss, through the act of either society or of his fellow citizens, either in his property or his

do whatever work he chooses, and merely a few hours a day, until a certain age.

For the great majority of socialistically minded people, this type of system of society sounds like the supreme ideal in life. In reality, however, it is but a forced contract, because under the circumstances there is no alternative. On the other hand, when all property and possessions of the commune are not owned exclusively by it, but are free for the sue of all, individually or collectively, there is a possibility for all sorts of contracts among free individuals, and everyone has the choice of entering into those contracts which seem best to him.

Some will possibly regard this distinction as petty hair-splitting, since, as compared with the misery and wretchedness of our time, the principles of libertarian socialism are so grand and lofty that nothing better should be expected. It will, however, be worth while to take cognizance of the other anarchist viewpoint.

How to Realize the Ideal

The anarchist movement of the Kropotkin school had from its inception promulgated revolution as the only means of ushering in the anarchist society. In the belief that the present capitalistic order, which is based on injustice and causes so much suffering and misery, cannot endure much longer, the hope, if not the assurance, had grown that the revolution is already knocking at the door, therefore our aim should be to hasten its coming and to make it as effective as possible. All reforms and palliatives, with the exception of workers' strikes for momentary amelioration, were regarded as wasted efforts. Complete annihilation of the present order of society; to make a *tabula rasa* of society, as Most was wont to advocate; to bring about the social revolution through "direct action" and continuous uprisings became the only tactics for building the new, anarchistic society. The means, however, nearly over-

schools, museums, etc., on condition that you give daily a certain number of hours, from the twentieth to the forty-fifth year of your life, to do whatever shall be deemed necessary to help maintain life." True to anarchist principles, he declares: "You can at any time select your group or groups which you wish to join, or you may organize a group of your own, provided it will assume the responsibility of creating necessary things. We require of you only a certain number of hours of work yearly in one of the groups which provide articles of food, clothing or dwellings, or which are productive in the realm of health and hygiene, transportation, etc., and for that we shall provide you with everything that the groups produce or had produced."

According to the Proudhonian system such a standpoint is not consistently anarchistic. If society is the owner of all property and all the means of production, the individual has no choice in the matter; he is compelled to agree to the terms of the social contract into which he enters. In order that a contract be actually voluntary, it must be mutual; but if one of the parties concerned is compelled to accept the contract, because he has no alternative, his liberty is indeed very doubtful.

Proudhon rejects social property and recognizes only property in the product of one's labor, and the contracts into which individuals enter with one another are mutually voluntary because both parties act on an equal basis.

Kropotkin's position on property appears to be more socialistic than anarchistic. The fundamental idea of socialism is that society will provide the individuals with whatever well-being possible. The basic ideal of anarchism is that each and every individual shall have the opportunity, either alone or with a group, to provide for himself all things necessary, in accordance with his taste and need. When all the necessities of life are social property, he must accept the contract which society proposed to him, at its terms—surely upright and equitable terms, even libertarian terms. He may

work, or in his relations of interest, of opinion, or of attachments among his comrades.

"However that may be, hearken ye mighty to the words of the producer, the proletarian, whom you wish to force to work for you like a slave, who says: 'I demand neither the goods, nor the money of anybody; but I do not at all intend to permit anyone to rob me of the fruit of my labor. I, also, want order, as much as they who are continually upsetting it by their alleged government. But I want it as the result of my free choice, as a condition of my labor, as a law of my reason. I will not submit to it coming from the will of another, and imposing sacrifice and servitude as preliminary conditions!"

Proudhon negates all state laws. "The state," says he, "must create laws because it finds such a multitude of opposing interests; and since the various interests and the relationships which are brought about thereby, are without number and the antagonisms are without end, law-making must per-force go on incessantly. Laws, decrees, ordinances, edicts, resolutions, will fall like hail upon the unfortunate people. It is said that there are by now at least fifty thousand laws—do you believe that the people or even the government itself can keep their reason in this labyrinth? Rousseau teaches clearly that the citizen, obeying the laws in a truly democratic, free government, obeys mere his own will. But the law has been made without my participation, despite my absolute disapproval, despite the injury which it inflicts upon me; and, in general, what do you mean by making laws for a human being who thinks for himself and who is responsible for his own actions—making laws for a man who wants to be free and who feels that he is deserving of that freedom? I am at all times ready to negotiate with my neighbors and comrades and even to make compromises, but I want no laws. I recognize none of them. I protest against every order which the powers that be, under the excuse of necessity, strive to force upon my free will. Laws! We know what they are and what they are worth! They are spider-webs for the rich and mighty, steel

chains, for the poor and weak, fishing nets in the hands of the government.

