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Overemphasis On Charity And Underemphasis On Cooperation In Modern Ethics

The early content of this issue is part of several consecutive issues devoted to analyzing brotherly or neighborly love. This analysis of brotherly love is essentially *rationalistic* — a matter of logic. In *method* it is distinguished from the material presented three years ago (February through May, 1955 issues) which was based on Scripture, and therefore deductive from authoritarian pronouncements; however, the *conclusions* based on logic or on authority are identical.

Beginning with the July issue (1958) and continuing in the August issue an analysis was made of what is known as Ricardo's Law of Association, or his formulation of the law of cooperation. It has been shown how human action according to Ricardo's Law is genuine cooperation, as indisputable as mathematics. Ricardo's law obviously points to a vital phase of genuine brotherly love.

There is a reason why so much attention is here devoted to brotherly love, namely, the brotherly love taught in many churches is exaggerated and unscriptural. The exaggerated doctrine to which

we refer is what goes by the name of the *agape* doctrine of brotherly love. *Agape* is one of the Greek words for love; *eros* is the other. (See 1957 issues of PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM, pp. 101ff. and 181ff.)

The *agape* cult (1) requires that you take a higher standard than self-love as the standard for neighborly love; (2) makes you your brother's keeper in a broad way; and (3) equates *agape* with charity rather than cooperation. The word *agape* is used in Scripture; we are campaigning against a false interpretation of the word.

The issue between the *agape* cult and PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM can be made clear by putting the conflicting propositions side by side:

Agape Cult

Brotherly love is charity.

or

Brotherly love is "from each according to his ability to each according to his need." This is the basic proposition of socialism-communism. In other words, the *agape* cult taught in many Christian pulpits has as its ultimate premise that which is identical with the doctrine of morality of the communists.

Progressive Calvinism

Brotherly love is cooperation.

or

Brotherly love is Ricardo's Law of Association which is based on (1) your own liberty to pursue your own purposes, and (2) your neighbor's corresponding liberty so that he is never coerced, deceived or defrauded by you.*

*In addition, the Law of God requires of you (1) forbearance and forgiveness; (2) *Biblical* charity to help the needy; (3) unlimited "communication" from you to your neighbor for his good, including the proclamation of the gospel. See PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM in February through May 1955 issues.

PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM teaches that you show more brotherly love to your neighbor when you operate genuinely in accord with Ricardo's law (and the premises that underlie it) than when you set out to be your "brother's keeper."

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Even more is it true that Ricardo's Law and the premises that underlie it far better represent Biblical teachings about ethics than any allegation by you to *A* that he is generally responsible for *B* and is his "keeper." It might be defended (although not successfully in our opinion) that brotherly love is *charity by you yourself* to your neighbor; that, and no more. But even if that were indeed true, it would not follow—*could* not follow—that *you* are authorized to require of *A* that he be the "keeper" of *B*. That extension beyond yourself is intrinsically a violation of the Law of God, and is sanctimony.

Conduct in accordance with Ricardo's Law of Association has done *all* the "neighbors" in the world a thousand times more good than the total of the charity exercised toward *some* neighbors, whether in the name of Christianity, or out of generous compassion.

It is not charity which holds society together. Charity is a mere fraction of brotherly love. Cooperation is a much larger fraction.

What Does Equally Equal Mean? (Definitions)

One of the readers of the July and August issues of PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM has been troubled by what can possibly be meant by *equally equal* persons. She says, "I understand what is meant by *unequally unequal*, and by *equally unequal*, but I do not know what you mean by *equally equal*."

We shall define those three terms and a fourth one (which we have not used) which will complete the list.

Let us first consider the *unequal* cases. There are in this major group two sub-classes, namely, the *equally unequal* cases and the *unequally unequal*.

Equally Unequal

Clearly, in both of these cases there must be inequality *in the total*. For example, Brown may have \$100 and Johnson \$200. They are unequal in the *total*.

But there is a sense in which they may be equal in their inequality. We shall illustrate how they may be "equal" in the detailed coins and bills they have. If they are *equally unequal* the denominations of the money they hold will be, say, as follows:

Table 1

Possessions Unequal In Total But Equal In Proportions

	Dollars		Percent of Total	
	Brown	Johnson	Brown	Johnson
Coins	\$2	\$4	2%	2%
\$1 bills	3	6	3%	3%
\$5 bills	15	30	15%	15%
\$10 bills	40	80	40%	40%
\$20 bills	40	80	40%	40%
\$50 bills	—	—	—	—
\$100 bills	—	—	—	—
	-----	-----	-----	-----
	\$100	\$200	100%	100%

The percent of the total for both men is distributed identically between coins, \$1 bills, \$5 bills, \$10 bills and \$20 bills. These men are unequal in total, but the make-up of their funds is the same — *equal*, as we have put it. This is shown conclusively by the identity of the figures in the two percentage columns.

Unequally Unequal

The situation is different if we change the detailed items in one of the columns (namely, Johnson):

Table 2

Possessions Unequal In Total And Also In Proportions

	Dollars		Percent of Total	
	Brown	Johnson	Brown	Johnson
Coins	\$2	\$1	2%	1½%
\$1 bills	3	4	3%	2%
\$5 bills	15	25	15%	12½%
\$10 bills	40	20	40%	10%
\$20 bills	40	—	40%	—
\$50 bills	—	50	—	25%
\$100 bills	—	100	—	50%
	-----	-----	-----	-----
	\$100	\$200	100%	100%

In Table 2 the totals are unchanged from Table 1. In *total* Brown and Johnson continue unequal. But in this case the make-up of their funds is altogether different, as the percentage columns

show. In our terminology, the men are now *unequally unequal*, that is, unequal in the total and further, unequal in the structure making up the total.

Men are *unequally unequal* in talents and actions, as we have shown in Table 2 that two sums of money have two types of inequalities.

In the July and August issues we have shown the following regarding these two types of inequality:

(1) The very existence of society depends on men being *unequally unequal*. Then it is *invariably* profitable for men to "associate" together according to Ricardo's Law of Association, or in more popular language, to *cooperate* together.

(2) Society would, in contrast, derive no profit whatever from cooperation if men were *equally unequal* (as illustrated in Table 1 of this issue) (a) unless the abler man is *compelled* to work longer than previously, or (b) unless he engages in obvious charity — helping his neighbor to his own hurt. Cooperation, then, would result only under compulsion or under charity, which (except when the charity is amply deserved) injures the self-respect of the recipient. ("It is more blessed to give *than* to receive." *Receiving* charity lacerates the pride of the recipients.) Society would be in a sorry plight if its existence would depend only on charity rather than as it does primarily exist, according to Ricardo's illuminating analysis of the "law" of association, which is the really dominant cohesive factor in society.

