

under the collectivist system there will be no paralyses of trade. It professes that, unlike capitalistic society, it will not labour at hazard, but so accurately estimate demands and needs as to hold in constant equilibrium every kind of supply with every kind of requirement; and that by securing for the labourers a larger remuneration it will render them more competent throughout the whole range of production to purchase and consume. But this is only vain boasting. It has in nowise shown that it will be able to do either of these things. Besides, crises in trade are largely due to natural causes, and to conjunctures or overpowering chains or combinations of circumstances, many of which men can neither foresee nor control. And even could they be so far mastered by means of a strenuous regulation of needs and compulsion of individual tastes, Democratic Collectivism would be, in virtue of its extremely democratic character, of all systems the least competent to perform so unpleasant, unpopular, and tremendous a task. "The eternal unrest and disturbance of this administrative guidance of production, together with the capricious changes of desire and demand in the sovereign people, would most certainly increase, to an extraordinary degree, the tyrannous fatality of these ever recurrent crises."

10. Democratic Collectivism promises to abolish what it regards as the slavery of the wage-system. The system, however, by which it would do so is one far more justly chargeable with involving slavery. As regards this argument see the words already quoted on p. 59.

These arguments are all extremely worthy of consideration for their own sakes. They fully sustain Dr. Schaffle's contention that Social Democracy "can never fulfil a single one of its glowing promises." They have, however, a further interest simply as coming from Dr. Schaffle. His earlier work, the "Quintessence of Socialism," 1878, was widely regarded as not only a socialistic production, but as the only production of the kind which had succeeded in showing that Collectivism was not an altogether impracticable and impossible scheme. Marx and his coadjutors had done nothing in this direction; their work had been merely critical and destructive. Schaffle undertook the task which they had not ventured on, and made Collectivism look as plausible as possible. He presented the case for it so

skilfully indeed, that all those who have since attempted to show its practicability have done little else than substantially repeat what he had said. It cannot, then, be reasonably averred that he has not thoroughly understood what Collectivism means, and is worth; that he has not comprehended it profoundly, and from within. Yet what is his real opinion of it? That we learn from the supplement to the "Quintessence"—from the "Impossibility of Social Democracy," 1884. It is a very definite and decided opinion—the conviction that "the faith in the millennial kingdom of Democratic Collectivism is a mere bigotry and superstition, and as uncouth a one as has ever been cherished in any age." As was, perhaps, to be expected, those who had received the earlier work with jubilation, entered into "a conspiracy of silence" regarding the latter.*

* Among the many able works which have been published in refutation of Collectivism the most conclusive and satisfactory on the whole, in the opinion of the present writer, is M. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu's "Le Collectivisme, examen critique du nouveau socialisme." 3^e éd. 1893.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION.

SOCIALISM is a theory as to the organisation of society. It has done good service by insisting on the need for more and better social organisation. It was especially by the boldness and keenness of their criticism of the actual constitution of society that the founders of modern Socialism—Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen—drew attention to themselves, and gained a hearing for their proposals. And so has it been with their successors. It is largely because of the amount of truth in their teaching as to the prevalence of disorder and anarchy, disease and misery in society, that their views have obtained so large a measure of sympathy and success.

Nor is this other than natural, seeing that society is really in every organ, portion, and department of it in a far from satisfactory condition. There is no profession without either just grievances or unjust privileges. Land is, in general, poorly remunerative to its proprietors; farming is precarious: and agricultural labourers are depressed and discontented not without reasons. The war between labour and capital becomes increasingly embittered and dangerous. There can be no reasonable doubt that in not a few occupations men and women are working far

too many hours, and are consequently left without time and strength for living fully human lives. It is unquestionable that under the guise of business hateful injustice is perpetrated to an enormous extent; and that by lying devices, dishonest tricks, heartless practices, a large number of persons reputed respectable beggar their neighbours and enrich themselves. It is terrible to think of the physical and moral condition and surroundings of multitudes of human beings in many of our large towns; and of all the misery and vice implied in the statistics of drunkenness, prostitution, and crime in this empire.

The socialistic criticism of society as at present constituted has not only been directly and wholly useful in so far as it has been temperate and well-founded; it has also been indirectly and partially useful even when passionate and exaggerated, as it has almost always been. By its very violence and onesidedness it has provoked counter-criticism, and led to closer and more comprehensive investigation. It has contributed to a general recognition of the necessity of instituting careful and systematic inquiries into the social difficulties and evils with which it is contemplated to deal by legislation and collective action. And this is an important gain. A thorough diagnosis is as necessary to the cure of social as of bodily diseases. Of many social troubles and grievances an adequate knowledge would of itself go far to secure the removal; in regard to all of them it is the indispensable condition of effective remedial measures. Ignorant intervention, however benevolent, only complicates the difficulties which

it seeks to solve, and aggravates the evils which it hopes to cure.

As to the practicability of social organisation Socialism cannot be charged with the lack either of faith or hope. Its leading representatives to-day show the same sort of simple and credulous confidence in their ability to transform and beautify society which was so conspicuous in Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Cabet. It is possible, indeed, as the example of Von Hartmann proves, to combine Socialism with Pessimism, at least to the extent of believing that it will inevitably come, yet only as a stage of illusion and misery in the course of humanity towards annihilation. But this conjunction is rare, and probably not to be met with at all outside a small philosophical circle. As a rule Socialists take an extremely rosy view of the near future even when they take a most gloomy view of the entire past.

And in this confidence and hopefulness there is undoubtedly something true and worthy of commendation. Faith and hope are necessary to those who would face aright the future and its duties. And there are good reasons for cherishing them within certain limits: namely, all the evidences which we have for concluding that there has been progress or improvement in the past; that there exists an Eternal Power which makes for righteousness; and that the evils which afflict society are in their very nature curable or diminishable by individual and collective effort. But faith is never wholly good except when entirely conformed to reason; nor is

hope ever wholly good except when it is entirely accordant with the laws and lessons of experience. The faith and hope of Socialism, however, even when it claims to be scientific, largely outrun reason and ignore experience; they are largely the most childish simplicity and credulity. If they have saved, as some suppose, a large section of the working classes from pessimistic despair, it is so far well; yet there must be serious danger of a reaction when the extent of their irrationality is discovered.

The great ends of life can by no means be so easily or readily realised as Socialists imply in their schemes of social organisation. Labour is the law of life; hard labour is the sign of earnest life. In the sweat of the brow the vast majority of men must eat their bread. In the sweat of the brain the mental worker must hammer out his thoughts. In the bloody sweat of a broken heart the martyr must consummate his sacrifice. So has it been for ages on ages, and so it is likely to be for ages on ages to come, even until man is altogether different from what he is now, and no longer needs the stimulus of hardship or the correction of suffering. Life has obviously not been meant, on the whole, to be easy, devoid of strain, untried by misery and affliction. And those who tell us that they have some scheme by which they can make it so are fanatics or charlatans.

It is much more difficult to become rich, or even to get a moderate portion of the good things of this life, than Socialists admit. There is no class of creatures in the world of which some do not die of

starvation. Why should man be an exception? * Man, it is true, is better than a beast; but just because he is so, suffering has more and higher uses to him than to a beast. He has reason, and therefore is capable of indefinite progress while the lower creatures are not; but therefore also he is liable to innumerable aberrations from which they are exempt, and which he can only slowly learn

* This question and the sentence which precedes it, called forth the following observations from the editor of "Progress, the Organ of the Salem Literary Society, Leeds" (November 1892): "These words occur in an article on Socialism and Social Organisation, which appeared in the September number of *Good Words*. The writer of the article is Dr. Flint, a Professor of Divinity of Edinburgh, and the author of some well-known works on Theism. *Good Words* is a Christian paper, and Dr. Flint is a Christian man, but his words reveal a cold, hopeless, and most sceptical pessimism. Christianity may well pray to be delivered from its apologists. Here is an acknowledged defender of the Christian faith calmly asking why man should be an exception to the law, that 'of every class of creatures some must die of starvation.' Dr. Flint's statement could be passed over with comparative indifference if there were no reason to fear that what he expresses with such unblushing candour was the tacit belief of a great many Christian men, sometimes finding milder expressions in the misread words of Jesus Christ, 'The poor ye have always with you.' We admit with Professor Flint that the great ends of life cannot be easily reached; that labour is the law of life: that the vast majority of men must eat their bread in the sweat of their brow. But we emphatically deny that there is any *law of nature* which dooms a man who has industriously striven after a livelihood to die of starvation. Such a belief belongs to antiquated and discredited political economy. Did we cherish it, it would work more mischief to our Theism than all Professor Flint's elaborate theories could repair. It is not true, it never has been true, and it is not likely to be true, that there is any real pressure of population upon the means of subsistence. The world's fields stand white unto the harvest. Nature's resources are infinite, she has heaped up in her vast storehouses food and fuel and raiment for all. Nature is no niggard, with ungrudging hand she yields her treasures to those who seek them with industry and patience. None need go empty away. We do not forget that Nature has other than a smiling face. Famine and pestilence and storm have slain their thousands. But history is the record of man's conquest over Nature. It is his privilege to wrest from Nature her secrets,

to detect and abandon in the school of want and adversity.

No distribution of the present wealth of the world would give plenty to every one. Were all the gold supposed to be in the world at present equally distributed each person would hardly get a sovereign a piece. Were all the land in Britain equally distributed among its inhabitants each person could

to make the crooked places straight, and the rough places plain; to make the wilderness and the solitary place glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as a rose. There is enough of mystery in life—the mystery of sin and pain and death—without making life more mysterious still by teaching that there are men born into this world who by irrevocable natural law are destined to die of slow starvation."

Now, neither in the words animadverted on, nor in any other words which I have written, have I either affirmed or implied that there is "*any law of nature* which dooms a man who has industriously striven after a livelihood to die of starvation," or that "there are men born into this world who by irrevocable natural law are destined to die of slow starvation." In referring to what Lassalle and his followers have said of the so-called "iron law of wages," I have explicitly indicated my entire disbelief in such laws. Dr. Thomas Chalmers loved to expatiate "on the capacities of the world for making a virtuous species happy." I am far from denying that it has such capacities. I readily admit that the miseries of society are mainly due not to the defects of the world, but to the errors and faults of man. Were the human race perfect in intellect, disposition, and conduct, possibly not only no human being but no harmless or useful beast would be allowed to die of starvation. Were it so the pressure of population upon the means of subsistence would, of course, be unknown. It is, however, actual, not ideal, human nature, real, not hypothetical human beings, that we must have in view when discussing practical social questions. When my critic denies that population has ever pressed on the means of subsistence he denies facts without number. His panegyric on the bountifulness of Nature will surely not apply to the Sahara or the Arctic regions, or even to Donegal or Connemara. History has been the record of man's conquest over Nature only to a limited extent, and it has been the record also of much else—of much that is painful and shameful. Neither Theism nor Christianity can be truly benefited by ignoring facts or indulging in rhetorical exaggeration. A sceptical pessimism is bad, but so likewise is a shallow and illusory optimism.

not get quite two acres. Were all the rents of all the landowners in Britain appropriated by the nation to pay the taxes they would be insufficient to pay them. Were the people of France grouped into households of four individuals each, and the whole annual income of France equally apportioned among them, each of these households, it has been calculated, would only receive about three francs a day. Were, even in those trades where there are the largest capitalists, the workmen to obtain all the profits of the capitalists to themselves, in scarcely any case would they receive four shillings per week more than they do.

Most workmen can save more weekly by the exercise of good sense and self-denial than the State could afford to give them beyond what they already receive were Collectivism established even without expense. The spontaneous bounties of earth become yearly less adequate to support its inhabitants. Each new generation is thrown more on its own powers of invention and exertion. Individuals may find "short cuts" to wealth, or even "break through and steal" their neighbours' property; but there is no public royal road to wealth; no other honest path for the great majority of men even to a competency of external goods than that of self-denial and toil.

The way to happiness is still more difficult to discover and follow than that to wealth. They are very different ways, and often those who find the one lose the other. "Men," said Hobbes, "are never less at ease than when most at ease." "The

more things improve," says Mr. Spencer, "the louder become the exclamations about their badness." History abounds in facts which warrant these statements. And one of the most striking of them is that although the workmen of Europe never had so much freedom and power, or received so large a proportion of the wealth of Europe, as since the triumph of free-trade and the introduction of machinery and the rise of the large industrial system, yet an enormous number of them believe that never till then had their class been so robbed, enslaved, and afflicted, and that never was there more need than at present to revolutionise society, and to reconstruct it on altogether new principles.*

I blame them not; and still less do I blame the Power which has made human nature so that the more it gets the more it would have, and that attainment rarely brings to it contentment, or outward prosperity inward satisfaction; for I see that unhappiness and discontent have uses in the education of mankind, and functions in history,

* That men with merely the education of ordinary workmen should be able to believe their condition worse than that of the workmen of all former generations is, of course, but little surprising, when men like Wm. Morris and E. Belfort Bax can gravely assert that "*the whole of our unskilled labouring classes are in a far worse position as to food, housing, and clothing than any but the extreme fringe of the corresponding class in the Middle Ages*" ("Socialism, its Growth and Outcome," p. 79). It is to be regretted that none of those who have made assertions of this kind have attempted to prove them, although they could hardly have failed to perceive that if they succeeded they would thereby not only make a most valuable contribution to historical science, but inflict a really fatal blow on the civilisation which they detest. Julius Wolf, in his "System der Socialpolitik." Bd. i. pp. 375-389, has some interesting remarks on such assertions, and on the state of mind in which they originate.

which abundantly justify their existence. But I cannot take due account either of the character of human nature or of the history of the operative classes without inferring that if working men believe, as Socialists endeavour to persuade them to believe, that were Communism or Collectivism even established and found to possess all the economic advantages which have been ascribed to them, unhappiness and discontent would thereby be lessened, they are lamentably easy to delude. The sources of human misery are not so easily stopped. Dissatisfaction will not be conjured away by any change in the mere economic arrangements of society. Before as after all such changes there will be not only discontent but the risks of disorder, conspiracy, and revolution, which at present exist. Collectivism will need its police and its soldiers, its tribunals and prisons and armaments, just like Industrialism. Good reasons, indeed, might, I think, be given for holding that it must require a larger force at its disposal to crush rebellion and ensure peace.

Excellence of every kind is, like happiness, very difficult to attain. None of the ideal aims implicit in our nature can be fully realised: and even approximations thereto can only be made through toil and self-denial. To become proficient in any department of learning, science, or art, a man must not only have superior and appropriate abilities, but make a patient, strenuous, and anxious use of them. It is only the very few who with their utmost exertion can attain high eminence, true greatness, of any kind. The late M. Littré's ordinary day of intel-

lectual toil, was during a considerable period of his life, about fourteen hours; and the labours of mind are certainly not less exhausting than those of body.

The way of perfect duty is the hardest way of all. We have been told that it is "easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," that kingdom which is righteousness and purity and peace of spirit. Is it easier for the poor to enter in? When I consider their temptations and difficulties I fear that it may often not be so.

Manifestly we have not been made for ease and happiness in this world. Manifestly those who would persuade us that merely to alter our social arrangements will go far to secure our welfare are mistaken. An illusion so childish is unworthy of grown men, and the more plainly those who foster it or cherish it are told so the better. We should look at the world as it is; face life as it is; seek no earthly paradise, as it is sure to be only a fool's paradise; and be content patiently to endure hardships and resolutely to encounter obstacles, if thereby we can improve even a little either ourselves or our fellow-men.

We have no right to expect to see in our days complete social organisation, or any near approximation to it. Social organisation proceeds with varying rates of rapidity at different times and in different places, but on the whole slowly. It is not accomplished by leaps and bounds. It is a continuous process, which began with the beginning of society, and has never been quite arrested, but which has

always been only a gradual transformation of the old into the new through slight but repeated modifications. Society has been always organic, and, therefore, has been always organising or disorganising itself; it is organic now, and, therefore, at every point the subject of organisation or disorganisation. It is not a collection or mass of inorganic materials capable of being organised at will, as wood, stone, and metals can be built up into a house according to a given plan, and as rapidly as may be wished. The power of statesmen in relation to the organisation of society is slight in comparison with the power of builders and engineers in relation to houses and bridges. Society must organise itself by a slow and multifarious evolution.

Now, it is not even denied by contemporary Socialists that their predecessors overlooked the truth just indicated, and, in consequence, failed to fulfil the promises which they made, and to justify the hopes which they awakened; that Owen, Saint-Simon, and Fourier, for instance, proceeded on the assumption that they could organise society according to their several ideals and schemes without troubling themselves much as to its own natural evolution; and that the result was that their systems were essentially Utopian, quite unrealisable on any large scale. What the socialistic theorists of to-day tell us is that they have got wholly rid of this error; that Socialism has ceased to be Utopian, and is now scientific; that instead of contravening historical evolution the new Socialism is based upon it; and that its adherents do not "look for anything but

the gradual passing of the old order into the new, without breach of continuity or abrupt general change of social tissue."

Such statements are not to be implicitly trusted. For, first, a theoretical belief in the necessarily gradual evolution of society is quite compatible with practical disregard of its natural and rational consequences. Saint-Simon and Fourier, like Condorcet before them, saw more clearly than the bulk of their contemporaries that the history of mankind had been a slow and continuous development, and yet they extravagantly deceived themselves as to the rate and character of social organisation in the future. Auguste Comte had quite as firm a grasp of the conception of historical evolution as Carl Marx, and yet he believed that his ludicrous religion of humanity would be established throughout the West during the present century; in seven years afterwards over the monotheistic East; and in thirteen years more, by the conversion and regeneration of all the polytheistic and fetichist peoples, over the whole earth. It is not less possible for even cultured and intellectual Marxist Collectivists, and evolutionist Socialists of other types, to be as credulous; and most of them, I imagine, are so.

They argue that Collectivism, for example, is inevitably arising from industrialism, as industrialism arose from feudalism, and because they thus reason from a scientific conception or theory, that of historical evolution, they conclude that they must be sober scientific thinkers. But even if the argu-

ment were good, it would not warrant expectation of the establishment of Collectivism in Europe until three or four hundred years from this date. It has taken considerably more than that length of time for industrialism to grow out of feudalism. I should be much surprised, however, to learn that more than a very few of the reputedly most scientific Collectivists are not fancying that Collectivism will come almost as speedily as Comte supposed the Positivist organisation of society would come. Of course, I admit that were they less credulous and optimist they would be also less popular as prophets, less persuasive as proselytisers. To set forth at Hyde Park corner on a Sunday evening that the collectivist régime might be expected to begin about the year 2300, supposing no unforeseen conjunctures or catastrophes powerful enough absolutely to prevent or indefinitely to delay its advent intervened, would not, indeed, gain many converts. To do so in an assemblage of professedly scientific Socialists, believers alike in Marx and Darwin, at Berlin or Paris on the first of May, might be dangerous.

Further, no evidences of the reality of an historical evolution towards Socialism properly so called have as yet been produced. The attempts made by Marx and others to prove that in societies which adopt the principles of industrial freedom the rich will inevitably grow richer and the poor poorer, and the number of landed proprietors and manufacturing and commercial capitalists steadily diminish through the ruin of the smaller ones by the larger, until all wealth is concentrated in the

hands of a few magnates on whom the rest of the population is entirely dependent for the necessaries of life, are obvious failures. Free trade in land can be shown to tend to a rational subdivision of the land. Where it has become the property of a few the chief causes thereof have been improper restrictions on liberty as to its sale and purchase. When Marx wrote there was some excuse for supposing that the growth of our industrial and commercial system was steadily tending to the extinction of all capitalists except the largest; but there is none for it now when the system may be everywhere seen to necessitate by the very magnitude of its operations the combination of numerous capitalists, large and small, in single undertakings of all sorts. The vast manufactories and gigantic commercial enterprises of the present day, instead of lessening are greatly increasing the number of capitalists, and facilitating the entrance of workmen into the ranks of capitalists. A multitude of the peasant proprietors of France, and many of the *cochers de fiacre* of Paris, were investors in the unfortunate Panama scheme.

It must be added that the present order of society cannot possibly pass into Collectivism by evolution. If it do so at all it must be through revolution. It is conceivable, although most improbable, that a time may come when all the possessors of capital in Great Britain will deposit their capitals in a vast fund to be administered and employed by one directing body; and that this result may be brought about by a process of historical evolution going on from day to day without any breach of

continuity, through generations and centuries. But manifestly should a day ever come when the directorate or the State undertook to grant to all the non-capitalists in the nation equal rights to the stock and profits of the fund as to the capitalists, this measure of expropriation, collectivisation, or spoliation, must be a revolutionary measure involving a breach of continuity, a rupture of social tissue, unprecedented in the history of mankind. Radical or revolutionary Socialists are right in maintaining that Collectivism cannot be established by evolution. Evolutionary Socialists conclusively argue that social organisation cannot be satisfactorily or successfully effected by revolution.

