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February 1968

No. 21

POSTERITY: THE NEW SUPERSTITION

Benjamin De Casseres

The latest decoy set up by the indestructible god of illusion is Posterity. Man has been invited to live for various motives. Once it was for the glory of God; Comte proposed as a motive the glory of man; now we are invited to live for the glory of Posterity. Nietzsche called Posterity the Overman; Socialists call it "the rising generation." No one has thought of the glory of living for the sake of living, of eating, fighting, reproducing merely because they give pleasure. Always there are devil-gods that call for sacrifices; always there is the bogey-word that demands obeisance and tribute of all our actions. Nothing must exist for itself. Each thing must exist for the sake of some other thing. The perfume in a rose is legitimate only if there is a human nostril somewhere to be intoxicated; and the perfume of our acts and thoughts is a "moral" or "right" perfume only if it gives pleasure to the nostrils of God, Church, Common Good, or Posterity.

Man has not yet become a good animal. He suffers from ideals, as he once suffered from superstitions. An ideal is a superstition in court clothes. It makes very little difference whether you believe that an east wind blowing down a chimney on a moonlight night will bring you good luck or that an act that gives you pleasure in the doing is "right" if it benefits Posterity and wrong if it doesn't.

The East worships its ancestors; the West worships posterity. The East lies prone on its belly offering its tributes to ghosts; the West bows its head in adoration to the ghosts not yet born. When an Oriental worships the soul of a bit of wood, we call him superstitious; when the Westerner worships certain letters of the alphabet which spell "God" or "Church" or "Morality" or "Posterity", we call it the Ideal. And a smile steals over the furrowed brow of wisdom, and Momus reels in glee. Ancestor-worship is the old superstition; posterity-worship the new superstition. The "gods of our fathers" are become the gods of our children. The old bottles are filled with new wine, but the old labels have never been taken off. We still march under mottoes and tramp to Ultima Thule to the raging tom-toms beaten by priests and idealists. Still we signal a host of imaginary beings with the gaudily-coloured pocket-handkerchiefs of our latest trumpery abstraction.

All these words that man bows before, one after another, in his flight across the face of Time, are born of the idea of Responsibility - that somewhere there is Something that is taking cognizance of all his acts and will bring him to account for them. Sometimes it is the bearded, concrete Jehovah of the Jews; now it happens to be a beardless, visageless, vaguely-shadowed Posterity. The idea of responsibility is as universal as all other

illusions; the universality of an idea or instinct merely proves - universality. From the feeling of responsibility sprang the most immoral and strength-destroying doctrine that we know of - the doctrine of the Vicarious Atonement.

Responsibility to God was the first great necessary lie; for, if the race is to be preserved (no one has ever found out a rational reason why it should be), lies are more necessary to its growth and sustenance than truths. Responsibility to God or gods was the first ideal, the birth-boards that clamped and twisted the brain and soul of healthy self-centred beings and changed their centres of gravity from the enkernelled Self to an all-seeing, all-recording Nonentity that had a name but no local habitation. Man is born in his own incalculable anterior images, but he came to believe, in his all-ignorance, that he had been created in the image of another, a giant jail-warden who allowed him to rove the earth at his pleasure under a heavy bail-bond to keep the peace. The idea of an eternal responsibility to this abstraction germinated the first seeds of man's moral weakness, paralyzed his activities, sickened him with scrupulosities, and filled him with the consciousness that healthy activity was sin. War began within him, a war between his superb irresponsible instincts and the ideas of a vicarious responsibility, and out of that shambles issued the whining Christian, the lord of matters called the idealist, and that mincing prig, Conscience.

The idea of responsibility to God began to wane with the dawning suspicion that man was not a celestial, but a sociological animal. Conceiving himself to be this new thing, he here invented a new kind of responsibility called "social responsibility." The old mask was being repainted. The phrase "social well-being" was hoisted into the Ark of the Covenant of Lies. An act was now good or bad as it affected the community. Man loved his neighbour for the responsibilities he could shoulder on him; the corner ballot-box was the Kabala; the community had power to bless or curse the individual. God had become a town-hall orator; the Recording Angel had become a court-reporter. The era of the State-Lie had begun.