"You say that you will make but few laws, that you will make them *simple* and *good*. You talk of simplification; but if you can simplify in one point, you can simplify in all. Instead of a million laws, a single law will suffice, and what shall this law be? Don't do unto others what you would not have others do unto you; do unto others as you would have others do unto you. But it is clear that this is not a law of the State; it is the elementary principle of justice, the rule of all transactions. Legislative simplification then leads us to the idea of contract and consequently to the denial of authority. If there is no more than one law, if the law is the answer to all the contradictions of society, if everybody admits and accepts it, it is sufficient for all social contracts. If a contract can be carried out by two producers, it could just as easily be carried out by millions, because it always relates to similar obligations. The moment you make this declaration you declare the end of government."

The Free Contract

Proudhon demands, in the name of justice, that societary life be based on the legal criterion that agreements and contracts must be fulfilled and carried out. He does not subscribe to the subtle, abstract morality which maintains, as does Godwin, that no contract or promise must be binding on anyone, because, if what one promised to do is good, one will do it anyway, and, if it is not good, no contract can bind one to do it. according to Proudhon, no stateless society can exist if human being will not fulfill promises and carry out contracts and agreements into which they enter voluntarily.

Says Proudhon: "That I may remain free; that I may not have to submit to any law but my own, and that I may govern myself, the authority of the suffrage must be renounced: we must give up

Property

Private property, according to Kropotkin, is doomed. "It has developed like a parasite in the midst of the free institutions of our forefathers, in the strongest bond with the state. The political structure of society is ever the expression and at the same time the sanctification of its economic structure." Instead of private property there will be communal property.

Society, Kropotkin maintains, will be the possessor of all the social capital which it accumulates; this includes the means of consumption as well as of production. "Attempts have been made to draw a distinction between capital which serves production and capital which serves to satisfy the necessities of life. The contention was that the machinery, the factories, the raw materials, the means of transportation and the land will become the property of society as a whole; whereas, the dwellings, the finished products, clothing and food will remain private property. Such a distinction is an error and is impractical. The house that shelters, the nourishment which the body consumes, the raiment which covers the body and the book from which we study, even the pleasures of which we avail ourselves—all these things are essentially important for our existence, and are just as necessary for the successful productivity and for the continued development of human society, as are machines, factories, raw materials and all other factors of production."

Speaking in the abstract, it appears that Kropotkin, unlike Proudhon, believes in property, namely *social* property. In the practical sense, however, property which belongs to all does not belong to anyone in particular, and is in its essence a negation of property. Nevertheless we find quite a distinction between the two schools in regard to their conception of organized society. According to Kropotkin's system society, or the commune, is actually the master of all means of life; it possesses the power to say to every member: "We shall guarantee you the use and enjoyment of our dwellings, storage supplies, highways and streets, transportation,

things for the members. In the commune, everybody will, on his own accord, do whatever will be necessary, not waiting for orders from a centralized bureau. The communes themselves will form associations with others in the manner that the individuals formed themselves into a commune. In as much as our needs are multifarious, it will at once become clear that one association or alliance is not sufficient and the commune will find it necessary to enter into association with other alliances. For the purpose of creating its necessities of life the commune will be a member of one group; in order to procure other things of which it will have need, for instance metals, it will join another group, then a third, a fourth group, etc., which will deliver to the commune wares, fabrics, art works, etc.

"When one examines an economic atlas of any people or land it is at once evident that there are no economic boundaries. The regions of production and exchange of various wares and commodities are intermingled, ramified, and overlap one another. In a like manner will also be the ties and bonds of the different communes, if they will follow their natural development. They will at once intermingle with and branch into one another in that manner and give rise to a network more closely woven and of quite a different type of unity than that which we have under the present system of capitalist states."

For such group-alliances, through free contracts, the various law codes, per se, become superfluous, in as much as most laws pertain to private money-interests and to the obligations of the citizen to the state.

"The laws," declares Kropotkin, "made their first appearance as a sort of collection of custom-rights which served the perpetuation of society. Now, however, they are merely a tool for those who seek to perpetuate the system of exploitation and the domination of the working masses by the idle rich, and merely help to entrench a social order which is beneficial to the ruling minority. The laws as written down have no longer any cultural functions."

the vote, the representative system and every sort of governmental prerogative which rest on divine right, and rebuild the whole upon the human idea of *contract*.

"When I agree with one or more of my fellow citizens for any object whatever, it is cclear that my own will is my law; it is I myself, who in fulfilling my obligation, am my own government. It follows, then, that if I could make a contract with all as I can with some; if all could renew it among themselves; if each group of citizens, as a town, county, province, corporation, etc., formed by a like contract, could at all times by a similar contract agree with other groups, if would be the same as if my own will were multiplied to infinity. Thus the principle of contract, far more than the principle of authority, would bring about the union of the producers, centralize their forces, and assure the unity and solidarity of their interests.

