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# The Principles

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## Voluntaryism and Free Life

By  
Mr. Auberon Herbert.

"The widest possible liberty, only limited by the equal liberty of all."—*Herbert Spencer.*  
"Over his own body and mind the individual is sovereign."—*John S. Mill.*  
"It is but too common for men to treat that which is their best friend as a dangerous enemy."—*Anonymous.*

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PRINCIPLES  
OF  
VOLUNTARYISM AND FREE LIFE

BY

MR. AUBERON HERBERT

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the organ of Voluntaryism and Voluntary Taxation,  
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With an Introductory Comment from a New World  
Point-of-View

By

ELIJAH E. KNOTT.

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## INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS.

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*To the American People :*

Having for many years past meditated upon most of the matters discussed in *Free Life and Voluntary Letters*, I have thought it afforded a good opportunity of putting a few of my own thoughts on the subjects about them and sending them broadcast, in the great mission of reform. Individual freedom has cost mankind more than any other one thing in the world, and it is a sacred right that must be maintained, if life is to be worth living. We must, however, be just and guard our expressions, actions and influence in the enjoyment of this sacred privilege and its maintenance, from enthusiastic extremes so as not to misuse its blessings. We are fallible creatures, and it is so easy for us to become blind in our own eyes, and go astray, that we should never get out of the light of the grand beacon of *Universality*, that lights the path of all mankind. One fact presents itself with great force, in my mind, and that is the mortification of the intelligent minority ; when the free will spirit must submit to abominable coercion, and while honor and kinder character is at stake lest the proud spirit revolts into a display of old Adamite viciousness.

It cannot be denied as a notable fact that much of the crime of civilization can be traced to the fountains of subordination, subjection and injustice established by force and laws of Christian construction and Christian support, in all nations. That all of Mr. Auberon Herbert's *Free Life* principles are possible, ideal and likely ever to mature in the atmosphere of our present civilization, I neither expect nor claim, nor can I go so far as to say that I embrace all he advocates so logically and earnestly, yet as a whole I do admire the common grounds he baptizes with reason and well supported argument. Civilization as we have it to-day has matured from mere outlines gathered from many sources, and while Voluntaryism may only make up a part of a better social plan for the great human family, I see in it sufficient to pin my admiration to its claims for that part. The thinking men and women of our day are far in advance of existing conditions, and that the social fabric is doomed to reconstruction cannot be intelligently refuted. Evolution is going on as naturally as the bud develops the flower or leaf, and the egg the insect. A new world is being moulded without the pain of human conflict, as in olden times, to keep pace with the requirements of the changed conditions that invention and

machinery have established. The old fashioned laws cannot continue to rule, let them be formulated by a monarchy or republic, they are prejudged to abolishment, unless every particle of force, coercion and majority rule is eliminated from them ; the old enslaving yoke is by far too heavy for the modern spirit to bear it up any longer. That minorities will suffer this slavery and sustain it with their financial support, when their very soul is protesting, is a monstrous expectation to expect. Uncle Tom, the helpless slave, suffered his fate in his day, but that white slaves will continue to remain patient under another kind of slave-treatment, without seeking and succeeding in emancipation, can safely be counted upon as an impossibility. The obedient minority will join the fearful wing of the majority (and this is the laboring classes largely) some day and will, like a runaway horse, discover their real strength and the oppressive chains will snap asunder by a complete revolution.

The prevailing presumption that all people regardless of good or bad repute must be kept behind the brutal bars of force like tigers, that implies that they are not to be trusted, is reprehensible in the face of the nineteenth century boasted civilization, and so long as this implied want of confidence exists, so long will outbreaks startle the public peace by crime. That a percentage of mankind is criminally inclined, cannot be doubted ; on the other hand that the larger portion of people have an inborn pride to be good citizens, stands out in admirable defiance to contradiction. Confidence is a powerful master—notwithstanding he is many times betrayed. The noblest examples of the ennobling effects of confidence as a master, is what it graduates. How many thousand diplomas could be put over the graves of heroes and heroines that have spent their lives faithful to great trust ? It seems to me that an individual you must require a bond from to insure faithful performance, should not be employed.

In the same light I regard the people and feel that the law's yoke should be a respecter of persons. If a natural thief or fraud must be guarded against, upon what good grounds should a naturally honest man be held under the same restrictions ? All the laws that ever have been printed or can be printed will not make a dishonest nature honest and the same laws will not make an honest nature more honest. More crime goes unpunished than is punished, notwithstanding the fact that society is submerged with its compulsive and beastly restrictions. The undiscovered transgressions and the discovered transgressions prove that the old tyrant is more than half blind and that justice is wholly so. The part that is discovered is oftener the less guilty. The financial gain that prompts the representative of our laws, that acts in the uniform of justice, is one of the greatest shams of our government system, as he displays his power on the

weak and friendless with a brutality that would bring a blush to the wild, original man, while the strong with many friends is treated with a remarkable degree of legal consideration. To avoid all of this, social conditions must be established that will remove the cause, and when no cause exists, there can be no desire. All efforts to discover the cause, therefore must be honored and greeted by every heart that is in the right place among mankind.

We have in the aborigines a sample of the voluntary system and Free Life; these untutored tribes have their unwritten laws, they are *few in number* but are very sacred and they need no lawyers to interpret them. Ninety per cent of the people to-day are crying out against our cumbrous system and praying in their hearts for relief, "Too many laws!! Too much injustice!! Too much extravagance!! Too much officiousness!!" can be heard from tens of thousands of them, still the body politic continues to struggle under the oppression! Despair has blighted the hopes of many millions in European countries and the mire of debt is swallowing them up. In our own America, we are sinking fast and our people are becoming hopelessly bankrupt and despondent through industrial failures and overburdened taxation. That even the will of the majority rules, admits of the strongest evidence that it does not. It is quite notorious that the political boss or manipulator through the lobby dictates what must be law and must not, and the people's majority is sidetracked most contemptuously. If governments sustained by the force of majority, exercised their force against some of the most fruitful causes of crime, distress and poverty, much of their enactments in other respects, might be tolerated, but when we see in every part of our country and every civilized country, evils legalized by civil laws that consume before our eyes the lives, happiness and comforts of millions, what conclusion can any sincere mind come to respecting the good or honesty of government?

No true father or guardian in this or any other country would think of creating and permitting a legalized destroyer. It reminds me of a miller I knew during my boyhood that was to the world a very honest (?) man; to the church a very pious man; to the community a very reputable citizen; but to himself a man that never thought an honest thought. He had a hopper in his mill and a spout through the wall to the outside and farmers unloaded their grain by emptying the bags in the hopper outside and when the hopper was full the old miller or his man would weigh it, or in other words the hopper was on a scale and when full they would adjust the weights. How often this hopper overflowed before the busy (?) miller or his man would notice it, goodness only knows, but it went on and on and apol-

ogies made up for the shortage in weights until this man accumulated an enviable wealth. So it is with governments ; they accumulate great revenues from the most diabolical fields and go on and on blind to it but very wide awake to trifling wrongs. Imagine the assumption of some petty limb of the law crushing down to subjection some weak brother for some minor transgression? Individual liberty is becoming a misnomer ; in fact it is a misnomer. Hundreds of law-makers fill our legislative and thousands our municipal councils, and as a matter of common truth, crankism pervades these bodies to a point of suffocation in the law making and governing line. The Hon. David B. Hill, United States senator and ex-governor of New York State, has recently contributed the following terse protest against the infringement of personal liberty :

“The sound and well-recognized general doctrine that a man may eat, drink and wear whatsoever he pleases, and act as he himself sees fit, so long as he does not interfere with the just prerogatives of his neighbors has almost been lost sight of. It is a fitting time to revive the consideration of elementary principles of conduct and to determine the true province of the law making powers of government.\*\*\*We are familiar with the old argument which is urged as a justification for the legislative interferences. It is that abuses pertain to the exercise of our inherent rights, and therefore in the general interest such rights must be curtailed, regulated or prohibited by law.\*\*\*Regulation has especially become the tyrant's familiar plea everywhere. I deny the proposition that merely because abuses are incident to or liable to accompany the doing of concededly proper things, that therefore such things must be forbidden or surrounded with obnoxious provisions infringing personal rights.\*\*\*\*Otherwise nearly every right guaranteed to us under our system of free government could be ruthlessly subverted under the pretense of guarding it from alleged evil effects.\*\*\*\*It was only a few years since the self-constituted guardians of our manners and morals—those who assume to be public teachers—attempted to stop women from riding bicycles in our parks and thoroughfares upon the ground that such conduct was highly improper. But an enlightened public sentiment refused to listen to their unfair criticism, and it is believed that female bicycle-riding has come to stay. There will undoubtedly be abuses but will that justify the cranks to enforce their law?\*\*\*Our communities are filled with long-haired men and short-haired women, well meaning but woefully misguided persons intent upon RULING OTHER PEOPLE BY FORCE MORE THAN REASON, and who are diligently concocting new schemes of legislation whereby to more COMPLETELY CIRCUMSCRIBE THE PERSONAL PRIVILEGES



AND INNOCENT CUSTOMS AND HABITS OF THE CITIZENS (every person can endorse these words except the person or persons who consider the 'end is justified by the means' no matter about justice and no matter about personal choice or liberty of others).\*\*\*When once a State assumes to interfere with social and personal conduct beyond well-recognized limitations, every liberty is in danger of being broken ! \* \*\*It is a time to cry halt. WE NEED LESS—NOT MORE—LEGISLATION. Individualism should be exalted, rather than the powers and functions of government should be increased, and to the accomplishment of that end an intelligent public sentiment should now be aroused and directed.”

