SOCIALISM

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Title Pages and Approvals

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BY THE

REV. JOSEPH RICKABY, S.J.

FOURTH EDITION, REVISED

TWENTY-SIXTH THOUSAND

SOCIALISM

By THE REV. JOSEPH RICKABY, S.J.

1. The Sores of Lazarus.

The sacred rights of property—yes, but there is something even more sacred than property, the lives and happiness of mankind. It is an often proved thesis that property is an institution natural and necessary ; a comforting doctrine to persons in easy circumstances. But these arguments for property are not the want of the times. Dives does not need them, and Lazarus will not heed them, not at least unless they be accompanied with a recognition of his grievances and a discourse of remedies for the same. The sacred duties of property, that is the theme to take up at present, even in the worldly interest of the propertied classes themselves. To parody a famous saying, property now is on its trial. If the existence of Dives is a benefit to Lazarus according to the order of nature, then well and good, Dives may be converted, and maintained in his estate ; but if his existence is a benefit to no one but himself, so much the worse for Dives in the time that is coming on the earth.

Lazarus can read; he has had some education: he can think ; and he does think the division of this world's goods between himself and Dives desperately unfair : and in his weakness he growls to his comrades in misery, "We will right this injustice some day."

2. What is Socialism ?

The means of redress held out to him by the oratory, poetry, journalism, and organizing power of a very active propaganda, is a plan called "Socialism." It is one of those inconvenient names that mean different things to different people. Socialism carried to an extreme, involves a transfer, sudden and probably violent, of all capital to the State, and that apparently without compensation to the sufferers by the change. There is nothing to prevent a good Catholic, or any reasonable man, if he sees his way to it, advocating that the State should pacifically and with due consideration of vested rights, take up now this form of capital, now that, and make it a government or communal monopoly ; and it is difficult to see where the absorption should stop ; only let it be done gradually and justly. But there must be some limit. I am about to argue that Socialism in its extremest form, implying the extinction of private capital and private commercial enterprise altogether, would be a huge and intolerable evil, abhorrent alike to the pious Catholic and to every other rational human being.

Whenever I speak of Socialism, I mean Socialism full-blown, unmitigated and extreme. It may take many forms. But as it is impossible here to discuss infinite possible amendments, I must beg leave to confine my remarks to one original proposal. That proposal at least is thoroughly Socialistic ; and we want to inquire what thorough-going Socialism would involve.

Socialism thus carried out means a posture of affairs in which a government of sheer democracy, just such as was proposed by Jean Jacques Rousseau, keeps in its own hands the whole of the capital, or producer's wealth, of the country. The government is purely democratic. The people, having manhood suffrage, make their own laws by their own direct vote, without Parliament or Senate, and hold the sovereign power in their own hands in such a way that all government officials are their nominees and bailiffs, removable at their will any day they choose. The people collectively is sole proprietor, not of all the wealth of the country, but of all the wealth that may lawfully be employed for producing other wealth by means of buying and selling, or other contracts. A man thus may own the house he lives in, the coat upon his back, the wine in his cellar, even the garden that grows cabbages for his table; but he may not hire hands to cultivate the garden, and then sell the produce; he may not build houses and rent them ; he may not import wine for the market. The State will be sole landlord, sole manufacturer, sole owner of shipping and railroads and all branches of the carrying trade, sole exploiter of mines, sole practitioner of medicine (taking fees), sole educator, sole keeper of wine and spirit vaults, sole merchant, and sole retail dealer—in a word, sole capitalist. The only way to wealth for the individual will be his own personal labour ; he will get nothing but the wages of his work. The utmost vigilance will be exerted to prevent his capitalizing his wages ; they are given him to consume, not to produce with. He may produce for himself if he can, but not for the market. It will be seen that there is no compulsion put on any man to work ; but he must either work himself, or have worked, or beg, borrow, or steal from some one who has worked, if he means to live.

Under this system mental labour will be rewarded as well as bodily. The work that feeds the imagination and ministers to the æsthetic taste will command a price no less than the labour which supplies the necessaries of life. Every one will receive pay who does work useful to the community, and no one else will receive anything. Skilled labour will be paid better than unskilled, not in proportion to the excellence of the work, but in proportion to the time that the workman, manual or

intellectual, may be supposed to have taken in acquiring his skill ; the apprenticeship will be counted into the value of the labour. Thus the value of labour will always be reckoned by time, the unit of value being the day of a labourer of average skill and diligence.

It is difficult to formulate proposals which crumble away in the act of putting them into definite shape and detail ; proposals the authors of which prefer to leave them vague and general ; or if any one has come forward with a scheme more detailed than the rest, the others are sure to protest that they are not answerable for the absurd details of his addition. No working-drawing, so to speak, of Socialism has yet been made by its architects. And yet some of them are bold enough to cry out for the demolition, sudden, violent, and total, of the present edifice of civilization. Before a man consents to have his house tumbled about his ears, he may well insist upon inspecting precise and accurate plans of the new palace into which he is invited to migrate.

There are two kinds of labour, storable and unstorable, or productive and ministrative. The former is such labour as making a coat, or writing a book ; book and coat can be stored up till there is a demand for them.

