1938

The social philosophy of William Godwin, with special reference to his religion

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dissertation

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF WILLIAM GODWIN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS RELIGION

by

Charles William Havice

(A.B., Allegheny College, 1924; A.M., Boston University, 1926; S.T.B., Boston University, 1927)

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

1938

APPROVAL BY READERS

FIRST David D Vaughan
Professor of Social Ethics

SECOND W. O. Ault
Professor of History

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. REASON FOR CHOICE OF SUBJECT

The principal reason for the author's choice of subject can be indicated tersely in these statements of belief: (1) Totalitarianism and absolutism are rampant in our world today. Man is becoming lost in mass movements, and the depersonalization of life is steadily increasing. (2) Individualism emphasizes the importance of the very elements which totalitarianism neglects; individualism is thus a needed corrective. (3) Philosophical anarchism is the purest form of individualism. To understand the principles of philosophical anarchism, then, is to establish a proper basis for the study of individualism in general. (4) William Godwin's social philosophy contains the fullest expression of philosophical anarchism. While Proudhon gave a measure of popularity to the economic implications of anarchism to the extent that one might assume that Proudhon is the most authentic voice of philosophical anarchism, it is indeed Godwin who has given us the only systematic presentation of this social philosophy. Jászi supports this belief when he says that "the first systematic exponent of

anarchist doctrine was William Godwin."[1]

B. DEPERSONALIZATION AND ITS CAUSES

Since the phenomenon of depersonalization is believed to be so inimical to the philosophy of individualism, let us consider several aspects of this phenomenon before we proceed to the study of Godwin.

Writing with the perspective which the passing of time alone can give, historians at the close of our century will give our children's children an orderly chronicle of these years of chaos. One ventures to predict that, though the tragedies of the World War and the world depression were cruel anachronisms, neither the war nor the depression is the greatest tragedy of the era. Less spectacular but more basic, the supreme tragedy is the depersonalized nature of human society.

Whether the war and the depression were causally related to the phenomenon of depersonalization, or whether the relation was only concomitant, is not for us here to determine. It is enough for us to observe that depersonalization is a social pathology so basic that it opens the

---

[1] Oscar Jászi, "Anarchism", Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, II, 52.

way for almost every ill of humanity - not war and poverty only, but crime, suicide, mental diseases, moral deterioration, and spiritual barrenness.

1. DEPERSONALIZATION DEFINED

A depersonalized society is one in which the primary groups have lost status. Persons have become merely people. Men have become masses and masses have become mobs. Mechanisms dominate organisms. Social forces have become formalized, then impersonalized, and finally depersonalized. It is not the instance of the forgotten man, to borrow the familiar phrase. To be a forgotten man suggests that there are persons who can and who ought to remember.

What has brought about this depersonalization? The factors and forces are many. Multiple causation requires us to consider a number of elements which have bearing on the matter.

2. THE EXPANDING UNIVERSE

Observe, in the first place, the effect of the expanding universe. The Psalmist looked into the heavens and meditated on the littleness of man. Astronomy was very miniature then. The man of today, unless he shares the

Psalmist's faith in the supremacy of spiritual values over stellar and spatial vastness, becomes astronomically intimidated. He becomes lost in cosmic and galactic magnitudes. He does not always realize, as did one of our contemporaries, that the greatest fact about astronomy is the astronomer.

3. BIOLOGY

In the second place, observe how an inadequate conception of biology has tended to weaken the status of persons. Reducing man to a mere biological organism, he is nothing more than "a clot of blood on a clod." Biological evolution can be especially devastating if only its half-truths are considered. Darwin, Lamarck, aand Spencer are not enough. There are also Bergson, Morgan, and Smuts. Creativity, emergency, and holism are no less essential to the meaning of evolution than are natural selection, acquired characteristics, and mutations.

4. CHEMISTRY

Then observe that chemistry, unless viewed in its larger relations, can be as explosive as some of its new formulae to the status of persons. Man's genesis may have been colloidal, but his exodus has been into the realm of a

consciousness which no chemistry can explain. His body may be worth only ninety-six cents in the chemist's shop, but man is a body with a soul. Rather, man is a soul with a body. Chemistry does not cope with this truth.

5. GEOLOGY

Again, geology can contribute its share to the effacing of personal significance. The records of the rocks not only push back history considerably beyond 4004 B.C. (at nine o'clock in the morning!), but they also indicate that the world managed very well indeed before man announced his arrival. A glance at the geological shaft is somewhat disconcerting to any homocentric view of the universe.

6. PHYSICS

Finally, physics is capable of being so construed as to undermine belief in selfhood. Certain modern concepts of matter, time, space, and causality disturb a person's complacency concerning his place in the world. Some of his old supports are gone. Quite literally, he does not stand on solid ground.

7. THE NATURAL SCIENCES

We have been considering the exact sciences. While they have had their part in the depersonalizing of society,

yet it should be made clear that they have had to bear false accusations. The battle of words between science and religion, for example has turned out to be a rather silly affair. The antagonisms were, for the most part, ill founded. The versus has become the and. The exact sciences, as such, engender no hostility. By their very nature they are religiously neutral and ethically unmoral.

8. THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Not so, however, with the social sciences. To the extent that they involve the human equation, to that extent do they lend themselves to ethical and spiritual implications. While they may be put to good or to bad uses, the sciences themselves are wholly amoral. But it is quite in the nature of the social sciences, in so far as they are normative, to exercise influence in the areas of morality and religion. For this reason, religion has much more justifiable cause for anxiety over what may be thought and taught today in sociology, psychology, economics, history, and political science.

Aside from the influence of certain views in both the exact and the social sciences which make for depersonalized life, there are several more general, as well as more striking, factors.

9. EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

First, society has become industrialized. It is not too much to say that a great deal of the dislocation in the world today is due to the abrupt transition from an agrarian to an industrial life. An industrial age cares more for money and machines than it does for men. In one sense men do not as much as exist in our modern mills and factories. We have mill hands and factory hands, but no men. This fragmentary view of a human being produces, in turn, a fragmentary conception of work. Workers do not make things; they make parts of things. The economic man has supplanted Rousseau's natural man. The capitalistic economy regards man as a commodity.

10. EFFECTS OF URBANIZATION

Not only has society become industrialized. It has also become urbanized. The metropolis knows no boundary lines today. Figuratively stated, city limits no longer exist. The remotest rural settlement feels the impact of urban influences. Megalopolis dominates the thinking and living of people everywhere. The impersonal nature of city life is notorious and needs no emphasis here. The more crowded we are into metropolitan areas, the more lonely we are.

Our attempts to regain status are often as pathetic as they are ineffectual. We are a race of joiners. Especially prized is the membership in a group that will hail us by our first name. Syndicated columns on advice to the lovelorn and lonely vainly attempt to make the reading public a great happy family. Hollywood tells us what its stars eat for breakfast, hoping thereby to capture the intimate touch. But these efforts toward making society personalized succeed no better than do Madame Tussaud's wax figures in becoming human beings.

C. DEMOCRACY AND DEPERSONALIZATION

Can democracy endure in a depersonalized world? H. G. Wells says that democracy dies five miles away from the parish pump. Wendell Phillips warned that the test of democracy would be in the cities. Democracy can function properly only where the social forces are well integrated. The tenuous and impersonal nature of our civilization imposes heavy strains on the democratic organism. Ortega y Gasset in his Revolt of the Masses emphasizes the danger of the mass mind. Mass mindedness degenerates democracy into ochlocracy. Fear and contempt replace faith and confidence in man's relation with man. The classes are afraid of the masses, and the masses are afraid of themselves.

Alexander Hamilton once expressed the mood when he cried, "The people, sir, the people is a great beast." Democracy requires men and persons; it is imperiled by masses and people.

It is significant that the two formidable rivals of democracy in the world today are both based, one inherently and the other avowedly, on the premise that society does not exist for individuals, but individuals for society. Communism and Fascism are forms of the Great Society, and human beings can be attached to the Great Society without being attached to each other. John Dewey comments that "the tragedy of the lost individual is due to the fact that while individuals are now caught up into a vast complex of associations, there is no harmonious and coherent reflection of the import of these connections into the imaginative and emotional outlook on life."[2]

The irony of Russian Communism seems to be that it gives the people everything except what they want most - personal peace and happiness. As Joseph Wood Krutch remarks, Communism "is based upon the assumption that the only maladjustments from which mankind suffers are social in character, and hence it is sustained by the belief that in a

---

[2] John Dewey, Individualism Old and New, 60-73.

perfect state all men would be perfectly happy."[3]

As for Fascism, in both its Italian and German forms, the individual is hopelessly regimented in the totalitarian state. Except for Il Duce and Der Fuehrer, all personalities are submerged. In the light of Mussolini's later program, it is revealing to read what he wrote in 1920: "We are approaching the complete destruction of human personality. This State is the gigantic machine which swallows living men, and casts them forth again as dead ciphers . . . The great curse which fell upon the human race in the misty beginnings of its history and has pursued it through the centuries has been to build up the State and to be perpetually crushed by the State."[4] But witness Italy now!

D. INDIVIDUALISM AND ANARCHISM

Our country has had a rich tradition of an individualism necessary to the functioning of a democracy. American individualism is not to be confused with that iniquitous self-interest which in its latter days bore the questionable

---

[3] Joseph W. Krutch, The Modern Temper, 242-249.

[4] Benito Andrea Amilcare Mussolini, "Popolo d'Italia" April 6, 1920.

label of rugged individualism.[5] True individualism has regard for both freedom and security. Some of the ideals and principles of anarchism form essential ingredients of that social philosophy which we are pleased to call Americanism.

---

[5] Concerning this spurious type Charles A. Ellwood comments: "And now individualism threatens us with moral and social anarchy." Miles H. Krumbine, The Process of Religion, 129.

E. CONTRIBUTIONS BY OTHER INVESTIGATORS

One of the several considerations which gave incentive for undertaking this present study is the paucity of existing literature in the field. However ephemeral some may claim fame to be,[6] Godwin's significance and influence merit more study than they have received. Except for several biographies[7] - only one of these, Paul's, is sufficiently careful of its sources - no volumes are to be found which concern themselves exclusively with Godwin. Furthermore, there is no work which is avowedly devoted to his social philosophy or his religion. Several accounts have been written which in a general way consider his social views, but one fails to discover any sustained attempt to analyze and evaluate Godwinism. Though he was less a novelist than a social philosopher, it is easier to find references to him in the former light than it is in the latter. It is true, however, that his Enquiry Concerning Political Justice has elicited a number of articles and

---

[6] Note the comment by Rogers: "The name of William Godwin is one which, I am afraid, arouses but little enthusiasm in the breast of the modern student of literature or politics. Even before his death he had for the most part lost his vogue, and he has never had the fortune to be rehabilitated in any large degree." Arthur K. Rogers, "Godwin & Political Justice", International Journal of Ethics, Vol. 22, 50.

[7] See bibliography, 199 ff. below.

commentaries, but most of these are too fragmentary to be of much value. Whatever this study may lack in completeness, it at least has the opportunity of being relatively original and exploratory.

While the field is decidedly limited, several contributions made by other investigators are noteworthy, and they place the present writer heavily in their debt. A brief review of the more valuable of these works follows.

(1) C. Kegan Paul, William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries

Of all works on Godwin, Paul's two-volume biography is most accurate and adequate. It is well documented, and it draws from authentic sources. Diligence and high standards of workmanship are evident at every turn.[8] In fact, one would be compelled to journey to the British Museum for several diary notes and letters of Godwin were it not for Paul's scholarly inclusion of them. The enthusiasm which greeted the publication of this biography is indicated in an intelligent review found in a journal of the same year. An excerpt from this unsigned article follows:

---

[8] See comment in this connection in The North American Review, Vol. 123, 232.

> William Godwin's life, important as it was, did not, like that of a Pitt or a Byron, for example, call for, or indeed admit of, more than one exposition. It was therefore of the utmost importance that the labour should be undertaken by some one possessing the necessary qualities of high literary capacity, accurate knowledge of the time, and a faculty of harmonious reflection, as well as a certain amount of devotion to the task, without which no such work can become possessed of any vital interest, - and of course that untiring patience and research, for the want of which not even the finest literary style and the utmost appreciation of the merits of the central figure can wholly compensate. All these qualities, however, Mr. Kegan Paul seems to possess in a very remarkable degree, and his application of them has resulted in a complete and satisfactory biography. The reader grows into a perfect knowledge of Godwin, both as author and as man; his virtues and his failings, his strength and his weakness, are alike made evident, with a clearness undimmed by any shade of partiality. Godwin is shown as he was, without any attempt to convert him in any way into an unreal hero. We feel the picture to be a true one, and are grateful for it.[9]

The passing of a half-century has proved that the above reviewer's commendation was not misplaced. No subsequent work has dimmed the reputation which Paul earned. No later biography approaches the accuracy and exhaustiveness of this monumental work. Moreover, several of the later biographers - Brown, as we shall see, is one of these - have drawn liberally from Paul, and they have added

---

[9] Westminster Review, n.s., Vol. 50, 365-366.

little or nothing to the original contribution. Those whose interest in Godwin is chiefly literary may regret that Paul passes so lightly over some of the novels. Those whose interest is in the social philosophy, however, are gratified that Paul treats so fully the political writings, especially Enquiry Concerning Political Justice.

(2) Ford K. Brown, The Life of William Godwin

Of all volumes on Godwin, probably Brown's is currently best known. Its light style lends it popular acceptance, and its recent publication gives it advantage.[10] No more entertaining account of Godwin and his views has been written. Brown does not intend laboriously to search out a matter for himself. He quite frankly states at the outset that Paul is his authority. And a comparative study of Paul and Brown convinces one that the latter borrows very considerably from the former.

The organization of the book is logical and chronological. The inclusion of so much material on Jacobism seems unwarranted, and the courtships and marriages of Godwin are accorded more space than is necessary for a

---

[10] Published in 1926. For complete bibliographical data, see 200 below.

sufficient knowledge of this phase of Godwin's life. Brown gives a digest - without adequate annotations - of Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and discusses briefly several other political writings. But it is regrettable that he fails to consider a representative number of Godwin's writing. Preference seems to be given the more literary and less philosophical works. The whole effect of the biography is to make Godwin live in flesh and blood. With less interest in accuracy and scientific objectivity than in color and human interest, Brown gives warmth and appeal to the critical and painstaking data he has taken from Paul. For those who will not give time and thought to Paul's two volumes, let them read Brown while they run. As a popular account, the book is admirable; as a careful and comprehensive study, it is unacceptable.

(3) Leslie Stephen, English Thought in the Eighteenth Century

While it suffers from brevity and over simplification, Leslie Stephen's account of William Godwin in English Thought in the Eighteenth Century[11] is commendable in its insight and its regard for the historical setting. Stephen

---

[11] See bibliography 213 below.

makes a clear exposition of Godwin's view of mind, thought it is doubtful whether the latter would agree that mind has been so cavalierly disavowed in the Enquiry Concerning Political Justice as his critic states.[12] Stephen fails to indicate that several of Godwin's ideas underwent modification with the passing of time. This failure may be due to a neglect of Godwin's other writings.[13] He does observe, however, that the rigor of Godwin's logic was later softened.[14] On the whole, the account, though less critical than one desires, is a reliable and informative presentation of Godwinism.

(4) Raymond Gourg, William Godwin

Gourg's study of Godwin[15] reveals little new or pertinent data concerning his social philosophy and theology. As its sub-title indicates, the study is devoted to Godwin's life and principal works. For the biographical material, Gourg relies heavily upon Paul.[16] For the works,

---

[12] See Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, II, 268.

[13] Stephen makes much use of Godwin, Political Justice, but almost no reference is made to other works.

[14] Stephen, op. cit., Vol. II, 272.

[15] See 205 below.

[16] William Gourg says: "Nous nous faisons un devoir de reconnaître, en terminant, combien nous a été utile, pour écrire la vie de Godwin, l'ouvrage de Kegan Paul." Gourg, William Godwin, xvi.

Gourg considers principally Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and those "oeuvres se rattachant directement à la Justice politique"; namely, Caleb Williams, The Enquirer, and St. Leon. Emphasis is given to the relation between Condorcet and Godwin, and later, Burke and Godwin. The chapter on the religious ideas of Godwin is confusing in some of its theological concepts, especially that of deism. The correlation made between the French Revolution and political trends in England is skilfully handled. The bibliography is hardly comprehensive; yet the documentation is commendable in its range and quality.

(5) Henri Roussin, William Godwin

This more recent biography of Godwin[17] has little to offer that is of fresh interest. The arrangement of the book centers around the French Revolution. The first part, entitled "Avant la révolution française" deals with Godwin's youth, his pastorates, and his early literary and political life. The second part, "La révolution française", concerns England's relation to the revolution and the appearance of Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, including a summary

---

[17] Published in 1913. For complete bibliographical data, see

and appraisal of the work. The final part, "Après la révolution française", is devoted to Godwin's marital and pecuniary problems, his experiences with Shelley, and his last years.

Roussin believes that Godwin's influence on socialism is greater than is generally recognized, and he believes this influence is especially marked in the case of Robert Owen. Roussin goes further and states: "Par l'intermédiaire d'Owen et aussi d'Hodgskin, l'action de Godwin s'est transmise à Charles Hall, à William Thompson, aux leaders du mouvement chartiste, et peut-être même à Karl Marx."[18] It is easier to assert that this line of influence exists than it is to ascertain it. Roussin gives no data in support of his claim. It is probably more accurate to assert that Owen was influenced by the whole movement of which Godwin was so forcefully a part.

Roussin's volume has very little documentation. One gathers that the book was written with the view of stimulating interest in Godwin among the readers of France, rather than adding to the field of critical scholarship. If such were the intention of the writer, he has succeeded

---

[18] Henri Roussin, William Godwin, 319.

well. The work is written in a lucid and readable style. He has appended a bibliography which includes several little-known but significant articles to be found in journals of the early nineteenth-century period.

(6) C. H. Driver's Article on William Godwin

Driver has written a readable and stimulating account of Godwin in the survey volume which Hearnshaw has edited.[19] It is a sketch and only that. Driver infers more acquaintance with sources than he explicitly states; he did not intend to write a complete treatise. Nor did he. The references are scanty, and the assertions stand only on their own weight. His "Book List" at the conclusion of his article indicates discrimination but great limitation in source materials. He adopts Paul's biography as standard.

(7) Halévy, The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism

Halévy gives skeletal consideration to Godwin.[20] His correlations of Godwin's views with those of contemporaries and immediate predecessors is suggestive and enlightening. He is too much given, however, to easy classification and

---

[19] Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw, Social and Political Ideas, 141-181. For complete bibliographical data, see 206 below.

[20] See ibid., 176.

convenience of labels. In assuming that Godwin's ideas conform to existing molds, Halévy fails to recognize the synoptic and integrated philosophy of the man. While this reference deserves mention as a contribution to the study of Godwin, it merits little added comment.

CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Godwin was born on March 3, 1756 at Wisbeach in Cambridgeshire, England. He was seventh in the family of thirteen children.

A. LINEAGE AND PARENTAGE

His ancestry was composed for the most part of respectable, middle-class folk. A number of ministers are found in the paternal lineage. His father's father, William Godwin, was a dissenting minister of superior ability, who held an influential parish in London. Two of his sons were clergymen. One of them, Edward, had a brief but distinguished career as a Methodist minister. John, a younger son and the father of the William Godwin of this study, was a nonconformist minister of rigid Calvinistic qualities. He had a faulty education and cared little for intellectual pursuits. Possessed with no great ambition, the father was content with little. Although he held a series of pastorates, no one of them paid more than sixty pounds a year. The family moved, in 1758, from Wisbeach to Debenham, Suffolk, where the father preached to a dissenting congregation until a protesting minority of Arians

forced him to leave. The next parish was at Guestwick, north of Norwich, to which place the family moved in 1760. The father died on November 12, 1772.

He had ruled his household with a stern and rigorous hand. His piety was solemn and ponderous. Fear of profaning the Lord's day was ever a burden on his mind. He harshly rebuked William on an occasion for taking a cat into his arms on Sunday. One ventures to believe that it is in the father's austerity that one finds explanation in part for Godwin's subsequent repudiation of religion and protest against tyranny in any form. In any case, evidence of William's love and sympathy for his father is not to be found in any available autobiographical or biographical sources. It is interesting to note that the biography in Temple Bar pays tribute to the beneficent influences of William's mother and aunt,[1] but leaves the father wholly unmentioned. It is not likely that this omission can be explained merely by the fact that the father died when William was but sixteen.

Mrs. Godwin, the daughter of a shipowner named Hull, had little formal education; her spelling gives frequent

---

[1] See Temple Bar, Vol. 46, 325.

evidence of this lack. Nevertheless she possessed a large measure of good sense and shrewdness. She had warm sympathies and a great capacity for understanding. A fine integrity of character redeemed her narrow religious views. In spite of the fact that he had traveled far from her in religious and political thought, William Godwin showed enduring loyalty and deep affection for his mother to the end of her long and burdened life.

An aunt, Miss Godwin who later became Mrs. Sothern, lived in the Godwin family and exercised much influence on William. She was a Calvinist, and was interested in literature and theology. Her fondness for reading gave encouragement to William's passion for books.

B. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

William Godwin's personal appearance was hardly to his advantage. A frail physique, a grotesquely large nose, and an ill-shaped head lent themselves too easily to unkind caricature. One writer thus describes him:

> In person he was remarkably sedate and solemn, resembling in dress and manner a Dissenting minister rather than the advocate of "free-thought" in all things - religious, moral, social, and intellectual; he was short and stout; his clothes loosely and carelessly put on, and usually old and worn; his hands were generally in his pockets; he had a remarkably

> large, bald head, and a weak voice; seeming generally half asleep when he walked, and even when he talked.[2]

Yet his obituary notice reads that "his countenance was of a particularly mild and pleasing cast."[3] DeQuincey draws this pen-picture of Godwin: "He was in person a little man, with manners peculiarly tranquil, philosophic and dignified - so at least I thought."[4]

C. EDUCATION AND INTELLECTUAL INTERESTS

Though physically puny, Godwin was intellectually precocious. From early youth he exhibited an unusual degree of intelligence about common matters. Acute powers of observation and analysis were his. Books were his choice companions at an age when games and play might more reasonably have been his chief interest. Intellectual and religious issues were the absorbing subjects. Long before most children were prepared to do so, Godwin had read Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress and Janeway's A Token for Children; Being an Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives, and Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children.

---

[2] Samuel C. Hall, A Book of Memories of Great Men and Women of the Age, from Personal Acquaintance, 63.

[3] Gentleman's Magazine, "William Godwin: Obituary", (unsigned editorial), June, 1836, 666.

[4] Thomas DeQuincey, Literary Reminiscences, I, 51.

Godwin's first schooling was received under the direction of local masters and tutors. His experiences at a school in Hindolveston, or Hilderson, made him unhappy because he observed that most of his school-fellows were lax in their religious devotions. It was at Hindolveston that Godwin was trained in the legibility and gracefulness which ever since characterized his penmanship, for the master was himself an excellent penman and taught well the art to his students. Godwin then was sent to Norwich - this at the age of eleven - where he studied under Samuel Newton. The significant influence here was the Sandemanian leanings of Newton.[5] In 1773, Godwin sought admission at the venerable dissenters' college, Homerton Academy. Though most biographers neglect the fact,[6] he was rejected at Homerton because of his Sandemanian tendencies. He then entered the dissenters' college at Hoxton where he remained throughout a five-year period of intensive study. Here he came under the influence of the able Dr. Andrew Kippis, who was liberal in his political views and verged upon Socinianism.[7] The political liberality encouraged Godwin the

---

[5] For an account of Sandemanianism, see 112 ff.

[6] Note, however, The North American Review, Vol.123, 234. Also see Ford K. Brown, The Life of William Godwin, 10.

[7] See 114 ff.below.

more eagerly to set forth his own social philosophy. The Socinian argument, however, seems to have had little effect on him.

D. MINISTERIAL EXPERIENCES

In 1777, when he was twenty-one years of age, Godwin began to preach as a dissenting minister. Ware, Stow Market, and Beaconsfield were his early pastorates. It was during this period of his life that he became interested more than ever in the teachings of the French philosophers and the Encyclopaedists particularly. Joseph Fawcett was one who strengthened this interest.

Returning to London in 1782 after discouraging results in his parishes, Godwin resolved to improve society by means of the pen rather than by preaching from the pulpit. One of his first literary attempts was the anonymous biography of Lord Chatham.[8] In 1784 he published six sermons under the inappropriate title of Sketches of History. Fuller reference will be made later to this volume.[9] In this connection, however, it is of interest to note that this collection contains the much-quoted declaration that

---

[8] See 224 below.

[9] Ibid., 224 below.

"God, himself, has no right to be a tyrant."[10] Other writings during this period include articles, mostly historical, for the Annual Register; three unimportant novels; and a series of essays on various political, social, and religious subjects.

E. SEVERAL INFLUENCES ON HIS LIFE

The French Revolution accelerated Godwin's zeal for social change. He found in the works of Rousseau, d'Holbach, and Helvétius many ideas which were compatible with his own. He moved in the circles of the radical thinkers and became increasingly identified as one of them. Of his associates and colleagues in this connection we shall have something to say later. Godwin saw London in the throes of political unrest, confusion in religion, economic imbalance, and literary decadence. His interests sharpened by the intolerable injustices, Godwin determined to labor unceasingly for social reform.

F. LITERARY PRODUCTIONS

In 1793 he published in expensive form the extraordinary work which gave classic expression to his revolutionary philosophy. It was An Enquiry concerning the

---

[10] William Godwin, Sketches of History, 20.

Principles of Political Justice, and Its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness.[11] An exposition of this magnum opus will be found in a later chapter.[12]

He was now an active opponent of the established order. He associated with Holcroft, Thelwall, Hardy, Horne, and Tooke. The most outspoken members of this group were caught in the toils of the law, but were later given their freedom. Lauderdale, Fox, Parr, Holland, and Sheridan provided additional re-enforcement to Godwin's ambition to further social reform. Out of the crucible came two works, Caleb Williams[13] and The Enquirer,[14] which emphasized his case against the established order.

In the same year in which The Enquirer was published, in 1797, he was united in marriage to the famous authoress, Mary Wollstonecraft, writer of the Vindication of the Rights of Woman.[15] He had lived with her for a short time

---

[11] For its various editions, see 224 below.

[12] ~~See Appendix~~

[13] See 224 ff, below.

[14] See 224 below.

[15] Erroneous ideas might arise among those who have only heard the name of this book. She made no demand for political equality with men, and treated the institutions of religion and marriage with entire respect. Indeed, from her letters she was remote from any tinge of free thinking at this time. Better educational opportunities for her sex was the emphasis of the book.

before their marriage, but later married her in conventional manner chiefly for the sake of the yet unborn Mary, who was destined to be the wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley.[16] Mary Wollstonecraft's daughter, Fanny Imlay, thereafter bore the Godwin name.

G. MARITAL EXPERIENCES

The Godwin-Wollstonecraft alliance did not remain as conventional as the marriage ceremony might suggest. Mary maintained her separate quarters, and Godwin his. Their notes dealing with their arrangements for meeting reveal a strong bond of love and devotion to each other.[17] But deep tragedy severed this bond. His wife died while giving birth to their daughter Mary. Godwin was prostrate. He was not even physically able to attend her funeral.

Godwin soon sought the hand of Miss Harriet Lee. The courtship was by mail, and the correspondence was too philosophical to be passionate. At any rate, Miss Lee refused Godwin, and lived to an old age in the maiden state. His

---

[16] For their views on marriage, see 105 ff. below.

[17] See C. Kegan Paul, William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries, I, 241 ff. below.

next effort was to obtain the consent of the widowed Mrs. Reveley. She and her husband had been long-standing friends of William Godwin. But again Godwin met failure, as Mrs. Reveley suddenly married another.

Having been twice disappointed in his marital hopes, Godwin found himself captured in 1801 by the attractive and aggressive Mary Jane Clairmont. She brought with her into the household two children (one of whom, also Mary Jane, became Lord Byron's mistress). She was an indulgent mother but a harsh stepmother. Selfishness, untruthfulness, a bad temper, and little delicacy of feeling were among her many faults; shrewdness and physical charm were among her virtues. It was a poor match. Although she was a harsh stepmother, she did aid the family by co-operating with Godwin in conducting a book business. This business was not successful, and pecuniary difficulties continued to harass him. An attempt to produce a play also failed.

