

The  
**Nineteenth**  
**Century.**

No. CXXVI---August 1887.

*The Coming Anarchy.*

The views taken in the preceding article\* as to the combination of efforts being the chief source of our wealth explain why more anarchists see in communism the only equitable solution as to the adequate remuneration of individual efforts. There was a time when a family engaged in agriculture, and supported by a few domestic trades, could consider the corn they raised and the plain woollen cloth they wove as production of their own and nobody else's labour. Even then such a view was not quite correct: there were forests cleared and roads built by common efforts; and even then the family had continually to apply for communal help, as it is still the case in so many village communities. But now, under the extremely interwoven state of industry, of which each branch supports all others, such as the individualistic view can be held no more. If the iron trade and the cotton industry of this country have reached so high a degree of development, they have done so owing to the parallel growth of the railway system; to an increase of knowledge among both the skilled engineers and the mass of the workmen; to a certain training in organization slowly developed among British producers; and, above all, to the world-trade which has itself grown up, thanks to works executed thousands of miles away. The Italians who died from cholera in digging the Suez Canal, or from 'tunnel-disease' in the St. Gothard Tunnel, have contributed as much towards the enrichment of this country as the British girl who is prematurely growing old in serving a machine at Manchester; and this girl is much as the engineer who made a labour-saving improvement in our machinery. How can we pretend to estimate the exact part of each of them in the riches accumulated around us?

We may admire the inventive genius or the organising capacities of an iron lord; but we must recognise that all his genius and energy would not realise one-tenth of what they realise here if they were spent dealing with Mongolian shepherds or Siberian peasants instead of British workmen, British engineers, and trustworthy managers. An English millionaire who succeeded in giving a powerful impulse to a branch of home industry was asked the other day what were, in his opinion, the real causes of his success? His answer was:---'I always sought out the right man for a given branch of concern, and I left him full independence---maintaining, of course, for myself the general supervision .' 'Did you never fail to find such men?' was the next question. 'Never.' 'But in the new branches which you introduced you wanted a number of new inventions.' 'No doubt; we spend thousands in buying patents.' This little colloquy sums up, in my opinion, the real case of those industrial undertakings which are quoted by the advocates of 'an adequate remuneration of individual efforts' in the shape of millions bestowed on the managers of prosperous industries. It shows how far the efforts are really 'individual.' Leaving aside the thousand conditions which sometimes permit a man to show, and sometimes prevent him from showing, his capacities to their full extent, it might be asked in how far the same capacities could bring out the same results, if the very same employer could find no inventions were not stimulated by the mechanical turn of mind of so

many inhabitants of this country. British industry is the work of the British nation---nay, of Europe and India take together---not of spate individuals.

While holding this synthetic view on production, the anarchists cannot consider, like the collectivists, that a remuneration which would be proportionate to the hours of labour spent by each person in the production of riches may be an ideal, or even an approach to an ideal, society. Without entering here into a discussion as to how far the exchange value of each merchandise is really measured now by the amount of labour necessary for its production---a separate study must be devoted to the subject---we must say that the collectivist ideal seems to us merely unrealisable in a society which would be brought to consider the necessities for production as a common property. Such a society would be compelled to abandon the wage-system altogether. It appears impossible that the mitigated individualism of the collectivist school could co-exist with the partial communism implied by holding land and machinery in common---unless imposed by a powerful government, much more powerful than all those of our own times. The present wage-system has grown up from the appropriation of the necessities for production by the few; it was a necessary condition for the growth of the present capitalist production; and it cannot outlive it, even if an attempt be made to pay to the worker the full value of his produce, and money be substituted by hours of labour cheques. Common possession of the necessities for production implies that common enjoyment of the fruits of the common production; and we consider that an equitable organisation of society can only arise when every wage-system is abandoned, and when every-body, contributing for the common well-being to the full extent of his capacities, shall enjoy also from the common stock of society to the fullest possible of his needs.