Ministrative labour is illustrated by a surgeon lancing an abscess, or an usher teaching a class. Whatever the labour be, some Socialists propose that the doers of it form a gild, and that gild have the monopoly in its own sphere—thus a joiners' gild, a tailors' gild, a shoemakers', a masons', a physicians', a schoolmasters'. The maker of a coat, then, will take his article to the gild stores, and receive his pay thence, if he be one of the fraternity ; otherwise he will not be authorized to make coats, except, if he chooses, for his own back. The gild will sell the coat. The writer of a book will take it to his literary gild, and they will pay him according to the number of days which they think it would have taken an ordinary man amongst their number to have written that work. But the surgeon and the schoolmaster have no work to take to their gild : who then shall remunerate them ? If they pocket their fee according to approved modern practice, they will not be members of the Co-operative Commonwealth, they will be working on their own account. It appears, therefore, that the patient or the pupil must carry his fee to the gild of physicians or the gild of preceptors, and the gild will pay their man for doing so many days' work.

Every gild will manage its own affairs, subject to the central control of the State—that is, of the whole people in meeting assembled. The State will fix, from time to time, a prescribed limit of production for the productive gilds ; how many tons of coal shall be raised, how much wheat grown, how much cloth woven, and the rest. This the State will be able to do by employing a school of statisticians, whose forecast will be received with deference by the people. Sometimes it will be necessary to order a large transference of workers from one gild to another. In this system it will be observed that whoever buys anything, buys it of the State, that is, of some gild over which the State has plenary dominion and control. The State, in like manner, buys all the marketable labour of the individual. The State, having full power over the individual, will always have an escape from bankruptcy by demanding his labour at a lower figure.

For the whole people to form one sovereign legislative assembly, the State cannot be very large. Nations will be resolved into myriads of sovereign cities or communes. These cities may federate together for mutual protection. Some Socialists, however, are opposed to the idea of federation, as infringing the liberty of the several component States. Some indeed go so far as to wish to get rid of the State itself, as barring the free action of the individual. But these are madmen.

Socialism, to be successful, would need to embrace the civilized world. Otherwise the threatened capitalists would hasten to transfer their wealth to countries where private capital was still allowed. It might even be worth while for some State to stand aloof from the Socialist movement, thus to grow rich at her neighbours' expense.

3. Socialism a Romance.

Still, man fell from Paradise, and might fall from Socialism. And it yet remains to see whether the Socialist State would be a paradise or a pandemonium, a heaven or a hell on earth. That will depend largely—chiefly, perhaps—on the spirit in which it is worked. But we must consider whether the institutions are such as, taking man as he is, are likely to be worked in a good spirit. The first advances of State Socialism were made more than two thousand years ago. They were confronted by one of the keenest practical intellects that ever lived, with this emphatic condemnation : " This style of legislation wears a good face and an air of philanthropy. No sooner is it heard than it is eagerly embraced, under the expectation of a marvellous love to grow out from it between man and man, especially if the proposer goes on to inveigh against the evils of existing institutions, setting all down to the want of a community of goods. These evils, however, are due, not to the want of a community of property, but to the depravity of human nature. For experience teaches that disputes are far more likely to occur among people who possess property in common and live as partners, than among those who hold their estates in separate tenure. The life proposed appears to be altogether impossible."[1]

[1] Aristotle, *Politics*, 2, 5.

There are a great many minds who are unable to withstand a brilliant picture set before their imagination. Their intellect is fascinated, their reason dazzled : they take what is set before them without argument, and hold it in spite of argument ; it is so airy, so romantic, it must be true. Socialism has made way under this advantage : it is a charming Utopia on paper.

4. Political Difficulties of Socialism.

The first difficulty about the scheme is a political one. Pure unmitigated democracy is to Socialism the very breath of its nostrils : for if the State owned all capital, and privileged classes ruled the State, where would the workman be? But pure democracy is a very hard government to work. There is no instance in history of its working over a large area and for a long period of time. But the area of government duties in the Socialist State would be very large indeed. Not only would it include all the functions of government proper, as at present carried on, but likewise the supreme management of business throughout the country. To be sure, those functions would be simplified by the absence of competition, but even in their simplest form the administrative duties would be enormous. The State might have armies of clerks to work for it : moreover, the several gilds, as proposed above, might each conduct their own affairs; but there would always remain the appeal to the general assembly, an appeal that would be made continually. The assembly, unless it were willing that the government should pass into bureaucracy and oligarchy, would exercise an active and meddlesome supervision over the gilds and their officers. It would be a body huge and unwieldy, established on the principle of a vote for every man, and every man one vote. Obstruction would flourish there rank and impassable, like the growth of an Indian jungle. The labour of legislation would supplant the labour of production. The people would be voting supplies when they should be working for them. To " run," as the Americans phrase it, the Social Democracy, there ought to be, as there was at Athens and at Rome, one set of men to work as slaves, and another set to legislate and adjudicate as citizens.[1] Thus only would there be shoulders broad enough to bear the immense burden of sovereign and proprietary right combined, which Socialists wish to devolve upon the sovereign people.