These are hot words from one of our most prominent American Statesmen and one who above all other public men can be justly attributed as an authority upon this very subject. Mr. Hill is as broad and liberal minded as it is prudent for any man to be, and when he is stifled with the extreme of government wholly by law, well may the common people who suffer for individual liberty, where such men as Mr. Hill may be privileged, conclude that they will resist this yoke and assert their rights as nature-born beings endowed with faculties and personal freedom which no government or person have a right to control. A volume can be written in protest on this subject but it is written in the subsequent letters of Mr. Auberon Herbert with a degree of truth and charm that no pen can improve upon, and no person living can sacrifice more deep thought, zeal and earnestness than he for the cause of justice to mankind. In every sentence he has put the blood of love, and in every thought the light of imperishable truth, and while I write these lines I cannot but hope that every person in this world could be gathered together in one grand amphitheatre and that the God of heaven could speak to them the sentiments of Free Life and Voluntaryism, that the dreadful yoke of tyranny, force and oppression might fall from their necks forever.

I well know how many “Don't-care-people” and others tardy in ambition and never disposed to rally in the army of reform. Their very selfish, take-care-of-myself disposition is painful to see, when we think that mankind is one unbroken chain, before and after us. We never die—no, never ! The anticipation of blessings to our posterity that we may in whole or part bring about, should be as precious, as if we were to enjoy them ourselves, if we love our offspring, and if the soul of kinship and love is, as it should be, paramount in our nature. Therefore let us do our part, be it ever so little, wisely and well.

We boast of civilization and being a highly civilized people in this nineteenth century, but, alas, we may in a few decades be looked upon as

expert barbarians, that enacted laws most subtle to crucify the minority, the weak and helpless, without regard to any degree of personal rights or individual liberty.

Advanced thinkers have been stoned and abused in the past ; they are now ; but the evolution of right will never stop until the highest, truest, purest and best liberty of mankind is on the throne and the oppressive force government of every king, protentate and republic shall have passed into oblivion.

Yours ever truly,

E. E. KNOTT.

Burlington, Vt., May 14, 1897.

## WHAT WE VOLUNTARYISTS BELIEVE.

(The self-owner is owner of his own mind and body and his own property.

We Voluntaryists believe that no true progress can be made until we frankly recognise the great truth that every individual, who lives within the sphere of his own rights, as a self-owner, and has not first aggressed upon others by force or fraud, and thus deprived himself of his own rights of self-ownership, by aggressing upon these same rights of all others, is the one and the only one true owner of his own faculties, and his own property. We claim that the individual is not only the one true owner of his faculties, but also of his property, because property is directly or indirectly the product of faculties, is inseparable from faculties, and therefore must rest on the same moral basis, and fall under the same moral law, as faculties. Personal ownership of our own selves, of our own faculties, necessarily includes personal ownership of property. It would be idle, it would be a mere illusion, to speak of an individual, as owner of his own faculties, and at the same time to withhold from him fullest and most perfect right over his property, if such property has been rightfully acquired through faculties (by *rightfully* we mean acquired without force or fraud), or inherited from those who have rightfully acquired it.

NO PEACEFUL NON-AGGRESSIVE CITIZEN CAN BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONTROL OF OTHERS, APART FROM HIS OWN CONSENT.

We hold that the one and only true basis of society is the frank recognition of these rights of self-ownership; that is to say, of the rights of control and direction by the individual, as he himself chooses, over his own mind, his own body, and his own property, always provided, that he respects the same universal rights in others. We hold that so long as he lives within the sphere of his own rights, so long as he respects these rights in others, not aggressing by force or fraud upon the person or property of his neighbors, he cannot be made subject, apart from his own consent, to the control and direction of others, and he cannot be rightfully compelled by force of others to perform any services, to pay any contributions, or to act or not to act in any manner contrary to his own desires or to his own sense of right. He is by moral right a free man, self-owning and self-directing; and has done nothing which justifies others, for any convenience of their own, in taking from him his self-ownership.

THE MORAL RIGHTS OF A DELEGATED BODY, SUCH AS A GOVERNMENT, CAN NEVER BE GREATER THAN THE MORAL RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHO DELEGATED IT. FORCE CAN ONLY BE USED (WHETHER BY AN INDIVIDUAL OR BY A GOVERNMENT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE) FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES, NEVER FOR AGGRESSIVE PURPOSES.

We hold then both as a great natural fact and as a great moral truth—probably from a human point of view the greatest of all facts and the greatest of all truths, that each man owns his own body and mind, and that he cannot own the body and mind of another man. We hold that what one man cannot morally do, a million of men cannot morally do, and government, representing many millions of men, cannot do. Government are only machines, created by the individuals of a nation for their own convenience, they are only delegated bodies, delegated by the individuals, and therefore they cannot possibly have larger moral rights of using force, or, indeed, larger moral rights of any kind, than the individuals who delegated them. An individual, as a self-owner, is morally justified in defending the rights he possesses in himself and in his own property,—by force, if necessary, against force (and fraud); but he cannot morally be justified in using force for any other purpose whatsoever. He cannot morally use force to further his own interests, to further his own opinions, to further any cause, however excellent in itself, for in all these cases he would be stepping outside his own rights of self-ownership, and taking away from others some part of their rights of self-ownership. All such actions would imply that he was owner of the bodies and minds of others, and this he cannot be, for all ownership of others, is for ever precluded by each person's rights of self-ownership. It is impossible at one and the same time for men to be self-owner and owners of others. Self-ownership leaves no place for some men to own, or to be owned by others. If we are self-owners (and it is absurd, it is doing violence to reason, to suppose that we are not), neither an individual, nor a majority, nor a government can have rights of ownership in other men.

It is plain then that there is no moral function in the whole world for force to perform except to maintain the rights of self-ownership; for whenever it is employed on any other service, it must be employed in taking away or lessening the rights of self-ownership, and thus destroying the moral basis on which society rests. It is plain that force does not belong to a civilized world, that it is a mere remnant of barbarism, and (except as a defence against force) that we must allow it to find no place in our organization of society.

Against whom, then, you will ask, may force be used? Simply against users of force (and fraud) as the murderer, the thief, the common swindler, and the aggressive foreign enemy. And what are we to say if a government should use force for other purposes than the protection of self-ownership? We can only say that those who use force, whoever they are, by that very act justify the use of force against themselves. In a free country, where reason and discussion are not strangled by the authorities, and where in the end we may be sure that these moral forces will destroy force, it is in almost every case our duty to trust to reason and discussion and not to use force; but it is necessary that the moral position of all concerned should be clearly understood; and that position is—: that no individual, no majority, no government, holds any true commission to use force, for taking away the rights of self-ownership; and that all those who do so use force justify the use of force against themselves. Haters of force, just because of their hatred of force, may not, probably will not, avail themselves in a moderately free country of this right; but it is best that every majority and every government should clearly understand that when they use force (except for purposes of restraining force) they make force the law of the world, and that then force is open to everybody, since it cannot remain the moral privilege of some persons and not of others.

#### THE USES AND ABUSES OF MAJORITY-RULE.

Believing that numbers cannot make rights,—are quite powerless either to give rights to the individual or to take them away from him,—we hold that the acts of a majority can only be morally valid as regards those persons who consent to accept the decisions of such majority; that no peaceable citizen, abiding within the sphere of his own rights, and not aggressing upon the life or property of others, can be restricted, or regulated, or dealt with, by a majority, as if he were the property of that majority, any more than he can be restricted, regulated, or dealt with by an Emperor, or King, or his next door neighbor, if such neighbor should happen to be stronger than himself. Can then this majority (or might) rule ever be rightfully employed? We answer that a majority of owners may rightfully regulate public property, if (1) such property in real fact belongs to such owners; and (2) if the owners individually consent to this method of management. But the legitimate use of a majority is wholly distinct from the illegitimate use. It is a mere confusion of thought, a mere superstition, to suppose that a majority, as a majority, can have any rightful power of regulating or interfering with those things which do not belong to it, as

for example, the faculties or the property of individuals. There is no holiness, or divinity, or mystical virtue in a majority. A majority is simply a collection of individuals. The power of majority, the authority, which it possesses, all come to it from the individuals. It is quite evident that the plain individual, John Smith, has no moral right to regulate or interfere with what does not belong to him; and it is also quite as evident that the collection of plain John Smiths, called a majority, can not possibly have any moral rights which plain John Smith himself does not possess. If it had,—then stones ought to change their nature and to become potatoes or cocoa-nuts, as soon as we had placed enough of them together in one pile. If it had,—then nature would be a mere conjurer, and from like things would be able to produce for our benefit *unlike* things. Happily for us, however, nature is a very sane person and not given to playing these tricks.