We maintain, moreover, not only that communism is a desirable state of society, but that the growing tendency of modern society is precisely towards communism---free communism---notwithstanding the seemingly contradictory growth of individualism. In the growth of individualism (especially during the last three centuries) we merely see the endeavours of the individual towards emancipating himself from the steadily growing powers of Capital and the State. But side by side with this growth we see also, throughout history up to our own times, the latent struggle of the producers of wealth for maintaining the partial communism of old, as well as for reintroducing communist principles in a new shape, as soon as favourable conditions permit it. As soon as the communes of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries were enabled to start their own independent life, they gave a wide extension to work in common, to trade in common, and to a partial consumption in common. All this has disappeared; but the rural commune fights a hard struggle to maintain its old features, and it succeeds in maintaining them in many places of Eastern Europe, Switzerland, and even France and Germany; while new organizations, based on the same principles, never fail to grow up as soon as it is possible. Notwithstanding the egotistic turn given to public mind by the merchant-production of our century, the communist tendency is continually reasserting itself and trying to make its way into the public life. The penny bridge disappears before the public bridge; so also the road which formerly had to be paid for its use. Museums, free libraries, and free public schools; parks and pleasure grounds; paved and lighted streets, free for everybody's use; water supplied to private dwellings, with a growing tendency towards disregarding the exact amount of it used by the individual; tramways and railways which have already begun to introduce the season ticket or the uniform tax, and will surely go much further on this line when they are no longer private property: all these are tokens showing in which direction further progress is to be expected.

It is putting the wants of the individual above the valuation of the services he has rendered, or might render, to society; it is in considering society as a whole, so intimately connected

together that a service rendered to any individual is a service rendered to the whole society. The librarian of the British Museum does not ask the reader what have been his previous services to society, he simply gives him the book he requires; and for a uniform fee, a scientific Society leaves its gardens and museums at the free disposal of each member. The crew of a lifeboat do not ask whether the men of a distressed ship are entitled to be rescued at a risk of life; and the Prisoners' Aid Society do not inquire what the released prisoner is worth. Here are men in need of service; they are fellow men, and no further rights are required. And if this very city, so egotistic to-day, be visited by a public calamity---let it be besieged, for example, like Paris in 1871, and experience during the siege a want of food---this very same city would be unanimous in proclaiming that the first needs to be satisfied are those of the children and old, no matter what services they may render or have rendered to society. And it would take care of the active defenders of the city, whatever the degrees of gallantry displayed by each of them. But, this tendency already existing, nobody will deny, I suppose, that, in proportion as humanity is relieved from its hard struggle for life, the same tendency will grow stronger. If our productive powers be fully applied for increasing the stock of the staple necessities for life; if a modification of the present conditions of property increased the number of producers by all those who are not producers of wealth now; and if manual labour reconquered its place of honour in society---all this decuplating our production and rendering labour easier and more attractive---the communist tendencies already existing would immediately enlarge their sphere of application.

Taking all that into account, and still more the practical aspects of the question as to how private property might become common property, most of the anarchists maintain that the very next step to be made by society, as soon as the present regime of property undergoes a modification, will be in a communist sense. We are communists. But our communism is not that of either the Phalanstere or the authoritarian school: it is anarchist communism, communism without government, free communism. It is a synthesis of the two chief aims prosecuted by humanity since the dawn of its history--- economical freedom and political freedom.

I have already said that anarchy means no-government. We know well that the word "anarchy" is also used in the current language as synonymous with disorder. But that meaning of "anarchy" being a derived one, implies at least two suppositions. It implies, first, that whenever there is no government there is disorder; and it implies, moreover, that order, due to a strong government and a strong police, is always beneficial. Both implications, however, are anything but proved. There is plenty of order---we should say, of harmony---in many bunches of human activity where the government, happily, does not interfere. As to the beneficial effects of order, the kind of order that reigned at Naples under the Bourbons surely was not preferable to some disorder started by Garibaldi; while the Protestants of this country will probably say that the good deal of disorder made by Luther was preferable, at any rate, to the order which reigned under the Pope. As to the proverbial "order" which was once "restored at Warsaw," there are, I suppose, no two opinions about it. While all agree that harmony is always desirable, there is no such unanimity about order, and still less about the "order" which is supposed to reign on our modern societies; so that we have no objection whatever to the use of the word "anarchy" as a negation of what has been often described as order.