Equally Equal

This is the term which troubled our reader. But now it should be clear that all that is necessary for Brown and Johnson to be *equally equal* in cash is for the figures for Brown in column 1 of Table 1 to be doubled, in order to equal *in each case* the figures for Johnson. Then the men will be equal in total, as well as in the details making up the total.

Under this situation cooperation, as we have previously made clear, is *wholly and always sterile of mutual benefits to the two parties*.

Unequally Equal

We come finally to a classification which we have not used, namely, the *unequally equal*. This situation would be revealed by the following situation:

Table 3

Possessions Equal In Total But Unequal In Proportions

	Dollars		Percent of Total	
	Brown	Johnson	Brown	Johnson
Coins	\$6	\$4	3%	2%
\$1 bills	14	6	7%	3%
\$5 bills	—	30	—	15%
\$10 bills	40	80	20%	40%
\$20 bills	40	80	20%	40%
\$50 bills	100	—	50%	—
\$100 bills	—	—	—	—
	—————	—————	—————	—————
	\$200	\$200	100%	100%

In this instance the total is equal, namely \$200 in both cases. But the make-up of the \$200 in the two cases is different. This is clearly shown in the percentage columns. The situation is correctly described by the term *unequally equal*.

In regard to this category, the following remarks will be nothing more than a record of what readers will think for themselves.

This would be the ideal society — an unequally equal society! In such society association (cooperation) would be profitable as in an unequally unequal society — *both* parties to *every* transaction would gain (unless there was coercion).^{*} But the merit in this situation would be that *in total* the members of society would be *equal*. There would be no Browns who are half so effective (strong) as the Johnsons. The world would be a paradise! If God had only made men that way, then he would have been a just God!

Being devout adherents of the Christian religion, we rebel against such thinking. We dissent from attacks on the wisdom or beneficence of God. We subscribe to the statement of the Psalmist: "Good is the Lord and full of kind compassion."

Avoidance of Subjectivity In Viewpoint

We are not reconciled to an unequally unequal society in the world because we ourselves might be considered to be fortunately placed in the hierarchy of strength or ability. Readers might think that we or Thomas or Howard are happy about being unequally

^{*}This assumes that men correctly evaluate their true interests, which is not always the case.

unequal because we are one of the strong. Then, so the idea might go, we would be reconciled to the "injustice" of God in the distribution of abilities and honors and power, because, as Marx said, the strong seek liberty and are not interested in equality, *because* they are the gainers, by their native endowments, against the weak; and (if we were one of the strong) then we would be at an advantage which we would surely exploit.

We have a lowly place in the hierarchy. We as all others (except *one* — the one who is the ablest of all living men whoever he may be) have had bitter thoughts that others had it easier, "got the breaks," had better wits, had a stronger body, had a more ingratiating personality, obtained more honors, would probably live longer. As Freud found out about the sub-conscious — *underneath* in every man there is a seething mass of discontent, hatred, envies, jealousies, would-be exploitation. If we are honest in examining ourselves, we are aghast!

And so we endeavored to "settle down" early. We decided we were no brilliant runner as the hare in Aesop's fable. We were at best a lowly, ugly, slow tortoise. And so we have been plodding along — not unannoyed about the brilliant racers who pass us — but reconciled to our lot. Why rebel against the inevitable and inescapable?

We are resigned (although not in a *passive* sense) to our lot in life by self-realism. We (and others) are but weak men, remarkable in a way, but easily destroyed, short sighted, unwise, and in a short space of time we become feeble, ugly, debilitated — *and we die*. The survivors will be obligated to dispose of our bodies rather promptly to avoid unpleasant odors and dangerous consequences to their own health! There is, therefore, no reason for overvaluing ourselves. Our perspective on life has humbled us. We are not disposed to make an attack on the wisdom or fairness of Almighty God.

Impossibility Of Retaining Unequal Equality

But — and this is an integral part of the ideas involved — even if God had made us *unequally equal* — so that society would be *ideal!* — we would not remain in a position of total equality. What we mean by that is that He did not create men with a character which would result in their *continuing* to be equal. This is merely common observation. One man, maybe with great abilities,

is like a grasshopper, in another of Aesop's fables; he is carefree and indolent. Another man, intrinsically no more virtuous, is anxious and industrious; he is, in the category of Aesop a hard-working ant. These two men follow different courses. The consequences must (in the only kind of cosmology that mortal men can understand) be that in the end the two men are not only radically different but also unequal. Their temperament, activities and objectives have made them unequal in total. They could not remain equal in total because they changed so much in the various phases of their persons and personalities. The character of creation results in men gaining or losing, now in one thing and now in another. The individual *totals* for *all* men could not, it appears to us, be expected to remain equal, even though men were originally created equal.

Furthermore, the vicissitudes of life, directly attributable to impersonal natural laws, contribute toward men not being able to continue to be equal. For example, there may be two brothers, identical twins, about equal, both farming. But a cyclone may suddenly destroy the improvements on the farm of one.

It is therefore wholly unrealistic to expect the continuance of unequal equality, even if God had created us all to be equal *in total*. To hope and strive for unequal equality is about as practical as a baby crying for the moon.

The Inequality Of Men Is Not Primarily Related To Adam's Fall

Some readers who consider the world to be "out of joint" because men are unequal may at this juncture have easy recourse to the idea of sin, and especially Adam's Fall. The idea would be that Adam's Fall and men's subsequent sins would explain the inequality among men.

Behind such an idea lies some questionable dogmatization about the cosmology of the world. Everything p-e-r-f-e-c-t until Adam fell, and then suddenly everything just t-e-r-r-i-b-l-e!

The idea would seem to be that the sun once shone just right, always, everywhere and for everybody; or that the rain came just right, always, everywhere and for everybody; or that every wish and every need was promptly fulfilled. That is apparently the concept that some have about the Garden of Eden. But a little reflection will easily convince everyone that such imaginations are unrealistic for this life.

Let us assume a perfect world, a realm populated with a happy people, all equal. In this imaginary paradise the Jones family plans it will go on a picnic on Thursday. In contrast to that the Brown family plans to plant tomatoes on Wednesday and does so. In our "perfect" world the Joneses on Thursday want pleasant sunshine for their picnic but the Browns want a steady and soaking rain for their tomatoes. If the sun does not shine the Joneses are unhappy; if the rain does not fall, the Browns are disappointed.

Maybe the sunshine should follow the Joneses individually wherever they go. Maybe the rain should fall *only* on the tomato field of Brown. A perfect world, according to this view, is a *special-purpose world* — a world in which everybody's individual wish is fulfilled. Further, so the thought seems to be, if the world does not operate to fulfill every individual and passing wish of everybody, then the explanation must be Adam's Fall and the subsequent sins of men.

