

Read, not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and dis course, but to weigh and consider.—FRANCIS BACON.

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# Economic Discontent

AND

## ITS REMEDY.

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BY

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Author of "Why Physicians Should be Socialists," "Socialism and Freedom of Conscience," etc.

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In every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organisation necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch.

—KARL MARX

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## ECONOMIC DISCONTENT

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By FATHER THOMAS J. HAGERTY.

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When you lead a young colt for the first time up to a railway engine he shows every sign of fear. His eyes widen, his nostrils dilate, his ears point forward in nervous terror, and he trembles in every limb. The escaping steam and the shrill emphasis of the whistle are phenomena which he interprets only as the on-rushing of a bodily danger certain to overwhelm him before he can fly the terrible monster. The engine is something wholly out of the range of his previous knowledge—a thing to be dreaded through sheer ignorance of its nature. It is only after a great deal of gentleness and patience on the part of his master that he gradually learns to look unmoved upon this huge machine of commerce and to realise that, after all, it is a friendly dragon whose fiercest appetite is appeased by simple lumps of coal.

Very similar are the actions of the average unthinking citizen when you bring him face to face with the economic discontent which is disturbing the times. He has heretofore maintained his peace of mind by



resolutely ignoring sociologic problems and satisfied his conscience by perusing editorials on the marvellous prosperity of the toilers in this country. His favorite Sunday paper has been telling him in the department of "Editorials by the Laity," how great millionaires have risen from the lowest depths of poverty, how plough-boys have become managers of titanic trusts, and how, in the words of Chauncey M. Depew, "these have made possible our industrial advance and superiority over other nations." None of his previous reading has ever brought him into actual touch with the widespread discontent of the proletariat. And when its existence is suddenly borne in upon him, he sees in it only a menace to the stability of government and a danger to civilisation. Visions of lawlessness, murder and dynamite crowd his fear-wrought imagination. In fancy he beholds the re-enactment of the wild deeds of the French Revolution:

"When through the streaming streets  
Of Paris red-eyed Massacre o'er-wearied  
Reeled heavily, intoxicate with blood."

The grumblings of underpaid working men, of half-starved children, and sad-faced women, and their sullen protest against the purely animal life of drudgery under the last of capitalism, strike upon his affrighted ears like the fore-rumbling of some awful catastrophe. And when outraged toil finds

expression in strikes or boycott, he feels himself safe only behind the gleaming bayonets of the militia.

He does not understand this discontent any more than the young colt understands the railway engine. He needs to be taught the function and far-reaching influence for good of intelligent discontent—of that restlessness under injustice which nerves men everywhere to battle for the right. He must learn to recognise his kinship of a common humanity with those who groan beneath the burden of unequal toil. His mind must be awakened to a consciousness of his complete dependency upon his fellow-men and of the identity of his interests with those of the remotest sons of earth. As his economic education goes on, his eyes gradually open to the true significance of the social unrest which is troubling the age. He begins to grasp the fact that, in all periods of the world's history, intelligent discontent has been the torch-bearer of progress.

The sciences owe their development to the genius of men who would not be satisfied with the limitations of knowledge and who flinched not before the wrath of the traditions which their investigations so ruthlessly disturbed. Socrates paid the penalty of his daring with his death, though his philosophy enriched the thought of men. "When Roger Bacon was raising his voice against the habit of blindly following authority, and



seeking for all science in Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas was employed in fashioning Aristotle's tenets into that fixed form in which they became the great impediment to the progress of knowledge.' (Whewell, History of the Inductive Sciences, 3rd ed., vol I., book iv., ch. v., p. 521). He was accused of witchcraft "and imprisoned by command of the general of his order." (Tennemann, Hist. of Philosophy, London, 1852, p. 241.) Copernicus, Galileo, and Savonarola were all malcontents in their day whose sanity and wisdom it was left for succeeding generations to vindicate. To Sir Isaac Newton's discontent with the current science of his day we are indebted for our knowledge of gravitation. Despite the determined hostility of the orthodox scholars in the German Universities, Frederick Messmer's discontent with their teachings gave to the world that psychophysiology which has influenced the whole domain of physical and mental philosophy. Smarting under their many industrial wrongs, the people of England forced from King John the increased liberties of the Magna Charta. The early Colonists of America were not content meekly to bow down to the injustice of taxation without representation; and they swept the divine right of kings off every acre of land and established for evermore on freedom's soil the divine right of the People in its stead. The sturdy Boers listened to no preaching of peace while

their liberties were assailed; and almost every veldt holds the grave of a hero who elected death in preference to a dishonorable contentment under British tyranny.

Indeed, every advance in civilisation, every forward movement in knowledge and freedom, has been achieved by the organised discontent of men or by the patient bravery of some great soul breaking through the inertia of conservatism and blazing new pathways for humanity.

From an economic point of view, then, no more damnable error can be conceived than that of teaching the poor to be content with their lot; to be satisfied with coarsest food, with hob-nailed boots, with cheap furniture and bare walls: to forego the pleasures of books and paintings and music in their homes: to stifle the legitimate aspirations of talent, never to penetrate beyond the smoke of factories into God's pure air nor listen to the wondrous melodies of feathered songsters in the brake, nor watch the changing pigments of His brush on the floral canvas of the fields: but always to go on slaving from morning till night with no prospect of comfort for the evening of life. Surely it is the veriest mockery to preach contentment to the aged worker who finds younger men crowding him out as the years steal his strength away. A time comes to him when he is thrown aside like an out-worn tool.



His usefulness in the industrial conflict has been a constantly diminishing factor. The future looms up dark and forbidding; and he grows tremulous with despair.

His children are scattered far and wide; perchance they are dead; and he is left heavy hearted and alone. Entering the poorhouse, he is rated as a pauper, and he chafes under the dishonour which classes him as a burden upon the people. To the public contractor he represents a body to be clothed and fed at so much per diem; and he becomes a mere algebraic quantity in the problems of the statistician. Gospel-mongers drone hymns into his ears on Sunday and preach dry, comfortless contentment to his weary soul, and for the rest of the week leave him severely to himself. Meanwhile the Capitalist who has robbed him of the fruits of his labor is living in some Alladin-like palace where no terrors of poverty enter to blanch the face of old age. And his sons continue to take away from the sons of the people three-fourths of the product of their toil and to furnish barely enough lubricating oil to keep these human machines from wearing out too soon.