By taking for our watchword anarchy, in its sense of no-government, we intend to express a pronounced tendency of human society. In history we see that precisely those epochs when small parts of humanity broke down the power of their rulers and reassumed their freedom were epochs of the greatest progress, economical and intellectual. Be it the growth of the free cities, whose unrivalled monuments---free work of free associations of workers---still testify

of the revival of mind and of the well-being of the citizen; be it the great movement which gave birth to the Reformation---those epochs witnessed the greatest progress when the individual recovered some part of his freedom. And if we carefully watch the present development of civilised nations, we cannot fail to discover in it a marked and ever-growing movement towards limiting more and more the sphere of action of government, so as to leave more and more liberty to the initiative of the individual. After having tried all kinds of government, and endeavoring to solve the insoluble problem of having a government "which might compel the individual to obedience, without escaping itself from obedience to collectively," humanity is trying now to free itself from the bonds of any government whatever, and to respond to its needs of organisation by the free understanding between individuals prosecuting the same common aims. Home Rule, even for the smallest territorial unity or group, becomes a growing need; free agreement is becoming a substitute for the law; and free co-operation a substitute for the governmental guardianship. One after the other those functions which were considered as the functions of government during the last two centuries are disputed; society moves better the less it is governed. And the more we study the advance made in this direction, as well as the inadequacy of governments to fulfill the expectations laid in them, the more we are bound to conclude that Humanity, by steadily limiting the functions of government, is marching towards reducing them finally to nil; and we already foresee a state of society where the liberty of the individual will be limited by no laws, no bonds---by nothing else but by his own social habits and the necessity, which everyone feels, of finding co-operation, support, and sympathy among his neighbours.

Of course, the no-government ethics will meet with at least as many objectives as the no-capital economics. Our minds have been so nurtured by prejudices as to the providential functions of government that anarchist ideas must be received with distrust. Our whole education, since childhood up to the grave, nurtures the belief in the necessity of a government and its beneficial effects. Systems of philosophy have been elaborated to support this view; history has been written from this standpoint; theories of law have been circulated and taught for the same purpose. All politics are based on the same principles, each politician saying to the people he wants to support him: "Give me the governmental power; I will, I can, relieve you from the hardships of your present life." All our education is permeated with the same teachings. We may open any book of sociology, history, law, or ethics: everywhere we find government, its organisation, its deeds, playing so prominent a part that we grow accustomed to suppose that the State and the political men are everything; that there is nothing behind the big statesmen. The same teachings are daily repeated in the Press. Whole columns are filled up with minutest records of parliamentary debates, of movements of political persons; and, while reading these columns, we too often forget that there is an immense body of men---man-kind, in fact---growing and dying, living in happiness or sorrow, labouring and consuming, thinking and creating, besides those few men whose importance has been so swollen up as to overshadow humanity.

And yet, if we revert from the printed matter to our real life, and cast a broad glance on society as it is, we struck with the infinitesimal part played by government in our life. Millions of human beings live and die without having had anything to do with government. Every day millions of transactions are made without the slightest interference of government; and those who enter into agreements have not the slightest intention of breaking bargains. Nay, those agreements which are not protected by government (those of the Exchange, or card debts) are perhaps better kept than any others. The simple habit of keeping his word, the desire of not losing confidence, are quite sufficient in the immense overwhelming majority of cases to enforce the keeping of agreements. Of course, it may be said that there is still the government which might enforce them if necessary. But not to speak of the numberless cases

which even could not be brought before a court, everybody who has the slightest acquaintance with trade will undoubtedly confirm the assertion that, if there were not so strong a feeling of honour to keep agreements, trade itself would become utterly impossible. Even those merchants and manufacturers who feel not the slightest remorse when poisoning their customers with all kinds of abominable drugs, duly labelled, even they also keep their commercial agreements. But, if such a relative morality as commercial honesty exists now, under the present conditions, when enrichment is the chief motive, the same feeling will further develop very fast as soon as robbing somebody of the fruits of his labour is no longer the economical basis of our life.