Everybody has some kind of cosmology, or idea (right or wrong) how the universe is constructed and how it operates. That cosmology can be realistic or fanciful. A religion that links itself to a fanciful cosmology will not be accepted by sensible human beings. The Christian religion will do wisely not to put forward certain ideas to explain about *every* problem that arises, as if those ideas were the magic solution.

Why is it that an earthly utopia, in which the wishes of everyone are fully satisfied instantaneously, cannot exist? The reason is that there is *too great a diversity of wishes on the part of every individual*. Those wishes are in such a state of flux that their variations (among all men) approach infinity. Such diversities of wishes naturally result in differences which are normal, not sinful, but not all satiable. Therefore, desires almost without number will surely be unfulfilled every day in this world, and sin has nothing in principle to do with that.

There is one way in which it might be possible to get rid of these disappointments. That way is not for everybody to become sinless. That will not accomplish the end. An essential prerequisite to get rid of all disappointments and make the world "perfect" — if getting rid of disappointments is the definition of a *perfect* world — is to end all diversity in the world. In regard to people, that would require that everybody would be absolutely alike —

perfectly equal in everything (including age and sex). If there were such perfect equality and equal timing, then it would be possible (although not probable or certain) that there would be perfect *satisfaction* of all wants. Then everybody might want rain on the same day, and they might want sunshine on the next day. If the natural world then conformed, like a compliant creature, to the mass wishes, then we would have a perfectly blissful world!

The demand on the part of people for an ideal world for everybody, at every instant, in every respect, is a utopian demand. When that utopian demand is not satisfied, it is an error to conclude that sin explains the nonsatisfaction. The failure to obtain perfect satisfaction may *in part* be due to sin, but even in a sinless world, *perfect* satisfaction for everybody in *every circumstance* could exist only if there were no diversity among men — could exist only if men were all not only equally equal but wanted to do the same thing at the same time. Those requirements appear to be impossible of fulfillment.

Granting wholeheartedly and emphatically that sin is a grievous cause why people do not obtain maximum satisfaction in life, it should also be admitted that, wholly independent of sin, not every variable individual wish of every man can be satisfied — because the cosmology of the world is such that it is governed by *general* laws (established by God), which preclude particular and variable wishes of men from being fulfilled.

The cosmology of the world — *before* and after sin — must be that God made men infinitely different, variable, *unequal*. If we do not like that, we are merely rebelling against the character of creation. If we hold critical views of the variableness and inequality in everything in the world, then we are disputing what Moses wrote long ago, namely, that "God saw everything that He had made and, behold, *it was very good*" (Genesis 1:31). That view of what He had made must have been in error!

Sin permeates every human thought, word and deed, but it is not desirable to overdo the use of sin as an explanation for every disappointment regarding what is not spontaneously available in response to our specific desires. We should not expect so much. It is impossible even to imagine intelligently what a world would be like which would respond favorably and at once to every inclination that we have. Such a world would be chaos, because men's

wishes are too many and too variable and too un-timed not to conflict with the wishes of others.

If our memory serves us reliably, Christ did not once use Adam's Fall to explain anything related in the four gospels. Further, if our memory again serves us correctly, Adam's Fall is not mentioned in Scripture between Genesis and the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. Fifteen centuries in Biblical time without reference to the Fall is a long time.

Inequality is the result of creation and not of sin.

Sin may sometimes increase inequality.

But sin probably as often increases equality by bringing everybody down to a lower level, thereby making everybody less unequal, or in other words, more equal.

The sin factor is merely a plus or minus in the basic situation — the character of creation, which is infinitely diverse, *consequently involving every possible kind of inequality.*

The Dilemma Of God: Society Or No Society

The word *dilemma* in the title requires qualification.

We do not accept the idea that God would ever be in a state of uncertainty or frustrated by a dilemma. Our finite conception of an infinite God involves us in imperfections and contradictions of thought.

Nevertheless, having no more than a finite rationality to assist us in understanding the cosmology of the universe, consideration of the "problem" of God in regard to what kind of human society He would create compels a finite human being to think in terms of what God "could" rationally do and what He "could not" rationally do.

In one of his books Sir James Jeans has written something to the effect that if there is a God, He is a marvelous mathematician. There is a certain inescapable logic in mathematics, and if simple mathematics are not true, or rational, then rationality is at an end. We assume here, disregarding that God is supra-rational as well as rational, that as far as mortal men can understand or "know" God, He must be interpreted in our own rational terms.

Let us pick up the "reasoning," *after* the creation of the physical, vegetable and animal world. How must God then have worked on the problem of the kind of men to be created?

That earlier creation had not provided rational and cooperative creatures. It was a world of brute survival of the fittest. No forward planning or calculation appears to be made by any plant or animal. If plants and animals think, as we think of *thinking*, then ordinary men are not able to comprehend it. If animals think, nevertheless we consider such thought different from human thought, and so we give it the name of instincts.

In regard to men God had, it must seem to human thought, only one of two alternatives, namely, (1) men would be equally equal and consequently there would be no human *society*, or (2) men would be unequally unequal and consequently there would be human *society*. By *society* we here mean active human cooperation and association.

The word *would* in the foregoing paragraph might well read *could*. Then the statements would read: if men were created equally equal, there *could* be no human *society*; and if men were created unequally unequal, then human *society* (that is, profitable cooperation) *was inevitable*.

The horns of the dilemma of the Creator then were (1) to make men unequal but living in society together, or (2) to make men equal but not living in society because there would be no *mutual* benefit possible from it. There were and are no other alternatives. The choice was and is *either/or*.

Common observation tells us that the character of our human existence demonstrates that of the two choices open to Him, God decided to make men *unequally unequal*, and *consequently* motivate them to *cooperate* and so establish what we know as *society*.

The mechanism of cooperation had to possess something in it that spontaneously motivated men to cooperate — that is, to associate together (as according to Ricardo's Law of Association). That spontaneous mechanism was a combination of the urge of self-love, plus the obvious profit from division of labor and genuine cooperation. Men *cooperate in society* because it is *mutually* advantageous. It is mutually advantageous to cooperate *because* men are unequal, different from each other. The price men *must* pay, according to the creation by God in order to have a cooperating *society*, is unequal inequalities among them.

The very existence of *society*, as we think of a cooperating

group of human beings, depends completely and absolutely on *inequality*. Wipe out the inequality and then no *voluntary* society is possible. It is not even thinkable any more.

Some people may think that there are, however, two different alternatives: (1) no society at all, or (2) a society based solely on coercion. Of course, a society based on coercion is not voluntary, nor if there is coercion, can there be equality. And so the statement stands that the *very foundation of any voluntary society must be inequality*. Any coerced progression toward equality will impair society and impoverish it; and any uncoerced progression toward inequality will strengthen society and enrich it.