"*The system of contracts*, substituted for the *system of laws*, would constitute the true government of the man and the citizen, the true sovereignty of the people, the *Republic*. For the contract is Liberty, the first term of the republican motto. I am no free when I depend on someone else for my work, my remuneration or for the extent of my rights and duties, whether than someone is the Majority or Society. And I am no more at all free when I am compelled to give myself a representative to govern me, even if he were my most devoted servant. The contract is *Equality* in its profound spiritual essence. The human being with whom I enter into a contract considers himself my equal; he does not put himself in the position of my overlord and exploiter, who demands from me more than it suits me to give him. The contract is *Fraternity* because it identifies all interests, unifies all divergences, resolves all contradictions, and consequently encourages the sentiments of goodwill and kindness which are crushed by economic chaos through representative governments and alien law. Finally, the contract is *order*, since it is the organization of economic forces

instead of the alienation of liberties, the sacrifice of rights, the subordination of wills."

Property

Proudhon maintains that property is theft and robbery and has no justification whatsoever in a free society. It is important, however, to understand in what sense he regards property as theft, because elsewhere he states clearly that he is by no means in favor of the abolition of property, and that "property in so far as its foundation and its meaning make up the human personality, will never be done away with. As a constant stimulus for work, as an antidote, without which work might become a tedious drudgery and die, it must ever be in the hearts of human beings." Property, which is not the result of one's effort and toil, for example, the exploitation of hired help, or the income from rent and interest—that property is theft. On the other hand, the fruit of one's own toil, the product which one creates, having invested in them his energy and ability, is, according to the principle of justice, a well earned and honest possession.

The land, with all the raw materials therein, belongs to no one as owner, but to all human beings as possessors and consumers. "Every human being, by the mere fact that he is alive and existing, has a right to possess a parcel of land which he could work and make use of, because without it he could not get along; and since the number of possessors varies in accordance with the growth of the population, no possession of land can remain constant and definite in size and can consequently never become a piece of property." The time honored possession of land, any claim on it, and even the labor that has been put into the land, implies no power of ownership over that land. "You maintain, says Proudhon, "that when the possessor of a parcel of land has through his toil doubled its value, that new value is his product, his creation, having robbed thereby

contracts will be carried out, says Kropotkin, is amply supported by the need which everyone feels for cooperation, assistance and sympathy, and in the fear of being excluded from the community. He adds that in an emergency this criterion, too, will be made secure through the intervention of the group.

Both reject the state as the embodiment of power and authority, as the upholder and protector of exploitation, as the source of all injustice, and as the staunchest enemy of all liberty. Kropotkin formulated a remarkable and profound definition of the state which distinguishes it from the nature of local government or administration of a free community. *The essence of the state is the concentration of numerous functions of human society in one central authority.* The harmfulness of the state, aside from the theft and depredation which it commits, lies in the fact that it destroys the free initiative of the group and the individual; this evil is inherent in the nature of even a socialist state. "The State," he writes, "grew up, comparatively not so long ago. It is a historical creation which has gradually, at a definite period, taken the place in the life of all peoples, of free associations. The church, the law, the military force and the wealth which was piled up through robbery and depredation have in the course of centuries formed a bond, have through the gradual working process piled stone upon stone, adding one aggression unto another, until they have at last entrenched themselves in every nook and niche of society—nay, even in the brains and hearts of the people."

The state must and will be abolished, and life in human society will go on not by means of an outside authority, but by the power of the free contract. "Voluntary formation of groups by individuals and of groups into associations; voluntary organizations form the simple to the complex in accordance with their needs and proclivities—such will be the nature of the future society.

"Human beings will unite in communes through agreements. They will assume duties and responsibilities to the commune, and the commune in turn will assume the responsibility to do certain

society. But anarchism has the great virtue of not compelling acceptance of one prescription for an economic system for all communities or groups indiscriminately. In the even that certain individuals, under given circumstances, will not feel comfortable enough in a communistic system, they will be quite at liberty to bring about an economic arrangement that will afford them greater satisfaction. At least in theory, therefore, Anarchism cannot be as absolutely inseparable from communism as the Kropotkinist formula presents it. freedom for each individual to arrange his life and affairs as he sees fit, not interfering with others in the same freedom, as well as the liberty of not doing what does not appeal to one, are, in the final analysis, the basic principles of anarchism which cannot be negated.

Elsewhere, some 35 years ago, I formulated the question of coupling up communism with anarchism in a few words: "It can and may be done, but it is not a condition sine qua." A voluntary sort of communism can, in practice, go hand in had with anarchism, and it will not mean the exploitation of the strong by the weak. They may go hand in hand in theory, and they are not "fire and water," because communism, when the communal property has no owner, has none of the elements of authority in it. But it must not necessarily be communism for everybody, since anarchist freedom permits all possible economic arrangements based on equality of opportunity and free arrangements.