H. LATER WRITINGS

Godwin then turned more assiduously to writing. He had met Sir Walter Scott on a sojourn in Edinburgh, and through Scott arranged a sale for Mandeville,[18] a novel

---

[18] See 226, below.

which fell below the quality of Caleb Williams.[19] Other novels and works followed. Among them were his attack on Malthusianism, Thoughts on Man, and The Lives of the Necromancers.[20]

I. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

In spite of his active pen, he had many embarrassing financial difficulties. The loans from Shelley were a source of particular unpleasantness.[21] His last few years, however, were less burdened by economic stress. In 1833 he was appointed yeoman usher of the exchequer to which sinecure was attached apartments in Palace Yard. It has been cryptically observed that this sinecure presented by the Whig government was an ironical end for the archpriest of anarchism.[22]

---

[19] See brief account of this work, 224 ff, below.

[20] For a complete bibliography, chronologically arranged, see 226 , below.

[21] He became bankrupt in 1822. During this period of financial insolvency he produced one of his more valuable works, The History of the Commonwealth.

[22] Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw, The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era, 144.

J. GODWIN'S DEATH

He died on April 7, 1836 and his remains were deposited in the churchyard of St. Pancras, in St. Pancras Road, where Mary Wollstonecraft had been buried.

K. A SUMMARY OF CONDITIONING FACTORS

The foregoing biographical account has value in indicating some of the influences which were formative factors in Godwin's beliefs concerning social philosophy and theology. Let us here recapitulate several significant elements found in the biography. First, note the introvertive, reflective nature of Godwin's youth. His physical inferiority and his preference for books rather than social games doubtless had their effects on his later life. Second, the unsatisfactory relationship between him and his father quite possibly has bearing upon Godwin's subsequent attack against authority and tyranny. Third, his own marital disappointments and frustrations may have been projected into his denunciation of marriage. Fourth, the stifling rigors of his early Calvinism and his experiences as a son of an ill-adjusted, dissenting minister may have been causative factors in Godwin's radical views in theology and ecclesiasticism. Fifth, the conspicuous economic and

social injustices seen from his youth may have accentuated his zeal for reform.

CHAPTER III

GODWIN'S VIEWS CONCERNING ANARCHY, SOCIETY, AND GOVERNMENT

It is the purpose of this chapter to attempt to show what Godwin meant by several concepts which are basic to his social philosophy. After indicating difficulties encountered in the investigation, we shall deal in a preliminary manner with Godwin's attitude towards anarchism. Then we shall consider his ideas concerning society and the several forms of government. A critical study of these fundamental views is believed essential to a clear understanding of the system of thought he presented.

A. CONFUSION AND DIFFICULTIES

One does not proceed far with the task of analyzing and evaluating Godwin's theory of anarchism before discovering that confusion and contradiction exist both in what Godwin himself said and in what writers say that he said. As we shall see, part of the difficulty lies in the fact that he never did make himself clear and consistent in his social philosophy, and thus part of the blame for confusion must be charged to him. Again, as we shall also see,

many elements in the few extant accounts of his anarchism are at fault in reaching unfounded conclusions and in giving erroneous impressions. Yet no little blame for this confusion is due to the lack of precision and uniformity in the use of terms and concepts. Jászi comments in this connection:

> There is perhaps no other chapter in the history of social-political ideas which has caused so much confusion to the specialist as well as to the general public as the anarchist doctrine. Anarchism covers so many distinct conceptions and tendencies that it is difficult to reduce them all to a common denominator.[1]

For our purposes, however, we may define anarchism[2] loosely as the social philosophy which holds that government is not only unnecessary but is actually inimical to the best interests of man. Repudiation of law and property are frequently corollaries.

B. ANARCHY AND ANARCHISM

Godwin at no time explicitly states what he means by anarchism. Nor does he distinguish between anarchy and

---

[1] Oscar Jászi, Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, II, 46.

[2] Anarchy etymologically means "without head."

anarchism.[3] In his concern lest his own system of beliefs be confused with popular conceptions of anarchy, he makes this statement: "Anarchy as it is usually understood, and a well conceived form of society without government, are exceedingly different from each other."[4] But he does not define just what anarchy means to him.

Godwin, as Leslie Stephen observes, "admits that anarchy is an evil."[5] Yet Godwin, as Stephen fails to observe, never directly attacks anarchy; his references to it are in relation to other evils in government, such as despotism. In one instance, he states: "Anarchy may and has terminated in despotism; and in that case the introduction of anarchy will only serve to afflict us with variety of ills."[6] Again, he compares anarchy with despotism in this manner: "Anarchy awakes mind . . . but in despotism it is trampled into an equality of the most odious sort

---

[3] Note the same failure in R. Bruce Taylor, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, I, 419.

[4] William Godwin, Enquiry concerning Political Justice, and Its Influence on Morals and Happiness, II, 361. Hereafter this often-cited work will be referred to briefly as Political Justice. All references are to the 1796 edition.

[5] Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, II, 275.

[6] Godwin, op. cit., II, 365.

. . . In despotism there is no encouragement to excellence."[7] Godwin further asserts his belief that anarchy is an evil in this relative statement: "We must not hastily conclude that the mischiefs of anarchy are worse than those which government is qualified to produce."[8] He leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that despotism is worse. Despotism is perennial, while anarchy is transitory.[9] Another comparison between despotism and anarchy is made as follows: " . . . Despotism, a government, as Mr. Locke justly observes, altogether 'vile and miserable', and 'more to be deprecated than anarchy itself.'"[10] Godwin later states: "If vigilance and wisdom be successful in their present opposition to anarchy, every benefit will be ultimately obtained, untarnished with violence, and unstained with blood."[11]

Although Godwin makes no clear statement as to the nature of anarchism, and although he makes no distinction

---

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., II, 363.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., I, 13.

[11] Ibid., II, 367.

between anarchy and anarchism, there can be no doubt that his social philosophy is to be regarded as advocating anarchism. Jászi reminds us that "anarchism is not so much a definite scientific theory as a mass ideology colored by many emotional and religious elements."[12] Anarchism permeates Godwin's writings, even though there is no definite scientific theory presented. A statement like the following is thoroughly expressive of the basis upon which anarchism builds its thought: "Every man should stand by himself and rest upon his own understanding. No man must encroach upon my province nor I upon his."[13] Or, again: "The most simple and obvious of all proceedings is for each man to be the sovereign arbiter of his own concerns."[14] Such sentiments represent the anarchistic pattern as surely as does the similar statement which is more familiar to American readers: "I was not born to be forced, but I will breathe after my own fashion."[15] If we find no explicit formulation of Godwin's anarchism, therefore, it should be

---

[12] Jászi, op. cit., II, 46.

[13] Godwin, op. cit., I, 169.

[14] Ibid., II, 32.

[15] See Henry David Thoreau, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience", Miscellanies, (New Riverside edition), 156.

remembered that the whole force of his writing is to be taken as his anarchism. As we shall see later, his views concerning force, government, law, and property are all of the essence of anarchism.

C. GODWIN'S VIEWS CONCERNING SOCIETY

The second basic element in Godwin's social philosophy is his conception of society and government and the distinction he makes between them. It is clear in some instances that Godwin favors society. "Society is our proper sphere," he says.[16] Man, he believes, is characterized by two propensities - the love of society, and the love of solitude. All our great lessons from youth to age are learned in society. "In society all our sweetest affections are called into play, and our main virtues are exercised."[17] But society, however informally and voluntarily organized, must remember that "the value of individuals ought not to be forgotten."[18] Moreover, "can society

---

[16] Godwin, Essays, 219.

[17] Loc. cit.

[18] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 264.

become the equal of certain individuals of whom it is composed?"[19] Godwin seems to think not.

The difficulty to be encountered here is that Godwin fails to clarify the distinction between society and government. He sets out to do so,[20] but he does not hold consistently to the distinction he drew. As a matter of fact, the distinction is borrowed from Thomas Paine, who argued that society and government are different in themselves and have different origins. Paine continues:

> Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness. The former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections; the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions; the first is a patron, the last a punisher. Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil, in its worst state an intolerable one . . . Government like dress is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the powers of Paradise.[21]

Apparently quite in accord with Paine, Godwin adds that men associated at first for the sake of mutual assistance.[22]

---

[19] Godwin, ibid., II, 199.

[20] Ibid., I, 125.

[21] Thomas Paine, Common Sense, 1.

[22] Godwin, op. cit., I, 125.

Here, again, we find agreement with Paine, who wrote: "No one man was capable without the aid of society of supplying his own wants."[23] Free association and common consent are as distinct from government to Godwin as they were to Paine,[24] but only in Godwin's definitions!

Stephen asserts that Godwin "would pulverize society. All association involves some sacrifice of individual judgment . . . Cooperation is hateful to him."[25] Stephen's authority for stating that Godwin would pulverize society is to be questioned. We have shown, on page six above, that Godwin himself indicates approval of society in some instances.

But Stephen is right when he observes that all association leads to some sacrifice of individual judgment. The significant point is that the observation is Stephen's, not Godwin's. Godwin did not resolve in his social philosophy the conflict between society and government. The nearest approach to reckoning with their inter-relation is evidenced

---

[23] Paine, op. cit., 1.

[24] Paine wrote: "Instances are not wanting to show that everything which government can usefully add thereto has been performed by the common consent of society without government." Thomas Paine, Rights of Man, II, 64.

[25] Stephen, op. cit., II, 275.

in this comment: "We are members of a community. We are indissolubly connected with the society of our fellowmen. We have duties."[26]

Yet Godwin at no time indicates that he was aware of the implications of the fact of duties. What Stephen apparently saw, and what he presumes that Godwin also saw - but did not! - is that duties logically necessitate a more formal matrix than is required by the concept of free association. That is to say, duties imply a sense of oughtness which at once renders free association practically impossible. This sense of oughtness involves moral force and obligation, if not compulsion; hence freedom is restricted.[27] Moral force leads to implementation. Legislation comes into being. Godwin, however, condemns the institution of law:

> We can scarcely hesitate to conclude universally that law is an institution of the most pernicious tendency. It is an institution which, once begun, can never be brought to a close. Edict is heaped upon edict, and volume upon volume.[28]

---

[26] Godwin, Essays, 217, also 219.

[27] Note Godwin's own statement: "Coercion may be the duty of individuals within the community." Godwin, Political Justice, II, 182.

[28] Ibid., II, 204.

D. GODWIN'S VIEWS CONCERNING GOVERNMENT

We have tried to show that Godwin did not sharply demarcate society and government. About his essential disbelief in government, however, there can be no misunderstanding. He says flatly: "All government corresponds in a certain degree to what the Greeks denominated a tyranny."[29] In another connection, he asserts:

> Government is the perpetual enemy of change. What was admirably observed of a particular system of government,[30] is in a great degree true of all: They "lay their hand on the spring there is in society, and put a stop to its motion."[31]

These are representative expressions of his attitude towards government in general. He explains that this attitude was influenced by conditions in France during the eighteenth century. Note this comment which he makes about himself in his preface to Political Justice:

> Of the desirableness of a government in the utmost degree simple he was not made fully aware, but by ideas suggested by the French revolution. To the same event he owes the determination of mind which gave existence to this work.[32]

---

[29] Godwin, ibid., II, 198.

[30] Godwin is referring here to Logan's History of Government, 69.

[31] Godwin, op. cit., I, 247.

[32] Ibid., I, ix.

It was not the French Revolution alone, however, which moved Godwin to denounce government. He was apparently attacking the whole system of thought, so antithetical to his own, which held that man's relation to government is in the nature of a social contract. Not only had the contract theory been popularized in France by Rousseau, but Locke had given it prestige in Godwin's own country.[33] Burke, as a Whig, defended the theory in an eloquent, but puzzling, address which included these statements:

> Society is indeed a contract . . . but the State ought not be considered as nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other such low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection.

---

[33] The Revolution of 1689 was also justified by Parliament on the ground that James VI "had endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom by breaking the original contract between King and people." (Resolutions of House of Commons, January, 1689.)

> As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are dead and those who are to be born. Each contract of each particular State is but a clause in the great primeval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures each in their appointed place.[34]

This excerpt indicates something of the hold which the contractual theory of government had upon one of Godwin's contemporaries.

One further conditioning factor should be mentioned, in order that we may understand Godwin's attitude towards government more clearly. This factor was the publication, in 1791, of the first part of Thomas Paine's Rights of Man. Concerning the flow of influence between Paine and Godwin we shall have occasion to comment at several points in our study, but let us here note the manner in which the former helped to prepare the way for the latter's attack on government, especially in its contractual sense. Early in the first part of his book, Paine argues as follows:

---

[34] Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution", Works, I, 368-369.

> It has been thought a considerable advance towards establishing the principles of freedom to say that government is a compact between those who govern and those who are governed; but this cannot be true, because it is putting the effect before the cause; for as man must have existed before governments existed, there necessarily was a time when governments did not exist, and consequently there could originally exist no governors to form such a compact with. The fact therefore must be that the individuals themselves, each in his own personal and sovereign right, entered into a compact with each other to produce a government: and this is the only mode in which governments have a right to arise, and the only principle on which they have a right to exist.
>
> To possess ourselves of a clear idea of what government is, or ought to be, we must trace it to its origin. In doing this we shall easily discover that governments must have arisen either out of the people or over the people.[35]

Thus a transition was effected for Godwin. Just as the theory of the divine right of kings was challenged by the contract theory of government, so do we find the contract theory now challenged by Paine's theory of man's rights. In a sense beginning where Paine concluded, Godwin carried the doctrine to its logical end, namely, the challenging of the value of any government at all.

Godwin, like Paine, avowedly rejects the contract theory. He attacks the position by use of the following

---

[35] Paine, Rights of Man, 47-48.

arguments:[36] (1) The contract theory makes for inequality and injustice because it implies that the contract has already been drawn between the government and our ancestors. Thus man today, as well as posterity, is denied the opportunity of choosing the system of regulations under which he considers it proper to live. Furthermore, he asks:

> And if I be obliged to submit to the established government till my turn comes to assent to it, upon what principle is that obligation founded? Surely not upon the contract into which my father entered before I was born?[37]

(2) The contract theory assumes, without justification, that acquiescence means approval of government. To be sure, Locke seeks to clarify this point by explaining that

> a tacit consent indeed obliges a man to obey the laws of any government, as long as he has any possessions, or enjoyment of any part of the dominions of that government; but nothing can make a man a member of the commonwealth, but his actually entering into it by positive engagement, and express promise and compact.[38]

Yet, argues Godwin, such a theory leads to the end of all political science, all discrimination between better and

---

[36] For his own statements concerning these arguments, see Godwin, Political Justice, I, 190-195.

[37] Godwin, op. cit., I, 191.

[38] John Locke, Treatise of Government, II, 122.

worse. Moreover, "acquiescence is frequently nothing more than a choice on the part of the individual of what he deems the least evil."[39] (3) The contract theory creates the impossible situation of requiring a continued consent to its laws. One is bound to a static system of laws, and no progress can be admitted. No matter if better information avails itself, one is held to a contract made under less enlightened circumstances. (4) The contract theory erroneously assumes that law can be stated simply enough for all persons to understand it alike. The necessity for interpretation and the possibility of variation in interpretation are ignored. "What then can be more absurd," Godwin asks, "than to present to me the laws of England in fifty volumes folio, and call upon me to give an honest and uninfluenced vote upon their contents?"[40] (5) The contract theory obliges one to consent not only to all the laws already made, but to all the laws that shall hereafter be made. Rousseau pointed out the injustice of this requirement when he wrote the following declaration:

---

[39] Godwin, op. cit., I, 191.

[40] Ibid., I, 193.

> La souveraineté ne peut être representée, par la même raison qu'elle ne peut être alienée; elle consiste essentiellement dans la volonté générale, et la volonté ne se represent point: elle est la même, ou elle est autre; il n'y a point de milieu. Les deputés du peuple ne font donc point ses representans, ils ne font que ses commissaires; ils ne peuvant rien conclure definitivement. Toute loi que le peuple en personne n'a pas ratifiée, est nulle; ce n'est point une loi.[41]

Nor is the use of addresses of adhesion a real remedy for the injustice here discussed. Such alterations and addenda are a precarious and equivocal mode of collecting the sense of a nation, Godwin thinks.[42] (6) The contract theory, in assuming that government is founded in the consent of the people, can have no power over any individual by whom that consent is refused. Godwin adds: "If a tacit consent be not sufficient, still less can I be deemed to have consented to a measure upon which I put an express negative."[43] Thus Godwin dismisses the contract theory as fallacious and impracticable.

---

[41] Jean Jacques Rousseau, Du Contrat Social, Book III, 15.

[42] See Godwin, op. cit., I, 195.

[43] Ibid.

Again, like Paine, Godwin holds that "government is little capable of affording benefit of the first importance to mankind."[44] Thoreau carries the argument still farther when he says that "government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way."[45] Godwin also believes that governments "originate in the errors of man"[46] and that "their tendency is to perpetuate abuse."[47] Government, Godwin further contends - and here he is most characteristic of the anarchist, - is a question of force and not of consent.[48] He adds: "There is no such disparity among the human race as to enable one man to hold several other men in subjection, except so far as they are willing to be subject."[49] But government in truth, constitutes other men the arbitrators of one's own actions and the ultimate disposers of one's destiny.[50] He states:

---

[44] Ibid., II, 230. Cf., n 24, above.

[45] Thoreau, op. cit., 132.

[46] Godwin, Op. cit., I, 222.

[47] Ibid., I, 247.

[48] See ibid., I, 227.

[49] Ibid., I, 145.

[50] See ibid., I, 227.

> The supreme power in a state ought not, in the strictest sense, to require anything of its members, that an understanding sufficiently enlightened would not prescribe without such interference.[51]

In another connection he asserts "that government by its very nature counteracts the improvement of individual intellect."[52] Godwin stressed that we should have little government as possible. Each man should be wise enough to govern himself without the intervention of any compulsory restraint; and, "since government is an evil, the object principally to be aimed at is, that we should have as little of it as the general peace of human society will permit."[53]

As to the forms of government, Godwin believes that some are more evil than others. Monarchy is the worst. It is essentially corrupt.[54] Of monarchy he later says: "The

---

[51] Ibid., 123.

[52] Ibid., I, viii.

[53] Cf. Thoreau: "I heartily accept the motto - 'That government is best which governs least' [quoting Thomas Jefferson]; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe, - 'That government is best which governs not at all;' and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have." "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience", Miscellanies, 131.

[54] Godwin acknowledges that he owes this conviction to the political writings of Swift and "to a perusal of the Latin historians." See Godwin, Political Justice, I, ix.

seeds of reason and truth become barren and unreproductive in this unwholesome climate."[55] Montesquieu's L'Esprit des Lois (1748) had declared that monarchy led to despotism, and Godwin had written of the influence, which Montesquieu had exerted upon him.[56] The protests in France and America against monarchy probably accentuated Godwin's opposition to this form of government.[57] He devotes a section of his Political Justice to the evils of monarchy in general.[58] He shows that the very education of a prince unfits him for ruling. Protection from the rougher and more common experiences of life, sycophantic environment, and callousness to man's sufferings are the inevitable characteristics of a prince's education.[59] The prince is educated for a private life marked by irresponsibility, impatience, dissipation, dislike of truth and justice.[60]

---

[55] Godwin, op. cit., II, 62.

[56] Paul had access to Godwin's incomplete diary and preserved this reference. See Paul, William Godwin, I, 67.

[57] Cf. Godwin's own statement concerning this influence. Political Justice, I, x.

[58] Godwin, op. cit., II, 1-30.

[59] Ibid., II, 5 ff.

[60] Ibid., II, 20 ff.

Indeed the whole foundation upon which monarchy rests is false, since monarchs are not entitled to the eminence they obtain. They possess no intrinsic superiority over their subjects. "The first lesson of virtue is, obey no man; the first lesson of monarchy is, obey the king."[61] The imposture upon which a monarchy is founded is supported by splendor of court, inflated style of regal formality, indifference to merit and truth, artificial desires, and pusillanimity.[62] "Virtue was never yet held in much honour and esteem in a monarchical country."[63] Moreover, the injustice of luxury in royal circles and the inordinate admiration of wealth are vices to be deplored.[64]

Godwin also believes that "monarchy is not adapted to the government of large states,"[65] and thus he disagrees with Rousseau who says "that monarchy is suited only to

---

[61] Ibid., II, 53.

[62] Ibid., 46 ff.

[63] Ibid., 54.

[64] Paine warns: "The enormous expense of government has provoked people to think, by making them feel; and when once the veil begins to rend, it admits not of repair." Paine, Rights of Man, 359.

[65] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 36.

large states."[66] This disagreement reveals a basic difference in the conception of government as held by these two writers. Godwin declares that good government depends on information and reason, and a large monarchy cannot know the interests of the whole.[67] Rousseau, on the other hand, argues that a large monarchy more nearly approaches the nature of a desirable democracy because the ruler has a more tenuous relation to his people.[68]

Concerning a virtuous despotism, Godwin argues in this manner: "Whatever dispositions any man may possess in favour of the welfare of others, two things are necessary to give them validity and power: discernment and power."[69] But, however benevolent the monarch, he cannot exercise discernment and power to the extent that his subjects will be favorably affected. Monarchy is not adapted to governing large areas and many people, as we have observed in the preceding paragraph. The good intentions of a monarch,

---

[66] Rousseau, The Social Contract, (Tozer trans.),164.

[67] Godwin, op. cit., II, 36.

[68] Rousseau, op. cit., 164.

[69] Godwin, op. cit., II, 32.

therefore, fall short of reaching those who most need it. While Godwin ostensibly addresses himself to the question of "virtuous despotism", it would seem more accurate to say that his question was that of benevolent monarchy.

The second main type of government which Godwin considers is aristocracy. This form is based even more than is monarchy on the fallacious principle of hereditary preëminence. Aristocracy erroneously views the multitude as "an unruly beast"[70] which necessitates a government by the superior few. Though Godwin believes that those who govern - if government be admitted desirable - should be competent, he argues that competence is not a matter of heredity. If we can in this manner produce an hereditary legislator, why not a hereditary moralist or an hereditary poet?"[71] Aristocracy is further to be condemned because it encourages luxury and extravagance of the few at the expense of poverty and servility of the many.[72] In fact, while Godwin sets aristocracy apart as a second and separate form of government, it is so similarly treated as to be part of his

---

[70] Godwin, ibid., II, 85. Also cf. Hobbes' view that homo homini lupus.

[71] Godwin, ibid., II, 89. He is quoting Paine, q.v., Rights of Man, 358.

[72] See ibid., II, 92.

section on monarchy. The arrangement is hardly logical, but it serves to emphasize the greater contempt he holds for aristocracy.

The third form of government[73] which Godwin evaluates is democracy, which he thus defines: "Democracy is a system of government according to which every member of society is considered as a man and nothing more."[74] He believes the weaknesses in democracy are as follows: The ascendancy of the ignorant and crafty, the inconstancy and vacillation, the opportunity for demogogues to take control, and the suspicion directed towards those of superior merit.[75]

Yet Godwin holds that democracy is superior to monarchy and aristocracy. In spite of all its weaknesses, Athenian democracy was more desirable than these other two forms of government.[76]

---

[73] Godwin says: "No form of government can be devised which does not partake of monarchy, aristocracy or democracy." Godwin, Political Justice, II, 113. Totalitarianism currently shows the incompleteness of his trichotomy.

[74] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 110.

[75] Although Godwin at no time acknowledges that Plato has influenced him, it interesting to note how closely Godwin's criticisms of democracy resemble those of Plato. Cf. Plato, Republic, (Davies and Vaughan trans.), VIII, 270-304.

[76] See Godwin, op. cit., II, 114.

> Democracy restores to man a consciousness of his value, teaches him by the removal of authority and oppression to listen only to the dictates of reason, gives him confidence to treat all other men as his fellow beings, and induces him to regard them no longer as enemies against whom to be upon his guard, but as brethren whom it becomes him to assist.[77]

Godwin's partial endorsement of democracy is probably due also to the atomistic nature of this form of government. Democracy is logically more akin to anarchism, which is wholly atomistic, than it is to monarchy or aristocracy. Many of the elements in democracy - its relative freedom, justice, and equality - are virtues which find fullest expression in the ideals of anarchism. This practical relation of democracy to anarchism quite likely placed the former in a favorable light in Godwin's thinking.

Then, there was the influence of the rights of man theory. We have seen that Paine popularized this point of view and that Godwin acknowledged his debt to Paine. This theory rejected both monarchy and aristocracy, and advocated democracy. Of monarchy Paine wrote that it "appears to be something going much out of fashion, falling into ridicule, and rejected in some countries both as unnecessary and expensive."[78] And of aristocracy he said that it

---

[77] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 116.

[78] Paine, Rights of Man, 366.

"has a tendency to deteriorate the human species."[79] Democracy was, of course, the the form of government which gave more attention to man's rights. Paine declares "that civil government is necessary, all civilised nations will agree; but civil government is republican government."[80]

Godwin's persistent belief in man's perfectibility probably is a further encouragement to his belief that democracy is better than monarchy or aristocracy. Democracy has the faith to assume that man is capable of self-government and of a proper use of freedom. Rousseau states: "If there were a nation of gods, it would be governed democratically. So perfect a government is unsuited to men."[81] But note Godwin's argument: "Nothing can be more unreasonable than to argue from men as we now find them, to men as they may hereafter become."[82] How dominant an influence this belief in man's perfectibility was in all of Godwin's writing we shall consider later,[83] but here we see its bearing upon his degree of faith in democracy.

---

[79] Paine, ibid., 323.

[80] Ibid., 367

[81] Rousseau, op. cit., 160

[82] Godwin, op. cit., II, 116.

[83] See 165 ff. below.

We have endeavored in these foregoing pages to indicate Godwin's views concerning anarchism, society, and government. Pertinent to his ideas in regard to these basic concepts are the implications of force in its several forms. The following chapter attempts to make a critical study of this problem.

CHAPTER IV

GODWIN'S VIEWS CONCERNING FORCE IN ITS SEVERAL RELATIONS

Closely related to Godwin's views concerning government are his ideas as to the place of force in his social philosophy. It is the purpose of this chapter, therefore, to deal with this fundamental question. We shall endeavor to show the confusion which exists in this area of Godwin's thinking; to consider possible distinctions between force, coercion, and violence; and to study such related problems as punishment of crime, revolution, and war.

A. CONFUSION AND AMBIGUITIES IN TERMS

As already indicated, Godwin fails to clarify the distinctions in his use of the concepts of force, coercion, and violence. He employs three terms in a confused and indiscriminate matter. In this respect he does not differ from several other writers who might be mentioned. Rousseau, for instance, says that "force is a physical power,"[1] but he later assigns to it a moral emphasis and gives violence a more physical meaning. Paine also makes no distinctions.

---

[1] Rousseau, Social Contract, 103.

A study of the several dictionaries reveals further confusion and inconsistency. The New English Dictionary (the so-called Oxford Dictionary) makes no helpful distinctions. It defines force as "physical strength or power exerted; violence or physical coercion".[2] The New Standard Dictionary, on the other hand, defines force as "unlawful violence".[3] Webster's New International Dictionary makes force and violence synonymous, but it adds: "Violence denotes the unjust or unwarranted exercise of force . . . Compulsion and, still more, coercion, imply the application, usually by some active agent, of physical or (in the case of coercion more frequently) moral force to control the action of a voluntary agent."[4]

These representative sources indicate the difficulty confronted in finding clear definitions of force, coercion, and violence. Nor do Skeat[5] or Dewey[6] sharpen the needed

---

[2] New English Dictionary, IV, 420.

[3] Ibid., I, 959.

[4] Webster's New International Dictionary, 848.

[5] See Walter W. Skeat, Etymological Dictionary, 119, 221, and 692.

[6] John Dewey, "Force and Coercion", The International Journal of Ethics, XXVI, 359-365.

distinctions. Dr. Georgia Harkness gives the following helpful analysis of coercion and violence:

> No society - not even so small a group as the family - could exist without some kind of coercion. Immature members must be taught and in some cases forcibly directed by coercion from the more mature, lest they destroy themselves and others. In the larger society a police force is imperative to restrain the results both of ignorance and sin. Within both areas, physical coercion under some circumstances is both curative and necessary. There are times when children need to be spanked; there are occasions when intoxicated persons need to be thrust forcibly into a police car. It is better to disperse a lynching mob with tear gas than to let them lynch their victim.
>
> Coercion ceases to be legitimate force and becomes violence when either physical brutality or mass destruction replaces the spirit of redemptive restraint. To imprison an offender is coercion; to flog him is violence. To disperse a mob with a gas causing physical discomfort but no permanent injury is coercion; to ride ruthlessly through it and let human beings be trampled under horses' hoofs is violence. There is probably a legitimate coercive use of night-sticks and guns by the police, but there is certainly an illegitimate use of these when an arbitrary and brutal demonstration of power replaces the maintenance of order.
>
> Violence corrupts much family discipline; it impregnates the police and penal systems with arrogance; it is the very nature of war. And whenever coercion gives way to violence it destroys its end; for it sets in operation forces of anger, cruelty and retaliation which in their essential nature are destructive rather than curative.[7]

---

[7] Georgia E. Harkness, The Resources of Religion, 62 ff.