Every time that a moralist declares that equality *as an end result* is or should be the goal of human conduct and morality, he is proclaiming a false and evil doctrine. All that he should proclaim is that men should have *equality of opportunity** in order to become more unequal, and such inequality should be the goal. The proper purpose of morality should be (1) freedom, plus genuine goodwill and assistance to others to become *better*, not to become *equal*. To *become better* aims at no vicious egalitarianism or holding-down of anybody. Any goal of *equality* has a ceiling, namely, the capacity of the least competent. Any goal to become *better (unequal)* has no ceiling; the "sky is the limit."

Morality then is not *basically* charity or sentimentality or liking somebody, but is liberty and self-development — *but without violence, fraud or theft*.

The rewards of that liberty and self-development *cannot in a voluntary society accrue only to the benefit of the person himself*. That is IMPOSSIBLE. The benefits are diffused among all men. We plan to develop that idea further later.

The program to annul by human action the inequality created by God is also a vicious program. It violates a principle thoroughly rediscovered by modern psychologists, namely, that people should not be pitted against each other, but should have an altogether different standard.

Imagine a family with two daughters with only a small age differential. Father and mother can in such a household compare Sally and Myrtle in all their achievements and chide Sally to equal Myrtle and Myrtle to equal Sally.

*Even *equality of opportunity* is not fully attainable, but should be vigorously promoted.

Inescapably the consequences, though well intentioned, will be bad. The goal set is equality. That goal *cannot* be achieved. Either Sally or Myrtle will eventually come out ahead. The winner will know it and be tempted to be arrogant. The loser will know it and will be induced to be bitter, envious, and maybe dejected and demoralized. The morality of the striving for equality between Sally and Myrtle is simply wrong. As the expression goes: all comparisons are invidious.

The parents of Sally and Myrtle should have a different goal — not equality but inequality. Each girl should be urged to outdo her own past performance. If that puts one sister far ahead of the other, there is no loss from that. The evaluation of the sister who achieves less should not be poisoned by an unfavorable comparison. Instead of having identical or equal daughters, the family will be better off having different and unequal daughters. Of course, the better each girl does in her respective field, with her talents whatever they may be, the better. Just as this family will be damaged by setting standards of equality and mutual rivalry, similarly society will be damaged by setting standards of equality and mutual rivalry.

If then God was faced with a dilemma when He created the world — to make men equal and not have society, versus to make men unequal and have society — then we should all be thankful that He had wisdom and the mathematical knowledge of the benefits for men from inequality and mutual cooperation so that He made men unequally unequal.

The foregoing is merely an attempted rational, finite, creaturely tracing of what would appear to have been the thoughts of God in regard to the creation of man. It is pitifully limited in scope, but within the range of what is considered human reason no other view is possible. Ricardo's Law of Association is either incontrovertible mathematics, or human reason does not exist any more.

We are opposed to irrationalism. We do not dispute mathematics. We do not dispute, either, what can be seen on every side to be reality. We do not dispute what Scripture plainly teaches, either. We accept the common result of mathematics, experience and authority.

That common result is that God showed infinite wisdom in making men *unequally unequal*.

God As An Unjust Creator!

Karl Marx apparently hated God as revealed in the Hebrew-Christian Scriptures. God has made men unequal; He had made some men "stronger" and some men "weaker" than others. Freedom, according to Marxian thought, was an evil because it created the opportunity of the strong to exploit the weak. God, then, having made men unequal was unjust. Further, all human efforts should be designed to undo that inequality. We all should undertake to be our brothers' keepers. We should so live that there should be an equality established by the rule, From each according to his ability to each according to his need.

If the idea is correct that it is *per se* unjust to make men unequal, then Marx was undoubtedly right that God gave conclusive evidence by His creation that He is an unjust God, for it certainly cannot be disputed that men have been created *unequally unequal*.

If morality consists in making men equal (thereby presumably manifesting brotherly love!) and if immorality consists in making men unequal or tolerating it, then the conclusion is inescapable that God failed on the job of creation. Why did He not set up a world of *equal men*!

What is surprising is that many moralists accept Marx's premise that *equality is the ideal goal and that true morality will strive to establish equality*, but that these same moralists do not know that they thereby in effect accuse God of being unjust and wicked. Marx was in this (as an exception) a consistent thinker. He realized that his demand for equality was an open attack on the righteousness of God. Preachers of the gospel should not try to hold onto two ideas that cannot be reconciled: (1) that inequality is an evil, but (2) that God is nevertheless righteous and just.

As a significant reform in so-called Christian morals we submit for consideration that God be considered to have been wise and just when He made men unequal, and that final equality be abandoned completely as a goal of morality. The talk about equality is evidence of moral and intellectual "confusilation."

The Absurdity Of Being Our Brother's Keeper

If it is correct that God was wise when He created men unequal, and if equality in end result is not a suitable moral goal for society, then one of the silliest ideas in the world is that we are our brothers' keepers.

This idea that we are our brothers' keepers stems from Cain, the first murderer. Probably more people accept Cain as their law-giver than Moses. We are emphatically with the minority.

Why should we be our brothers' keepers if human inequality is a good thing for society, if it is in fact essential to human society? Are we to be our brothers' keepers in order to help them be equal or in order to promote their being unequal?

Tacitly underlying acceptance of the idea that we are our brothers' keepers is the assumption that our efforts will be in the direction of promoting equality.

But if that is not the implicit assumption underlying the idea that we are our brothers' keepers, then what? How do we successfully undertake to be our brothers' keepers by making all of them more unequally unequal? That promotion of unequal inequality is what helps them and what helps society. That promotes association or cooperation, according to the Law of Association, formulated by Ricardo.

We might be our "brothers' keepers" if we had a uniform pattern into which we could mold them. We might have a moral tool and die shop as modern plants have. Dies are made which determine the shape of a piece of sheet metal. Next, that die is put in a machine and then the machine stamps out thousands of identical pieces. What is the "die" we wish to establish in order to form and mold men so that they are "equal"?

But if we are to help each man fashion his own individual life so that he develops his own special characteristics, how can we possibly have the time to do that artistry? We can no longer be a moral mass producer but must become an individual artist; "keeping" our individual brother is a unique task like a painting by Leonardo da Vinci. For how many people have we the time to be their "keepers" in the sense of helping them be *different*, and *individualistic*, and *unequal* to other individuals?

And what will happen if both *A* and *B* undertake to develop the individual and unequal personality traits of *C*, and who is to

decide whether *C* will develop his own personality, or whether *A* or *B* will determine that. The idea that we are our brothers' keepers is the acme of impertinence and absurdity.