[1] Rousseau was shrewd enough to see this. He says of the Greeks: "Des esclaves faisaient ses travaux : sa grande affaire était sa liberté. . . . Quoi ! la liberté ne se maintient qu'à l'appui de la servitude ! Peut-être. Les deux excès se touchent" (*Du Contrat Social,* iii. 15.).

We are told in reply that the General Assembly, in Socialist times to come, will consist of people so highly educated, so wise to discern their own best good in the good of the commonwealth, so very unlike all people within our experience, the British House of Commons included, that there need be no fear of obstruction, over-legislation, partisanship, or any other of the infirmities that have beset popular assemblies in the past. In other words, we are requested to discard all the lessons of history in judging of Socialist proposals. By what other canon is it possible to judge them except the experience of the past ? " What is it that hath been ? The same thing that shall be."

Peoples have their favourites as well as kings. The favourite of a Social Democracy would be a very formidable personage. The lives, liberties, and property of all would be in his hands. It is the way of the multitude in politics to overlook principles which they cannot understand or see the application of, and stand by persons who excite their enthusiasm and sympathy. To these persons they blindly commit the management of concerns, as our large-tongued James committed himself and his kingdom to " Doggie Steenie." But this devotion to what our forefathers in Cromwell's time called " The Single Person " looks ominous for popular liberty. If ever in the Socialist State a Fighting Gild—in other words, a standing army—shall rise up by the side of the other gilds, the people may find some day that they and all their capital have passed into the ownership of a military despot.

5. The Proletariate.

So much for political difficulties. They have been the difficulties of democracies in past times, and Socialism will not be exempt from them. Rather, as being the most democratic of democracies, it will experience them in an aggravated form. There remains a social difficulty peculiarly incident to the constitution we are now considering. The only source of private wealth here will be wages. That is to say, wages will be the only lawful source : but it is not to be expected that the greed of having, and the dislike of working, will be extinguished in the heart of man. On the contrary, when wealth by the force of law and public opinion is made a mere thing to squander and enjoy, men will first scrape together a little wage, then quit work altogether and spend their earnings wildly; then come back with less inclination than before to work, agitate for higher wages, abuse their foremen, rant and cabal in the Assembly, steal the wages of a more industrious neighbour, embezzle the gild-money ; or they will borrow at usury, as gamblers contract their debts in disregard of legal sanction, from some canny workman who will let them have part of his wages for a consideration. Saving money for commercial gain is certainly not the noblest motive that a man can have for suppressing his spendthrift and riotous appetites : yet it is a motive, and one which poor humanity can ill afford to lose. That motive is flung aside and lost by Socialism.

There is an ugly foreign word, unknown to our fathers, that Socialists now use as a watchword, the Proletariate. It means the people who have nothing but their labour to live by, and who give birth to children as poor as themselves. Socialism promises to be the enfranchisement, aye, the enthronement, of the Proletariate. But Socialism once established would witness the speedy development of a Proletariate within the Proletariate thus ennobled and crowned. In the days when the workmen are to have all, and all are to be workmen, there will grow up in the vitals of this new society a class of drones, of workmen who have gone to the bad ; degraded, debauched, and dissolute creatures, whom no gild will employ, and who have no mind to belong anywhere where work is to be done. People like these—“ stinging drones ” Plato calls them—are, in countries like England and France at present, systematically coerced and kept under by force, the doing, Socialists say, of the bourgeoisie. But in the new republic to come they will be emancipated, on the principle that one man is as good as another : so they will sway from side to side like unsecured cargo in the hold of the political vessel. Their votes in the Assembly will be bidden for by the political adventurer, the Clodius of the future : one day they will shout for a Clodius, another for a Caesar. This is the revolution that is preparing in the womb of the Revolution itself.

It may be said that Socialism will disfranchise these drones, every man that will not work, and treat them as criminals. But that would be to make labour obligatory, an intention which at least some modern Socialists disclaim. Besides, once disfranchisement sets in, many may be found to deserve it.

6. The Iron Law.

The right and left arm of Socialism in argument are Karl Marx's Theory of Value and Lassalle's Iron Law of Wages. We will deal with the Iron Law first. There is a certain level of wages, the lowest that is sufficient to enable a workman to live and work, and leave children behind him to go on working when he is dead. If wages sink below this level, numbers of workmen die : and the scarcity of labour in the market brings wages up again to their normal level. If that level is exceeded, more children are born to working people, and more live : thus in time the labour-market is glutted and wages sink. The conclusion is that, as things are, the lot of the labouring classes can never be permanently improved : they and their children have nothing to hope for but a bare subsistence : they are iron-bound in toil and penury. Whence the further conclusion is drawn, that the labouring classes must break up the established order and the distinction between labourer and capitalist.