Dr. George A. Coe deals with this same problem of clarifying the concepts of force, coercion, and violence. He makes no careful distinction between them, but he does distinguish between two kinds of coercion: violent and non-violent.[8]

The practical problem faced in the interpretation of these terms as they appear in Godwin's writing is to make sure whether he gives them physical or moral implications. One assumes that force is less physical and more organized than is violence, and that coercion is more successful than is violence; but these arbitrary distinctions are not held consistently by Godwin. He frequently does employ the term violence to mean inadequately organized, mostly physical, and usually unsuccessful force.[9] As for his use of the term coercion, one is led to believe that it is physical but less so than violence. We have noted his statement that "coercion may be the duty of individuals within the community."[10] Coercion is not to be condoned, but it is better than violence; hence the lesser evil should be chosen. He states:

---

[8] George A. Coe, "Two Kinds of Coercion", World Tomorrow, Vol. 16, 177.

[9] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 103; II, 182 and 196.

[10] Ibid., II, 182.

> As long as nations shall be so far mistaken as to endure a complex government and an extensive territory, coercion will be indispensibly [sic] necessary to general security. It is therefore the duty of individuals to take an active share upon occasion, in so much coercion, and in such parts of the existing system, as shall be sufficient to prevent the inroad of universal violence and tumult.[11]

In another connection, he declares: "Of consequence the wise and just man, being unable as yet to introduce the form of society which his understanding approves, will contribute to the support of so much coercion as is necessary to exclude what is worse, anarchy."[12]

Yet ideally coercion has no justification even as an expedient. He believes that "coercion can at no time, either permanently or provisionally [italics mine], make part of any political system that is built upon the principles of reason."[13] Here is one of the many instances in which Godwin attempts at once to accept the actual situation as it is and endeavor to proceed from it to the more desirable, and at once to superimpose the ideal on the

---

[11] Ibid., II, 359.

[12] Ibid., II, 368.

[13] Ibid., II, 358.

real. He observes that "coercion has no proper tendency to prepare man for a state in which coercion shall cease."[14] Coercion is therefore of doubtful value even when used as an expedient. Without the use of coercion, however, the even more reprehensible elements of anarchy and violence may go unchecked. Yet so long as coercion is resorted to, so long are reason and justice thwarted. Godwin implicitly considers this dilemma, but he makes no effort to resolve it.

His views concerning force are almost as inconsistent, although here he makes clearer that he regards force more favorably as an expedient. In one instance he declares that "force may never be resorted to, but in the most extraordinary and imperious emergency."[15] But precisely what constitutes "most extraordinary and imperious" emergencies he does not say. By whose judgment and by what criteria are emergencies decided? It would seem that the general community is to decide. Note this statement:

---

[14] Ibid., II, 356.

[15] Ibid., I, 169.

> It has appeared to be necessary with respect to men as we at present find them, that force should sometimes be employed in repressing injustice; and for the same reasons we will suppose this force should as far as possible be vested in the community.[16]

As with coercion, "force is an expedient the use of which is to be deplored . . . It corrupts the man that employs it, and the man upon whom it is employed."[17]

Violence is even more strongly opposed in Godwin's writings. Like Rousseau, he holds that violence is not so much the product of man's nature as it is of his institutions. "Man is not originally vicious,"[18] he insists. Violence, like coercion,[19] is not even to be used as a bad means to a good end. Concerning the evil of violence in this connection he writes as follows:

> . . . Nothing can be more indefensible than a project for introducing by violence that state of society which our judgments may happen to approve . . . To dragoon men into the adoption of what we think right is an intolerable tyranny. It leads to unlimited disorder and injustice. Every man thinks himself in the right; and, if such a proceeding were universally introduced, the destiny of mankind would be no longer a question of argument, but of strength, presumption or intrigue.[20]

---

[16] Godwin, ibid., I, 224.

[17] Ibid., I, 263.

[18] Ibid., II, 203.

[19] See 64 above.

[20] Godwin, op. cit., I, 259.

B. PUNISHMENT OF CRIME

Another aspect of the problem of force which Godwin considers is the punishment of crime. In fact, he believes that this is a very significant consideration. He begins his chapter by declaring that "the subject of punishment is perhaps the most fundamental in the science of politics."[21] Driver is so favorably impressed with Godwin's treatment of the problem that he states that "perhaps the most brilliant and penetrating of all the sections of Political Justice are those that deal with this subject."[22]

This same writer asserts that Godwin's own thinking on the subject of punishment has been supplemented by the influence of Beccaria and that the former has borrowed extensively from the latter.[23] Godwin himself acknowledges this influence.[24] Both thinkers deplored the use of coercive authority (thought they differed as to the occasions upon which it was used justifiably). Godwin's statements concerning coercion we shall deal with at greater length

---

[21] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 321.

[22] C. H. Driver in Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw, Social and Political Ideas, 167.

[23] Loc. cit.

[24] See Godwin, op. cit., II, 348 and II, 353. Note in the first reference Godwin's comment concerning "the humane and benevolent Beccaria".

immediately below. Beccaria said: "Every act of authority of one man over another, for which there is not an absolute necessity, is tyrannical."[25] Secondly, both men indicated in their entire approach to the problem of crime and punishment the earnest desire to place the question on a scientific basis. Justice and fairness in dealing with criminals are their common emphases.[26] Thirdly, both men held to the pleasure-pain element in utilitarianism.[27] They agree, too, on a further utilitarian principle in that they hold that the most important consideration in crime is what it does to the greatest number of people.[28] Finally, there can be little doubt that both did much to arouse public interest in penological reform.

There are, however, two differences between Godwin and Beccaria which are too fundamental for Driver to have ignored. The first difference is that Godwin completely rejected the contract theory of government,[29] while Beccaria avows this theory as the basis for his arguments.[30] The

---

[25] Cesare B. Beccaria, An Essay on Crimes and Punishments, 19.

[26] Cf. Godwin, Political Justice, II, 338, and Beccaria, ibid., 20.

[27] Cf. 157 below, and Beccaria, op. cit., 35.

[28] Cf. 156 below, and Beccaria, op. cit., 36.

[29] See 47 above.

[30] Beccaria, op. cit., 22.

second difference, no less significant, is that Godwin believed free will did not exist,[31] while Beccaria held that man is a free moral agent who has the choice of committing or not committing a crime, and that all who commit identical crimes deserve identical treatment.[32]

Godwin first inquires into the meaning of punishment. One may employ force to compel any member of society to occupy a post most conducive to the general good, such as requiring a man to serve as a soldier. Again, one may put a valuable man to death because he is infected with some pestilential disease. Neither of these acts, however, would Godwin regard as punishment. What, then, is punishment? He replies that punishment is the voluntary infliction of evil upon a vicious being both because public advantage demands it and because there is a certain fitness or propriety in the nature of things which makes suffering the suitable concomitant of vice.[33] Both these reasons, however, take for granted the validity of the doctrine of free will. They presuppose that the offender might have chosen to do other

---

[31] See 153 below.

[32] For an account of Beccaria's views, see Albert Morris, Criminology, 52-53.

[33] See Godwin, Political Justice, II, 322.

than he did. They further assume that, if sufficiently painful consequences are attached to criminal actions, members of the community will voluntarily refrain from committing those acts.[34] Now, Godwin believes he has already completely disproved the existence of free will.[35] He argues as follows:

> Mind is an agent, in no other sense than matter is an agent . . . Morality, in a rational and designing mind, is not essentially different from morality in an inanimate substance. A man of certain intellectual habits is fitted to be an assassin; a dagger of a certain form, is fitted to be his instrument . . . The man is propelled to act by necessary causes and irresistible motives . . . The assassin cannot help the murder he commits, any more than the dagger.[36]

Next, Godwin examines the nature of retributive justice. This idea he wholly repudiates. Necessitarianism must ever be the guiding principle. "There is no such thing as desert," he says.[37] So it is wrong to inflict punishment except when it is clearly known that general good will be thus effected. Otherwise, to punish a man for what is past and irrecoverable is a most pernicious exhibition of an untutored barbarianism. "The only sense of the

---

[34] See ibid., II 323.

[35] See ibid., I, 361-421.

[36] See ibid., II, 324.

[37] See ibid., II, 327.

word punishment, that can be supposed to be compatible with the principles of the present work," he explains, "is that of pain inflicted on a person convicted of past injurious action, for the purpose of preventing future mischief."[38]

What can be said concerning the use of coercion involved in punishment? Let us reflect a little upon the species of influence that coercion employs, Godwin suggests.[39] It tends to make the criminal believe that he is wrong for the reason that he has less power than those coercing him. Thus, force is appealed to. Might, not right, appears to be the criterion of superiority. Superior strength is the standard of justice. Self-defence is the only occasion for a justifiable employment of coercion. Godwin terms this instance as "the most innocent of all the classes of coercion."[40] Even in this case, however, a mere passive resistance might be better. In this spirit of absolute pacifism, he queries: "Who shall say how far the whole species might be improved, did they cease to respect force in others, and did they refuse to employ it for

---

[38] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 327.

[39] Ibid., II, 334.

[40] Ibid., II, 337.

themselves?"[41] Certainly coercion in any other case is to be rejected outright.

Nor can punishment reform a man. Much less is punishment as restraint justifiable. These beliefs rest on the fallacy that coercion and adversity create virtue. Reason alone can create virtue, and reason is outraged by coercion.

Finally, Godwin considers whether punishment is desirable as a deterrent. He quickly concludes that this argument is the most specious of them all. Vicarious punishment never does anyone else any good. "All coercion sours the mind."[42] Punishment as an example to others leads only to greater barbarities and cruelties, since it emphasizes coercion rather than reason.

The difficulty of administering punishment is another problem which Godwin raises. In the first place, by what criteria should the degree of punishment be measured? Delinquency and punishment are incommensurable, he argues. "No standard of delinquency ever has been, or ever can be,

---

[41] Ibid., II, 339. Cf. the principles currently found in India's nonresistance movement and the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

[42] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 342.

discovered. No two crimes were ever alike."[43] Reducing crimes to general classes is absurd. Moreover, it is unfair to measure punishment on the basis of overt behavior, since it is the motive which is the proper object of study. But motives cannot always be known. Until the precise intentions of an offender is known, no just measure for punishment can be used. Thus Godwin concurs with Beccaria's reasoning.[44]

Now, what can be said for the use of punishment as a temporary expedient? Godwin insists it is fallacious to argue that the human species is at present so infested with evils that punishment must be resorted to until men are better. The first truth is that punishment will never make men better. "It were idle to expect," he continues, "that force should begin to do that, which it is the office of truth to finish."[45] Furthermore, the only way in which crime can be eradicated is to change the whole social system, since the causes of crime are inherent in the very structure of government.[46] It is the characteristic of a

---

[43] Ibid., II, 347.

[44] Beccaria, An Essay on Crimes and Punishments, 36-37.

[45] Godwin, op. cit., II, 360.

[46] Ibid., II, 361.

well-formed society to create, preserve, and increase the virtues of its members. Wrong government, not the individual, produces crime.

> The ill propensities of mankind no otherwise tend to postpone the abolition of coercion, than as they prevent them from perceiving the advantages of political simplicity. The moment in which they can be persuaded to adopt any rational plan for this abolition is the moment in which the abolition ought to be effected.[47]

Thus, Godwin urges that the only way to rid society of crime is not to temporize with punishment, but at once to change the nature of the social structure. "Punishment can at no time, either permanently or provisionally, make part of any political system that is built upon the principles of reason."[48]

Godwin's next point in his discussion of the problem of punishment is hardly consistent with his general views concerning coercion.[49] He states that coercion exercised in the name of the state upon its respective members cannot be the duty of the community, "but coercion may be the duty of individuals within the community."[50] But the individual

---

[47] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 362.

[48] Ibid., II, 363.

[49] See 64 above.

[50] Godwin, op. cit., II, 363.

rendering the punishment must be quite certain that temporary restraint, not retribution or reform, is his only motive. Godwin not only at this point broke from his established opposition to coercion, but also made his argument vulnerable by failing to show exactly under what exigencies coercion is justified. Moreover, he himself relies on motives in this connection, in spite of his declaration that motives cannot be known.[51]

After denouncing corporal punishment, torture, and capital punishment, as well as slavery, prison conditions, and solitary confinement, Godwin concludes his lengthy study of crime and punishment with the appeal that every lover of justice will do his duty to help repeal iniquitous laws and to help produce that kind of society in which crime cannot exist.[52] And, in characteristic ultilitarian language, he makes it clear that duty is the best possible application of a given power to the promotion of the general good.[53]

---

[51] See 74 above.

[52] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 393.

[53] Ibid., II, 377.

C. THE RIGHT OF REVOLUTION

With revolutions shaking both France and America, it is but natural that Godwin should include this type of violence in his discussion. While he does deal with the matter, it is in a sketchy and not conclusive manner.[54] He defines his term as follows: "Revolutions are a struggle, between two parties each persuaded of the justice of its cause, a struggle not decided by compromise or patient expostulation, but by force only."[55] As to the incidence of bloodshed in revolutions, he says: "Perhaps no important revolution was ever bloodless."[56] Revolutions are the product of passion, not of reason.[57] They are engendered by an indignation against tyranny, but they are themselves pregnant with tyranny.[58] Moreover, "during a period revolution, enquiry and all those patient speculations to which mankind are indebted for their greatest improvements, are suspended."[59] Revolutions by their very nature are crude and premature in their effects.[60] The right of

---

[54] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 265 ff.
[55] Ibid., 273.
[56] Loc. cit., see also 274.
[57] Godwin, op. cit., I, 246.
[58] Ibid., 269.
[59] Ibid., 272.
[60] Ibid., 274.

revolution is not a matter of force but of justice. Godwin here refutes "the right of the stronger" view of Thrasymachus.[61] Like Rousseau, Godwin rejects the view that might makes right.[62] Probably the most informative statement which Godwin makes at any time in his rather indefinite treatment of the subject is the following:

> It has perhaps sufficiently appeared from the preceding discussion, that revolutions are necessarily attended with many circumstances worthy of our disapprobation, and that they are by no means essential to the political improvement of mankind. Yet, after all, it ought not to be forgotten that, though the connection be not essential or requisite, revolutions and violence have too often been coeval with important changes of the social system.[63]

Nevertheless, like Hume, Godwin rejected the contract theory of government partly because of the implications of force. It is not true to historical fact that government depends on the authority of the governed. Hume argued that practically all governments have been based "either on usurpation or conquest, or both, without any pretence of a

---

[61] See Plato, The Republic, (Davies and Vaughan, trans.), I, 16.

[62] Rousseau said: "The strongest man is never strong enough to be always master unless he transforms his power into right and obedience into duty." Rousseau, Social Contract, 103.

[63] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 285.

fair consent or voluntary subject of the people."[64] Godwin stressed this argument and insisted that force, not contract, is the essence of government.[65]

Whatever views Godwin may have held in his mind without committing them to paper - and the two major revolutions were probably too contemporaneous with his writings for sufficient detachment and perspective - it is clear that he deplored their elements of violence.[66] While he points out that "it is not unworthy of a good member of society to be an enemy of the constitution of his country,"[67] he would change the constitution by the use of reason rather than by violence.[68] For "the friend of human happiness will endeavour to prevent violence."[69] And again, "Truth and virtue are competent to fight their own battles. They do not need to be nursed and patronised by the hand of power."[70]

---

[64] David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature.

[65] For the full discussion, see Godwin, Political Justice, I, 200 ff.

[66] See 67 above.

[67] Godwin, op. cit., I, 226.

[68] See ibid., I, 304.

[69] Ibid., I, 286.

[70] Ibid., II, 217.

D. WAR

No study of Godwin's views of force would be complete without a consideration of his beliefs concerning war. Consistent with his argument that force is the inherent characteristic of government, Godwin in his discussion of the causes of war shows that certain types of government inevitably produce war.

Monarchy and aristocracy are the breeders of war. In fact, "it is perhaps impossible to show, that a single war ever did, or could have taken place, in the history of mankind, that did not in some way originate with those two great political monopolies, monarchy and aristocracy."[71] Democracy lessens the danger of war.[72] While democracy has not been free from war, it is nevertheless true that "war will be foreign to the character of any people in proportion as their democracy becomes simple and unalloyed."[73] To be sure, democracy cannot insure its people against

---

[71] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 143.

[72] Note Paine's similar belief in Rights of Man, 388.

[73] Godwin, op. cit., II, 144.

invasion and consequent defensive war. Defensive war, however, is exceedingly rare.

Unlike Rousseau, Godwin argues that a love of country can be a vice and not a virtue. Rousseau holds that the general will deserves our allegiance, and that we are but members of the whole society. He says:

> Chacun de nous met en commun sa personne et toute sa puissance sous la suprême direction de la volonté genérale; et nous recevons en corps chaque membre comme partie indivisible du tout.[74]

This statement represents the very essence of his social contract theory. But Godwin, as we have seen above,[75] entirely repudiates this theory. Against Rousseau's organic view of government[76] stands Godwin's atomism with its corollary that patriotism is an emotion which perpetuates force. This diametrically opposite conception of the nature of government is fundamental to an understanding of why Rousseau's view gives quarter to war and why Godwin's view outlaws war. The latter does not hesitate to say that

---

[74] Jean Jacques Rousseau, Du Contrat Social, 33.

[75] See 47 above.

[76] Rousseau states: "Qu'est-ce donc que le gouvernement? Un corps intermédiaire établi entre les sujets et le souverain pour leur mutuelle correspondance." Rousseau, Du Contrat Social, 95.

"love of country has too often been found to be one of those specious illusions"[77] which invites warfare.

Godwin again makes reason the deciding principle.[78] Lack of reason and the presence of error made government possible. Because nations were susceptible to error, war was introduced. Men were induced deliberately to seek each other's lives, and to settle controversies between them by murder rather than by the dictates of reason.[79] This murder has then been established as a trade. One part of a nation pays another part to murder and be murdered in their stead. The evil of war can be fully realized only by seeing a field of battle. He thus describes the atrocities of war: "Here men deliberately destroy each other by thousands, without resentment against, or even knowledge of, each other. The plain is strewed with death in all its forms."[80] Anguish and wounds display the diversified modes in which they can torment the human frame. Towns are burned; ships are blown up in the air, while the mangled

---

[77] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 146.

[78] See 137 below.

[79] Godwin, op. cit., II, 148.

[80] Ibid., II, 149.

limbs descend on every side; the fields are laid desolate; the wives of the inhabitants exposed to brutal insult; and their children driven forth to hunger and nakedness. It is an inferior circumstance, though by no means unattended with the widest and most deplorable effects, when we add, to these scenes of horror, and the subversion of all ideas of moral justice they must occasion in the auditors and spectators, the immense treasures which are wrung in the form of taxes, from those inhabitants whose residence is removed from the seat of war.[81] With Rousseau at this point Godwin would agree: "L'homme est naturellement pacifique."[82] The horrors of war, so forcefully depicted by Godwin above, are the results of government.

The usual causes of war are without foundation in truth, Godwin asserts. In the first place, the argument is fallacious that war imparts a healthy and vigorous tone to the mind of a nation. Furthermore, Godwin argues,

---

[81] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 148-149.

[82] Rousseau, op. cit., 305. Note, also, Paine's dictum: "Man is not the enemy of man, but through the medium of a false system of government." Paine, Rights of Man, 388.

private insults of tyrants cannot justify the plunging of a whole nation into war to avenge such insults. His attitude as to the proper manner of dealing with insults directed towards one's countrymen when visiting a foreign nation is interesting. He says that government ought to protect the tranquillity of those who reside within the sphere of its functions; but, "if individuals think proper to visit other countries, they must be delivered over to the protection of general reason."[83]

Again, the fact that a more bellicose neighbor is preparing for the possibility of war is no justifiable reason for preparing in turn. Godwin deplored what we contemporaneously refer to as "the mad race for armament," since he believed its natural outcome was war. He then examines another often-cited justification for war; namely, that nations should at once exercise violence as a protest against small provocations, for ignoring small insults opens the way for large ones. Godwin refutes this argument by saying that a people which will not fight over trivialities but "does not fail to be moved at the moment it ought to be moved, is not the people that its neighbours will

---

[83] Godwin, op. cit., II, 150.

delight to urge to extremities."[84] Finally, the vindication of national honor is no legitimate cause of war, Godwin contends. True honor is to be found in integrity and justice. Nations cannot be indicted, as Burke would put it, for violating honor.[85] Individuals, not nations, possess or do not possess honor. Godwin thus adheres to his atomistic point of view.

Are there, then, no justifiable causes of war? There are two legitimate causes, says Godwin. Rather, there are two aspects of the same principle; that is, defense of our own liberty and the liberty of others. But Godwin is not clear here as to what precisely he means by liberty and what precisely he means by infringement upon that liberty. Unconsciously, it would seem, he makes his position vulnerable. Exactly how would he distinguish between a defensive war and an offensive one, insofar as infringement upon his liberties are concerned?[86] Furthermore, what circumstances justify a nation's going to war to protect the liberties of others? Godwin apparently overlooks some of the serious

---

[84] Ibid., II, 151.

[85] For his views concerning defensive war, see 82 above.

[86] See also Paine, op. cit., 388.

implications of his position. In the main, however, he consistently opposes war as the negation of all reason and justice.

CHAPTER V

GODWIN'S VIEWS CONCERNING PROPERTY

It is our purpose in this chapter to attempt to analyze and evaluate Godwin's views concerning property. The question of property rights is almost an inevitable one for the anarchist to challenge. Its classic treatment is, of course, Proudhon's "What Is Property? with its reply that "Property is robbery".[1] Godwin assigns the topic a significant place in his anarchism. He says: "The subject of property is the key-stone that completes the fabric of social justice."[2] Driver comments that Godwin includes the question of property as one of the several major social institutions to be denounced.[3] Halévy notes that Godwin submitted the idea of individual property to a more rigorous criticism than did Paine.[4]

Godwin begins his discussion with the observation that "there is nothing that more powerfully tends to

---

[1] Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, What Is Property?

[2] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 420.

[3] See C. H. Driver on "William Godwin" in Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw, The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era, 170.

[4] Elie Halévy, The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism, 209.

distort our judgment and opinions, than erroneous notions concerning the goods of fortune."[5] The question of property may be approached, he says, from many angles. Consider, for instance, such ramifications as taxation, bounties, monopolies and such claims of the church as first fruits and tithes. The present inquiry, however, deals not so much with these more specific questions concerning property as with the general principles involved.

A. CLASSIFICATION OF PROPERTY

The good things of the world, as Godwin puts it, may be divided into four classes: subsistence, the means of intellectual and moral improvement, inexpensive gratifications, and such gratifications, "as are by no means essential to healthful and vigorous existence, and cannot be purchased but with considerable labour and industry."[6] It is concerning these classes, and especially the fourth, that Godwin develops his thought. Finally, in his preliminary treatment of the subject, Godwin calls attention to the fact that the injustice of accumulated property has

---

[5] Godwin, op. cit., II, 421.

[6] Ibid., II, 424.

been the foundation of all religious morality. The rich have been admonished that their wealth is only a trust, and that they are strictly accountable for their stewardship.[7] But, unfortunately, this doctrine has tended "to place the supply of our wants in the disposal of a few, enabling them to make a show of generosity with what is not truly their own, and to purchase the submission of the poor by the payment of a debt."[8] It is an iniquitous system of charity, instead of a system of justice. It fills the rich with pride and the poor with servility.[9] Instead of regarding the slender comforts they are accorded by the rich as their due, the poor tend to view such comforts as gifts from their opulent neighbors.

Godwin then defines what he means by property. "Property," he says, "implies some permanence of external possession and includes in it the idea of a possible competitor."[10] There are three degrees of property. The first and simplest degree is that of a permanent right to those things, the uses of which result in a means of

---

[7] See St. Mark X:21. Also, Acts II:44-45.

[8] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 430.

[9] Cf. the views of Weber and Tawney in this connection.

[10] Godwin, op. cit., II, 432.

subsistence and happiness. One of the most essential rights of man is that he may not be molested in the use of his personal belongings. The second degree of property to which every man is entitled is the produce of his own industry, the fruits of his own labor. Yet even in this case he is only a steward; he is obligated to use this property for the benefit of society, so far as he is able. The third degree of property is a more involved and more questionable matter. It has to do with laboring for others. "It is a system, in whatever manner established, by which one man enters into the faculty of disposing of the produce of another man's industry."[11] No one lives unto himself alone. When one indulges in a luxury, he condemns to slavery countless others who must supply him with his whim. It is this degree of property which Godwin believes is capable of rendering great injustice.

B. POSSIBLE INFLUENCES UPON GODWIN'S VIEWS

It is possible that Godwin was influenced by Helvétius in his views concerning luxury. Helvétius wrote:

---

[11] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 435.

"Luxury is harmful not because it is luxury, but merely because it is the result of a great disproportion between the wealth of the citizens."[12] Halévy thinks Godwin may have been influenced by Burke also. Halévy comments that

> Burke, who, in a youthful work, a curious essay devoted to the defence of natural society, had contrasted the state of nature in which "it is an invariable law, that a man's acquisitions are in proportion to his labours" with the state of "artificial" society in which it is a law as constant and as invariable, that those who labour most enjoy the fewest things; and that those who labour not at all, have the greatest number of enjoyments and depicted, in moving terms, the state of slavery to which British industry reduces its labourers.[13]

It was Adam Smith, however, who most clearly influenced Godwin in his views concerning property. Smith's great work, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,[14] published in 1776, had already attained great heights of popularity (by 1780 it had been translated into four other languages) when Godwin wrote his views. One basic principle in the Wealth of Nations Godwin did not accept. That was Smith's belief in self-interest as an economic motive. "We address ourselves,

---

[12] Helvétius, De l'Esprit.

[13] Halévy, op. cit., 216.

[14] Hereafter referred to as Wealth of Nations.

not to their humanity, but to their self love," says Smith.[15] While Godwin was thoroughly utilitarian, he did not hold to this principle of selfishness as being the dominant motive in society.[16] But in the main Godwin did accept the doctrines found in the Wealth of Nations. For instance, Smith reasoned that, when once land is occupied and capital has accumulated, the labourer no longer receives the whole produce of his labor. Instead, his wages are determined as a result of a bargain entered into by the employee and the employer. In such a bargain the employer always sees to it that he has the better of the deal.[17] Godwin follows this same line of reasoning.[18]

Again, Godwin agreed with Smith that there should be little or no interference on the part of the government. Godwin says that "the interference of government, however impartially vested, is, no doubt, only to be resorted to, upon occasions of rare occurrence and indispensable urgency."[19] Smith had already elaborated his principle of

---

[15] Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, I, 13.

[16] See 157 below.

[17] Smith, op. cit., I, 42. Also I, 58.

[18] See Godwin, Political Justice, II, 437.

[19] Godwin, ibid., II, 434.

laissez faire, that government should interfere with business only on rarest occasions.[20] While he admits that an economic system which allows another than the worker to reap the rewards of the work, Godwin nevertheless argues that governmental control would be worse. He even protests against having inheritance suppressed by government, fearing such suppression would create a worse state of affairs by its inevitable evasions.[21]

Let us briefly trace another influence. Adam Smith had treated at some length the labor theory of value.[22] In this treatment he made a distinction between a natural or rude state of society and an artificial state. In the former, the whole produce of labor belongs to the laborer; in the latter, it is right that profits should be taken from the produce by other persons who have in some way assumed responsibilities for the produce. Note that Godwin would not agree with this view in his ideas concerning the first degree of property, but that in his presentation of the third degree of property there is full opportunity for Smith's principle to be operative.

---

[20] See Smith, op. cit., I, 309-310, 319, 395, 406-412; II, 180.

[21] Godwin, op. cit., II, 439.

[22] See also Ricardo's treatment of this theory in his Principles of Political Economy and Taxation.

Thus we see in reference to the question of property that his views here, as in other instances, were not original. Yet he did not merely borrow ideas from others. He incorporated and synthesized them into his own social philosophy. We now turn to further implications of the subject.

C. EVILS IN THE SYSTEM OF PROPERTY

Godwin says that in reality nothing is our own. We have nothing that has not a destination prescribed to it by the immutable voice of reason and justice. But, on the other hand, if there is an obligation for each man to assist his neighbor, each one in turn has a right to the assistance of his neighbor.[23]

He then raises two general questions concerning the problem of property. In the first place, who is the person intended to make use of a given object? Secondly, who is the person to whom the preservation and distribution of any

---

[23] See Halévy, The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism, 209. Note, too, Smith's interpretation of this fact. He says: "Man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect if from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them." Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, I, 12.

given amount of these objects can most justly and most usefully be entrusted?[24] The utilitarian principle is employed by Godwin as the basis for deciding such questions. What use of property will be for the greatest good for the greatest number?