The true organisation of society must not only be a gradual evolution, but must be due mainly to the exercise of liberty, not to the action of authority. It must be originated and carried on chiefly from within, not from without. It must be to a far greater extent the combined and collective work of the moral personalities who compose a nation than of the officials who compose its Government. There can be no good government of a community the members of which are not already accustomed to govern themselves aright. The healing of society to be effective must proceed on the whole from the centre outwards.

Socialism has never seen this clearly or acknowledged it fully. From its very nature it cannot do so, for it undervalues the individual. It leads men to expect extravagant results from merely repairing or reconstructing the outward mechanism of society.

It encourages them to fancy that their welfare is more dependent on what Government does than on what they do themselves; on the wisdom and power of their legislators than on their own intelligence and virtue. There can be no more foolish and baneful illusion. Let any drunkard become sober, or any profligate a man of clean and regular life, and he has done far more for himself than any Government can do for him. Let Irishmen deliver themselves from the superstition that their clergy can, by an act of excommunication, exclude them from the pale of salvation, and they will thereby obtain both for themselves and their country more moral and political liberty than any Home Rule Bill or other Act of Parliament can give them; while Almighty Power itself cannot make them free either as citizens or as men so long as they retain in their hearts that servile faith.

Nations have only enjoyed a healthy and vigorous life when wisely jealous of the encroachments of authority on individual rights and liberties; they have sunk into helplessness and corruption whenever they were content to be dependent on their Governments. The men who have done most for society have been those who were the least inclined to obey its bidding when it had no moral claim to command. It is because British men have been, perhaps above all others, self-reliant men, with strongly marked differences of character, with resolute, independent wills, who would take their own way and work out their own individual schemes and purposes, who were not afraid of defying public opinion and social

authority, who were ready to do battle on their own account against all comers, when they felt that they had right on their side, that Britain stands now where she does among the nations of the world.

All plans of social organisation which tend to weaken and destroy individuality of character, independence and energy of conduct, ought to be rejected. In seeking to determine when collective action, the exercise of social authority, is legitimate or the reverse, we may very safely decide according to the evidence as to whether it will fortify and develop or restrict and discourage individual freedom and activity. Can there be any reasonable doubt that, tested by this criterion, such a scheme of social organisation as Collectivism must be condemned? The whole tendency of Collectivism is to replace a resistible capitalism by an irresistible officialism; to make social authority omnipotent and individual wills powerless; to destroy liberty and to establish despotism. Hence any society which accepts it must find it, instead of a panacea for its evils, a mortal poison. But happily the love of liberty is too prevalent and its advantages too obvious to allow of its general acceptance. It is so manifestly contrary to the true nature of man and inconsistent with the prosperity and progress of society, that, notwithstanding all its pretensions to a scientific and practical character, it must inevitably come to be regarded as not less essentially Utopian than the Phalansterianism of Fourier or the Positive Polity of Comte.

One great reason why social organisation must

be mainly the work of individuals left free to act for themselves and to associate together as they please, so long as they abstain from injustice and from encroachment on the freedom of others, is a fact already referred to, namely, that man has various aims in life, and these distinct aims, and often difficult to harmonise. He is not only a physical being with physical appetites, to whom life is only an economic problem; but also a moral being, conscious of the claims of duty and charity; an intellectual being, to whose mind truth is as necessary as light is to his eyes; a being capable of æsthetic vision and enjoyment and of artistic creation; and a religious being, who feels relationship to the Divine, with corresponding hopes, fears, and obligations. And, of course, if he would live conformably to his nature he must seek to realise, as far as he can, all the proximate aims to which it tends, and to reconcile and unify them as best he may, by reference to an ultimate and comprehensive end. But who except himself can do this for any human being? And how can even he do it for himself unless he be free to act and free to combine with those who can aid him, in such ways as the consciousness of his own wants may suggest to him?

Society is as complex as man. It has as many elements and activities as human nature. It can only be a fitting medium for the development of the individual by having organs and institutions adapted to all that is essential in the individual. Its true organisation must consequently imply the evolution

of all that is involved in, and distinctive of, humanity. Hence there was much truth in Gambetta's famous declaration—"There is no social problem; there are only social problems." It is impossible to resolve all social problems into one, or even to reduce all kinds of social problems to a single class. From the very nature of man, and therefore, from the very nature of society, there are classes of social questions, all of direct and vital importance to social organisation, which although closely connected and not incapable of co-ordination, are essentially distinct, and consequently admit of no common solution.

Socialists almost always assume the contrary. And for this plain reason that unless the natures of man and of society be regarded as far meaner, poorer, and simpler than they really are, the claim to regulate human life and to organise human society socialistically is manifestly presumptuous. To render the claim plausible it must sacrifice the individual to society, and give inadequate views of the natures and ends of both. The only modern Socialist, so far as I am aware, who has made a serious and sustained attempt to devise a comprehensive scheme of social organisation is Comte. Few men have possessed greater synthetic and systematising power. And yet his attempt at social reconstruction was, notwithstanding many valuable elements and indications, a grotesque and gigantic failure. It assumed as a fundamental truth that belief in the entire subordination of the individual to society which more than any other error vitiated the political philosophy and political practice of classical antiquity, and from which

Christianity emancipated the European mind. It proposed to organise the definitive society of the future according to the mediæval pattern; to entrust the government of it to a temporal and spiritual power—a patriciate and a clergy—the former centring in a supreme triumvirate and the latter in a supreme pontiff—and the two conjointly regulating the whole lives, bodily and mental, affective and active, private and public, in minute conformity to the creed of Comte; and even, while forbidding belief in the existence of God and of the immortality of the soul, to impose a varied and elaborate worship. It is unnecessary to criticise such a system, although it is noteworthy as an almost unique attempt to accomplish the task incumbent on Socialism as a theory of social organisation.

Socialism generally concerns itself mainly or exclusively with the organisation of industry. But it manifestly thereby forfeits all claim to be considered an adequate theory of society, if society really has a religious, ethical, æsthetic, and intellectual work to do as well as an economic one; if it requires to organise its science and speculation, its art and literature, its law and morals, its faith and worship, equally with its labour and wealth. When Socialism confines itself, as it commonly does, to the sphere of industry, it can only prove itself to be a sufficient and satisfactory theory of social organisation by proving that there is far less in society to organise than is generally supposed; that men "live by bread alone," and need only such advantages as wealth properly distributed will procure for them;

that they are merely creatures of earth and time; and that all aims which presuppose thoughts of absolute truth and right, of God and of eternity, are to be discarded as illusory. Of course, it does not prove this; but it almost always assumes it as if it had been proved. There is at present little Socialism properly so called which does not rest on an atheistic or agnostic view of the universe, on a hedonistic or utilitarian theory of conduct, and on a conception of the natures of man and of society which ejects or ignores much of the wealth of their contents.

The prevalent socialistic mode of solving the problem of social organisation is that of simplifying it by eliminating as many of its essential elements as render the task of Socialism difficult. It is wonderful to what an extent many Socialists thus simplify it. Many of them look forward to the near abolition even of politics. The two most eminent of contemporary Socialists, Engels and Liebknecht, expect that when the State establishes Collectivism by socialising all capital and directing and controlling all labour, so far from employing its enormous power to extend its sphere of action and encroach on the rights of individuals and of neighbouring States, it will voluntarily die unto its old self, sacrifice its very existence as a State by ceasing to be political at all, and, as one of them has said, "concern itself no longer with the government of persons but with the administration of things." That such a notion as this of the possible elimination of all political interests and struggles from the life of society in the

future, and the possible reduction of all the activities of government to that of individual direction, should have been entertained by the chief living theorist and the greatest living tactician of the Socialism which especially pretends to be scientific and practical, shows how absurd a thought may be generated by an enthusiastic wish even in a naturally clear and vigorous mind, and may well lead us to suspect that much else in the system may be of the same character and origin.

That there will be no serious religious difficulties and troubles under the régime of Collectivism is generally assumed by the advocates of the system. With rare exceptions, they are decidedly hostile to Theism, Christianity, and the Church, and only repudiate the charge of being anti-religious on the ground that Socialism itself so purifies and ennobles human life as to be entitled to the name of religion. But all that is commonly called religion, and all that has been founded on it, they regard as pernicious superstition, and an obstacle to the organisation of society on collectivist lines. While clear and explicit, however, in their denunciation of it, they are extremely vague and reticent as to how they mean to deal with it. Can Collectivism be established at all until religion and religious institutions are got rid of? Some think that it cannot; others that it can. Those who think that it cannot seem to me to have the clearer vision; but I should like them to explain how, then, they hope to get it established. What do they mean to do with Theists, Protestants, Catholics, Greek Christians,

Jews, and Mohammedans? They are not likely for centuries to convince them by arguments. They are not strong enough to overcome them by force. To assume that religion is so effete that those who profess it are ready to renounce it without being either intellectually convinced or physically coerced is unjust and unwarranted.

On the other hand, suppose that Collectivism is established, and yet that religions and Churches are not overthrown. How, in this case, can the collectivist society be governed and organised by a merely temporal or industrial power? How can it fail to be governed and organised also by the spiritual power, which may be, perhaps, all the more influential and despotic because the temporal power is at once despotic and exclusively industrial? How can a Collectivism which is tolerant of religion be without religious troubles? I have sought in vain in the writings of Collectivists for definite and reasoned answers to these questions. I have only found instead these two assumptions, alike without evidence: that religion will either somehow speedily disappear to make way for Collectivism; or that if it survive its establishment it will have changed its nature, lost the will and power to move and agitate the hearts of men, and will allow the temporal authority to mould and govern society with undivided sway.

If what we have been maintaining is true even in substance, social organisation is from its very nature a complex operation, and incapable of being so sim-

plified as Collectivists and most other Socialists suppose. It must be carried on in a variety of directions which are distinct, and none of which are to be overlooked or neglected. It must be carried on, therefore, not through the State alone, but much more through the individual units which compose society, and those natural or voluntary groups of individual units which may be considered the organs of society; not according to a single plan laid down by authority, but along a number of lines freely chosen.

The individual is of primary importance. Society is composed of individuals, and their spirit is its spirit. This is not to say that the individual is of exclusive importance, or that we are not to take full account of the dependence of character on social circumstances. It does not mean that we are Individualists; that we sever the individual from society, or absorb society in the individual, or oppose the individual to society. It only signifies that with the individualist error we set aside the socialist error also; that we refuse to regard individuals as the mere creatures of society instead of as mainly its creators, or to deny that they are ends in themselves, with lives of their own. The individualist "abstraction" is bad; the socialist "abstraction" is still worse. The influence of the social atmosphere and of social surroundings is great, but still it is only secondary; mainly product not producer. The constitutive qualities and powers of human nature have been modified in many respects from age to age with the successive changes of society, but they

have not been certainly or conspicuously altered in their essential character within the whole of recorded time. The Socialists of to-day who expect a vast mental and moral improvement of individuals from a mere reorganisation of society are just as Utopian as their predecessors have been. Social organisation without personal reformation will always have poor and disappointing results. Dr. Chalmers wrote his "Political Economy" to demonstrate that the economic well-being of a people is dependent on its moral well-being. Whether he quite succeeded or not is of small consequence, seeing that reason, experience, and history so amply testify to the truth of his thesis. Those who would reverse it and maintain that mere economic changes will produce moral well-being or even economic prosperity must be incompetent reasoners, slow to learn from experience, and hasty readers of history.

What chiefly differentiates man from man is character; what chiefly elevates man, and secures for him the rank and happiness of a man, is character; and character is always far less a product of society than the growth of personal self-development. Hence the extreme importance of the whole art of education, and of all that directly affects true self-development or self-realisation. There is undoubtedly still abundant room and urgent need for improvement in this sphere. A vast amount of what passes for education is positively mischievous and tends directly not to educe and strengthen, but to repress and enfeeble, the personality. Perhaps of all our social evils the least visible to the vulgar eye,

yet the most cruel, wasteful, and deplorable, is the extent to which cramming is substituted for education in all kinds of schools from the lowest to the highest. If we only knew and felt what education really is, and recognised aright nothing to be worthy of the name which does not train the bodily powers, or improve temper and disposition, or evoke and widen the social sympathies, or awaken and regulate imagination, or quicken and exercise æsthetic discernment, or deepen and elevate the sense of reverence, or help to make conscience the uncontested sovereign of the human mind, we would have immensely less of poverty, of unmanly helplessness, of bad workmanship, of low taste, of scandalous luxury, of intemperance, of licentiousness, of dishonesty, of irreligion, and the like, to complain of. Appropriate training to bodily deftness and dexterity, to intelligence, virtue, and religion, although obviously a prime condition of true social organisation, and just what education should supply, is either not given at all, or only in a wretchedly small measure by the so-called education of the present day. Of course I cannot dwell on this subject; it would be unfair, however, not to mention that as regards the true nature of education, and especially as regards the relation of true education to art, few have spoken worthier words or done nobler work than two socialist men of genius—John Ruskin and William Morris.

The importance of the Family follows from the importance of individuals. Fathers and mothers exert a far greater influence on the welfare of

society than politicians and legislators. "The popular estimate of the family," says Westcott, "is an infallible criterion of the state of society. Heroes cannot save a country where the idea of the Family is degraded; and strong battalions are of no avail against homes guarded by faith and reverence and love."* Comte has declared that "the first seven years of life are the most decisive, because then a mother's discipline lays so firm a foundation that the rest of life is seldom able to affect it." Not improbably he was right. Certainly there can be no satisfactory organisation of any community or nation in which the Family is not a healthy social organ.

From the time of Plato to the present day the constitution of the Family has been a favourite subject of socialistic speculation; and very naturally so, both because of the vast influence of the Family on society, and because at no period of its history has it been free from grave and deplorable defects. As we trace the evolution of the Family from the obscurity of the prehistoric age through various stages in the oriental world, in Greece, in Rome, and Christendom, terrible traces of the selfishness and cruelty of man, of the oppression and suffering of woman, of the maltreatment of the young, the feeble, and the dependent, and of legislative folly and iniquity, continually present themselves to our contemplation. Truly the task of socialist criticism is here very easy. But it is also of comparatively

* "Social Aspects of Christianity," p. 22.

little value. What is needed is practical guidance in the work of amelioration, instruction of a truly constructive character. Of this, however, Socialism has singularly little to give us.

All the schemes of Family organisation proposed by socialist theorists in the course of the last two thousand years and more have been of a kind which, had they unfortunately been adopted, would, instead of improving the world, have done it incalculable mischief. They have been reactions from actuality, not without some soul of truth and justice in them, yet so extreme and unnatural that carrying them into effect, far from purifying and elevating the Family, would have degraded it, and brutalised the community. And Socialism has in this direction made hardly any progress. Bebel and Lafargue have not got beyond Plato and Campanella. Socialist critics of what they call "the bourgeois Family" or "mercantile marriage," can easily point out various imperfections prevalent in modern domestic life; but when, granting their criticisms not to be without more or less foundation, we ask them how they propose to get rid of, or at least to lessen, the evils which they have indicated, they have virtually no other answer to give us than that they would introduce evils far worse—absorption of the Family in the community, free love, the separation of spouses at will, transference of children from the charge of their parents to that of the State.

Without essential injustice the whole practical outcome of socialistic theorising as to the Family may be stated in the following sentences from the

joint work of Morris and Bax: "The present marriage system is based on the general supposition of economic dependence of the woman on the man, and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be necessary between the parties as regards livelihood; while property in children would cease to exist, and every infant that came into the world would be born into full citizenship, and would enjoy all its advantages, whatever the conduct of its parents might be. Thus a new development of the family would take place, on the basis, not of a predetermined lifelong business arrangement, to be formally and nominally held to, irrespective of circumstances, but on mutual inclination and affection, an association terminable at the will of either party. It is easy to see how great the gain would be to morality and sentiment in this change. At present, in this country at least, a legal and quasi-moral offence has to be committed before the obviously unworkable contract can be set aside. On the Continent, it is true, even at the present day the marriage can be dissolved by mutual consent; but either party can, if so inclined, force the other into subjection, and prevent the exercise of his or her freedom. It is perhaps necessary to state that this change would not be made merely formally and mechanically. There would be no vestige of reprobation weighing on the dissolution of one tie and the forming of another. For the abhorrence of the oppression of the man by

the woman or the woman by the man (both of which continually happen to-day under the ægis of our would-be moral institutions) will certainly be an essential outcome of the ethics of the New Society." *
 What meagre and uncertain results! What lame and impotent conclusions!

A true organisation of the Family cannot be effected on socialistic lines. It must proceed from and carefully maintain the autonomy of the Family against the encroachments of the community. It must treat the Family as a true society with rights and duties of its own, and as sacred and binding as are those of the State or nation. The present Pope—one of the wisest and worthiest of those who have occupied the papal throne—has most justly said that "the idea that the civil government should, at its own discretion, penetrate and pervade the family and the household, is a great and pernicious mistake." A people which loses sight of this truth is one in which all personal liberties, and all regard for justice, will rapidly become extinct.

The economic dependence of the wife on the husband must always be the rule among the labouring classes. An emancipation of women from their household duties in order that they may be able to labour for remuneration in the service of the community, and of men from obligation to make provision for their wives and children, would produce a base kind of freedom economically and morally ruinous both to women and men, and to the former

* "Socialism," &c., pp. 299, 300.

also cruelly unjust. Where the economic independence of women or men, in the married state, is actual or possible, it is not by abolishing the right of contract and substituting for it a condition of status that satisfactory arrangements can be reached as to the property of married people, but by the fuller development of the right of contract—a development towards the perfect equality of freedom and justice as regards husband and wife, and with no other restrictions than those necessary to guard against either of the contracting parties swindling the other, or both conspiring to swindle the public.

The movement towards securing to women equal rights with men and free scope to exercise all their faculties, although some have regarded it as likely to endanger and disorganise the Family, really tends directly and powerfully to its consolidation and true development. It favours the formation of a better class of women. It contributes largely to increase the number of women who are not necessitated to enter into loveless marriages. Within the last twenty years there has been decided improvement in this direction; and there will doubtless be more. It is a right direction, however, precisely because it leads away from the slavery which Socialism would introduce, and towards full personal freedom.

To transfer, as Socialists have proposed, the care of children from the Family to the State would be to rob the Family of a large portion both of its utility and of its happiness, and to devolve on the State responsibilities which it must necessarily fail

to meet aright. The State should supplement but not supersede the education of the Family. To replace marriage by mere association between man and woman terminable at the will of either, would be not, as Morris and Bax imagine, “a great gain to morality and sentiment,” but an incalculable and irreparable loss. As long as the moral sense was so deadened and the better feelings of human nature so perverted as to tolerate the change, sexual promiscuity and hetairism would prevail. So-called Free Love is untrue and degrading love; love from which all the pure, permanent, and elevating elements are absent; love reduced to animal passion and imaginative illusions; the love which is powerful to destroy families but powerless to sustain and organise them.*

The Church draws its chief strength from religion,

* The following observations of Dr. Schäffle may usefully supplement the preceding remarks as to the Family: “It is true we are told that things would for the most part remain as they are, and marriage-unions would still for the most part remain constant; Free Love would only be called into play for the loosening of unhappy marriages. Then why not let the stable marriage-tie be the rule, with separation allowed in cases where the marriage-union has become morally and physically impossible? Why not have at least the existing marriage-law as among Protestants? But the whole statement, even if made in good faith, will not stand examination.