Law and the State

Kropotkin, like Proudhon, strives to abolish the state and majority-made laws in the name of anarchist freedom. Both contend that the only criterion for equity and justice, which are the basis of human society, must be the adherence to contracts and the fulfillment of agreements which are voluntarily carried out by individual or groups among themselves. The assurance that

no one, and is therefore his property. My contention is that the possessor is paid for his trouble and industry in his doubled crops, but that he acquires no right to the land. Does the skill of the fisherman, who on the same coast can catch more fish than his fellows, make him the owner of the fishing grounds? Man has brought about a greater possibility for the productivity of land than had hitherto been known to exist, but that possibility could come about only through the natural elements in and about the land, which existed before he settled upon it. The actual soil, the soil as a tool, remains the same. Ownership of a product does not include ownership of the tools of production. Man has not created the very substance of which the soil consists, and consequently he merely has the right of settlement and use of the land, and that only, provided he keeps working it."

On the other hand, one who works for another, whether in the field or workshop, "creates values for which he is not compensated. The day's pay is merely enough to cover the expenditure indispensable to conserve and replenish the daily loss of energy incurred by the worker while he labors. The power to reproduce, the preparation of the soil, the creation of the tools of production—for these the capitalist never pays. This fraudulent scheme which creates the poverty of the working masses, the luxury of the idle rich and the inequality of living conditions is correctly called the exploitation of man by man."

The question arises: "If the blacksmith, the wheelwright or any other craftsman has a right to the products in return for the implements which he furnishes; and if land is an implement of production, why does not this implement, the land, entitle its owner a part of the products, as in the case of the craftsman who makes the ploughs or wages? The answer to this is—and here we come upon the central and basic nature of property—the craftsman who makes or repairs the instruments and tools of the farmer receives his pay once, and after he has been paid the tools or instruments are no longer his. The landowner, on the other hand, never yields a

particle from his 'tool,' the land, eternally he is paid for it, eternally he keeps it."

The principle of justice demand the annihilation of property-theft, and Proudhon queries: "Why property will be abolished what form of human society will we have then? Will it be Communism?

Says Proudhon: "I ought not to conceal the fact that property and communism have always been regarded as the only possible forms of society. This deplorable error has been the life of property. The disadvantages of communism are so obvious that it was not at all difficult to make people shun it. The irreparability of the injustice which it causes, the violence which it does to attractions and repulsions, the iron yoke which it fastens upon the will, the moral anguish to which it subjects one's conscience, the debilitating effect which it has upon society—in short, the pious and stupid uniformity, which it enforces upon the free, active, reasoning, unsubmissive personality of man, have shocked common sense and condemned communism by an irrevocable decree."

Proudhon does not take into consideration the possibility of a voluntary group-communism, which must not necessarily suffer from any of the aforementioned shortcomings. He speaks of communism as a widely established economic system, and cites facts and instances from the ancient communist societies, which were not based on freedom. He reminds us that Plato's communistic Republic accepted slavery; that the republic of Lycurgus contained helots (serfs); that the communistic associations of the early church degenerated into monasteries, and that in the communist society of the Jesuits in Paraguay the condition of the negroes was just as sad as that of slaves. Proudhon rejects this type of systematic communism not only in the name of liberty, but also because he finds that property is the foundation of all communist theories.

"It is true," says Proudhon, "that the members of such a community have no private property, but the community is the proprietor, and not only of the goods but also of the persons and wills. Life, talent and all the human faculties are the property of the state,

work hand in hand. Every discovery, every step in progress, every bit of improvement in the sum total of human opulence, owes its existence to the physical and mental exertions of ages gone by as well as to those of our contemporary age. What, pray, gives anybody the prerogative to appropriate even an infinitesimal fraction of all that and to declare—this is mine and not yours?"

All things belong to all, and, therefore, Kropotkin does not satisfy himself with the claim to "the right to work," or with the claim to "the full product of one's labor," but he asserts instead "the right to well-being—well-being for all." This, of course, does not imply that everybody has a right to enjoy freely all the good things without having contributed his share of the work which is a prerequisite to the creation of the good things. He expressly says, "If a man or a woman contributed an equitable share of work they have a claim to an equitable share of everything that had been produced by all."