Another striking feature of our century tells in favour of the same no-government tendency. It is the steady enlargement of the field covered by private initiative, and the recent growth of large organisations resulting merely and simply from free agreement. The railway net of Europe is a confederation of so many scores of separate societies and the direct transport of passengers and merchandise over so many lines which were built independently and federated together, without even so much as a Central Board of European Railways, are a most striking instance of what is already done by mere agreement. If fifty years ago somebody had predicted that railways built by so many separate companies finally would constitute so perfect a net as they to-day, he surely would have been treated as a fool. It would have been urged that so many companies, prosecuting to their own interests, would never agree without an International Board of Railways, supported by an International Convention of the European States, and endowed with governmental powers. But no such board was restored to, and the agreement came nevertheless. The Dutch Beurden extending now their organisations over the rivers of Germany, and even to the shipping trade of the Baltic; the numberless amalgamated manufacturers' associations, and the syndicate of France, are so many instances in point. If it be argues that many of these organisations are organisations for exploitation, it would prove nothing, because, if men prosecuting their own egotistic, often very narrow, interests can agree together, better inspired men, compelled to be more closely connected with other groups, will necessarily agree still easier and still better.

But there also is no lack of free organisations for nobler pursuits. One of the noblest achievements of our century is undoubtedly the Lifeboat Association. Since its first humble start, which we all remember, it has saved no less than 32,000 human lives. It makes appeal to the noblest instincts of man; its activity is entirely dependent upon devotion to the common cause; while its internal organisation is entirely based upon the independence of the local committees. The Hospitals Associations and hundreds of like organisations, operating on a large scale and covering each a wide field, may also be mentioned under this head. But, while we know everything about governments and their deeds, what do we know about the results achieved by free co-operation? Thousands of volumes have been written to record the acts of governments; the most trifling amelioration due to law has been recorded; its good effects have been exaggerated, its bad effects passed by in silence. But where is the book recording what has been achieved by free co-operation of well-inspired men? At the same time, hundreds of societies are constituted every day for the satisfaction of some of the infinitely varied needs of civilised man. We have societies for all possible kinds of studies -- some of them embracing the whole field of natural science, others limited to a small special branch; societies for gymnastics, for shorthand-writing, for the study of a separate author, for games and all kinds of sports, for forwarding the science of maintaining life, and for favouring the knowledge of how to destroy it; philosophical and industrial, artistic and anti-artistic; for serious work and for mere amusement -- in short, there is not a single direction in which men would exercise their faculties without combining together for the prosecution of some common aim. Every day new societies are formed, while every year the old ones aggregate

together into larger units, federate across the national frontiers, and co-operate in some common work.

The most striking feature of these numberless free growths is that they continually encroach on what was formerly the domain of the State or the Municipality. A householder in a Swiss village of the banks of Lake Lemman belongs now to, at least, a dozen different societies which supply him with what is elsewhere as a function of the municipal government. Free federation of independent communes for temporary or permanent purposes lies at the very bottom of Swiss life, and to these federations many a part of Switzerland is indebted for its roads and fountains, its rich vineyards, well-kept forests, and meadows which the foreigner admires. And besides these small societies, substituting themselves for the State within some limited sphere, do we not see other societies doing the same on a much wider scale? Each German *Bürger* is proud of the German army, but few of them know how much it borrows of its force from the numberless private societies for military studies, exercise, and game; and how few are those who understand that their army would become an incoherent mass of men the day that each soldier was no longer inspired by the feeling which inspire him now? In this country, even the task of defending that territory -- that is, the chief, the great function of the State -- has been undertaken by an army of Volunteers, and this army surely might stand against any army of slaves obeying a military despot. More than that: a private society for the defence of the coasts of England has been seriously spoken of. Let it only come into life, and surely it will be a more effective weapon for self-defence than the ironclads of the navy. One of the most remarkable societies, however, which has recently arisen is undoubtedly the Red Cross Society. To slaughter men on the battle-fields, that remains the duty of the State; but these very States recognise themselves unable to take care of their own wounded: they abandon the task, to a great extent, to private initiative. What a deluge of mockeries would not have been cast over the poor "Utopist" who should have dared to say twenty-five years ago that the care of the wounded might be left to private societies! "Nobody would go in the dangerous places! all hospitals would gather where there was no need of them! national rivalries would result in the poor soldiers dying without any help, and so on," -- such would have been the outcry. The war of 1871 has shown how perspicacious those prophets are who never believe in human intelligence, devotion, and good sense.