“What then is an ‘unhappy’ or relatively a ‘happy’ marriage? No one is perfect, and therefore not a single marriage can ever hope to be entirely ‘happy.’ First love must always yield to sober reality, after the cunning of nature has secured its end for the preservation of the species. In the indissoluble life-union of marriage, with the daily and hourly contact between the inevitable imperfections of both parties, there necessarily arise frictions and discords, which, if severance is free, will only too easily give rise to the most ill-considered separations from the effect of momentary passion; and all the more readily if the one party have begun to grow tedious to the other, or pleasant to a third party. The

from what is spiritual in human nature, and as this is permanent, there is no probability that the Church will ever cease to be a social force. We have only to study with intelligence and care the state of feeling and of opinion, and the relative strength of parties and of tendencies in Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, and Britain, to convince ourselves that the religious question, far from having lost its

very essential advantage of the stable marriage-tie is just this, that it secures the peaceable adjustment of numberless unavoidable disagreements; that it prevents the many sparrings and jarrings of private life from reaching the public eye; that it allows of openness on both sides, and avoids the possibility of pretence; that it induces self-denial for the sake of others; that it insures a greater proportion of mutuality in both spiritual and physical cares for the general run of wedded couples—in short, that for the majority of cases at least a relative possibility of wedded happiness is attainable. Therefore the indissoluble marriage-tie must still remain the rule, and separation the exception, confined to cases where its persistence becomes a moral impossibility. But it is clear that if once the emancipation of woman made it general for her to step out of the home into public life, and if once the bond of common love and of common care for the offspring were loosened, or even weakened, frequent marriage changes would very easily become the rule, and permanent unions only the exception. The training in self-conquest, in gentleness, in consideration for others, in fairness, and in patience, which the present family and wedded relations entail, would also be lost in the entrance of all into public life outside the home. The gain to separate individuals in point of sensual gratification through fugitive unions would be very far from outweighing the loss of the ideal good attainable by man, and by man only, through the channel of marriage. . . . Existing marriage rights and married life are susceptible of further improvement, but this is not to say that the problem of their personal, moral, industrial, and social amelioration will be solved by facilitating for every one the breaking of the marriage-tie; we may rather look to solving it by restoring, perfecting, and generalising the external and moral conditions of the highest possible happiness in binding unions. This can be done without Social Democracy, and cannot be done with it. The new hetairism of Free Love reduces man to a refined animal, society to a refined herd, a superior race of dogs and apes, even though all should become productive labourers, and spend a few hours daily in manual labour." ("Impossibility of Social Democracy," pages 147-51.)

interest and importance, is likely to be far more agitated in the twentieth century of our era than it has been in the nineteenth, to be more interwoven with political and social questions, and to be the source of more momentous changes in the development of humanity. Those who fancy that they are indicating a way of solving or of settling it when they repeat such party catchwords as "Secularise the State," "Dissociate Politics from Religion," "Separate Church and State," and the like, are mistaken. These phrases solve nothing, settle nothing, and recommend what is as impossible as to separate soul and body without producing death. The Church may contest the action of the State, and tyrannise over its subjects all the more for being in so-called separation from it. The Church necessarily acts on society with such power either for good or ill that it is of the highest importance that it should be for good. An enlightened pure, and earnest Church, faithful to the principles and animated by the spirit of its Founder, is not less essential to the right organisation of society, and to the prosperity and progress of a nation than a good civil government. Individuals become through connection with it far more able to benefit their fellows and serve their country.

What have Socialists to propose regarding organisation in this sphere? Nothing, certainly, of any value. The main body of them cherish the expectation of the disappearance of the Church. This only shows their inability and unwillingness to look at facts as they are. Even if a man disbelieve in the

truth of Christianity he must be credulous to suppose that the power of the Christian Church will not continue for centuries to be felt. Other Socialists say, we shall treat religion as a private affair, and leave the Church to itself. That is so far good. The Church can only organise itself aright by working freely, and from within. Yet who that will reflect can fail to see how utterly inadequate a solution the answer is? It simply means that with a large portion of the work of social organisation Socialism acknowledges itself to be incompetent to deal. Socialism will let the Church alone, because conscious of its inability to deal with it consistently otherwise than in ways which would be deemed intolerant and oppressive. Socialists forget in this connection to ask, Will the Church let the socialistic commonwealth alone? Is neutrality possible between a religious and an atheistic society? Can a self-governed Church co-operate or even permanently coexist with a communistically or collectivistically governed State? Must the conditions on which a Free Church holds not be irreconcilable with the laws by which a Socialist State regulates property? In none of the more prevalent forms of contemporary Socialism is the Church contemplated as an enduring and influential agent of social amelioration.

Within the limits at my disposal it is impossible to treat of the process of organisation which, in consequence of the latest extension of the electorate, is most visible at present—organisation in the direction of more local self-government, of a greater

representation of the poorer classes in the management of municipal, parochial, and county affairs; in other words, organisation towards a fuller realisation of the democratic ideal, now supreme and dominant in political life. This process involves the devolution of power from a central legislature to bodies with more limited spheres of control and administration, and the more varied and vigorous development of representative government; but it is in no respect of a necessarily socialistic nature.

Nor can the organisation of science, art, and literature, as bearing on that of society, be discussed, intimate and comprehensive although the connection be; but manifestly such organisation should be chiefly brought about by the exertions of scientists, artists, and literary men themselves—*i.e.* by those most qualified to effect, and most directly interested in effecting it—and only to a comparatively small extent by State regulation and encouragement.

Even as to industrial organisation my remarks must be few and brief. It can only be satisfactorily accomplished if effectuated chiefly from within by the free yet combined action of those who are specially engaged in industry. They have no right to expect that it will be done for them by the State, or at the expense of the community. There is no need that it should be done for them, as they have wealth and power enough to do it for themselves. Their own history is a conclusive proof, whatever Socialists may say to the contrary, of

their power to combine, organise, and prosper under a régime of liberty.

It is greatly to be desired that there were more concerted and united action on the part of the employers of labour in the various departments of industry with a view to bringing their departments into a thoroughly sound condition: that capitalists and masters combined and co-operated, not merely for self-defence against the workers, but also on behalf of the workers, and for the general good of trade. It is obvious that they are strong enough and rich enough, if united and earnest, to remove some of the most grievous of the evils of which labour has to complain.

One of these is that exemplary men may, without any fault of their own, after a lifetime of toil, when strength fails, be left in utter destitution, solely dependent on public charity. Can it be supposed that the employers of labour in such departments as the coal and iron trade, paper-making and publishing, ship-building, brewing, etc., could not, if they would, remove this stain on the civilisation of a nation like Britain, and provide for their labourers in old age pensions which would be as honourable as those of the soldiers? In some departments a childless millionaire might do it at his death for the whole trade in which he had gained his fortune, and at the same time leave behind him a monument which would most honourably perpetuate his name.

Then there is the evil of concurrent periods of protracted depression of trade and scarcity of employment, urgently calling for provision against

it being made when trade is prosperous and employment plenty; for a system of organised insurance which would carry those thrown out of work through the evil days. The burden of such a system should be borne partly by employers and partly by employed. What is to be aimed at is that in each industry all willing labourers should be saved from the degradation of becoming the recipients of charity. It is an aim which might in some respects be more satisfactorily realised by combined voluntary effort than by enforced taxation, although it is probably less likely to be so realised. Employers would act wisely were they freely to tax themselves, even to no small extent, in order to attain it.

The movement for compulsory labour-insurance against the evils involved in loss of work or of capacity for work is still far from advanced, yet it has within recent years made considerable progress in various countries of Europe. It has, in all probability, an important future before it, and in conjunction with the already established Savings Bank system, may greatly improve the position of the wage-earning classes. The principle on which it proceeds is not in itself socialistic, but rather the reverse; it is the principle of requiring of individuals, trades, or classes which can provide for themselves protection against the contingencies of evil to which they are specially exposed that they do so, instead of leaving the commonwealth to bear the burdens which must fall upon it from their not doing so. Long before Socialism took any interest

in the principle it had been embodied in such institutions as the Scottish Ministers' Widows' Fund, &c.*

The various forms of co-operative production and industrial partnership which have been tried within the last sixty years are the beginnings of a perfectly legitimate movement which may be reasonably hoped to have a great future before it. Its aim—to make labourers also capitalists, sharers of profits as well as recipients of wages—is admirable. In principle it is unassailable. The difficulties impeding it are only difficulties of application, and arise from causes which the growth of intelligence and self-control, the spread of mutual confidence, the acquisition of commercial experience, and the increase of pecuniary means, will diminish. At the same time it is easy to form visionary hopes in regard to it. The goal at which it aims may be reached otherwise, and often better otherwise. While it can hardly be too earnestly desired that workmen in general should be also capitalists, there may be in many cases no special advantage in their being capitalists in the same business or concern in which they are workmen. It is the union of capital and labour in the same hands, in the same persons, which is the great point. †

* Those who may wish to know what has been done through legislation in Germany, Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland regarding such insurance as is referred to in this paragraph will find full information in M. Maurice Bellom's "Assurance contre la maladie." 1893.

† For a statement of opposite views as to the relation of Co-operation and Socialism, see "Co-operation v. Socialism: being a report of a debate

One of the most interesting yet difficult of the themes connected with the industrial organisation of society is that of participation in the product of labour or profit-sharing by employes. It is plain that the condition of workmen must be greatly improved even in countries like our own before this system can become more than subordinate and supplemental to that of wages; but that in this latter form it may increasingly, and with ever-growing advantage, be introduced seems also certain. The regularity and certainty of the labourer's remuneration, which are the great merits of the wages-system, are necessarily gained at the expense of a concomitant variation in relation to demand and prices, which is also a merit, and which can only be secured through profit-sharing. Profit-sharing has many modes, none of them without defects or easy of successful adoption, but also none of them without advantages or incapable of being followed within certain limitations. As the great obstacle to the development of profit-sharing is the want of a right understanding and of sufficient trust between employers and employed, the extension of the system will be at least a good criterion of the progress of a truly harmonious social organisation.*

Hitherto workmen have combined chiefly in order

between H. H. Champion and B. Jones at Toynbee Hall." Manchester. 1887. As to Co-operation itself G. J. Holyoake's "History of Co-operation in England," and V. P. Hubert's "Associations Co-opératives en France et à l'Étranger" are specially informative works.

* On profit-sharing the two most instructive studies, perhaps, are Victor Böhmer's "Gewinnbetheiligung," 1878, and Nicholas P. Gilman's "Profit-Sharing between Employer and Employee," 1889.

to secure favourable terms for labour in the struggle with capital. Such combination is necessary, yet far from the only kind of combination necessary to them. And one may well wish to see some combination of a higher and more constructive kind among them; more organisation for their general good, for purposes of intellectual and moral improvement, and even for rational amusement. The possibilities of organisation of this kind, far from having been exhausted by them, are as yet almost untouched. Workmen cannot too clearly realise that any institution or movement which will prove of much benefit to their class must either be their own work, or made their own by cordial co-operative appropriation. External help without self-help will come to little; and the self-help of a class, to be effective, must be earnest, general, and systematised.

It is not difficult to perceive where the crux of the problem of industrial organisation lies. In ordinary times steady, intelligent, skilled, efficient workmen are, in Britain at least, neither out of work nor wretchedly paid. They have fully proved that they can organise themselves; and owing to their organisation, numbers, and the importance of the services which they render to the community, they can give effective expression to their wishes as to wages, the duration of the working day, and other conditions of labour. They are probably as able to protect themselves as are their employers. They have manifestly outgrown the need for exceptional State-protection, for grandmotherly legislation. Such Socialism as Collectivists advocate, by restricting

their liberty would only diminish their influence and power.

While there is a large amount of destitution among operatives, it is chiefly confined to two grades of them. First, there are those who, although willing to work, and to work diligently, bring to their work merely physical strength and an honest will, not intelligence and skill. Wherever there is a numerous and increasing population such workmen must be in constant danger of being greatly in excess of the demand for them. They are so now in this country. And hence there is in it a large body of men who are badly paid, hardly driven, sorely taken advantage of, preyed on by sweaters, misled by agitators, and easily capable of being stirred up to disorder, but feebly capable, or altogether incapable, of the sort of organisation which would really strengthen and profit them.

What is to be done as regards them? This is a crucial question. Socialism does not help us to answer it. It is obviously, for the most part, an essentially educational question. So educate all who are to become workmen that they will become, or at least be inexcusable if they do not become, intelligent and skilled workmen, and the question will be answered as far as it can be answered. But free Britain can thus answer it just as well as a socialistic Britain could. And it is her manifest interest to apply all her intelligence and energy so to answer it; to make it a prime object of her policy to have all her workmen intelligent and skilled—better workmen than those of other countries. Of such workmen she can never

have too many, or even a sufficient number; and such workmen never can be very badly paid in a free country. That she will ever perfectly solve the problem indicated I am not so optimistic as to suppose. I have little faith in absolute solutions in politics; I have much more confidence in what, to use mathematical phraseology, may be called *asymptotic* solutions—continual approximations to ideals never completely reached.

There is, secondly, a class of workmen whose destitution is mainly self-caused; mainly due to intemperance, to idleness, and to other forms of vice. It is impossible to follow in regard to them the advice of Mr. Herbert Spencer—"Do nothing; leave 'good-for-nothings' to perish." The human heart is not hard enough for that; and human society is not wholly guiltless of the faults even of the least worthy of its members. On the other hand, simply to give charity to the idle, the drunken, and dissolute, is to increase the evil we deplore, and to divert charity from its proper objects. What is wanted is a system which will couple provision for the relief of the unworthy with conditions of labour and amendment, so that their appeals for charity can be refused with the knowledge that they have only to work and be sober in order not to starve. To devise an appropriate system of the kind is doubtless difficult, but surely is not impossible.

CHAPTER IX.

SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY.

IN the preceding pages I have especially had in view the Collectivism of Social Democracy, or, in other words, Democratic Socialism. Other forms of Socialism seem to me to be at present comparatively unimportant. Our age is a thoroughly democratic one. The democratic spirit pervades and moulds all our institutions; it raises up what is in accordance with it and casts down what is contrary to it; it confers life and inflicts death, as it never did in any previous period of the world's history. Contemporary Socialism manifestly draws most of its strength from its alliance with Democracy. Not unnaturally it rests its hopes of success mainly on the full development of democratic principles and feelings; on the irresistible strength of the democratic movement. Its adherents hope to gain the masses to their views, and by the votes and power of the masses to carry these views into effect.

The connection between Socialism and Democracy being thus intimate and vital it is expedient to consider for a little Democracy in itself, and in its relation to Socialism.

What is Democracy? The etymology of the word yields as good an answer as we are likely to

get. Democracy is rule or government by the people; it is the system of political order which every one who is held bound to conform to it has a share in forming and modifying. A community or nation is a Democracy when, according to its constitution and in real fact, the supreme governing authority, or rather the head source of political power, is not an individual or a class but the community or nation itself as a whole. Such is the general idea of Democracy; the principle on which it rests and in which it moves; the end or goal to which it tends; the ideal in the realising of which it can alone find satisfaction, self-consistency, and completeness.

But it is only an idea or ideal. The ideal has never been manifested on earth in any social form. There has never existed a pure and complete Democracy, any more than a pure and complete Monarchy or Aristocracy. Every actual government is mixed. There have been many communities called Democracies; but they have all been only more or less democratic. The ancient "Democracies" were not States governed by the people. They were governments in the hands of the poorer classes of the people—the classes which had wrenched power from the richer classes, yet who denied freedom to multitudes of slaves. In other words, they were class governments. But government by a class is essentially incompatible with a true notion of Democracy, rule by the people, not by any class or classes of it, rich or poor.

Nor has the democratic idea ever fully actualised

itself in modern times. Our own country has been gradually becoming democratic, and is now somewhat strongly democratic; but it is in no sense strictly a Democracy. Large numbers of the people have still not even an indirect share in the government of the country. If every person is entitled to even such a share in it our most advanced politicians have not been very zealous in promoting the rights of their fellow-citizens. We are still far from manhood suffrage; and manhood suffrage is, as regards the suffrage, only half-way to the democratic ideal; for all women are people, and if every man has a right to vote as one of the people so has every woman.

When we get, if we ever get, to manhood and womanhood suffrage, then, but only then, shall we be strictly a Democracy; and even then only in what may be called the lower sense of the term. The government of the country will then be indirectly in the hands of the people. The electorate will be coextensive with the people. Every one will have a share in the legislation of the nation to the extent of having a vote in the appointment of one of its legislators.

But will the attainment of this be a full realisation of the idea of Democracy, or likely to satisfy the desires of Democracy? The ancient Democracies were much more democratic than that, and far from so easily satisfied. In them the people directly governed. The citizens of Athens were all members, and even paid members, of its government. They had vastly more influence on the internal and

external politics of Athens than the parliamentary electors of Britain on the politics of Britain. Of course, this was chiefly owing to the comparative smallness of the territory and the comparative fewness of the citizens of Athens. The direct government of extensive and populous countries by the whole mass of their citizens is obviously impossible. That a very large number of the inhabitants of Britain, France, and the United States have any share at all in the government of their respective nations, they owe to the elaboration of that great political instrument, the system of representation.

But the representative system is no development of the idea of Democracy; on the contrary, it is an obvious and enormous limitation or restriction of it. If Democracy be the entirely and exclusively legitimate form or species of government it cannot consistently adopt the representative system at all. It cannot reasonably be expected to be content to serve merely as the means of choosing an aristocracy. If the democratic idea be an absolute and complete truth; if the central principle of its creed, the equal right of all to a share in the government of their country, be an absolute and inalienable right; not an equal share for each man in an election merely, but an equal share in the entire government of the country is the ideal which every thorough-going democrat must have in view.

It is one, however, which is manifestly unattainable not only in the form of personal participation in the government of countries like those of modern

Europe, but even through the methods of representation adopted by the most democratic of these countries. How, then, can a Democracy which has a thorough and unqualified belief in the justice of its own claims and in the certainty and completeness of their realisation, act in accordance with its faith, and vindicate its pretensions?

The way in which it is most certain to try so to act is to endeavour to minimise representation, and to substitute for it, so far as possible, mere delegation; or, in other words, it is to insist that its legislators and functionaries be wholly its servants and instruments; that their judgments and acts be simply the reflections, and expressions of its own mind and will. Such is the goal to which from its very nature the absolute democratic idea strives and tends. In this country we are already to such an extent democratic that the strain of the movement towards it is distinctly felt. No intelligent observer, I think, can have failed to perceive that the House of Commons is not unexposed to a danger which cannot be warded off by any forms of procedure, rules, or laws of its own—the danger of losing its deliberative independence, of becoming a body of mere mandatories, not free to judge according to reason and conscience, but constrained to decide solely according to the wishes of their constituents. It is as apparent, however, that we should beware of this danger. When the electors of this country fancy themselves competent to give mandates regarding the mass of matters which must be dealt with by its Legislature, common

sense must have entirely forsaken them. When they find men willing to legislate as their mere mandatories on affairs of national importance, patriotism must have become extinct among our so-called politicians. And should government by mandate ever be established, such government must of its very nature be so blind, weak, and corrupt that it will be of short duration. Besides, government by delegates is as incompatible as government by representatives with the direct participation of the people in the government, or, in other words, with a full realisation of the democratic ideal of government.

Hence certain fervent democrats in France, and Spain, and Russia have advocated the splitting up of Europe into a multitude of communes sufficiently small to allow all the adult inhabitants to take a direct share in their government. These communes, they believe, would freely federate into natural groups, and in process of time form not only a United States of Europe, but a Confederation of Humanity. Insensate as this scheme is, it is not unconnected with the democratic ideal of equality; and it rests on a faith in the possibilities and merits of Home Rule and Federation which is at present in many minds far in excess of reason. A real and vital union when attained or attainable is always to be preferred to mere confederation. A sense of the equal right of all to rule which cannot tolerate representative government will not find full satisfaction in a delegative government, or even in the direct and independent home rule of a small commune; it

must demand, if not the absolute equality, at least the nearer approximation to it, of self-rule, the rejection of all authoritative and parliamentary, social and public government. Beyond democratic Communism or Collectivism there is democratic Anarchism, the anarchist Communism or Collectivism, which leaves every man to be a law unto himself and, so far as his power extends, unto his neighbour; which declares that everything belongs equally to every one, and nothing specially to any one, and which discards every idea of reverence and obedience.

What precedes naturally leads us to ask, Is the democratic idea an absolute and complete truth? Is the principle of equality on which Democracy rests the expression of an absolute and inalienable right? Is a thoroughly self-consistent and fully developed Democracy a possible thing? Is it a desirable thing? Is Democracy the only legitimate form of government? Is it necessarily or always the best government?

These are questions which, with full conviction, I answer in the negative. But I have to add that the democratic idea is truer and less incomplete than any rival idea of government; that the principle of equality on which Democracy rests is not moving and swaying the modern mind so widely and powerfully as it does without reason or justification, any more than the idea of unity which built up the monarchies of Europe and the mediæval Church worked without a purpose and mission in earlier centuries; that not only is no other government more legitimate or more desirable than Democracy, but that every other

government does its duty best when it prepares the way for a reasonable and well-conditioned Democracy; and that although Democracy, far from being necessarily good, may be the worst of all governments, it can be so only through the perversion of powers which ought to make it the best of all governments.

It may be necessary that one man should rule a community with almost unlimited and uncontrolled power; but it can only be so in evil times. The rule of a few may often be better than the rule of many, for the few may be fit and the many unfit; but that is itself a vast misfortune, and every addition to the number of the fit is assuredly great gain. That the rule of one should give place to the rule of some, and the rule of some to the rule of all, if the rule be at last as efficacious and righteous as at first, is progress; whereas to go from the rule of all towards that of one alone is to retrograde. A government in which any class of the people has no share is almost certain to be a government unjust or ungenerous to that class of the people, and, therefore, to that extent a bad government. It may in certain circumstances be foolish and wrong to extend political power to all; but it is always a duty to promote whatever tends to make those from whom such power is withheld entitled to possess it, by making them able to use it wisely and rightly. In this sense and to this extent every man, it seems to me, is bound to be the servant and soldier of Democracy. The true goal of life for each of us in any sphere of existence is not our own selfish

good, or the good of any class or caste, but the good of all; and so the goal at which each of us ought to aim in political life is the good government of all, by the association and co-operation of all, in the spirit expressed and demanded by these words of Jesus: "Let him who would be the first among you make himself the servant of all."