The transition is easy from the cant about living for the sake of "doing good in the community" and "benefitting the whole" to the ideal of living for the sake of posterity. The old, obscure doctrine of blood-sacrifices reappears in this new posterity superstition, slightly attenuated and shorn of its immediate and more obvious savage characteristics; but the old trait of responsibility and life-guilt is there.

We are told to live for the sake of posterity; we must breed for posterity, eat for the sake of posterity, be moral for the sake of posterity, dress hygienically for the sake of posterity, and even die when necessary for the sake of posterity. We legislate for posterity, rear a child with an eye to posterity, tinker with the social system for the sake of posterity, tamper

with individual liberty for the sake of posterity, construct utopias for the sake of posterity, vote the Socialist ticket for the sake of posterity.

It is the fetich, the Moloch, the Golden Calf of our civilization. We who are living, palpitating in the flesh and blood present, have no rights; the ego is not sufficient unto itself; we are only straws to show which way the sociological and evolutionary winds are blowing; we are only the bricks and mortar that shall go to build the marvelous, fantastic, phantasmal edifice to house that coming Holy Family - Posterity. Our deeds have no value unless they feed the bulging belly of incalculable tomorrows. We are only as scraps of bone and meat tossed to that fugitive glutton, the Future, by pasty-souled idealists and the spineless altruists who poison life with their doctrines of responsibility and hoax the feminine with their metaphysical Cardiff Giants.

We are to be systematized, badged, classed, grooved, wired, stuffed; our instincts, our very marrow, are to be inoculated by the virus of Altruism and our faces beatified with the fore-running rays of the great Posterity Light. How we are to glow with the shine of "right living" - all because the altruistic quacks with their obsessions of Succubae and Incubae have dreamed a new dream they call Posterity!

Weak, impotent, helpless before the immovable present, man salves his sore spot with hopes for the future; not being able to regulate his life today, he promises himself a virtuous, vicarious tomorrow; not daring to set up his Ego as God and its endless pleasure as sufficient motive for all his acts, he sets up an Alter Ego and calls it Posterity, as he once called it God, then the State or the Community. With ecstatic eye and lolling anticipatory tongue he awaits for his happiness in Posterity - something no one has ever seen, something no one can define, something that could not possibly exist.

(First published in Benjamin Tucker's "Liberty", No. 402)

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People used to say of me that I was too individualistic. I must be far more of an individualist than ever I was. I must get far more out of myself than ever I got, and ask far less of the world than ever I asked. Indeed, my ruin came not from too great individualism of life, but from too little. The one disgraceful, unpardonable, and to all time contemptible action of my life was to allow myself to appeal to society for help and protection. To have made such an appeal would have been from the individualistic point of view bad enough, but what excuse can there ever be put forward for having made it?

From "De Profundis" by Oscar Wilde.

MORE ON MORALITY VS. EGOISM

Robert LeFevre

I was pleased to see my letter reproduced in MINUS ONE and was equally pleased to read your answer. When persons talk about different things or even about the same things at different levels, it is certain they will never agree. It is equally certain that agreement is not an essential, although it would be helpful if each disputant knew what the other was talking about so that disagreement would be meaningful rather than demonstrative of non-comprehension.

First, let me say that I am concerned with those actions or decisions which individuals take (including Stirnerites), which actions or decisions may further their ends, but which may constitute molestation of me or other persons. Now, this is a particular class of actions and not "any action," as you erroneously contend.

I have no objection whatever to the Stirnerite or anyone else who does as he pleases with himself and his own property. Indeed, I support this concept and will defend this right. Here, as I see it, there is only right action, although there could be unwise action. If a Stirnerite decides to commit suicide or to burn down his house, this is his business and I could not rightfully interfere. It may be unwise, but the wisdom of the Stirnerite is not my concern. He may do as he pleases with himself and his property irrespective of anything else.

But when the Stirnerite decides that it is to his advantage to kill me or to burn down my house, he has moved into the area of inter-human relationships. At this point, you have suggested that Lan Freed has provided the definition of morality. I don't subscribe to his definition. For the quotation you have used makes it appear that I must act self-sacrificingly at this point, or that if the Stirnerite refrains from burning my house or killing me he is sacrificing himself. And this is, it seems to me, limiting our behaviour by a definition of morality that is surely as savage as the barbaric notions it sought to eliminate.