In this same preachment of content to the poor from gorgeous pulpit and well-padded editorial chair the common people are earnestly exhorted to be law-abiding citizens, to enter no conspiracies in constraint of trade

—which is the privilege only of the captains of industry—and to be submissive to the men whom they themselves have elected to be, not their masters, but their servants. The sacredness of the laws framed in the interests of the monied power must not be violated by the mere plebeians of the Fourth Estate. For the millionaire laws are figments upon parchment; for the toiler, though the laws be unjust and one-sided, they are stern facts whose mandates are to be obeyed by those upon whom their injustice falls heaviest.

A servile judiciary, in the pay of Capital, widens the breach between law and equity; and class legislation sets them still farther apart. It is a lamentable fact that the men who are elected to make the laws of the country are often lacking in the moral and intellectual equipment needful to the task. There remain few

“Statesmen like those who sought the primal Fount  
Of righteous law, the Sermon on the Mount.”

A complicated system of private influences, acting through powerful and wealthy lobbies, is constantly tempting our all too-willing law-makers to put upon the Statute-books ordinances which favor the Capitalist at the expense of the labourer. The jingle of gold drowns the voice of justice. No mat-



ter how iniquitous such ordinances may be in principle, they remain binding upon the commonwealth until repealed. They are enforced by mulct and all the machinery of the courts; and there are not wanting moralists who are so weak-kneed as to counsel obedience to them on the ground of expediency, telling us "that we may sometimes be bound to submit to such an imposition, not as a law, for it is none, but on the score of prudence, to escape dire consequences." (Joseph Rickaby, S.J., *Moral Philosophy*, 2nd ed., ch. vii., p. 126.)

Ethics, as the science of human duty, is the test of law. Uprightness, honesty, truth, purity, gentleness, love and mutual support in the family — these are some of the principles of Ethics which are universally admitted without question or shadow of doubt, these are some of the virtues which are recognised by all clear-minded men as duties not of choice but of that moral necessity which dominates every clean soul. Whenever the human workings of the law stand in the way of these duties we have what Samuel Johnson calls "treason against the great republic of human nature." Whenever the law operates against the well-being of the family, the physical comfort, the intellectual gladness, the social happiness of man, it is unethical and, hence, no longer law, but legalised oppression. To say, then, that a thing must be admitted

to be legal which may, at the same time, be ethically bad is to play fast and loose with thoughts whereof words are but the ambassadors.

The right to earn meat and bread for the body, to win art and literature and grace for the soul is prior to law. Law is only the formal expression of it and the guardian. And when forces ethically bad, though working under legal sanction, are opposed to this right, men are justified in fighting for it to the last redoubt. In the present state of affairs, the toiler is the victim of competition which, in the hands of capital, is the freebooter's sword gleaming treacherously along the highways of commerce and mercilessly cleaving the bodies and souls of men. It is never in its scabbard lest it be forced—

"To eat into itself for lack  
Of something else to hew and hack."

The difference between the picturesque bandit who jauntily empties your purse at the point of his six-shooter and the capitalist who defrauds the labourer of his hire is decidedly in favor of the bandit, with this grave distinction: that the law protects the capitalist and sets her bloodhounds on the trail of the bandit. The law garrisons the vast holdings of the syndicates. The law guards the mines with glistening bayonets and patrols the shops and factories and



foundries with sleepless care. The law shelters the holder of mortgages, the money-lenders, the investors, the speculator in grain and stocks, the contractor, and all the rights of property, with one exception—the laborer's property. The laborer's property is his labor and that has no adequate protection of law. The State guarantees to the capitalist the full exploiting of his capital. Suppose a speculator were to say to the capitalist who has advanced him money: "There has been a crisis, a depression in trade, I am no longer in a position to pay you the high rate of interest agreed upon. I shall give you a third or two-thirds of the sum," what answer would the capitalist make him? Why, he would refuse to accept any reduction, and for what reason? . . . . Simply because he is well aware that the law supports his claim. But let us suppose the speculator saying to his workmen: "There has been a heavy depression in trade, I cannot pay you more than a third or two-thirds of your present wages," what resource is left to the workman? There is no alternative for him, he must either accept the pay offered to him or throw up his place, which latter course means starvation. Why, therefore, should the law not guarantee the workman as it does the capitalist, protecting what is but just and right? There is no greater infraction in one case than in another." (Canon Moufang in the

Christlich-Social Blatter, March, 1871.)

Every honest workman has an inherent right to the full product of his work. He invests his life and the lives of his wife and children in it, but under the present industrial system, he never receives a full return on the investment. There is always an unpaid surplus which constitutes a moral claim against his employer. The wage which he gets for any particular day's work is not equivalent to a quit-claim deed to his employer, because the earning power of that day's work does not end with the day itself. The workman has put into it personal value in intelligence, skill and industry which continue, with more or less permanency, long after the sun sets upon the actual toil expended in the production of it.

In the winter of 1898, an exceptionally mild one, over 55,000 children were reported to the London School Board as being "in a state of semi-starvation, physically unfit for their task, and incapable of benefiting by the teaching;" and a great many schools did not send in returns. The "tail boys" on the vans in Central London are taken from school at twelve years old and work from three in the morning till eight at night. In Newington, a parish holding more than 120,000 residents on a square mile, a fifth of the inhabitants has only one room as home, 80 per cent. of the houses are taken up by



more than one family to a house. In one little road in Lambeth, of only fourteen dwellings, and fifty-six rooms in all, there are twenty-three families counting 123 persons, of whom 59 are children under 10 years of age; while in the same parish there are 1690 cases where three persons live in one room, 887 cases where four, 375 where five, and 134 where six persons eat, sleep and have their being in one room. In all the big cities of America like conditions prevail. Surely there is cause for economic discontent among the toilers of the world when poverty forces them to herd together under circumstances which render domesticity and modesty impossible.

