

As to when this will come about he says, "I do not pretend to set a date for the catastrophe, or to anticipate its horrors," but come it would in his opinion.

On being interrogated as to the situation in America, he claims that the dangers here are even greater, because the State is absorbing the individual's freedom of action much faster than elsewhere. He says:

"The American has the form of self-sovereignty, but he does not have it in reality. It is difficult to foresee what will be the outcome of American progress, but I do not think that your Republic will escape the consequences of the general struggle. The fact is, few men have any true appreciation of liberty. Subservience to a majority in personal concerns is as bad as subservience to a king, and there can be no worse despot than the majority. Just in the same way that men have now come to resist the dictation of the State be it one or the majority of men in respect of their religious beliefs, so when they fully understand liberty will they come to resist such dictation, even of the million as of the one, in matters of private concern."

The needed reform of the present is, he thinks, that each man shall be compelled to take the consequences of his own nature, and shall have without deduction all the benefits or evils of it. The evils of the individual shall not be saddled on other people, nor shall that individual be defrauded of the benefits of his nature by other people.

Mr. Spencer was asked what he thought the most effective aid to the American people in the way of religion, journalism and science. He replied that teaching did little, the discipline of life everything. "There is nothing to do but to insist upon the carrying on of life in a thoroughly honest, conscientious way and repudiating everything that does not conform to a high standard of conduct." But he says that Americans unfortunately can not adopt such a standard of life. In a society constituted as ours is, ambition inevitably takes the direction of acquiring wealth, and the struggle for it brings inevitable evils, and until the whole continent is peopled he thinks this condition will continue.

The *Detroit News*, commenting on the *World* interview, says that State Socialism is in itself a military despotism. Its purpose is to organize industry upon a military basis, to produce wealth and perform all the functions of society, thus entirely depriving the individual of free, voluntary, spontaneous action. In European countries a large measure of state control in many instances is the rule. In the United States all reform organizations clamor for an enlargement of the powers and functions of government. And this, says the *News*, in the face of the fact that our material prosperity has

advanced as it has never advanced before under the greatest degree of freedom the individual citizen has ever enjoyed. But the evil lies in the inequitable distribution of this material prosperity among us. Whether this is due to the individual freedom enjoyed is another question. The *News* thinks that it is because there was not enough of individual freedom that Herbert Spencer's idea of individual responsibility was not adhered to, and that American citizens lack what he calls "discipline of life." That is, each person must know his own rights and have the moral courage to maintain them; and he must also have the moral rectitude not to invade the rights of others. He who will allow his own rights to be infringed will, when he has the power, invade the rights of others.

PRISON REFORM.

THE attack which W. P. Andrews made in the October *Forum* on reformatory prisons has as a matter of course attracted much attention. It is just the kind of subject which small editors grasp at with avidity, because it looks like a convenient vehicle for a large amount of smartness, along with much ignorance, and with no great risks attached. This prison document has proven a particularly rich morsel for these writers against space, and they have worked it in their usually brilliant fashion.

There is plenty of room for adverse opinions on the prison question, so long as it is confined to jails. It is consistent for wise men to disagree on the subject of capital punishment. The man who has religious or humane compunctions against the taking of human life, is reasonable in protesting against what he terms judicial homicide of all kinds. The man who considers the question solely upon the standard of human right is just as reasonable in holding that the person who has become sufficiently depraved to commit a certain offense against his fellow man, has forfeited absolutely the confidence of men and likewise the right to exist among them to, their jeopardy and harm.

Men may also argue if they wish, that all prisons are institutions for reform, rather than for punishment. We believe that with men who have pursued lives of crime to a certain age, the chances for reform are very slight. But reform schools in their proper and strict significance do not belong in such a controversy, and it is only ignorance of social equity that would question their propriety or usefulness. Through incapable parentage, criminal

associations, or the influence of some other school for criminals a large number of the children born into this world never know the meaning of discipline or government till some overt wrong forfeits their liberty to the State. To such youths the reform school is a place of education where those influences of correct association and home discipline which parents failed to bestow, may be given.

Mr. Andrews has not the timidity to assail openly this class of institutions, but with covert allusions he furnishes a text for scribblers to harp upon. The idea that the State may not take into account the question of reform in dealing with ordinary criminals is monstrous.

But assuming that all prisons are purely institutions of punishment, in this age they can never fill the measure of their purpose save through appropriate discrimination between criminals.

The centuries have proven that law is effective more directly in proportion to the promptness and severity of the punishment.

Every thoughtful citizen of this country is anxious for reform in our prison arrangements, but Mr. Andrews has not touched the key note of the popular feeling by any means. The conditions do not demand that the convict's life should be in general more severe, but that there should be more certainty in bringing criminals to conviction.

THE PRESS ON THE REPORT.

THE report of the Utah Commission has caused much discussion, by the press, of the everlasting "Mormon" question. Most of the papers have something to say about it. One thing is very clear; they all obtain the impression that it is the Commission that makes the charges of recent polygamous marriages, and it is the Commission that throws doubts upon the sincerity of the "Mormon" people in relation to party politics.

The signers of the report so arranged their sentences that while conveying these charges in effect, they could claim they were merely stating the allegations and opinions of other persons, whose names, however, they carefully conceal. Some of the public journals perceive this cunning, others do not. Most of them construe the report as an effort to prevent Utah from becoming a State for fear it might be a polygamous State, while a few see through this specious pretence and behold a desperate struggle to retain lucrative and easy positions which