These facts -- so numerous and so customary that we pass by without even noticing them -- are in our opinion one of the most prominent features of the second half of our century. The just-mentioned organisms grew up so naturally; they are such rapidly extended and so easily aggregated together; they are such unavoidable outgrowths of the multiplication of needs of the civilised man, and they so well replace State-interference, that we must recognise in them a growing factor of our life. Modern progress is really towards the free aggregation of free individuals so as to supplant government in all those functions which formerly were entrusted to it, and which it mostly performed so badly.

As to parliamentary rule, and representative government altogether, they are rapidly falling into decay. The few philosophers who already have shown their defects have only timidly summed up the growing public discontent. It is becoming evident that it is merely stupid to elect a few men, and to entrust them with the task of making laws on all possible subjects, of which subjects most of them are very ignorant. It is becoming understood that Majority rule is as defective as any other kind of rule; and Humanity searches, and finds, new channels for resolving the pending questions. The Postal Union did not elect an international postal parliament in order to make laws for all postal organisations adherent to the Union. The railways of Europe did not elect an international railway parliament in order to regulate the march of trains and the repartition of the income of international traffic; and the

Meteorological and Geological Societies of Europe did not elect either meteorological or geological parliaments for scheming polar stations, or for establishing a uniform subdivision of geological formations and a uniform coloration of geological maps. They proceeded by means of agreements. To agree together they resorted to congresses; but, while sending delegates to their congresses, they did not elect M.P.'s *bons á tout faire*; they did not say to them, "Vote about everything you like -- we shall obey." They put questions and discussed them first themselves; then they sent delegated acquainted with the special question to be discussed at the congress, and they sent *delegates* -- not rulers. Their delegates returned from the congress with no laws in their pockets, but with proposals of agreements. Such is the way assumed now (the very old way, too) for dealing with questions of public interest -- not the way of law-making by means of a representative government. Representative government has accomplished its historical mission; it has given a mortal blow to Court-rule; and by its debate it has awakened public interest in public questions. But, to see in it the government of the future Socialist society, is to commit a gross error. Each economical phase of life implies its own political phase; and it is impossible to touch the very bases of the present economical life -- private property -- without a corresponding change in the very bases of the political organisation. Life already shows in which direction the change will be made. Not in increasing the powers of the State, but in restoring to free organisation and free federation in all those branches which are now considered as attributions of the State.

The objection to the above may be easily foreseen. It will be said of course: --- "But what is to be done with those who do not keep their agreements? What with those who are not inclined to work? What with those who would prefer breaking the written laws of society, or -- in the anarchist hypothesis -- its unwritten customs? Anarchy may be good for a higher humanity, -- not for the men of our own times.'