The Iron Law professes to state things as they must be. The first verification of such a statement is by comparison with things as they are. Now, looking at things as they are, we find that the Iron Law has been broken, is being broken, cancelled and removed, by the action of the Trades Unions. Socialists themselves explain that what they call bare subsistence must be taken with a certain latitude. It includes more in Queen Victoria's reign than it did in Queen Anne's. It means more for an Englishman than for a coolie. So the term may be stretched until it comes to signify quite a comfortable existence ; and when that limit is reached, the workman need no longer complain of the Iron Law. It depends in some measure on the workmen themselves to keep wages up towards this limit. This has been the object of the Trades Unions, an object not unsuccessfully pursued.

There are always two limits to wages, a superior and an inferior. The superior limit is the utmost that masters can afford to give ; the inferior is the least that workmen can afford to take. If the superior limit is past, the master closes his business : if the inferior limit is not attained, the workman dies of slow starvation. Where labour is very unproductive, the superior limit falls down upon the inferior: where the productiveness of labour generally is very great, the superior limit rises high above the other. That is the workman's opportunity. Then let him combine with his fellows to ask a high price : the master can afford it. Then he may live and flourish, and snap his fingers at the Iron Law.

The workman who does fall a victim to the Iron Law is the unfortunate person who, for one cause or another, cannot belong to any Union, and is glad to eke out a livelihood at any sacrifice. He comes under the operation of the " sweating system," and the worst of it is that he (or she, for it is too frequently a woman) is glad to be " sweated," the alternative being starvation. At this price of human misery we are supplied with cheap goods. But we need not raise the demon of Socialism to be rid of the sweating system. A more innocuous and more effectual remedy would be to relinquish the cheap goods, and pay honest prices for our luxuries to provide fair wages.

7. Karl Marx's Theory of Value.

But the right arm of Socialism, as I have said, is Karl Marx's Theory of Value. He presupposes the distinction between worth, or value in use, and value in exchange, or market-value. The *worth* of a thing is the esteem which its possessor has of its utility to him. Thus the convenience of being ferried across a river, thereby saving a seven miles' walk when I am short of time, has a worth in my eyes equal perhaps to £1. The market-value of that same passage, the ferry being a public one, is 1d. Value in exchange is measured by the commercial price of any article, or of a service rendered. Karl Marx, then, reasoned thus. The exchange value of a commodity, he said, is the amount of human labour that has been put into it. Take, for instance, a regimental coat. There was, to start with, a sheep, a work of nature ; but the shepherd laboured to rear and feed it, and to shear it : there was the carriage of the wool, the dyeing it, the manufacture of it into cloth, the tailoring. There has been large use of machinery in these processes, but the machines were made by man. The value of the coat is all this labour added together, all the human labour that such a coat involves. Moreover, Marx goes on, labour is estimated by the time that it takes a man to do it. Thus the value of the coat is the amount of man's time that has been spent in making it. It is obvious to object that at that rate the slower the workman, the more valuable the work. Marx replies that by time we must understand the time which an average workman would take over the task.

I waive for the present another objection with Marx's reply to it, and proceed to show how this theory is pursued to the destruction of capital. Suppose we have before us a consignment of five thousand regimental coats, fresh from the premises of Messrs. X. Y. Z., military tailors and outfitters. The coats are of considerable value : that is, they represent not a little of man's time spent in making them. Who created that value ? The man, it is answered, whose time and labour has been spent, and is contained as it were *jellified* in those coats. But who are those men ? X. Y. Z. ? Not a bit of it. Y. and Z. are away perhaps boating on Lake Lucerne; and X. has not been on the premises more than two hours a day, and has never laid a finger on the coats in any stage of their manufacture. The men who created that value are other workmen going before, and finally the workmen or " hands " of Messrs. X. Y. Z. But now who will pocket the price, the equivalent of that value? Messrs. X. Y. Z. will take it, and divide into three portions. With one they will pay for the raw material and machinery : one will be paid to their workmen as wages : the third portion, it is said, they will put into their own pockets, and on it live in luxury, doing no work, creating no value, but consuming the lives and devouring the labours of other men. Messrs. X. Y. Z. are capitalists. That third portion which they take to themselves, is termed " surplus value." Karl Marx proposes to abolish Messrs. X. Y. Z., and distribute that surplus value among the hands that created it, the workmen.

It is time to go back upon the objection that we waived just now. A carver in wood spends his time in turning out wooden imitations of cakes of Brown Windsor Soap. In ten days, working eight hours a day, he has turned out two hundred of these wooden tablets. No ordinary carver could have done the job in less. The man goes about to sell his products and can find none to buy them. In vain he relates how long he took to make them, and babbles of labour-jelly and Karl Marx : the public will not have them. They are no use. This brings Marx down to saying that by labour he means socially useful labour, or what society esteems such. Here is a vast alteration of the theory. Value, which had been all reduced to labour and time, is found to contain a totally different element, social utility. So the value

of labour itself is not the mere labour and toil of it, not the mere time that it took, or would have taken an average man ; but the issue or outcome of the labour to society is an important factor in its value.