It is a duty, then, to work towards, and on behalf of, Democracy; but only towards, and on behalf of, a Democracy which knows its own limitations, which perceives that its distinctive truth is not the whole truth, and that, therefore, to be exclusive and thoroughly self-consistent and complete, instead of being an obligation under which it lies, is a danger against which it must always be anxiously on its guard.

The truth distinctive of Democracy, I have said, is not the whole truth of government. The truth in Monarchy, the necessity of unity of rule and administration, of a single, centralising, presiding Will, is also a great and important truth. In all times of violence and of discord it has come to be felt as the supreme want of society. Wherever Democracy rushes into extremes there sets in a reaction towards unity in excess, the unity of despotism.

The truth in the idea of Aristocracy: the truth that there must always be in society those who lead and those who follow; and that it is of almost incalculable moment for a people that those who lead it be those who are ablest to lead it; its men of greatest power, energy, and insight, its wisest and best men: is likewise a truth which will never cease

to be of quite incalculable value. The nation which does not feel it to be so, which fails to give due place and respect to those endowed with the gifts of real leadership, and accepts instead as good enough to lead it empty and pretentious men, flattering and designing men, demagogues and intriguers, is a nation which will become well acquainted with ditches and pitfalls, with misfortune and sorrow.

Theocracy as a distinct positive form of government has almost everywhere passed away, but the idea which gave rise to it: the idea that the ultimate regulative law of society is not the will of any man or of any number of men but of God; that every people ought to feel and acknowledge itself to be under the sovereignty of God: has in it a truth which cannot pass away, whoever may abandon it, betray it, or rise up against it. It is a truth with which society cannot dispense. A people which deems its own will a sufficient law to itself, which does not acknowledge a divine and inviolable law over itself, will soon experience that it has stripped itself of all protection from its own arbitrariness and injustice. Only in the name of a Will superior to all human wills can man protest with effect against human arbitrariness and tyranny. Recognition of the sovereignty of God can alone save us from that slavery to man which is degrading; whether it be slavery to one master or to many, to despotic kings or despotic majorities.

In the interests, then, of Democracy itself we ought to combat Democracy in so far as it is exclusive,

narrow, intolerant; in so far as it will not acknowledge and accept the truths in other forms of government.

Democracy may tend to be, but is not bound to be, republican. A constitutional monarch may be the safest sort of president. From a democratic point of view the general and abstract argumentation in favour of Monarchy may seem unsatisfactory, and yet the Monarchy of a particular country may have such a place in its history and constitution, and such a hold on the imaginations and affections of its people, that no democrat of sane and sober mind will set himself to uproot and destroy it, and so to sacrifice the tranquillity of a people for the triumph merely of a narrow dogma.

More than this, whatever a Democracy may call itself, it must be so far monarchical, so far add the truth and virtue of Monarchy to its own, that there shall be no lack of unity, strength, or order in its action either at home or abroad. It will not prosper in the struggle for existence unless it function with the consistency and effectiveness of a single, central sovereign Will. If through any fault of Democracy the loyal, law-abiding citizens of Britain be allowed to suffer violence and wrong from the lawless and disloyal, and still more if through any fault of Democracy Britain should have to endure defeat and humiliation from a foreign enemy, the result must inevitably be an indignant and patriotic revulsion towards a more efficient and anti-democratic government. Hence every wise friend of the cause of Democracy in this land, as well as every lover of his

country, will sternly discountenance all tendencies which would lead the Democracy of Britain to sympathise with lawlessness or to be indifferent as to the naval supremacy and military power of Britain.

Again, in so far as a Democracy fails to provide for itself a true Aristocracy—raises to leadership not its ablest, wisest, and best but the incompetent and unworthy—it must be held not to satisfy the requirements of good government. I doubt very much whether Democracy in Britain is satisfying this requirement at present. I should be surprised to learn that in the House of Commons there are as many as forty men of remarkable political insight or ability. It has been said, and there can be little doubt accurately said, that were the average of intellect in the Royal Society of London not greater than that in the House of Commons, British science would be the contempt of the world. Yet legislation, not less than science, can only be successfully engaged in by persons of exceptional brain power and thoroughly trained intellects. To be quite candid, however, I must add that what is most to be desiderated in our political rulers is not so much brain power as moral fibre; not intellectual capacity but integrity.

On the only occasion on which I met J. S. Mill I heard him say, "I entered Parliament with what I thought the lowest possible opinion of the average member, but I left it with one much lower." Parliament has certainly not improved since Mr. Mill's time, and especially morally. The more indistinct the principles, and the more effaced the lines of action, on which the old parties proceeded are

becoming, the more the advantages of party government are decreasing and the more its latent evils are coming to light. Already the struggle of politics is largely a conscious sham, an ignoble farce, the parties pretending to hold different principles in order not to acknowledge that they have only different interests. Our whole political system is thus pervaded with dishonesty. What would in any other sphere be regarded as lying is in politics deemed permissible, or even praiseworthy. Ordinary parliamentary candidates have of late years shown themselves unprecedentedly servile and untrustworthy. A large majority of the House of Commons are of use merely as voting machines, but without independence of judgment, sensibility of conscience, or anxiety to distinguish between good and bad in legislation or administration. The House of Commons has during the last decade greatly degenerated. And it is still plainly on the down-grade.

Is there any remedy? None, I believe, of a short or easy kind. No merely political change will do much good; such a change as that of the payment of members, one very likely to be made before long, cannot fail to do harm. The House of Commons has been reformed so much and so often without becoming better, if not with becoming worse, that all of us should by this time see that the only real way of improving it is by improving ourselves; by each elector being more independent, serious, and careful in the choice of his representative; more able to judge, and more conscientious in judging of his ability, force of character

and general soundness of view, while not expecting him to think entirely as he himself does, or wishing him to abnegate the reason and conscience by the independent exercise of which alone he can either preserve his self-respect or be of use to his country.

The House of Lords, unlike the House of Commons, might obviously be greatly improved by direct reform. The time can hardly be far off when no man will be allowed to fill the office of a legislator merely because he is the son of his father. The House of Lords needs reform, however, not with a view to rendering it more dependent or less influential; but in order to make it, through selection from within and election from without the peerage, if less purely aristocratic in the conventional sense, more aristocratic in the true sense; so that not less but more ability, wisdom, and independence, not less but more eminence and influence, may be found in it.

With only one House of Legislature, with a merely single-chambered Parliament, the nation would probably soon be among the breakers. Those who would rather end than mend our Upper House are either very thoughtless persons or persons who desire to see revolution and confiscation. No large self-governing nation can wisely dispense with such a safeguard against its own possible imprudence and precipitancy as is afforded by the system of two legislative chambers.

The Crown has in this country been gradually stripped of every vestige of the power by which it can check or control Parliament. There is not in Britain, as in the United States, a Supreme

Court of Justice independent of the Legislature and entitled to pronounce null and void any law which the Legislature may pass if it set aside the obligations of free contract or contravene any of the rights guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States as essential rights of men. We have no written constitution; no definite constitution. Mr. Gladstone has affirmed, without having been, so far as I am aware, contradicted, that Parliament is omnipotent, or without limits to its right of action. If so, and I imagine it is so, we are a free people living under a theoretically pure despotism. If so, Parliament has an unlimited right to do wrong. Of course, confronting such a right there is a higher right, however unconstitutional it may be, the inalienable right of men to resist unjust laws, and to punish, in accordance with justice, the authors of them. Our political constitution, however, being so indeterminate that the uttermost parliamentary arbitrariness has no other boundary or barrier than insurrection, there is all the greater need that our Upper House should rest on a firmer and broader basis than it does; and that in both Houses of Parliament there should be a greater number of truly wise and eminent men, real leaders of the people, and fewer ignoble persons, mere sham leaders.

When the two Chambers or Houses of Parliament irreconcilably differ in opinion on questions of grave importance, it seems proper that the nation itself should decide between them, and that provision should be made for its doing so otherwise than through a dissolution of Parliament and a general

election. A general election, indeed, in the present state of political morality in this country, makes almost impossible the honest submission of a special question, however important, to the national judgment. It gives every opportunity to either or both of the conflicting political parties to confuse and pervert public opinion on the question in dispute by connecting it with other questions, raising side issues, and appealing to all varieties of prejudice and of selfishness. The way in which the British people has been thus befooled in recent years is deplorable. In certain circumstances a clear and specific referendum to the people would, perhaps, be the best method of settling a disputed political question; but recourse to it in other than rare and very special cases in such a country as Britain could hardly fail to have harmful consequences.*

To proceed: no form of government can so little afford to dispense with the essential truth of the theocratic idea as Democracy. The more the suffrage is extended, the more political power is diffused, the more necessary it becomes, so far as the political order and progress, security and welfare, of a nation is concerned, that a sense of responsibility to God should prevail throughout the nation. A Democracy in which the masses are irreligious must be a specially bad government and is specially likely to destroy itself. If a people be

* The chapter in Laveleye's "Democratie" on "direct government by the referendum" is valuable owing to the amount of information which it contains as to its operation in Switzerland. The conditions of Switzerland, however, as Laveleye himself points out, are exceptionally favourable to this kind of government.

without faith in an eternal and invisible God, how can it have a reasonable faith in an eternal and invisible law of right and duty which is no mere expression of material fact or creation of human will? And if it have not faith in such a law what rule can it devise as a standard for its own legislation or for its own obedience? Will it take might for right, and bow before accomplished fact, whatever it may be? Surely that would be too monstrous. Will it be content with whatever a majority decides, with whatever is the national will? But the mere will of a majority is no more binding on reason or conscience than that of a minority; the mere will of a nation is no more sacred than that of an individual; mere will is not righteous will, but may be either a tyrannical or a slavish will. If a nation makes laws merely for its own convenience, why should not any individual break them for his own convenience? Will tendency to produce happiness or utility be a sufficient guide as to what laws should be made and obeyed? No, for that, too, leaves conscience untouched, cannot summon to self-sacrifice, must end in a reign of selfishness. Only the recognition of law as that which has its seat in the bosom of God can make men at once free from law as a law of bondage and willingly subject to it as the law of their own true life,—as the law of order, justice, and love, which gathers men into societies, and unites them into one great brotherhood.

The distinctive and favourite principle of Democracy is Equality. All men are equal and have equal rights. To the extent of the truth in it this

principle is valuable. Faith in it has achieved great things; it has inspired men to assail arbitrary pretensions and privileges, and to put an end to many unjust and injurious inequalities. Its mission for good is doubtless far from as yet exhausted. But no one ought to allow himself to become the slave even of a great idea, or to follow it a step farther than reason warrants. And the idea of equality is very apt to be the object of an exaggerated and impure passion. In countless instances the desire for equality is identical with envy; with the evil eye and grudging heart which cannot bear to contemplate the good of others.

The principle of equality is one not of absolute but of relative truth. It has only a conditioned and limited validity. There is, indeed, only one sort of equality which is strictly a right: namely, civil equality, equality before the law, the equal right of every man to justice. And it is a right only because the law must have due respect to circumstances and conditions; because justice itself is not equality but proportion, rewarding or punishing according to the measure of merit or demerit. Political equality, equality as to property, and religious equality, unless simply applications of this equality, simply forms of justice, are misleading fictions which make equality what it ought never to be—a substitute for justice, or the formula of justice, or the standard of justice. Political equality affirmed as an absolute principle can only mean that every man has a right to an equal share in the government of the country; in other words, it can

only mean political anarchy. Equality in property, similarly conceived of, necessarily implies communism, and a communism as inconsistent with even the nationalisation of property as with its individual appropriation; in equivalent terms, it is destructive of the very nation and incompatible with the very existence of property. Religious equality viewed as a separate and independent right must signify that for the State there is no difference between religion and irreligion, Christianity and Atheism; that for the State religion has no interest, no being. All such equalities when presented as additional to civil equality, the equality of all men before the law, the equal right of all men to justice, are illusory and pernicious; they have worth and sacredness only as included in it.

The arbitrary exclusion, indeed, of any class of the community from political activity is a wrong to that class. For every exclusion adequate reasons ought to be producible, and the sooner the need for it can be done away with the better. As regards the suffrage no reason either of expediency or of principle can now be consistently urged in this country against extending it to the utmost, as it has already been granted even to illiterates. Rightly or wrongly, we have already gone so far as to have left ourselves hardly any real or even plausible reason for refusing any serious claim to its farther extension, its virtual universalisation. Resistance to any such claim can only be based on invidious grounds, and can have no other effect than to cause a very natural irritation.

Granting to every person a vote, however, is by no means to acknowledge that every person is politically equal to every other, and still less is it actually to create political equality. It is a concession that the admission of all to the suffrage is reasonable in the circumstances, not that it is right in itself. It is quite consistent with a denial of any right of the kind; quite consistent with the affirmation that no one has any right to exercise so important a function as the suffrage if he cannot do it rightly, *i.e.*, to the benefit of the nation. A nation which adopts universal suffrage is perfectly entitled to devise counterpoises which will remove or lessen any evils incidental to the system. While leaving universal suffrage intact, it may quite consistently provide for special representation of labour, trade, and commerce, of science, art, and education, and, in a word, of all the chief institutions and interests of the commonwealth. It may recognise the importance of the fullest possible development of the freedom of individuals; yet recognise also the folly and falsehood of the notion that the nation is only the sum of its individual units; and may, in consequence, strive so to combine corporative with individual representation as will preserve Democracy from rushing into a ruinous Individualism, or becoming the prey of Socialism.

There is valid reason for complaint of inequality, in the sense of partiality and injustice, as regards property, if all be not alike free to acquire or dispose of it; if any exceptional or special impediments be

put in the way of any class of persons either as to its purchase or sale. This admission, however, is far from equivalent to the affirmation of that equality of right as to property which would logically prevent the profitable use of it by any one. There is no right to equal participation in property, but only a right not to be inequitably prevented from participation in it. The State is consequently not entitled to enforce or aim at an equal distribution of property. Its function is to do justice, neither more nor less; and the sphere of justice as to property is merely that of equal freedom to acquire and to use it.

The State may err and do unjustly by favouring one class of religious opinions and discouraging another. In the name of Christianity it may act in a very unchristian way towards atheists and other non-Christians. It is bound to respect the conscientious convictions of the least of associations and of every single individual. It may provide that no man shall be excluded from Parliament because of atheism or disbelief in Christianity, and yet hold that it thereby only shows a just, a generous, and a Christian spirit. Nothing in what has just been said implies that for the State religion and irreligion, Christianity and atheism, are equal; or is even inconsistent with maintaining that for the State no difference, no distinction, is more profound and vital than that between religion and irreligion; that the distinction between virtue and vice is not more so; that the distinction between knowledge and ignorance is not so much

so. It is of small importance to the State whether its citizens are taught algebra or not in comparison with whether or not they are imbued with the spirit and principles of the Gospel. A State cannot fail to feel itself bound to provide for the teaching of the religion in which it believes, unless it can get the duty done for it by the spontaneous zeal of its members. Were there no separate Christian Church, a sincerely Christian State would inevitably undertake itself to discharge the duties of a Church, and so transform itself into a Church-State or State-Church, in which Church and State would be only functionally, not substantively distinct.

There is another respect in which every patriotic man and true friend of Democracy must seek to guard against the one-sidedness of the especially democratic principle. He must be careful to distinguish between arbitrary and artificial inequalities and essential and natural inequalities. The more ready he may be to assail, to diminish, to cast down the former, the more anxious should he be to defend, and to allow free play and full development to the latter. Equality of conditions is not an end which ought to be aimed at. It is a low and false ideal. The realisation of it, were it possible, which it fortunately is not, would be an immense calamity. It would bring with it social stagnation and extinction. Mankind must develop or die, and development involves differentiation, unlikeness, inequality. The only equality which can benefit society is the equality of justice and of liberty. Let equality be regarded as a truth or good in

itself; let it be divorced from justice and opposed to liberty; let the free working of the powers in regard to which men are unequal be repressed, in order that those who are of mean natures may have no reason to be jealous of any of their fellows; and society must soon be all a low and level plain, and one which continually tends to sink instead of to rise, for it is just through the operation of natural inequalities that the general level of society is always being raised in progressive communities. The material wealth, the intellectual acquisitions, and the moral gains which constitute the riches of mankind at the present day would never have been won and accumulated if the manifold special energies and aptitudes of individuals, if all natural inequalities, had not been allowed free scope.

The direst foe of Democracy has been excess of party spirit. When moderated by, and subordinated to, patriotism, the conflict of parties may be healthful and stimulating. It has thus been often largely conducive to the growth and prosperity of democratic States. But it has generally ruined them in the end; and, perhaps, it will always succeed in ruining them. For it tends to become increasingly less honest and more selfish; to grow keen and embittered as a struggle for power and its advantages in proportion as it ceases to have meaning and to be ennobled by faith in principles or generous ideals.

Besides, while in every Democracy there will be a struggle of political parties, parties will always feel that they need organisation, and organisation

must be effected and developed through associations. But unless political intelligence, independence, and zeal are general in a community, political associations may easily become the seats of wire-pullers, adroit enough to juggle the mass of the people out of their rights, to dictate to Parliament what it shall do, and to subject what ought to be a great and free Democracy to the sway of a number of petty and intriguing oligarchies. The greatest Democracy on earth—that of the United States of America—has submitted to be misrepresented, deceived, and plundered in the most shameless and humiliating manner by its political committees. It has known their character; it has despised them; it has groaned over their doings; but somehow it has not been able to deliver itself from them. It has needed for its emancipation from their power and methods more moral and political virtue than it possessed. Only of late years has it attempted to resist and restrain them.

A great deal of labour, and wisdom, and virtue, in fact, are needed in order that Democracy may be a success. Although at its conceivable best Democracy would be the best of all forms of Government, it may not only be the worst of all Governments, but is certainly the most difficult form of Government to maintain good, and still more to make nearly perfect. It demands intelligence, effort, self-restraint, respect for the rights and regard for the interest of others, morality, patriotism, and piety in the community as a whole. Without the general diffusion of these qualities

among those who share in it, it easily passes into the most degenerate sort of Government.

This is why history is the record of so many Democracies which have deceived all hopes based on them, and failed ignominiously. It is why they have so frequently reverted into absolute Monarchies and Oligarchies. It is why they have so often passed through a state of agitation and disorder into one of lethargic subjection to despotic rule.

Democracy can only succeed through the energy, intelligence, and virtue of the general body of its members; through their successful resistance to temptations, their avoidance of dangers, their resolute overcoming of difficulties, their self-restraint and discipline, their moral and religious sincerity and earnestness. From Plato downwards all who have intelligently speculated on Democracy have seen that the problem on the solution of which its destiny depends is essentially an educational problem. A Democracy can only endure and flourish if the individuals who compose it are in a healthy intellectual, moral, and religious condition.

In the foregoing remarks I have insisted mainly on the limitations of the democratic principle, and on the dangers to which Democracy is, from its very nature, exposed. To have dwelt on its strong points would have been, so far as my present object is concerned, irrelevant; and is, besides, work which is constantly being done, and even overdone, by gentlemen who are in search of parliamentary honours, and by many other smooth-tongued flatterers of the people. As I have sought, however, to

indicate the limitations, weaknesses, and dangers of Democracy, I may very possibly be charged with taking a pessimistic view of its fortunes and future. I do not admit the applicability of the charge.

History does not present an adequate inductive basis from which to infer either optimism or pessimism. Although faith that the course of humanity is determined by Divine Providence implies also faith in that course leading to a worthy goal, this falls short of optimism, while manifestly incompatible with pessimism. That the democratic ideal of Government contains on the whole more truth than any of its rival ideals, and that it has, for at least two centuries, been displacing them and realising itself at their expense in the leading nations of the world, may warrant in some measure the hope that in the long run it will universally and definitively prevail, provided it appropriate and assimilate the truths which have given to other ideals their vitality and force; but between such a vague and modest hope as this and any attempt at a confident or precise forecasting of the fate of Democracy there is a vast distance. Whether it will finally triumph or not, and, if it do, when, or in what form, or after what defeats, it is presumption in any man to pretend to *know*. No mortal can even approximately tell what its condition will be in any country of Europe a thousand, or a hundred, or even fifty years hence.