That the existing system of property is not true to the utilitarian principle is quite evident. Nothing, says Godwin, distorts our judgment as much as erroneous views about property. He denounces the system further in these words:

> And here with grief it must be confessed that, however great and extensive are the evils that are produced by monarchies and courts, by the imposture of priests and the iniquity of criminal laws, all these are imbecile and impotent compared with the evils that arise out of the established administration of property.[25]

Godwin advances five arguments as to the evils of property as administered under the prevailing system. In the first place, the unequal distribution of property creates, as we have just seen, a sense of dependence upon the owners. Instead of realizing that he has a just right to a share of the world's goods, the poor man accepts with servile gratitude the gifts from the rich man. Obsequiousness

---

[24] Halévy, ibid., 209.

[25] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 453.

is the symptom of this disease of maldistribution. Paupers and servants are created, and the owners take on increased powers.

Second, this inequality encourages an over-emphasis of the acquisitive desires of both the "haves" and the "have-nots." The system corrupts the moral sense of men. The craving for opulence distorts integrity and judgment. A false hierarchy of values is developed. The wealthy are merely the pensioners of society.

Third, intellectual attainments are blighted, proper ambition is thwarted, and men are reduced to crushing toil and desperate economic slavery. "Accumulated property," Godwin declares, "treads the powers of thought in the dust, extinguishes the sparks of genius, and reduces the great mass of mankind to be immersed in sordid cares."[26] He observes that the peasants and laborers, under the existing system, are benumbed with toil, their bodies invaded with infirmities, and surrendered to an untimely grave. Furthermore, it should be remembered how rapid would be the advances of intellect if all men were admitted into the

---

[26] Ibid., II, 460.

field of knowledge. Poverty alone prevents this.[27] "Genius would not be depressed with false wants and niggardly patronage."[28]

Fourth, the prevailing system of property multiplies all manner of vices and evils among men. "The fruitful source of crimes consists in this circumstance, one man's possessing abundance, that of which another man is destitute."[29] This source of crime will continue as long as men's minds are possessed with a sense of justice. The real guilt is upon those who hold a monopoly. The crimes of the poor are but so many efforts to right the original wrong. But this grave fault in the system of property must be rectified by the use of reason, not force. The immediate tendency of the established administration is to persuade men that reason is impotent. The injustice of which they complain is maintained by force; hence, they are inclined to resort to force for its correction. Godwin goes so far as to say that "force grew out of monopoly."[30] Since the rich must use force to hold what they have and the poor are tempted to use force to gain equality, class war

---

[27] Note again Godwin's unswerving faith in reason and man's perfectibility.

[28] Godwin, ibid., II, 462.

[29] Ibid., II, 462.

[30] Ibid., II, 463.

results.[31] Driver comments: "Like all the later socialists. Godwin sees in the institution of private property the basic cause of war."[32] Were this injustice removed, each man could be united to his neighbor the world over in love and mutual kindness. But "as long as this source of jealousy and corruption shall remain, it is visionary to talk of universal peace," Godwin concludes.[33]

Fifth, the existing system of property results in the continuance of a state of under-population. While it is hardly within the province of this present study of Godwin to deal at length with his views concerning population, it may be proper to make several observations in this connection at this time. Godwin maintained that there was no danger of population pressure. He argues that "it has been calculated, that the average cultivation of Europe might be so improved, as to maintain five times her present

---

[31] For the Marxist view of this cause of class war, see The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

[32] Driver, on "William Godwin", in Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw's The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era, 171.

[33] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 466.

number of inhabitants."[34] He further contends in his later chapter on population that "there is a principle in nature by means of which every thing seems to tend to its level, and to proceed in the most auspicious way, when least interfered with by the mode of regulation."[35] Again, he argues that, despite temporary increases, population never exceeds the facility of subsistence. With Thomas Robert Malthus Godwin most thoroughly disagreed. Malthus had advanced his pessimistic theory that population pressure seriously menaced civilization. He believed that there "is the constant tendency in all animated life to increase beyond the nourishment prepared for it."[36] His disturbing book, published in 1798, disputed Godwin's (and incidentally Malthus's father, who was in accord with Godwin) view of the perfectibility of man. Malthus predicted that the population would increase in geometrical proportion, while the means of subsistence might increase but only in arithmetical proportion. Artificial checks were necessary. Godwin vigorously attacked Malthus in the work, Of Population: an Enquiry concerning the Power of Increase in the

---

[34] Ibid., II, 466.

[35] Ibid., II, 516.

[36] Thomas R. Malthus, An Essay on the Principle of Population as It Affects the Future Improvement of Society, 3.

Number of Mankind; being an Answer to Mr. Malthus's Essay.[37] With these several facts in mind, we can understand somewhat more clearly Godwin's views concerning the whole question of population. Finally, let it be noted that Godwin held that the existing system of property results in a continued state of under-population. Since it is a principle of human society, as he believed, that population is always kept down to the level of subsistence, private ownership of land and unequal property rights "may be considered as strangling a considerable portion of our children in their cradle."[38]

D. UTILITARIAN PRINCIPLE INVOLVED

Note that Godwin consistently holds to the utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness for the greatest number. He views it as a natural consequence that the quantity of happiness experienced in a society is in proportion to the number of individuals capable of happiness and consequently to the total number of individuals.[39]

---

[37] For complete bibliographical data, see 226 below.

[38] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 467.

[39] Halévy discusses this point rather fully. See his Growth of Philosophical Radicalism, 218.

This reasoning coincides with that of Paley.[40] It is the purpose of good government, Paley argued, to provide the greatest amount of happiness for the people. Happiness is an individual experience, and the quantity of it ordinarily can be increased only by increasing the number of beings who experience it. Now in countries like Western Europe where economic conditions come more nearly to equality, it may be assumed that a greater amount of happiness can be found among ten people living in comfort than among only five living in luxury. Thus, for Paley, the great task of government was to increase population and thereby increase happiness.

Not all thinkers shared Paley's optimism as readily as did Godwin. We have seen how Malthus later presented a much less sanguine view.[41] Wallace, too, in his Various Prospects of Mankind, Nature and Providence,[42] had advocated that all private property be abolished. Such abolition would help increase population. But this action would not remove what he regarded as the natural obstacles to

---

[40] See Paley, Moral and Political Philosophy, XI.

[41] See 99 above.

[42] Published in 1761. See bibliography.

population increase. He believed that the earth would be unable to nourish a human race whose population was steadily growing larger.

Godwin, however, saw no real difficulty in the carrying out of his utilitarian principle of increasing happiness by increasing population. Only a fourth of the habitable world had thus far been cultivated, the fourth already cultivated could undergo great improvement in its cultivation, and man's intelligence and perfectibility were incalculable in their possibilities of solving what might appear at the present time to be insoluble difficulties. These arguments gave Godwin great confidence in his point of view. The fact that the Marquis de Condorcet in his Equisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain carried to their fullest development Godwin's optimistic views probably added to the latter's confidence that he had written with a true prophetic pen.[43] In any case, it is quite clear that Godwin does not lose sight of his utilitarian criterion in his study of the existing system of property. He closes his discussion with these words:

---

[43] Condorcet's book was not published until a year after the first edition of Political Justice had appeared.

"Whatever may be the value of the life of man, or rather whatever would be his capability of happiness in a free and equal state of society, the system we are here opposing may be considered as arresting, upon the threshold of existence, four fifths of that value and that happiness."[44]

E. MARRIAGE AS PROPERTY

Whatever else Godwin may have charged against the institution of marriage, he never obscured his chief reason for discrediting it. This chief reason is that marriage can be viewed as nothing more than a branch of the prevailing system of property.[45] He says bluntly that "the

---

[44] Godwin, Political Justice II, 467.

[45] Note the views of Marx and Engels: "Abolition of the family! . . . On what foundation is the present family based? On capital, on private gain . . . The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital." Manifesto of the Communist Party. 27.

Note, also, the quite opposite point of view concerning the connection between marriage and property as presented a few years after Political Justice by the Christian (Catholic) socialist, Baron von Kettler. In The Labor Question and Christianity, he approves of the right of private property, provided it be realized that man is a steward and that God is the true owner. Marriage, far from being a species of property, is basic to the life of the worker. It protects his very existence, his morality, and gives meaning to his labors. (See The Labor Question and Christianity, 101 and 118.)

institution of marriage is made a system of fraud."[46] While he admits that "human beings are formed for society,"[47] it is nevertheless true that "individuality is of the very essence of intellectual essence."[48] Marriage impairs individuality and spoils self-reliance. Even more, "marriage is a monopoly and the worst of monopolies."[49] The wishes of any two people can never coincide, owing to the differences of their early training. Moreover, marriage results in a degrading economic dependence for the woman, and it tends to develop in the man an unjust sense of mastery and superiority. Godwin does not see any harm that can result from the abolition of the system of marriage. "The mutual kindness of persons of an opposite sex will fall under the same system as any other species of friendship."[50] The problems of promiscuity and sex laxity are dismissed as of

---

[46] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 507.

[47] Ibid., II, 499.

[48] Ibid., II, 500.

[49] Ibid., II, 508.

[50] Ibid., II, 511.

easy solution. He apparently over-simplifies the whole problem of changing the established marriage pattern.

His own lack of sentiment and ardent affection is possibly accountable in part for his matter-of-fact handling of what he terms the iniquitous marriage system. It was in the first edition of Political Justice that he was most rigorous in his treatment of the subject. In the subsequent editions, he slightly modified his position, but nevertheless opposed marriage. It was in his preface to St. Leon that he almost completely reversed his arguments, and gave full place to domestic affection and marriage. As we suggested in another connection, it is possible that his personal experience of an ardent love for Mary Wollstonecraft influenced him in this change of attitude.[51] It is also possible that his boyhood experience of observing the economic burden thrust upon his mother by a well-meaning but none too successful father may have encouraged him to write as he did in the first edition.[52] At any rate, Godwin's views of marriage resulted in widespread consternation among the more conservative people. The vitriolic

---

[51] See 30 above. Also 185 below.

[52] For his boyhood experience in this connection, see 23 above.

attacks printed in the Anti-Jacobin give some indication of the opposition he aroused. Possibly some of the opposition would have been softened had his opponents inquired into his reasons for disavowing marriage as an institution. It apparently was enough for them that he criticized marriage; it did not matter to them why he did so.

CHAPTER VI

GODWIN'S RELIGIOUS AND THEOLOGICAL VIEWS

A. RELATION OF HIS THEOLOGY TO HIS SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Godwin's social philosophy and his theology - more explicitly, his anarchism and his religion - were never two separate elements for him. They were but two aspects of the same truth. They were by their nature integrated and not dichotomized. Except possibly Tolstoi, no other anarchist so effectively made his social and religious views of one piece as did Godwin. Let us therefore turn our attention to the religious implications inherent in Godwinism.

B. VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

William James might well have said of Godwin that he had a variety of religious experiences. It is true that he held in favor a number of theological strains, some grotesquely conflicting with each other. His ecclesiastical connections, too, were varied and inconsistent.

Yet undue confusion marks many of the referencesto Godwin's religion. Theological labels have been applied to him too indiscriminately. Inaccurate statements and hasty conclusions have given rise to several wrong impressions.

We must consider this phase of Godwin's life as carefully as possible. To understand his religious views is largely to understand the grounds of his anarchism.[1]

C. CALVINISTIC AND NONCONFORMIST INFLUENCES

In the first place, it must be remembered that Godwin was born and reared a Calvinist. We have already seen how rigorous his Calvinism was.[2] This influence colored his entire life. Even when he seemed remotest from Calvinism, he was in reaction and in protest against it; hence, Calvinism was even then tincturing his beliefs. Max Beer oversimplifies the matter, but nevertheless indicates a truth, when he calls Godwin's materialism an inverted Calvinist theology.[3] Hearnshaw observes that Godwin may have dropped the specific tenets of the Calvinist creed, but his spirit continued to be Calvinistic:

> For a discoverable God he sustituted a discoverable universe. For grace working silently in the heart of man he substituted reason. Instead of righteousness as the principle of

---

[1] See 1 above.

[2] See 23 above.

[3] Max Beer, A History of British Socialism, I, 115.

> conduct he pleaded for enlightenment, since the mind - once awakened to the sublimity of eternal truth - must of necessity act in conformity with it.[4]

In the second place, the psychological conditioning of Godwin's youth must be borne in mind. From earliest youth he witnessed, as only a son of a rigid dissenting minister could witness, both the unrelenting adherence of a man to unpopular convictions and the persecutory zeal of the conformists toward anyone who disagreed with the established faith. In his Thoughts on Man Godwin makes this interesting comment: "When I was a child, I was taught that there were four religions in the world: the Popish, the Protestant, the Mahometan, and the Pagan."[5]

Neither from within or from without was religion made attractive in his eyes. Within, he had all too intimate contact with a stern, almost pathologically pious father.[6] Without, he looked upon an ecclesiastical world in which invectives and small contempts obstructed its

---

[4] Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw (Editor), The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era, 153.

[5] Godwin, Thoughts on Man, 186.

[6] For a poignant and wistful essay on the tragedy of youth, see Godwin, The Enquirer, 65 ff.

essential charity and loveliness.[7] The wonder is that, in face of all this adverse conditioning, he even temporarily considered the pulpit as a means by which he could spread his social views. But, as we have noted,[8] he held several pastorates before he turned to writing as his chief mode of expression. Saintsbury thinks Godwin "slipped almost insensibly out of ministerial and into literary work."[9] The transition was hardly that imperceptible!

Previté-Orton thus summarizes Godwin's theological and ecclesiastical mutations: "Bred a Calvinist, he had become a believer in materialism and necessity, passing, in 1792, to atheism, and renouncing it somewhere about 1800."[10] Another observer comments: "He halted for awhile at Socinianism as a resting-place on his pilgrimage from Calvinism carried to the highest point to utter unbelief."[11] Townsend

---

[7] See North American Review, Vol. 123, 224.

[8] See 27 below.

[9] George Saintsbury, The Collected Essays and Papers, III, 367.

[10] C. W. Previté-Orton, The Cambridge History of English Literature, XI, 48.

[11] North American Review, Vol. 23, 225; article unsigned.

states that Godwin's theological views had been changing from Calvinism to Socinianism, and thence to deism.[12] We are indebted to Kegan Paul for preserving Godwin's own statement concerning this transition. The quotation follows:

> Till 1782 I believed in the doctrine of Calvin, that is, that the majority of mankind were objects of divine condemnation, and that their punishment would be everlasting. The Systeme de la Nature, read about the beginning of that year, changed my opinion and made me a Deist.[13]

Some parts of these summaries are incorrect, as we shall see later, but they serve to point out that Godwin's thinking traversed the wide range from orthodoxy to apparent heresy within the compass of several decades. As a matter of fact, there were several added stages in his change from Calvinism to materialism and back, not to Calvinism, but to a modified form of theism.

D. SANDEMANIANISM

Sandemanianism was one of these stages of belief which the above summaries fail to mention. Even as early as his college days he was interested in the Sandemanian doctrines. The authorities at the Dissenting College at

---

[12] Townsend, St. James's, Vol. III, 80.

[13] Kegan Paul, William Godwin, I, 26.

Homerton suspected Godwin's Sandemanian leanings. He was rejected at Homerton and finished his formal education at the Hoxton Theological Seminary largely because his Sandemanianism was not objectionable at the latter institution.

This small sect had its rise in the teachings of John Glas in the middle of the eighteenth century. The creed was soon called Sandemanianism, after Glas's son-in-law and collaborator, Robert Sandeman. Sandemanianism has never been popular nor had a large membership; in fact, one of the rules of the sect is that there shall be no attempt to convert or attract any new members. It is possible that Godwin was attracted somewhat by this complete lack of coercive practice, since he so thoroughly opposed any infringement upon the rights of the individual to act voluntarily. The sect deemed it unlawful to lay up treasures on earth. Again, we note a teaching highly consonant with Godwin's social views concerning economic equality.[14]

Like Calvinism, Sandemanianism held to an orthodox Christology. In fact, its orthodoxy involved more authoritarianism than did Calvinism, and in this respect was even more antithetical to Godwin's anarchism than was Calvinism.

---

[14] For further views of this sect, see Samuel Pike, A Plain and Full Account of the Christian Practices Observed by the Church.

Note the following reference to Christological tenets in Sandemanianism:

> . . . Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and as such, the only Prophet, Priest and King of God's Church; so that, all the divine Knowledge we can possibly acquire is contained in his revealed Word, as he is the Prophet; all our Hope of Salvation is derived from the Compleat Atonement he has made, and perfect Righteousness he has wrought out for Sinners, as he is the Priest; and we are therefore bound to do whatsoever he hath commanded us, as he is the King and the Head of the Church.[15]

Again, note the authoritarian view implied in this excerpt:

> We think it our Duty as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all Men; to be obedient to Magistrates [sic], and discountenance every Thing that may disturb the Peace of the State or Neighbourhood.[16]

Apparently, though he did not express himself in the matter, Godwin found more in Sandemanianism with which he disagreed than with which he agreed. At any rate, he turned his interest from this sect to another one.

E. SOCINIANISM

It was to Socinianism that Godwin turned. Since Socinianism, like Sandemanianism, has not been popularly understood, except in its Unitarian development in England

---

[15] Ibid., 5.

[16] Ibid., 26.

and America. Godwin apparently became interested in the movement during college days, as we have noted above.[17] Brown indicates that "Socinianism was not a safe or a logically complete theology; it was in fact not a religion at all, said Coleridge, 'but a theory, and that, too, a very pernicious, or a very unsatisfactory, theory.'"[18] But whether Brown and Coleridge were right or wrong in their criticisms, Godwin for a time nevertheless embraced this creed.

Let us therefore consider some of its principles in order that we may try to understand its influences upon Godwin and possibly its correlations with his social philosophy.

Socinianism can be traced back to Michael Servetus who, in the sixteenth century, declared that the nature of the Deity was indivisible. He thereby laid the basis for a

---

[17] See 26 above. Brown, however, implies that Godwin earlier came close to Socinianism. "At the age of fourteen", he says, "he renounced the principles of Calvinism in which his family had bred him, and only narrowly escaped the dangerous and probably heretical doctrines of Socinianism." Both the statements that Godwin at fourteen renounced Calvinism and that "only narrowly escaped" Socinianism seem not to be founded on anything Godwin himself said or upon anything his most authentic biographer, C. Kegan Paul, since said. Brown's authority is therefore to be questioned. For this reference, see Ford K. Brown, The Life of William Godwin, 11.

[18] Ibid., 17.

theological belief which has persisted until the present day, finding its fullest expression in modern Unitarianism.

Lelio Socini (or Sozzini) should be given credit for founding Socinianism. It was he who urged the view that Christ was a prophet, not part of the Godhead. Early death cut short the influence of Lelio Socini, but his nephew, Faustus Socini (or Socinus) fell heir to the uncle's theological heritage. It was Faustus who gave impetus to Socinianism. He not only denied the Trinity and the deity of Christ, but also the personality of the devil, the native and total depravity of man, the vicarious atonement, and the eternality of punishment. His theory was that Christ was a man divinely commissioned, who had no existence before he was conceived by his mother Mary. He believed, too, that the Bible was to be interpreted by human reason and that its metaphors were not to be taken literally. Involved in this theology was the rejection of the Calvinistic doctrine concerning predestination. Emphasis was placed on the high value of the individual personality and on the freedom of will. It became increasingly a friend to Unitarianism and a foe to Calvinism and especially Roman Catholicism. In short, it may be regarded as a simplified and rationalized ethical Protestantism with the Unitarian viewpoint in its

Christology.[19]

It is significant that Socinianism was diametrically opposite to Sandemanianism in several instances. To recapitulate, Sandemanianism emphasized the authority and deity of Christ, as we have already indicated; Socinianism, on the other hand, completely rejected His authority and deity. For the follower of Socini, Christ was a man divinely commissioned, but merely a man. Both predestination and future punishment were cast out. The Bible was to be interpreted by human reason.

Hence, at several important points we observe that Socinianism could be easily integrated with Godwin's social philosophy. The emphases in both were upon reason, man's autonomy and dignity, and the rejection of authoritarianism and future punishment. From a theological point of view, it is interesting to note that Socinianism paved the way for Godwin's further departure from Calvinism. We shall consider his transition in the following section.

---

[19] For fuller accounts of Socinianism, see the North British Review, Vol. 30, 467-491; Unitarian Review, Vol. 31, 224 ff; Christian Disciple, Vol. 3, 429-34, and Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XI, 650-654.

F. DEISM

Godwin next turned to deism. This change, as he himself states, took place about 1782.[20] Paul suggests that deism suited Godwin's temperament.[21] While this comment is probably true, it is hardly definite enough to be informing. What, one may ask Paul, were the elements in Godwin's temperament to which deism appealed? Moreover, just what elements in deism found favor with Godwin? Possibly we can deal more explicitly with this relation between Godwin and deism by considering several revealing factors. The first is the emphasis in deism upon reason. We have seen how central a place reason held in Godwin's thought.[22] A deistic conception of God is strongly couched in reason and intellectual comprehension, and is weakly couched in the more human elements of love and sympathetic warmth.[23] Thus Godwin's temperament, as Paul puts it, would find harmonious response in this rationalistic emphasis. A second

---

[20] See 111 above.

[21] Paul, William Godwin,

[22] See 137 above.

[23] For a summary exposition of deism, see the article on "Deism" by G. C. Joyce, Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, IV, 540 ff.

factor, closely related to the first, is the stress upon man's independence which desim gives. Joyce states: "Man learns to think that his welfare depends entirely upon the accuracy of his knowledge of those general laws by which the course of the world is determined."[24] Here, then, are two definite characteristics of deism which logically would find favor with Godwin's emphasis upon reason and man's essential autonomy, and hence we note at one more point the high correlation between his views of religion and of social philosophy.

There is, however, a further explanation to be offered for Godwin's acceptance of deism. Deism had experienced a revival of interest in the eighteenth century.[25] It is not within the province of this present study to trace the history of eighteenth-century deism, except to observe that thinkers by whom Godwin avowedly was influenced - Hume and Locke among them - had interested themselves in this theological position.[26] One writer,

---

[24] G. C. Joyce, Ibid., IV, 542.

[25] For an account of this revival, see Leslie Stephen, A History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, II, 460 ff.

[26] But it should be pointed out that some of these thinkers stimulated interest in deism, not because they accepted it but because they attacked it directly or indirectly. Locke serves to illustrate the point.

possibly more than any other, was responsible for popularizing the deism of that time. It was Thomas Paine, the very one to whom Godwin acknowledged great debt for influencing his own trend of thought.[27] Stephen indicates what force the reading of Paine's Age of Reason exerted in reviving interest in deism. Stephen comments: "Deep oblivion had, indeed, settled upon the deists; but the publication of the Age of Reason suggested an unpleasant explanation of the phenomenon. Deism was not dead, but sleeping."[28] In another passage, Stephen declares that "in Paine's rough tones they recognised not the mere echo of coffee-house gossip, but the voice of deep popular passion. Once and forever it was announced that, for the average mass of mankind, the old creed was dead."[29] With some of the eighteenth-century intellectuals in general showing interest in deism, and with Thomas Paine advocating in particular, it is quite probable that these influences had effect upon Godwin.

---

[27] See Godwin, Political Justice.

[28] Stephen, op. cit., II, 462.

[29] Ibid., 463.

G. MATERIALISM

It would be an easy step for Godwin to take from deism to materialism.[30] In deism, "the worshipper adores an infinitely distant God."[31] Psychologically viewed, this remoteness would seem to invite materialism. Without the corrective of believing in God's immanence also, the deists' emphasis upon His transcendence might well lead to such an attenuated relationship as to lose God altogether. But, in spite of several references by biographers to Godwin's materialism,[32] only one explicit statement is offered by Godwin himself to confirm the opinion that he actually took the step. This statement is found among Godwin's notes which Paul has preserved for us. Godwin here says that "I was not a complete disbeliever till 1878."[33] But, then, Paul advisedly explains: "By complete unbeliever, however, Godwin must be understood to mean an infidel to Creeds only, and not an infidel to God."[34] Inferentially, we

---

[30] Materialism seems to be used in all references to Godwin, not in the more philosophical sense, but simply as a synonym for atheism.

[31] G. C. Joyce, "Deism", Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, IV, 542.

[32] See, for instance, John Morley on "William Godwin", The Fortnightly Review, (New Series) XX, 461. Also note Henry Crabbe Robinson's comment in his Works, 32.

[33] Paul, William Godwin, I, 26.

[34] Loc. cit., 26.

might gather that he became materialistic because of some of his views concerning the nature of God and the future life.[35] But these are inferences only, and uncertain ones at that.

There was one influence in particular upon Godwin, however, which lends support to the view that he became materialistic. It was the influence of the arch-materialist Helvétius. In this connection, Brown comments concerning Godwin as follows:

> He read particularly the Systeme de la Nature and De l'Esprit, with their calm but vigorous and assured objections to the belief in which he was already wavering - in the being of a God - and found that he could not answer them.[36]

Godwin himself admits the influence of Helvétius was great upon him.[37] But as to the specific influence of Helvétius's

---

[35] Yet one is inclined to feel that Godwin was attacking misconceptions rather than the true nature of God and immortality. What Stephen says of Paine, might apply likewise to Godwin: "Paine's appeal was not simply to licentious hatred of religion, but to genuine moral instincts. His 'blasphemy' was not against the Supreme God, but against Jehovah . . . He was denying that the God before whom reasonable creatures should bow in reverence could be the supernatural tyrant of priestly imagination . . . who lighted the fires of everlasting torment for the mass of mankind." Stephen, Ibid., 463.

[36] Brown, The Life of William Godwin, 15

[37] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, ix.

materialism, one can only surmise. Whatever influence there was in this particular, it must have been powerful; for Helvétius was an ardent materialist. Plekhanov's statements are revealing at this point:

> Helvetius was not only a materialist but among his contemporaries he maintained the main ideas of his materialism with greatest consistency. He was so consistent that he horrified the other materialists. Not one of them was bold enough to follow him in his daring conclusions.[38]

Helvétius argued, for instance, that our soul is only the capacity for sensation. Everything is sensation. Even memory is purely physical, and it has for its function the vitalizing of past impressions. Man is a machine, he says further, and he is put into motion by physical sensibility and must do everything which it demands.[39]

We have indicated that Godwin might have gone from deism to materialism because of the degree of relationship of one to the other. We have his one statement of unbelief. We have also indicated that the influence of Helvétius adds weight to the possibility of Godwin's acceptance of materialism. Yet precisely how far and for how long Godwin occupied himself with the materialistic position there

---

[38] Georgii V. Plekhanov, Essays in the History of Materialism, 92.

[39] For a full discussion of this point of view, see his essay, "De l'Homme", X.

seems to be no way of ascertaining.

H. PANTHEISM

At least two references suggest a pantheistic strain in Godwin's theology.[40] This element seems to be of little significance and possibly represents a phase of his deism. No clear evidence in Godwin's writings supports pantheism. The following passage, cited by Paul, closely relates God with nature, but it does not necessarily identify Him with it:[41]

> Religion is among the most beautiful and most natural of all things; that religion which "sees God in clouds and hears Him in the wind", which endows every object of sense with a living soul, which finds in the system of nature whatever is holy, mysterious, and venerable, and inspires the bosom with sentiments of awe and veneration.[42]

Godwin reveals a similar attachment for nature in another passage which, like the above quotation, has been accessible through Paul's collection of Godwin's otherwise unpublished notes.

---

[40] See Paul, op. cit., I, 28 and an unsigned editorial comment, North American Review, July 1876, Vol. 123, 223.

[41] Pantheism says that God is all and all is God.

[42] Paul, op. cit., I, 28.

> I should pine to death, if I did not live in the midst of so majestic a structure as I behold on every side. I am never weary of admiring and reverencing it. All that I see, the earth, the sea, the rivers, the trees, the clouds, the animals, and, most of all, man, fill me with love and astonishment. My soul is full to bursting with the mystery of all this and I love it the better for its mysteriousness. It is too wonderful for me; it is past finding out; but it is beyond measure delicious. This is what I call religion.[43]

I. HUMANITARIANISM

Even more striking than regard for nature in Godwin's religion was his ardent regard for humanity. His deism apparently never became humanism, though the elevation of man's sense of autonomy is strongly present in both theological systems. But throughout his life, he expressed a profound devotion to humanitarianism. The following choice paragraph from Godwin's pen reveals how trenchant this humanitarianism was in his thinking:

> I know many men are misanthropes, and profess to look down with disdain on their species. My creed is of an opposite character. All that we observe that is best and most excellent in the intellectual world is man: and it is easy to perceive in many cases that the believer in mysteries does little more than dress up his deity in the choicest of human attributes and qualifications.