VOLUNTARYISTS BELIEVE IN GOVERNMENT, STRICTLY LIMITED AS REGARDS ITS AUTHORITY; AND SEE IN IT, SO LIMITED, A TRUE ORGAN OF SOCIETY.

Lastly, whilst we hold that government, the delegated body, the machine created by the individuals for their own convenience, and clothed with such moral authority as the individuals are competent to confer upon it, cannot possibly be anything more than this delegated body, this machine, this creature of our own making, this servant of our daily wants, whilst we utterly repudiate the pagan doctrine of those power-worshippers who see in the State a sort of god, a something bigger than the men who create it and carve it and change it according to their changing ideas, a something possessed of an unlimited authority, derived nobody knows whence, and holding a roving, fickle commission to crush any one set of men, if less in number, for the sake of any other set of men, if more in number,—at the same time we hold that there are real duties and functions for government to perform. We hold that it is a social duty for all of us, acting freely and without compulsion, to join in organising, and, as far as possible, perfecting Government for several purposes. First of all, as the common-force machine, for protecting self-ownership, for resisting and restraining all acts of force directed against the life, person and property of any citizen. We hold that for many grave reasons the individual should not attempt to exercise his own inherent rights of restraining force by force—since to do so would be to make him act as his own judge and executioner; and we hold that he chooses wisely and well in delegating these rights to a body constituted, as a government should be,

in the most public, formal, careful, and deliberate manner. We believe the Anarchist ideal of no fixed and regularly organized machinery for repression of crime to be founded in mistake; and we are governmentists, in the sense that we believe that the common instrument for the repression of ordinary aggressive crime should rest upon the strongest part of the nation—that is upon the majority. Repression of crime is an act of force; and force should be in the hands of the strongest. Whilst a majority has nothing to do with those matters affecting the individual's life,—matters, which lie within the sphere of his own will and judgment, as a self-owner, matters which must be determined by himself, for himself, under the influence of reason, discussion, persuasion, example, and the other moral forces, we hold that as regards the business of universal defence, which belongs to the province of force (force to restrain force,) the rule of the majority, as representing the strongest part of the nation, is indicated as the true rule. Force, whenever employed, gravitates by nature's own law to the strongest. It would be absurd to place force in the hands of the weaker part of any society.

We must learn to distinguish clearly between the illegitimate and the legitimate forms of government. The legitimate form of government is when it is directed against those who are "aggressives" upon others; the illegitimate form of government is when it is directed against the "non-aggressives". We ought not to direct our attacks,—as the anarchists do—*against all government*, against government in itself, as the national force-machine, against government strictly limited to its legitimate duties in defence of self-ownership and individual rights, but only against the overgrown, the exaggerated, the insolent and unreasonable forms of government, which are found everywhere to-day, and under which, those who govern usurp powers of all sorts, that do not or cannot belong to them, laboring under the ludicrous mistake that they are as little gods, and own the bodies and minds of those individuals who called them into existence.

#### GOVERNMENT AS THE AGENT OF THE NATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL MATTERS.

Secondly, we would employ government as the mouthpiece of the nation (under most carefully guarded conditions) in its relations with other nations. Whilst we would utterly refuse to allow the government to forget its true position of being an instrument and a servant, whilst we would refuse to allow it to place itself in any way above the individuals of the nation, whilst we would withhold from it the powers of declaring war, or the making of alliances or treaties, whilst we would require in these great

matters individuals to come forward and declare individually their approval and support of, and their personal responsibility for, great national steps of so serious a character, whilst we would insist that no person should be compelled to support any war, or to perform any service, or pay any tax, either for national defense or for carrying on war, against his own will, whilst we would insist that the rightful supremacy of the individual as regards his own actions, should never be taken from him on any false plea of national interest or safety, yet we hold that, just as it is a patriotic duty to support the government in the suppression of ordinary crime, so also it is a patriotic duty to support the government in all measures that seem just and reasonable to the individual, for ensuring the independence and safety of the country. We believe in patriotism—not compulsory, but voluntary patriotism. We believe that patriotism will be carried to far higher, nobler and purer levels by free man than by those who have fallen to the level of being the sheep of the political drover or simple state material, and with whom governments deal and traffic at will. We believe that only as men cease to be looked upon by their governments as convenient material for taxation and the pliant tools of political bosses; only as each unit in a nation gains his full and perfect right to act as a free man, and comes into full possession of his own conscience and his own sense of right, will patriotism cease to burn with its present gross and clouded flame, and become a real and true force on the side of peace and happiness.

GOVERNMENT AS THE USEFUL FRIEND, ADVISING AND INSTRUCTING, NOT  
COMPELLING.

Thirdly, we believe that government might play the part of useful friend to the people, and perform many valuable services on their behalf, provided that it renounced all use of compulsion, and never attempted to impose either compulsory services or compulsory contributions. Freely competing with all Voluntary bodies, it might become a most valuable centre, during many future years, of help and knowledge and direction in matters of education and sanitation (The great work of sanitation in all its important development must rest on voluntary methods, must be deofficialized,—that is, must be divorced from compulsion; at the same time, if necessary, men may be rightfully restrained from polluting the earth, water, air that does not belong to them; or from disseminating germs of disease in public places. All such are acts of aggression on the person or property of others.) in matters of labor and trade. It might offer to all who required it, skilled advice in such matters as the safety and healthfulness of buildings, the



cultivation of land, or the management of animals ; it might undertake useful experiments of various kinds, always acting on the one condition, that it would help us as a friend, and never seek to play the part of the compelling and regulating authority, of the owner of bodies and minds, of the little god supreme above all rights. All force (not employed in restraining force) disturbs peace, and prevents progress. We want none of it. Our true ideal is a NATION AT PEACE WITHIN ITSELF, developing every form of industrial energy and co-operation, making many experiments in social life, with every citizen acting in the line of his own convictions, spending his energies and his resources in such causes as seem to him the truest and best, and no citizen engaged in the old miserable and profitless trade of placing fetters on the hands of another citizen, and using him against his own beliefs and his own desires, just because one political party has gained its victory at the polls, and another party has suffered defeat. The rights of men are too sacred to be voted away in any contests of our political parties. Let us once more repeat our Voluntaryist principle:—all things in the State shaped in obedience to the rights of the individual, as self-owner ; and as a consequence, the Government strictly limited, so far as the use of force is concerned, to the repression of force and fraud. When once the Government had accepted this limitation, and held its authority subject to the rights of the individual, it would be, we believe, loyally supported by the freely-given services of free men, who would no longer be called upon either to lay conscience and will at its feet, or forced to struggle with their fellow-men for the possession of that evil thing—POWER—over each other. Where the conscience, the will, the self-direction of every citizen were frankly respected, where his rights over himself and his property were put in the first place, there the foolish, wasteful and mischievous rivalries of our political parties would disappear, for power would cease to be the highest prize of life, inviting all men to snatch it by any weapon from the hands of each other. Where governments simply protected life and property for all without difference, international jealousies, hatreds, and wars, would die out, for Frenchmen in Great Britain, and the Britons in France would fare alike. Each would be protected ; neither would receive privileges and favors in the one country more than in the other, and all men would be left free to work out their own development in their own fashion. The great causes of strife and hatred would pass away. Perfect free trade and friendly co-operation would satisfy all wants, and the world at last would begin to fulfill its destiny—as the free and peaceful meeting-place of all opinions, all desires, and all energies.

## STATE SOCIALISM.

State Socialism is the denial, the abandonment of all true human rights. Under it a man would have no rights over his own property, over his own labor, over his own amusements, over his own home and family—IN A WORD, EITHER OVER HIMSELF OR ALL THAT NATURALLY AND REASONABLY BELONGED TO HIM, but he would have as his compensation (if there were 10,000,000 electors in his country) the one-tenth millionth share in the ownership of all his other fellowmen, and in all that naturally and reasonably belonged to them. It is the flinging away of natural and reasonable rights in exchange for unnatural and unreasonable rights; it is the giving up of what a man ought not to give up, and the taking of what he ought not to take. State Socialism is the last short cut, which men have invented, to Magicland. The nation is to get there without any labor, effort, or sacrifice on its own part, without any improvement in character, or development in moral qualities. Magicland is to be won to-morrow, or to-day if you like, by the easy method of dropping papers into a ballot-box. The winning of it will cost every elector only the trouble of making a cross on half-a-sheet of paper—he is not expected or desired to do anything more for himself. He may then go home quite satisfied. All the rest will be done for him by the new patent machinery while he eats, sleeps, and is directed by the State officials as to what he is to do. Happy electors!! Wonder-working ballot-box!! Omnipotent machinery!! Superhuman leaders!!

Under State Socialism the minimum of work would be done, for the energies of one-half of the nation would be always spent in compelling the other half to do what they did not want to do. The political pull-devil, pull-baker, would be the principal national occupation. We should talk much, work little, and eat less. Under State Socialism we shall have three choices of profession. We may be either a State-hand, or a State-official, or a State-spy and informer. The last two professions will be very much crowded; but there will probably be room for us all, since the State will be much like a German colony, principally made up of officials.