No one can be certain, for instance, whether its future in Britain will be prosperous or disastrous, glorious or the reverse. The future of Britain itself is too uncertain to allow of any positive forecast in

either direction being reasonable. The ruin of Britain may be brought about at any time by quite possible combinations of the other great military and naval powers. The British people may also quite possibly so behave as to cause the ruin of their country. Those who profess unbounded trust in the British people, or in any people, are the successors of the false prophets of Israel, and of the demagogic deceivers of the people in all lands and ages. They belong to a species of persons which has ruined many a Democracy in the past; and there is no certainty that they will not destroy Democracy in Britain or in any other country where it at present prevails.

On the other hand, there is nothing to forbid the hope that Democracy in Britain will have a lengthened, successful, and beneficent career. Why should it listen to flatterers or believe lies? Why should it not, while asserting and obtaining its rights, keep within those limits of Nature and of reason which cannot be disregarded with impunity? Why should it not recognise its weaknesses and guard against them? Why should it not discern its dangers and avoid them? Why should it not be prudent, self-restrained, just, tolerant, moral, patriotic, and reverent? Why should it not strive after noble ends and reach them by the right means and by well-devised measures? I know not why it should not. Therefore I shall not anticipate that it will not.

This is certain, however, that if Democracy in Britain or elsewhere is to have a grand career, it

must work for it vigorously and wisely. It will not become powerful, or prosperous, without toil or thought; not through merely wishing to become so, or even through any amount of striving to become so, which is not in accordance with economic, moral, and spiritual laws. It will not become so, if it adopt the dogmas of Socialism; for, these are, alike as regards the conduct and concerns of the material, moral, and religious life of communities, so false and pernicious that Democracy by accepting them cannot fail to injure or destroy itself.

The creed of Social Democracy is the only socialistic creed which requires in this connection to be considered. It is substantially accepted by the immense majority of contemporary Socialists. The really socialistic groups which dissent from it are of comparatively small dimensions and feeble influence. Is it, then, the expression of a faith on which Democracy can be reasonably expected to endure or prosper?

Certainly not as regards the distinctive economic tenets which it contains. The views to which Social Democracy has committed itself on the nature of economic laws, on value and surplus value, on competition and State-control, on labour and wages, on capital and interest, on money, on inheritance, on the nationalisation of land, on the collectivisation of wealth, and other kindred subjects, are of a kind which cannot stand examination. Some of them have been dealt with in previous chapters, and have been shown to be erroneous and unrealisable. The others are of a like character.

The economic doctrine of Social Democracy is thoroughly anti-scientific wherever it is peculiar or distinctive. It has been widely accepted, but only by those who were predisposed and anxious to believe it; not by impartial and competent economists, or any other students of it who have made their assent dependent on proof. It owes its success not to the validity of the reasons advanced for its doctrines, but to the wide-spread dissatisfaction of the working-classes with their condition; or, as Dr. Bonar expresses it, to their "belief that they are now the tools of the other classes and yet worth all the rest."*

This state of feeling, however it may be accounted for, is of itself a very serious fact, and will be lightly regarded only by the foolish. Whatever is just and reasonable in it should find a generous response. For whatever is pathological in it, an appropriate remedy should be sought. Its prevalence should produce general anxiety for the material, intellectual, and moral amelioration of the classes in which it threatens to become chronic. But it will never be either satisfied or cured by concessions to, or applications of, the economic nostrums of Social Democracy. To fancy that it will is the same absurdity as to imagine that a fevered patient may be restored to restfulness and health by complying with the dis-tempered cravings and exciting and confirming the delirious illusions which are the effects and symptoms of his malady.

* "Philosophy and Political Economy," p. 353.

According to the teaching of Social Democracy there are no natural laws in the economic sphere, and especially in that of the distribution of wealth, but only laws which are the creations of human will, made by society and imposed on itself. But this teaching is the reverse of true, and it directly encourages men to expect from society what it cannot give them, and necessarily embitters them against it for not bestowing on them what is impossible. According to the same teaching, labour is the sole cause of value, and the labouring classes alone are entitled to all wealth. This is no less false, and it equally tends to spread in a portion of the community unwarrantable hatred against another portion, and to generate extravagant expectations in connection with proposals of the most mischievous kind. The suppression of the wage-system, as recommended by Socialism, could not fail to destroy the chief industrial enterprises of a country like Britain; the abolition of money would paralyse its commerce. The measures of confiscation advocated by it under the names of expropriation, nationalisation, and collectivisation, would take away indispensable stimuli to exertion and prudence, individuality and inventiveness, and so end in general impoverishment and misery. The social unrest of which Socialism is the symptom cannot be allayed with doses of Socialism either pure or diluted. The distinctive economic tenets of Socialism are fatal economic errors. But it is only on economic truths that economic well-being can be founded. And this applies in an even special degree to democratic societies as being self-governing

societies, or, in other words, societies ruled by public opinion, and, therefore, societies in which it is of the last importance that public opinion should be true opinion.

The ethics of Social Democracy will come under consideration in the next chapter, and therefore it is only requisite to say here that it is not better than its economics. It is an ethics which treats individual morality as almost a matter of indifference, and which fatally sacrifices individual rights to social authority. Its teaching as to domestic relations and duties is unhealthy. The justice inculcated by it is largely identical with what is commonly and properly meant by injustice. Such a moral doctrine must be pernicious to the life of any society, but especially to that of a democratic society. All who have thought seriously on forms of government and of society have recognised that the democratic form is the one which makes the largest demand for the personal and domestic virtue of its members; the one to the security and strength of which the general prevalence of settled and correct conceptions of justice is the most absolutely indispensable. It is to an exceptional degree true of democratic societies that in them the social problem is a moral problem. A Democracy pervaded by the ethical principles of Social Democracy must soon become disorganised and putrid.

Social Democracy has been able to inspire large numbers of men with a sincerity and strength of faith, and an intensity of zeal seldom to be found dissociated from religion. Hence, perhaps, in a

loose way it may be spoken of as religious. Of religion, however, in the ordinary sense of the term it has none. It acknowledges no Supreme Being other than the State or Society; no worship but that of Leviathan. Its cult is identical with its polity. It rests on a materialistic view of the universe and of life, and recognises no other good than such as is of an earthly and temporary nature. It is not merely indifferent to religion but positively hostile to it. It not only despises it as superstition, but hates it as the support of tyranny and the instrument of severity. Its motto might be that of Blanqui, *Ni Dieu ni maître*. If it triumph another age of religious persecution will have to be traversed. But reason and history alike lead us to believe that faith in God and reverence for God's law are essential to the welfare of societies; that any people which accepts a materialistic and atheistic doctrine condemns itself to anarchy or slavery, to a brief and ignoble career. What it calls liberty will be licentiousness, and the more of it it possesses, the shorter will be its course to self-destruction. On this subject, however, I need not dwell as I shall have to treat of Socialism in relation to religion in a subsequent chapter.

Socialism, it may now be perceived, is dangerous to Democracy, inasmuch as it tends to foster and intensify what is partial and exclusive in the democratic ideal. It urges it on to reject the truth which gave significance and vitality to the theocratic ideal. It is anti-monarchical, and will only tolerate a republican form of government even

where monarchy would be practically preferable. It errs as much through jealousy of social inequalities as Aristocracy does through pride in them. It strives after social equality as a good in itself, even when it is an equality only to be obtained by levelling down, by general compression. In this respect it is peculiarly dangerous in a democracy because it seduces it through its chief weakness. Where each man has some share in government, many are apt to think all should have an equal share. The ordinary mind is rarely just towards the exceptional mind. Average human nature may be easily persuaded to aid in pulling down whatever seems to it so high as to overshadow itself.

Socialism is jealous even of the inequality necessarily implied in the parliamentary system, and hence does not interest itself in the real improvement of the system. The parliament of a nation ought to be truly representative of the nation as an organic whole, of the steady, persistent will and general pervading reason of the commonwealth, and not merely of fluctuating majorities gained by election tricks. But a parliament thus representative is one naturally very difficult to secure, and, perhaps, especially so, when the democratic spirit is dominant. Democracy arrived at a certain stage of development demands universal suffrage; and the claim may be one which neither ought to be nor can be refused. But universal suffrage will never of itself ensure to a nation a true parliamentary representation of it as a whole, or in the entirety of its interests. It can only yield a representation of

individuals; and the governmental majority which results from it may conceivably be a majority of one and may even have been returned by a minority of the electors. Education, art, science, and other great national interests may be left wholly unrepresented in the legislative body. Interests too strong politically to be left altogether unrepresented may only be represented in a one-sided way. Does Socialism warn Democracy of its danger in this respect, or suggest to it any remedy for the evil? On the contrary, it encourages that excessive confidence in the virtues of universal suffrage which generally prevails in democratic communities, and still more the excessive and equally prevalent jealousy of any representation over and above that of individuals alone.

Yet Socialism has not like common Democracy any admiration of the parliamentary system. Probably no class of persons estimates the worth of our time-serving politicians at a lower figure, or is less deceived by them, than Socialists. The socialistic criticism of parliamentaryism has always been of a searching and unsparing kind, not lacking in truth, but erring on the side of severity. It has, however, not been criticism intended to improve the constitution, or efficiency, or morality of parliament, but either to make it despised and hated, or to make it a better instrument for the introduction of a system which will dispense with it.

Socialists see in a parliament an instrument which they hope to get possession of, in order to nationalise land and to collectivise property. When the instru-

ment has served their purpose they do not mean to preserve it, but to break it, and cast it aside. They have, therefore, no desire to improve it as an instrument for directing national energies and supplying national wants. Their aim is to render it a more effective instrument of revolution during the period of transition between Capitalism and Collectivism. It is least intolerable to them when exclusively a representation of individuals, and when members are paid, and as dependent as possible. They would prefer, however, direct government or delegation with an imperative mandate to representation in the ordinary sense of the term.

Socialism, in fact, has no just claim to the credit of taking an organic view of society. It is at one with Individualism in treating society as an aggregation of units. What Social Democracy proposes to do is to compress all the individual units composing a community or nation into an economic system which will secure for each unit the maximum of material enjoyment for the minimum of necessary physical labour. In this conception there is no recognition of the true nature of society, of its nature as an organic whole, with interests of a properly social, moral, and spiritual character. Such Socialism is obviously individualistic in its ideal and aims. It differs from Individualism only in its employment of social force and pressure in order to realise its ideal and reach its aims. "Economical Socialism," writes Mr. Bosanquet, "is no barrier against Moral Individualism. The resources of the State may be more and more directly devoted to

the individual's well-being, while the individual is becoming less and less concerned about any well-being except his own."* Collectivism is a Socialism of this kind, and hence its influence on Democracy must necessarily be evil.

Further, Socialism must act unfavourably on Democracy in so far as it infuses into it its own excessive faith in the rights and powers of the State. The distinctive tendency of Socialism is unduly to extend the sphere and functions of the State, and to make individuals completely dependent on corporate society. For the Socialist the will of the State should be revered as authoritative in itself and accepted without question as the supreme and comprehensive law of human conduct. This reverence and obedience it does not receive, and is not entitled to receive, at present, because it is confounded with government, as contradistinguished from society; but when this opposition is done away with, and the State will become the expression or personification of organised society, of the socialised commonwealth, there can be no higher source of authority in the universe, no worthier object of worship; and then no one must be allowed to show it disrespect or to challenge its behests. "Socialists," says one of the most scientific and learned among them, "have to inculcate that spirit which would give offenders against the State short shrift and the nearest lamp-post. Every citizen must learn to say with Louis XIV., *L'État c'est moi.*"†

* "Essays and Addresses," p. 70.

† Carl Pearson, "Ethic of Free Thought," p. 324.

Quite so. Contemporary Socialism desires to serve itself heir to the Absolutism of past ages. Its spirit is identical with that of all despotisms. It seeks to deify itself, and means to brook no resistance to its will. The Socialist in saying *L'État c'est moi* will only give expression to the thought which animated the first tyrant. If Socialism can impregnate and inspire the Democracy of our time with this spirit, society in the near future will lie under the oppression of a fearful despotism.

Socialists are striving with extraordinary zeal and success to convert the adherents of Democracy to their faith. They fancy that if they can succeed in doing so they are certain to gain their ends and to establish Socialism throughout the whole of Christendom at least. It seems to me that they are too hasty in coming to this conclusion. They ought to consider not only whether or not they can socialise Democracy, but whether or not a socialist Democracy can live. The latter question is the more important of the two.

I grant that it is quite possible that Democracy may be so infatuated and misled as to adopt the principles and dogmas of Socialism. I deem it even not improbable that early in the approaching century in several of the countries of Europe the socialistic revolution may be so far successful that for a time the powers of government will be in the hands of socialistic leaders who will make strenuous efforts to carry out the socialistic programme.

Socialism abusing the forces of Democracy may

bring about a terrible revolution. Will, however, the revolution thus effected by it found the state of things that Socialism promises, and one at the same time satisfactory to Democracy? History affords us no encouragement to expect that it will. Hitherto all revolutions wrought by Democracy with a view not to the attainment of reasonable liberties but to equality of material advantages—*i.e.*, all essentially socialistic revolutions—have led only to its own injury or ruin. Greece and Rome not merely reached a democratic stage, but they passed through it into Caesarism. May not the nations of modern Europe which have reached the same state share the same fate? Nay, must they not have the same fate unless they avoid the same faults? Is it not inevitable that any revolution which they can conceivably effect under the influence of passion for an equality inconsistent with freedom, of a perverted sense of justice, of party fanaticism, and the desire of plunder, will speedily be found to end in the triumph of anti-democratic reaction? It has always been so; and probably always will be so. The primary necessity of society is order, security; and to obtain that it will always sacrifice anything else.

At a time when Karl Marx had hardly any followers in Britain he gave expression to the conviction that it was in Britain that his system would be first adopted. He based his conviction on what is certainly a fact, namely, that the British Constitution presents no obstacle to the adoption of any system. If Socialists so increase as to be able to

elect a majority of the members of the House of Commons the whole socialistic programme may be constitutionally converted into law, and constitutionally carried into effect at the point of the bayonet. Thus far Marx saw quite clearly. And, possibly, the time may come when the people of Britain will be so infatuated as to send to Parliament a socialist majority.

But would a socialist Parliament even with a socialist majority of the people at its back be able to establish a collectivist or communist regime? Would not the minority opposed to it be superior in all the chief elements of power, except numbers, to the majority supporting it? And would not that minority have every motive to induce it to make the uttermost resistance to the order of things sought to be introduced? The immediate effect of Parliament passing into law a collectivist programme would not be the establishment of Collectivism but the origination of social and civil war, out of which there has always come, and must come, the repression of free parliamentary government, and the substitution for it of military and absolutist government.

Our English House of Commons has slowly and insensibly acquired the enormous power which it possesses because it has on the whole deserved it; because, more than any other representative assembly in the world, it has justified national confidence in its practical wisdom, its patriotism, its regard for its own honour, and its respect for the liberties and rights of the citizens. When it loses the qualities to which it owes its power, and uses

that power to give effect to demagogic passions and socialistic cupidities, it will suddenly fall from the proud height to which it has slowly risen. Those who excite our English Democracy to revolution with a view to the introduction of a collectivist millennium are really working towards the establishment not of Social Democracy but of strong Individual Government.

So many Democracies have ended in Despotisms that many have concluded that they all must do so; that there is a law of nature, an invariable law of history, which determines that Democracy must always give place to autocratic government. Most Democracies have been short-lived; some historians and theorists believe that they all will be so. "Democracies," says Froude, "are the blossoming of the aloe, the sudden squandering of the vital force which has accumulated in the long years when it was contented to be healthy and did not aspire after a vain display. The aloe is glorious for a single season. It progresses as it never progressed before. It admires its own excellence, looks back with pity on its own earlier and humbler condition, which it attributes only to the unjust restraints in which it was held. It conceives that it has discovered the true secret of being 'beautiful for ever,' and in the midst of the discovery it dies."*

I am not of opinion that Democracy *must* be short-lived, or even that it *must* die at all. All democracies not killed by violence have, so far as I can make out, died, not because they were under

* "Oceana," p. 154.

any necessary law of death, but because they chose the way of death when they might have chosen that of life. As so many of them, however, have in the past chosen the way of death, the way which leads through disorder to despotism, I fear that many of them will do the same in the future.

This feeling is not lessened but intensified by the obvious fact that the friends of Democracy are in general unconscious of its having now any great risks to run. The present generation, as the late M. Cournot has well pointed out, is, in comparison with that which preceded it, somewhat indifferent to liberty, and ready to endure and impose encroachments on it which promise to be advantageous. This is due partly to the diffusion among the people of socialistic principles but partly also to the confidence that liberty can no longer be seriously endangered. This confidence is inconsiderate, and itself a serious danger. The liberty which is thought to be in no danger is almost always a liberty which is in the way of being lost. It should be remembered that Democracies not only may destroy themselves, but that when once they have entered on "the broad way," it is naturally less easy for them to retrace their steps, or even to moderate their pace towards destruction, than for Monarchies or Aristocracies. Just because they live much more unrestrainedly and intensely their evils come much more quickly to a head.

Words which I have elsewhere used when speaking of De Tocqueville's famous work on "Democracy in America" may here serve to complete my

thought. "A part of the task which De Tocqueville attempted in that treatise was one which the human intellect can as yet accomplish with only very partial success, namely, the forecasting of the future. Induction from the facts of history is too difficult, and deduction from its tendencies too hypothetical, to allow of this being done with much certainty or precision; hence it is not to be wondered at that several of his anticipations or prophecies have not yet been confirmed, and seem now less probable than when they were first enunciated. It is more remarkable that he should have been so often and so far right; and that he should have been always so conscious that he might very possibly be mistaken

"He shared in democratic convictions, but with intelligence and in moderation. He acknowledged that Democracy at its conceivable best would be the best of all forms of government; the one to which all others ought to give place. And he was fully persuaded that all others were rapidly making way for it; and that the movement towards it, which had been so visibly going on for at least a century, could by no means be arrested. He elaborated his proof of the irresistibility and invincibility of the democratic movement, and he emphasised and reiterated the conclusion itself, because he deemed it to be of prime importance that men should be under no illusion on the matter. He succeeded at once in getting the truth generally accepted; and there has been so much confirmation of it since 1835 that probably no one will now dream of contesting

it. At present Russia and Turkey are the only absolute monarchies in Europe, and it seems impossible that they should long retain their exceptional positions. There is nowhere visible on the earth in our day any power capable of resisting or crushing Democracy. If there be none such it does not follow that it will not be arrested in its progress; but it follows that it will only be arrested *by itself*.

"That it may be thus arrested De Tocqueville saw; that it would be thus arrested he feared. While sensible of its merits he was also aware of its defects, and keenly alive to its dangers. While he recognised that it might possibly be the best of all governments, he also recognised that it could easily be the worst, and that it was the most difficult either to make or to keep good. The chief aim of his work, indeed, was to demonstrate that Democracy was in imminent peril of issuing in despotism; and that the more thoroughly the democratic spirit did its work in levelling and destroying social inequalities and distinctions, just so much the less resistance would the establishment of Despotism encounter, while at the same time so much the more grievous would be its consequences.

"As regards France, his gloomiest forebodings were realised. She had shown, by the Revolution of July 1830, that she would submit neither to autocratic nor to aristocratic government; and in 1835 she was chafing under plutocratic rule, rapidly becoming more democratic, and getting largely imbued with the socialistic spirit which insists not

only on equality of rights but on equality of conditions. The Guizot Ministry (1840-48), by blindly and obstinately refusing to grant the most manifestly just and reasonable demands for electoral reform, greatly contributed to augment the strength and violence of the democratic movement, until at length it overthrew the monarchy, and raised up a republic, one of the first acts of which was to decree universal suffrage. But in 1852 the workmen and peasants of France made use of their votes to confer absolute power on the author of a shameful and sanguinary *coup d'état*, and Cæsarism was acclaimed by 7,482,863 Ayes as against 238,582 Noes. There could be no more striking exemplification or impressive warning of the liability of Democracy to cast itself beneath the feet of despotism.

"Yet history, so far as it has gone since De Tocqueville wrote, has not, on the whole, shown that Democracy is more than liable thus to err; has not tended to prove that it must necessarily or will certainly thus err. For the last twenty years France has been organising herself as a democracy according to the principles of constitutional liberty. America, even while passing through a great war, gave not the slightest intimations of desire for a Cæsar. Instead of being less there is far more inequality of conditions in the United States to-day than there was in 1835. In no other country, in fact, have such inequalities of wealth been developed during the last half-century; and inequality of wealth necessarily brings with it other kinds of inequality. In no country is the establishment of a

despotism so improbable. It should be observed, however, that the only way in which we can conceive of such an event being brought about is one which would be in accordance with De Tocqueville's theory. Let the conflict between labour and capital in America proceed until the labourers attempt to employ their political power in the expropriation of the capitalists; let the Democracy of America become predominantly socialistic, in the sense of being bent on attaining the equality which requires the sacrifice of justice and of liberty; and there will happen in America what happened about two thousand years ago, in the greatest republic of the ancient world, a Cæsar will be called for and a Cæsar will appear, and Democracy will be controlled by despotism."*

* "Historical Philosophy in France and French Belgium and Switzerland," pp. 521-3.