If I follow this, what is being claimed is this: The Stirnerite (or any other) is compelled to sacrifice something. Either he will sacrifice me, whose property or life he covets, or he must sacrifice himself, since he may elect not to sacrifice me. And this is to say that all life and survival itself is a predatory matter and someone or something must be ravished. Either we will sacrifice others or we will sacrifice ourselves. And with this type of definition the Stirnerite says, I'll sacrifice others, but never myself. No Hitler or Genghis Khan could have stated it better. My own concept of morality does not adhere to barbarism nor arise from it.

But, indeed, it is at this point that the Stirnerite does reject any ambivalence in his own behaviour, for here the Stirnerite can't be wrong. Obviously, he cannot be wrong when it comes to the disposal of his own resources and assets. We would agree there. But when he proposes to dispose of his resources or assets (or proposes to dispose of mine) through processes of molestation, the Stirnerite cannot view this act as wrong either, for as he sees it there is no wrong for him. Whatever his ego tells him, is right by definition.

And now two Stirnerites confront each other, each coveting something the other has. Each is absolutely right and neither can suffer any qualms of indecision, remorse, or guilt. Following the Stirnerite code, which arises from a rejection of morality as defined by Freed, each Stirnerite must sacrifice the other or admit that he has sacrificed himself - unthinkable to an egoist.

Come to think of it, this might be a solution. If only we could arrange to pair off Stirnerites in some type of "life boat" situation, there probably would be few Stirnerites left around.

AND IN REPLY -

S.E.Parker

I agree entirely with Robert LeFevre about "non-comprehension". His reply to me is an excellent example of what he is talking about. He completely ignores what I wrote about the egoist's non-moral use of the terms "right" and "wrong" and insists on treating egoism as if it were a moral philosophy. Just as his first attack rested on the fallacious identification of "guilt" with "recognition of error", so his second rests on the equally fallacious assumption that, because I accept Lan Freed's definition of morality, therefore my behaviour as an egoist must be judged according to morality as so defined! For this reason all his contortions regarding who sacrifices whom for what are wasted. Egoists are amoralists so the question of what is morally "right" or "wrong" for them is completely irrelevant. To repeat: The egoist standpoint is that a "right" action is simply one appropriate to the end desired, and a "wrong" action is one inappropriate to the end desired. In other words, there are expedient or inexpedient actions for the egoist - nothing more.

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Hadjee Abdoo-el Yezdee wrote: -

There is no Good, there is no Bad; these be the whims of mortal
will;
What works me weal: that I call Good; what harms and hurts,
I hold as Ill;
They change with place, they shift with race; and, in the
veriest space of Time,
Each Vice has worn a Virtue's crown; all Good was banned as Sin
or Crime.

RENZO NOVATORE

Enzo Martucci.

My soul is a sacreligious temple
 in which the bells of sin and crime,
 voluptuous and perverse,
 loudly ring out revolt and despair.

These words, written in 1920, give us a glimpse of the promethean being of Renzo Novatore.

Novatore was a poet of the free life. Intolerant of every chain and limitation, he wanted to follow every impulse that rose within him. He wanted to understand everything and experience all sensations - those which lead to the abyss and those which lead to the stars. And then at death to melt into nothingness, having lived intensely and heroically so as to reach his full power as a complete man.

The son of a small farmer of Arcola, Italy, Abile Riziero Ferrari (Renzo Novatore) soon showed his great sensibility and rebelliousness. When his father wanted him to plough the fields he would flee, stealing fruit and chickens to sell so that he could buy books to read under a tree in the forest. In this way he educated himself and quickly developed a taste for non-conformist writers. In these he found reasons for his instinctive aversion to oppression and restriction, to the principles and institutions that reduce men to obedience and renunciation.

As a young man he joined the Arcola group of anarcho-communists, but he was not satisfied with the harmony and limited freedom of the new society they awaited so eagerly. "I am with you in destroying the tyranny of existing society," he said, "but when you have done this and begun to build anew, then I will oppose and go beyond you."

Until he was 15 years old, Renzo included the church in his poetry. After that, freed and unprejudiced, he never planted any roots in the gregarious existence of his village, but often found himself in conflict with both men and the law. He scandalized his respectable family, who wondered what they had done to deserve such a devil.

The Marquis de Sade, who strongly influenced Baudelaire and Nietzsche, saw the problem of human wickedness as the product of a perversion of sexuality (a theme later developed scientifically by Freud).