In February, 1899, Mr. Robinson, of the Brotherhood of Tailors, was commissioned by the New York "World" to investigate the sweat-shops of that city. His report is gruesome reading. "The fierce competition for sweat-shop work has brought thousands of women and children into the trade who before made their living in more healthful ways. . . . Many of the workers are boys and girls ranging from twelve to sixteen years of age. These children are made to work from daylight until far into the night. This is especially the case where the boss has a government contract to finish on a certain date. . . . If anyone doubts the awful effects of sweat-shop work on these

half-starved men, women and children, let him go to the hospitals. He will find that a large percentage of pauper patients are either sweat-shop workers or companions of these people. Hundreds have been sent to hospitals and to their graves by Government work."

During the last three months of the prosperity year of 1898, almost 50,000 union men were out of work in New York, over 25 per cent. of the working men of that State idle during the year 1899, through no fault of theirs but simply through lack of employment. Other States report, with more or less variation of misery, the same distress. This enforced idleness hides many a tragedy of poverty which might well tax the fertile imagination and masterful description of a Dickens or a Victor Hugo. No one who does not have to depend upon daily wages for a living can realise the hopelessness and mental anguish, the forebodings of pain and hunger, and the slow disintegration of health and happiness wherewith the chemistry of time eats out the heart and soul of the unemployed working man and his family. The day comes when the clothier, the butcher and the grocer refuse to give them credit for the necessities of life, and the landlord demands the rent of his disease-sodden tenement rooms. The gaunt faces of his children stamp themselves into every



fibre of his memory, like the face of the Christ upon Veronica's towel, as their father drags his weary steps along labour's way of the cross day after day in search of work. And too often another Golgotha is encompassed when the faithful wife or the loving child, breaking down under privation, falls an easy prey to some current malady and, mayhap, is buried in a pauper's grave the while the stricken husband or father can only cry out, in that world-old plaint of oppressed humanity, "Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani?"—My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

And there is that other tragedy, far more terrible in its utter degradation, of hundreds of poor girls, bearing the image of God's likeness upon their souls, driven by insufficient wages to sell their bodies for bread; while the wives of their capitalist employers rustle in silks and satins and draw their skirts aside from these pitiful victims of their husbands' greed as from some foul-skinned leper.

These tragedies are not enacted in the so-called Dark Ages, but in the enlightened dawn of the twentieth century. In a land of plenty where a quarter of a million of dollars is spent on one evening's entertainment, where thousands of dollars are thrown away every day in the mad quest of pleasure, where food is wasted by the ton every

week, and millionaires' cooks are at their wits' end, like the chefs of Nero and Caligula, trying to devise new dishes for their dyspeptic masters, that hundreds of men, women and children should be reduced to living upon the offal of the market place is a cause for discontent which ought to shake the nation to its every centre.

Even for the vast majority of those who have employment there are few of the comforts of existence and fewer still of the joys of living. The wages they receive bear no just proportion to the work they perform. It will not do to consider the wages of the highly skilled crafts in determining the reasons for economic discontent for the simple cause that all labor is fundamentally the source of the means of livelihood; and the man who digs in the ditch has essentially the same right to the good things of life as the man who guides the intricate machinery of some huge manufactory. We must, therefore, confine our study to that great preponderance of the toilers who barely eke out a subsistence from week to week. Taking the reports from Massachussets, where labor is so concentrated, we find that 25 per cent. of men employed in eighty-eight classes of wealth production have an income of less than eight dollars the week. In other terms, one-fourth of the laborers, when steadily at work, receive about thirty dollars the month. From this paltry sum there must be



deducted the wages lost in times of commercial depression, strikes, lockouts, sickness or accident. With the utmost thrift and management, then, the laborer and his family cannot live on such wages in half the comfort which his employer's horse enjoys in the stable. The cheapest unfurnished rooms for an average family of five will cost at least two dollars the week, fuel and lights, at the lowest calculation, fifty cents, and food of the coarsest kind four dollars the week, leaving fifty cents for shoes, clothes, books, recreation and minor luxuries. No margin remains for births, sickness and death. The physician cannot be called till the last moment when it is too late to abort disease, and the rest of the family must go upon quarter rations to buy medicines or procure the simplest nourishment for the sick member.

But America is not alone in injustice toward, and oppression of, the toiler. "Writer after writer has described for us with that unanimous testimony which is the voice of truth itself the degradation, spiritual, moral and material, of the Italian peasants and working classes; the wretched hovels they dwell in amid squalor and filth, the foul food which they are driven to as sole means of sustenance, the grinding oppression of the system under which they live—compelled out of the meagre pittance they wring from the over-taxed earth to support two great classes

in idleness and luxury—the landowners and the administrators—office-holders multiplied indefinitely, for the salaries they are to receive, not for the service they are to render. Read the horrible pictures of peasant life which d'Annunzio has painted. Compare them with the vignettes of squalid misery occasionally inserted by Marion Crawford among the magnificent portraits of princes and grandees of Quirinal and Vatican, and one is filled with horror and despondency to think that twenty centuries of Christianity in the oldest of Christian countries has done so little to mitigate this boundless suffering; that human beings with hearts and souls like ourselves can be condemned to such seemingly issueless misery. It is the old bad, grasping selfishness of those who will not work contriving by a hundred artifices to fix themselves parasite-like on the lives of those who toil." (Chas. Johnson in "North American Review.")

Is there no balm in Gilead for all this world-wide tragedy of poverty, and pain? Is there no satisfying answer to the cry of discontent which, from shore to shore, echoes throughout this fair land of ours? Must we take the purely local text of the Gospel and, stretching it through the ages, assume that the poor we must have always with us? Shall there never be surcease of hunger and want for the wearied muscles



and toil-worn minds of men? Has the Creator filled this wondrous earth with plenty simply to mock the suffering of millions of His creatures? Has He, by any special dispensation of His Providence, given to a few men the right to rob the race of food, and gladness, and art, and song? Is it of imperative necessity that delicate women and children should be forced out of the sanctuary of the home to battle for bread and meat in the rough arena of factory and shop? Is there no hope on this side of the grave, and must the workman be content with the narrow limits of a joyless life in this world with the promise of happiness only in a world to come? Surely the God of Heaven is also the God of earth; and He has not made the world so beautiful with interlacing lights on land and sea, with rare melodies in hill and dale with ear and eye and tongue and touch to tremble and vibrate in conscious rapture of the unspeakable grandeur of His work, merely that the favoured few of the sons of men may be languidly stirred thereby and the great mass of humanity shut out therefrom by the blank wall of hopeless poverty and toil.