CHAPTER X.

SOCIALISM AND MORALITY.

SOCIALISM has always occupied itself mainly with the economic organisation of society. It does so at the present day not less than during the earlier periods of its history. Its advocates are still chiefly engaged in urging the transference of property from individuals and corporations to the State, and in explaining how the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth may be so regulated as best to secure the advantages which they deem a socialistic system capable of conferring. At the same time, Socialism has, of course, not ignored morality or the relations of morality to its own theses and proposals. No scheme of social organisation can afford to do that. Socialisation obviously cannot be effected independently of moralisation. Any proposed solution of a social problem is sufficiently refuted as soon as it is shown logically to issue in immorality. As the Duke of Argyll pithily says: "In mathematical reasoning the 'reduction to absurdity' is one of the most familiar methods of disproof. In political reasoning the 'reduction to iniquity' ought to be of equal value."*

* "The Unseen Foundations of Society," p. 419.

Besides, Socialism has itself moral presuppositions and tendencies which obviously demand consideration and discussion: moral presuppositions and tendencies which its adherents must defend, and which those who reject it are certain to regard with disfavour.

Accordingly in the present chapter we shall treat of the bearing of Socialism on Morality.

Socialists charge Political Economists with having taught as science a system of doctrine which is non-moral or even immoral. They denounce Economics as it has been presented by its best accredited teachers as not only a dismal and unfruitful science, but one which has been falsified and vitiated by being severed from, and opposed to, Ethics. They profess to be alone in possession of an ethical Economics—an economic theory capable of satisfying the heart and conscience as well as reason and self-interest. But both the censure and the claim are based on very weak grounds.

One of these grounds is that Economics takes a narrow, unnatural, and unethical view of what ought to be its own object and scope. It is said that it confines itself to the study of wealth; subordinates man to wealth; assumes that wealth includes the satisfaction of all human desires, even while confining itself to those material things and corporeal services which minister chiefly to the appetencies and vanities of the lower nature; practically raises wealth, so understood, to the rank of an end in itself; and by exclusively dwelling on it encourages the delusion that it is the chief end of life.

The Socialists and semi-Socialists, however, who have sought by arguing thus to bring home to Economists the charge of doing injustice to morality have only made apparent the defectiveness of their insight.

In order to advance the study of any science, its cultivators must concentrate their attention on the facts and problems appropriate to it, and not allow their thoughts to roam abroad. The economist must do so equally with the mathematician or the biologist. He must fix his attention on economic processes just as the mathematician does on quantitative relations and the biologist on vital phenomena. But all economic processes are concerned with wealth, are phases or changes of wealth, in a sense so definite that it may be called its economic sense; and wealth so understood is an object sufficiently precise and distinct, as well as sufficiently extensive and interesting, to be the subject of a science. It has reasonably, therefore, been assigned to, or appropriated by, Economics as its subject.

And this being so, it is not only the business, but the entire and only legitimate business, of the economist as a pure or strict scientist to investigate the nature, conditions, laws, and consequences of the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth. To condemn him for devoting himself specially to this task, and leaving it to others to speculate on the welfare of nations or the prospects of humanity, is as foolish as it would be to censure a mathematician for prosecuting his abstract and

exact deductions and calculations to the neglect of discoursing on the harmonies of the universe.

While, however, as a scientific specialist he not only may but ought to confine himself within the limits of his special science, he should also endeavour to form as philosophical a view as possible, as comprehensive, profound, and accurate a view as possible, of the relations of that science to others, and especially to contiguous and closely connected sciences, such as psychology and ethics and their derivatives. This is the natural and appropriate preventive of the evils incident to exclusive and excessive specialisation in Economics; and economists have been gradually and increasingly realising its importance. There is no warrant for representing them as less sensible of the necessity of giving heed to the relations of political economy with other sciences than are socialistic theorists. They do not overlook that Economics has psychological bases, and is a science of the social order; and consequently subordinate man to wealth.

To the economist wealth is not a merely material fact but a human and social fact. It is not with wealth as a complex of external objects, but as the subject of human interests and of social processes that Political Economy is concerned. Man, in the view of the Economist, is the origin and end, the ground, medium, and rationale of wealth; and wealth can have neither meaning nor even being apart from man, and from the rationality, the freedom, the responsibility, the capacities of feeling and of desire,

and the social bonds and affinities which are distinctive of man.

In like manner Economics has been neither severed from, nor opposed to, Ethics by any of its intelligent cultivators. They have merely refused crudely and confusedly to mix two distinct disciplines. Pure Economics, it is true, does not attempt more than to explain the facts and to exhibit the laws of wealth; it does not pronounce on their moral characters or discuss their moral issues; yet it deals with all moral elements or forces which are economic conditions or factors to the extent that they are so; tracing, for instance, how idleness, drunkenness, dishonesty, profligacy, and the qualities opposed to them, operate in the various spheres of economic life. It is thus helpful to morality. "By demonstrating the material advantages gained through the exercise of such virtues as industry, providence, and thrift, and by showing the harm that springs from sloth, improvidence, and unthrift, political economy supplies very efficacious and practical motives for virtuous action, motives, too, which have a hold upon those not moved by the unaided maxims of ethics pure and simple."*

Further, although the Economist cannot reasonably deem it a part of his duty as a scientific specialist to treat of the right use or abuse of wealth, or of the duties of men in connection with the acquisition and employment of wealth, he will be the first to recognise that the moralist should do so, and may

* L. Cossa, "Introduction to Political Economy," p. 29.

confer great benefit on society by doing so. Economic Ethics is a very necessary and important branch of instruction at the present day. Obviously it is one which can only be properly taught by those who have studied Economics with sufficient care and without prejudice.

It is not scientific Economists but certain Socialists of a sentimental type who have either taught or implied that wealth is the satisfaction of all wants, or the chief end of life, or even in any instance or reference an end in itself. No genuine Economist has been so foolish as to inculcate or suggest that what he calls wealth, however abundantly produced or wisely distributed it may be, is necessarily creative either of wealth or of virtue.*

* The error to which reference is made has not, perhaps, been refuted better by any subsequent economist than by Pelegrino Rossi in the second lecture of his "Cours d'Economie Politique" (1840). As the point is a not unimportant one, either in itself or in the controversy between economists and Socialists, I shall here summarise his argument: "Wealth, material prosperity, and moral development, although not unrelated, are not necessarily conjoined or uniformly connected. The poverty or wealth of a man is not a criterion of his happiness, and still less of his moral worth. As it is with individuals so is it with nations. A poor State may be prosperous and, as Sparta proves, powerful; and a wealthy State may abound in wretchedness and be on the eve of ruin. So both the wealth and general prosperity of a people may be great while its moral development is most backward. The working classes of a country may be comfortable and contented, their means of living cheap, and of enjoyment abundant, yet in that country the intellectual and moral faculties of men may be repressed and deadened, and the higher life of spiritual freedom almost extinct. Nations, then, like individuals, may be judged of as to wealth, material well-being, and moral development. To attain each of these supposes a certain use of human faculties; demands certain means, a certain action of man on the external world, and of man on man. To multiply wealth labour properly so-called is necessary, labour enlightened by physical, chemical, and mechanical knowledge, and furthered by the combination of many persons in a common work but with different func-

It is among Socialists that we find those who fancy that Economics may be regenerated and ennobled by identifying—*i.e.*, confounding—wealth with well-being, and so including in it not only those things to which Economists restrict the term but the pleasures of imagination and affection, purity of heart, peace of conscience, and the satisfactions which religion confers. Obviously, there can be no common science of things so different. And as obviously thus to elevate and extend the meaning of the term wealth can have no tendency to lead

tions. The wealth so produced will distribute itself among its producers according to certain laws which are the work of no one but the necessary consequence of the general facts of production. The material welfare of a nation requires another and wider application of knowledge and energy. It requires a wisely contrived social organisation and good laws, and the use of many arts and sciences for the public benefit. Moral development calls for the exercise of faculties of still another order. It appeals to our noblest sentiments, to conscience and to reason, for it consists not in abundance of wealth and of the enjoyments of the material life, but in the culture and elevation of the spiritual nature, so as to bring out the full dignity which belongs to it. These three ends of action thus suppose the use of different means. He who merely wishes wealth, he who seeks material happiness, and he who aims at moral development, must act in different ways. The three ends may not be incompatible; but he who not content with the first desires also to secure the second, and from that to rise to the third, cannot restrain his actions within the same limits as he who looks exclusively to the first. If, therefore, political economy were merely an art—if it were a mere means towards an end, and that end were wealth—it would still have a distinct sphere of its own, and need not be confounded with politics or ethics or any other science or art. But the application of human knowledge to a definite end, the employment of individual and social forces for a practical result, is not science; and political economy may and does claim to be a science. Sciences must be classed according to their objects and not according to their uses. A science has, properly speaking, no use, no end. When we consider what use we can make of it, what end we can gain by it, we have left science and betaken ourselves to art. Science, whatever be its object, is only the possession of the truth, is only the knowledge of the relations which flow from the nature of things."

to the due subordination of what is ordinarily called wealth to morality.*

It is also specially among Socialists that we find the delusion prevailing that the kingdom of heaven may be established on earth by merely reorganising the means and methods of the production and distribution of wealth; that man is the creature of

* The views on Economics propounded by Mr. Ruskin in "Unto this Last" and other writings are all supposed by him to be dependent on his definition of wealth as "the possession of the valuable by the valiant," and on the thesis that "there is no wealth but life, life including all the powers of love, of joy, and of admiration." Whether they are in reality logically derivable from them may well be questioned, but they are certainly quite as vague as if they were. The most definite and distinctive of them is that all labour ought to be paid by an invariable standard, good and bad workmen alike, if the latter are employed at all. "The natural and right system respecting all labour is that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. The false, unnatural, and destructive system is, when the bad workman is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the good, or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum. So far as you employ it at all, bad work should be paid no less than good work; as a bad clergyman takes his tithes, a bad physician his fee, and a bad lawyer his costs; this I say partly because the best work never was nor ever will be done for money at all, but chiefly because the moment the people know they have to pay the bad and good alike, they will try to discern the one from the other, and not use the bad. A sagacious writer in *The Scotsman* asks me if I should like any common scribbler to be paid by Smith, Elder & Co. as their good authors are. I should if they employed him; but would seriously recommend them, for the scribbler's sake, as well as their own, not to employ him."

How is it that a man of so much genius as Mr. Ruskin could regard such a method of recompensing labour as "the natural and right system" when it is so obviously unnatural and so manifestly unjust? Plainly because his standard of judgment is neither the laws of nature nor of justice but a private "ideal," a personal preconception. To count unequals as equal is unnatural. To pay for bad work as much as for good is unjust. To refuse to employ "bad," *i.e.*, inferior workmen, at all is an excessively aristocratic as well as arbitrary rule; and would not only bear hard on the "common scribbler," but reduce to beggary common workmen of all kinds.

circumstances, and that the moral and spiritual development of society is ultimately dependent on exclusively material conditions. Bax and Bebel, Gronlund and Stern, and indeed the whole main body of the Collectivists as well as of the Anarchists of to-day, are as much under the influence of this shallow error as was Robert Owen. They exaggerate the plasticity of human nature and assume the irresponsibility of man. They fail to perceive that the history of man has been mainly not a product of matter, but the work of man; that society has been far more the creation of individuals than individuals of society; that economic development has been at least as dependent on ethical development as the latter on it; that morality is not only so far the fruit of civilisation but also its root and vital sap; and that the great obstacle to social progress and prosperity is not the defectiveness of social arrangements or of industrial organisation but the persistency of individual human vices.

Economists as a class have not thus erred. They have seen more clearly the limits both of the power of material conditions and of the science which treats of wealth. They have recognised that there is a vast deal which wealth, however distributed or manipulated, cannot accomplish, and that the most exhaustive knowledge of its nature and laws can be only a part of the knowledge required for the solution of such a problem as how to make a nation happy or how to guide humanity towards self-perfection. Economics, strictly scientific in its methods and definitely limited in its sphere, must,

they have admitted, be content merely to yield a few certain specific conclusions capable, in conjunction with those drawn from other sciences, of being applied with good effect to answer great and complex questions which can never be resolved by any single science or even perhaps in any purely scientific manner.

The main argument on which Socialists rely in support of the allegation that Economics as commonly taught is in its general tendency unfavourable to morality, is that it assumes human nature to be essentially selfish, fundamentally egoistic; and that it builds itself entirely up on this assumption. They say that it lays down as premisses what are only forms or applications of its primary assumption of the selfishness of human nature, and that from these premisses—the principles of least sacrifice, of unlimited competition, and the like—it deduces its chief doctrines. Hence they condemn it, and demand a new Economic based either entirely or largely on sympathy and benevolence; on what they call “altruism.”

In arguing thus thorough-going Socialists, such as the Social Democrats, have not stood alone, but have been encouraged and supported by so-called Academic and Christian Socialists of all shades and varieties. Mr. Thomas Davidson, favourably known by his contributions to philosophy and especially to the knowledge of the philosophy of Rosmini, has presented the argument as skilfully, perhaps, as any other writer; and, therefore, I shall quote his statement of it, indicating where I have omitted

sentences which I think can be dispensed with without injustice.

"One of the avowed and cardinal assumptions of the political economy of selfishness is this, that every man tries to obtain as much of the means of satisfaction as he can, with the smallest possible amount of labour. Along with this, it makes the tacit assumption that means of satisfaction is wealth, and that the more material wealth a man has, the greater is his power of satisfying his desires. It makes also the further assumption that trouble and labour are synonymous terms, and, hence, that labour is pain, submitted to only for the sake of subsequent pleasure.

"Now, all these assumptions rest upon a more fundamental assumption, that man is simply an animal, whose sole desire is to satisfy his animal appetites. But set out with the contrary assumption, that man is a rational being, whose true satisfaction is found in spiritual activity. Spiritual activity, let me now add, consists of three things, pious intelligence, unselfish love, practical energy, guided by intelligence and love to universal ends. Upon my assumption, all the three assumptions of the economy of selfishness fall to the ground, being entirely incompatible with a moral element in man's nature. Let us consider these assumptions, beginning with the second.

"Is it in any sense true that, to a moral being, the only means of satisfaction is wealth, and that the more wealth he has, the more readily he can satisfy his desires? Is it true that all satisfactions can be obtained for material wealth? Is it true that even any of the highest satisfactions can be bought for it? Will wealth buy a pure heart, a clear conscience, a cultivated intellect, a healthy body, the power to enjoy the sublime and beautiful in nature and in art, a generous will, an ever-helpful hand—these deepest, purest satisfactions, of human nature? Nay, not one of these things can be bought for all the wealth of ten thousand worlds: and not only so, but the very possession of wealth most frequently stands in the way of their attainment. . . . What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and be a mean, contemptible, human pig, finding satisfaction only in varnished swinishness? My God! I had rather

be a free wild boar, basking and fattening in the breezy woods, without a soul and without a mind, than, having a soul and a mind, to prostitute them in grovelling for wealth, and craving the satisfactions which it can give. It is not true, then, that wealth is the only means of satisfaction, or that true human satisfaction bears any ratio to wealth.

"Again, is it true that labour is necessarily trouble and pain? Let us see. I know of no sadder and more humiliating reflection upon the position of labour in our time and country, no clearer proof of the moral degradation entailed by our present economic system, than the prevalent conviction that labour is pain and trouble. We hear a great deal declaimed about the honourableness of labour, as if that were a fine, new sentiment, instead of being something which it is a disgrace ever to have doubted; but we hear hardly a word about the delights and satisfactions of labour. And the reason is, alas! that there are no delights or satisfactions in it. But is this state of things a necessity? Or is it only a temporary result of an evil system? There is not a shadow of doubt about the matter. Labour is not in itself pain and trouble, and it is only a wicked and perverse economy that now makes it so. Labour, on the contrary, under a wise economy, is to every rational being a pleasure, not something to be avoided, but something to be sought. Labour with a view to good ends is rational men's natural occupation. . . . Let labour be placed in clean, healthy, and attractive surroundings; let it never overtask the brain, nerves, or muscles; let it receive its just reward; let it leave a man with time to cultivate his mind, and to meet with his fellows in friendly ways; let it be honoured; let it be pursued with hope and the sense of progress, and, so far from being trouble and pain, it will be delight and joy.

"It is the greatest possible mistake to suppose that, under true human conditions, men try to get as much as they can with the least possible amount of trouble. This is true only under animal or inhuman conditions. In all natural labour, men enjoy the pursuit of the result more than the result itself; for it is the pursuit alone that has a moral value. . . . Artists often paint their best pictures for themselves, just for the delight of practising their art. The sportsman will spend whole days

in hunting game which he could buy in the market for a few cents or dollars. And so it is generally. Man, as soon as he rises above the animal stage, makes no attempt to avoid labour, as a trouble and a pain; he rather seeks it as a delightful exercise of his faculties. There is nothing in the world so satisfactory as labour for a rational end.

"The baselessness of the two assumptions with regard to satisfaction and labour having been shown, the third falls to the ground of itself. Since material wealth is not the means to the highest satisfaction, and labour is not a synonym for pain and trouble, it follows at once that it is not at all true that men seek to obtain the largest amount of satisfaction with the smallest amount of labour. Thus, one of the most fundamental assumptions of the current political economy proves utterly untenable, when applied to rational beings. By attempting so to apply it, economists have been forced to bring men down to the level of the brutes. Many of them, consequently, have gone to work to prove that man, in his economic relations at least, is governed by brute laws, over which he has no control; for example, the law that every man must buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. Assuming selfishness to be the only motive power in political economy, they have been forced to the conclusion that man is governed entirely by animal laws, and they have accepted the conclusion. A puerile enough procedure, surely!

"In a true political economy, suited to human beings, the whole of human nature, and not merely its lower, animal part, must be taken into account, and wealth must be looked upon, not as at an end, but as a means to the building up and perfecting of that nature. We must no longer ask how, given human nature as purely selfish and certain other conditions, wealth will be produced and distributed; but how wealth must be produced and distributed in order to pave the way for the perfecting of human nature in the whole hierarchy of functions, headed by the moral ones."*

* "The Moral Aspects of the Economic Question," pp. 6-11. Index Association: Boston, 1886.

A few remarks should suffice to dispose of the argument thus urged.

In the first place, then, it rests entirely on a single assumption—the assumption that Political Economy assumes human nature to be essentially selfish, fundamentally egoistic. Is there any warrant for the assumption? Has any evidence been produced in proof of the charge which it implies? None. And it is even certain that none can be produced.

Not one economist of repute has been shown to have taught the doctrine in question. The charge of having done so has been insinuated against Say, Ricardo, Malthus, Garnier, Bastiat, and even Adam Smith; but recklessly and falsely. All these authors have given distinct expression to their belief that man is distinctively and pre-eminently a rational and moral being; and that the sympathetic affections or fellow-feelings are as essential to human nature as the private appetencies or self-feelings. None of them regarded selfishness or egoism, in the popular and correct acceptation of these terms, as a normal or legitimate constituent of human nature at all. They deemed it, and very properly, an excessive and perverted development of self-feeling, a discreditable passion, a vice.

Let our Scottish economists be cited in proof. The ethical views of Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, David Hume, Dugald Stewart, and Thomas Chalmers, are as well known as those which they held on economic

subjects. Did they, then, represent human nature as fundamentally selfish, or even assign a small place or low rank to altruistic principles? No one who knows anything about them will answer in the affirmative. When they erred as moral philosophers it was chiefly in the contrary direction of resolving virtue into benevolence, sympathy, or the like. In a word, the argument under consideration has for its corner stone not a certified truth but an inexcusable misrepresentation.

It is a natural consequence of this initial error that the argument should proceed to affirm that Political Economy assumes that "man is simply an animal, whose sole desire is to satisfy his animal appetites." Thus to reason, however, is merely to support one calumny by another. Political Economy assumes nothing of the kind attributed to it. Political Economists have taught nothing of the kind. Political Economy has owed almost nothing to materialists, or to those who resolved all the affections and faculties of human nature into impressions of sense. It is not scientific Economics but utopian and revolutionary Socialism which has sprung from the crude materialistic sensism of the eighteenth century. And such Socialism, it must be added, has never purged itself from the evil qualities derived from its origin. They have never been more manifest in it than they are at present. If we wish to trace back the succession of the theorists of modern Collectivism to the man with the strongest claim to be regarded as its founder, we shall have to pass from one materialist

to another until we come to the author of the "Code de la Nature" (1756), the Abbé Morelly. It was on the hypothesis of materialistic egoism; the hypothesis that man is simply a physical and sentient organism, whose sole end or summum bonum is pleasure; that he rested his proposals for the suppression of private property, the collectivisation of wealth, and the common enjoyment of the products of labour; and it is on the same hypothesis that the same proposals have been generally rested ever since.