There is also a certain arrogance in undertaking to be our brothers' keepers. What about a poorly endowed man; is he to undertake to be the keeper of an especially richly endowed man? If we are our brothers' keepers, practically every attempt to "keep" our "brothers" is likely to be resented. If *A* thinks he is more capable of taking care of himself than *B* is capable of doing that, because he (*A*) considers *B* to be a less wise and less competent man, how sympathetic will *A* be to *B*'s attempt to "keep" him (*A*)? Everybody who has self-respect will resent the attempted "keeping" by another; he will consider the attempt an intrusion in his privacy. If there is to be "keeping" of some by others, then the unpleasant assumption is that those who are to be "kept" are inferior and that those who do the "keeping" are superior.

Furthermore the idea of being our *brothers' keepers* suffers from a serious terminological deficiency. The term should, obviously, be broadened. It should be our *brothers' and sisters' keepers*. There is no reason why, if I am Mr. Gregory's keeper, I should not also undertake to be Mrs. Gregory's keeper. Why should my interest be limited to Mr. Gregory? Further, I can understand that if it is sound for Mr. Morton to be my keeper, then it is also the duty of Mrs. Morton to be my keeper. If we are "keepers" of each other, then there is no sound reason to be discriminators against the opposite sex.

Trusting memory again, we do not remember a single instance after Cain that there is mention in Scripture that we have an obligation to be our brothers' keeper.

Easy Explanations Of Praxeological Problems — The Kangaroo Jump

None of the classifications of the sciences into groups is more useful than the classification, (1) the Natural Sciences and (2) the Praxeological Sciences.

The praxeological sciences are the sciences of *human action*. They are the sciences involving morality of conduct. They are the sciences in which men act as free beings who have a will of their own and who can influence the course of events. Where human

choice and action begin, *there* is the significant dividing line between (1) what is human and (2) the rest of creation.

The popular name for the praxeological sciences is the social sciences. It is not the *social* aspect that should receive emphasis in the name for the sciences involving human beings, but the *human action* aspect.

The praxeological sciences include social action. Social action is only a phase of the praxeological sciences; *human action* is genuinely broader than *social*. A lucid understanding of the differences between the praxeological and the social will result in the term, *praxeological sciences*, eventually superseding the term, *social sciences*.

Because the epistemology of the sciences of human action is different from the epistemology of the natural sciences*, the methodology of the praxeological sciences must be different.

There is an unsatisfactory method of explaining events which occur in the field of the physical sciences, but that unsatisfactory method is even more common in the praxeological sciences.

The method to which we refer we shall designate as the "kangaroo jump" method.

The *cause* of some event is seldom simple. Furthermore, there are always a series of causes. Assume that a house burns down. The "first" cause was a fire. An antecedent cause was defective wiring, or carelessness with matches, or a stroke of lightning. The defective wiring in turn may have been caused by a careless workman or by mice nibbling on the wires; the carelessness with matches in turn may have been caused by a man being drunk; the damage from lightning may have been caused by the lack of lightning rods or atmospheric friction, or whatever other cause one may properly select. *Causes* then occur in sequence like links in a chain.

Consider a toothache. That may be described as being caused by tooth decay, by there being a cavity, by eating too many sweets, by not brushing the teeth properly and not having had them cleaned, by inadequate diet currently or as a child, etc. Dentists will be able to give the exact links in a chain of causes in scientific terminology and with scientific accuracy.

*See Mises: *Theory and History*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1957.

The ultimate cause of a toothache can be considered to be certain complex physical laws; or even beyond that, the Creator of nature, God himself. Shall we say, God is the ultimate cause of your toothache, indeed of everything? That idea is peculiarly Calvinistic in that Calvinism stresses the predestination of all things.

All explanations can be short-cut then by simply saying, God is the cause. That is the "kangaroo jump." All intermediate causes are jumped over.

This easy explanation, true as it may be, has not done the Christian religion much good. It has made Christianity obscurantist. To be obscurantist is to be neglectful of helpful inquiry and analysis. Mankind, to get along well, needs to know intermediate causes as well as the Ultimate Cause. It is not adequately helpful to ascribe toothache to God as its cause. Auguste Comte rather devastatingly ridiculed the propensity of religion to ignore intermediate causes, and blithely say that God is the explanation for some event — such as a plague, which is directly caused by germs spread by rats and fleas (as the bubonic plague).

Whatever is true about any obscurantism of religion in the physical sciences, is even more true in the praxeological sciences. In the field of human action it is easy to ascribe events to God — to His favor or to His wrath. We are not disputing that as being the ultimate cause, but we question the wisdom of employing only the "kangaroo jump", *whenever there are intermediate causes*. The error is not in acknowledging the ultimate cause, but in being indifferent to the intermediate causes or being in error about them.

Consider the very fundamental question in the praxeological sciences — what holds society together? What, considering man's total depravity, keeps society from falling apart and being suicidal?

To that question the Christian Reformed Church has found the answer by a "kangaroo leap." Society, the Christian Reformed Church has decided in solemn synod assembled, is held together by the "general operations of the Holy Spirit," the third Person in the Trinity.* The church has answered this question, as in fact every praxeological question can be answered, namely, the reason why society holds together is that there are "general operations of the Holy Spirit."

*See July 1957 PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM, pages 215ff.

It would be, in our opinion, as helpful to explain a toothache or the relief from toothache by saying that it was *caused* by the "general operations of the Holy Spirit," as it is to say that society is held together by the "general operations of the Holy Spirit." The answers are equally obscurantist.

What are the intermediate causes for society not falling apart? Can the *causes* be listed in some sequence that is helpful? Here is our list:

1. Acts of self-determination by individuals, which are usually but not always motivated by considerations of what is beneficial to the self; in one phrase, honest *self-love*. We have explained that in detail in five preceding issues (April through August).

2. Inequalities among men, or more specifically, unequal inequalities, as explained in the two preceding issues and in this issue.

3. The revealed Law of God, especially, Thou shalt not coerce, commit adultery, steal, lie, covet; these laws to be enforced through the public apparatus of the state, or enforced by public opinion. (The pursuit of self-determination requires a restraint, namely the prohibition of injuring the neighbor.)

All three items mentioned are *laws*. They are *principles*. They are not mystical. They are all in the practical field of *human action* rather than abstract theology.

It is not known how many in the Synod of 1924 of the Christian Reformed Church really understood Ricardo's Law of Association. If anyone did, he could have made clear how noncoercive and honorable self-love and inequality, *which two together yield mutuality*, hold society together. He could have explained how society is benefited by the unequal inequality among men. And he might well have urged not nullifying any of the Laws of God.