After all these centuries of progress there is certainly a remedy somewhere, a remedy wide enough in its scope to embrace all conditions of men and of such imperative

truth and efficacy as to solve every doubt and difficulty. The remedy lies in the ownership of the means of subsistence by an intelligently cohesive organisation of all the people and the common proprietorship of the machinery of production and distribution to the end that arts and sciences and all the agencies of happiness may be developed in the equal interests of humanity.

No matter how measurable may be their differences of energy and capacity, of mind and muscle, and of knowledge and skill, all men are fundamentally equal. Their social independence makes them so. The physician who writes a prescription for his patient is drawing upon the services of thousands of his fellow-men in that simple act. The paper which he uses is the product of the paper mill which quarrymen, miners, moulders, wood cutters, stone masons, bricklayers, hod carriers, plasterers, plumbers, machinists, painters, glass workers, electricians, engineers, teamsters, and scores of other trades have combined to build. The gathering of the raw material in widely divergent places, the process of making the paper, the machines for rolling out the pulp and cutting it into definite shapes, represent the co-operative thought and cleverness of many minds and hands. The railroads for carrying it from the mill to the wholesale paper dealers and



from them to retail dealers are the finished product of countless kinds of labour and their operation calls into activity hundreds of men from the clerk in the superintendent's office to the section hand on the road. The printing of the physician's name and office hours as the head of the paper carries his indebtedness to his fellow men back through all the stages of the art from Mergenthaler to Guttenberg and the Phoenicians. The men who mine the lead and copper for the types, the artists who design the fonts, the mechanics who cut the dies, the founders who cast them, and the workers who arrange them in small or large fonts ready for transportation to the printer, all give their share to the making of the prescription blank. But the physician's dependence upon his fellow men does not end here. In order intelligently to write his prescription, he must be able to make a correct diagnosis of his patient's disease and know the therapeutic value of the drugs suitable to the case. And since he cannot, in the limits of a single lifetime, acquire such knowledge by personal research into all the specialised fields of medicine, he must make use of the generalised results of the botanist, the chemist, the physiologist, the anatomist, the biologist, the bacteriologist and the specialist in every ill to which flesh is heir. Furthermore, for the purity of the drugs and the accuracy of

their compounding he must rely upon the manufacturing (and retail druggists, and through them, upon men of every race who, in India or Africa, Asia or America, gather minerals and herbs in smiling valleys, on dangerous mountain sides or in the solitude of tangled forests. Meanwhile, numberless hands are deftly engaged in making his clothes, shoes, furniture, books, and instruments in order that he may be free to devote his time and services to suffering humanity. Through his own unaided efforts it would be absolutely impossible for him to begin with the raw materials of the earth and, after travelling hundreds of miles to collect them and spending years and years in digging out the ore, chopping down the trees, and devising means of transportation, construct and operate the machinery for their conversion into all the things thus supplied him through the united efforts of his fellow men in every part of the globe.

Manifestly, then, we have co-operation, or Socialism, in production. If each man were to work apart and only for himself in a disjointed, haphazard fashion on the principle of "every man for himself and devil take the hindmost," we would clearly have Anarchy in production. Since, therefore, all men are necessary to one another in the functioning of the social organism, all men



should share alike in the distribution of the products of society. In other words, Socialism in production postulates as a logical conclusion of justice Socialism in distribution.

This conclusion becomes indisputable when we consider that labour is the source of all wealth and the measure of all values. It matters not whether the labour be employed in grinding lenses for the big Lick Observatory or in digging drains to carry off the waste stuff whose stagnation would endanger the health of the community, for the wealth created in either case is determined by the amount of labour expended and not by the utility of the work performed; for while labour is always absolute, utility is always relative. The value resides only in labour. The great Lick telescope would be wholly worthless to a town threatened by an epidemic of typhoid fever through defective drainage; whereas, on the other hand, the drains would be entirely useless to the astrooomer in fixing the orbit of Jupiter. The track-walker who tightens the plates and spikes wherever he finds a loose rail and keeps a sharp lookout for bad places in the road, performs a labour which is just as valuable to the travellers on the railroad as the services of the train despatcher who keeps account of the schedules and orders the freight on a

siding to give a clear track to the thundering "Limited" on its fifty miles an hour dash across the continent; and the labour of the section-gang is just as essential to the safety of the passengers as the work of the train crew. Although the stone cutter may not need the assistance of the doctor, the gardener who supplies him with vegetables may be sick; and thus, indirectly but nevertheless truly, the stone cutter and the doctor exchange their labor through the social medium. One labour is as useful to society as another. All differences of talent and skill are equalised in the totality of the social product. Very often the cleverest machinist cannot tell a field of oats from a field of wheat, or hold a plough in the furrow for a dozen straight feet. All this knowledge of steam pressure and a tensible resistance would be of no avail in handling a balky horse or treating a sick cow. In matters of sub-soiling planting and harvesting, he would be the clumsiest unskilled labourer. The assyriologist, who has familiarised himself after ten years of patient research with the manners and laws of ancient Babylonia and who reads the Tel-el-Amarna tablets as easily as we do our newspapers, would find himself as helpless as an infant *if* he had to cut out and make for himself a dress suit in which to read a learned paper on the



Summerian Conception of the Deity before some Oriental society.

The miners who take the ore out of the earth and the men who work it into different forms, whether of keen surgical instruments or wagon axles, create so much wealth the value of which evidently depends not upon its inherent usefulness, but upon the degree of human effort required for its transformation into social commodities: for the surgeon cannot explore the peritonal region with a waggon axle any more than the teamster can haul a ton of coal with bistuary knives for the support of his load.