The eloquent protest of Mr. Davidson against the notion that wealth can satisfy all man's wants, or even purchase any of the highest human satisfactions, must commend itself to every mind not sordid and ignoble. But its relevancy as against Economists is more than doubtful. For Economists are just the persons who take pains so to define wealth as to make it plain that it is what satisfies only *some* wants, and these wants which, although universally important, are not among the highest. It is no principle or doctrine of Economics that wealth is an end or good in itself, or even a necessary means to such end or good. The selfishness, the avarice, which so regards it, is a passion which will find no justification in Economics, and which must have its sources elsewhere.

When a writer defines wealth as co-extensive with human weal, as Mr. Ruskin does, or declares that it can only be properly defined "in terms of man's moral nature," as Mr. Davidson does, he, in my opinion, justly lays himself open to

the charge of using language calculated to favour the notion that wealth can satisfy all wants, and that material wealth shall have ascribed to it a place and dignity to which it is not entitled. Contrary to his intention he falls into the very fault of which he accuses economists notwithstanding that they had carefully avoided it.

Social Democrats and other advocates of Collectivism have, of course, not erred in the same way as those who like Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Davidson have approached Socialism from the side of idealism; but it is they, and not economists, who specially deserve censure for ascribing an excessive importance to wealth. It is Collectivism which proposes to convert entire society into a vast association for the production of wealth, and to exempt no class of persons, male or female, from the compulsion of giving several hours daily to industrial labour. There is, in fact, no characteristic of Collectivism more conspicuous than the predominance which it assigns to the economic interests of society over all others; than what Cathrein calls its "einseitige Betonung des wirtschaftlichen Lebens." It assumes that if a satisfactory economic organisation be attained all other needed organisation will follow and perfect itself as a matter of course. "Seek first equality of wealth and the happiness which that can give you," and all other blessings will be added to you, is its first and great commandment as well as its chief and special promise.

Economists will admit as readily as other people that labour is very often a great deal more dis-

agreeable and painful than it need be or ought to be. But, certainly, they will also demand more proof than any man's mere word for regarding labour as in no degree pain and trouble, but delight and joy. Labour is not play. Not only a wicked and perverse economy but also the nature of things and the nature of man render necessary hard, prolonged, wearisome labour. If labour involved no pain or trouble, no self-denial or self sacrifice, it would be no moral discipline and would deserve neither honour nor reward.

That "men seek to obtain the largest amount of satisfaction with the smallest amount of labour" is a principle which Economists will not refuse to accept the responsibility of maintaining. But, says Mr. Davidson, "it proves utterly untenable when applied to rational beings." Indeed! Has he ever met with a single rational being to whose conduct it would not apply in strictly economic relationships? What rational being will not prefer, other things being equal, little labour to much, large wages to small? If, indeed, so far from other things being equal, the little labour and the large wages require the violation of the moral laws of purity, of justice, or of charity, then every good man will prefer to them much labour and small pay; but then, also, by doing so he will not in the least violate the principle laid down by Economists. The economic principle is no longer alone, and consequently is no longer to be alone considered. Besides, the largest possible amount of pay for the least possible amount of labour will in such circum-

stances bring with it no "satisfaction" to any properly "rational being." What will it profit a man although he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

The allegation that economists by accepting the principle in question "have been forced to bring men down to the level of the brutes" has only this modicum of truth in it, that brutes would all perish if they were such incarnate absurdities as to prefer wasting their energies and advantages to profiting by them. It might, however, be as relevantly said that acceptance of the principle brings men down even to the level of inanimate agents, inasmuch as winds and waters and other elements and powers of nature always follow the path of least resistance. It is surely no degradation to reason to accept and apply of its own free choice a principle which is both rational and natural.

Economists do not say that "every man must buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest;" or that any man must. They never say "Thou must, or Thou shalt." They lay down no precepts. They are content to indicate what economic results will, under given conditions, follow from any given course of economic action. Any man can buy and sell at an economic disadvantage if he pleases. Most men occasionally do so, and from a variety of motives. And why should they not? There are occasions when no one is under obligation to act on economic principle, or from an economic motive. All that Economists maintain as to the principle which so offends Mr. Davidson, and,

it may be added, Mr. Ruskin, is that it is true in the sphere of Economics: that if a man does not buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest he will not buy and sell to full economic advantage; and will not grow rich, or at least as rich as he otherwise would. Its truth has been denied only by those who have failed to understand its meaning.

Economics, then, does not assume the essential or exclusive selfishness of human nature. It assumes merely that when any man buys or sells labour or commodities his actions have a motive satisfactory to himself; have in view some good or advantage which he deems will be a sufficient recompense for his toil and trouble. It assumes self-interest in this sense and to this extent.

But self-interest thus understood is not selfishness any more than it is benevolence. It does not even necessarily imply self-love any more than benevolence. The (self) interest in labour or trade may spring, indeed, exclusively from a desire to gratify my own appetites, but it may also spring from a desire to promote the welfare of my relatives, my fellow-citizens, my fellow-men. My interest in carrying on business may arise mainly or even wholly from my desire to make wealth in order to give it away for beneficent and noble ends. Economics does not take account of the characters and varieties of the motives which underlie the self-interest which it assumes; but neither does it pronounce these motives to be of one kind or character. It stops short at the self-interest, and leaves to psychology and ethics the consideration of the

ulterior motives, the mental and moral states, in which the self-interest originates.

That most of the actions which are concerned in the production and distribution of wealth have their ultimate source in self-love, and very many of them in selfishness, is not, indeed, to be denied. It is a fact, although one for which neither Economics nor Economists are responsible. Men do not directly produce wealth for others, but for themselves, even when they forthwith transfer it to others. They must in the first place get it to themselves. It is only when they have got it that they can give it away. Traders who profess to sell their goods at tremendous sacrifices are necessarily humbugs. Theorists who profess to found Economics on altruism unconsciously occupy in science a corresponding place to that which such traders occupy in practice.

Strictly speaking, Economics does not assume either egoism or altruism, but only self-interest in a sense in which it may be either egoistic or altruistic. Even, however, if it did distinctly assume self-love to be the motive force of economic life it could not in fairness simply on that ground be condemned as immoral or debasing in its teaching. Self-love is not selfishness; not egoism understood, as it generally is understood, as equivalent to selfishness. It is a rational regard to one's own good on the whole. It involves a general notion of happiness or well being, and not mere love of pleasure or aversion to pain. It presupposes experience of the satisfactions obtained through our

particular affections; groups and co-ordinates, as it were, these satisfactions; and seeks to obtain them in such a regulated way as to secure true and permanent happiness. It is essentially based on reflection, necessarily calm and deliberative; and is rather a habit of the whole mind or cast of character than a single principle, however composite.

Such being the nature of self-love, we may easily see what acting from it is not, which is what here specially concerns us.

For example, the man who acts from self-love thus understood must be one who does not seek too keenly, or estimate too highly, the pleasures yielded by any particular appetite or passion. To yield in excess to the cravings or affections of nature, to yield at all to feelings which are in themselves unnatural or excessive, is to act not from but against self-love. It is to sacrifice the whole to the part, permanent and rational happiness to temporary and unworthy gratification.

Again, self-love is not selfishness, and acting from the one principle is quite different in character from acting from the other. Self-love aims at the completest and highest good of self. Selfishness aims at seizing and keeping for oneself, at alone possessing and enjoying, what it considers good; and being thus excessive desire of exclusive possession, it disregards the highest and most satisfying goods, those which cannot be exclusively attained or possessed—truth and beauty, moral and spiritual goodness. It concentrates itself on material advantages; clings exclusively to wealth; and finds its fullest ex-

enplification in the miser, whom it engrosses and degrades until he becomes almost as insensible to self-respect, to the voice of conscience, to generous feelings, or religious influences, as, in the words of Salvian, "is the gold which he worships."

Further, self-love is not opposed, as selfishness is, to benevolence. There may be an occasional contrariety, to use Butler's phrase, between self-love and benevolence as there may be between self-love and other affections; but both in themselves and in the courses of conduct to which they lead self-love and benevolence are in essential harmony. Love wholly engrossed with self is not rational self-love. It is irrational not only in its exclusiveness and injustice even, but also in its futility and self-contradictoriness, for it necessarily defeats its own end, the happiness of self. The benevolent affections are among the richest sources of personal happiness. The man who loves himself only loves himself very unwisely, for he so loves himself that he can never be happy. On the other hand, no man who does not care for his own true good will care for the true good of others. Ruining one's self is not the way to be most helpful to others.*

Self-love, it must be added, is desire not of illusory and fleeting advantage to self, but of the real and lasting good of self. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The love of thyself is as

* "Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds;
Another still, and still another spreads.

legitimate as the love of thy neighbour. Only, however, when it is of the same kind. The second commandment is "like unto" the first and great commandment in that it enjoins only pure, true love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind." To Him who is Absolute Truth, Perfect Goodness, Infinite Holy Love, thou shalt give an unrestrained, unlimited, unswerving, true, pure, and holy love. And thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But how, then, mayest thou love either thy neighbour or thyself? Only with a love which is true love; which seeks thy own true good and his; which aims always at what will ennoble, never at what will debase thee or him; which prefers both for thyself and for thy neighbour the pain and the poverty which discipline and purify the spirit to the pleasure and prosperity that seduce and corrupt it; which does not forget at any time to ask both as regards thyself and thy neighbour, What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? and which, in a word, in no way withdraws thee from, or diminishes in thee, the love thou owest to God, but is itself a form and mani-

Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race.
Wide and more wide the o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in of every kind."

These well-known lines of Pope are only true of *true* self-love—*i.e.*, the self-love which, like the various forms of benevolence itself, implies and is akin to "the virtuous mind."

festation of that love. From God all true love comes, and in Him all true love lives. True love of self is as essentially in harmony with love to God as with love to man.*

Socialists, we have now seen, have failed to prove that Economics is antagonistic to morality. How, we proceed to inquire, is their own doctrine related to morality?

Morality is essentially one, inasmuch as it springs from an internal principle of reverence for rectitude, of love of ethical excellence, which should pervade all the activities and manifestations of the moral life. Where any branch of duty or virtue is habitually disregarded, there the root of morality must be essentially unsound. No moral excellence can be complete where the entire moral character is not simultaneously and harmoniously cultivated. Yet there are many virtues and many duties; and these may be arranged and classified in various ways, of which the simplest certainly, and the best not improbably, is into Personal, Social, and Religious.†

Man occupies in the world three distinct yet connected moral positions. Hence arise three distinct

* For confirmation of the positions laid down in the preceding three pages the reader is referred to Bishop Butler's two sermons "Upon the Love of our Neighbour" (xi.-xii.). A vast amount of worthless writing on egoism and altruism has appeared in recent years implying on the part of its authors lamentable ignorance of the teachings of these invaluable discourses.

† No opinion is here expressed as to how either the ethical or the science which treats of it may be most appropriately distributed.

yet connected species of moral relationship. Man is a rational and responsible agent, cognisant of duty towards himself, of obligations to restrain and control, improve and cultivate, realise and perfect *himself*. As such the moral law has a wide sphere for authority in his conduct as an individual; as such he is the subject of personal virtues and vices. He is also a social being, bound to his fellow creatures by many ties, and capable of influencing them for good or ill in many ways. As such he has social duties, and can display social virtues. He is, further, a creature of God, manifoldly related to the Author of Life, the Father of Spirits, the Supreme Lawgiver. And as such he has religious duties and ought to cultivate the graces of a pious and devout mind.

But already at this point true ethics and the ordinary ethics of Socialism come into direct and most serious conflict. The vast majority of contemporary Socialists recognise only the obligatoriness of social morality. They refuse to acknowledge the ethical claims of either the personal or religious virtues. The former, in so far as they take notice of them at all, they judge of only from the point of view of social convenience; the latter they treat as phases of either superstition or hypocrisy. They thus set themselves in opposition to two-thirds of the moral law. The triumph of their doctrine would thus involve a tremendous moral as well as social revolution.

It would be most unfair to charge *all* Socialists with discarding religious morality. There are

Socialists, real Socialists, men prepared to accept the whole economic and social programme of Social Democracy, who retain their belief in God and acknowledge the obligations of religion. There are among thorough-going Socialists some Anglican High-Churchmen, and a still greater number of zealous members of the Roman Catholic Church. Of course, all these have a religious morality—theistic, Christian, or churchly and confessional, as the case may be. But such Socialists are comparatively few, compose no homogeneous body, and possess little influence. It is enough to note that they exist.

Contemporary Socialism viewed as a whole unquestionably rests on a non-religious conception of the universe, and is plainly inconsistent with any recognition of religious duty in the ordinary acceptance of the term. As a rule, when the Socialist speaks of his religion, he means exactly the same thing as his polity; and should he by chance talk of religious duty, he understands thereby simply social duty.

The truth on this point is thus expressed by a good socialistic authority: "The modern socialistic theory of morality is based upon the agnostic treatment of the supersensuous. Man, in judging of conduct, is concerned only with the present life; he has to make it as full and as joyous as he is able, and to do this consciously and scientifically with all the knowledge of the present, and all the experience of the past, pressed into his service. Not from fear of hell, not from hope of heaven, from

no love of a tortured man-god, but solely for the sake of the society of which I am a member and the welfare of which is my welfare—for the sake of my fellow-men—I act morally, that is, socially. . . . Socialism arises from the recognition (1) that the sole aim of mankind is happiness in this life, and (2) that the course of evolution, and the struggle of group against group, has produced a strong social instinct in mankind, so that, directly and indirectly, the pleasure of the individual lies in forwarding the prosperity of the society of which he is a member. Corporate Society—the State, not the personified Humanity of Positivism—becomes the centre of the Socialist's faith. The polity of the Socialist is thus his morality, and his reasoned morality may, in the old sense of the word, be termed his religion. It is this identity which places Socialism on a different footing to the other political and social movements of to-day."*

This elimination of religious duty from the ethical world seems to me a fatal defect in the socialistic theory. I am content, however, to leave it uncriticised. It could not be left altogether unindicated.

Socialism also sacrifices personal to social morality. It ascribes to the conduct and habits of individuals no moral character in themselves, but only so far as they affect the happiness of society. It sees in the personal virtues no intrinsic value, but only such value as they may have when they happen to be advantageous to the community. Utilitarianism

* Karl Pearson, "The Ethic of Free Thought," pp. 318-9.

tended to induce this sort of moral blindness, and some of its advocates went far in the direction of thus doing injustice to the personal virtues. But Socialism errs in the same way uniformly and more strenuously, *peccat fortiter*. And it is not difficult to see why.

Socialism naturally bases its moral doctrine on utilitarianism, on altruistic hedonism: naturally assumes that the sole aim of mankind is happiness in this life, the happiness of society; and that virtue is what furthers and vice what hinders this aim. It tends, therefore, as all altruistic hedonism does to identify "right" and "wrong" with *social* and *anti-social*; to conclude that there would be no morality at all if men did not require the sympathy and help of their fellow-men; and so to merge private in public ethics.

Further, Socialism is carried towards the same result by holding that morality is merely a product of social development, or, as Marx said of Capital, "an historical category." It represents economic factors as the roots of human culture, and morals as only a portion of its fruits; the material conditions of society as the causes which determine social growth, and the civilisation which has thence resulted as the source of all the ethical perceptions, feelings, and actions now in the world. It still, as in the days of Owen and Saint-Simon, traces character to circumstances; believes in the almost boundless power of education; depreciates the reality, persistency, and efficacy of the operation of moral forces in the life and history of mankind; and looks at

spiritual processes through the obscuring and falsifying medium of a superficial empiricism. Hence it overlooks fundamental ethical factors; fails to recognise that history is just as much a moral creation as morality is an historical production; and does not see that were there no specifically personal virtue there would be no genuinely social virtue.

The chief reason of the socialist view has yet to be given. Socialism of its very nature so absorbs the individual in society as to sacrifice his rights to its authority. This is its differential feature. Where the individual is fully recognised to be an end in himself, a true moral agent entitled and bound to strive after his own highest self-realisation, independently of any authority but that of Him of whose nature and will the moral law is the expression, there can be no real Socialism. In Social Democracy we have a somewhat highly developed form of Socialism, although one which finds it convenient to be either silent or ambiguous on essential points where the necessity of choosing between slavery and freedom so presents itself that it cannot safely pronounce for the former and cannot consistently pronounce for the latter. It demands that society should be so organised that every man will have his assigned place and allotted work, the duration of his labour fixed and his share of the collective produce determined. It denies to the individual any rights independent of society; and assigns to society authority to do whatever it deems for its own good with the persons, faculties, and possessions of individuals. It undertakes to relieve individuals of what are manifestly their own

moral responsibilities, and proposes to deprive them of the means of fulfilling them. It would place the masses of mankind completely at the mercy of a comparatively small and highly centralised body of organisers and administrators entrusted with such powers as no human hands can safely or righteously wield.

Such a doctrine as this is even more monstrous when looked at from a moral than from an economic or a political point of view. It is above all the moral personality which it outrages and would destroy. It makes man—

“An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool
Or implement, a passive thing employed
As a brute mean;”

and nothing

“Can follow for a rational soul
Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
And strength in evil.”

On this point the following words of a very acute and thoughtful writer will convey my conviction better than any which I could frame of my own. “A State Collectivism in which the unqualified conception of an ‘organism’ logically lands us, by restraining the free activity of each self-conscious personality, strikes not only at the liberty of the citizen in the vulgar acceptance of the term ‘liberty,’ but cuts off at the fountain-head the spring of the entire spiritual life of man. It is profoundly immoral; for, with free activity must perish all that distinguishes man from animal, and all must go in religion, philosophy, literature, and art by which human life has been exalted and dignified. If these

things still held a place in the life of the race it would be as a dim tradition of happier epochs. It has not been the race as a collective body which has created literature, and art, and religion—no, not even political institutions and laws—but great personalities, in presence of whose genius the mass bowed the head in submission or acquiescence. An organised and consistent Collectivism would, like an absolute paternal despotism, be the grave of distinctive humanity.”*

Men would wholly belie their manhood if they submitted to such a system. It is one which can only be accepted by a senseless and servile herd of beings unworthy of the name of men. Only a slavish heart will yield to society the obedience which is claimed. Only a man without either living faith in God or a real sense of duty will so set society in God’s place or so conform to whatever it may decree as Collectivism expects. Society is mortal; men are immortal. Society exists for the sake of men; men do not exist for the sake of society. Men are primarily under obligation to God; only secondarily to society. The laws of society are laws only in so far as they are in accordance with right reason. When they are contrary to divine and eternal law they can bind no one. An unjust law, as Thomas Aquinas has said, is not law at all, but only a species of violence.

When acting within its proper sphere, society, organised as the State or Nation, may, in certain

* S. S. Laurie, “Ethica,” p. 227.

circumstances and for good reason shown, exact from its members the greatest sacrifices. If invaded by a foreign enemy it may without scruple send every man who is capable of bearing arms to the battle-field or draw to exhaustion on the resources of its richest citizens in order to enable it to repel the common foe. But it has no right to dictate to any of its members what they shall do for a living, so long as they can make an honest living for themselves; and if it so dictate it has no right to expect from them obedience, and should receive none. If society enacts that certain individuals shall labour either unreasonably many or unreasonably few hours a day, those with whose freedom it thus interferes will act a patriotic part if they set its decree at defiance and brave the consequences of so doing. If it attempts to take from them arbitrarily and without compensation property justly earned or legitimately acquired, they will do well to resist to the utmost such socialistic tyranny and spoliation, whatever be the penalties thereby incurred. It is only by acting in this spirit that the rights of individuals have been won; it is only by readiness to act in it that they will be retained. It is only when this spirit of personal independence based on personal responsibility, of the direct relationship of the individual as a moral being to the moral law and its author, has become extinct that a logically developed Socialism can be established; and where it is extinct all true morality will be so likewise.

The reason why Socialism thus comes so grievously

into conflict with morality is none other than its root-idea, its generative error—a false conception of the relation of individuals to society.

A true conception of the relation must be neither individualistic nor socialistic.

It must not be individualistic. Society is not merely the creation of individuals, or a means to their self-development; it is further so far the very condition of their being, and the medium in which they live materially, intellectually, and morally. While the individual has natural rights independent of society and as against society, these are not rights which imply "a state of nature" anterior to society, but rights grounded in the constitution of human nature itself. There are no personal duties wholly without social references. The mere individual, the individual entirely abstracted from society, is a pure abstraction, a non-entity. The individualistic view of the relation of man to society is, therefore, thoroughly false.