State Socialism exists as a perfect mirror for the politician. It shews him all the superstitions and defects of his political system in their most exaggerated form; it caricatures every blunder that men make in trying to govern each other on this present "Unlimited principle." Our common superstition of supposing that we can represent 25,000 persons on all the great subjects of life, by one marvellous person in the senate or congress, of supposing that it is reasonable to give all rights to three persons, because

they are three, and no rights of any kind to two persons, because they are two; of supposing that numbers create moral rights,—*our* common mistake of constructing huge machines, that nobody understands or controls, and that govern men as much as they are governed by them, of handing the nation over in a lump to the officials, of turning the officials into sacred persons, of turning the public into dead material, without will and intelligence of its own, of giving every individual, say the one-ten millionth voice in the affairs of all his neighbors, and no authority over his own affairs, of allowing men who don't own themselves to own the selves of others, of destroying differences and consecrating uniformity, of placing the good, the bad, and the indifferent under one system, and therefore making regulations that apply to the self-criminal and half-criminal, apply also to the good citizen, of reducing us all to systems fitted to the least intelligent, as a cavalry charge is regulated by the pace of the slowest horse, of multiplying regulations till they become as the grains of the sand of the sea, and require libraries to contain them, and a professional class to expound them, of supplying the nation during every hour of the day with the utmost possible material of every kind for quarrelling over, of destroying natural rewards of ability and industry, and those natural penalties of faults which belong to free life, and replacing them by every sort of artificial contrivance which can suggest itself to the perverted official imagination, of trying to dodge the great natural law of progress by making the good and the industrious carry on their backs, as their compulsory burden, the less good and the less industrious, of making the workers subject to the talkers—all these superstitions and mistakes, and many more, are the common property of the politician and the socialist, between whom there is only a difference of degree. If the politician were to give a little careful philosophical reflection to the subject he would discover his own self somewhat exaggerated and caricatured in the Socialist, whom he reviles, and whom he believes to be so different from himself. The Socialist is only the politician kept longer in the oven and hard-baked; the politician by trickery produces in the clothing of law the same wrongs to his fellow-men as the Socialist aims by no law to establish.

#### ANARCHY DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ITSELF.

Anarchy does not understand itself. It is not anarchy or "no government." When it destroys the central and regularly constituted government, and leaves every group to make its own arrangements for the repression of ordinary crime, it merely decentralizes government to the furthest

point, splintering it up into minute fragments of all sizes and shapes. As long as there is ordinary crime, as long as there are aggressions by one man upon the life and property of another man, as long as men are resolved to defend life and property, there cannot be anarchy or no-government. There can only be either regularly constituted government, generally accepted by all citizens for the protection of the individual; or irregularly constituted government, irregularly accepted, according to the pattern of each group. Neither in the one case nor in the other case is government got rid of. The only real anarchist, the only man who gets rid of government, is Tolstoi, who preaches as Christ did, that we should bear all injuries without returning them. In that way alone can government be got rid of—but are any of us prepared to follow Tolstoi?

## THE LAND NATIONALIZER.

The land nationalizer has a touch of the old pagan worshipper about him. He turns the land into a sort of God, something greater than men. A man can't own land—he says, exalting the thing, the dead material, into the first place; and degrading the man, who lives and reasons, into the second place. It is a strange inversion of parts.

The ordinary politician is not as consistent as the land nationalizer; the land nationalizer is not as consistent as the state socialist. The politician steals with two or three fingers, and thinks it would be very wrong to steal with the whole hand; the land nationalizer steals with one hand, and thinks it would be very wrong to steal with both hands; the state socialist steals with both hands, and boldly glorifies the whole business. If you steal pence, why not steal pounds, we ask the politician? If you steal the land, we ask the land-nationalizer, why not steal all that grows upon it and comes from the land, all wool, cotton, grain, fruit and animals? In the name of reason, let us preach the whole gospel of stealing!! The land-nationalizer would take from men one of their greatest and deepest sources of happiness. He says to them: "You shall never possess your own home. You shall never possess as your own one single square yard of soil. You place nothing on the face of the earth, which shall be truly yours; you shall plant no tree, and on planting it know that the fruit it bears shall belong to you and to those who come after you; you shall be only as the nomad race, encamped for a season, as long as it pleases those who govern, to leave you in your hired houses." Why? On what grounds does the land nationalizer venture to cut off this great source of human enjoyment from the human race? Simply because he has not yet cleared his mental vision; simply because he does not see, first:—that if the land of the country really belongs to the whole nation, it cannot belong to that part of it, called a majority, and that no majority, therefore, can be competent to deal with it; and secondly, that if John Smith cannot morally own land, then ten million John Smiths cannot morally own land. The land-nationalizer has not yet discovered that a government or state can only possess exactly the same moral rights as individuals who create it. Land-nationalizers forget that under land-nationalism we shall all be merely as tenants at will. At present, if we do not wish to own land, we can make such agreements for a term of months or years, or for life, as we will with our landlord, and we have the protection of the courts as regards these agreements; but with government as our landlord, we should

only occupy at the pleasure of those who constitute the government. No agreements bind governments. What one administration creates to-day, another administration four years hence may obliterate by repealing it. Under land-nationalization it would be the constant amusement of governments to re-organize the system of land-tenure. No question would open up such pretty opportunities for quarrels of our politicians with such varied whims, notions and rarely patriotic conclusions.

## THE AIM OF THE VOLUNTARYIST.

What is the work of the Voluntaryist? It is to destroy the love of power ; to destroy alike in himself and in his fellowmen the desire to FORCE opinions or interests—whatever they may be—upon others ; to be content to be a SELF-RULER, not a ruler of others ; to strengthen belief in the moral weapons of reason, discussion and example ; to bear patiently many evils rather than to weaken at any point the principle of self-ownership and self-direction ; and to live in the faith that there is no evil which cannot be overcome by courage and resolution, no moral failure that cannot be remedied and no just need but can be supplied, except the one evil, the one moral failure, of abandoning self-ownership and self-direction. To abandon self-ownership is to become corrupt and servile in spirit, and for the servile and corrupt there are no greater things possible. You cannot carve in rotten wood ; you cannot lead to greatness those who have renounced the essence of their own manhood or womanhood.

Let the Voluntaryist boldly preach the doctrine of self-ownership everywhere. Let him seek to persuade the Socialist that he has no right to offer comfort and advantage at the price of the sacrifice of personal liberty ; that it is quite vain to try to destroy one kind of bondage by building up another in its place ; let him persuade the capitalist that national and universal wealth is greater good than individual overflow of wealth that drains thousands of his fellow beings empty as the gambler does his victims at Monte Carlo ; let him persuade the members of all churches that it is a travesty and a mockery of their own creed — rightly and simply understood—to attack any kind of moral evil with State punishments ; that all such persecutions are necessarily abhorrent to the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, and that Christians above all men, are bound to fight with weapons of reason, charity and discussion ; let him seek to persuade all men, whether rich or poor, employers or employed, men of this country or of other countries, that the organization of any kind of material force against each other is a barren and pitiful waste of life—that a victory gained over unwilling bodies and minds is a defeat, and not a victory, that in peace, friendly co-operation, unrestricted experiment, constant difference, almost unlimited toleration as regards the actions of others, free trade in every direction, the increased mobility and self-protection of the individual, the removal of all compulsory burdens and services, the abandonment of the evil power of mortgaging the faculties of the future generations by the present generation, the abandonment of all great in-

duancements for men to struggle with each other, and in the perfect security of person and property, so that the conditions of successful effort may be recognized by all, as constant and persisting, —that in these things are the true watchwords of progress, to which it is our duty under every temptation to be faithful to each other and to ourselves ;

Voluntaryism is the reconciler of differences ;

It is the system of liberty, peace and friendliness ;

Under Voluntaryism the State only employs force to repel force, — to protect the person and the property of the individual against violence and fraud ; the State under Voluntaryism would defend, not assault ;

It takes part with no sect ; it belongs to no faction ;

It persecutes nobody, restricts nobody, regulates nobody ;

It refuses to force the opinions or interests of any one part of the people upon another part ;

It refuses to fight for any moral view with immoral weapon of force ;

It compels no services, confiscates no property, takes no compulsory payments ; it does not believe that man was created to devour his fellow men by force, fraud or trickery ;

It refuses to be the blind instrument of Republican, Democrat or Populist or any other party ;

It is opposed to all privileges, monopolies and restrictions, and seeks to leave men free to shape their own lives in a free world.

It believes that millions upon millions are annually wasted in governing by force that if civilization was emancipated from doing, would relieve burdens of taxation from mankind and permit a healthy growth of prosperity and happiness, through the fertility of a broader field of human freedom and individual rights.