Novatore, who was influenced by Baudelaire and Nietzsche, asserted that we had needs and aspirations that could not be satisfied without injury to the needs and aspirations of others. Therefore we must either renounce them and become slaves, or try to satisfy them and come into conflict with Society, whatever kind

it may be, even if it calls itself anarchist.

"Anarchy," he wrote, "is not a social form, but a method of individuation. No society will concede to me more than a limited freedom and a well-being that it grants to each of its members. But I am not content with this and want more. I want all that I have the power to conquer. Every society seeks to confine me to the august limits of the permitted and the prohibited. But I do not acknowledge these limits, for nothing is forbidden and all is permitted to those who have the force and the valour."

"Consequently, anarchy, which is the natural liberty of the individual freed from the odious yoke of spiritual and material governors, is not the construction of a new and suffocating society. It is a decisive fight against all societies - christian, democratic, socialist, communist, etc., etc. Anarchism is the eternal struggle of a small minority of aristocratic outsiders against all the societies which follow one another on the stage of history."

These were the ideas expressed by Novatore in "Il Libertario" of La Spezia, "L'Iconoclasta" of Pistoia, and other anarchist journals. And these were the ideas that then influenced me as I was well prepared to receive them.

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During World War I Novatore refused to fight for a cause that was not his own and took to the mountains. Astute, courageous, vigilant, his pistol at the ready, the authorities failed in every attempt to capture him. At the end of the war the deserters were amnestied and he was able to return to his village where his wife and son were waiting for him.

But he was not left in peace for long by the authorities and he fought back immediately and decisively. It was at this time that I first met him.

I was 16 years old and had run away from home and my studies, freeing myself from my bourgeois family who had done everything they could to stop my anarchist activities. Passing through Sarzana on my way to Milan, I stopped there to get to know Novatore, having read his article "My Iconoclastic Individualism." Together with another anarchist called Lucherini, Renzo came at once to meet me.

We passed unforgettable hours together. Our discussions were long and he helped me to fill in some gaps in my thinking, setting me on my way to the solution of many fundamental problems. I was struck by his enthusiasm.

His appearance was impressive. Of medium height, he was athletic in build, and had a large forehead. His eyes were vivacious, and expressed sensibility, intelligence and force. He had an ironic

smile that revealed the contempt of a superior spirit for men and the world. He was 31 years old, but already had the aura of genius.

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After two months wandering around Italy with the police at my heels, I returned to Arcola to see Renzo again. But Emma, his wife, told me that he was also hunted and that I could only meet him at night in the forest.

Once again we had long discussions and I was able to appreciate even more his exceptional qualities as a poet, philosopher and man of action. I valued the power of his intellect and his fine sensitivity which was like that of a Greek god or a divine beast. We parted for the last time at dawn.

Both of us were existing under terrible conditions. We were in open struggle against Society, which would have liked to throw us into jail. Renzo had even been attacked in his house at Fresonaro by a band of armed fascists who intended to kill him, but he had driven them off with home-made grenades. After that he had to keep a safe distance from the village.

However, despite being an outlaw, he continued to develop his individualist anarchist ideas in libertarian papers. I did the same and we aroused the anger of the theoreticians of anarcho-communism. One of them, Professor Camillo Berneri, described us in the October, 1920, issue of "L'Iconoclasta" as "Paranoic megalomaniacs, exalters of a mad philosophy and a decadent literature, feeble imitators of the artists of opium and hashish, sirens at so much an hour."

I could not reply because in the meantime I had been arrested and shut up in a House of Correction. But Renzo replied for us both and took to task "this bookworm in whom it is difficult to find the spirit and fire of a true anarchist."

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More than a year later I was provisionally released from prison, but I could find out nothing regarding the whereabouts of Renzo. At last came the terrible news that he had been killed.

Together with the intrepid illegalist S.P., he was at an inn in Bolzaneto, near Genova, when a group of Carabinieri arrived disguised as huntsmen. Novatore and S.P. immediately opened fire and the police replied. The tragic result was two dead, Renzo and Marasciallo Lempano of the Carabinieri, and one one policeman wounded. This was in 1922, a few months before the fascist march on Rome.

So died, at 33, a great and original poet, who, putting into action his thoughts and feelings, attacked the mangy herd of sheep

and shepherds. He showed that life can be lived in intensity, not in duration, as the cowardly mass want and practice.