He relies upon the sense of justice of the members of the group of workers to determine what constitutes an equitable share of work; and it may be admitted that the practice of communism for a considerable length of time would probably bring a more or less satisfactory solution of that problem. We can readily imagine, however, that it will not always be possible to avoid, under such a system, dissatisfaction in some measure, if not so much on the part of those given to envy, or of the egoists who constantly labor under the impression that some of the "others" are not "doing their bit" in the group, than on the part of the very honest and sincere members, the altruists, who may be troubled in their minds for fear that they do not do enough for the group, that they take more than is coming to them from the community. This point was brought out at one time by that fine anarchist, Dr. Rossi, through his experience in the anarchist-communist colony which he had founded in Argentine, and it is not so easy to brush aside such an observation.

Such cases could perhaps be considered as the exceptions which prove the rule; it is quite possible to agree with Kropotkin that communism, in a general sense, is the most ideal form of human

determines the extent of the libertarian character of such groupings."

As an anarchist he most assuredly must have been aware of the fact that in a free society there would also be a possibility for other forms of voluntary economic relations among men. His unbounded faith, however, in the feeling of solidarity in man, and in the supreme equity of communism, led him to believe that freedom can never be complete without that supreme equity. It is the belief that communism is the most ideal form of a free human society, a belief born in him by virtue of his deep seated altruistic feelings, which led Kropotkin to regard communism as the supreme principle of the social revolution, provided its foundation is freedom—anarchism.

Kropotkin found the moral justification of communism in the fact that all our social wealth is the creation of society and not of individuals. Kropotkin observes, "Millions of human beings work and toiled to bring about our present civilization, and other millions, throughout the world are toiling to keep it up. There is not a single thought, not one solitary invention which is not common, social property, created in the past as well as in the present time. Thousands of inventors, known and unknown, contributed to the invention of every machine, which is the embodiment of man's genius. Thousands of writers, poets and intellectual leaders have all contributed their share to the constant growth of human knowledge, to teach man how to avoid mistakes and to create an atmosphere of scientific thinking without which all the wonders of our century could not have come. And these very philosophers, poets, thinkers and inventors have also been helped by the efforts and accomplishments during the many centuries which had preceded their age; they were aided and supported, both physically and mentally, by hosts of toilers and workers of all sorts.

"Science and industry, knowledge and its application, discoveries and their practical realization which leads to new discoveries, the capacity of head and hand, the efforts of mind and muscle—all

which has the right to use them as it pleases for the common good. Communism is inequality, but not as property is. Property is the exploitation of the weak by the strong. Communism is the exploitation of the strong by the weak. This damaging equation is repellent to the conscience and causes merit to complain; for although it may be the duty of the strong to help the weak, they prefer to do it out of generosity and will never tolerate forced leveling down. Give them equal opportunities to labor and equal wages,[1] but never allow their jealousy to be awakened by mutual suspicion of unfaithfulness in the performance of the common task."

"Communism," continues Proudhon, "is oppression and slavery. Man is very willing to obey the law of duty, serve his country and oblige his friends. But he wishes to work when he pleases, where he pleases and as much as he pleases. He wishes to dispose of his own time, to be governed only by necessity, to act from judgment, not by command; to sacrifice himself through selfishness not through servile obligation. Any plan which could be devised for reconciling it with the demands of the individual reason and will would end only in changing the thing while preserving the name."

The Realization of a Free Society

The new state of affairs, says Proudhon, will be ushered in as soon as the ideal will gain popularity, and in order to make its advent possible we must popularize the ideal. We are told, "Just make the social revolution and the necessary enlightening propaganda will inevitably follow; but the revolution itself is no more than an enlightenment of the minds of the people."

Proudhon rejects all forcible and violent methods for the realization of freedom. He says: "To procure justice for ourselves through bloodshed may have been an urgent need for the greedy

[1] Elsewhere Proudhon argues strongly against the privileges of the talented and specially gifted in society to lay claim to greater remuneration for their work.

gold hunters in California; as for ourselves, let us pray that the Fates of France will guard us against it! But then how popularize the idea, if the bourgeoisie remains hostile; if the populace, brutalized by servitude, full of prejudices and bad instincts, remains plunged in indifference; if the professors, the academicians, the press, are calumniating you; if the courts are truculent; if the powers that be muffle your voice?—Don't worry. Their war against these ideas can only push forward the Revolution."

The most effective means, according to Proudhon, of convincing the people of the advantages of a new order of things, is to show them an example of a possible voluntary and independent social organization, created under the present circumstances, and not in defiance of even existing laws. Proudhon, by his plan, would apply at present the principles of the future free society. He pleads: "Arouse the collective activity of the masses without which their lot will ever be tragic and their force and energy will always be naught. Teach them to create wealth and order with their own hands without the aid of their masters." He calls his plan the organization of the economic forces and the dissolution of government in the economic organism.