## PRINCIPLES OF THE VOLUNTARY STATE.

1. To recognize at all points and under all circumstances the self-ownership of men and women, and their full right to direct their faculties and employ their own property (within the one limit of non-aggression by force or fraud upon others) as they choose ;
2. To recognize that the State should compel no services and exact no payments by force, but should depend entirely upon voluntary services and voluntary payments ;
  - a That it should be free to conduct many useful undertakings, in connection with education, sanitary matters, poor relief, insurance, post-office business, trade, inspection of buildings, machinery, etc., and many other matters, but to do so in competition with all voluntary agencies, without employment of force, in dependence on voluntary payments, and acting with consent of those concerned, simply as their friend and their adviser ;
  - b That it should use force only to restrain force of the murderer, of the thief and of the violent, and certain coarse forms of fraud,—thus guaranteeing the self-ownership of the individual by protecting him in person and property ;
  - c That it should take no property of any kind from any citizen by force ; nor regulate any part of life ; nor interfere with any exercise of faculties by force (within the non-aggressive limit) ; nor seek to attain any moral purpose by force ;
3. To get rid of all public debt, central or local, by selling and mortgaging public property and by organizing a great system of voluntary contribution, certain days in the year being specially observed as holidays for raising of voluntary revenue, local and central ;
4. To extend the voluntary defences of the country and to place them on a much broader scale and a more permanent foundation than that on which they now stand ; to depend in war as in peace solely on voluntary contributions ; and to renounce absolutely the flagrant wrong of compelling those who are opposed to war to give any support to it ;
5. Without abandoning in panic any duty towards those connected with us or dependent upon us in other countries, to press forward the peaceful and friendly settlement of all unsettled external questions ; to narrow responsibilities ; to resolutely give up an annexing and grasping policy ; and to seek to establish international friendly agreements as regards vexed questions ;

6. By thus removing all burdens, all restrictions and interferences with personal activities, by cutting down officialism, by getting rid of the mischievous interference of the politician with private property, and his constant bribing of the people, often for his own advancement, by destroying the reckless rivalry of political parties for place and power, by steadily creating free trade in everything, and thus allowing the free development of not only the almost infinite capacities and resources of the people of this country, but also of their friendliness and their desire to work together for common ends,—by these methods to make this country yield an example of the happiness and prosperity that can be won by any nation, where the natural right of every person to direct his own faculties and to deal with his own property according to his own desires, and not at the dictation of others, is universally respected, and all undertakings and all services are founded upon persuasion of each other, not upon force.

## THE FREE LIFE.

THE FREE LIFE does not believe in creating happiness, virtue, or prosperity for the human race by Acts of Congress. It does not believe in splitting the nation up into two or three political parties, each trying to vote down the other and to force upon the other its own opinions and interests. It does not believe in the modern politician, always engaged in glorifying himself and his party, belittling his rival, misleading the people by passionate appeals in the interest of the moment, and too careful about his own self-advancement to speak in the scrupulous and responsible language of true friendship. It does not believe in the great game of politics; in the traffic of votes; in the scramble for property; in forcible interferences with the habits and lives of men; in great uniform systems; in huge departments, escaping from all real control on the part of the people, their nominal owners; or in the treatment of men and women, their faculties and their property, as State material, which may be employed for any purpose at the pleasure of the majority which has climbed into power.

FREE LIFE believes in self-ownership as one of the deepest truths of human existence; believes that the bodily and mental faculties of men and women are their own inalienable property, and that the attempt to treat them as state-material, spells pure nonsense from a rational point of view, and pure mischief from a social and progressive point of view.

THE FREE LIFE believes in the widest possible differences of life and thought, in endless experiment, in the slow wearing out of vices and follies under THE EDUCATING INFLUENCES OF FREEDOM, IN THE UNIVERSAL DIFFUSION OF PROSPERITY, as men abandon the mad struggle for power over each other, and the workers of all conditions, throwing aside the illusions of politics, resolutely concentrate their energies upon the reconstruction, bit by bit, of all the circumstances of their daily life through their own voluntary associations. It believes that it will be the function of these associations to peacefully revolutionize the life of the worker, by amassing corporate property of many different kinds for their members, until such property becomes a considerable part of the national wealth, and to provide for all the new wants—many as yet unknown and unsuspected—of a constantly growing civilization.

THE FREE LIFE looks upon all forms of war—whether between nations, or political parties, or classes, or employers and employed—as mere survivals of barbarism, as mere outbursts of senselessness, and believes that such forms of war can only be brought to their end by inspir-

ing a general hatred of all coercion of each other, and by frankly recognizing that the free judgment and free action of every man and woman are the supreme law governing all human relations. As regards international war, when once the right of the individual to give or withhold his war-tax is conceded, the military systems, so fatal to happiness and so brutal, cruel and productive of widespread evil, will gradually collapse of themselves. They depend at present upon a false national cohesion—the power of some to drive others along paths that the sunlight of honesty and justice never lights and which the drivers themselves dare not tread for fear of the glass cover of sham and pretense being broken and revealing their true selves.

THE FREE LIFE is voluntarism not anarchy. It opposes State Socialism in all its forms, as a huge, ill-conceived, ill-jointed, ill-balanced structure, founded by brute force in defiance of all rights upon the ruins of individual liberty, and, therefore, involving the certain degradation of human character. It is utterly opposed to the confusions, the scrambles, the contradictions, the impossibilities, of Communistic Anarchism, which offers everything to anybody, and too often, in the persons of its apostles, sanctions the most senseless and revolting violence. It has sympathies with a certain peaceable group belonging to the so-called Individualist Anarchists,—a group that believes strongly in individual property, and peaceable evolution,—but differs from them since it believes that the State has a rightful (and useful) existence so long as it REMAINS IN SUBORDINATION TO INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. The state is the creation of the individual; it is his instrument, his servant; it may be endowed by him with such powers and rights as he himself possesses; but it cannot possibly be endowed with any larger powers or rights.

As “Self-owner,” the individual has a right of using force to defend against force the self which he owns, with its faculties, and the property acquired (without force or fraud) by means of those faculties—the individual ownership of property being the logical consequence of the individual ownership of faculties, and resting upon the same moral basis—but the individual can possess no moral right to use force to dominate others, and to compel their acceptance of his own opinions or his own interests, since any such compulsion is destructive of the self-ownership of these others. Exactly the same limit is morally imposed upon the State. The State, created by the individual, cannot possess larger rights than the individual. It can only receive in trust the rights which the individual possesses; it can therefore only use force to protect self-ownership; it can never use force to lessen or destroy self-ownership. It can protect by force against force

the person and property of all persons ; it can never be made the tool of one set of persons to force either their opinions or their interests upon another set of persons. As these truths are recognized, we shall slowly get rid of human strife, and the cause of strife ; we shall be content to go our own way, and to concede the same liberty in full to our brother men. Freed from misery of the perpetual struggle to avoid being trampled upon, whilst we trample in turn upon our rivals, we shall give our undivided energies to our own work, of whatever kind it may be ; and we shall learn to help each other, and to discharge public duties in the only worthy spirit,—that of Free Men, uncoerced ourselves, and with no desire to coerce others. The future of the world is Voluntaryism, for there is no other political creed whatsoever which thoroughly respects human rights, and that without the boundaries of a nation, and no other creed which will not be found under searching criticism to be self-contradictory and morally indefensible.

## SOME REASONS WHY VOLUNTARYISTS OBJECT TO COMPULSORY TAXATION IN ALL ITS FORMS.

1. Because it rests on certain intellectual contradictions and absurdities. It requires that wealth should be created by individual energy and enterprise, and then spent collectively, that is, spent under a system which reduces the individual almost to insignificance; it tends to place the owner and the non-owner on an equality,—the non-owner, if he choose to use his power, becoming the virtual master of the property of the owner; and for every service conferred it imposes a burden—direct or indirect—and yet gives the individual no choice as regards the services performed for him, or the burdens placed upon him.

2. Because it is opposed to a state of true liberty. It is impossible to look upon a man as free, so long as others have unlimited command over his property. It is impossible to separate freedom of action from freedom of possession. A man acts through and by means of the various substances of the world, and if he is not free to acquire and own these substances as an individual, neither is he free to act as an individual.

3. Because it builds up the belief that a man may be used by other men against his own convictions and his own interests. It therefore divides us into those who are tools and those who are users of tools; and perpetuates a modern form—more subtle and more concealed than the old forms—of slave-owning.

4. Because it builds up and strengthens a number of revolting superstitions. It teaches men that they belong, body and mind, to the uncounted, unknown, voting crowd, called the State; for if their property belongs to the State, then we must presume that their physical and mental faculties, through which they earned their property, also belong to the State. In the same way it teaches the cowardly and contemptible doctrine that in presence of any supposed public danger or on behalf of any supposed public good, there is no longer any appeal, as if they had no existence, and that all persons are simply subject to the decisions—often taken in panic—of those who have gained political power over them.

5. Because in strengthening these superstitions it degrades the view of human existence. It destroys the perception that the judgment and the will are sacred, because they are the highest part of human nature, and it leads us to look on each other as mere material to be dealt with wholesale and in accordance with the expediency of the moment.