After his death it was discovered that, together with a few others, he was preparing to strike at society and tear from it that which it denies to the individual. And in the Assise Court where his accomplices were tried, a prosecuting counsel acknowledged his bravery and called him "a strange mixture of light and darkness, love and anarchy, the sublime and the criminal."

A few friends collected some of his writings and posthumously published them in two small volumes: "Al disopra dell'arco" (Above Authority) and "Verso il nullo creatore" (Towards The Creative Nothing). Other writings remained with his family or were lost.

So lived and died an exceptional man - the one I felt closest to me in his ideas and aspirations. He described himself as "an atheist of solitude". He wanted to "ravish the impossible" and embraced life like an ardent lover. He was a lofty conquistadore of immortality and power, who wanted to bring all to the maximum splendour of beauty.

(Translated from the Italian by
Stephen Marletta)

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AMONG THE REVIEWS

Egoist

The December issue of "Defense de L'Homme (B.P.53, Golfe-Juan, Alpes-Maritimes, France) contains an interesting article on Max Stirner by D. Giraud - Enzo Martucci (Via Carducci, 98, Pescara, Italy) has published another "numero unico" of his individualist anarchist journal called "L'Uomo Libero" - The Sept-Oct. 1967 issue of "A Way Out" (The School of Living, Lane's End Homestead, Brookville, Ohio 45309, U.S.A.) was edited by Dr. L. Krimerman, co-editor of "Patterns of Anarchy", contains a particularly good article on "Negative Freedom, Positive Freedom and Conservatism (Part 1)" by John Clark, as well as other items relating to anarchism - The October (sic) 1967 issue of the same journal is edited by Herbert C. Roseman and contains attacks from a "Tuckerite" viewpoint by him and Laurance Labadie on the "pure Stirnerites" represented by the editor of MINUS ONE and E. Bertran! Replies have already been written. The issue is worth reading, nonetheless, for some good material by Labadie.

LONG LIVE THE GREEN REVOLUTION!

Mildred J. Loomis

Lyman Tower Sargent in the October-December issue of MINUS ONE considers the future. Among other things, he believes anarchists can no longer look to "a return to the land, and concludes that "the Green Revolution is dead." I see it differently.

I am a participant in and an exponent of the Green Revolution. For 25 years I have edited a monthly by that (or a similar) name, but more important, for that period my day to day living has been on the land. It was not always so.

In my youth I was enamoured of the City. A college degree prepared me for my great goal - advertising manager in a big department store! I couldn't avoid seeing the poverty and seamy side of cities and in due time I changed to social work in slum settlements. But I soon knew I must go deeper - find some goal and direction more basic and corrective.

Like most of the youth of my generation I became a socialist. But it wasn't long before I doubted the dependence on government. Then I moved into the co-operative movement. I lost savings in the bank failures of the Great Depression and began to study money reform. Later I investigated intentional community, and trained in psychology and psychiatry, new tools for social betterment. And praise, too, for courses in "Progress and Poverty" from the Henry George School for insight into the land monopoly.

All good ideas, all crusades I could assist, by attending meetings, writing articles, petitioning officials, etc., etc. But my own life was not "in order". It was vaguely unsatisfying, fragmented. I had not married. How could I myself get out of the exploitive stream which I objected to and worked against so persistently?

I went to Megalopolis for a Master's Degree and asked my questions. Professors gave me a book, "This Ugly Civilization" - a 1928 indictment of industrial, urbanized, monopolized culture. The author, Ralph Borsodi, lived nearby, and I went to see him. His answer was the Green Revolution.

My response in those days was much that of Lyman Tower Sargent in MINUS ONE. "A green revolution is impossible, outdated, dead." So I went into public school teaching - to challenge minds to "all I had learned about economic and political reform." A few years of offering ideas and asking questions of the powers-that-be led to the loss of two jobs. By this time, Ralph Borsodi had established a School of Living. I went there to seriously consider the green revolution. My re-education started in that year in the

late thirties. It was terrific. Here was rolled into a curriculum - and a practice - all the reforms I had discovered: a new education, individual-family-community maintenance, creative living on the land, an ethical land-tenure, a co-operative credit system, and many more! This was for me. And, fortunately, marriage and a modern, productive home was available, then, too.