In regard to the Law of God mentioned in number (3) in the foregoing, the emphasis can be on the apparatus of the state, as is done in the Belgic Confession (see p. 217ff. in the July issue) or it can be on the *real* thing — namely, the Law of God itself. In the course of time the Christian Reformed church has in some of the most significant areas of human action nullified or neglected the application of those laws (in the areas of coercion, sex morality, fraud and theft). In proportion as self-determination

and self-love have fallen under suspicion and disrepute, the Law of God has simultaneously been abridged. The deviation from reality is along the whole line, in accord with a general system of thought.

In PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM we aim at holding strictly to Scripture. Self-determination, the inequalities of creation, and the Law of God are the three immediate factors holding society together. Oh yes, ultimately, too, the "general operations of the Holy Spirit."

Some Aspects Of Laws Of Human Action

I

There was a time when natural events which were not understood were considered to be evidences of special divine intervention in the affairs of men. Later the phenomena were discovered to be the result of natural laws; the phenomena became understandable and were no longer mysterious. The idea of *laws* thus became important in the natural sciences. The idea of *laws* in the praxeological sciences came later.

In the earliest days the idea of *law* in the praxeological sciences was probably based only on the idea of their immediate divine origin and imperative. The idea of praxeological laws as being "autonomous" — existing in their own right — independent (shall we say) of direct action by God is probably of later origin. In fact, emphasis on the existence of praxeological laws as *laws* is relatively modern.

Regardless whether the law brought down from Mt. Sinai by Moses is of divine origin, it should be good enough to survive on its own merits. It should not need the imprimatur of God to make it worthy of obedience; it should be sufficient to be universally valid even though it were detached from the origin described in Scripture.

On that basis the Law of Moses is valid for two reasons: (1) its origin from God and (2) its correct formulation of rules for proper praxeological conduct, that is, it describes cause and effect in the field of human action.

II

The basic law of human action is self-preservation. The validity of that law is not questioned even by the sanctimonious. Re-

formed churches of Dutch origin (for example, the Christian Reformed) accept the Heidelberg Catechism as one of their doctrinal standards. The lesson for Sunday XL in the Heidelberg Catechism is on the Sixth Commandment, Thou shalt not kill. The first paragraph of the lesson reads in part: "moreover, that I harm not myself nor willfully expose myself to any danger." Obviously then a conforming member of a Reformed church will be obliged to agree that self-preservation is a virtue.

Self-preservation is obviously selfish, or at least it is manifestation of self-love. Self-love then is also a virtue.

In addition to the approval given by religion to conduct designed to accomplish self-preservation, there is also the confirmation of reason. Carelessness about self-preservation is universally condemned as inexcusable.

III

But when men are comfortably on the safe side of the ragged edge of survival, not on the very edge of precarious self-preservation, then they can be concerned about their *welfare*.

To be concerned about your welfare, or your comfort, or let us go further and say, your pleasure — to be concerned about *that* does not appear to many people to be so virtuous or defensible as to be concerned about self-preservation.

Nevertheless, the ideas can be different only in degree. If self-preservation is a virtue, then the promotion of welfare, comfort and honorable pleasure is also a virtue. In our estimation they all have merit.

This is not hedonism in its customary unfavorable sense; nor is it eudaemonism in its less-unfavorable sense. This is merely being concerned about obtaining more of that which we prefer and less of that which we do not prefer. There can intrinsically be nothing sinful in working so that we substitute what is more desirable for that which is less desirable.

Self-love is the foundation and the standard for Christian ethics. We are required to love our neighbors *as ourselves*. Society, although it may sound paradoxical, is not so much held together by our love of our neighbors as by our love of ourselves. It is only because, under conduct in accordance with the Law of God, our pursuit of our self-interest *also results in mutual benefits* (not charity) for our *neighbors* that our neighbors do not object to our

pursuit of our self-interest, but (if they know the score) are happy about our action to promote our self-interest; consider Ricardo's law. If that *mutuality of benefits* did not result from human cooperation (because men are unequally unequal), then self-interest could and would not be a cohesive factor in holding society together. Then instead of this "praxeological law" some divine intervention of a special kind would need to become operative, for example, the "general operations of the Holy Spirit." Fortunately, Ricardo's Law is operative. Society "naturally" hangs together without undue burden on Almighty God. The reason is that Ricardo's Law has as its intrinsic character *mutuality of benefits*.

IV

Still the basic praxeological law has not been perfectly formulated. That law is not self-preservation, nor self-love, nor well-being, nor welfare, nor comfort, nor pleasure; it is, instead, self-determination. Self-determination is broader than self-love. Self-determination means *your own values*. Your own values, according to which you act, need not be for the self; often they are not. They are instead sometimes, in an unalloyed sense, for others and so are pure altruism. Nevertheless, the *decision* was yours; you determined what your action was to be. That self-determination is the quintessence of self-love. Men prize more highly the possession of self-determination than they do action exclusively for self.

Liberty (self-determination) then, is man's greatest basic value. Self-love must be equated with self-liberty. And if you really *love* your neighbor, then you will give him *his liberty* equally. In that sense what Calvin wrote about liberty, in a narrow framework, has broad meaning. That is the first and most important part of brotherly love. The rest is merely supplementary — like a lean-to shed built against the side of a house.

V

Unfortunately, men are loaded down with sinful inclinations and are steeped in a mass of grievous sins. As a man's shadow follows him, so sinful conduct follows (unnecessarily and wickedly) behind proper self-preservation, self-love and self-determination. These sins are of five kinds, easily mentioned — coercion, fornication, lying, stealing and coveting. It is not really possible to add to the list, nor to subtract from it. Genuinely liquidate those sins

interpreted in a broad sense out of your conduct and you are "free" again in the scriptural sense. Nobody ever quite accomplishes that.

Because people generally and because some people especially will not restrain their inclination to coercion, fornication, lying, stealing and coveting, a group-apparatus is eventually set up, known as the state, which threatens punishment for perpetration of those sins. Fundamentally, however, we retain our liberty if the state does no more than that. We are then only prohibited from abusing our liberty. Where the Law of God prevails over men individually and over the state as a collective unit *there* is liberty.

VI

There are no *special* laws of morality unhinged from other laws. What are called laws of morality are merely laws of cause and effect in the field of praxeology, in the field of *human action*. The Second Table of the Law of Moses contains merely laws of cause and effect.

1. *Thou shalt not kill*, that is, engage in violence or coercion of any kind. Christ said, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matthew 26:52b). In short, violence begets violence. If I may employ coercion, you may (or eventually will) employ coercion. Freedom and cooperation — the bases of society — are thereby destroyed. This law, *Thou shalt not kill*, is the most comprehensive rational law that exists in the field of human action.