It is evident, therefore, that, taking all men in their organic interdependence, exchange-value does not permit a distinction in the quality of labour. It is the quantity of labour which counts. The man who works for a day, whether at making bistuary knives or waggon axles, gives his life for that day. The value of the wealth which he creates in that day is not measured by its relation to other wealth he created but by its relation to that which is the source and norm of all value, man's labour. Without labour there would be no values. Wealth, then, in the strict sense of the word, is the product of labour; it is a natural, tangible object so modified by human toil as to be capable of ministering

to some need or pleasure of man. A great deposit of minerals, therefore, is not wealth nor a vast stretch of fallow land. In order to be translated into wealth they must be brought from economic potentiality to social activity by human labour before they acquire any value for mankind in the arts and industries. The land must be ploughed and sown before it yields subsistence to the nation. Hence, in the words of Carl Marx, "that which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labour socially necessary for its production." (Das Kapital, p. 4.)

It must be borne in mind that we are considering the worker, not as an isolated being living in a world by himself, but as a social factor; and, therefore, that his labour must also be considered as the labour of a social factor, or in relation to the aggregate social production which is the sum of human efforts in every industry. Consequently, when we speak of labour as the measure of values, we mean labour operating through the social organism, abstract or social labour; and we reduce all concrete, individual labour to units of abstract or social labour-time. The reason for this is manifest. In that coherent totality of men which we call society the labour of the spinner is as necessary as the labour of the baker or the pharmacist, but the



latter has to spend more time in fitting himself for an intelligent performance of his duty to society than the two former and, therefore, the quantitative worth of his labour must include the years of preparatory study which are expressed in units of social labour time.

Under a proper economic system, where the organic people would own all the means of subsistence, these social units of labour-time would be equalised in the higher trades and professions by the nation's giving full share of the necessities and comforts of life to the men and women engaged in the apprenticeship or study which is required to fit them for a fruitful after-discharge of their duty and service to their fellow men. The civil engineer spending his days in studying out the best plans for intercepting sewers would be held as much a benefactor of mankind as the medical student devoting his time to acquiring a knowledge of the most efficient means of checking the spread of endemic disease. The agricultural scholar engaged in learning the method of raising cereals and cattle for the nourishment of the nation would be rated as necessary to society as the student of languages who is preparing to enlarge the nation's capacity for culture.

Each working member of society gives his quota of work to the social product;

and each member is, therefore, entitled to his labour-share of that product no matter what the quality of his labour may be in the premises.

Granted the fact that man has a body and soul, it follows naturally that he has a right to all the needs of body and soul, and not merely to a sufficiency from his labour to keep that body and soul together at the smallest expenditure of food, shelter, and raiment. The average economist commits the unpardonable sin of studying man only from the physical point of view as an individual industrial animal whose usefulness to society is to be maintained at the lowest cost. From this narrow view of the toiler originate all those errors of the wage question which have for centuries retarded the advancement of the proletariat. Taking only the corporeal wants of the working man, the lowest possible wage is determined by the bare cost of living for the human animal. No allowance is made for what are falsely termed the luxuries of travel, of music, of painting, of literature, of intellectual intercourse, of public worship and of the simplest means of culture. The so-called law of supply and demand...which is no more a law than the common rules of cattle rustlers and safe blowers...is brought into play to justify the lowering of the wages of the father of a family in open



competition with the unmarried worker in the labour market.

But since, according to the natural law, it is inevitably decreed that man can rightly acquire the good things of life only by his personal efforts working through the social organism, his labour must furnish him with all the necessities of soul and body. No man has any inherent right to live off the sweat and toil of his fellow man. Man's own labour is the only honest source whence not only his own physical, moral, and intellectual wants must be supplied, but those also of his natural dependents, his wife and children, if he have any, or his parents when they require his assistance in sickness or old age. The real logic of wages, therefore, is that from his labour the worker must derive everything necessary to the full expansion of all the forces and capabilities of his being. To the accomplishment of this end he must receive the whole product of his toil; and no other man nor combination of men may, under God, exploit his labour to their own aggrandizement and his loss.

All men are born with exactly the same rights. The child of the king has no more clothes at its parturition than the child of the peasant. The heir to the throne possesses no greater claims at its birth to the comforts and luxuries of life than the son of the poorest subject of the sovereign.

Both are creatures of the same Lord. In the natural order of procreation and the biologic processes both are brought into the world through the same laws of foetal development. Reaching outward existence both stand equal in everything which pertains to human needs and human aspirations. Physically there is nothing to distinguish the child of the monarch from the child of the toiler. They are subject to the same stages of growth. Their respiratory organs work according to the same laws of breathing. Digestion, assimilation and nutrition follow the same course in each. The one cannot convert meat and bread into more vital substances than the other. The "free pass" of the microbe will carry that enterprising agent of disease into the throat, or lungs, or intestines of the one as easily as into those of the other. At what point, then, does the economic difference of these two children begin? Is there any place in life where these two may logically and justly divide? Nature answers no. In a perfect conception and execution of the science of society, such as can be had only under Socialism, there would be no point of divergence for these two, save inasmuch as the one might be willing to work, and the other refuse to labour, for the commodities of existence.

These things being true, any economic system which deprives the worker of men-



tal growth, moral progress, and the broadest physiological development is, in its very nature, unjust, tyrannic, and inimical to the best interests of humanity. But the present capitalist form of society so deprives the worker and is plainly in diametric opposition to the known laws of nature as expounded by all the physical sciences dealing with the origin, nourishment and upbuilding of the human race. It deprives the worker of mental growth because it forces him out of school at an early age to assist his father in supporting the family. Capitalism deprives the worker of moral progress because it compels him to compete with other workers in the labour market, to resort to trickery and lying in order to secure employment to take the place of strikers and thus cause bloodshed in many cases, and to assist in the adultering of food and the dishonest making of shoddy goods. It deprives the worker of the broadest physiologic development because it keeps him at work for long hours—often at unhealthy occupations—and by insufficient wages necessitates his dwelling in unsanitary tenements whose air is tainted with almost every foulness.

On all sides the victims of capitalism cry out against it. Competition, which is one of its many evil factors, destroys the independent manufacturer and grinds the faces of the poor into the dust of the highways. Nations war against nations for no other

reason than that capitalism may find new markets for the exploitation of labour and the filling of the pockets of a few rich men with the ill-gotten gains of army contracts. In all its naked horror it is really a traffic in human flesh. It controls millions of men in an economic serfdom differing little, in the last analysis, from the bondage of ancient slavery. In the days of the chattel slave, the worker was at least sure of enough to eat. Under the feudal system of Western Europe in the Middle Ages the toiler practically owned his own strip of land and the products of that land, deducting the tribute to the feudal lord, were his own property. The free artisans possessed their own tools and fully controlled the output of their own labour. The working man was his own capitalist. And the great guilds fostered the independence of their members and held in check the master workmen.