At our home, Lane's End Homestead, Brookville, Ohio, my insight into and experience of all that the Green Revolution implied has continued for a quarter of a century. Now my life and living are, as much as any life in this culture can be, outside of the exploitive pattern. We produce our own food, we produce and consume healthful, whole food, our occupation is creative, our income is adequate and below the taxable level, our time is our own to use and enjoy as we wish, we speak and write without interruption - no one can take our livelihood from us. Freedom, security, creativity, companionship - what more can one want, except that all people who wish it, or can be persuaded to want it, have this way of life too. And this we hope to achieve by developing intentional communities where land is held in common via occupancy-and-use tenure, centring in a School of Living for all residents.

The Green Revolution is not predominant today, but it is not dead. It may be difficult to achieve, but it is not impossible. Liberty, peace - even anarchism - are all wonderful goals. They are in short supply today, they might even be said to be "dead". But pro-life persons keep working for them, and continue hopeful of achieving in those directions. In fact, in our view the Green Revolution encompasses all these goals.

The Green Revolution is not merely living on the land, victimized by all the evils of society. Green revolutionaries are constructive, positive drop-outs. The Green Revolution is living on the land the while we non-participate in many social evils, while we work for and bring into being those personal and institutional practices which result in anarchism, liberty, and peace. Long live the Green Revolution!

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THE LIBERTARIAN OF TOMORROW

by Domenico Pastorello

Lyman Tower Sargent writes on page seven of the last issue of MINUS ONE: "we all respect the individual who chooses voluntary poverty so as not to support government."

I do not dispute this and am, in fact, in this condition, not giving a penny directly to the government. I pay no taxes on alcohol having been an abstainer for 65 years, on tobacco because I do not smoke, on cinemas because I do not go, and so on. But in my experience of freedom I have found that poverty is a very cunning

way to maintain in health, avoid illness, have most of one's time to oneself, and repel the attention of unasked-for friends. In a word, a way to put one's mind first and one's body at its orders.

For me a man is a mind that can reason and, above all, does reason - something that is not so frequent in the human race! My pleasure is neither food nor amusement to divert me from my dear solitude. I often prefer to turn off the television, or go into another room to leave my Maria to enjoy herself with what I abhor, since it fatigues my eyes, assails the neurons of my brain, and after one hour of my life leaves me as I was before, having brought nothing to what I already knew. My time is my life and I am jealous of it.

Poverty does not take anything away from this opulence of mine. Not having been born stupid I know nine languages and write so-so in five. Having done something in my life I am continually comparing my present with my past, and sometimes with my future! I also correspond with a very cultured nun of the Order of the Holy Heart, Professor Carga Gaggini, who honours me with her counsel in order to relight my dead faith. Alas, with no success, so far.....

I have poems to prepare in my free time. I am never weary and my subconscious moves like a hungry workman.

I like poverty, not to be against any government, but to be for the government of myself. From my point of view, I do not exist for my carcass or my muscle, but for the nervous matter which is the guest of my skull.

And I see the man of the future in an individual house as I am, in the open air with the sun on all sides, perhaps giving some time to an automatic machine, but giving most time to a garden and the flowers of his mind.

Poverty allows me to be a rich man, who makes a present of his publications to selected correspondents, as I will do with the third edition of my esperanto grammar which is now with the typographers in Catania. To live physically, I want so little that something remains! Try to do the same. Thirty years of my life have proved it. At eighty years of age I do not regret anything.

(Note: Domenico Pastorello will send free esperanto stamps to anyone who will write to him at 13, Fos sur Mer, France.)

Marx's thesis that all conflict between men arises from the class struggle...is...fallacious. For the supreme source of conflict in life is the inevitable opposition between the claims of the individual and those of society....

R.N. Carew Hunt.

STIRNER ON EDUCATION

S.E.Parker

("The False Principle of Our Education, or Humanism and Realism" by Max Stirner. Translated from the German by Robert H. Beebe. Edited, with annotations and an introduction by James J. Martin. Published by Ralph Myles, P.O.Box 1533, Colorado Springs, Colorado, U.S.A. 80901. 60 cents. 28pp.)

This is the first of Stirner's important seminal essays to be published in the English language. It is both a fascinating forshadowing of his major work, "The Ego and His Own", and an interesting critique of "progressive" as well as "classical" education.