2. *Thou shalt not commit adultery*. Too much sex is debasing and debilitating. For real welfare men must rise above mere breeding operations. One woman and the children he may beget by one woman is all the time that should be devoted to sex by a man who wishes to use his short span of time in this life well. To go beyond that is damaging to the extra woman or women involved, damaging to any children begot by them, and damaging to one's own wife and children. Cogitate and reason and calculate all you will, no man is smart enough to escape the conclusions Scripture enjoins on us. All vigorous societies have been based on such sex principles or close approximations to them. *Restricted* sex activities motivate people so that their well-being is increased.

3. *Thou shalt not steal*. A man's most vital earthly possessions are his mate and his property. Those two possessions

pretty much determine his satisfaction about his "welfare." Take either away, and he will again become a barbarian. If property is not safe, if ownership may be annulled, if by group legislation the same result is accomplished as is provided by armed robbery, then "society" will fall apart. Men will not be motivated any more to great efforts, nor will they remain passive and cooperative. Stealing (in whatever form) is not bad only because God said it is bad; it is bad because the *effect* (by the laws of cause and effect) is destructive.

4. *Thou shalt not bear false witness*: If lying is permitted or engaged in frequently, society is also destroyed. Man cannot live for the *present* alone. Most of his activities are related to the *future*. Every contract made is expected to bind future conduct. If a signature or a pledge is worthless — if the other party is lying — society cannot really function. *Truth* is an essential to a good society. Again lying is not to be condemned only on the ground that God forbade it; it is also to be condemned because it is eventually contrary to purpose.

5. *Thou shalt not covet*. This commandment is not so much in the field of *action* as are the foregoing; but it sweeps the whole psychological front. It condemns the motivations underlying coercion, adultery, theft and fraud. It would be strange to condemn overt acts, but be silent of the vicious origin that makes a man act as he does. (Moralists today pander more to the sin of covetousness than to any other sin.) A poisoned mind is no good. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is." Cause and effect operate again. A man who gives way to covetousness will either go all the way and sin openly; or he will be handicapped by having a split personality, because of frustration between his thoughts and his actions.

It does not appear possible for secular thought wisely to reject these commandments. The question of their origin — that is, from God — may be viewed skeptically by skeptics, but the content of the laws are as indisputable as are the laws of gravity.

VII

The laws of morality (praxeological laws of human action) differ, however, in certain respects from natural laws. Solomon called attention to a basic difference when he wrote (Ecclesiastes 8:11):

Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Solomon is saying that cause and effect have a different time factor in the praxeological field than in the nonhuman field. In the human action field consequences are like a delayed-action bomb.

If you push a silver dollar to the edge of a table, when it is more than half way over the edge, it immediately tumbles to the floor. The effect is prompt. Such promptness in effect does not exist in the field of morality. Because there is that time factor, people look at sin more favorably. If the effects of sin were instantaneous, sin would disappear in a short period.

The reason for the delay in the consequences of human action are varied. These are worth listing: (1) *secrecy*: if you wrong your neighbor, it may not be known to him; consequently he will not react; the penalty to you will come first from his reaction; when he nor others know you have wronged him, he nor they visit consequences on you; examples of what is involved can be imagined by readers; however, as the expression goes, "murder will out"; eventually what is secret is likely to become public; there are classic cases in history; (2) *fear*: you may be powerful, and your neighbor may be weak; he might react at once, but he withholds his reaction until the time is favorable; he might wish to kill you at once, but for his own safety he may wait for a lonely spot and a dark night; if you wrong one man successfully, you will later wrong others; eventually they will "gang up" on you, but in the meantime there is a delay; (3) *surprise*: your neighbor may be so astonished about your wronging him that he cannot make up his mind at once what to do; he may dissemble his feeling until he has thought the matter over thoroughly; (4) *calculation*: he may say to himself that he needs a lot more information before he reacts; (5) *forebearance*: he may be a sagacious and forbearing man, knowing that retaliation and vengeance are generally unsuitable and dangerous policies; but after he goes "two miles" or "three miles" with you, and you still continue to injure him, he will eventually certainly take decisive action; the consequences to you may be late, but they will be final; the slow and calculating men are likely to be thorough; it will then be really too late for you; you will, figuratively, be pulled up on the gallows and you will swing in the wind; (6)

personal affection or old-time friendship: under such circumstances men may be forgiving and long-suffering, but ties of affection are eventually broken; human endurance is not great; (7) in addition, there are factors of *pride, fortitude, ulterior designs, confusion, and many others*.

The fact is that causes and effects in praxeology have a special link in the chain — the link of the human mind with all its characteristics. Therefore, it is inevitable that "sentence is not executed speedily" in the field of praxeology. But cause and effect are not annulled! Eventually . . . !

VIII

A second difference between natural laws and praxeological laws is that the former have greater uniformity and consequently have a reliable predictive character. It is otherwise with praxeological laws; however, they do possess uniformity; (in Scripture at least they are given predictive standing and reliability).

If you push a silver dollar to the edge of the table, it *always* falls; or, at least, that is the way we regard it practically. But if you burglarize your neighbor's house, wearing a mask, with silk gloves to leave no finger prints, when your neighbor is away on a long trip, and if nobody else is around, then the penalty in the form of alarm, arrest, trial, fine or imprisonment may be escaped. Cause and effect seem to have failed.

But Scripture is emphatic. Neither isolated sins nor small sins are unpunished. *Eventually*, so Scripture teaches, the penalty is there — *in one form or another*. If Scripture is right about that, then rules of morality are predictive as well as are the rules of physics, except that timing and character of punishment are more variable.

We accept the predictability of moral laws as completely as we do physical laws.

The value derived from knowing laws rests largely in fore-knowing consequences. It is for that reason that laws — physical or moral — are useful.

IX

Physical laws are based on observation. Moral laws are based on analogy *and* observation. We would not know how Pierce will react if we did not have an idea how we ourselves would react if we were in his position. A man, therefore, is astute in the praxeo-

logical field, in proportion as he knows himself; if he really understands his own motivation without self-deception, he will be able to read other people's minds. The Greeks were wise when they taught, "Know thyself," although the phrase may have meant something different for them.

Observation must supplement self-knowledge. By observation one observes how others differ systematically from the self; if those differences are allowed for, then prediction becomes rather reliable.

Robert E. Lee is said to have appraised correctly the character of his classmates at West Point. Later in the Civil War he anticipated (forecast) correctly the moves those men would make while leading armies against him. He said to himself: "This man has such abilities, and he is timid. Therefore, this is what he will do." Or: "This man has these abilities, and he is rash, and so this is what he will do." Lee had extraordinarily clear insight. He usually predicted correctly.

However, perfect predictability is not possible in the praxeological sciences.

X

What is the basic law of praxeology? What outranks everything else — love, hate, compassion, lust, greed? What is the law which is determinative with other laws being only moderative?