In order to enable everyone to enjoy the full product of his labor, it is necessary to establish certain mutual relations; Proudhon, therefore, calls his teaching "the theory of mutualism." he sought to furnish a concrete example of his theory by the establishment of a "People's Bank." The purpose of creating such a bank was the inauguration of a read credit, practically free of interest charges, for all those who are able and willing to produce useful commodities. Credit in its essence is based on work, and, therefore, it should be controlled by the workers and operated for the benefit of the workers. At present all credit is in the hands of middlemen, bankers and usurers, who make use of credit for their own benefit, and, directly or indirectly, thereby rob the workers of a large share of their products. If the workers, however, could make use of this very important means, i. e., credit, which is indisputably theirs, they would

according to their conception, was closely connected with political power and government—archy—is directly antagonistic to anarchy, which is the negation of all state rule or domination. At the same time a number of anarchists themselves were opposed to communism "in the name of the individual," as defined by Proudhon, "who wishes to secure his freedom, to maintain unqualified independence of his ego, his work, his initiative, his education, his luxury which he can acquire for himself without exploiting anyone."

It was Kropotkin who worked out a union of freedom and communism, of a voluntary communist social order, of *Anarchist-Communism*. Living socially in fraternal relations, without any bookkeeping of debits and credits, offers, according to Kropotkin, no contradiction to freedom. The question of individual freedom, included in his mind the much weightier problem, "whether life in organized society in general is a means for liberation of the individual or just the reverse, the cause of his being enslaved? Whether it leads to the expansion of individual liberty or helps to curtail and limit it?" And his researches and analyses of this broader question proved to him that social life must not necessarily lead to the curtailment of individual freedom, that mutual relationship and equal opportunity offer to the individual the greatest possibility for getting the most of a life of freedom.

Kropotkin finds that, as human society develops, many communistic practices are gradually introduced in various branches of social activity; that the failures of the hitherto tried out forms of communism resulted from their having been segregated from the general community, from their having been saturated with a spirit of authoritarianism, from not having been confederated one with the other, and because the demand thy placed on their members for work, due, of course, to conditions of those days, was so burdensome that there was not sufficient time left for the enjoyment of life and leisure. "It is not," contends Kropotkin, "the communist form of uniting social groups which is the cause of enslavement, but rather the degree of development of the ideals of freedom which

can, to greater advantage and at lower cost, be undertaken and carried out by voluntary associations. Thus the strongholds of privilege and power will gradually grow weaker until our ideal will fully be realized.

The Kropotkin School

For most of the adherents of this school, the anarchist philosophy and ideals consist of the trinity: anarchism, communism, and revolution. These three ideas have become so closely interwoven that they cannot, according to the judgment of Kropotkin's followers, be separated.

Anarchism, as Kropotkin expounds it, leads to communism, and communism leads to anarchy (i. e., the absence of government), and can be brought about only through a turbulent revolution which will demolish the state with all its institutions, expropriate all capital and the means of production and consumption, and usher in a system of common property which will mean assurance of well being for all.

During the period when the anarchist ideal was in the process of crystallization, a great many of the anarchistically minded comrades rejected communism, which, at that time, was saturated with the ideas of authoritarianism and centralization. Proudhon fought relentlessly against it; and due to his influence the French comrades renounced communism. Most of the French anarchists who participated in the formation of the First International were mutualists, and had nothing whatever to do with communism. Even Bakunin called himself a collectivist, and proclaimed that "in the name of freedom we will at all times protest against any social order which resembles, in the slightest degree, communism or state-socialism."

The opponents of anarchism contended that communism and anarchy are two diametrically opposed concepts, like "fire and water." To them it was clear that authoritarian communism, which,

rid themselves of the necessity to work for others—that is, the necessity to yield the greater part of their production for the use of capital. They could become the masters of the machinery and tools of production, they would liberate themselves from the overlordship of the capitalists and become independent, and thus enjoy the full product of their toil.

The plan is as follows: A given number of people establish a cooperative bank for the purpose of advancing credit for the production of different useful commodities, and accept the commodities produced, according to their values, as payment for debts. The bank operates without cash money. It merely issues its own notes which circulate like money among the members of such a bank, who obligate themselves to accept these notes in exchange for commodities. At the outset of the banking operation it will be necessary for each and every member to invest an equal sum of cash money in order to cover the first expenditures of the bank and also to be in a position to purchase the necessary raw materials and machinery. Later on, when the business and the transactions of the bank expand, and the notes in circulation, which are properly secured by useful and desirable merchandise, become acceptable to all classes of merchants and manufacturers, then cash money becomes a superfluous article, except in so far as it may still be needed for giving change and similar possible instances. The difference between the ordinary bank notes and those of this People's Bank consists in this: that whereas the former are redeemable in cash money, the latter notes are certificates for products, and the holders of these notes may redeem them for all the commodities which are daily necessities. This form of money, called "tokens," is being used in our own time in a number of localities in this country, due to the economic crisis and unemployment.