First of all, there are two kinds of agreements: there is the free one which is entered upon by free consent, as a free choice between different courses equally open before each of the agreeing parties; and there is the enforced agreement, imposed by one party upon the other, and accepted by the latter from sheer necessity; in fact, it is no agreement at all; it is mere submission to necessity. Unhappily, the great bulk of what are now described as agreements belong to the latter category. When a workman sells his labour to an employer, and knows perfectly well that some value of his produce will be unjustly taken by the employer; when he sells it without even the slightest guarantee of being employed so much as six consecutive months -- and he is compelled to do so because he and his family would otherwise starve next week -- it is a sad mockery to call that a free contract. Modern economists may call it free, but the father of political economy -- Adam Smith -- was never guilty of such a misrepresentation. As long as three-quarters of humanity are compelled to enter into agreements of that description, force is, of course, both to enforce the supposed agreements and to maintain such a state of things. Force -- and a good deal of force -- is necessary for preventing the labourers from taking possession of what they consider unjustly appropriated by the few; and force is necessary for always bringing new "uncivilised nations" under the same conditions. The Spencerian no-force party perfectly well understand that; and while they advocate no force for changing that existing conditions, they advocate still more force than is now used for maintaining them. As to anarchy, it is obviously as incompatible with plutocracy as with any other kind of cracy.

But we do not see the necessity of force for enforcing agreements freely entered upon. We never heard of a penalty imposed on a man who belonged to the crew of a lifeboat and at a given moment preferred to abandon the association. All that his comrades would do with him, if he were guilty of a gross neglect, would be probably to refuse further to do anything with

him. Nor did we hear of fines imposed on a contributor of Mr. Murray's Dictionary for a delay in his work, or of gendarmes driving the volunteers of Garibaldi to the battle-fields. Free agreements need not to be enforced.

As to the so-often repeated objection the nobody would labour if he were not compelled to do so by sheer necessity, we heard enough of it before the emancipation of slaves in America, as well as before the emancipation of the serfs in Russia; and we have had the opportunity of appreciating it at its just value. So we shall not try to convince those who can be convinced only by accomplished facts. As to those who reason, they ought to know that, if it really was so with some parts of humanity at its lowest stage -- and yet, what do we know about it? -- or if it is so with some small communities, or separate individuals, brought to sheer despair by unsuccesses in their struggle against unfavourable conditions, it is not so with the bulk of the civilised nations. With us work is a habit, and idleness an artificial growth. Of course, when to be a manual worker means to be compelled to work all the life long for ten hours a day, and often more, at producing some part of something -- a pin's head, for instance; when it means to be paid wages on which a family can live only on the condition of the strictest limitation of all its needs; when it means to be always under the menace of being thrown to-morrow out of employment -- and we know how frequent are the industrial crises, and what a misery they imply; when it means, in a very great number of cases, premature death in a paupers' hospital, if not in the workhouse; when to be manual worker signifies to wear all life long a stamp of inferiority in the eyes of those very people who live on the work of their "hands;" when it always means the renouncement of all those higher enjoyments that science and art give to man -- oh, then there is no wonder that everybody -- the manual worker as well -- has but one dream: that of rising to a condition where others would work for him. When I see writers who boast that they are the workers, and write that the manual workers are an inferior race of lazy and improvident fellows, I am inclined to ask them, Who, then has made all you see round about you: the houses you live in, the chairs, the carpets, the streets you enjoy, the clothes you wear? Who built the universities where you were taught, and who provided you with food during your school years? And what would become of your readiness to "work," if you were compelled to work in the above conditions all your life on a pin's head? No doubt, anyhow you would be reported as a lazy fellow! And I affirm that no intelligent man can be closely acquainted with the life of the European working classes without wondering, on the contrary, at their readiness to work, even under such abominable conditions.

Overwork is reluctant to human nature -- not work. Overwork for supplying the few with luxury -- not work for the well-being of all. Work, labour, is a physiological necessity, a necessity of spending accumulated bodily energy, a necessity which is health and life itself. If so many branches of useful work are so reluctantly done now, it is merely because they mean overwork, or they are improperly organised. But we know -- old Franklin knew it -- that four hours of useful work every day would be more than sufficient for supplying everybody with comfort of a moderately well-to-do middle-class house, if we all gave ourselves to productive work, and if we did not waste our productive powers as we do waste them now. As to the childish question, repeated for fifty years (who would do disagreeable work?), frankly I regret that none of our savants has ever been brought to do it, be it for only one day in his life. If there is still work which is really disagreeable in itself, it is only because our scientific men have never cared to consider the means for rendering it less so: they always knew that there were plenty of starving men who would do it for a few pence a day.