It was only after the breaking up of the feudal system that the erstwhile serfs and free labourers were thrown out of their holdings and the guilds suppressed. "The change in the feudal tenure of land no longer attached people to the soil, and the tenants being no longer regarded as retainers of their lord, it ceased to be of paramount interest to keep them upon his estates. As they ceased to be a source of strength, they were felt to be burdensome. Pleasure and profit, the former by multi-



plication of animals for the chase, the latter by the breeding of oxen and sheep were better served by expelling the small tenant farming population and throwing the land into large enclosed grazing farms." (Gasquet, Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries, vol. I., 4th ed., pp 15, 16.)

Men crowded into the towns and cities and had no other way of earning a living than by selling their strength for whatever wages they could get. One man engaged in making furniture, for instance, taking advantage of their dire necessity, hired as many of these landless toilers as he could conveniently employ and enlarged his business through the profits which he made out of their labour. Later on as the shop grew larger the labour was divided among different parts of the furniture, one set of men being told off for carving, another for polishing, another for varnishing, a fourth set for upholstering and so on.

Finally, with the incoming of the era of machinery the degradation of the proletariat reached its apogee. The tool was taken out of the hands of the workman and fitted into a machine. "The machine, which is the starting point of the industrial revolution, supersedes the workman, who handles a single tool, by a mechanism operating with a number of similar tools, and set in motion by a single motive power, whatever the form of that power may be." (Marx, *Das Kapital*, p 228). The manual cleverness

of the workman becomes less and less valuable as the machines grow more complicated. He is brought into competition with women and children who can serve the machines as well as he and for smaller wages. According to the United States Labour Bureau Report on Machine and Hand Labour, spinning machines operated by one operator and two girls turn out more yarn than 11,000 old time hand spinners could do. In weaving one man now does as much work as 95 could do with the old hand loom. One man tending a nail machine turns out as many nails as 1,000 men formerly did by hand. Formerly it required a good workman to gin five pounds of cotton a day. Now two men with a machine turn out 4000 pounds in the same time. In the days of hand work it took a quick shoemaker to sew six pair of shoes in a day. Now one man will sew 1000 pair in a day with a machine. Nowadays, 300 girls will turn out by machinery as many matches as 8000 men could formerly accomplish by hand. In making wall-paper one man does the work formerly requiring 100 men. In 1889 the Berlin Bureau of Statistics estimated the power capable of being exerted by the steam engines of the world as equivalent to 200,000 horse power, representing in men three times the entire population of the "globe." (cf. Socialist Campaign Book of 1900, pp 22, 23.)

Indeed, so rapid has been the industrial



evolution of the past century that the practicability of Socialism is now almost self-evident. The vast combinations of allied industries in the trusts are daily concentrating and synthetising the production of commodities. Competition is slowly giving way to monopoly; and the small partnership and stock-companies are either disappearing or absorbing in the greater trusts.

With the increased facilities of production and the concentration of energies in the most efficient organisation, it is evident that the poverty of the working class is not due to a scarcity of the commodities of life but to the unequal distribution thereof—to the profit takers who unjustly appropriate the bulk of the social product. Dr. Spahr's tables show that one half the families in Americans own practically nothing besides a few sticks of furniture and clothes. One-eighth of the people own seven-eighths of the wealth of the United States. One per cent. of the people possess more than fifty per cent. of the wealth, or one family in each eight hundred owns more than 99 families put together. (Distribution of Wealth.)

Now, as every student of economics well knows, wealth is simply heaped-up labour. It belongs only to him who has earned it by his own efforts. In its very nature it cannot be transmitted to other generations as a talisman against the necessity of toil. It is the personal meed of the brain and brawn

of the laborer; and, since the co-operation of his fellowmen was needed for its acquisition in the premises, it cannot rightly be diverted from society to future individuals who have no share in its production. The folly of stored-up gold and silver as a means of purchasing, without personal effort, the necessities and pleasures of existence, is manifest to all thinking men.

“These grains of gold are not grains of wheat,

These bars of silver thou canst not eat.”

Of itself gold has very little value except as an ornament, an ingredient of toning-solutions, a medicant in the Keeley-cure, or a material for wedding rings. It is worthless for chisels, hammers, knives, cart-wheels, building columns, fence rails, or smoke stacks. Put a man on a desert island with all the gold in the treasures of the world, and it will not stave off the pangs of hunger nor cause one stalk of wheat to grow where none grew before. It is not a good fertiliser. Ten pounds of iron will go farther in the service of man than a ton of gold. As a medium of exchange it implies too much waste of time and labour in mining and minting.

Socialism is the antithesis of capitalism as light is of darkness. As I have already defined it, Socialism is the ownership of the means of subsistence by an intelligently cohesive organisation of all the people and the common proprietorship of the machinery of



production and distribution to the end that the arts and sciences and all the agencies of happiness may be developed in the equal interests of humanity. It postulates as the next logical stage in the evolution of our industrial system the transition from monopoly under private ownership to monopoly under public co-operative ownership. There is no reason in the essence of things why the people should not collectively own the railroads and the mines, the shops and factories, and all the tools of production and distribution because all things are the collective product of society. If a few men can regulate these sources of wealth in the interests of the capitalist at the expense of the proletariat, the nation itself can better regulate them for the benefit of the common weal. If a mere fraction of society, in spite of the corruption and dishonesty consequent upon the profits wrung from the toil of men, can bring to such a high degree of efficiency the productivity of the race, an intelligently cohesive organisation of all the people can certainly achieve the same results with much less expenditure of labour and infinitely less misery and pain and injustice. In the nationalisation of industries the present waste of competition would be eliminated which would mean a saving of millions of pounds every year. Commodities would be produced for use and not for profit, and, therefore, all articles of consumption would have a fixed standard of quality and work-

manship guaranteed by the people. The nation being collectively the only producer, there could be no competition in the selling of goods. There would be no rival corporations trying to outdo one another by clever advertising.