At the time this essay first appeared in 1842, a big controversy was raging between those educationists who favoured a "humanist" approach to education and those who favoured a "realist" approach. The first was the formal and exclusive education of the aristocratic style. The second was the practical and universal education of the democratic style. Although he tended to prefer the latter, Stirner asked of the advocates of both: "Do they conscientiously cultivate our predisposition to become creators or do they treat us only as creatures whose nature simply permits training?" He answers that the school, whether humanist or realist, does nothing fundamentally but treat its pupils as creatures:

"Truth itself consists in nothing other than man's revelation of himself, and thereto belongs the discovery of himself, the liberation from all that is alien, the uttermost abstraction or release from all authority, the re-won naturalness. Such thoroughly true men are not supplied by school: if they are nevertheless there, they are there in spite of school. This indeed makes us masters of things, at the most, masters of our natures; it does not make us free natures.....

".....in the pedagogical as in certain other spheres freedom is not allowed to erupt, the power of the opposition is not allowed to put a word in edgewise: they want submissiveness. Only a formal and material training is being aimed at and only scholars come out of the menageries of the humanists, only 'useful citizens' out of those of the realists, both of whom are indeed nothing but subservient people."

The idea of the opposition of egos as a source of creativity, which Stirner develops in detail in "The Ego and His Own", is brought out here as well, particularly in regard to children. Stirner sees the child as neither angel nor devil and while he despises being an authority over the child, he nonetheless does not favour letting the child tyrannize over the adult:

"Childlike obstinacy and intractability have as much right as childlike curiosity. The latter is being stimulated; so one should also call forth the natural strength of the will, opposition. If a child does not learn self-awareness, then he plainly does not learn that which is most important. They do not suppress his pride or his frankness. If pride turns into spite, then the child approaches me with violence; I do not have to endure this since I am just as free as the child. Must I however defend myself against him by using the convenient rumpart of authority? No, I oppose him with the strength of my own freedom: thus the spite of the child will break up by itself. Whoever is a complete person does not need - to be an authority."

It is here that Stirner, writing in 1842, tackles a problem that still plagues "progressive" educationalists today. The biological and emotional dependence of the child upon the adult has been the stumbling block of all efforts to apply complete freedom in education. That is why the "freedom" that has been offered has, in practice, only been a varying amount of permissiveness with the adults having the final say in all important matters. It is difficult to see how it could be otherwise. And all too often the authority of the cane has been replaced by the authority of a subtle moralizing.

But perhaps this view of the child as an innocent perverted by wicked adults is nothing more than an inversion of the view that he is an evil thing to be kept in check by punishment and morality. Perhaps the child does not always need the sweetness and light of those who are always on "his side" any more than he needs cruelty and discipline. Perhaps, as Stirner suggests, conflict and opposition are part of its development towards self-awareness along with love and care. Perhaps the adult does not have to shrink from using his will against that of the child, but at the same time does not have to pose as an authority...

"The False Principle of Our Education" is preceded by an excellent introduction by James J. Martin in which he points out the relevance of Stirner's ideas to the contemporary educational scene, but is sceptical of their acceptance by 'mostpeople':

"Unfortunately, what Stirner perceived as the dawn of a potentially great era for individualist realization turned out to be only a temporary crack in the ice floe of authority, which has congealed and solidified steadily in this century and a quarter of the industrialized State."

He concludes:

"The war of wills between the individual and the collectivity will undoubtedly go on as long as the race of man persists,

and the schoolroom will continue to be one of its ubiquitous battle grounds. As the school training machinery of the State grows ever more pervasive and inescapable, and no less so even in most of the privately organized institutions, it may be that, for some time to come, such as one may number among Stirner's "free men" are most likely to come into existence and endure in an auto-didact underground."

PSYCHO-SELFISM

I.A.

("How To Prevent Psychic Blackmail: The Philosophy of Psycho-Selfism", by Leo Louis Martello. The Hero Press, Suite 1b, 153, West 80th Street, New York, N.Y. 10024, U.S.A. 4.95 U.S. Dollars. 192 pp.)

In reviewing a book of this nature two important questions must first be asked:

- 1) Is the author conversant with the ideas he opposes?
- 2) Has the author experienced the hypocrisy of altruism?

The answer to both these questions is a definite yes.