As to the third -- the chief -- objection, which maintains the necessity of a government for punishing those who break the law of society, there is so much to say about it that it hardly can be touched incidentally. The more we study the question, the more we are brought to the



conclusion that society itself is responsible for the anti-social deeds perpetrated in its midst; and that no punishments, no prisons, and no hangmen can diminish the numbers of like deeds; nothing short of a re-organisation of society itself. Three-quarters of all the acts which are brought every year before our courts have their origin, either directly or indirectly, in the present disorganised state of society with regard to the production and distribution of wealth -- not in the perversity of human nature. As to the relatively few anti-social deeds which result from anti-social inclinations of separate individuals, it is not by prisons, nor even by resorting to the hangman, that we can diminish their numbers. By our prisons, we merely multiply them and render them worse. By our detectives, our "price of blood," our executions, and our jails, we spread in society such a terrible flow of basest passions and habits, that he who would realise the effects of these institutions to their full extent, would be frightened by what society is doing under the pretext of maintaining morality. We must search for other remedies, and the remedies have been indicated long since.

Of course now, when a mother in search of food and shelter for her children must pass by shops filled up with the most refined delicacies of refined gluttony; when gorgeous and insolent luxury is displayed side by side with the most execrable misery; when the dog and the horse of a rich man are far better cared for than millions of children whose mothers earn a pitiful salary in the pit or the manufactory; when each "modest" evening dress of a lady represents eight months, or one year, of human labour; when enrichment on somebody's account is the avowed aim of the "upper classes," and no distinct boundary can be traced between honest and dishonest means of making money -- then force is the only means for maintaining such a state of things; then an army of policemen, judges, and hangmen becomes a necessary institution.

But if all our children -- all children are our children -- received a sound instruction and education -- and we have the means of doing so; if every family lived in a decent home -- and they could under the present high pitch of our production; if every boy and girl were taught a handicraft at the same time as he or she receives a scientific instruction, and not to be a manual producer of wealth were considered a token of inferiority; if men lived in closer contact with one another, and had continually to come into contact on those public affairs which now are invested in the few; and if, in consequence of a closer contact, we were brought to take as lively an interest in our neighbours' difficulties and pains as we formerly took in those of our kinsfolk -- then we should not resort to policemen and judges, to prisons and executions. The anti-social deeds would be prevented in bud, not punished; the few contests which would arise would be easily settled by arbitrators; and no more force would be necessary to impose their decisions than is required now for enforcing the decisions of the family tribunals of China, or of the Valencia water-courts.

And here we are brought to consider a great question: What would become of morality in a society which would recognise no laws and proclaim the full freedom of the individual? Our answer is plain. Public morality is independent from, and anterior to, law and religion. Until now, the teachings of morality have been associated with religious teachings. But the influence which religious teachings formerly exercised on the mind has faded of late, and the sanction which morality derived from religion has no more the power it formerly had. Millions and millions grow in our cities who have lost the old faith. Is it a reason for throwing morality overboard, and for treating it with the same sarcasm as primitive cosmogony?

Obviously not. No society is possible without certain principles of morality generally recognised. If everybody grew accustomed to deceive his fellow-man; if we never could rely on each other's promise and words; if everybody treated his like as an enemy, against whom