Moreover, the wealth squandered in militarism is so great that it would build and equip hospitals and sanatoria and maintain all the invalids of the country in ease and luxury. "Counting only the armies of the six great powers on a peace footing, they amount to nearly three millions of men; and if we add the men permanently attached to the several fleets, we shall have considerably more than three millions of men in the prime of life withdrawn from productive labour and devoted nominally to defence, but really to attack and destruction. This, however, is only a portion of the loss. The expense of keeping these three millions of men in food and clothing, in weapons and all the paraphernalia of war; of keeping in a state of readiness the ships, fortifications, and batteries; of continually renewing the stores of all kinds; of pensions to retired officers and wounded men; and whatever other expenditures these vast military organisations entail, amounts to an annual sum of more than one hundred and eighty millions sterling. Now, as the average wages of a working man or his annual expenditure—considering the low wages and mode of living in



Russia, Italy, Austria, and the other Continental States—cannot be more than, say, twelve shillings a week or thirty pounds a year, an expenditure of one hundred and eighty million pounds implies the constant labour of at least six million other men in supporting this monstrous and utterly barbarous system of national armament. If to this number we add those employed in making good the public or private property destroyed in every war, or in smaller military or naval operations in Europe, we shall have about ten millions of men withdrawn from all useful or reproductive work, their lives directly devoted or indirectly to the Moloch of war, and who must therefore be supported by the remainder of the working community.” (Dr. Alfred R. Wallace, *The Wonderful Century*, p. 336.)

But besides this immense economic waste there is the still more terrible drain upon the nation's vitality, which crime and dishonesty make under capitalism. The industrial condition and their attendant physiologic impediments have more to do with sin than the deliberate malice of the will. “The starvation wages paid to young women in stores, factories, restaurants, etc., compel many of them to earn money elsewhere; and when they are thrown upon their own resources, unequipped by any training to earn their living, the temptation is very strong to barter away their virtue for what may seem to them adequate money rewards.

... Prostitution is very largely the effect of the unfortunate circumstances of these poor girls, and the material for brothels is largely recruited from the stores, the factories, and the sweetshops where they must work many and weary hours for cruelly small pay.” (James F. Scott, M.D., *The Sexual Instinct*, pp. 183, 184.) Dr. Sanger, in his “*History of Prostitution*,” gives equally conclusive proofs of the economic causes of this tragic evil. Abolish the wage-system and give to every working woman the entire product of her toil, and virtue will no longer be exchanged for bread. Socialism should arrest the thought and enlist the service of every lover of humanity for this reason alone; that it offers the only practical remedy for this paramount social evil.

Again, the curse of drunkenness is a direct outcome of the industrial inequalities of capitalism. A high medical authority, Dr. James C. Wilson, avers that “rum is at once the refuge and the snare of want, destitution, and sorrow. . . . Exhausting toil under unfavourable circumstances as regards heat, and confinement predisposes to drink, as in the case of foundrymen, workers in rolling mills, stokers and the like.

... Monotony of occupation, as in the case of cobblers, tailors, bakers, printers, etc., especially when associated with close, ill-ventilated work rooms, and long hours of toil, exerts a strong predisposing influ-



ence. . . . Bodily weakness and inability to cope with the daily tasks imposed by necessity impels great numbers of persons of feeble constitutions, especially among the labouring classes, to the abuse of alcohol." (Pepper's System of Medicine, vol. v., pp. 575, 576, 577.) Under Socialism, with the rapid improvements in labour-saving machinery, two hours a day of mental or physical work would be enough to supply all the needs of the collective people. The exhausting toil and vitiated conditions would be done away with, and, in consequence, the craving for stimulation of over-worked muscles would cease. Moreover, in those particular cases where the desire for strong drink is a heritage from preceding generations of out-worn nerves, Socialism would regulate the opportunities of over-indulgence, because the people themselves would own and control the sale of liquor for use and not for profit.

Socialism would gradually eradicate insanity, because it would afford the most suitable environment for physiologic growth. It would wipe out the slums; it would cast out the demon of profit whose temptations unsettle the minds of men; and it would, in a word, furnish every means for the maintenance of that "sound mind in a sound body" which is essential to normal life and thought.

To achieve these results, to abolish the incentives to crime, to remove the cause of

drunkenness and insanity, to lift fallen women from the mire, to establish economic freedom and happiness for the toiler, Socialism need not commit a single injustice towards any member of society. It simply requires that supreme justice be done unto all men. Socialism does not mean dividing up. It demands from every man his share of labour toward the social product on the ground that every man is debtor to his fellow man not only for the physical things of life, but also for the sustenance of the mind and heart. As Emerson phrases it, "we have our social strengths. Our affection towards others creates a sort of vantage or purchase which nothing can supply. I can do that by another which I cannot do alone. I can say to you what I cannot first say to myself. Other men are lenses through whom we read our own minds." (Representative Men; on the Uses of Great Men.) If all the wealth of the United States were distributed among the people, there would be only about 40 dollars for each man, woman, and child. Now Socialism does not want that each woman, child, and man shall have only 40 dollars. It wants each man, woman, and child to have the opportunity and the means of producing enough wealth to supply all the needs of body and soul. The dividing up which Socialism postulates is the division of the social product among those who work for society.



Socialism does not repudiate all private ownership, but only the private ownership of the tools, machinery, factories, railroads, mines, and whatever other things constitute the means of production and distribution of wealth. Under Socialism a man may privately own the product of his own labour and the commodities for which he exchanges his own labour. His clothes, books, food, house, piano, and carriage are his individual property when he has earned them by his own toil. But no man may privately own the earth nor any portion thereof; for the earth is the common property of mankind whence they are to derive the means of subsistence. Man has not created the land out of his own labour, and, consequently, no individual can justly claim it as his own. It is God's testament to the collective people of all ages. Similarly no man can appropriate to himself, and shut out all other men from the accumulated knowledge of the centuries because knowledge is a social product. Nor may any one man or set of men own the machinery of industry for the plain reason that all mechanical inventions are the crystallisation of the thought and genius and labour of thousands of men in every age and clime. "Every ship that comes to America got its chart from Columbus. Every novel is debtor to Homer. Every carpenter who shaves with a fore-plane borrows the genius of a forgotten

inventor. (Emerson, Representative Men, Essay f.) Since the social co-operation of men is necessary to the production of wealth to-day, the folly of private ownership of land and machines is apparent when you isolate the owner thereof from the help of all his fellow men. Let the millionaire stand alone without any servants to wait upon him, without any workers to operate his railroads and machinery, without anyone to bring him food, or make his shoes and clothes, let him be utterly excluded from the society and assistance of all other men, let him be compelled by necessity to make his own ploughs and till his own fields and his efforts would be only as the toil

"Of dropping buckets into empty wells  
And growing old in drawing nothing up."