Besides the actual members of this cooperative association, any resident of the community could join the People's Bank as a coworker. In order to do this, it would suffice for the applicant for membership to subscribe to the constitution of the bank, and to

agree to accept the bank notes. A co-worker in this bank must promise to give preference in business transactions to the other members of the bank, and to place all his order with them. Since every group of producers or individual procure their working capital without paying any interest at the bank, except so much as will be required to defray the expenses of running it—estimated at about one-half of one per cent—they, the producers, will be in a position to supply their customers with products at cheaper prices than the other manufacturers, who are obliged to pay 6 per cent or more for credit in the usual business banks.

It is self-evident that the greater the number of producers of different types of wares, the more members of all kinds of professions, and the greater the number of customers, in such an association, the greater the opportunity for its expansion and its approaching perfection.

"When all the products of labor," declares Proudhon, "will have the same exchange value as does money, all the workers will enjoy the same advantage as those who have case capital. Everybody will be enabled to produce an inexhaustible supply of wealth. This will teach the starving workers, who are unable to procure work, a lesson, that the fruit of their labor has concrete value and is just as useful in their daily living as if it were case money."

That such mutualist associations are practically possible is shown by the great cooperative associations in various countries. "*The International Cooperative Alliance*" has at the present time cooperative groups in 34 countries, representing some 80 national organizations, every one of which has from 50 to 2000 individual associations. All of them have a combined membership over 50 million.[2] There is one association which has 3 ½ million members, all of which have joined voluntarily and are free to leave at any time. This association has more than 1200 branches, operates 116 factories and productive industries which produce all sorts

[2] The figures are for the year 1922, and are taken from "What is Mutualism?"

terminable chain of stimuli and responses without the precedence of which they themselves could have no existence in the mind. An inventor can in truth call but an infinitesimal part of his idea his very own. What presumption, then, to attempt to levy a tax upon all mankind for so minute a contribution to the world of ideas as any single individual can possibly make!"

Mutualism as a theory of freedom rejects law and authority and the rule of the majority. "Government means power, force; it means the exercise of authority by a person or institution that has the power over another person, whether he recognizes that authority or not. The decision of a majority is just as much the exercise of physical force as are the machine guns in the hands of an army. The very threat to resort to force is just as much a physical force as the actual cannon fire and the spread of deadly gases."

The program of mutualism is in essence the same as that of Proudhon. "In the social field we must build and support such voluntary associations as will be able to take the place of our present system of force and coercion. In the economic field we must build and support such voluntary organizations as develop individual initiative and responsibility and liberate economic life from the onerous burden of authority and privileges. It is most certain that it is not possible to carry out the program in its entirety so long there exist numerous laws which are impediments on the road. Those who believe in political action would agitate for the abolition of such laws through parliamentary action in Congress, but we have a certain tradition that this is not the right way. It rarely happens that a law should be entirely repealed without being superceded by another law. Ways and means will have to be devised to circumvent the laws that stand in the way and bring them to naught in practical life.

"The greater the number of voluntary associations that will be built up and developed, the more vivid it will become to the people, through practical examples, that the multifarious services and functions which are in our times undertaken by the government

of interest, and also, indirectly, commodity prices and the rent of buildings."

By abolishing this monopoly the way would be open for the inauguration of the system of mutual banking, as advocated by Proudhon and Green[e].

"The second great monopoly is that of land, whereby non-users are permitted to hold vast areas out of use, for purposes of speculation, which keeps idle labor from employing itself by recourse to unused land." This, in conjunction with the money monopoly, forces the working man to sell his labor for a wage that represents only a portion of its full product.

"The third inequity is the tariff monopoly, by which the prices of many commodities are kept at an abnormally high level by a tax on importation, thus giving the domestic manufacturers an artificial monopoly which enables them to rob the consumer at will; which extracts from labor in general another portion of its product. It must be admitted, however, that to abolish this monopoly and leave the others—especially that of money—intact, would work a great hardship on those employed in the protected manufacturing industries, since labor in these occupations obtains, under the present system, a higher wage than it would if there were no protecting tariff.

"The patent and copyright monopoly is the fourth on the list, and it has permitted its beneficiaries to exact a tribute from the people, through the granting of an exclusive monopoly to inventors and authors, which greatly exceeds the actual labor value of the products of their intelligence and ingenuity. The great injustice of this monopoly may be better understood when it is considered that any person who might independently devise of produce a similar contrivance is prevented, by the special protection given the first one who recorded his invention, from reaping any benefit from his own labor."