It further appears that there are various orders of labour, some more useful to society than others, and therefore more valuable, time for time. In other words, we must consider the quality of labour, not merely the quantity. The attempt to reduce labour of high quality, or the best skilled labour, to quantity by referring it to the time spent in education or apprenticeship, is futile and absurd. Lord Wellington drove the French out of the Peninsula in something like five years : how long would it have taken an ordinary soldier, with Arthur Wellesley's education, to do the like? How long would the Duke of York, of Walcheren celebrity, have taken to do it ? As in war, so in medicine, literature, engineering, politics, business management, art, there are men whose labour is quite incommensurable with the labour of their fellows. There are born aristocrats, a nobility of nature's own creation. And there is every grade of quality between one man's labour and his neighbour's, the difference arising partly from natural endowment, partly from advantages of position. Thus the little finger of Caesar or Crassus is thicker than the loins of Drom : half an hour of Caesar's thought does what Dromo could not do in weeks, perhaps not in centuries. So blind, so misleading, so outrageously neglectful of the facts, is this conceit of reducing all value to labour, and all labour to time.

To return to Messrs. X. Y. Z., their "hands," and the regimental coats. These coats are valuable, not merely as representing a certain amount of labour, but as being tolerably well adapted to meet a public need. But who thought of adapting them ? Who foresaw the need and was forward to meet it? Who set up the machinery, improved and perfected it, bought up the raw material, got together the workmen, inspected and controlled them? All this is the doing of capitalists, not of the hands. It is not hand-labour, but it is labour of the highest social utility. Unless this be done, all the labour of the workmen is of no use at all, and has no value. So I have seen four horses dragging a load of timber up the slope of a hill, straining and bending to the weight, and by their side at his ease walked a man urging the animals with low cries : the horses carted the timber, but the man carted it too, the former as physical causes, the latter in the way of mental and moral causation ; and as the man would have been helpless to move the timber without the horses, so the horses without the man could never have carried it to any good end. But it will be urged, the capitalist is a man and the workmen are men too : the workmen then may replace the capitalist. Not if they continue to be workmen, that is, hand-labourers. You cannot have every one working with his hands. There must, as Socialists allow, be directors, statisticians, managers, whose work is mental, not manual; there must be men set aside for mental labour, as others are made over exclusively, this to one, this to another narrow province of manual labour. The labour and use of capitalists, and the value they create, are proved by the vast bureaucracy which Socialists are compelled to think of instituting in order to replace them. It is no more fair to deny the capitalist his profit, and call it unjust gain, because one has imagined a contrivance to work in his stead, than it would be fair of a capitalist to defraud his labourers of their wages, in view of a dreamy vision of machinery to come whereby he shall no longer need them. The present actual creator of social utilities is to have his reward in the present ; the coming man may look for his at the justice of future generations.

It is only fair to X. Y. Z. to observe that they do not spend all the so-called surplus value in living riotously : that is what Socialists advise workmen to do with the said surplus, when it comes to be distributed amongst them. But X. Y. Z. capitalize great part of it, and provide for work and production to come. Their investments are not always judicious, it is true ; but it is generally better to invest than to squander. More production means of itself higher wages ; and less production, lower wages.

Pressed by arguments like these, Socialists sometimes change their key, and tell us that at any rate Messrs X. Y. Z. are wonderfully well paid for their personal contribution to the value of their goods. As one puts it, " half the cake is a pretty dear price for overseeing its baking." But how many capitalists get half the cake, or a net profit equal to the sum of wages and other working expenses put together? Perhaps there ought to be higher wages ; certainly the capitalist has other duties to his workmen besides paying them their wages ; but it is a law of nature, from which even the Socialist Commonwealth will not be exempt, that the superintendent be better paid than the journeyman baker.

Under the direction of intelligence, labour has vastly increased the wealth of the world, an increase which Socialists are never weary of enlarging upon, while they forget that it is due, not to common labour merely, but also to the intelligence of the capitalist setting common labour to work under advantageous conditions.

8. The Unproductive Rich.

Beaten out of their first position, Socialists take up this second and stronger ground. " Granted that some capitalists can rightly claim a reward as productive causes, for example, a gentleman farmer, or the managing partner in a factory, or the lessee of a coal-pit, what shall we say of the young nobleman who owns this pit and half a dozen others, and who is lounging about Pall Mall or Rotten Row, with less knowledge of coal than a housemaid, and with less brains than four-fifths of the miners ? "

Personally, of course, he is not a productive cause, though his money is. But what good comes to society of his having that money and that exemption from all personal labour of production ? Why this, that such sinecures are the prizes of the intellectual labour that is thrown into the work of production. The managing partner, and the coal-pit lessee aforesaid, toils and moils in the hope that, before the evening of life, he shall have reached an opulence which shall enable him to spend the rest of his days exempt from the labour of producing, and moreover to hand over his store, undiminished by his period of rest, to his children. His ambition is *to found a family* in wealth. He works that his posterity may not have to work as he does. An ignoble desire, you say : but a potent moral cause of production. This second and further good comes from the existence of a class of unproductive capitalists, that society has available an array, as it were, of pensioners, who can, and who as a class do, undertake and perform a mass of ministrative duties. Of this class are our Cabinet Ministers, and our higher Public Service generally, our clergy, authors, scientific investigators, musicians, artists, poets, the men who refine our taste and brighten our lives. Society exists not for consumption alone, nor for consumption chiefly, and quite as little for production alone. Socialists, who are fond of the fable of the Belly and the Members, may remember that some organs in the body minister to higher purposes than those of nutrition and reproduction.

