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A PROPOSAL  
FOR THE CONSIDERATION  
OF THE  
FRIENDS OF PROGRESS.

BY WM. LOVETT.



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## A PROPOSAL, &c.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,

MILLIONS of our brethren, from their ardent desire to promote such changes, social, political, moral and religious, as they conscientiously believe will remove, or greatly abridge, the present lamentable amount of poverty, misery, vice and crime, may justly be considered *friends of progress*.

Knowing that vast numbers of those friends are actively engaged in their respective societies, as well as individually, in forwarding each their peculiar views, too often midst difficulties and discouragements ending in disappointment, destructive of future efforts, I have long been desirous of seeing some combined effort made by which, as I conceive, all the various objects of reform they are separately in pursuit of may sooner be realised than can possibly be effected by individual or isolated effort; while at the same time they are cultivating principles of peace, union and brotherhood, which doubtlessly form the best foundation for social happiness and national advancement.

To effect any great improvement in this country, politically or socially, we have learnt from experience the great effort that is needed, as well as the amount of money that must be spent before public opinion can be formed and concentrated so as to influence our legislature in favour of even *one* measure of reform, and yet very *many* are needed to effect our social and political salvation.

Owing to this slow and tardy process of reform, misery, vice and crime are perpetuated; thousands are born and die in ignorance and vice; and thousands too often lose health and hope in the continuous and protracted struggle to make men wiser, better and happier than they found them.

This slow progress for good is evidently to be attributed to the great variety of measures advocated by different bodies of reformers; to the contentious feelings too often engendered in their onward progress, and the consequent difficulty of uniting our brethren in favour of any *one* object; and, above all, in the great difficulty of *abrogating old laws, or instituting new ones* necessary to effect or facilitate the reform desired by any particular body of reformers, or portion of the people.

But as all those various classes of reformers are *equally the friends of progress*, all zealous and desirous of benefiting their fellow-men, and, it may be, all equally active in promoting the especial object they have espoused, it will be useless to call upon any of them to give up their particular object in favour of any *one* measure that may by some persons be considered more practical and important than another; for such appeals have frequently been made, and as often disregarded.

As measures of progress they are *all* doubtlessly important, if not equally so, and as they are all equally desirous to check evil and promote good, and, it is presumed, *anxious to live to see the realization of some of the objects they are contending for*, the question arises, whether, upon the Good Samaritan principle, of each helping his fellow man, they can be brought to unite the sooner to realize *the objects they are severally in pursuit of*, and thus to carry forward simultaneously all those measures necessary for accomplishing the greatest good in the shortest possible period.

In reflecting on the difficulties in the way of progress it has struck me that something might be done to facilitate such a desired object, in the formation of a GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESS, in which might be combined *all those measures of social and political reformation for which societies are established, or mankind individually are now in pursuit of*, as well, indeed, as any other measure calculated to aid the great cause of mental, moral, and political progression.

Anxious that something should be done in favour of some combined effort for the progress of humanity, I have presumed to address you, as well as to direct your attention to the following proposal, as an outline explanatory of my views on the subject, which may be improved or altered by any persons disposed to promote or aid such an undertaking.

#### PROPOSAL FOR FORMING A GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESS.

Its first object being to unite in one general union of progress all those who are now separately, or in small bodies, seeking the attainment of the following *political and social* objects. Secondly, to devise some *practical measures* for unitedly promoting and realizing such objects in a shorter time than can possibly be done under present arrangements, and this without interfering in any way with the internal regulation of any present association.

#### *Political Objects of Progress.*

1st. The EQUAL and JUST REPRESENTATION of the whole people.

2nd. The abolition of all STATE RELIGION; and the right of conscience and opinion secured.

3rd. The ABSOLUTE FREEDOM OF TRADE; and the abrogation of all custom and excise laws.

4th. The ABOLITION OF ALL TAXES UPON KNOWLEDGE, such as the tax and securities on newspapers, stamps, and advertising duties, taxes on paper, books, pamphlets, &c.

5th. The GENERAL REDUCTION OF TAXATION, and a more rigid economy of its expenditure.

6th. DIRECT TAXATION ON PROPERTY, and the abolition of all *indirect* means of raising a revenue.