"Ideas (inventions) cannot possibly arise out of a void. On the contrary, they are merely minor or major culminations in an in-

of articles and commodities. It does the biggest tea business in the world, producing about 60 million pounds a year; it owns approximately 6000 acres of tea plantation in Ceylon and more than 28,000 acres in India and employs 10,000 workers. It owns over 40,000 acres of land; it operates a bank which has over 1500 branches in different parts of the country. The transactions of this association amounted ten years ago to a billion four hundred eight million dollars. It underwrites half of the industrial life and accident insurance of the country, and the rates are about one-fourth of those charged by the old, long established insurance companies. The social activities of this association embrace almost every line of human endeavor. This association is located in London, England; is called "*The English Cooperative Wholesale Society*."

The cooperative movement developed in the last 80 years, not as a result of theories, but due to the economic circumstances of the people. If, then, this can be achieved in the midst of the present day capitalist order, how much more may be accomplished later, when the special privileges of the capitalists will become a thing of the past, and mutual relationships in all walks of life will become a fait accompli?[3]

[3] In connection with this it may be interesting to mention that both Marx and Engels had at first agreed with Proudhon that socialism has nothing whatever to do with "politics"; that the objective of socialism is the economic and social reconstruction of human society, through the economic and social activity of the working masses themselves; in the main, through building up of free cooperatives. Later on, in the seventies, Engels sharply criticized the Proudhonists for their belief in cooperative associations; in the nineties, when the cooperative movement had gained great success in England and in Belgium, and has commenced to get a foothold also in Germany, Kautsky warned against becoming too enthusiastic over this type of activity because the cooperatives work to the disadvantage of the small business man—a considerable voting asset to the (social democratic) party.

Here in the United States, Eugene V. Debs began his socialist activities with a plan to build up a cooperative socialist colony for 25,000 families. The American Marxists, however, blocked the project. Now we find in the declaration of principles of the Socialist Party, adopted at the last convention in Detroit, a pro-

"I want a peaceful revolution," says Proudhon; "I wish you could bring it about that the very institutions whose destruction I advocate and the very law-principles which you will have to perfect, should serve the achievement of my projects, so that the new society will follow as the natural and inevitable development of the old order of things, and that the revolution, while in the process of doing away with the old order, shall itself be the perfection of that order. when the masses, having become enlightened as to their real interests, will decide not to reform the government but to revolutionized society, the dissolution of government into the economic organism will come in a manner which can at present be only a matter of conjecture."

Mutualism[4]

Certain groups of libertarian social reformers in this country are quietly developing a movement for political and economic freedom, based on the teachings of Proudhon and the American, Wm. B Green[e], who published in 1849 a book entitled "Mutual Banking."

In that work, Green[e] writes: "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 instead of government from without."

posal to organize a system of cooperative warehouses, markets and credits, which shall be owned and managed by the people. Workers in the city and on the farm must be well organized, economically as well as politically. The struggle waged by the industrial unions, the farmer-organizations, and the constructive work of the workers' cooperatives are necessary not only for the immediate amelioration of the condition of the producing classes, but also for preparing the masses for the day when they will become the masters of industry and production.

[4] See "What is Mutualism" by Clarence L. Swartz, in collaboration with the Mutualist Associates. Vanguard Press, New York, 1927.

In another work of his, published in 1875, Green[e] says: "Under the mutualist system each individual will receive the just and exact pay for his work. Services equivalent in const will be exchangeable for services equivalent in cost without profit or discount. The principle of mutuality in social economy is identical with the federative principle in politics."

The present day mutualists, who are really Proudhonian anarchists under another name, adhere strictly to the Spencerian formula of equal freedom. They contend that: "Mutualism is applicable to every human relation. Throughout the whole gamut of existence, from birth to death, mutuality—voluntary association for reciprocal action—can be felt everywhere and is at every moment available and waiting to solve every problem of social intercourse, to decide every issue that arises in commerce and industry. In order to live Mutualism, it is necessary to observe only two conditions: that the non-invasive individual shall not be coerced, and that no part of the product of any one's labor shall be taken from him without his consent. From these negative generalizations thus postulated, thereby affirming the sovereignty of the individual, naturally flows the positive and constructive corollary—reciprocity; which implies individual initiative, free contract, and voluntary association."

The mutualists enumerate four big monopolies which take away part of the worker's product. "First, and greatest of all, the money monopoly, established and maintained by the government through a national tax of ten per cent on all money not issues as specified by the government, which thereby exercises complete control over the amount of money in circulation and restricts its basis to one commodity only—gold. These federal regulations are supplemented by laws in most states making it a crime to issue any money except that authorized by the national government. This limitation upon the amount of currency that may circulate in the nation, and the restriction of the basis for the issue of currency to gold along, makes it possible for those agencies controlling the issuance of money to determine, practically and directly, the rate