The class, then, of unproductive capitalists is valuable to society. The drones, who are found in this class as in every other class, and well-nigh in every family, high and low, should be induced to such labour as they are capable of by public opinion. There is no harm trying to render their position uncomfortable, even by law, if that can be done without destroying greater store of goods than they at present idly consume. For example, they may be taxed in proportion to their laziness and their luxury, if need be : but they are not a reason for overturning the whole Social Beehive, in the hope of building up the comb afresh on unnatural lines of Socialism.

9. The Healing of Lazarus.

There is no lack of remedies proposed. Temperance, Thrift, Emigration, National Insurance, Co-operation, Profit-sharing, all have their advocates, all are good in their way, none of them is all in all by itself. I have yet another remedy to add. It is not Charity, as that word is commonly understood in England. The science and art of almsgiving must be studied and practised by charitable societies for the relief of the sick and wounded in the battle of life, who cannot help themselves : but we do not want all the working classes on the sick list.

We must contrive to have fewer sick and wounded, by giving the workman a better chance of doing a stroke for himself. He has higher claims than those of charity on his employer. There is a virtue which the old schoolmen called *piety* : we might English it *family-feeling*. It imports the habitual love and care which the members of a family ought to have one for another. Family is from the Latin *familia*, by which the Romans understood all who were under the *paterfamilias*, namely, the wife, the children, (called *liberi*, or free subjects), and the bondsmen (*servi* or *famuli*, literally the *doers*, or workers, whence the name *familia*, from *facio*, I do).

We need to have the principle recognized, that workmen are part of the family of their employer, understanding *family* in this wide Roman sense : that he is their *paterfamilias* : that between him and them there exists a personal relationship, the observance of which is matter of the virtue of *piety*. Now piety is a virtue that binds with a closer tie than justice. It is justice to give to another his own. Justice supposes two terms, the giver and the receiver, mutually distinct. Therefore no man can be just to himself, strictly speaking. Nor does hard, fast justice run between those who are in some sense identified as one moral person, as between father and son, husband and wife, master and servant. This is the teaching of Aristotle. If the father harms the son, or the master the servant, he harms himself, a more wicked piece of mischief than is injustice done to a stranger.

This was the personal relationship, the family connection between master and man, recognized in theory at least in the ancient world, where there were slaves ; recognized in the Middle Ages as the relationship of lord and vassal ; and most cruelly discarded in modern times by the substitution of the conception that finds expression in the terms *employer* and *hands*.

The bond of family must be strengthened, and the sphere of duty of the *paterfamilias* enlarged. It is the depreciation of family ties that leads up to the rankest State Socialism. To that goal our large Companies, with their agents and "hands," are unconsciously tending. But the tendency may be arrested, and even Companies become paternal, by wishing it, and by delegating to their various agents in command of their workpeople the office of a father, not without support of course from the Company's purse. Thus a station-master might be responsible for the Company's servants employed under him, not merely as touches the Company's interest, but for their individual well-being, short of fussy interference, for there is excess in all things.[1]

[1] "It is a good investment in a money point of view, but far more in other ways, for a railway company to provide houses for its station-masters, porters, platelayers, and signalmen. A company in good credit ought to be able to build houses more cheaply than other people, and can afford to let them to its servants at a lower rent than people who build houses merely for profit ; and it is much to the advantage of the company to keep their men together, giving them an

interest in the company both while at work and when off duty."—*Railway Appliances*, by Barry (*Text-books of Science*), pp. 190–1.

It will be said that this taking of workmen within the family circle will mean their employer spending money on them over and above the wages that he pays them. A frightful supposition truly ! Horrible to think of obstacles being thrown in the way of the amassing of wealth !

Perhaps the selfishness of the master may find comfort in the Aristotelian teaching, that he who spends on his workpeople, that is, on his family, spends on himself. Perhaps he may reflect that his men will work to greater production by being better fed, better housed, less brutal, less immoral, and more loyal to his person.

After all, there is something beyond mere breath in the " For he's a jolly good fellow."

I fear, however, that the employer who starts this objection has but a poor idea of the end and purpose of money-making. Either he regards it as a means to enjoyment and ostentation, or as an end in itself. In either case he is a selfish man, a plague and embossed carbuncle in the flesh of society.

Capitalists of this mind—sober, respectable men as they are reputed to be—are to blame for the present and past misery of our labouring population. If no capitalist is possible except money-grubbers like these, it is waste of words to argue against Socialism : the Socialists are right, and Capital stands condemned.

The true end of money-making is for the good of the man's own family, whereof his workmen count for part, for the good of his native city or district, and for the good of his country. Whoever does not appreciate the motto, *Non sibi sed patriæ*, is unworthy of a high position amongst mankind.

But, in these present evil days at least, it will be urged, it is all that the masters can do to keep out of the bankruptcy court : if they spend any more on their workmen, they will be clean ruined.