6. Because this country affirmed many years ago that a compulsory (The country referred to here by Mr. Hebert is England) Church-rate

was immoral and oppressive, just because of the burden of it laid upon individual conscience; and in affirming this truth it unconsciously affirmed the wider truth, that EVERY TAX OR RATE FORCIBLY TAKEN FROM AN UNWILLING PERSON, IS IMMORAL AND OFFENSIVE. The human conscience knows no distinction between Church-rates and other compulsory rates and taxes. The sin lies in the disregarding each others' convictions, and is not affected by the subject-matter of the tax.

7. Because it makes absolutely certain in the end a hateful war between classes. It accustoms the mass of voters to the belief that all their wants may be satisfied out of the COMMON COMPULSORY FUND, and thus the nation is split up into two struggling halves (parties)—those who strive to take, and those who strive to retain (The ins and outs of power).

8. Because it gives to the politician a very undue importance. It places in his hands, often as the reward of successful speech-making, the resources of large classes of his countrymen,—a position which could be won ordinarily only through a much more laborious process and in return for qualities of a much higher order. In this way it may be good for the politician, endowing him with many pleasant things in return for his profession of certain opinions; but it is not so good for those who are made use of to provide, willingly or unwillingly, these pleasant things.

9. Because it favors the rank growth of a very evil form of bribery. Out of the common compulsory fund (the public treasury) the politician promises what will please; and by means of taxes and burdens laid upon others buys his own way into Congress and office.

10. Because it tends to produce a habit of misty, confused thought and cheap generosity—generosity at the expense of others—in our leading men, corrupting all clear sense of justice, and making them traffickers in phrases and servile to their own interests; in other words, because no class of men, rich or poor, are found with sufficient honesty or impartiality to be entrusted with compulsory taking and spending of the money of others.

11. Because it gives Congress—a body which is elected under the influence of passion and strife, and by means of unscrupulously managed party organizations—far too great power over the movements of the human mind. It gives it power to force certain forms of thought upon the nation: to crush other forms out—at least temporarily; and makes of it a sort of god, which disposes,—but without the knowledge, judgment, or impartiality of a god—of the gravest questions of human existence.

12. Because it makes Universal Suffrage an entirely unworkable arrangement. Man for man, the whole people should be on a footing of perfect equality as regards certain great national questions (e. g., questions of civil and criminal code, peace and war, Monarchy or Republicanism, etc.) but not as regards property compulsorily taken. In all matters relating to property, it is clear sense and just sense that the opinions and desires of those to whom such property belongs, should count for far more than the opinions and desires of those to whom it does not belong. Compulsory taking of property and universal suffrage cannot reasonably be united under one system. Each makes the other ridiculous when keeping company together.

13. Because it inevitably leads to the curse of bureaucratic government. The departments of administration, ever extending and absorbing more public money, become independent of all real control, become a small solid nation within the nation, create—principally for the benefit of parents with unmarketable sons—innumerable places and immense vested interests, and turn out second-rate work, just because such work is exposed to no competition, and is relieved from the danger of the bankruptcy court—all mistakes being covered over by larger and larger takings from the public.

14. Because—notwithstanding the high character of many permanent officials—it increases the danger of harsh, arbitrary, and occasionally cruel things being done by these uncontrolled and irresponsible departments. As their work grows, and the authority of those employed by them becomes greater, the resistance of the public to their interference necessarily becomes less, both because the public cannot watch with carefulness the large area which falls under the regulation, and because the sense of public helplessness rapidly increases in presence of these powerfully organized bodies, possessed, in far greater degree than the public, of the technical knowledge which belongs to their own class of work and their own methods, and in almost all cases able to count upon the silent support of the Government, which has to work through them.

15. Because in its practical consequences it is endangering the prosperity and even the existence of old and young countries. The rich and the promising countries of South America have been already nearly wrecked by their mad financial management; at this moment, it is doubtful if the United States can adopt a free trade policy, even if strongly desired by a large part of our people, on account of the extravagant expenditure to which the country is committed, and which is consequently supposed to necessitate a tariff; New Zealand has for many years been strug-



gling to repair the frightful mistakes into which she was led by allowing a few men the power of compulsory dealing with the property of others; some of the Australasian Colonies are suffering acutely from past extravagance, and fortunately for themselves are experiencing difficulty in borrowing; India is in a condition that should cause the gravest anxiety as regards her future; in Europe, Spain, Portugal and Greece are apparently nearly outside of possibilities of financial salvation (since this was written Spain has had to raise by patriotic subscription \$100,000,000 to carry on her war in Cuba, being unable to borrow money upon her bonds in any market of the world); France has large chronic yearly deficits; Germany,—Austria, perhaps, to a less extent—and Italy—the last approaching condition is almost in sight—are being crushed by burdens which they cannot bear (the revenue tax now being collected from the goats' milk that the poor peasant owns), and which will, if persisted in, drive them over the abyss; and Russia lives in a state of constant financial difficulty, which is only partially concealed by official statements that do not err on the side of candor. Here and there are to be found some examples of saner management, amongst which England and our own country may perhaps be still counted. But whilst our state and national debt continues to increase, both forms of expenditure, local and central, continue to multiply, while municipal debt is doubling itself with alarming rapidity, in Mr. Albert Pell's words, "with very little to show for it," and is now threatening the industrial prosperity of our towns and cities. In other countries, the Municipal Governments of Paris, Vienna, Florence, Rome and Madrid, repeat in each instance the story of excessive expenditure, excessive burdens, and, in some instances, of grave corruption; in our own country the boodleism of New York has become a by-word in most parts of the world, and Boston has been removed from the hands of her municipal authorities, and placed under a Commissioner.

16. Because it gives great, undue facility for engaging a whole nation in war. If it were necessary to raise the sum required from those who individually agreed in the necessity of war, we should have the strongest guarantee for the preservation of peace. Once given the power of compulsorily taking the property of others, and a Minister "with a light heart," a General on a black horse, or the shouting crowd of a Capital, may turn the scale in favor of war. If neither the French nor the German governments had the power to take such property as they liked from the two nations, it would seem almost certain they would before now have arrived at a peaceful solution of their differences.

17. Because it is unfitted—as a system—to supply the new wants of an active and expanding civilization. Where in a simple type of community there exist a few unchanging wants, it is conceivable that a compulsory system—however unwise and immoral in itself—might for a time produce no serious inconveniences. In a progressive condition, where new wants discover themselves from day to day, these inconveniences take an acute form. When a certain point of taxation is reached, the hurtfulness of taxes and the friction caused in collecting them advance almost in geometrical ratio, until at last a tax may be increased without producing any greater return. When, therefore, taxation has once been made the principal instrument of supplying the wants of a people, a stage must presently be reached where each new want can only be satisfied at a much greater cost than in the case of preceding wants. In this way civilization—when made dependent on compulsory payments—arrests itself.

18. Because it cannot be arranged on any system that has not far-reaching hurtful effects. It passes “the wit of man” to render the compulsory taking of property harmless. Each system of taxation has its own peculiar group of evils. To take but one example: Income taxes necessitate inquisition and oppression; create a system of Government spies; lead to action being taken very improperly and upon questionable guesses by the “obedient” officials; under every imaginable system must be unequal in their incidence; cannot from their nature be decided in cases of dispute either in an open court or a secret court without grave annoyance to the tax payer; strike all visible property more severely than the less visible forms; lead to much evasion and untruthfulness; become complicated to the last degree owing to the innumerable methods of earning income in modern life; involve metaphysical difficulties which recall the dialectics of the middle ages; tend to drive capital into risky employments outside the country; whenever much raised, inevitably cause the corruption of officials on whom the returns depend; are a standing menace, owing to the apparent ease with which they can be increased, to traders and owners of property; tend to be unremunerative, as Leroy Beaulieu has so well shown, except when they are applied to the mass of small properties, since the larger properties, when singled out for attack, even if they do not disappear, are comparatively unfruitful as a field for taxation—thus defeating the greed and injustice of trying to make any special class supply the common compulsory fund; destroy the advantage of free trade, which a country may enjoy so far as customs are concerned, since they raise the price of articles produced in an almost excessive degree, each class of producer adding to the tax that he himself pays, and to the tax paid by any

one who precedes him, his own rate of profit—with the consequence that an article that passes through the hands of several producers and distributors pays the tax several times over, as well as in each case the special rate of profit added to the tax by each producer and each distributor; are therefore unfair to traders in a free trade country who may have to compete with traders in other countries not burdened with income tax (though it should be said, probably burdened in other ways); and commit the capital crime of making property less desirable, and of weakening the desire to save and invest. Death duties—a peculiarly mean form of property tax—assessed taxes, custom duties, stamp duties, all have their own special far-reaching consequences of mischief. One reason is plain; industrial or commercial life is free life, where men adapt themselves in their own way to changing circumstances, and are called on to display infinite tact and mental resource in their efforts to surmount difficulties and to do away with or reduce the various sources of expenditure which surround production; but State compulsory payments are a solid unyielding obstacle which defies all such exercise of ingenuity or invention or improvement or method. They are as irreconcilable with free movements of the human mind and the many varied adaptations which make up the delicate process of industrial life, as a rigid iron bar would be, if thrust from the outside and without any other connection, into a complicated machinery made up of joints and flexible parts.