every means of warfare is justifiable -- no society could exist. And we see, in fact, that notwithstanding the decay of religious beliefs, the principles are independent of religious beliefs: they are anterior to them. The primitive Tchuktchis have no religion: they have only superstitious and fear of the hostile forces of nature; and nevertheless we find with them the very same principles of morality which are taught by Christians and Buddhists, Mussulmans and Hebrews. Nay, some of their practices imply a much higher standard of tribal morality than that which appears in our civilised society. In fact, each new religion takes its moral principles from the only real stock of morality -- the moral habits which grow with men as soon as they unite to live together in tribes, cities, or nations. No animal society is possible without resulting in growth of certain moral habits of mutual support and even self-sacrifice for the common well-being. These habits are a necessary condition for the welfare of the species in its struggle for life -- co-operation of individuals being a much more important factor in the struggle for the preservation of the species than the so-much-spoken-of physical struggle between individuals for the means of existence. The "fittest" in the organic world are those who grow accustomed to life in society; and life in society necessarily implies moral habits. As to mankind, it has, during its long existence, developed in its midst a nucleus of social habits, of moral habits, which cannot disappear as long as human societies exist. And therefore, notwithstanding the influence to the contrary which are now at work in consequence of our present economical relations, the nucleus of our moral habits continues to exist. Law and religion only formulate them and endeavour to enforce them by their sanction.

Whatever the variety of theories of morality, all can be brought under three chief categories: the morality of religion; the utilitarian morality; and the theory of moral habits resulting from the very needs of life in society. Each religious morality sanctifies its prescriptions by making them originate from revelation; and it tries to impress its teachings on the mind by a promise of reward, or punishment, either in this or in the future life. The utilitarian morality maintains the idea of reward, but it finds it in man himself. It invites men to analyse their pleasures, to clarify them, and to give preference to those which are most intense and most durable. We must recognise, however, that, although having exercised some influence, this system has been judged too artificial by the great mass of human beings. And finally -- whatever its varieties -- there is the third system of morality which sees in moral actions -- in those actions which are most powerful in rendering men best fitted to life in society -- a mere necessity of enjoying the joys of his brethren, of suffering when some of his brethren are suffering; a habit and a second nature, slowly elaborated and perfected by life in society. That is the morality of mankind; and that is also morality of anarchy.

I could not better illustrate the difference between the three systems of morality than by repeating that following example. Suppose a child is drowning in a river, and three men stand on the bank of the river: the religious moralist, the utilitarian, and the plain man of the people. The religious man is supposed, first, to say to himself that to save the child would bring him happiness in this or another life, and then save the child; but if he does so, he is merely a good reckoner, no more. Then comes the utilitarian, who is supposed to reason thus: "The enjoyment of life may be of the higher and the lower description. To save the child would assure me the higher enjoyment. Therefore, let me jump in the river." But, admitting that there ever was a man who reasoned in this way, again, he would be a mere reckoner, and society would do better not to rely very much upon him: who knows what a sophism might pass one day through his head ! And here is the third man. He does not much calculate. But he has grown in the habit of always feeling the joys of those who surround him, and to feel happy when others are happy; of suffering, deeply suffering when others suffer. To act accordingly is his second nature. He hears the cry of the mother, he sees the child struggling for life, and he jumps in the river like a good dog, and saves the child, thanks to the energy of his feelings.

And when the mother thanks him, he answers: "Why ! I could not do otherwise than I did." That is the real morality. That is the morality of the masses of the people; the morality grown to a habit, which will exist, whatever the ethical theories made by philosophers, and will steadily improve in proportion as the conditions of our social life are improved. Such a morality needs no laws for its maintenance. It is a natural growth favoured by the general sympathy which every advance towards a wider and higher morality finds in all fellow-men.

Such are, in a very brief summary, the leading principles of anarchy. Each of them hurt many a prejudice, and yet each of them results from an analysis of the very tendencies displayed by human society. Each of them is rich in consequences and implies a thorough revision of many a current opinion. And it is not a mere insight into a remote future. Already now, whatever the sphere of action of the individual, he can act, either in accordance with anarchist principles or on an opposite line. And all that may be done in that direction will be done in the direction whereto further development goes. All that may be done in the opposite way will be an attempt to force humanity to go where it will not go.

P. KROPOTKIN.

*\*Nineteenth Century*, February 1887. The present article has been delayed in consequence of the illness of the author.