That law is self-interest, or more broadly, self-determination. The famous economist, Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk, wrote (our italics):

. . . Our knowledge is only patchwork at best, and must always remain so. But of the classical theory [of economics] this characterization was particularly and emphatically true. With the insight of genius it had discovered a mass of regularities in the whirlpool of economic phenomena, and with no less genius, though hindered by the difficulties that beset beginnings, it commenced the interpretation of these regularities. It usually succeeded, also, in following the thread of explanation to a greater or less distance from the surface toward the depths. But beyond a certain depth it always, without exception, lost the clue. To be sure, the classical economists well knew to what point all their explanations must be traced — *to the care of mankind for its own well-being*, which, undis-

turbed by the incursion of altruistic motives, is the ultimate motive-force of all economic action. [—Böhm-Bawerk, "The Austrian Economists," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, January, 1891.]

This "care of mankind for its own well-being" — this self-love — which Böhm-Bawerk declares must be the starting point to which all economic explanations must be traced, is not limited to economic actions only but should be extended to all actions. Every religious action of a man is related to his own *well-being* in some sense or other.

But this pursuit of our *well-being* is not merely an objective. There is also the question of the means to attain that objective. When the question arises *how* to promote our well-being, we immediately face the question of costs. In a sense we can just about get anything, if we are willing to pay the price or cost of getting it. For example, an education could be got by most people, if they were willing to make the sacrifice in the form of effort, money, time, postponement of marriage, etc. But many do not value the objective higher than the cost to them.

Every attention we give to well-being is then accompanied by attention to costs. It is the *net* benefit that we may get which is our prime consideration. We may wish to obtain objective *A* which has for us a value of 80 units, but the cost to get *A* may be 75 units; the net is only 5. We may wish to obtain objective *B* which has for us a value of only 30 units, but the cost may be only 10 units; the net is 20. In such cases we would abandon objective *A* despite its gross value to us, because its net value is smaller. We would select objective *B*.

But again the whole calculation is "selfish." The moment *costs* are considered — what else can we mean except costs *to us*? It is the self again which is the basis of the evaluation and the motivation. By measuring value to us of the gross yield, and of the cost, and of the net yield we have done one simple thing, we have used *our own values* as the standard of calculation.

Here, of course, it is possible that the gross proceeds may not be for ourselves; our objective in a specific case may be altruistic; but whether we decide to go through with that action depends on two calculations we make — the value of the objective in our

evaluation, and the cost of obtaining that objective in our evaluation.

Man is finite. He cannot have all that he wants. He must select. He selects what will give him the most — *net* — that is, gross minus costs. Every part of the calculation and the decision is based upon a self-determination, a liberty, and a center of gravity — the self.

Sin *per se*? Not according to Scripture and common sense.

Sin enters the situation when there is something in the means that is wrong — when there is coercion, adultery, theft, fraud, covetousness.

Karl Marx As A Thinker

Moses lived 1,400 years before Christ. Karl Marx lived 1,800 years after Christ. The spread in time between Moses and Marx was 3,200 years.

Many attacks have been made on the Law which Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai. Some of these attacks have been agnostic or atheistic, in regard to the First Table of the Law. Other attacks have been made on the Second Table of the Law. These attacks have generally been resentful that the Second Table of the Law has required a certain kind of conduct of men. The objectors were violators of the Law and defensively endeavored to defend or excuse their violation of the Second Table of the Law. These objectors to the Law had a guilt complex; their attack was based on that psychology.

An altogether different attack can be made on the Second Table of the Law, namely, that *that law itself is evil*. The attacker in this case is not a defensive violator of the Law, suffering from a guilt complex, but a judge who arrogantly appraises and disagrees with the Law.

It is interesting that nobody undertook *basically* to reject the Second Table of the Law until as late as 3,200 years after Moses, that is, not until Karl Marx. Marx of the nineteenth century rejected the whole morality of the Second Table of the Law which Moses declared, in the fifteenth century before Christ, came directly from God. Marx was not a petty critic; he put the axe to the tree; he scornfully rejected the morality proclaimed through Moses.

A considerable vogue has been developed for the Great Books of all ages. The word *great* in this connection does not mean *good*; instead it means great in what is evil as well as great in what is good. In that sense Marx must be called a great thinker — great in evil and in fallacies. He has in his ethics more followers — inside the churches and outside the churches — than have Moses and Christ.

Marx was an atheist and members of the various churches condemn him for his atheism. It could, however, be argued that Marx's atheism was not an integral part of his social philosophy. But there is a connection between the two, although of a rather different character than is generally accepted.

The really significant part of Marx's thinking is his sweeping rejection of every commandment in the Second Table of the Law.

Marx rejects self-love. The Law which Moses proclaimed was based on the assumed *validity of self-love*.

* * *

(This completes for the time being our rational consideration of the Law of Brotherly Love, and Marx's allegation that liberty is not a good thing because it is good only for the strong and not for the weak. We hope to give further consideration to this at a later date, probably under the subject of competition.)

Sarcasm

"Sarcasm, I now see, to be in general the language of the devil."
[Voltaire]

Quotations From Bohm-Bawerk

Self-love

"It is incontestable that the basic force which sets in motion all economic efforts of man, be they selfish or altruistic, is his interest in his own welfare." [—*History and Critique Of Interest Theories*, p. 353, Libertarian Press, South Holland, Ill., 1959]

Well-Being

". . . I am here using 'well-being' in the widest sense, and that it does not apply merely to the selfish interests of an individual, but rather to everything that in his eyes appears worth striving for." [—*Positive Theory of Capital*, Note 70 to page 188, Libertarian Press, South Holland, Ill., 1959.]

Alms

“. . . Donations and alms are given when their significance in promoting well-being, as measured by their marginal utility, is far greater for the recipient than for the donor. The reverse is virtually never true.” [—*Positive Theory of Capital*, Note 19, p. 143, Libertarian Press, South Holland, Ill., 1959.]

**Extract From An Open Letter To Dr. John C. Bennett
Of Union Theological Seminary Of New York
By Rev. Edmund A. Opitz**

“After perusing the books of the social gospellers and the welfare-staters, and after conversations with you and with men professionally engaged on one or the other of the various church councils for social action, I am forced to conclude that the reason why the libertarian case is not taught in seminaries is that the case is not known in theological circles! Neither is it a fashionable mode of thought among our intelligentsia; the climate of opinion is unfavorable to it.” [—*Truth In Action*, Spiritual Mobilization, September 15, 1952]

[Note: Professor Bennett is closely associated with Reinhold Niebuhr and others in leadership of the social gospel. Rev. Mr. Opitz is a Unitarian minister associated at the time of this *Open Letter* with Spiritual Mobilization.]

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