Within a brief biography at the beginning of the book we witness a youth not only seeing the sham of altruism and religion, but also having the guts to assert his individuality by refusing to take part in the doctrines of obedience and mob rule.

The pace is set with an explanation of psycho-selfism, which is, briefly, the doctrine of intellectual individuality. From then on a good part of the book is dedicated to a direct assault on commonly held values. Among those that get knocked off their pedestals are mystics, social parasites, God, The Holy Bible, sex, group-identities.

Many interesting and valuable ideas can be gained from reading this book, yet there are a few contradictions in Dr. Martello's alternative ideas.

To begin with, Dr. Martello has gone head over heels for the materialist American Dream, as if a society of canned food and ulcer-infested, alienated sub-humans have such appeal. Dr. Martello seems to be balancing schizophrenically between egoism and nationalism and I wish he would make up his mind which way he intends to go. Or is this a subtle compromise to give the book more appeal?

On page 98 he writes:

"Show me the person who refuses to use his reason, his

intellect, his mind (all God given by the way - their development is the sole responsibility of the individual) and I'll show you a pathetic neurotic in conflict with himself, preaching one thing, practicing another."

It is very strange indeed to assume that because a person refuses to imprison himself in a system of thought that he is mentally ill. I don't think that reason is such a heaven-sent gift as Dr. Martello implies. If anything has really helped to progress the human being beyond the animal level it is the ability to profit from experience. This ability is inborn and has nothing to do with book-learning.

No, Dr. Martello, the human situation will not be resolved by intellectual capacity, which is nothing more than a protective mental barrier against reality. If anything is to make the individual unique, it will be his capacity for intelligence, which doesn't spring from reading and is a truly creative ability.

ANOTHER APPEAL TO THE YOUNG!

S.E.Parker

("The Fake Revolt" by G. Legman. Breaking Point. New York. No price. 32 pp.)

In this booklet the author roars and rants his way through 32 pages of apoplectic fury at the hippies, hells angels, beats, new left, sexual revolutionaries - anyone, in fact or in fiction, who is said to be part of the 'new revolt'. Certainly there is an awful lot of rubbish talked by and about this 'movement'; certainly there is a need for an incisive, unillusioned analysis of it. The trouble is that Mr. Legman lets his fury run away with him and mostly flails at thin air. The result is something very much like a yellow-press exposure - the kind of titillating, moral-welfare piece the London "People" wallows in every Sunday.

Sobbing about the 'corruption of youth' is an age-old and very boring business. No doubt when the author was a rebellious young man in the 1930's his elders were throwing up their hands in horror and muttering darkly about evil forces 'corrupting' him, just as their elders had done before them. It is possible to write a passionate critique without wrapping oneself in a cloak of sentimental moralizing. The one good point he makes - that this 'revolt' is so easily assimilated by the Establishment - is lost in a welter of irrelevancies and red herrings. And his dismissal of Oscar Wilde as "the perverted cupid surfing in on an earlier wave of the same decadence" is worthy only of the square scribblers he professes to oppose.

This whole booklet reeks of a one-time radical gone sour.

Picking out garish bits of gossip and dishing them up in a sensational manner will only give aid, comfort and a vicarious thrill to the forces of conformity and servility. It is a great pity that such a beautifully vitriolic pen has been wasted in such a way. If Mr. Legman really wants to win American youth away from the mystagogues and intellectual con-men he must do much better than this.

THE ARTIST

Oscar Wilde -

One evening there came into his soul the desire to fashion an image of "The Pleasure that abideth for a Moment". And he went forth into the world to look for bronze. For he could only think in bronze.

But all the bronze of the whole world had disappeared, nor anywhere in the whole world was there any bronze to be found, save only the bronze of the image of "The Sorrow that endureth for Ever."

Now this image he had himself, and with his own hands, fashioned, and had set it on the tomb of the one thing he had loved in life. On the tomb of the dead thing he had most loved had he set this image of his own fashioning, that it might serve as a sign of the love of man that endureth for ever. And in the whole world there was no other bronze save the bronze of this image.

And he took the image he had fashioned, and set it in a great furnace, and gave it to the fire.

And out of the bronze of the image of "The Sorrow that endureth for Ever" he fashioned an image of "The Pleasure that abideth for a Moment."

From "Poems in Prose".

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