19. Because it introduces hopeless confusion and uncertainty—where all should be most clear, certain and stable—into conditions under which property is acquired and owned. It tends to destroy the free market, as the great centre of acquisition and distribution, the centre through which all industrial efforts are set in motion, and through which all efforts are rewarded, and to set up in its place the changing fancies of every set of politicians who make their way to office.

20. Because all taxes, even those placed upon the rich, injure those who are poor. They disturb the course of production and trade; they make traders timid, and so contract industrial enterprise; they make considerable payments in ready money necessary, and thus favor a few large houses as against small traders, and thus facilitate “corners” and monopolies; they disturb natural values, depreciating property specially taxed; when heavy, they discourage a useful service, which the rich perform unconsciously, of encouraging those inventions, which must at first pass through an expensive stage before they can be widely produced in cheap forms; they spoil markets, which in great measure depend for their cheapness and excellence upon their extent; but above all, they misdirect the

efforts of the working part of the people. Grasping at the common compulsory fund, out of which every sort of thing is promised, they lose their natural desire to form voluntary societies to provide for all the pressing wants of life; and instead of setting themselves to build up with their own hands a new civilization—the real work which cries aloud to be done—they waste priceless time and energy in struggling for miserable handfuls out of the common compulsory fund, thus playing the politician's game to his heart's content.

21. Because it injures the working class in another almost deadly manner, bribing them to give up the real management of their affairs and accept a purely sham management in its place. No better example exists than education. The simplest form of school, really managed and paid for by the working classes, would be worth far more to them and to their children, than the present tawdry and pretentious system, in which everybody interferes, and over which no parent has the least control. If they desire endowments—of which, be it said, they spoil education—the workmen should claim the old charitable endowments, which have been absorbed by all sorts of institutions, and kick tax rate, Whitehall department, and all compulsory management and all compulsory attendance into the dust hole.

22. Because our highest education in life is the education which results from our wants and our voluntary efforts to satisfy these wants; and because as long as we satisfy these wants by using a compulsory machine, we can never learn to work in friendly voluntary fashion with each other, and to help each other, out of a true public spirit. Thus, the richer classes are being constantly cut off by the compulsory machine from learning work with those less well-off than themselves for public ends, and their lives become less useful to others, and less happy for themselves.

23. Because when it is placed before the poor man, living a hard and struggling life, as his great hope of salvation, is it not reasonable to expect him to forbear from using with his full power the tempting weapon thus thrust into his hand. If it is in itself a good, true weapon, why not drive it home to its furthest consequences?

24. Because, from the very fact of being compulsory, it is accompanied by excessive inconveniences inseparable from it. We hear much of the official checks and counter-checks, the expensive, dilatory and yet unsuccessful safeguards, with which the spending of public money is surrounded, but these irritating arrangements are necessary and cannot be dispensed with. The system under which the money of individuals is compulsorily taken and spent by a few other persons is in itself so unnatural, so topsy-

turvey, since the great natural safeguard of a man looking after his own interest, doing what he thinks is best with his own property, and refusing to contribute to undertakings which he thinks are expensively, inefficiently, or corruptly managed, is swept away, that no imaginable reform can make a public service satisfactory, as long as it is kept on a compulsory basis. To set aside at the outset and treat as of no consequence the free agency of the individual is to commit an error of so vital a nature that everything falling under the influence of such an error is predestined to go wrong.

25. Because neither rich nor poor should carry out their special views at the expense of others. The poor should not compulsorily lay the burden of education upon the rich, whilst the rich, who favor Royalty and the expenses which are generally held necessary to maintain Royalty, should provide for these expenses themselves, and not lay any part of the burden upon those who dislike expensive ceremonial, or prefer the simpler forms of a republic.

26. Because it is an enormous distraction as regards the work of the best workers. Where money is compulsorily taken for all sorts of objects, the most capable men must either to some extent detach themselves from their own work in order to form a judgement upon any undertaking which any politician chooses to bring forward, or they must simply allow themselves to be robbed of money, which they neither consent nor desire to give, because it is a smaller loss to be robbed of money, than it is to be robbed of time.

27. Because it tends to turn us all, members of congress, journalists, electors, into persons who think superficially and act in a hurry on very imperfect knowledge. The enormous number of undertakings which are under the hands of Congress, and the enormous number of questions which are submitted to its decision, oblige all those who concern themselves with political life to possess innumerable smatterings of knowledge of various sorts, to judge in the light of such smatterings, and to make the best show that is possible with such smatterings. It has been said by the defenders of competitive examinations that their merit consists in developing the class of qualities that are specially required for the struggles of after-life. As regards political life the plea is perfectly just ; and the brilliant use of limited material and the intrepid judgement that are invaluable for the one purpose are also invaluable for the other purpose.

28. Because it is essentially socialistic in principle, and offers the easiest and surest means of advance to State Socialism. So long as we admit that the property of individuals lies at the mercy of the largest

number of votes, we are intellectually and morally committed to State Socialism, and it is only certain accidents, liable to disappear at any crisis, which stand between us and the practical realization of State Socialism.

29. Because it offers a decisive battle ground between State Socialists and Voluntarists. It raises the question of the State existing for the individual, or the individual existing for the State, in the clearest and most comprehensive manner. Moreover, it places the contest on equal terms. At present, State Socialists have the advantage of attacking at any point, and often win, because their solid column is rapidly thrown upon some skilfully selected spot in the widely-dispersed line of defence. To a contest persistently fought on such terms there must be only one ending. The fortress that cannot attack is destined to fall; and the defence of liberty by staying behind parapets and bastions is hopeless. Henceforward, we act on the offensive. We admit of no lost or decided causes where liberty is concerned. We care nothing for the many small victories which Socialists have won in the last few years. We only ask, with whatever we are dealing—be it an institution with its roots in the past centuries or hedged round by the bayonets of Emperors, or an institution pitched up on its brand new pedestal by universal suffrage, is it, or is it not, on the side of individual liberty?

30. Lastly, because it is the great representative enemy of all voluntary action. We see in it the very citadel of compulsion, the chief instrument by which every encroachment is carried out, the chief bribe by which men are induced to submit to these encroachments, and an institution which by its very existence preaches to men every day and every hour that they are NOT REALLY SOVEREIGN OVER THEMSELVES, THEIR FACULTIES, AND THEIR PROPERTY, *but are subject to the will of others, are at the mercy of these others*—to use or not to use, according to their caprices, their superstitions, or their selfishness. We see in it one of the last remaining but one of the most stubbornly defended strongholds of the dominion of men over MEN. To us, VOLUNTARY ACTION STANDS FOR THE HOPE OF THE HUMAN RACE, as compulsory action, STANDS FOR ITS EVIL GENIUS. We contrast what the free individual has done, with what the compulsory organization, called government, has done and is doing; we see on the one side all that the human mind has achieved in industry, in commerce, in art, in science, in literature: we count enterprise after enterprise, invention after invention; we see that not only food, the clothing, the houses, the comforts and refinements which we possess, but that our mental selves, the very thoughts that we think, the very beings that we are, are the outcome of the individual forces that surround us—the outcome of the

perpetual action and reaction of the spoken word, the written page, the social intercourse, the outcome of mind acting upon mind. How small, how beggarly in comparison, is the sum to be placed to the account of the compulsory association !!

We affirm, then, that Voluntaryism in everything is the true law of progress and happiness, compulsion, or the brute force of law, being simply retained to hold in check brute force, to protect the individual from the murderer, the thief, and the swindler, to protect him in person and property from injurious acts, done in disregard of his consent. Except for such rude and simple purposes of protection, we deny that the BRUTE FORCE OF LAW can ever form a basis for social relations. We affirm that the brute force of law can never be used to set aside a man's consent as regards his own actions without condemning that man permanently to a low existence. We affirm that only as men learn to be self-directing, to take their lives and actions into their own charge, to practice and perfect the instrument of voluntary combination for all the growing wants of life, to fight their battles with the weapons of discussion and reason, rejecting all intimidation and coercion of each other, to undertake the public duties and services for each other gladly, as free individuals, not driven into any path, however good it may be, by penalties and persecutions—it is possible to look forward to happier and friendlier forms of society. We affirm that there is no such hope to be found at the end of the dreary vista of organized compulsion; of compulsions resting upon old compulsions and buttressed by new compulsions; of endless regulations, becoming year after year more minute, and penetrating more deeply into social life and home life, each action, each habit, being more and more jealously scrutinized, for fear that if freedom should be allowed to exist at any point, like a ray of light entering the gloom of a dungeon, it might prove the source from which danger at other points should arise to the huge, unstable, badly-cemented fabric of universal regulation. We affirm that all such employments of compulsion are as mere wanderings in the desert, and can lead nowhere. In the breast of every person, however dimly he may recognize it, there is a moral feeling telling him that he has a right to freedom of action and freedom of thought, that he is meant to be self-guiding, and that no organization outside him, on any plea, whether the plea of his own good or of the good of others, can take these rights from him. It is because of the existence of this feeling, which, if often perverted and denied, yet is deep as human nature itself, and spread over every region of the world, that we who believe in liberty and hate compulsion, hold the conviction that the victory, whatever yet may be the battles to fight, must

at length belong to us. You cannot build upon compulsion,—human nature is in eternal revolt against it ; every building you rest upon it shall prove a building of strife and confusion ; every seeming victory shall turn against you, and come to naught.