Socialism, moreover, does not interfere with the home life except in so far as it liberates the family from the thralldom of industrial bondage. It does not, as Spencer so erroneously argues, demand that "the legislature must enact a national dietary, prescribe so many meals a day for each individual, fix the quantities and qualities of food, both for men and women, state the proportion of fluid, when to be taken, and of what kind, specify the amount of exercise and define its character, . . . and employ a sufficiency of duly qualified officials empowered to direct everyone's domestic



arrangements." (Social Statics, p. 407.) Socialism allows the largest individual liberty in such matters consistent with the public welfare. We have Boards of Health to-day in every big city, but no sane citizen complains that they unduly interfere with his domestic arrangements. These Boards of Health rightly interpose whenever anyone's domestic arrangements are of such an unsanitary nature as to endanger the health of the community. Socialism would do no more.

Socialism has nothing to do with the conscience of men. It does not dictate the dogmas nor mode of worship for the nation. Unfortunately there is a notion current among Churchmen that Socialism is anti-Christian, agnostic, and atheistic. It finds expression, for instance, in Bishop Quigley's wild statement that Socialism "denies the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, eternal punishment, . . . and the independence of the Church as a society complete in itself and founded by God." (The Literary Digest, April 12, 1902, p. 508.) As a matter of fact, Socialism has no more to do with religion than astronomy or biology. Socialism is an economic science, not a system of dogmatic beliefs. It is as much beyond the scope of Socialism to deal with Divine revelation as it is beyond the range of any political party to advance a new exegesis of the Davidic Psalms.

If there are atheists and infidels in the Socialist party, it is not the fault of Socialism. They have as much right to membership there as in any other political parties under a free Government. August Bebel's "Die Frau" is not a part of Socialism any more than Huxley's "Hebrew Essays" is a part of biology. There are many physicians who do not believe in God yet no man is so ignorant as to condemn the science of Therapeutics on that account. One does not enquire into the religion of the architect before admiring some Corinthian structure which he has designed, nor the particular affiliations of the bricklayer who built the walls of the house which one is about to buy or rent. From the data of his experiments in the laboratory, the chemist neither denies nor affirms the efficacy of the Atonement of the Christ; for the evident reason that the limits of his science forbid him to draw conclusions beyond the reaction and combination of his materials. The carpenter is not warranted in judging the grandeur and sublimity of Michael Angelo's gigantic statue of Moses by his rule and square; nor is the weaver justified in passing criticism upon the technique of a Motticelli merely by classifying the texture of the artist's canvas. No one science is the measure of all knowledge. The archaeologist is not to be taken to task, therefore, because his science does not set forth the full technical details for the operation



of laparomyomectomy; and the surgeon who would find fault with archaeology because it does not formally teach the proper process for an abdominal excision of a myoma would be just as unreasonable as the churchman who cries out against Socialism because it does not explicitly propound the dogmas of the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. The platform of Socialism calls for no ordained ministry just as the teachings of anatomy require no consecrated priesthood for their exposition. Wherefore, those churchmen who forbid their people to join the Socialist party exceed their authority in the same measure that they would exceed their authority if they commanded the members of their flock not to enter any other party or to take up the study of physics and chemistry.

Socialism has nothing to say against their preaching of future reward and punishment in another world, but it does insist from the economic point of view that

“It cannot be that all the years  
Of toil and care and grief we live,  
Shall find no recompense but tears,  
No sweet return that earth can give,  
That all that leads us to aspire  
And struggle onward to achieve,  
With every unattained desire  
Was given only to deceive.”

Socialism desires only the highest industrial welfare of the masses, confident that

economic well-being will contribute to the best intellectual and moral advancement of society. Socialism would abolish profit, usury, interest, and rent—the means whereby a few men now live in luxury upon the sweat and toil of their fellow men—and it would throw open the earth and the fulness thereof with equal opportunity to every son of Adam who is willing to work for the comforts and joys of life in unison with the cosmic efforts of humanity. Socialism would end all war, murder, and rapine by the establishment of that Brotherhood of Man whose dominant spirit is love and peace unto all the world. It would build huge iron-clad ships, not for the destruction of commerce and the tearing apart of human flesh, but for the transportation of the people and the orderly distribution of the products of their toil. It would sanctify labour, even as the Nazarene made holy the carpenter's bench, so that the humblest worker might stand as high in the esteem of his fellow men as the most exalted genius whom society nowadays lionizes. It would glorify the simplest toil and beautify with every resource of art the repellent ugliness of mill and factory. It would win for humanity the high resolve and the lofty inspiration which make work a pleasure, life a gladness, and heaven a mere transition from mortality to immortality. Envy and hate and scorn—the outcome of competition in the fight for bread—would



"Fold their tents like Arabs,  
And as silently steal away."

Socialism is the answer to the wail of discontent which has troubled the centuries through all the forward struggling of the race. Men are still battling in the gloom against poverty and pain, against the hopelessness of unending toil, against the tyranny of capitalism which holds their lives always in the prison-clasp of mine and shop and tenement, against the wretchedness and disease which lock them out from the glad sunlight and blitheness of body and soul, but Socialism

"Will send a cry upon these weary men,  
A cry to make the heart grow young again,  
A cry to comrades scattered and afar:  
'Be constellated, star by star;  
Give to all mortals justice and forgive—  
License must die that Liberty may live.  
Let Love shine through the fabric of the  
state—  
Love deathless, Love whose other name is  
Fate,  
Fear not, we cannot fail—  
The Vision will prevail,  
Truth is the Oath of God, and sure and  
fast,  
Though death and Hell hold onward to the  
last.'"

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