One thinks of Macduff's keen inquiry, " Dost thou say all ? " All these cotton-spinners who rent the parks of decaying noblemen, all these provision-dealers who dress their wives in diamonds, all employers of labour who find money to fling away in the extravagances of the London season, who yacht in the Mediterranean, and fish in Norway, and buy up art-treasures in Italy—all will be ruined by an increase of attention and expenditure bestowed on the poor who are the props of their fortunes !

There certainly are capitalists whose backs another straw would break, and who are not now in a position to treat their workmen handsomely : these petty potentates in due course of nature must perish from the ranks of Capital.

It is much more certain that they will perish than that their wealthier brethren will awake to a sense of their duty. The times are unfavourable to small undertakings. Too many moneyed men have taken up the position of employer, attracted by the profits, and not thinking of the responsibilities; now the profits are gone, and they must go. The burden of employership must rest on broader shoulders.

10. Co-operation.

Hobbes, in the frontispiece of one of his works, exhibits the bust of a human figure, whose head, breast, and shoulders are made up of men packed together

We may take this for a figure of a Co-operative Society.

Co-operation may open a great future at once to the small capitalists and to the working man. It has certain drawbacks, notably the difficulty of getting good managers ; still the cause looks hopeful. Even more hopeful still is Profit-sharing, which gives workmen a direct interest in the profits which their labour helps to produce.

The effect hence anticipated is to make "industrial divisions vertical, not horizontal," the workman's interests being " bound up with those of his employer, and pitted in fair competition against those of other workmen and employers " (Jevons).

11. Honour to Masters.

Flattery of the lower orders is as base and mischievous as the flattering of kings. It is plain truth to tell, and wholesome to hear, that the great multitude of the poor, who are always with us, have a choice to make, an alternative dictated by nature, between misery joined to independence on the one hand, and comfort along with dependence on the other. In the present deplorable state of society a third alternative widely obtains, to wit, abject misery and dependence conjoined. But if ever the good time comes when employers as a body shall take up an attitude of fatherly piety toward their men ; shall abstain from gains, the outcome of paying a starvation wage ; shall see to the housing of their people, shall visit them, know them, and be proud of their bright, happy faces, as of the young olive-plants about their own table : if ever this shall come to pass, it can only be by the workman assuming a reciprocal attitude towards his employer, an attitude of respect, love, and loyalty, and a readiness to consider his master's opinions—in fact, obedience without servility and deference short of blind worship. The employer cannot be a father, where the employed will not behave like a son. A grown-up son, if you like, and emancipated from paternal dominion, but a son for all that, mindful of the Commandment, " Honour thy father." The old song must no more be heard, " I care for nobody," with its doleful addition, " and nobody cares for me." The workman must put away at once the pride of independence and the grief of the castaway.[1]

[1] In time, however, the dismissal of a workman may become so heavy a ban as to require a court of arbitration to pronounce it. In time too we may revert to the old Saxon rule, *no man without a hlaford* (lord) ; *i.e.,* no labourer at a loose end, destitute of land and capital, and not belonging to any employer, or *gild* or *gang* of working men. Sudden spurts of work may then be met by contracting with the foremen of these gangs or gilds, or with other masters for the loan of their staff.

12. Augury of the Future.

It is presumptuous to prophesy, but one may hazard a guess as to distribution of wealth in the future. First, then, there will be large private capitalists, with or without profit-sharing. These will be incorporated frequently in wealthy companies. Small capitalists standing by themselves will grow fewer and fewer. Hesiod of old sang:

> Small craft praise and admire, but stow thou thy wares in a large ship.

So it is, that trade is entering into waters where nothing will float but either large argosies or large flotillas.

Secondly, there will be individuals of small means, half capitalist and half workman, banded together in common enterprises of Co-operation and Profit-sharing.

Thirdly, most wonderful event of all, there will be large municipal or communal property, mills, mines, stores, land, and particularly workmen's dwelling-houses. Local government in those days will be vastly developed, and great part of the total taxation will be under municipal control.

In that day, the working man will have the shrewdness to perceive, that it is much more his interest to have a potent voice in the management of municipal affairs than in the government of the empire. Municipal capital, therefore, will be fairly controlled by the workers : it will not be mere matter of *bourgeoisie* jobbery.

The men employed in the corporation works will live in the corporation dwelling-houses. The liberal treatment they receive, so to speak, at their own hands, will compel all private employers and companies, if they mean to find men to work for them, to treat their workpeople well, and especially to see them well lodged.

But this is Socialism ! No, it is not. Socialism allows of no private capital whatever. I look forward in ages to come to see private capital and communal capital working side by side in amicable and advantageous competition, the presence of either operating as a corrective to the peculiar abuses to which its rival is liable.

13. Need of Motive Power from Above.

In considering this or any other sketch of arrangements contemplated, we must stand on our guard against what is perhaps the master delusion of Socialism : I mean the idea that any imaginable constitution of society whatever has virtue enough in itself to render oppression impossible. Happiness and good order do not spring from mere environment. Perhaps it is their habitual conversation in mills and workshops that helps Socialists to imagine that human well-being might be manufactured like any other product, could we only erect the requisite machinery.