---

[43] Paul, ibid., I, 53.

> I have lived among, and I feel an ardent interest in and love for, my brethren of humanity. This sentiment, which I regard with complacency in my own breast, I would gladly cherish in others. In such a cause I am well pleased to enrol myself a missionary.[44]

J. NEAR-THEISM

It has been mentioned that Godwin's latter days brought him back to a more theistic position.[45] This impression should be clarified. Never did Godwin avow his acceptance of theism after he had once rejected it. As a matter of fact, almost at his very death he reaffirmed his skeptical position.[46] But, even so, Godwin's fervent adoration of God as revealed in nature and his intense belief in the worth of man had in them certain theistic tendencies. Note, for example, his repeated declaration in his Thoughts on Man (written as late as 1831) that "God made man upright."[47] He reminds his readers, too, in one of his earlier essays (not published until 1783) that man is but "a little lower than angels and crowned by the system of the universe with glory and honor."[48] Such statements seem

---

[44] Godwin, Thoughts on Man, v-vi.

[45] See 111above.

[46] See Brown, The Life of William Godwin, 371.

[47] Godwin, op. cit., 456, 457, 467.

[48] Godwin, Essays, 214.

to show an inclination towards a more immanent view of God. And to the degree that immanence tempers the extreme transcendence in deism, to that degree would it seem that theism is approached.

K. NO SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OR CHRISTOLOGY

We have attempted to indicate the several theological foundations upon which Godwin's religion was based, but no consistent theology appears ever to have obtained in Godwin's thinking. Indeed, the theologian will have difficulty in ascertaining precisely what Godwin's views of God and of Christ were. When he was preaching, he voiced fervent trust in Jesus. Several references will suffice to show this attitude. In one sermon, he exhorts: "Look up to Jesus. He never forgets you. He will comfort you under all your infirmities, and all your sorrows. He will wipe away the tear of the mourner, will exalt him to mansions of eternal joy."[49] In another, he declares: "He is the bread of life, a fountain of living water, and the great shepherd of his sheep . . . He is for a cornerstone, the son of righteousness and the rock of ages."[50] And,

---

[49] Godwin, Sketches of History, 160.

[50] Ibid., 169.

again: "Christ has assured us of a mercy extending to the sins of the whole world. His salvation is proffered unto all."[51] At no time, however, does he present a systematic account of his theology and Christology. This lack will perplex the theologian even more than will the fact that Godwin's views underwent such frequent and fundamental changes.[52] We must remember that, in spite of Godwin's training and ministerial experience, he was essentially interested in social philosophy, not theology. For instance, he made no attempt to provide a rounded conception of the nature of God,[53] but he dealt at length with those particular conceptions of God which bore upon his social philosophy. Let us therefore give attention to several elements in Godwin's religion which have more direct bearing upon his social views.

L. GOD AS TYRANT

One of the most striking instances of the correlation between Godwin's anarchism and his religion is the

---

[51] Ibid., 62.

[52] Concerning the changes, see 110 above and 133 below.

[53] See Godwin, Political Justice, 61.

zeal with which he challenges the right of God to be a tyrant. His argument follows:

> In the first place, we may remember that God is our master, and proprietor, and may do what he will with his own. This observation asks one word by way of explanation. The creator may place his creatures in a high or a low station; he may make some vessels to honour, and of others to dishonour. But the right of the creator does not extend to the making an innocent being, in a comprehensive sense, and with a view to the whole of his existence, miserable. God himself has not a right to be a tyrant.[54]

Likewise, in his Essays he refers to this same view of God: "To say all, then, in a word, since it must finally be told, The God of the Christians is a tyrant."[55] Bakunin gave more dramatic utterance of this idea when he said: "If God existed, it would be necessary to abolish him."[56] But it was Godwin who argued the point with persistent logic. We see in this attack not only the essence of pure anarchism, but also the psychological results of Calvinistic doctrines which portrayed a God more fierce than fatherly.[57]

---

[54] Godwin, Sketches of History, 20.

[55] Ibid., Essays, 72.

[56] Mikhail A. Bakunin, Dieu et l'Etat, 17.

[57] See 127 above.

M. REJECTION OF BELIEF IN FUTURE PUNISHMENT

Another phase in Godwin's religion which has bearing upon his social philosophy was his rejection of the belief in future punishment. Godwin possibly reflects here the influence of Dr. Rees of Hoxton Seminary, who cautiously taught the heretical view that there can be no such punishment.[58] Godwin cannot reconcile a God of love with belief in future punishment. He states:

> I am truly astonished when I call to mind how many persons have admitted the sentiment, or rather, I might say, how universal is the creed of hell and damnation, and that much the greater part of mankind are reserved in a future state to a perpetual exile from joy, and a condition of great suffering and wretchedness, as the due retribution for their behaviour in this transitory world. For myself, I must frankly confess that if one human creature is reserved for eternal punishment hereafter, it appears to form a more serious difficulty in the way of the assertion of the Divine benevolence, than the sufferings of thousands and tens of thousands of our fellow-beings in the present state, where we "come forth like a flower, and are cut down; we flee like a shadow and continue not." Job 14:2.[59]

No human conceptions of Divine benevolence can justify the infliction of everlasting torment on the majority of mankind. Furthermore, "The punishments of a future world can

---

[58] See 26 above.

[59] Godwin, Essays, 15-16.

answer none of the proper ends of punishment."[60] Such a justification would outrage our common sense. He admits that Isaiah asserts that God's thoughts are not our thoughts,[61] "but we cannot talk of the Divine benevolence unless in a way accordant to our own ideas of that equality."[62] Here we see revealed the Pythagorean principle implicit in all of Godwin's thinking, whether it be in social philosophy or in religion; namely, that man is the measure of all things. The test of any institution, be it political or theological, is its effect upon man. Eternal punishment is abhorrent to man's common sense; therefore, eternal punishment is a fallacy in religious thought. This protest against belief in future punishment has significant correlation with Godwin's views concerning punishment in human society,[63] and thus again indicates the integration of his anarchism with his religious philosophy.

But there was a time when Godwin clearly avowed his belief in such punishment - and let this be noted as a

---

[60] Ibid., 22.

[61] Isaiah 45:8.

[62] Godwin, op. cit., 17.

[63] Ibid., Political Justice, II, 153 ff.

further instance of the many changes which took place in his religious views. It is in his Political Justice (first edition, 1793) and in his Essays (1873) that he so resolutely opposes belief in future punishment. In his Sketches of History (a book of six sermons), however, he fervently exhorts his people to avoid being punished with fire.[64] This now rare volume was published in 1784, a fact which carries its own evidence of the change in Godwin's views.

As to whether Godwin believed in any form of future life, we can be certain only in our answer concerning the earlier part of his life. In his sermons collected under the title of Sketches of History, we find references to a belief in immortality. The following excerpts indicate this view: "And will you contentedly give up the joys beyond the skies, that you may escape a little thwarting and disappointment in this transitory state?" [65] He concludes this same sermon with this appeal: "May we all of us exemplify the quietness of an Aaron, and the unresentful mildness of a redeemer, that so we may be united with these

---

[64] See Godwin, Sketches of History, 57, 63, and 184.

[65] Ibid., 23.

great and illustrious characters forever hereafter!"[66]

Bearing in mind that these sermons were published as early as 1784, we can see that Godwin was yet a young man and that his belief in the future life was strong during that period when he was closer to Calvinism and less given to skeptical views.

In his Thoughts on Man, published in 1831, we find two informing accounts. In one connection, Godwin states that when man reflects deeply upon the perishableness of his frame, "he has indeed an irrepressible longing after immortality."[67] The second account is worthy of full quotation. It follows:

> Hence it is that unenlightened man, in almost all ages and countries, has been induced, independently of divine revelation, to regard death, the most awful event to which we are subject, as not being the termination of his existence. We see the body of our friend become insensible, and remain without motion, or any external indication of what we call life. We can shut it up in an apartment, and visit it from day to day. If we had perseverance enough, and could so far conquer the repugnance and humiliating feeling with which the experiment would be attended, we might follow step by step the process of decomposition and putrification, and observe by what degrees the "dust returned unto earth as it was." But, in spite of this

---

[66] Ibid., 33.

[67] Godwin, Thoughts on Man, 101.

> demonstration of the senses, man still believes that there is something in him that lives after death. The mind is so infinitely superior in character to this case of flesh that incloses it, that he cannot persuade himself that it and the body perish together.[68]

In his Essays, however, he is less confident of his belief in immortality. We read: "We know what we are but we know not what we shall be."[69] Again, in this essay, he raises the question as to what lies beyond and answers: "Probably nothing: neither work, nor device, nor knowledge."[70] In the same volume, he writes that "there is no need for the theory of a future state."[71] But it should be noted that these last three references were published posthumously,[72] and we cannot be certain as to the time they were written.

N. REJECTION OF BELIEF IN HUMILITY

Again, Godwin relates his social philosophy and theology in his rejection of the idea of humility. Next in gravity to the evil of punishment in the Christian religion

---

[68] Ibid., 14-15.

[69] Ibid., Essays, 283.

[70] Loc. cit.

[71] Ibid., 30.

[72] In 1873.

is the evil of teaching that man is but a worm. "God made man upright," he insists.[73] He holds arrogance as contemptible, but he adds that self-respect and unwillingness to debase one's view of oneself are essential to the nature of true worship.[74] Man is at least important enough to have his thoughts known by God. "God, it may be said, knows the thoughts of a man, and will judge him accordingly."[75] Godwin consistently elevates man, whether in terms of religion or of anarchism. "Let us then learn to respect man, and to be proud of ourselves that we belong to a species capable of so high achievements."[76] We have already noted how limitless was his confidence in man's perfectibility.[77] This confidence was essentially a religion for him.

It is interesting to note that Godwin took occasion to point out that the Founder of Christianity rose from humble parentage and environment to recognized greatness. He thus pays tributeto Jesus:

---

[73] See 125 above.

[74] Godwin, op. cit., 30.

[75] Ibid., 61.

[76] Godwin, Thoughts Occasioned by the Perusal of Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon, 82.

[77] See 166 below.

> Christianity is another of those memorable chapters in the annals of mankind, to which there is probably no second. The son of a carpenter in a little, rocky country, among a nation despised and enslaved, undertook to reform the manners of the people of whom he was a citizen. The reformation he preached was unpalatable to the leaders of the state,[78] he was persecuted; and finally suffered the death reserved for the lowest malefactors, being nailed to a cross. He was cut off in the very beginning of his career, before he had time to form a sect. His immediate representatives and successors were tax-gatherers and fisherman. What could be more incredible, till proved by the event, than that a religion thus begun, should have embraced in a manner the whole civilised world, and that of its kingdom there should be no visible end.[79]

Utopia would one day be achieved. Reason and perfection in mankind would triumph. Stephen comments: "Godwin believes as firmly as any early Christian in the speedy revelation of a new Jerusalem, four-square and perfect in its plan."[80]

We conclude our study of Godwin's views of religion by emphasizing again that his beliefs in this area are remarkably integrated with his views in social philosophy. The very elements in his religion which seemed to him of greatest importance were likewise the dominant convictions in his anarchism. The primacy of reason, the unalterable

---

[78] Note here the anarchistic implications.

[79] Godwin, Essays, 194.

[80] Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, II, 264.

law of justice, the dignity of man, and the promise of perfectibility were the foundations upon which he built his thought. He made a religion of his social philosophy, and his social philosophy was his religion.

CHAPTER VII

GODWIN'S VIEWS OF MIND AND REASON

Godwin's views of mind and reason are germane both to his social philosophy and to his religion. He devotes several large sections of his Political Justice to the implications of such views and shows how basic his theories are to the whole structure of his social thought.[1] Laying no claim to originality, Godwin borrowed heavily from earlier and contemporary thinkers in formulating his own views.[2] From Locke, Hume, Condillac, and Helvétius came the greatest influences.[3] We shall attempt, therefore, to trace the nature of some of these influences. Such principles as empiricism and associationism, utilitarianism, necessitarianism, perfectibility, and the primacy of reason will be examined in their relation to Godwin's views.

A. EMPIRICISM AND ASSOCIATIONISM

Empiricism may be loosely defined as that school of philosophical thought which holds that knowledge is the

---

[1] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 24-120; I, 361-420.

[2] Note 176 below.

[3] See Godwin, op. cit., I, ix.

result of experience. It is usually contrasted with rationalism, which holds that knowledge is the result of reason. Chief among the English empiricists - and empiricism seems to have been more at home in England, while rationalism found greater favor in France - were Locke and Hume.

Locke begins his argument by observing that "there is nothing more commonly taken for granted than that there are certain principles universally agreed upon by all mankind . . . which must needs be constant impressions which the souls of men receive in their first beings, and which they bring into the world with them.[4] Then, he argues that universal consent proves nothing innate.[5] That these principles are not "naturally imprinted" on the mind is evidenced by the fact that children and idiots do not possess them.[6] Nor does reason "discover" innate principles.[7] In another chapter, Locke holds that morality can lay no claim to innate qualities.[8] Virtue and vice are the results of experience, not of birth.

---

[4] John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, 12.

[5] Ibid., 13.

[6] Ibid., 13.

[7] Ibid., 14-15.

[8] Ibid., 28 ff.

Empiricism was then elaborated into a psychological theory which is commonly called associationism or sensationalism. In his most important work, Traité des Sensations (1754), Condillac gave new emphasis to Locke's position, and sensationalism became a great influence in the last half of the eighteenth century. Like Locke, Condillac denied the existence of innate ideas.[9] Indeed, Condillac went farther. Locke had been careful to distinguish between perception and reflection by explaining that the former was the function of the senses but the latter was the function of the mind. Condillac rejected the belief that there was any difference, and summarily reduced all functions, which we ordinarily call psychical, to mere sensation patterns.[10] That is to say, not only did Condillac believe that the intellectual processes were sensations, but likewise the volitional and the emotional. This psychology had practical significance in that it intensified the empiricist view that all knowledge came through the senses alone, and that therefore man was solely the product of influences which bore upon his life after birth. Moreover, this psychology

---

[9] Étienne B. de Condillac, Treatise on the Sensations, (Geraldine Carr, trans.), 8.

[10] Ibid., 17.

taught that man was not eternally confirmed in sin by reason of a predisposition towards evil, but that his post-natal experiences were entirely accountable for his moral nature. Such teaching, of course, found diametrical opposition in Calvinism and other religious groups. Memory, too, was reduced to sensation.[11] For Condillac, there was only one basis for pleasure and pain, and that was physical.[12] To speak of pleasures and pains of the soul was another way of speaking of physical pleasures and pains, since the soul was merely the seat of the feelings.[13]

Helvétius, whose strong influence upon Godwin we have already noted, developed the popular empirical philosophy of Locke and Condillac to the point whereby it represented a new and significant interpretation of social facts. This psychology of sensationalism was forcefully presented in Helvétius's work, De l'Esprit (1758). So forceful was the presentation, in fact, that it created a tumult in ecclesiastical circles. The book was publicly burned, and Helvétius was ordered to leave France.

---

[11] Ibid., 6.

[12] Ibid., 12.

[13] Ibid.

According to this pronounced sensationalist, man is born into the world with no predisposition for good or ill. He is endowed by nature, however, with a susceptibility to pleasure and pain. This susceptibility bringsabout a self-love which causes him to seek those experiences which result in pleasure and to resist those experiences which involve pain. Thus, man always considers his own interests. Even seeming acts of unselfishness are actually motivated by a selfish desire, that of self-gratification. Altruism thus becomes a form of egoism.[14]

Helvétius believed, however, that probity consists of conduct directed to social welfare.[15] Realizing that this interest in the group may conflict with the selfishness of the individual, he argues that the individual will not contribute to the public benefit unless such contributions can be made to appeal to his self-love. It is the task of the legislator to make public and private interests compatible. Influenced by external circumstances, individuals will develop those attributes which their government approves, and at the same time satisfy their selfish interests. Wherever a nation does not make public and private interests

---

[14] Cf. 161 below.

[15] See his Discours II for an elaboration of this point.

identical, it fails. Reform of legislation is the only way to insure virtue and eradicate vice. Hence, the significance of proper government is emphasized.

Talent and genius, Helvétius argues, are not inborn but are the product of government. A study of various countries at different periods indicates that talent and genius are more often present when government is good, and more often lacking when government is bad.[16] Character, he insists, is not the product of innate predispositions, but is rather the product of social influences and forces. It then follows that, if ignorance and misery prevail, it is because the government is bad. The great need is for a reconstruction of the social system. The power of education and good government is thus made incalculable in its possibilities for creating a superior race of people.

Baron d'Holbach published his famous work, Système de la Nature in 1770. Godwin refers to the influence which this work had upon him.[17] The empiricism of Locke and Condillac are carried into avowed materialism by d'Holbach. Absolute order exists in nature. The total activity observable in the universe is in accord with law. Cause

---

[16] See his Discours V for this argument in full.

[17] Godwin, Political Justice, I, ix. See also Paul, William Godwin I, 26.

and effect is a chain which is never broken. Chance is ruled out altogether.[18] As for the nature of man, he is a purely physical being, controlled entirely by physical laws. Human nature is essentially egoistic, but it can be made compatible with public interest through good government. For d'Holbach, as for Helvétius, education and government hold the key to man's character. In fact, d'Holbach assails bad government relentlessly. He states:

> L'homme n'est si souvent méchant que parcequ'il se sent presque toujours intéressé à l'être; que l'on rende les hommes plus éclairés et plus heureux, et on les rendra meilleurs. Un gouvernement équitable et vigilant rempliroit bientôt son état de citoyens honnêtes . . . Les vicieux et les méchants sont si communs sur la terre, si opiniâtres, si attachés à leurs déréglemens, parcequ'il n'est aucun gouvernement qui leur fasse trouver de l'avantage à être justes, honnêtes et bienfaisans; au contraire partout les intérêts les plus puissants les solicitent au crime, en favorisant les penchants d'une organisation vicieuse que rien n'a rectifiée ni portée vers le bien . . . Ce n'est donc point la nature qui fait des méchants, ce sont nos institutions qui déterminent à l'être.[19]

Thus we see that d'Holbach advocated the empiricistic doctrines to their fullest extent. There are no innate principles for him; experience is the sole factor in making character. More explicitly, education and

---

[18] For the full exposition, see his Système de la Nature, I, 1-69.

[19] d'Holbach, ibid., 360.

government are the determining factors in producing a desirable type of mankind. Furthermore, we have noted that Godwin acknowledges that he was influenced by this group of empiricists, and especially by Helvétius and d'Holbach.[20] Indeed, had Godwin not expressly stated this influence, even a casual reader of his works would find evidence of it.

In the first place, Godwin in typical associationist fashion asserts that each mind at birth is a tabula rasa. "The mind is like the slate of a schoolboy," as he puts it.[21] There are no innate principles.[22] "Man considered in himself is merely a being capable of impressions, a recipient of perception."[23] We are what our impressions make us.[24] These impressions are what we ordinarily mean by sensations.[25] In these impressions lie tremendous potentialities. "Compared with the empire of impression," Godwin says, "the mere differences of animal structure are inexpressibly unimportant and powerless."[26] Godwin further

---

[20] Godwin, Political Justice, I, ix.

[21] Ibid., Thoughts on Man, 254.

[22] Ibid., Political Justice, I, 27, 31.

[23] Ibid., II, 78.

[24] Ibid., II, 79.

[25] See Brightman, Introduction to Philosophy, 179.

[26] Godwin, op. cit., I, 38.

indicates his empiricistic point of view by holding that principles depend on ideas.[27] Now it is untenable that principles are innate, he reiterates, because we would by the same token be born with pre-established ideas. He declares that the fallacy of such a conclusion is obvious. And, since we have no pre-established ideas, our moral qualities are the result only of perceptions and impressions, not of any innate elements. As we have seen above, these are precisely the views of Helvétius and d'Holbach.[28] With Godwin, the environment is everything and heredity is nothing. He says that "moral qualities in men are the product of impressions made upon them, and there is no instance of an original propensity to evil."[29] He goes farther by insisting that "our virtues and vices may be traced to the incidents which make the history of our lives, and if these incidents could be divested of every improper tendency, vice would be extirpated from the world."[30] Embryo man is thus so nearly a zero that everything which makes the complete adult is due to the accumulation of ideas poured into his life since his birth.[31] In a later work, he indicates the

---

[27] Ibid., I, 33.

[28] See 140 above.

[29] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 18.

[30] Ibid., I, 18.

[31] Ibid., I, 95.

persistence in his mind of this belief in no innate ideas. He writes:

> . . . Man is born without innate ideas . . . A child is not designed by his original formation to be a manufacturer of shoes for he may be born among a people by whom shoes are not worn . . . But it is not the less true that one man is by his structure best fitted to excel in some one in particular of these multifarious pursuits . . . Every one has probably within him a string more susceptible than the rest, that demands only a kindred impression to be made, to call forth its latent character.[32]

B. MIND-BODY PROBLEM

Godwin gives some attention to the mind-body relation, but he is not too clear in his conclusions. In one instance he states that the mind is the seat of sensation and reason. "Where it resides we cannot tell nor can we authoritatively pronounce, as the apostle says, relatively to a particular phenomenon, 'whether it is in the body or out of the body.'"[33] Later he says that the mind cannot subsist without the body.[34] Yet he assigns some importance to the place of thought as apparently a phenomenon to be distinguished from mere sensation or impression. He states:

---

[32] Godwin, Thoughts on Man, 32-33.

[33] Ibid., 7.

[34] Ibid., 9.

> No inconsiderable argument may be derived from the singular and important nature of that property of human beings, which we term thought; which it is surely somewhat violent to strike out of our system as a mere superfluity.[35]

Stephen goes so far as to conclude concerning Godwin that mind has been abolished along with innate ideas or principles. "Nothing is left, one may almost say, but a number of logical processes, of which it is convenient to assume that they take place in a vehicle called the mind but which are everywhere unaffected by external conditions."[36]

But this conclusion seems to be unwarranted. Godwin does not dismiss the meaning of mind so easily as Stephen thinks. There are deeper implications. Note, for instance, in the following passage how Godwin assigns to the mind an almost mystical quality:

> The human mind is a creature of celestial origin, shut up and confined in a wall of flesh. We feel a kind of proud impatience of the degradation to which we are condemned. We beat ourselves to pieces against the wires of our cage, and long to escape, to shoot through the elements, and be as free to change at any instant the place where we dwell, as to change the subject to which our thoughts are applied.[37]

---

[35] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 402.

[36] Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, 268.

[37] Godwin, Thoughts on Man, 100.

While Godwin does use the mind as signifying the chain of thoughts which, when linked together, produces the complex notion of personal identity,[38] he nevertheless refuses to agree that mind is what mind does. On this disagreement with sensationalism, he is very clear. Note his argument:

> . . . If our business is to discover the consideration entertained by the mind which induces us to act, this tells us nothing. It is like the case of the Indian philosopher who, being ask what it was that kept the earth in its place, answered that it was supported by an elephant, and that elephant again rested on a tortoise. He must be endowed with a slender portion of curiosity, who, being told that uneasiness is that which spurs on the mind to act, shall rest satisfied with this explanation, and does not proceed to enquire. What makes us uneasy? An explanation like this is no more instructive, than it would be, if, when we saw a man walking, or grasping a sword or a bludgeon, and we inquired into the cause of this phenomenon, anyone should inform us that he walks because he has feet and he grasps because he has hands.[39]

C. MIND AND CLIMATE

As to the influence of climate on mind, like Hume, Godwin endeavored to show that the mind - the sheet of blank paper, as it were - is the same in all times and places.[40] He would not agree with Rousseau that "la

---

[38] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 26.

[39] Godwin, Thoughts on Man, 211.

[40] Ibid., Political Justice, I, 100.

liberte n'est pas un fruit de tous les climats,"[41] nor with Montesquieu's observation that "combien les hommes sont differents dans les divers climats!"[42] An anonymous writer in Time gives the impression that Godwin admitted that both individuals and nations were powerfully affected by the influence of climate even though reason in the main is omnipotent.[43] Like Helvétius,[44] Godwin gives no such quarters to the influence of climate. He is consistently an associationist at this point. The mind, unaffected by climate, is at the outset everywhere the same.[45]

D. NECESSITARIANISM

Part and parcel of his views of mind is Godwin's belief in necessity. Like Hume,[46] he applied the logic of

---

[41] Rousseau, Du contrat social; ou principes du droit politique, 671.

[42] Montesquieu, De l'esprit des loix, XV, 307.

[43] Time, 1890, 510.

[44] Helvétius argued that history and experience disprove the theory of climatic influence. Why, in the face of unchanging climate, do intellectual achievements of a nation change from age to age? The answer is that it is the form of government, not the climate, which determines the nature of the people. See his Discours III, Ch. 27,28.

[45] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 369.

[46] Hume said: "There is but one kind of necessity, as there is but one kind of cause, and the common distinction between moral and physical necessity is without any foundation in nature." Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, III, 4.

necessitarianism to all areas of thought, and it influenced both his theology and his social philosophy.

Mind, as we have seen,[47] is the result of sensations and associations. It is a rigidly causal system. "All actions of men are necessary," Godwin asserts.[48] The doctrine of moral necessity "leads to a more bold and comprehensive view of man in society, than can possibly be entertained by him who has embraced the opposite opinion."[49] Because necessity is so important a principle in his system, Godwin wants to make as clear as he can what the term means. He explains the concept in these words:

> He who affirms that all actions are necessary, means that the man, who is acquainted with all the circumstances under which a living or intelligent being is upon any given occasion, is qualified to predict the conduct he will hold, with as much certainty, as he can predict any of the phenomena of inanimate nature. Upon this question the advocate of liberty, in the philosophical sense, must join issue. He must, if he mean any thing, deny this certainty of conjunction between moral antecedents and consequents. Where all is constant and invariable, and the events that arise, uniformly correspond to the circumstances in which they originate, there can be no liberty.[50]

Godwin argues that all the events in the material universe are subjected to necessity. He holds that the

---

[47] See 144 above.

[48] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 363.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid., 364.

more we understand this universe, the less do wo ascribe to chance. The uniformity of events clearly indicates law and necessity. Science will increasingly reveal the constancy and regularity of such law.[51]

Then, Godwin proceeds to apply his arguments to the nature of mind. "Can intellect be made a topic of science," he asks. "Are we able to reduce the multiplied phenomena of mind to any certain standard of reasoning?"[52] Now, we may not be able to see the ground of that necessity, or to understand how sensations are able to generate volition and motion; but neither are we always able to perceive a ground of connection between any two events in the material universe. There are, nevertheless, definite indications of necessity in human mind. "That mind is a topic of science, may be argued from all those branches of literature and enquiry which have mind for their subject."[53] History, for instance, would be quite meaningless, if there were no principle of necessity operating in the human mind. He states:

> What species of amusement or instruction would history afford, if there were no ground of

---

[51] Ibid., 366-368.

[52] Ibid., 368.

[53] Ibid., 369.

> inference from moral antecedents to their consequents, if certain temptations and inducements did not, in all ages and climates, introduce a certain series of actions, if we were unable to trace a method and unity of system in men's tempers, propensities, and transactions?[54]

The idea of character is a second example of the force of necessity in human life. "The character of any man is the result of a long series of impressions, communicated to his mind, and modifying it in a certain manner so as to enable us . . . to predict his conduct."[55] If there were not this original and essential conjunction between motives and actions, there could be no such thing as character. Nor could there be any ground of inference which enables us to predict what men would be from what they have been.[56]

Again, from the same idea of necessity arise all "the schemes of policy, in consequence of which men propose to themselves, by a certain plan of conduct to prevail upon others to become the tools and instruments of their purposes."[57] All the arts of courtship and flattery, of playing upon men's hopes and fears proceed upon the supposition that the mind is subject to certain laws.

---

[54] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 369.

[55] Ibid., 370.

[56] See ibid., 370.

[57] Ibid., 371.

Finally, argues Godwin, the principle of necessity is involved in the idea of moral discipline. "If I carefully persuade, exhort, and exhibit motives to another, it is because I believe that motives have a tendency to influence his conduct."[58] If motives do not as yet function reliably, it is only for the reason that we do not understand the human mind sufficiently well. When the science of the material universe was in its infancy, chance and accident were more commonly used as explanations of phenomena. The science of the mind is yet in its infancy; hence, our inadequate understanding of motives.

Godwin thus presents his main arguments in favor of necessity. He is unwilling to say that there is no freedom, and he holds that necessity does not destroy all distinctions. He states: "Happiness and misery, wisdom and error will still be distinct from each other."[59] But for the "vulgar" conception of free will, he has little use.

E. NECESSITY AND MORAL CHOICE

Godwin anticipates the argument that belief in necessity invalidates virtue; that is to say, he does not believe

---

[58] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 371.