## LABOR ADVISED TO REJECT ALL HELP FROM COERCION AND RESTRICTION.

As regards the labor question, recognizing to the full the right of any and all laborers to peacefully withhold their labor, if so they choose, at every hour of every day, of every year, even—should they so elect—to starve into submission any number of their fellowmen by such simple withholding their labor, Free Life yet urges them to seek their ends through peace instead of war, and to do away with the terrible waste and other evils that result from employing their savings as a war-fund. Believing that it is most hurtful to the true interests of labor, as well as morally unjust, to attempt to prevent any fellow laborer from taking the place which another laborer has thought right to resign; believing that each man has the right to give or withhold his labor, as he chooses, but not in any way to interfere with the bargain which some other man may make about himself, it urges upon all workmen:—(1) Where they are discontented with their conditions of employment not to strike in a body (which means almost necessarily the compulsion of some of their own number, acting upon the instincts of a crowd instead of acting as individuals, and the danger of acquiescing—when once a struggle is entered upon—in some forms of violence and intimidation) but to assist in removing those, who individually wish to be removed, to other factories and work-shops,—thus draining away, where the terms of employment are unsatisfactory, the best and most adventurous hands, whilst as a matter of right and justice they offer no impediment of any kind to the taking on of new hands by the employer. (2) To trust in such cases far more than at present to friendly negotiation, and to the increasing power of publicity and free discussion for improvement of conditions; (3) To make their unions instruments for amassing large corporate property, to turn them from fighting machines into organizations for constructive purposes, such as the establishing of courses of education when trade is depressed, the investing of their savings-fund in solid bricks and mortar, in homes, which would become the property of the individual members, in lodging-houses, halls, reading and recreation rooms, farms in the country, which would be held collectively, in shares in existing productive enterprises, and eventually in trade enterprises conducted by themselves; (4) To cultivate far more friendly and intimate relations with employers; to place them under no vexatious rules or restrictions, especially restrictions invented by a central body; to make their conduct of business as easy as possible; to get rid of factory laws

and in their place to co-operate with employers to promote far better sanitary conditions than those existing at present ; to encourage every system under which they would become partners in the concerns in which they work ; and instead of placing themselves under any universal discipline of limited hours, to favor differences as regards time and manner of work at different factories or mines, so that each class of workers may gradually find that which suits it best ; (5) to abandon any attempt to enforce one fixed rate of payment throughout a trade, as driving out of employment old, young, and second-rate workers, and as certain to prolong the existence of great war-organizations and great war-funds on the part both of employers and workmen—each side wasting more and more of its resources in the effort to be stronger than its rival, and thus imitating on a small scale the disastrous example of Germany and France ; to abandon every attempt to restrict the number of those who enter their own trade, or to turn their trade into a monopoly.

PRICES RAISED BY RESTRICTION MEAN A TAX IMPOSED BY ONE WORKER  
UPON ANOTHER.

All such attempts are treason against their fellow-workers, because every restricted trade implies the effort to get an artificial or heightened price for the produce of such trade, whilst the workers in it enjoy the produce of other unrestricted trade, at free trade or unrestricted prices. They are, therefore, guilty in the great exchange of the world of taking more and giving less, and so far as they temporarily benefit themselves—and it can only be temporarily—they do it by placing a tax upon all other workers in the unrestricted trades. Nor is the universal restriction of all trades less hurtful than the partial restriction of some trades. Where all professions and trades are restricted, everybody is injured, because : 1st, everybody has to pay for all articles of use the higher price that results from the strike or the restriction ; 2d, because all production is rendered sickly by losing the vitalizing effects which accompany free trade—the constant introduction of new methods, the constant inflow of capital, brains, and energy ; 3d, because each set of restrictions in turn fails and is then succeeded by a new set of restrictions, created to make the first set more effective, and a state of hopeless entanglement results ; 4th, because the workers and their children cannot readily pass to the trades for which they have an aptitude or liking ; and a great mass, owing to such impeded movement, is slowly formed of the unemployed and indi-

gent. Such restriction, like restriction in every other matter, prevents the true solution. The true solution can only come, as in international affairs, through friendly disarmament of opposed forces; through making the individual the pivot of all action; through creating that freedom of movement, which on the one hand allows capital to work in the easiest manner, to adapt itself to new circumstances, to develop new branches of production, and, just because it is unharnessed and secure, to take the lowest profit; and on the other hand allows labor not only to improve its own position constructively—its energies being no longer misdirected and its savings no longer wasted in useless warfare—but to obtain the highest wage possible, because such highest wage depends upon the following factors: (a) peaceful, continuous production with increased amount of what is produced; (b) improved methods, saving labor and material; (c) the competition of capital against capital to obtain laborers, this competition being at its keenest where capital enjoys security. At the same time under a state of free trade and free movement there cannot be successful combination amongst employers to maintain profit at the expense of wages; since a high rate of profit leads to the formation of co-operative and joint-stock companies and to the increased bidding for labor with raised wages.

#### THE FRUITS OF LIBERTY AND THE FRUITS OF COMPULSION.

FREE LIFE asks of every human being to distrust coercion as a UNIVERSALLY BAD INSTRUMENT FOR FIGHTING FOR RIGHTS AND SUPPLYING ANY WANTS. It asks them to recognize the great truth that progress abhors the dull spiritless uniformity which follows upon every form of coercion. It asks them to have faith in the ALL-HEALING POWER OF THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL FORCES, and to believe that no true living development of these forces can take place until men set themselves to reason and persuade instead of coercing, until each man asks no more for himself than to go his own way, whilst he in turn concedes the same perfect liberty to his neighbor, and until every variety of thought, experiment, and system are allowed to compete freely with each other. It bids those who are Anglo-Saxon remember and cherish the special genius that belongs to their insular character—the personal initiative, the spirit of adventure, the steadiness in danger, the power to stand alone and resist adverse opinion. It bids them not to exchange these things for the nerveless abject life of an administered crowd. It bids them not to grasp at passing material advantages at the price of injuring themselves mentally and morally. It bids them reject all huge uni-

versal systems, not only as discouraging freshness and vigor of thought, but as necessarily fatal to the best classes of citizens, because they place these best classes under conditions framed to meet the requirements of the lowest class of citizens, and, therefore, pedantically sacrifice all the soundest and worthiest part of the people, on whom progress depends, for the sake of the least worthy,—who indeed are very slightly, probably not at all, improved by the restrictions thrust upon them. Free Life then calls upon the people to end the bitter strife, and the false state of progress which must continue to exist, as long as they struggle to rule over each other. It calls upon them to get rid of the Compulsory State, and replace it by the Voluntary State. It holds that it is only under the Voluntary State that in any true sense men can befriend each other, or work for the public good; for under the Compulsory State all such services are tainted by the compulsion of those who compel, and the submission of those who submit.

#### THE WORK THAT IS WAITING TO BE DONE.

It is in no selfish spirit that Free Life preaches Voluntaryism. It wishes no individual to wrap himself up in his own special interests; it wishes no part of the nation to retreat from any true duties which fall upon it, either within or without the borders of this country. But it denies that any good or lasting work can be built upon the compulsion of others, be they poor or rich; it denies that either by those who compel, or upon those who are compelled, can the peaceful and happy society of the future be founded. It invites all men to problems of liberty and friendly co-operation; to join in thinking out—whilst first and foremost we give to the individual those full rights over himself, his faculties and his property, without which all efforts are vain—how far we can usefully carry on in common life; how best we can manage common property; how we can work together in the perfecting of education, in the spreading of sanitary knowledge, in improving the conditions of labor, in attacking poverty, in purifying and beautifying the life of our towns, in organizing voluntary defence, in helping distant communities that are related to us or partly dependent on us; how we can do all these things,—without at any point touching with the least of our fingers the hateful instrument of an aggressive and unjustifiable compulsion. With such State compulsion Free Life makes and will make NO TERMS. To the Voluntary State it bids men offer their best gifts of *body and mind*; to the Compulsory State it bids men offer their HATRED and their RESISTANCE.

[ THE END. ]

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The organ of the Voluntary Taxation and the Voluntary State, whose motto is: "Use the brute force of Laws simply to restrain violence and certain coarse Forms of Fraud, and trust to voluntaryism—the true instrument of civilization—FOR ALL OTHER THINGS." Edited by Mr. Auberon Herbert, author of "Windfall and Waterdrift," "Sacrifice of Education to Examination," "Bad Air and Bad Health," "A Politician in Trouble About His Soul," "Under the Yoke of the Butterflies," etc. Subscription fifty cents per annum, postage prepaid. Address Mr. Auberon Herbert, Old House, Ringwood, London, England; Messrs. Marlborough & Co., 51 Old Bailey, London, E. C. England, or E. E. Knott, Burlington, Vermont, U. S. A. Sample copy sent free on application.