Give a man, they say, an interest in the interest of his fellows ; let him find himself benefited in the common good ; and he will remain indeed selfish as before, but his selfishness will work no harm, it will all turn to the good of the community. In being selfish he will be public-spirited. He will commit no crime against society, simply because he will be beyond the reach of temptation.

How can a man steal, who abounds in bread ? or commit adultery, where there is every facility for divorce ? or be idle, when by wages he must live ? or perjure himself, when he believes in no God ? or commit murder, when every man he meets is his partner and help-mate? How indeed?

Shrewd old Aristotle has an answer to the point, which I think worth quoting with some adaptation here :

> "It is not only for the necessaries of life that men commit crime, for which Socialists think to find a remedy in the confiscation of capital, so that people may not turn highwaymen for cold or hunger ; a further temptation is the longing to get gratification and appease desire. For if people have a desire of something beyond the necessaries of life, they will commit crimes to satisfy that craving. Nay, they will form to themselves artificial desires, that they may have gratification without paying for it by previous uneasiness. . . . As a matter of fact, it is the superfluities rather than the bare necessaries of life, which are the motives of the most heinous crimes. Men do not usurp a kingdom to get out of the cold. . . . It is solely as a preventive of petty crimes that the principle of the Socialist polity is efficacious. . . . No doubt there is a certain advantage in Democratic Socialism as a safeguard against the rivalry of classes, but it is nothing to boast of. For in the first place the men of light and leading, the possessors of ability and ingenuity, will take umbrage at not being set above the rest, as they deserve, and will turn to attacking the Constitution and sowing sedition. And secondly, *there is no satisfying the greed of human kind.*[1] People are content at first with an allowance of two shillings, but no sooner is this the constitutional sum than they claim a larger one, and so on *ad infinitum*. For it is of the nature of desire to extend indefinitely, and the mass of mankind live for the gratification of desire."[2]

[1] The Professor of Greek in the Socialist Commonwealth will often have these words on his lips.

[2] Aristotle, *Politics*, ii. 7, with slight adaptation.

Aristotle mentions philosophy as a remedy. Under a purely natural dispensation philosophy would have been the guide of life. But in the present order of Providence, not philosophy but the faith of Christ is appointed to lead man to his goal.

That goal is beyond this world, that we may so pass through the good things of life as to arrive at eternal joys.

As things stand, there is no way to those joys except by faith in Christ.

Christian "godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."[3]

[3] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

It is a mistake to look upon Christianity as a necessary institution indeed for bringing up men for heaven, but a drawback and disadvantage to their temporal estate.[4]

[4] Pius IX. in the *Syllabus*, n. 40, condemned the proposition that "The doctrine of the Catholic Church is adverse to the interests and well-being of human society."

Mankind cannot prosper as a race unless they live for heaven ; and living for heaven in the actual order of things means Christianity.

There is no other name under heaven given to men but the name of Jesus, whereby we must be either saved eternally or rescued from present social miseries.

There is no other love but the love of Jesus Christ, that can take the selfishness out of a man.

Demagogues, philanthropists, are all selfish—they want to advertise themselves, unless the love of the Crucified has taught them the art of self-suppression.

There is nothing but the vision and hope of good things beyond this world, that can thoroughly loosen a man's heart from honour and money and what money can buy.[5] But we need unselfishness and detachment—poverty of spirit, in fact—that human society as a whole may thrive and prosper.

[5] "No conviction that unselfishness pays, has ever made any man permanently and persistently unselfish" (Balfour)

If a man looks upon intoxicating drink as the supreme good of humanity, that very persuasion disqualifies him for taking his drink wisely.

Part of the reformation of a drunkard, or of any sensualist, is the creation in him of higher tastes.

But whoever takes the supreme good to be money, whether in the shape of capital or wages, it matters not—whoever has set his whole heart on money and its incidents, is as incapable of using his money well as the drunkard his wine.

Whatever we take to be the supreme good, we want to have as much as possible of it for ourselves—the drunkard all the liquor he can carry ; the worshipper of wealth and wages, all the money and luxuries he can lay his hands on.

Both men are thoroughly selfish : they are unfit co-operators in any social scheme : they will wrangle and squander, peculate and revolutionize.

I speak of what will occur in the world generally.

Man's nature needs to be spiritualized that we may deal with temporal goods unselfishly.

Never was there greater infatuation than the Socialist proposal, to set all mankind a-hungering after material goods alone, and then to make men up into fraternities and co-partnerships, in the fond expectation that they will not rend and prey upon one another.

The survival of the fittest—in popular language, the weakest to the wall—is a stern law of nature. It works itself out too little checked in the present capitalist system. It will work itself out under any system than can be proposed, Co-operation, Profit-sharing, Socialism—except it be counteracted by the further law of faith, hope, and charity, causing the stronger to hold their hand.

But Socialism rejects faith, hope, and charity.

It levies war alike on Capital and on Christianity.

It has yet to learn that Christianity is the stronger institution of the two.