[59] Ibid., 388.

that necessity makes goodness automatic and not subject to choice. He says that "the regularity of events in the material universe will not of itself afford a sufficient foundation of morality and prudence."[60] He infers that virtue does not mean "the operation of an intelligent being in the exercise of an optional power, so that under the same precise circumstances it might or might not have taken place."[61] Virtue rather means the employment of that principle by which we assert a preference for such values as happiness and wisdom rather than such disvalues as misery and error. "It is a system of general advantage, in their aptitude or inaptitude to which lies the value or worthlessness of all particular existences."[62] Again, in characteristic utilitarian fashion, he regards virtue as the application of one's capacity "in promoting the general good."[63]

Despite Godwin's attempt to reconcile necessity and virtue, he is not convincing. He does not make at all clear his proof that determinism leaves morality unaffected. Furthermore, he seemingly ignores the arguments in favor of free will. Wordsworth was more optimistic than critical when he proclaimed: "Throw aside your books of chemistry

---

[60] Ibid., I, 374.
[61] Ibid., 388.
[62] Ibid., 180.
[63] Ibid., 390.

and read Godwin on necessity." Godwin presents little, as a matter of fact, which would win disciples to his necessitarianism. His doctrine at this point seems logically incompatible with the accepted view of virtue; moreover, his necessity can hardly be integrated with his anarchism and its exaltation of unrestricted freedom. Though he argues that belief in the doctrine of necessity and its emphasis upon the unfailing connection between causes and effects should accelerate moral action, he fails to show how his necessity and his freedom can be harmonized. The force of determinism and the freedom of anarchism apparently dichotomize Godwin's philosophy.[64]

---

[64] One might argue similarly that Calvinism, like Godwin's later necessitarianism, is antithetical to moral action. But the case is different, as Sabine clearly indicates: "The belief that men are saved not by their own merit but by the free act of God's grace might seem, on its face, to take the heart out of human effort. In fact it had exactly the opposite effect . . . Calvinist ethics was essentially an ethics of action. And indeed, what better motive can there be to relentless activity - to steel the will and, if need be, to harden the heart - than a whole-souled conviction that a man is the chosen instrument of God's will? The Calvinist theory of predestination had nothing in common with the modern conception of universal causality." Sabine, A History of Political Theory. 364.

F. UTILITARIANISM

Another element in Godwin's system of thought which we shall attempt to examine in this present chapter is his utilitarianism. While the history and principles of utilitarianism are too involved to permit any adequate account to be included here, it will nevertheless be necessary to trace some influences of this theory if we are clearly to understand Godwin's position. Let us therefore turn our attention to several pertinent aspects of the subject.

Most definitions of utilitarianism seem to confine rather than define the concept. There is no easy or short definition. The term has too many facets to make that kind of definition possible. On its ethical side, utilitarianism may be said to hold that the summum bonum of life is that which gives the greatest good to the greatest number, and it may be further said that the theory is essentially hedonistic. But even here we must qualify our statements and explain that, while a utilitarian like Bentham would accept the quantitative implication we have given, a utilitarian like John Stuart Mill would insist that the qualitative criterion should have primacy. Moreover, the bare statement that utilitarianism is a form of hedonism would be challenged by those who dislike the emphasis on

the pleasure-principle which is suggested in our formulation. On its socio-economic side, utilitarianism can be said to represent "interest in the welfare of mankind, wedded to practical efforts to ameliorate the conditions of human life on rational principles, and to raise the masses through effective state legislation."[65] Yet, let it be repeated, utilitarianism is too pervasive a principle to allow any restricted definitions. Of several other forms of it, we shall have something to say later.[66]

That this study of utilitarianism follows at once after the discussion of empiricism and associationism is not mere chance. There is a logical relationship between utilitarianism and associationism. Davidson goes so far as to declare that "in the history of philosophy, utilitarianism and associationism have gone together: indeed, the greatest of the utilitarians have also been leaders of associationism."[67] He proceeds to give three reasons for this relationship.

---

[65] William L. Davidson, Political Thought in England, 9.

[66] For informative accounts of this branch of utilitarianism, see such works as Ernest Albee, A History of English Utilitarianism and Leslie Stephen, The English Utilitarians.

[67] Davidson, op. cit., 26.

In the first place, associationism necessarily deals with experience. If it were possible to define happiness apart from experience - still more, if it were possible to secure happiness by means of mere abstract principles supplied to us from without, regardless of experience - associationism would hold no quarters. But if happiness can only be conceived in terms of what man is and what his nature is formed to be, and if it has necessary relations to human wants and aspirations, we must then discover in the concrete circumstances of human life how happiness can be effected and increased. This procedure demands a study of how men actually find pleasure and promote their interests. Furthermore, we must study how pleasures can be combined and, it may be, transformed; and, accordingly, how the principle of association operates in deepening men's experience. Since conduct counts most for a happy life, it is necessary to be able to know in advance the consequence of an act - to know how the present may tell upon the future. All such procedure means application of the principle of associationism. And association is necessary for the formation of good habits and for the reformation of bad habits. Thus, associationism is of great importance if utilitarianism is to be the guiding principle.

Secondly, Davidson argues that utilitarianism is closely related to associationism, since it is the latter alone which can provide scientific explanations concerning the nature of conscience. Also, if there is to be any rational explanation of the fact that, though pleasure is to be the end at which man aims, he does not always aim at it directly; rather he makes it his chief business to act in life in accordance with what he conceives to be right and duty. To the utilitarian, as much as to every other serious ethicist, duty stands for the supreme moral mandate; but the utilitarian undertakes to analyze the concept of duty into its constituent factors and to show how it has attained its authority and what experience lies behind it. This analysis, again, means association. Moreover, the utilitarian strongly insists that this resolution of what is usually taken as ultimate in ethical experience into what is simpler, and reconstructing it, in no way detracts from the value of this ultimate. On the contrary, such scrutiny may well enhance it, inasmuch as it is now seen to have stood the test of experience and to have been evolved by society as a whole rather than by one man.

Finally, utilitarianism is closely related to associationism in that the latter enables the former to achieve a scientific position. A non-utilitarian ethics

may have merits, but it can hardly be described as scientific. It appeals only to a part of man's being, and fails to reach the springs of action that follow from the emotional and active sides of his nature. In other words, a merely formal ethics is ineffectual for guiding a warm-blooded social being, Davidson argues.[68]

With these background data in mind, we can perhaps better understand the utilitarianism which we discover in Godwin. Associationist that he was, he would probably find utilitarianism harmonious to his general system of thought.

Godwin explicitly states that "good is a general name, including pleasure and the means by which pleasure is produced.[69] In another work, he states:

> One of the first and highest duties that falls to the lot of a human creature, is that which he owes to the aggregate of reasonable beings inhabiting what he calls his country. Our duties are then most solemn and elevating, when they are calculated to affect the well-being of the greatest number of men.[70]

But Godwin's utilitarianism was not of that selfish variety

---

[68] For the complete argument concerning the relation of utilitarianism to associationism, see William L. Davidson, Political Thought in England, 26 ff.

[69] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 440.

[70] Ibid., Thoughts on Man, 320.

which paralyzed social reform.[71] It was a period, to be sure, in which indifferentism was evident. Says one writer: "It was difficult to convince people that something ought to be done . . . There was a fatalistic attitude abroad."[72] Godwin had sympathetic awareness of the prevailing misery in the social system. He insisted that all was not well and that something must be done. The following paragraph indicates the intensity of his feelings concerning the situation:

> There is no mistake more thoroughly to be deplored on this subject than that of persons, sitting at their ease and surrounded with all the conveniences of life, who are apt to explain, "We find things very well as they are;" and to inveigh bitterly against all projects of reform as "the romances of visionary men, and the declamations of those who are never to be satisfied." Is it well, that so large a part of the community should be kept in abject penury, rendered stupid with ignorance and disgustful with vice, perpetuated in nakedness and hunger, goaded to the commission of crimes, and made victims to the merciless laws which the rich have instituted

---

[71] Mill warned against this selfishness in these words: "I must again repeat . . . that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator." John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, 24.

[72] L. C. A. Knowles, The Industrial and Commercial Revolutions in Great Britain during the Nineteenth Century, 106.

> to oppress them? Is it sedition to enquire whether this state of things may not be exchanged for a better? Or can there be any thing more disgraceful to ourselves than to exclaim that "All is well," merely because we are at our ease, regardless of the misery, degradation and vice that may be occasioned in others?[73]

Nor was Godwin's utilitarianism to be classed as theological. Albee makes the following explanation:

> The true distinction i.e., between theological and non-theological utilitarianism may conveniently be indicated by briefly comparing Paley and Bentham in a single respect. The criterion of morality was the same for both. Actions were regarded by both as right or wrong, because they made for or against the greatest happiness of the greatest number; and the greatest happiness was taken by both to mean the sum of pleasures with a consistent disregard of so-called qualitative distinctions. So far they agreed; but Paley, unlike Bentham, thought it necessary, not merely to mention, but to lay very special stress upon the doctrine of rewards and punishments after death, in order to prove that it is for the ultimate interest of the hypothetically egoistic moral agent to act for the common good. In so doing, he was merely taking what had long been the characteristic position of theological utilitarianism.[74]

Morley prefers to call Godwin an intellectual utilitarianist,[75] as distinguished from the old utilitarianism

---

[73] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 487.

[74] Ernest Albee, A History of English Utilitarianism, xiii.

[75] John Morley, The Fortnightly Review XX (New Series), 452.

which was essentially selfishness sanctioned by ethical formulation. Also, Godwin's conception of utilitarianism was not that kind which sought to discover the moral law in pure reason without regard to empirical findings.[76] To Godwin, morality was nothing but a calculation of consequences.[77] Vice is wrong calculation, and virtue is right calculation. It is merely a matter of moral arithmetic, and the common denominator is happiness. Morality is that "which teaches us to contribute on all occasions, to the extent of our power, to the well-being and happiness of every intellectual and sensitive experience."[78]

To attain this utilitarian ideal, it is possible that one will be required to forego one's personal preference. Allen makes a pertinent comment in this connection:

> With a conscientiousness which today impresses us as almost comic, these ideologists attempted to practice their doctrines. Godwin refused to visit Thelwall, while the latter was imprisoned in the Tower, on the ground that as some danger was entailed by such a visit, he sacrificed the personal gratification of seeing Thelwall to the greater utility served by protecting his life for the public benefit! Thelwall himself was inspired to lecture upon the evil of retrospection by his recognition of his duty to control his grief at his mother's recent death and to betake himself,

---

[76] Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw, Social and Political Ideas, 156.

[77] Morley, op. cit., 453.

[78] Godwin, op. cit., 159.

> even at that painful hour, to his humble task of spreading truth among the living.[79]

Godwin's much-quoted illustration of Fenelon and his valet further exemplifies this characteristic about which Allen has written. That life ought to be preferred, argues Godwin, which will be most conducive to the general good. In saving the life of Fenelon, suppose at the moment he conceived the project of his immortal Telemachus, Godwin believes he would have been promoting the benefit of thousands who have been cured, by the perusal of that work, of some error, vice, and consequent unhappiness. Even more, his benefit would have extended further, for every individual helped by reading Telemachus has become a better member of society and has contributed in his turn to the happiness and betterment of others. Then Godwin asks what he should have done had he been the valet. He answers that he should have chosen to die, rather than Fenelon should have died. The valet should have preferred Fenelon to himself, because the archbishop's value was so much greater. Even if the valet had been Godwin's brother, or father, or benefactor, the principle would have remained unchanged. Justice would

---

[79] Beverly Sprague Allen, "Godwin's Influence upon John Thelwall", Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, XXXVII, No. 1, 676. (March 1922).

have taught him to save the life of Fenelon at the expense of the valet.[80]

In the foregoing paragraphs we have endeavored to show the utilitarian principles which are to be discovered in Godwin's thought and to indicate their bearing upon his associationism. Since Godwin himself acknowledges no debt to any specific utilitarianist, we cannot ascribe particular influences with certainty. Halévy says that one is tempted to believe that Bentham had a direct influence upon him because the expressions which Godwin used were so much akin to those used by Bentham in his Introduction.[81] But not once does Godwin mention the book. Halévy suggests that the air was so full of such expressions that Godwin could have used the very ones phrased by Bentham, and yet not have been guilty of plagiarizing.[82] This explanation seems to be satisfactory.

G. PERFECTIBILITY

A further element in Godwin's view of mind which influenced at once his social philosophy and his theology

---

[80] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 127-128. For a somewhat modified view of his belief, see Godwin, St. Leon, preface.

[81] Elie Halévy, The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism, 192.

[82] Ibid., 193.

in his strong belief in the perfectibility of man. "Nothing can be more unreasonable," says Godwin, "than to argue from men as we now find them to men as they may hereafter be made."[83] This point of view colors all of his thinking concerning the possible future of man. He said on one occasion: "I love to contemplate the yet unexpanded powers and capabilities of our nature, and to believe that they will one day be unfolded to the infinite advantage and happiness of the inhabitants of the globe."[84] Perfectibility was not a new idea, to be sure, but Godwin gave it conspicuous place and popular appeal.

Priestley was one who influenced Godwin in his roseate views of man's future, thinks Stephen.[85] Godwin does not acknowledge this influence in particular, but he does refer to reading Priestley's works.[86] In his Treatise on Civil Government, Priestley declares that, no matter how the world may have begun or however pessimistic a view one

---

[83] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 116.

[84] Ibid., Thoughts Occasioned by the Perusal of Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon, 48.

[85] See Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, II, 256.

[86] Paul provides us with a fragment of Godwin's diary in which this reference is made. See Paul, William Godwin, I, 19.

may hold of the past, "the end will be glorious and paradisaical beyond what our imagination can now conceive."[87] Stephen attributes Priestley's optimism to his sanguine temperament and to his scientific abilities. The old superstitutions were disappearing, and vast possibilities of future progress seemed to be presenting themselves in every direction.[88] A further comment concerning Priestley's enthusiasm for man's future attainments may indicate a further influence upon Godwin. Priestley, "with unconscious inconsistency,"[89] says that government is the great instrument of this progress of the human species towards this glorious state," and then adds that "government is to promote progress by letting things alone."[90]

Preston intimates that much of the ridicule of Godwin has arisen over the use of the term perfectibility.[91] Ridicule is a stronger word than seems necessary. Yet it is true that Godwin's naïve belief in man's capacity to improve received criticism. His views at this point were

---

[87] Joseph Priestley, Treatise on Civil Government, 5.

[88] See Stephen, op. cit., II, 256.

[89] Stephen, ibid., II, 256.

[90] Priestley, op. cit., 296.

[91] See Preston in the Introduction to his edition of Political Justice, I, xxviii.

hardly consistent with his rigorous application of principles of reason, even though he insisted that perfectibility was most reasonable. Is it impossible for us, he argues, to contemplate what man has already done without being impressed with a strong presentiment of the improvements he has yet to accomplish. "Once establish the perfectibility of man, and it will inevitably follow that we are advancing to a state, in which truth will be too well known to be easily mistaken, and justice too habitually practised to be voluntarily counteracted."[92] He then develops the point that sciences have already made great advances, and there is every probability that their progress will continue.[93] "Man is in a state of perpetual progress,"[94] he believes. Now, if this progress is true of the sciences, why is it not just as likely that moral and social standards will improve? "If we can still farther demonstrate it to be part of the natural and regular progress of mind, our confidence and our hopes will then be complete."[95]

---

[92] Godwin, Political Justice, II, 117.

[93] Cf. Priestley's optimism for the future of science in his Treatise on Civil Government, 5.

[94] Godwin, op. cit., I, 119.

[95] Godwin, op. cit., I, 27.

Such is Godwin's basis for confidence in man's perfectibility, a confidence which is grounded in man's unlimited possibilities in the use of reason. It is interesting to note that to the very end of his life Godwin retained this great faith in man's continual improvement and ultimate perfection. In his "Preliminary Essay" found in the posthumous volume, Essays, he declares: "The equality of human beings as such, opens upon us the prospect of perpetual improvement. . . . It opens to us the prospect of indefinite advancement in sound judgment, in real science, and the just conduct of our social institutions."[96] In view of his own weaknesses, failures, and disappointments, this testimony of undaunted faith is all the more impressive.

H. PRIMACY OF REASON

Godwin uses reason both as the center and the circumference of his system. All other concepts considered in this chapter revolve about reason, and all principles are bounded by it. He repeatedly asserts the primacy of reason. Yet at no time does he make clear what he means by reason! Is it both intellect and will? He does not make

---

[96] Godwin, Essays, 6.

the matter clear.[97] Indeed, what inferences he does make as to what he means by the concept are confusing, if not contradictory. Let us examine several implications of his views of reason as they bear upon his social philosophy.

In the first place, Godwin's own temperament and psychological conditioning throw light on his view of reason. Academic to the core, he reduced life to abstractions, formulae, and analytical speculations. Once critic comments that Godwin "saw life in simple outlines . . . and drew all lines of doctrine with an unqualified logical distinctness. He was quite incapable of appreciation, emotional subtlety, and the complexity of human contacts. Complexity was the very antithesis of his nature."[98] Conceiving life as a series of syllogisms, he would announce the most radical and revolutionary conclusions "as calmly as a mathematician manipulating a set of algebraic symbols."[99] He held that reason rigidly excludes instinct, insight, and sentiment. Herein Godwin's view of reason is antipodal to Rousseau's. All knowledge, believed Godwin, is derived from sense experiences, and there is nothing in the social

---

[97] See Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw, The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era, 155.

[98] Ibid., 145.

[99] Cornhill Magazine, "Godwin and Shelley", Vol. 39, 286.

or religious realm which reason cannot master. The exercise of reason toward ascertaining and doing one's duty is the whole purpose of life.[100] Reason should be the sole judge of truth, the sufficient sanction of morality, and the sole agent in regenerating society.[101] One of the most naïve expressions of Godwin's complete faith in reason is found in the following excerpt:

> Reason is omnipotent; if my conduct be wrong, a very simple statement, flowing from a clear and comprehensive view, will make it appear to be such; nor is it probable that there is any perverseness that would persist in vice, in the face of all the recommendations with which virtue might be invested, and all the beauty in which it might be displayed.[102]

Religion, for Godwin, must stand or fall at the test of reason.[103] Man is not only a reasoning being but is, in a sense, created by reason. His very tissue is woven out of argument.[104] The only reality which religion possesses is the reality of its reasonableness. Any belief in God was

---

[100] Cf. Solomon F. Gingerich, Essays in the Romantic Poets, 102.

[101] Cf. The Fortnightly Review, Vol. XX, 453.

[102] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 341.

[103] See Godwin, Essays, 13.

[104] Morley, The Fortnightly Review, Vol. XX (New Series), 453.

to be as coldly calculated as a problem in geometry.

Likewise in his social philosophy, Godwin gave full scope to reason. To inform, not to inflame, was his aim. The light of reasonableness, not the heat of passion, would bring men to the acceptance of justice as the rule of their life. In one of his essays he makes the following observation:

> The ancient Goths of Germany, we are told, had a custom of debating everything of importance to their state twice: once in the high animation of a convivial meeting, and once in the serene stillness of a morning consultation.[105]

To Godwin, the debating of a matter would never fall under the first circumstance, but always under the second.

I. WEAKNESSES IN HIS VIEWS

Several comments are pertinent to Godwin's exaltation of reason. In the first place, his concept of reason is nowhere clearly given.[106] We do not know just how much he includes in the concept, but we are rather led to believe that he makes it conveniently elastic to include other mental processes and attributes. Surely the concept is not used so rigidly as the representative philosophical

---

[105] Godwin, Thoughts on Man, 255.

[106] 48 Cf. 169 above.

rationalists would use it. Secondly, he resorts to the paradox of making an unreasonable use of reason. He makes a fetish of it. It stands in the way of his free reasoning power. Viewed semantically by one like Stuart Chase, Godwin's concept of reason illustrates "the tyranny of words." He resolutely turns his back, both in his religion and in his social philosophy, upon their inherent elements of feeling and warmth, and presumes that because he ignores them they do not exist. One feels that, though Godwin disavows them, he nevertheless senses their presence in his philosophy. He at times makes a passionate use of reason. In Godwin's plea for justice, for instance, it is his heart as well as his head which articulates a profound conviction.[107] The most forceful parts of Godwin's writings are those in which reasoning is shot through with deep feeling. Grierson made the trenchant observation concerning Edmund Burke that his "unique power as an orator lies in the peculiar interpenetration of thought and passion . . . he thinks most profoundly when he thinks most passionately."[108] Thus it is

---

[107] One is here reminded of Pascal's truth: "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison même ne connaît pas."

[108] Herbert J. C. Grierson, The Cambridge History of Literature, XI, 35.

frequently with Godwin in his writing. His argument, in spite of himself, transcends cold logic, and his reason becomes rhapsodic. Allen makes this apt comment about Godwin: "Indeed, Godwin may be said to sentimentalize about reason itself, for certainly his faith in its power creates a boundless optimism that plays upon susceptible feelings."[109]

Thirdly, there is in Godwin's insistence on the primacy of reason the irony of practical inconsistency. He endeavored to govern his life by the rules of pure reason, and yet what a tempest of passions his life actually incited! He strove to lead a severely studious career and to rise above human frailties, and yet domestic tragedies and stormy romances dominated the scenes of his life.[110] Thus in Godwin's insistence on the primacy of reason there was an Hegelian-like reach for the unattainable.

Later in his life,[111] however, he expressed the desire to give "a proper attention to the empire of feeling."[112] Indeed, one reads quite unexpectedly in one of

---

[109] Beverly Sprague Allen, "Godwin's Influence upon John Thelwall," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America (March 1922), Vol. XXXVII, No. 1, 682.

[110] Cf. Townshend-Mayer, St. James's Magazine and United Empire Review, Vol. III, 79.

[111] It was in 1798.

[112] See C. Kegan Paul, William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries, I, 294.

his later essays this mystical statement:

> It is difficult to think of an institution more consonant to the genuine sentiments of human nature than that of masses for the dead. When I have lost a dear friend and beloved associate, my friend is not dead to me. The course of nature may be abrupt; but true affection admits of no sudden breaks. I still see my friend; I still talk to him. I consult him in every arduous question; I study in every difficult proceeding to mould my conduct to his inclination and pleasure. Whatever assists this propensity of the mind, will be dear to every feeling heart.[113]

What noble feeling to be expressed by one who sought primarily to ennoble reason! Can it be that Mrs. Shelley wrote more truly than one might at first suppose when she stated that "Godwin knew the human heart so well?"[114]

---

[113] Godwin, Essays, 193.

[114] Mrs. Shelley's letter, Paul, William Godwin, I, 124.

CHAPTER VIII

CRITICISMS RAISED AGAINST GODWIN

While specific criticisms of Godwin's system of thought have been incorporated in the several chapters as we have developed the dissertation, it is the purpose of this present chapter to give attention to the more general weaknesses for which he has been attacked.

A. LACK OF ORIGINALITY

Godwin has been criticized for his lack of originality. Before this criticism can be accepted, however, it is necessary to know clearly what the critics mean by originality. If by the term it is meant that Godwin presented a quite new social philosophy without antecedents among other related theories, that he inaugurated his system entirely de novo, then of course the criticism is just. If by the term, however, it is meant that Godwin made new and original formulations of data already available, then he was original to that extent. Preston makes this discriminating comment:

> That Godwin has originated a new philosophical system is sometimes denied. It is true that all the component parts of the system propounded by him had been set forth earlier by others; but the combination is new, and the result of the synthesis,

> to which the somewhat dubious name of "philosophical anarchy" has been attached, is distinctly original, anticipating Proudhon, the first avowed anarchist. Godwin is the fountain supplying water from streams whose sources may be remote.[1]

After stating that it is impossible to discover in the works of Godwin "une seule idee dont la conception lui soit personnelle",[2] Roussin explains that Godwin's originality is "simplement d'avoir uni et pousse a leurs extremes limites, avec son intelligence intrepide et toute logic, certaines tendances de son epoque."[3]

The question whether Godwin was original is thus shown to be academic and dependent upon formal definition. The significant point is that Godwin never claimed originality; rather, he freely acknowledged many of the sources of his ideas. Stephen observes that Godwin's intellectual genealogy may be traced to three sources. From Swift, Mandeville, and the Latin historians[4] he had learned to regard the whole body of ancient institutions as corrupt; from Hume and Hartley he derived the means of assault upon

---

[1] Preston, Preface to his edition of Political Justice, xx-xxi.

[2] Henri Roussin, William Godwin, 167.

[3] Loc. cit.

[4] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 10.

the old theories; from the French writers, such as Rousseau, Helvetius, and d'Holbach, he caught the contagion of revolutionary zeal.[5]

Let us turn to Godwin's own indications concerning the sources of his ideas. In the first place, it is evident that he was familiar with the social philosophies of the classical Greeks. His broad conception of politics is of the nature of Plato and Aristotle.[6]

Godwin was fond of the political satire of Swift and made several references to him.[7] Gulliver's Travels afforded satirical examples of the fact that trivial incidents can precipitate nations into warfare. This same work is used to show how meaningless are titles and how foolish are oaths of office. Swift's Sermon on Mutual Subjection also gave Godwin suggestions for his views on the coercive nature of government.

We have already considered the significant influences of thinkers who lived during or just prior to Godwin's

---

[5] See Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, 265-266.

[6] Note Godwin's references to them in Political Justice I, 140.

[7] Ibid., II, 229.

life. Locke's contribution to Godwin's thought can hardly be overstated, especially in terms of his empiricism and doctrines of revolution.[8] Hume likewise is explicitly referred to again and again in Godwin's writings. From him was derived not only empiricistic teachings, but also elements in Godwin's skepticism.[9] Condillac, as well as Helvetius who is mentioned above, increased Godwin's interest in sensationalism.[10] To Bentham, Mill, and other utilitarians Godwin owed in substantial part his own adaptations of that theory.[11] Priestley, as we have seen, strengthened Godwin's belief in perfectibility and views of mind. Paine did much to promote the doctrine of the rights of man, which Godwin also advocated.[12] Beccaria encouraged Godwin in his views of punishment of crime. Rousseau offered a point of contrast with his contract theory, as did Burke also.[13]

---

[8] See 77 above.

[9] See 120 above.

[10] See 138 above.

[11] See 156 above.

[12] See 44 above.

[13] See 47 above.

It is not the purpose or province of this dissertation to trace all the influences which affected Godwin's thinking. The few summaries above suffice to show, however, that Godwin not only made use of other sources, but that he did not hold that his work is original in any other sense than that it is a new synthesis of old thought patterns. Hence, criticisms concerning Godwin's lack of originality require careful statement lest they be unfounded and unfair.

B. LACK OF HISTORICAL SENSE

In the second place, Godwin has been criticized for his lack of the historical sense. To be sure, this lack is frequently manifest in his writings. His prevailing fault of over-simplification is not lessened by his short-range view and his neglect of the implications of the past. It is not surprising, then, that this absense of historicity should be noted by later commentators. Gourg, for instance, states that "on peut reprocher a Godwin: de manquer totalement de sens historique."[14] Gourg, however, renders Godwin an injustice in failing to make clear that historicity was

[14] Raymond Gourg, William Godwin, 299.

deliberately disregarded by many writers of that period. Malthus, Mackintosh, and Parr likewise criticized Godwin on this account. Harper understands this neglect of history better. He observes that "to say that Godwin was lacking in historical feeling is putting the case too negatively. It is more correct to say that he chose not to be hampered by history."[15] Godwin, as one of the last of the thinkers of the Enlightenment, remained true to the tradition. His attitude towards history is precisely the attitude which characterized the whole period. It is not shallowness of literary culture which caused him to neglect history. Rather, it was the belief that the historical method was of little value as compared with the philosophical. Beer represents Godwin in this connection much better than Gourg.[16] Note that Godwin himself sets forth explicitly his attitude concerning history in the following quotation:

> There are two modes, according to which we may enquire into the origin of society and government. We may either examine them historically, that is, consider in what manner they have or ought to have begun, as Mr. Locke has done; or we may examine them philosophically, that is consider the moral principles upon which they depend. The first of

---

[15] George M. Harper, "Rousseau, Godwin, and Wordsworth", Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 109, 645.

[16] See Max Beer, A History of British Socialism, I, 115.

> these subjects is not without its use; but the second is of a higher order and more essential importance. The first is a question of form; the second of substance. It would be of trivial consequence, practically considered, from what source any form of society flowed, and by what mode its principles were sanctioned, could we be always secure of their conformity to the dictates of truth and justice.[17]

It is an over-simplification of the truth, therefore, to assert that Godwin lacked the historical sense. He himself indicated the attitude he held when he said that we should look back in order that we may profit from the experience of mankind, "but let us not look back as if the wisdom of our ancestors was such as to leave no room for future improvement."[18]

C. LACK OF CONSISTENCY

A third possible criticism against Godwin is his inconsistency and shifting views. Let us examine this criticism from the point of view of one of his severest critics at this point. Thomas de Quincey accuses Godwin of indeciveness on the basis of differences found in the three editions of Political Justice (1793, 1796, and 1798).