7th. The Abolition of all POLITICAL MONOPOLIES and UNJUST PRIVILEGES.

8. The Legislative improvement, impartial execution, and cheapening of LAW and JUSTICE for the whole people.

*Social Objects of Progress.*

9th. GENERAL EDUCATION for the whole population, provided *by all*, and carried out and enforced *by all*, with the least possible government interference.

10th. The promotion of SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS, SCHOOLS for ADULT INSTRUCTION, and LIBRARIES for general circulation among the whole population.

11th. The Promotion of TEMPERANCE, SOBRIETY, CLEANLINESS, and HEALTH, amongst all classes; and the securing of places of rational recreation for the people, *apart from intoxicating drinks*.

12th. The devising means by which the working and middle classes may have COMFORTABLE HOMES, and be gradually enabled to become MANUFACTURERS, TRADERS, or FARMERS, on their own capital.

13th. To labour for the general abolition of WAR, SLAVERY and OPPRESSION, and the promotion of

GENERAL CIVILIZATION and CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD throughout the world.

SKETCH OF THE GENERAL ORGANIZATION.

That any number of individuals uniting, or already united, to promote any of the above objects may become members of the association of progress, by complying with the following conditions :

1. That they be united for one or more of the objects specified, and be classified, for purposes hereafter mentioned, one hundred persons in each class.
2. That they individually subscribe *2d.* each towards a general fund weekly, the same to be collected by one of their own body, and paid into the District Bank of the Association.
3. That they signify by resolution that any sum their class may secure by lot (or otherwise) shall not be divided or applied otherwise than for their declared object.
4. That they appoint one of their members to form a *Committee for the District*; such Committee to see that the sums collected by the Classes within the district are paid into the Bank, as well as for promoting the objects of the Association within their respective districts.

*General Committee.*

That each District Committee appoint two members annually to form the *General Committee of the Association*, such Committee to meet in London (or other large town alternately) for the division and application of the money thus raised, according to the rules agreed to; as well as for the promotion of the general objects of the Association, by all just and peaceful means.

*Application of the General Fund.*

That the fund so raised be annually divided by the Committee, into portions of £2000; such portions to be appropriated by lot (or any other approved means) among the different classes of the Association, and immediately handed over to those who may be so successful; the same to be applied by them in promoting their declared objects, without any further intervention.

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Such is a mere outline of the plan proposed. It will be seen that I have sought to include under the heads of *political* and *social* reform all those measures which are now advocated and contended for by different bodies, as well as others which I deem desirable and necessary, before right, knowledge and happiness can be effected for our fellow-men.

I have not thought it necessary to enter into the details of Rules and Regulations, as those can be best matured by such persons as may be disposed to form such an association.

As however a mere outline of the plan is set forth, it may be necessary to explain, that the chief object of the classification *into hundreds* is for the appropriation of the fund raised, as well as to afford facilities for persons not included in any existing Association to form a part of the Association of Progress. As, for instance, 100 men, known to each other, may unite for the purpose of building themselves comfortable habitations, for raising means to take a farm, to commence manufacturing, or trading, or for any social or political object embraced by the Association, and in this manner may obtain £2000 capital to commence or forward their undertaking; or if not successful directly in a pecuniary

sense, they will, by their union, be indirectly benefited by the reforms they would unitedly be able to effect.

If in this manner the friends of progress were only combined to the extent of *one million*, that number, paying *2d. each* per week, would raise money enough to give *£2000 capital to 216 different classes every year*.

The mere pecuniary advantages however would be trifling, compared with the great and paramount object, A UNION OF ALL FRIENDS OF PROGRESS, all aiding each other, in the spirit of Christian Brotherhood, the better to accomplish the reforms they are anxious to effect; acting in concert for the promulgation of their respective views and objects; seeking to smooth down those contracted, prejudiced and contentious feelings which now so much impede the progress of reform; and uniting hearts and minds to remove the poverty, misery and oppression of their land, and to extend the blessings of peace, prosperity, knowledge and happiness among all the nations of the earth.

That the friends of progress may speedily perceive the necessity for some such plan of union, is the sincere wish of

WM. LOVETT,

Dec. 31st, 1847.

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