---

[17] Godwin, Political Justice I, 78.

[18] Ibid., I, 27. Also I, 10.

De Quincey states:

> In the original edition of his Political Justice, Mr. Godwin advanced against thrones and dominations, powers and principalities, with the air of some Titan slayer . . . but in the second (1796) edition and under what motive has never been explained, he recoiled absolutely from the sound himself had made: everybody else was appalled by the fury of the challenge and, through the strangest of accidents, Mr. Godwin was also appalled. The second edition as regards principles is not a recast but absolutely a travesty; nay it is all but a palinode.[19]

This criticism is hardly fair to Godwin. It is true, as de Quincey points out, that there are modifications in the second edition of Political Justice. De Quincey should have borne in mind, however, Godwin's own statement which is found in the preface to the second edition. Godwin here comments that although Books I - IV "may without impropriety be said to be re-written . . . the spirit and great outlines of the work remain untouched."[20] Moreover, de Quincey apparently ignores Godwin's own statement as to the motive he had for altering the second edition. "There are many things," explains Godwin, "that now appear to the author upon a review not to have been meditated with a sufficiently profound reflection and to have been too

---

[19] Thomas de Quincey, "Godwin" in Notes on Gilfillan's Literary Portraits, 63.

[20] Godwin, Political Justice, I, ix.

hastily intruded upon the reader. These things have been pruned with a liberal hand."[21]

Indeed, it would seem that Godwin had anticipated the criticisms of de Quincey, as the following statement may indicate:

> It will be perhaps asked by some persons in perusing the present edition how it has happened that the author has varied in so many points from the propositions advanced in the former? And this variation may be treated even as a topic of censure. To this he [Godwin] has only one answer . . . that it is reasoned in various particulars with more accuracy from the premises and fundamental positions than it was before. Secondly, he presumes to ascribe the variations to an industrious and consecutive endeavour to keep his mind awake to correction and improvement. He has in several instances detected error; and, so far is he from feeling mortified at the discovery, that he hopes yet, by such activity and impartiality as he shall be able to exert, to arrive at many truths, of which he has scarcely at present perhaps the slightest presentiment.[22]

Godwin's explanation, in spite of de Quincey's attack, seems reasonable and ingenuous. The modifications appear to be not the evidence of indecision and vacillation, as they seem to be the products of a growing mind and greater development of thought.[23] Now as far as the third edition (1798) is concerned, Godwin correctly observes that the

---

[21] Ibid., I, x.

[22] Ibid., II, xv.

[23] Ibid., II, ix.

changes in it are slight.[24] With characteristic candor, he remarks that the alterations were made in order to remove a few of the crude and ill-considered remarks. "The ideas of the author became more perspicuous and digested, as his enquiries advanced."[25]

A further instance may be furnished concerning this charge of inconsistency. Godwin in his Political Justice was opposed to family affections, as we have already noted.[26] Rather than violate his supreme principle of justice and his utilitarian theory of the greatest good for the greatest number, he would deem it no unpardonable offense if he allowed his own father to be burned to death in a flaming house if the situation were "necessary". "What magic is there in the pronoun 'my', that should justify us in overturning the decisions of impartial truth?"[27]

Several years later, in his preface to St. Leon (1799), Godwin acknowledged that he had changed his point

---

[24] Ibid., II, VIII.

[25] Note Hazlitt's comment about Godwin: "He is not one of those who do not grow wiser with opportunity and reflection: he changes his opinions, and changes them for the better." William Hazlitt, The Spirit of the Age, IV, 212.

[26] See Godwin, Political Justice, I, 128.

[27] Loc. cit.

of view concerning the family.[28] Note his forthright statement:

> Some readers of my graver productions will, perhaps, in perusing these little volumes, accuse me of inconsistency; the affections and characters of private life being everywhere in this publication a topic of warmest eulogium, while in Political Justice they seemed to be treated with no great degree of indulgence and favor. In answer to these objections all I think it necessary to say on the present occasion is that for more than four years I have been anxious for opportunity and leisure to modify some of the earlier chapters of that work in conformity to the sentiments inculcated in this. Not that I see cause to make any change respecting the principles of justice or anything else fundamental to the system there delivered; but that I apprehend domestic and private affections inseparable from the nature of man and from what may be styled the culture of the heart and am fully persuaded that they are not incompatible with a profound and active sense of justice in the mind of him that cherishes them. True wisdom will recommend us to individual attachments and it is better that a man should be a living being than a stock or a stone.[29]

Let one charge Godwin with inconsistency here if one must, but let one at least respect the intellectual - and likewise emotional - honesty of the man.

---

[28] Was it Mary Wollstonecraft who had convinced him of his error? No clear evidence is available to support this assumption, but it seems tenable. Surely, there was an ardent and reciprocal affection between them. (See above.)

[29] Godwin, St. Leon, preface, v.

D. UNREASONABLE FAITH IN REASON

A fourth criticism which may be raised against Godwin is the exaggerated confidence he placed in abstract reason. He made *a priori* generalizations which had no proof. In fact, his emphasis upon the power of reason[30] is an inconsistent element in his otherwise empiricistic leanings. He was an enthusiastic follower of English empiricism, especially of Locke; yet, in his exaltation of reason he seems to be more in harmony with French rationalism.

It is interesting to note that the rigorous use of reason which he advocated in his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* was softened in a later writing.[31] Affection, he later admitted, is inseparable from the nature of man.[32] Nevertheless, in spite of Godwin's comments in the preface to *St. Leon,* the total effect of his teaching was to make reason almost a tyrant over life.[33] Godwin failed to realize that to live rationally means to live not merely by reason alone.[34]

---

[30] See Chapter VII.

[31] Preface to *St. Leon*.

[32] See *Frazier's Magazine*, Vol. 10, 463.

[33] Fossey J. C. Hearnshaw, *Social and Political Ideas*, 144.

[34] See Driver in ibid., 178.

E. FAILURE TO ACCOUNT FOR ERROR

The fifth criticism against Godwin's social philosophy is a more subtle fallacy which the several investigators have apparently overlooked. It pertains to his implicit faith in reason, as indicated in the foregoing paragraph. He has implied that man is perfectible and that reason can usher in the millenium.[35] Man is, moreover, merely a passive receptacle for logic and reason.[36] Much in the same fashion that earlier Christian theology established a dualism between God and the devil, Godwin seems to have held that there is some monstrous incubus which prevents reason from reigning. But why is the perfectible being so far from being perfect? Why cannot the power of truth prevail? How can we account for the presence of error? Godwin makes no explanation at all concerning this serious flaw in his philosophy.

F. FAILURE TO CONSIDER IMPLEMENTATION

A sixth criticism raised against Godwin's social philosophy is its lack of clear implementation. It is a

---

[35] Godwin, Political Justice, I, 11.

[36] See Stephen, op. cit., II, 272.

set of principles without a program. He is vague as to how the transition from existing society to anarchism is to be made. He deplores violence; yet he provides no substitute for it, and apparently overlooks the implications of violence in the cataclysmic social change which would be involved in establishing anarchism. He assumes that reason suffices. He neglects the possibilities of revolution by violence, and envisions only an evolutionary change wrought solely by reason.

CHAPTER IX

COMPREHENSIVE DIGEST OF DISSERTATION

The purpose of this dissertation, as indicated in the introduction, has been to make a careful examination of the social philosophy of William Godwin. The emphasis has been upon the theological and ecclesiastical factors. Behind this explicit purpose has been the motive of considering philosophical anarchism, as represented by its acknowledged founder, in the light of a corrective and check against prevailing totalitarian philosophies of state.

In the introduction, attention was given to the broad base from which the present study has been derived. Depersonalization was stressed as being the chief problem facing human society. How both the physical and the social sciences are related to depersonalization was shown. The relation between individualism and anarchy was next considered. Anarchy was stated to be a check against totalitarian trends. William Godwin was selected as the most logical representative of philosophical anarchism.

Comparatively little has been written about Godwin as a social philosopher, and several of the few available accounts cannot be regarded as scholarly studies. Moreover, Godwin's own writings reveal contradictions which add to

the difficulty of any investigator. This present study has not attempted to offer a complete account of Godwin as a social philosopher, but rather has sought to give a thorough treatment of data most pertinent to the field as demarcated.

A brief review of the work done by other investigators in the field was next presented. The paucity of such contributions was pointed out. Apparently, no other investigator has concerned himself specifically with Godwin's social philosophy, especially in its relation to his theology. C. Kegan Paul's two-volume work was found to be at once the most complete and the most scholarly study of the life of Godwin. Other works investigated included those by Brown, Stephen, Gourg, Roussin, Allen, Driver, and Halévy.

Godwin's life offered significant clues to his social philosophy. The psychological conditionings of his youth and his social milieu were indicated. Much emphasis was placed on his religious experiences. Other influences observed were his introverted boyhood, his zealous father, his marital frustrations, and the contemporary socio-political scene.

Godwin's views of anarchy, society, and government were next analyzed. Confusion and contradictions were

found both in what writers said that Godwin believed and in what he himself wrote. At no time did he explicitly define what he meant by his anarchism. Stephen noted that Godwin admitted at one time that anarchy was an evil, but Stephen failed to note that Godwin viewed anarchy as an evil when it became what he called despotism. Indeed, while Godwin did not declare in so many words that he was a believer in anarchism, his whole philosophy - including his views concerning government, force, law, and property - was of the very essence of anarchism. Godwin favored a simple society but opposed government because it necessarily involved force. He borrowed Paine's distinction between society and government, but Godwin failed to explain clearly what his own views were. He rejected the contract theory and endorsed the rights of man point of view. Monarchy and aristocracy were severely attacked. Democracy, of all forms of government, was considered most desirable.

Godwin's ideas concerning force in its several relations were next considered. The confusion which existed in his use of the terms force, coercion, and violence made it difficult to know precisely his beliefs at certain points. It would seem that he used the term force to mean action less physical and more organized than violence. Coercion was more physical than force but less so than

violence. Coercion was not to be condoned except under extreme necessity. It was to be used to check violence. Again, however, Godwin opposed the use of coercion even as an expedient. Violence was not the result of man's nature but of his evil institutions. He argued that man possessed no free will; hence, man was not responsible for crime. Punishment was therefore an injustice. An inconsistency appeared in his argument when he stated that, while the community had no right to exercise coercion upon its members, coercion might be the duty of individuals within the community. Temporary restraint was stated to be the only proper motive in using such coercion. Revolutions were denounced as products of passion, not of reason. They were engendered by indignation against tyranny but were themselves pregnant with tyranny; moreover, they were considered as crude and premature in their effects. Monarchy and aristocracy were accused of being breeders of war. Godwin emphasized his hatred of war. Defense of one's own liberty and the liberty of others were held to be the only justifiable causes of war. Thus Godwin weakened his argument. He failed to make clear what he meant by a justifiable defensive war.

Godwin's views of property were essentially anarchistic. Property was denounced as an evil, except those personal belongings which were among the rights of man.

Property was condemned because it created a sense of dependence upon the rich, a craving for opulence, a system of crushing toil, a cause of crime and a continued state of under-population. Property was not in accord with utilitarian principles. Marriage for Godwin, as for Marx, was a form of property, though Godwin later modified his views here.

Social philosophy and religion were not two separate considerations for Godwin. He viewed them as of one piece. Variety characterized his religious experiences. He was born and reared a Calvinist. This influence colored his whole life. Owing to his father's nature, Godwin's earliest impressions of religion must have been of a stern, unlovely sort. He became interested successively in Sandemanianism, Socinianism, deism, materialism, and finally a near-theism. A trace of pantheism was also observed. He deplored the view of God as a tyrant, rejected belief in future punishment and man's humbleness, and made humanitarianism and man's perfectibility the foundations of his faith. He lacked a consistent theology and Christology.

Godwin was a wholehearted empiricist. He rejected the belief in innate principles and insisted that mind was everywhere a tabula rasa at birth. The influences of Locke, Hume, Condillac, Helvétius and d'Holbach were

indicated. The mind-body problem was considered. Stephen claimed that Godwin completely rejected mind as other than a seat of sensations, but Godwin himself assigned more place to the mind than Stephen indicated. Unlike Rousseau and Montesquieu, Godwin held that climate did not influence mind. Herein he agreed with Hume and Helvétius. Godwin was strictly a necessitarian; he attempted at great length to show that free will did not exist. Yet, he argued that necessity did not invalidate virtue. Utilitarianism was a fundamental working principle in his system. The greatest good for the greatest number was ever a consideration. He avoided, however, the selfish implications. Utilitarianism was shown to be a natural concomitant of associationism. Perfectibility was the next element to be dealt with. Like Priestley and Condorcet, Godwin believed man could attain inconceivable heights. Evil in government was the worst stumbling block to man's progress. Finally, Godwin's insistence on the primacy of reason was examined. He never made clear what he meant by reason, but he used it almost as a fetish. He ignored, until late in life, the realm of emotion and sentiment. Reason was the panacea for all evil in human society. Godwin made no clear connection between his exaltation of abstract reason and his thorough-going sensationalism.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. Godwin's life was conditioned in early days by a stern father, a marked degree of introversion, religious non-conformacy, and the socio-political unrest of his age.

2. Godwin advocated that society be reduced to its simplest form. He was never clear as to the precise nature of this form. He opposed government because it necessarily employs force. The contract theory was rejected, and the rights of man stressed.

3. Godwin opposed force, coercion, and violence; yet he failed to make clear distinctions between these terms. Coercion must be resorted to as a means of preventing violence, but force in any form should be used as little as possible. He rejected the Thrasymachian principle. Revolutions were denounced as products of passions.

4. Godwin abhorred war and stressed its destructiveness and cruelties. Yet he held that a defensive war to protect liberty was justified, and thereby made his position vulnerable.

5. Godwin believed that property is an evil, except in its

simplest form as representing the direct fruits of man's own labor. Marriage was denounced as a form of property. He later modified his views concerning marriage.

6. Godwin was successively a nonconformist, a Socinian, a Sandemanian, a deist, somewhat of a pantheist, an atheist, and finally a near-theist. Throughout his varied theological interests, Calvinistic influences remained.

7. Godwin wholly rejected the belief in innate principles. He was an avowed associationist. The mind everywhere was at birth a tabula rasa.

8. Godwin was thoroughly a necessitarian. He argued lengthily against free will, but insisted that necessity did not invalidate virtue.

9. Godwin was consistently utilitarian in his thought. The greatest good for the greatest number was a dominant principle in his social philosophy.

10. Godwin believed that life could be governed solely by the dictates of abstract reason. Life was no more than logic to him. In later years, however, he gave some place to sentiment and affection.

11. Godwin held that man was perfectible. Reason and justice would prevail. All evil would be abolished.

12. Godwin neglected to consider the power of public opinion. He ignored what are now regarded as elementary principles of social psychology.

13. Godwin has been criticized for his lack of the historical sense. The criticism is valid in part, and is probably due to the emphasis on the future which his associationism and belief in perfectibility gave to his thinking.

14. Godwin presented no systematic nor wholly consistent social philosophy. Inconsistencies and contradictions indicate both the incompleteness of his system and the developmental processes of his thought.

15. Godwin failed to implement his social philosophy. His principles lacked specific programs and procedures. He was especially vague as to how the transition from government to uncoerced society would be effected.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albee, Ernest, A History of English Utilitarianism. London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., Ltd., 1902.

Alger, John G., Englishmen in the French Revolution. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, Ltd., 1889.

Aristotle, Politics, New York: (Loeb Classical Library) G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1932.

Arnold, Matthew, Essays in Criticism. (second series). London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1930.

Baju, Anatole, L'Anarchie litteraire. Paris: Vanier, 1892.

Bakunin, Mikhail A., Dieu et l'État. Paris: Stock, 1895.

Beccaria, Cesare Bonesana, An Essay on Crimes and Punishments. Edinburgh: Alexander Donaldson, 1778.

Beer, Max, A History of British Socialism. London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1920.

Bentham, Jeremy, Works. London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1843.

Bérard, Alexandre, Les Hommes et les Théories de L'Anarchie. Paris: G. Masson, n.d.

Berkman, Alexander, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist. New York: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1912.

Birks, Thomas R., Modern Utilitarianism. London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1874.

Bogardus, Emory S., A History of Social Thought. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1922.

Brailsford, Henry N., Shelley, Godwin, and Their Circle. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913.

Brewster, Henry B., The Theories of Anarchy and of Law. London: Williams and Norgate, 1887.

Brightman, Edgar S., Introduction to Philosophy. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1925.

Brinton, Crane, English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century. London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1933.

Brodtmann, Catharina N., William Godwin, der theoretiker des individualistischen anarchisms. Kaldenkirchen: Meeuws, (Thesis: Koln), 1931.

Brown, Ford K., The Life of William Godwin. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1926.

Burke, Edmund, "Reflections on the Revolution", Works, I. London: F. and C. Rivington, 1801.

Carus, Paul, Nietzsche and Other Exponents of Individualism. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1914.

Chamberlin, William H., Collectivism: A False Utopia. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937.

Charlier, R. E., L'Anarchisme - Communisme; Sa lutte contre le marxisme et contre l'état et le droit. Rennes: H. Riou-Reuze, 1930.

Condillac, Étienne Bonnot de Traité des Sensations. Paris: Hachette, 1893.

Condorcet, Marie Jean A. N. C. (marquis de), Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain. Paris: Agasse, 1798.

Cory, Charles E., Three Philosophical Studies. St. Louis: Washington University (New Series), 1931.

Davidson, William L., Political Thought in England from Bentham to J. S. Mill. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1916.

Davis, Jerome, Contemporary Social Movements. New York: Century Company, 1930.

DeMoss, William F., The Relation between Godwin's Political Justice and His Novels. Chicago: University of Chicago Library, 1912.

DeQuincey, Thomas, Essays on the Poets (and Other English Writers). Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1853.

-------, Literary Reminiscences. Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1851. Vol. I

DeQuincey's Works (ed. by D. Masson). London: The Macmillan Company, 1881.

Dewey, John, Individualism Old and New. New York: Minton Balch and Company, 1930

d'Holbach, Baron, Système de la Nature. London: 1770, n.p.

Dickinson, Goldsworthy L., The International Anarchy 1904-1914. New York: Century Company, 1926.

Dictionary of National Biography, "William Godwin". London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1890.

Donisthorpe, Wordsworth, Law in a Free State. London: Macmillan and Company, 1895.

Doob, Leonard W., Propaganda. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935.

Dowden, Edward, The French Revolution and English Literature. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897.

Dubois, Felix, The Anarchist Peril. London: T. F. Unwin, 1894.

Ducasse, Curt J., Causation and the Types of Necesssity. Seattle: Washington University, 1924.

Ellwood, Charles A., The Process of Religion (Edited by Miles H. Krumbine). New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933.

Elsner, Paul, Percy Bysshe Shelleys Abhangigkeit von William Godwins Political Justice. Berlin: Mayer & Muller, 1906.

Eltzbacher, Paul, Anarchism. New York: B. R. Tucker, 1908.

Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, "William Godwin". New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931. Vol. 6.

Everett, A. H., New Ideas on Population: with Remarks on the Theories of Malthus and Godwin. London: J. Miller, 1823.

Fairchild, Hoxie Neale, The Romantic Quest, "Burke and Godwin". New York: Columbia University Press, 1931

Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary of the English Language, "Force". New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1937. Vol. I.

Ghio, Paul, L'Anarchisme aux États-Unis. Paris: A. Colin, 1903.

Gingerich, Solomon F., Essays in the Romantic Poets. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929.

Godwin, William, An account of the Seminary that will be opened on Monday the Fourth Day of August at Epsom in Surrey. London, 1783. (Pamphlet, anonymous.) British Museum.

-------, An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness. 2 Vols. London, 1793.
Second Edition. 2 vols. London, 1796.
Another Edition. 2 vols. Dublin, 1793.
First American Edition (from Second Edition). 2 vols. Philadelphia, 1796.
Third Edition. 2 vols. London, 1798.
Political Justice: a reprint of the essay on "Property," edited by H. S. Salt. London, 1890.

-------, A New Guide to the English Tongue. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. M. J. Godwin, for the Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1809. (With the School Dictionary of W. F. Mylius.)

-------, An Essay on Sepulchres. London, 1809.
First American Edition. New York, 1809.

-------, Antonio: A Tragedy in Five Acts. London, 1800.

-------, Cloudesley. 3 vols. London, 1830.

-------, Considerations on Lord Grenville's and Mr. Pitt's Bills. London, 1795. (Pamphlet, by "A Lover of Order".)

-------, Cursory Strictures on Lord Chief Justice Eyre's Charge to the Grand Jury. London, 1794.(pamphlet, anonymous.)

Godwin, William, Deloraine. 3 vols. London, 1833.

-------, Essays. London: Henry S. King and Company, 1873.

-------, Fables, Ancient and Modern. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. 2 vols. Hodgkins, London, 1805.

-------, Faulkener: a Tragedy. London, 1807.

-------, Fleetwood; or, The New Man of Feeling. 3 vols. London, 1805.
First American Edition. 2 vols. New York, 1805.
First French Edition. 3 vols. (Traduit par M. Villeterque.) Paris, 1805.
Another Edition. Bentley's Standard Novels, London, 1832.

-------, History of the Commonwealth of England, from its Commencement, to the Restoration of Charles the Second. 4 vols. London, 1824-1828.

-------, Letter of Advice to a Young American, on the Course of Studies most advantageous for him to pursue. M. J. Godwin, for the Juvenile Library, London, 1818.

-------, Mandeville: a Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England. 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1817.
Another Edition. 2 vols. New York, 1818.
Mandeville, histoire anglaise du Dix-septième Siècle. Traduite par J. Cohen. 4 vols. Paris, 1819.

-------, Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman. London, 1798.
Second Edition. London, 1798.
The Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (First American Edition). Philadelphia, 1799.

-------, Of Population: an Enquiry concerning the Power of Increase in the Numbers of Mankind; being an Answer to Mr. Malthus's Essay. London, 1820.
Recherches sur la population, et sur la faculté d'accroissement de l'espèce humaine, etc. Par William Godwin. Traduit de l'anglais par F. S. Constancio. 2 vols. Paris, 1821.

-------, Outlines of English Grammar; partly abridged from Mr. Hazlitt's New and Improved Grammar. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. The Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1810.

Godwin, William, Posthumous Works of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman. 4 vols. London, 1798. (Edited, anonymously, by William Godwin.)

-------, Sketches of History, in Six Sermons, London: T. Cadell, 1784.

-------, St. Leon: a Tale of the Sixteenth Century. 3 vols. London, 1799.
Second Edition. 4 vols. London, 1800.
Saint-Lèon, Nouvelle du Seizième Siècle. 4 vols. Paris, 1799.
First American Edition. 2 vols. Alexandria, 1801.
Another Edition. 2 vols. Dublin, 1800.
Another Edition. Bentley's Standard Novels, London, 1831.
Another Edition. The Novelist, Vol. II. London, 1840.

-------, The Enquirer: Reflections on Education, Manners and Literature. London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1797.
Another Edition. London, 1823.

-------, The Herald of Literature. London, 1784. (Pamphlet, anonymous.) British Museum.

-------, The History of England. By Edward Baldwin, Esq., Hodgkins, London, 1806.

-------, The History of Greece. By Edward Baldwin, Esq., The Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1811.

-------, The History of Rome. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. M. J. Godwin, for the Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1809.

-------, The Life of Chatham. London, 1783. (Anonymous.)

-------, The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer, the Early English Poet, etc. 2 vols. London, 1803.
Second Edition. 4 vols. London, 1804.

-------, The Life of Lady Jane Grey, and of Guildford Dudley, her Husband. By Theophilus Marcliffe, Esq. Hodgkins, London, 1806.

-------, The Lives of Edward and John Philips, Nephews and Pupils of Milton, etc. London, 1809.
Second Edition. London, 1815.

Godwin, William, The Lives of the Necromancers; or, An Account of the Most Eminent Persons in Successive Ages, who have claimed for themselves, or to whom has been imputed by others, the Exercise of Magical Power. London, 1834.
Another Edition. New York, 1835.
Another Edition. New York, 1847.
Another Edition. Chatto and Windus, London, 1876.

-------, The Looking Glass: a True History of the Early Years of an Artist. By Theophilus Marcliffe, Esq. Hodgkins, London, 1805.
Facsimile reprint. London, 1885.

-------, The Pantheon, or Ancient History of the Gods of Greece and Rome. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. Hodgkins, London, 1806.

-------, Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams. 3 vols. London, 1794.
Second Edition. 3 vols. London, 1796.
Les Choses comme elles sont, ou Adventures de Caleb Williams, par William Godwin.
Traduit de l'anglais par des gens de la campagne.
4 vols. Paris, 1797.
Les Aventures de Caleb Williams, par William Godwin.
Traduit de l'anglais par M. le comte Garnier, 3 vols. Paris.
Another Edition. Bentley's Standard Novels, London, 1831.
Another Edition. Routledge & Sons, London, 1903.
Another Edition. George Newnes Ltd., London, 1904.

-------, Thoughts Occasioned by the Perusal of Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon. London: Taylor and Wilks, 1801. (Pamphlet)

-------, Thoughts on Man, his Nature, Productions and Discoveries. London: Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange, 1831.

Gourg, Raymond, William Godwin. Paris: Alcan, 1908.

Grabo, Carl, The Magic Plant: The Growth of Shelley's Thought. North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1936.

Graham, William, English Political Philosophy from Hobbes to Maine. London: 1899.

Green, John R., A Short History of the English People. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1879.

Gregg, Richard B., The Power of Non-Violence. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1934.

Grierson, Herbert J. C., The Cambridge History of English Literature. Cambridge: University Press, 1914.

Grossman, Mordecai, The Philosophy of Helvétius. New York: Columbia University, 1926.

Halévy, Elie, The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism (English tr. by Mary Morris). New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928.

Hall, Samuel C., A Book of Memories of Great Men and Women of the Age, from Personal Acquaintance. London: Virtue and Company, 1871.

Halstead, Murat, Anarchy, its History, Influences and Dangers. New York: 1901, n.p.

Harkness, Georgia E., The Resources of Religion. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936.

Hastings, James, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, "Socinianism". New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908. Vol. XI.

Hazlitt's Works (Edited by Waller and Glover). London: Dent and Company, 1902-1904. Vol. IV.

Hearnshaw, Fossey J. C. (Editor), The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era. London: George G. Harrap and Company, Ltd., 1931.

Helvétius, Claude Arien, Ouvres complettes. Paris: Servière, 1795.

Hocking, William E., The Lasting Elements of Individualism. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937.

Hoover, Herbert, The Challenge to Liberty. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934.

Hume, David, A Treatise of Human Nature. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1923. 2 vols.

Hume, David, Philosophical Works. Edinburgh: Black and Tait, 1826

Hunter, Robert Wiles, Violence and the Labor Movement. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1914.

Jászi, Oscar, "Anarchism", Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, II. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926.

Joyce, G. C., "Deism", Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.

Knowles, Lilian Charlotte Anne, The Industrial and Commercial Revolutions in Great Britain during the Nineteenth Century. London: G. Routledge and Sons, 1921.

Kallen, Horace M., Individualism; An American Way of Life. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1933.

Kohn, Hans, Force or Reason. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1937.

Kropotkin, Petr A., Anarchist Morality. London: Wilson, 1895.

-------, Esprit de Revolte. Paris: Stock, 1892.

-------, Ethics (tr. Friedland and Piroshnikoff). New York: The Dial Press, 1924.

-------, Expropriation. Freedom Pamphlets, No. 7.

-------, L'anarchie - Sa philosophie - Son ideal. Paris: Stock, 1896.

-------, Law and Authority. London: International Publishing Company, 1886.

-------, Modern Science and Anarchism. Boston: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1908.

-------, War. London: Reeves, 1894.

Krouse, H., The Anarchist Constitution. San Francisco: Radical Publishing Company, 1903.

Krutch, Joseph W., The Modern Temper. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929.

Laidler, Harry W., A History of Socialist Thought. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1927.

Laski, Harold J., Authority in the Modern State. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1919.

-------, Dangers of Obedience, and Other Essays. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1930.

-------, Democracy in Crisis. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1933.

-------, Foundations of Sovereignty, and Other Essays. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931.

-------, Liberty in the Modern State. London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1930.

-------, Nationalism and the Future of Civilization. London: Watts and Company, 1932.

-------, Political Thought in England from Locke to Bentham. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1920.

-------, Rise of European Liberalism; An Essay in Interpretation. London: Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1936.

-------, Rise of Liberalism; the Philosophy of a Business Civilization. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936.

-------, Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917.

Lecky, William and Edward Hartpole, A History of England in the 18th Century. New York: Appleton, 1878-90. 8 vols.

Leighton, Joseph A., Social Philosophies in Conflict. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1937.

Lippman, Walter, Public Opinion. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1922.

Locke, John, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Edinburgh: Mundell and Son, 1798.

-------, Treatise of Civil Government. London: G. Routledge and Sons, 1884.

Lortie, S. A., Abbé, L'âme anarchiste. Quebec Université, 1902.

Lumley, Frederick E., Means of Social Control. New York and London: The Century Company, 1925.

MacCunn, John, Six Radical Thinkers. London: Arnold, 1907.

Mackay, John H., Die Anarchisten. Berlin: Harmsch & Company, 1893.

Malato, Charles, Philosophie de l'Anarchie. Paris: Stock, 1897.

Malthus, Thomas Robert, An Essay on the Principle of Population. London: J. Johnson, 1798.

Maurois, André, Ariel. (tr. Ella D'Arcy). New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1926.

Meyer, Johannes, William Godwins Romane. Leipzig: Thomas und Hubert, 1906.

Mill, John Stuart, Utilitarianism. London: Parker, Son, and Bourn, 1863.

Montesquieu, Baron de la Brède et de (Charles Louis de Secondat), De l'ésprit des loix. Geneve: Barillot, 1753.

Morgan, B. S., Individuality in a Collective World. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1935.

Morris, Albert, Criminology. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1934.

New English Dictionary (so-called Oxford Dictionary), Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901. Vol. 4.

Ortega y Gasset, José, Revolt of the Masses. New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1932.

Osgood, Herbert L., Socialism and Anarchism. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1889.

Page, Kirby, Individualism and Socialism. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc.

Paine, Thomas, Common Sense; Addressed to the Inhabitants of America. Philadelphia: Bradford, 1776.

Paine, Thomas, Rights of Man. New York: Putnam, 1895.

Parsons, Albert R., Anarchism. Chicago: Mrs. A. R. Parsons, publisher, 1887.

Parsons, Talcott, The Structure of Social Action. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1937.

Paul, C. Kegan, William Godwin, his Friends and Contemporaries. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1876. 2 vols.

Pike, Samuel, A Plain and Full Account of the Christian Practices Observed by the Church. Boston: Z. Fowle, 1766.

Place, Francis, Remarks on Mr. Godwin's Enquiry Concerning Population. London: G. Wilson, 1821.

Plato, The Republic, trans. by John Llewelyn Davies and David James Vaughan. London: Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1929.

Plechanoff, George, Anarchism and Socialism. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1908.

Plekhanov, Georgii V., Essays in the History of Materialism. (Ralph Fox, Trans.). London: The Bodley Head, Ltd., 1934.

Pollock, The History of the Science of Politics. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920.

Previté-Orton, C. W., The Cambridge History of English Literature. Cambridge: University Press, 1907-1927. Vol. XI.

Priestley, Joseph, An Essay on the First Principles of Government and on the Nature of Political, Civil and Religious Liberty. London: J. Johnson, 1771.

-------, The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. Birmingham: Pearson and Rollason, 1782.

Proby, W. C., Modern Philosophy and Barbarism or a Comparison between the Theory of Godwin and the Practice of Lycurgus. London: R. H. Westley, 1798.

Proudhon, Pierre J., Solution of the Social Problem. New York: Vanguard Press, 1927.

Ramus, Pierre, William Godwin, der theoretiker des kommunistischen anarchismus. Leipzig: Dietrich, 1907.

Reclus, J. E., L'Anarchie. Paris: 1896.

-------, Evolution & Revolution. London: Reeves, 1898.

-------, L'évolution, la révolution et l'ideal anarchique. Paris: Stock, 1898.

Recolin, Charles, Anarchisation of Egypt. London: Ranken & Company, 1882.

-------, L'anarchie litteraire. Paris: Perrin & Cie, 1889. Vol. XV.

Ricardo, David, Principles of Political Economy and Taxation. London: G. Bell and Sons, 1891.

Riding, L., Anarchism is Not Enough. Garden City: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1928.

Roberts, Charles W., The Influence of Godwin on Wordsworth's Letter to the Bishop of Llandoff. North Carolina: University Press, 1932. Vol. 29.

Robinson, Henry C., Works. London: Macmillan & Company, 1869. Vol. I.

Rogers, Lindsay, Crisis Government. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1934.

Ross, Edward A., Social Control. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922.

Rousseau, Jean Jacques, Du contrat social; ou principes du droit politique. Amsterdam: Chez Marc-Michel Rey, 1742.

-------, Oeuvres, avec des notes historiques. (par L. G. Petitain). Paris: Crapedet, 1819,20. 22 vols.

Roussin, Henri, William Godwin. Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie., 1913.

Russell, Bertrand, Proposed Roads to Freedom. New York: Cornwall Press, 1919.

Sabine, George H., A History of Political Theory. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937.

Saintsbury, George, The Collected Essays and Papers. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1923.

Saitzeff, Helene, William Godwin und die aufänge des anarchismus in XVIII Jahrhundert. Ein beitrag zur geschichte des politischeu individualismus. Altenburg: Stephan Geibel and Company, 1907.

Salter, William M., Anarchy or Government? An Inquiry in Fundamental Politics. New York: Crowell & Company, 1895.

Schaak, Michael J., Anarchy and Anarchists. Chicago: F. J. Schulte and Company, 1889.

Schuster, Eunice M., Native American Anarchism. Northampton: (Department of History) Smith College, 1932.

Shaw, George B., Anarchism versus State Socialism. London: Seymour, 1889.

--------, The Impossibilities of Anarchism. London: Fabian Tracts, No. 45, 1895.

Simon, Helene, William Godwin und Mary Wollstonecraft. Munich: Oscar Beck, 1909.

Skeat, Walter W., Etymological Dictionary. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910.

Smith, Adam (1723-1790), An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of Wealth of Nations (First Edition). London: W. Strahan & T. Cadell, 1776.

Smith, Arthur L., "English Political Philosophy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", Cambridge Modern History. Cambridge: University Press, 1909. Vol. VI.

Smith, Edward, The Story of the English Jacobins. London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin and Company, 1881.

Sorel, Albert, L'Europe et la révolution Francaise. Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie., 1885-1904. 8 vols.

Stanton, Henry B., Sketches of Reforms and Reformers of Great Britain and Ireland. New York: Baker and Scribner, 1850.

Stephen, Leslie, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century. London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1876. (Third Edition) Vol. II.

-------, Hours in a Library. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904. Vol. III.

-------, The English Utilitarians. London: Duckworth and Company, 1900.

Tallack, W., Anarchist Movement in Both Hemispheres. London: Wertheimer, Lea & Company, 1901.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, "Sandemanianism". New York: The Universal Knowledge Foundation, Inc., 1912. Vol. XIII.

The Encyclopedia Britannica, "William Godwin". New York: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1926. (Thirteenth Edition) Vol. 12.

Thoreau, Henry David, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience", Miscellanies. (New Riverside Edition). Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1926.

Tolstoi, Leo N., The Slavery of Our Times. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1900.

Tucker, Benjamin R., Anarchism or Anarchy. Boston: Tucker, 1881.

-------, Philosophical Anarchism. New York: Tucker, 1893.

Vaughan, C. E., Studies in the History of Political Philosophy. Manchester: The University Press, 1925. 2 vols.

Vizettelly, Ernest A., The Anarchists. New York: John Lane Company, 1911.

Wagner, Donald O., Social Reformers. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934.

Wallas, Graham, Life of Francis Place. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1898.

Weber, Max, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. (Trans. by Talcott Parsons). London: 1930.

Webster's New International Dictionary, "Force". Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1934 (Second Edition).

Weisbord, Albert, The Conquest of Power. New York: Covici-Friede Company, 1937. 2 vols.

Wheelwright, Philip, A Critical Introduction to Ethics. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1935.

Whitehead, Alfred N., Adventures of Ideas. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933.

Williams, Reginald H., Socialism and Anarchism. New York: Albert A. Ochs, 1901.

Wollstonecraft, Mary, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. London: (Printed for J. Johnson), 1790.

Zenker, Ernst V., Anarchism (tr. from the German). London: Methuen and Company, 1898.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

Abbot, Lyman, "Cause and Cure." Outlook, 69 (October 5, 1901), 253-255.

Allen, Beverly Sprague, "Minor Disciples of Radicalism in the Revolutionary Era." Modern Philology, Vol. XXI, No. 3 (February, 1923), 277-301.

-------, "The Reaction Against William Godwin." Modern Philology, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September, 1918), 225-243.

-------, "William Godwin's Influence upon John Thelwall." Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, Vol. XXXVII, No. 4 (1922).

Beach, S. C., "Story of the Socinians." Unitarian Review, 31 (March, 1889), 224-233.

Bennet, John W., "Common Ground for Socialist and Individualist." Arena, 36 (August, 1906), 157-162.

Brinsmade, Herman H., "Four Dollars a Day and Utopia." Illustrated World, 24 (December, 1915), 523-524.

Brown, J., "Message of Anarchy." Hibbert Journal, 8 (July, 1910), 760-779.

Bruno, Guido, "Anarchists at Close Range." Current Opinion, 61 (September, 1916), 212.

Bryan, William J., "Socialism vs. Individualism." Century, 71 (April, 1906), 856-859.

Cadoux, Cecil J., "Ethics of Coercion." Contemporary Review, 145 (June, 1934), 688-697.

Capek, Karel, "Why I Am Not a Communist." Fortnightly Review, 127 (March, 1927), 390-399.

Chafee, Zechariah, "Legislation against Anarchy." New Republic, 19 (July 23, 1919), 379-385.

Chase, Stuart, "Collective Industry in Russia." Asia, 28 (May, 1928), 368-373.

Chenevix, Henry, "Consequences of Individualism." Westminster Review, 172 (July, 1909), 74-82.

Clark, John M., "Basis of War-Time." American Economic Review, 7 (December, 1917), 772-790.

Coe, George A., "Two Kinds of Coercion." World Tomorrow, 16 (February 22, 1933), 177-179.

-------, "What is Violence?" World Tomorrow, 15 (October 19, 1932), 378-380.

Conant, R. Warren, "Anarchism at Close Quarters." Arena, 28 (October, 1902), 237-245.

Cortesi, Salvatore, "Anarchy in its Birthplace." Independent 53 (October 3, 1901), 2346-2348.

Davis, Jerome, "Challenge of Dictatorship, Red or Black." Century, 120 (April, 1930), 170-179.

Davis, Robert G., "Individualism and Socialism, and Liberty." Westminster Review, 178 (August, 1912), 144-151.

deBosdari, Cosmo, "Error of Fascism." Forum, 74 (December, 1925), 912-914.

deCleyre, Voltarine, "Making of an Anarchist." Independent, 55 (September 24, 1903), 2276-2280.

deUnamuno, Miguel, "Anarchy in Spain." Living Age, 346 (March, 1934), 22-24.

Devine, Edward T., "Anarchy: From Below and From Above." Survey, 28 (June 1, 1912), 351-352.

Dewey, John, "Force and Coercion." International Journal of Ethics, XXVI (1916), 359-365.

-------, "Force, Violence and Law." New Republic, 5 (January 22, 1916), 295-297.

Doane, William C., "Anarchism and Atheism." Outlook, 69 (September 28, 1901), 218-221.

Duncan, Lewis J., "Modern Individualism." Arena, 40 (September, 1908), 209-216.

Ellis, Henry H., "Individualism and Socialism." Contemporary Review, 101 (April, 1912), 519-528.

Elliot, William Y., "Perils of Fascism." World Tomorrow, 12 (November, 1929), 452-455.

Garnett, R., "Letters from Coleridge to William Godwin." Macmillan's Magazine, IX (April, 1864), 524-536.

Gaskine, J. W., "Anarchists at Home, Washington." Independent, 68 (April 28, 1910), 914-922.

Gentile, Giovanni, "Philosophic Basis of Fascism." Foreign Affairs, 6 (January, 1928), 290-304.

Giddings, Franklin H., "Absolutist Communism." Independent, 103 (July 3, 1920), 13-15.

Giglio, Giovanni, "Situation in Italy." Nation, 113 (August 10, 1921), 148-149.

Gladden, Washington, "Philosophy of Anarchy." Outlook, 69 (October 19, 1901), 449-454.

Goldman, Emma, "Was My Life Worth Living?" Harper, 170 (December, 1934), 52-58.

-------, "Johann Most." The American Mercury, VIII (1926), 158-166.

Goodwin, George S., "What Anarchy Is." Era, (December, 1902), 599-607.

Haller, William, "'Political Justice', 1793 and 1919." The Review, October 25, 1919.

Hard, William, "Hoover as Individualist." The Nation, 133 (August 26, 1931), 301-303.

Harper, George M., "Rousseau, Godwin, and Wordsworth." Atlantic Monthly, 109 (May, 1912), 639-650.

Havice, Charles W., "Is Society Being Depersonalized?" Zion's Herald, October 21, 1936, 1028-1029.

-------,"Anarchism." Northeastern News, June 7, 1935.

Havice, Charles W., "Three of the Answers." Brockton Enterprise, Brockton, Massachusetts, June 15, 1937.

Holt, Henry, "Treatment of Anarchism." Review of Reviews, 25 (February, 1902), 192-200.

Holyoake, George J., "Causes of Anarchy." Nineteenth Century, 50 (October, 1900), 683-686.

Hoover, Herbert C., "American Individualism." World's Work, 43 (April, 1922), 584-588.

Johnson, F. Ernest, "The Unwarranted Exercise of Authority." Religious Education, Vol. XXXII, No. 3 (July, 1937), 207-210.

Johnston, Charles, "Nihilism and Anarchy." American Review, 171 (September, 1900), 302-313.

Kidder, M. Grier, "Anarchy." Overland, 52 n.s. (August, 1908), 129-133.

Langtoft, Geoffry, "Socialism and Anarchism." Fortnightly Review, 74 (October, 1900), 544-548.

Lewis, Edwin H., "Definitions of Individualism." American Journal of Sociology, 17 (September, 1911), 223-253.

Lewis, John D., "The Individual and the Group in Marxist Theory." The International Journal of Ethics, Vol. XLVII, No. 1 (1936), 45-57.

Livingston, Robert, "Communism." New Republic, 19 (July 16, 1919), 359.

Marriott, John A. R., "Economics of Communism; Theory and Practice." Fortnightly Review, 116 (September, 1921), 405-416.

Mason, Edward S., "Fourier and Anarchism." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 42 (February, 1928), 228-262.

McConnell, S. P., "Chicago Bomb Case." Harper, May, 1934, 730.

Morley, John, "On William Godwin." The Fortnightly Review, XX n.s. (1876), 452-453.

Murry, John M., "Necessity of Communism." Living Age, 342 (April, 1932), 147-152.

Mussolini, Benito Andrea Amilcare, "Editorial." Popolo d'Italia, April 6, 1920.

Nairn, John A., "Marx or Christ." Nineteenth Century, 97 (July, 1925), 686-696.

Neill, C. P., "Anarchism." American Catholic Quarterly, 27 (January, 1902), 160-179.

Newton, Richard H., "Philosophic and Revolutionary Anarchism." Arena, 27 (January, 1902), 1-12.

Nichols, Francis H., "Anarchists in America." Outlook, 68 (August 10, 1901), 859-863.

Otto, Max C., "Morality as Coercion or Persuasion." The International Journal of Ethics, 31 (October, 1920), 1-25.

Page, Kirby, "Is Coercion Compatible with Religion?" World Tomorrow, 16 (March 1, 1933), 210-212.

Page, Kirby, "Is Coercion Ever Justifiable." World Tomorrow, 15 (June, 1932), 173-175.

Pepper, George W., "What Is an Anarchist?" North American Review, 210 (October, 1919), 470-474.

Radek, Karl, "Communist-Fascist Rapprochement." Living Age, 318 (September 29, 1923), 585-590.

Richards, Phillip S., "Rise and Fall of Individualism." Nineteenth Century, 103 (January, 1928), 63-75.

Roberts, Evelyn H., "Cure for Anarchy." Arena, 26 (November, 1901), 453-458.

Rogers, Arthur K., "Godwin and Political Justice." International Journal of Ethics, 22 (October, 1911), 50-68.

Russell, Bertrand, "Non-resistance." The International Journal of Ethics, 26 (October, 1915), 23-30.

Salt, H. S., "Godwin's 'Political Justice.'" Time, I n.s. (May, 1890), 507-519.

Salter, William M., "Does Political Compulsion Need to Be Justified?" The International Journal of Ethics, 10 (October, 1899), 97-98.

Silver, Abba H., "The Decline of the Individual." Religious, Education, XXXII, No. 3 (July, 1937), 211-216.

Slosson, Preston W., "If We Had Anarchy Tomorrow." Independent, 103 (August 14, 1920), 169.

Stack, R. E. Hilliard, "Some Aspects of Fascism." Catholic World, 128 (January, 1929), 482-484.

Stalin, Iosif, "Socialism or Capitalism." Living Age, 339 (October, 1930), 120-123.

Stoddard, Theodore L., "Realism, the True Challenge of Fascism." Harper, 155 (October, 1927), 578-583.

Stone, Melville E., "Chicago Anarchists." Collier's, 67 (February 5, 1921), 16-17.

Talbert, Ernest L., "Two Modern Social Philosophies." The International Journal of Ethics, 21 (October, 1910), 68-82.

Taylor, I. A., "An Eighteenth-Century Friendship." Living Age, 193 (April, 1892), 33-40.

Tobenkin, Elias, "Anarchists and Immigrants in America." World Today, 14 (May, 1908), 482-485.

Townshend-Mayer, S. R.,"William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft." St. James's Magazine and United Empire Review, III (1876), 79-92.

Turner, John, "Protest of an Anarchist." Independent, 55 (December 24, 1903), 3052-3054.

Wallace, W. B., "St. Leon, A Forgotten Novel." The Westminster Review, CLVII (June, 1902), 687-691.

Walsh, Edmund A., "Basic Doctrine of Communism." Catholic World, 127 (September, 1928) 727-733.

Will, Thomas E., "Individualism Through Socialism." Arena, 36 (October, 1906), 359-363.

Winslow, Erving, "Coddling Anarchy." North American Review, 209 (February, 1919), 234-236.

Wood, George H., "Anarchistic Communism." Westminster Review, 157 (February, 1902), 181-186.

Yarros, Victor S., "Philosophical Anarchism: Its Rise, Decline, and Eclipse." University of Chicago Press: American Journal of Sociology, 41 (January, 1936), 470-483.

UNSIGNED ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

"Advocacy of Force and Violence." New Republic, 21 (January 28, 1920), 253-254.

"Amiable Anarchists." Current Literature, (July, 1900).

"Anarchism versus Anarchists." Independent, 99(August 2, 1919), 145.

"Anarchists." Independent, 64(March 5, 1908), 538. 64 (April 2, 1908), 760-761.

"Anarchy and Dynamite." Outlook, 107(July 18, 1914), 629.

"Anarchy: From Below and From Above." Survey, (June 1, 1912).

"Control of Anarchists." Nation, 82(June 7, 1906), 463-464.

"De la littérature Française pendant le 18 me siècle." The Quarterly Review, No. XVI 8(December, 1812), 287-301. Art. II.

"Emma Goldman's Faith." Current Literature, 50(February, 1911), 176-178.

"Ethics of Violence." Living Age, 256(March 28, 1908), 820-822.

"Everett's New Ideas on Population." The North American Review, 17(October, 1823), 288-310. (n.s. Vol. 7, No. 4) Art. 14.

"Fascisti in the United States." Nation, 116(April 25, 1923), 502-503.

"Fascisti vs. Bolsheviks in Italy." Literary Digest, 113 (June 11, 1921), 148-149.

"Gallery of Literary Characters." Frasier's Magazine, No. LVIII, X(October, 1834), 463.

"History of Socinianism." North British Review, 30, 467-491.

"Hours in a Library" (review). The Cornhill Magazine, No. 231, 39(March, 1879), 281-302.

"Immigration and Anarchism." Independent, 64(March 12, 1908), 554-555.

"Living Authors, No. III. Godwin." The London Magazine, No. VIII, II(August, 1820), 163-169.

"Man, a Journal of the Anarchist Ideal and Movement." No. I, I(January, 1933), and later numbers.

"Mandeville. By Godwin." The North American Review, No.XIX, 7(May, 1818), 92-105. Art. VI.

"Mr. Godwin's Novels." Frazier's Magazine, No. X, II November, 1830), 381-396.

"Our Black Shirts and the Reds." Literary Digest, 77(April 7, 1923), 16-18.

"Paul's William Godwin." North American Review, No. CCLII, 123(July, 1876), 221-233.

"Qualities of the Anarchist." Blackwell, (July, 1906).

"Socialist-Fascisti Truce in Italy." Nation, 113(November 2, 1921), 514-516.

"Thoughts on Man" (review). Christian Examiner, (n.s.) 6(November, 1831), Art. IX.

"William Godwin's Thoughts on Man" (review). Frasier's Magazine, No. XVII, III(June, 1831), 569-586.

"William Godwin: Obituary." Gentleman's Magazine, (June, 1836).

"William Godwin." Temple Bar, No. CLXXXII, 46(March, 1876), 325-335.

"William Godwin." The Westminster Review, I(July and October, 1876) n.s., 365-389.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM GODWIN

IN THEIR CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

The Life of Chatham. London, 1783. (Anonymous.)
An account of the Seminary that will be opened on Monday the Fourth Day of August at Epsom in Surrey. London, 1783. (Pamphlet, anonymous.) British Museum.
The Herald of Literature. London, 1784. (Pamphlet, anonymous.) British Museum.
Sketches of History, in Six Sermons, London: T. Cadell, 1784.
An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness. 2 vols. London, 1793.
Second Edition. 2 vols. London, 1796.
Another Edition. 2 vols. Dublin, 1793.
First American Edition (from Second Edition). 2 vols. Philadelphia, 1796.
Third Edition. 2 vols. London, 1798.
Political Justice: a reprint of the essay on "Property," edited by H. S. Salt. London, 1890.
Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams. 3 vols. London, 1794.
Second Edition. 3 vols. London, 1796.
Les Choses comme elles sont, ou Adventures de Caleb Williams, par William Godwin. Traduit de l'anglais par des gens de la campagne. 4 vols. Paris, 1797.
Les Aventures de Caleb Williams, par William Godwin. Traduit de l'anglais par M. le comte Garnier, 3 vols. Paris.
Another Edition. Bentley's Standard Novels, London, 1831.
Another Edition. Routledge & Sons, London, 1903.
Another Edition. George Newnes Ltd., London, 1904.
Cursory Strictures on Lord Chief Justice Eyre's Charge to the Grand Jury. London, 1794. (pamphlet, anonymous.)
Considerations on Lord Grenville's and Mr. Pitt's Bills. London, 1795. (Pamphlet, by "A Lover of Order.")
The Inquirer: Reflections on Education, Manners and Literature. London, 1797.
Another Edition. London, 1823.
Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman. London, 1798.
Second Edition. London, 1798.
The Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (First American Edition). Philadelphia, 1799.
Posthumous Works of the Author of a Vindication of the

Rights of Woman. 4 vols. London, 1798. (Edited, anonymously, by William Godwin.)

St. Leon: a Tale of the Sixteenth Century. 3 vols. London, 1799.

Second Edition. 4 vols. London, 1800.

Saint-Lèon, Nouvelle du Seizième Siècle. 4 vols. Paris, 1799.

First American Edition. 2 vols. Alexandria, 1801.

Another Edition. 2 vols. Dublin, 1800.

Another Edition. Bentley's Standard Novels, London, 1831.

Another Edition. The Novelist, Vol. II. London, 1840.

Antonio: a Tragedy in Five Acts. London, 1800.

Thoughts Occasioned by Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon, etc. London 1801. (Pamphlet.)

The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer, the Early English Poet, etc. 2 vols. London, 1803.

Second Edition. 4 vols. London, 1804.

Fleetwood; or, The New Man of Feeling. 3 vols. London, 1805.

First American Edition. 2 vols. New York, 1805.

First French Edition. 3 vols. (Traduit par M. Villeterque.) Paris, 1805.

Another Edition. Bentley's Standard Novels, London, 1832.

Fables, Ancient and Modern. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. 2 vols. Hodgkins, London, 1805.

The Looking Glass: a True History of the Early Years of an Artist. By Theophilus Marcliffe, Esq. Hodgkins, London, 1805.

Facsimile reprint. London, 1885.

The Pantheon, or Ancient History of the Gods of Greece and Rome. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. Hodgkins, London, 1806.

The History of England. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. Hodgkins, London, 1806.

The Life of Lady Jane Grey, and of Guildford Dudley, her Husband. By Theophilus Marcliffe, Esq. Hodgkins, London, 1806.

Faulkener: a Tragedy. London, 1807.

The History of Rome. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. M. J. Godwin, for the Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1809.

A New Guide to the English Tongue. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. M. J. Godwin, for the Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1809. (With the School Dictionary of W.F. Mylius.)

An Essay on Sepulchres. London, 1809.

First American Edition. New York, 1809.

The Lives of Edward and John Philips, Nephews and Pupils of Milton, etc. London, 1809.

Second Edition. London, 1815.

Outlines of English Grammar; partly abridged from Mr. Hazlitt's New and Improved Grammar. By Edward Baldwin,

Esq. The Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1810.
The History of Greece. By Edward Baldwin, Esq. The Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London, 1811.
Mandeville: a Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England. 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1817.
Another Edition. 2 vols. New York, 1818.
Mandeville, histoire anglaise du Dix-septième Siècle. Traduite par J. Cohen. 4 vols. Paris, 1819.
Letter of Advice to a Young American, on the Course of Studies most advantageous for him to pursue. M. J. Godwin, for the Juvenile Library, London, 1818.
Of Population: an Enquiry concerning the Power of Increase in the Numbers of Mankind; being an Answer to Mr. Malthus's Essay. London, 1820.
Recherches sur la population, et sur la faculte d'accroissement de l'espèce humaine, etc. Par William Godwin. Traduit de l'anglais par F. S. Constancio. 2 vols. Paris, 1821.
History of the Commonwealth of England, from its Commencement, to the Restoration of Charles the Second. 4 vols. London, 1824-1828.
Cloudesley. 3 vols. London, 1830.
Thoughts on Man, his Nature, Productions and Discoveries. London, 1831.
Deloraine. 3 vols. London, 1833.
The Lives of the Necromancers; or, An Account of the Most Most Eminent Persons in Successive Ages, who have claimed for themselves, or to whom has been imputed by others, the Exercise of Magical Power. London, 1834.
Another Edition. New York, 1835.
Another Edition. New York, 1847.
Another Edition. Chatto and Windus, London, 1876.
Essays. London, 1873.

Charles William Havice

Born on December 24, 1901 as the second son of Frank Davis and Edna May Havice, I was reared in Oil City, Pennsylvania, where I lived until reaching college age.

My early education was received in the grammar and high schools of Oil City. In the fall of 1920, I entered Allegheny College and was graduated in 1924 with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. In 1926, I received the degree of

Master of Arts from Boston University. The major field was social ethics. In 1927, I obtained the degree of Bachelor of Sacred Theology, also from Boston University. In 1930, I registered for several courses at the University of London summer session. In 1933, I began the course of study preparatory to candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The requirements pertaining to courses were completed in June, 1937, at which time progress on the dissertation was also reported.

While a student at the Boston University School of Theology, I was given opportunity to begin professional activities by being appointed pastor of the West Abington Methodist Episcopal Church in West Abington, Massachusetts. In due course of time I received full ordination and membership in the New England Southern Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

My teaching experience began in a limited manner at Allegheny College in my senior year. In the fall of 1927 I was appointed instructor of social science at Northeastern University. Two years later the appointment as assistant professor was made, and in 1932 the rank was changed to associate professor. In 1936 the appointment as professor of sociology and head of the department was received, with the provision that a portion of the time could continue to be devoted to certain executive duties. Since 1927,

therefore, I have had the opportunity of teaching courses in sociology, social ethics, and social philosophy.

Affiliations with the several professional and social groups include the following: American Sociological Society, British Institute of Philosophy, American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division), Philosophical Club of Boston University, American Association for Economic Freedom, Boston Student Work Council, Manse Dwellers, Methodist Federation for Social Service, New England Southern Conference Social Service Committee (chairman), fraternities of AXP, KΦK,ΠΔE, Twentieth Century Club, Sigma Society (Honorary member), Chaplain St. John's Lodge A.F. of A.M., Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education (Social Science group).

Except for some six articles on sociological and religious subjects published in several journals, I can report no literary contributions.