Not more so, however, than the socialistic view. It in no way follows that because the individual man exists in and by society he is related to it only as chemical elements are related to the compounds which they build up, or as cells to organisms, or as the members of an animal body to the whole. Man is not so related to society, for the simple reason that he is a *person*, a free and moral being, or, in other words, a being whose law and end are in himself, and who can never be treated as a mere means either for the accomplishment of the will of a higher being or for the advantage of society without the perpetration

of moral wrong, without desecrating the most sacred of all things on earth, the personality of the human soul. With reference to the ultimate end of life man is not made for society but society for man. Hence the sacrifice of the individual to society which Socialism would make is not a legitimate sacrifice but a presumptuous sacrilege.*

Now all this bears directly on the pretensions of Socialism to be *a solution of the social question*. It proves that these pretensions are largely mere pretensions—false pretensions. The social question is mainly a moral question; and the key to every moral question is only to be found in the state of heart of individuals, in goodness or badness of will. The kingdom of heaven on earth does not begin in the world without, but works outwards from the heart within. It can be based on no other founda-

* "The term 'organism,' useful as it is, is not applicable to the State at all save in a metaphorical way. An organism is a complex of atoms such that each atom has a life of its own, but a life so controlled as to be wholly subject to the 'idea' of the complex, which complex is the total 'thing' before us. Each part contributes to the whole, and the idea of the whole subsumes the parts into itself with a view to a specific result, and can omit no part. As regards such an organism we can say that no part has any significance except in so far as it contributes to the resultant whole, which is the specific complex *individuum*. It is at once apparent that this furnishes an analogy which aids and may determine our conception of an harmonious State, just as it does of an harmonious man. But it is at best an analogy merely. . . .

"Unlike the atoms of a true organism, it has to be pointed out that the atoms of society are individual, free, self-conscious Egos, which seek each *its own* completion—*its own* completion, I repeat, through and by means of the whole. . . . These free atoms have a certain constitution and certain potencies which bring them into a specific relationship to their environment, including in that environment other free atoms. It is that independent constitution and these potencies which, seeking their own fulfilment as vital parts of the organic spiritual whole which we call

tion than the moral renovation of individuals—the *metanoia* of John the Baptist and the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. The great bulk of human misery is due not to social arrangements but to personal vices. It is unjust to lay the blame of the sufferings caused by indolence, improvidence, drunkenness, licentiousness, and the like, chiefly on the faulty arrangements of society, instead of on the evil dispositions of those who exemplify these qualities or habits. Society may not be indirectly or wholly guiltless in the matter; but those who are directly and mainly guilty are, in general, the individuals who involve themselves and others in misery through shirking duty and yielding to base seductions. The socialistic teaching which studiously refrains from offending the lazy loafer, "the wicked and slothful servant," the drunkard whose self-indulgence is the

a man, find the whole world, including other persons, to be only an occasion and opportunity of self-fulfilment; and on these it has to seize if it would be itself. Brought by the necessity of its own nature into communities of like Egos, each gradually finds the conditions whereby its life as an individual can be best fulfilled. It is the law of *their* inner activity as beings of reason, of desire, and of emotion, which gradually becomes the external law which we call political constitutions, positive statute, and social usage. Thus generalised and externalised, the 'relations of persons' become an entity of thought, but this abstract entity exists only in so far as it exists in each person. To this generalisation of ends and relations we may fitly enough apply the word and notion 'organism,' for the metaphorical expression here, as in many other fields of intellectual activity, helps us to realise the whole. But we have to beware of the tyranny of phrases. . . . The Ego does not exist for what is called the 'objective will,' but the reverse. So far from the 'atom,' the self-conscious Ego, having significance only in so far as it contributes to the organism, the so-called organism has ultimate significance only in so far as it exists for the free Ego. The 'organic' conception, if accepted in an unqualified sense, would reduce all individuals to slavery, and all personal ethics to slavish obedience to existing law."—S. S. Laurie, "Ethica," pp. 209-12.

sole cause of his poverty, the coarse sensualist who brings on himself disease and destitution, and the like; and which even encourages them to regard themselves not as sinners but as sinned against, the badly used victims of a badly constituted society: this teaching, I say, is the most erroneous, the least honest or faithful, and the least likely to be effective and beneficial that can be conceived.*

Let us pass on to the consideration of the relationship of Socialism to Social Morality. Here I shall say nothing of the moral life of the family, domestic ethics, although Socialism is notoriously very vulner-

* The corresponding individualistic error would be that social environment has no influence or but slight influence on individual character. As we reject Individualism equally with Socialism, we have naturally no sympathy with this error. It is obviously inconsistent with facts. The characters of men are to a large extent affected by their material and moral surroundings. As the physical medium may be such as to poison and destroy instead of strengthening and developing the physical life, so may it be as regards the moral medium and the moral life. Endeavours after the personal improvement of those who are placed in circumstances unfavourable thereto should be accompanied by attempts at modifying the circumstances. To hope to do much good to those who are condemned to live amidst physically and morally foul conditions by so individualistic a method as merely distributing religious tracts among them is foolish. To refuse to aid in modifying these conditions for the better on the plea that those so situated ought "to reform themselves" must be merely pharisaical pretence.

Prof. Marshall ("Principles of Economics," vol. i. p. 64) perhaps credits Socialists somewhat too generously with having shown the importance in economic investigations of an adequate recognition of the *pliability of human nature*. Should this merit not rather be ascribed to the Economists of the Historical School? Is the contribution of Karl Marx, for example, to the proof or the relativity of economic ideas and systems not very slight indeed in comparison with that of Wilhelm Roscher? Nay, has the former in this connection done much more than exaggerate, and distort and discolour with materialism—i.e., metaphysics—the historic and scientific truth set forth by the latter?

able at this point. I have touched on it, however, in chapter viii., and I refrain from returning to it.

Socialism is morally strongest in its recognition of the great principle of human brotherhood. In all its forms it professes belief in the truth of the idea of fraternity. It proclaims that men are brethren, and bound to act as such; that they are so members one of another that each should seek not only his own good but the good of others, and, so far as it is within his power to further it, the good of all. It vigorously condemns two of the greatest plagues which have scourged humanity: war and the oppression of the poor and feeble; and it glorifies two of the things which most honour and advantage humanity: labour and sympathy with those who are in poor circumstances and humble situations. Its spirit is directly and strongly opposed to that which ruled when war was deemed the chief business of human life, and when the laws of nations were made by and on behalf of a privileged few; it is a spirit which recognises that the work which man has to do on earth ought to be accomplished chiefly through brotherly co-operation, and that society cannot too earnestly occupy itself with the task of ameliorating the condition of the class the most numerous and indigent.

There we have what is noblest and best in Socialism; what has made it attractive to many men of good and generous natures. Thus far it is the embodiment and exponent of truth, justice, and charity; great in conception, admirable in character, and beneficent in tendency. Were Socialism only

this, and wholly this, its spirit would be identical with that of true morality, as well as of pure religion, and every human being ought to be a Socialist.

But Socialism is much else besides this, and often very different from this. It often directly contradicts the principle, and grievously contravenes the spirit, of brotherhood; often appeals to motives and passions, and excites to conduct and actions, the most unbrotherly. As yet it has done little directly, little of its own proper self, to propagate the spirit of brotherhood, and to spread peace or goodwill or happiness among men. As yet it has led chiefly to hatred and strife, violence and bloodshed, waste and misery; and only occasioned good by convincing those who are opposed to it of the necessity of seeking true remedies for the evils which it exhibits but also intensifies. The leaders of Socialism have largely acquired their power by appealing not to the reasons and consciences, but to the envy, the cupidity, and the class prejudices of those whom they have sought to gain to their views. The power which they have thus obtained has undoubtedly been formidable; but the responsibility which they have incurred has also been terrible.

Let us not be misunderstood. We blame no man for stirring up the poor to seek by all reasonable and lawful means the betterment of their condition; nor for agitating in any honourable way to make the community or the Government realise the duty and urgency of solicitude for the wellbeing of the

labouring population; nor for exposing whatever seems to him oppression or injustice on the part of capitalists; nor for taking an active part in resisting the selfish demands of employers, or in supporting the just claims of workmen, so long as in his ways of doing so he does not contravene any principle of morality. We fully admit that by all such action the spirit of brotherhood is not violated but exemplified, even when the action may give much offence to those who are in the wrong, and to those who sympathise with them. But we are morally bound to condemn those who strive to create discontent and division among men, and to foster and excite the spirit of social disorder, by flattering certain classes and calumniating others, or by appealing to envy and covetousness. And, unfortunately, it is impossible to exonerate Socialists from the charge of having done this to a deplorable extent. In every country where Socialism is prevalent, abundant proof of the charge is to be found in the speeches of its acknowledged leaders, in the articles of its party periodicals, and in the actions of its adherents.

That Socialism should have thus been so unfaithful to its profession of belief in fraternity has been the necessary consequence of its aiming mainly to secure class advantages, to further party interests. It has persistently represented the solution of the social question as only to be obtained through a triumph of what it calls *the fourth estate*, similar to that which *the third estate* gained in France by the revolution which at the close of last century

abolished the absolute control of an individual will, and swept away the unjust privileges of the nobles and clergy. By this victory the Third Estate is represented as having gained for itself political supremacy, wealth, and comfort. But, we are told that, while it has been prospering, another estate has been rapidly growing up under its régime, and rapidly increasing in numbers and in wretchedness; and that this Fourth Estate is now rapidly rising all over the world against the rule of the third estate, as that estate rose in France against monarchical despotism and the domination of the two higher estates; that is demanding its full share of enjoyment, wealth, and power; and is resolved so to reorganise the constitution and administration of society as to give effect to its will.*

This description of the social situation is very inaccurate and misleading. There is no Fourth Estate at present in any of the more advanced nations of the world in the sense in which there was a Third Estate in France before the Revolution.

* In a paper entitled "La Prétendue Antinomie de Bourgeoisie et de Peuple dans nos Institutions Politiques" (published in the "Compte Rendu des Séances et Travaux de l'Acad. d. Sciences Morales et Politiques," Aout, 1893), M. Doniol has made an interesting contribution to the history of the imaginary distinction between *bourgeoisie* and *peuple*. It originated in the use of the designation *la bourgeoisie de 1830* as a party nickname. Jean Reynaud (in the art. "Bourgeoisie" in the "Encyclopédie Nouvelle," 1837) employed the term *bourgeoisie* to denote those whom Saint-Simon had termed "free" in the sense of being "above want." The notion that the terms *bourgeoisie* and *peuple* denote a real antinomy of "classes" or "estates" was raised into a theory and popularised by Louis Blanc's "Histoire de Dix Ans" and "Histoire de la Révolution Française" (tom. i.). The only semblance of foundation for it was the existence of a property qualification for voting.

The victory of the Third Estate, in France as everywhere else, was a victory over privilege, not the transference of privilege to itself. The rights which it gained were "the rights of man," and were gained for all men. Its victory destroyed "estates" in the old sense, and removed the foundations on which any such new estate can be raised.

The putting forward of the claims of a Fourth Estate in the socialistic fashion necessarily implies a proposal to undo the work which the Third Estate accomplished; to reintroduce protection and privilege; to withdraw the common rights of men in order to equalise conditions by favouring some at the expense of others; and, in a word, to suppress natural liberty and to violate justice. Were Socialists, however, to do otherwise they would virtually admit that the economic and other evils under which society is suffering are of a kind to be dealt with not by such revolutions as may be necessary to gain essential rights and natural liberties but by such reforms—*i.e.*, such measures of adjustment and improvement—as will always be needed to ensure the proper exercise of rights, and to prevent the abuses of liberties, which have been gained.

Accordingly they persist in presenting an exaggerated and distorted view of the social situation. And in order to give plausibility to it they denounce as akin to those social and civil distinctions against which the France of the Revolution so justly protested, others which are of an entirely different character. But they are thereby inevitably led to deny the principle and to contravene

the spirit of fraternity. Whenever, for example, they represent the distinction between rich and poor as equivalent in itself to one between the privileged and the oppressed, they set the poor against the rich by teaching error. There is nothing unjust in men having very unequal shares of wealth. To prevent the freedom of choice and conduct the exercise of which leads some to wealth and others to poverty would be manifestly unjust so long as that freedom was not immorally and dishonestly applied. To equalise fortunes by the employment of force and the suppression of liberties would be manifestly to oppress those levelled down and unfairly to favour those levelled up.

Besides, when liberty is only limited by justice there is no absolute division or distinction between rich and poor: they do not form separate castes or even distinct "estates." There is, in this case, a continuous gradation from the richest of the rich to the poorest of the poor, and there is no inequality of rights, such as there was between the nobility and clergy of France and the great bulk of the French people before the Revolution.

Socialists must likewise bear the responsibility of having seriously violated the principle of fraternity by habitually representing capitalists, both good and bad, as the enemies and oppressors of the working classes. They have thus spread hatred and enmity among those who ought to live on terms of friendly and fraternal relationship. And they have similarly erred by indulging in much mischievous abuse of the shop-keeping and trading

community, or *bourgeoisie* as they call it. They have represented it as a non-productive and parasitic body composed of peculiarly narrow-minded, prejudiced, and selfish persons, and manual labourers as mentally and morally superior to them, and the only true authors of national wealth. At the same time, further to deceive and embitter those whom they have thus flattered, they are accustomed to describe them as the *proletariat*—i.e., to apply to them a term of insult and shame, one only applicable to the idle, servile, improvident, and dissolute, and wholly inappropriate to men who honestly labour for their bread. While, then, Socialists have placed the word "fraternity" conspicuously in their programmes and on their banners, they have, in general, deplorably disregarded and dishonoured it in their speeches, writings, and actions. I rejoice to acknowledge that there are exceptions, signal and noble exceptions, to this statement; but as a general statement it cannot be disputed.

The thought of fraternity readily suggests that of charity, for brethren ought to love and aid one another. A man who really feels the brotherhood of men cannot but recognise in every sufferer the appropriate object of his sympathy, nor can he fail to do his part in supplying the wants of the needy. How, then, is Socialism related to charity, understanding the term in its ordinary signification? Socialism aims at suppressing the need of charity, at least so far as poverty constitutes the need. It professes to be a complete solution of the problem of misery. It

undertakes to secure that there shall be no poor, but that all men shall be equally rich, or at least sufficiently rich. What are we to think of it in this respect?

It would not be fair to charge it with want of charity. If it err as to charity it is owing to its feeling of charity. And it is commendable in aiming at reducing the need for charity. If poverty could be abolished by us we undoubtedly ought to abolish it. It is a duty to strive to get rid of it so far as is possible without causing evils even worse than itself. Socialistic teaching as to charity is healthily counteractive of much churchly teaching on the subject which has done enormous mischief.

In Palestine at the time of Christ, and generally throughout the Roman Empire in the early centuries of Christianity, charity in the form of almsgiving, or at least of relief which involved no demand for labour or exertion from the recipient, was not only an appropriate, but almost the only way, of relieving poverty. In inculcating brotherly love, Christ naturally enjoined His hearers to show it in what was the only form in which they could show it. But unfortunately his exhortations to almsgiving have been widely so misunderstood and misapplied as to have enormously increased the power and wealth of the Church and the number and degradation of the poor. In several countries of Europe so-called charity has, perhaps, done more harm than even war. To provide remunerative work, and so to make almsgiving as unnecessary as possible, is what is most required at the present day. A man who

establishes a successful manufactory in the west of Ireland would thereby do much more good there than by giving away a large fortune in alms.

But it is one thing to be aware of the abuses of charity and another to deny such need for it as really exists, or to fancy, as Socialists do, that the need for it is temporary, and may be easily got rid of. I fear that vast as are the sums at present spent in charity, they are not vaster than are required; and that comparatively few people who give with discrimination and after due inquiry, give too much in charity. I confess even to not seeing any probability that our earth will become free from sorrow and suffering, pain and poverty, so long as the physical constitution and arrangements of the world remain generally what they are, and especially so long as human nature and its passions are not essentially changed.

Will the adoption of Communism or Collectivism prevent earthquakes and tempests, pestilence and disease, drought and famine, catastrophes and accidents? Will it expel from the hearts and lives of men selfishness and folly, improvidence, envy, and ambition? If not, or, in other words, if the old order of things continues, if the world is not, through some great material change and spiritual manifestation, transfigured into a new earth with a regenerated humanity, we may expect our earth to remain a place where charity will find abundant opportunities for exercise.

It is not nearly so probable that a communistic or collectivistic organisation of society would diminish

the need for charity as it is that it would weaken the motives to it and deprive it of resources. Without freedom and the consequent inequality of fortunes there might well have been far more misery in the world than there has been, while there could not have been the wonderful development of charity and of charitable institutions which is so conspicuous in the history of Christendom.

Socialists would abolish charity by providing work for, and rendering it compulsory on, all who are capable of working, and by granting to those who are incapable the supply of their wants in the name, not of charity, but of justice. Are they sure, however, that they could always provide work for all who need it? Are they sure that they could always provide it on such terms as would be tolerable to workmen? If they are, one would like very much to know their secret. If they have one, they have not yet divulged it. As for the idle and dissolute, those whose poverty is voluntary and disgraceful, how are Socialists to compel them to maintain themselves by labour except by violence or starvation? But we could do it by these means without Socialism; we are only prevented from doing it by our respect for human liberty and our soft-heartedness.

Then, although calling what is really of the nature of charity "justice" is very characteristic of Socialism, it is also a worse than useless device. It can only do harm to confound the provinces of justice and of charity. We ought to give to justice all that belongs to it, and seek in addition to diffuse and deepen the feeling of the obligatoriness of charity;

but we ought not to encourage men to claim pretended rights, and deaden in them the sense of gratitude for acts of kindness and generosity.

Individuals, voluntary associations, and the Church have often, in their dispensation of charity, committed serious mistakes, and aggravated the evils which they desired to remove. But they have not erred more grievously than has the State. The old English Poor Law was the cause of an enormous amount of poverty and of demoralisation. "England," says Fawcett, "was brought nearer to the brink of ruin by it than she ever was by a hostile army."*

It would be a deplorable policy to entrust the State with the exclusive right to deal with the problem of poverty, or with the means of satisfying all the demands of poverty. The result would assuredly be that the State would waste and abuse the resources foolishly confided to it, and that idleness and vice would be encouraged. The State in its dealings with poverty should only be allowed to act under clear and definite rules, and should be kept rigidly to economy. While it ought to see that all charitable societies and institutions regularly publish honest accounts, and should from time to time carefully inquire into and report on the good and evil results which they are producing, it should, instead of seeking to substitute its own action for free and spontaneous charity, encourage such charity, and only intervene in so far as may be necessary to supply its deficiencies.

* "Socialism; its Causes and Remedies," p. 25.

Socialism vainly pretends to be able to do away with poverty and misery. But, of course, it could abolish true charity, and arrest the free manifestations of it. It could everywhere substitute for spontaneous and voluntary charity what is already known among us as "legal charity" and "official charity." That, however, would be the reverse of an improvement. "Legal charity" is a contradiction in terms: there can be no charity where there is a legal right or claim, and no choice or freedom. So is "official charity," because even when officials are allowed some degree of liberty and discretion in giving or withholding, what they give is not their own. Hence neither legal nor official charity can be expected to call forth gratitude.

But, although charity does not work in order to obtain gratitude, it cannot accomplish its perfect work without evoking it. For gratitude itself is an immense addition to the value of the gifts or effects of charity. It makes material boons moral blessings. It is an intrinsically purifying and elevating emotion, and can never be experienced without making the heart better. When we know it to be sincere, it is the best evidence we can have that he who is now receiving a kindness will in other circumstances be ready to bestow one. Charity to be fully and in a high sense, effective, must be obviously self-sacrificing, and capable of adapting itself to the particular wants of individuals. The State, acting through law and officials, is incapable of a charity thus real and

efficacious. It makes no sacrifice, and it cannot individualise.*

Socialism has been to a certain extent favourable to the diffusion of international or cosmopolitan feeling. It has laboured with success to convince the workmen of different nations that they have common interests. It has taught them to organise themselves internationally with a view to promote these interests. We may well believe that the range of their intellectual vision and of their moral sympathies has been thereby also extended. Possibly the section of British workmen which is most under the influence of socialistic feelings and ideas is the portion of the British people which is least insular in its thoughts and sentiments. Socialism, simply through awakening workmen to a sense of the solidarity of their interests over all the civilised world, has, doubtless, also helped them in some measure towards a true appreciation of the brotherhood of mankind.

And, it must be added, Socialism has further directly inculcated human fraternity. It has explicitly proclaimed universal brotherhood, the love of man as man, irrespective of race, country, and religion. Socialists deserve credit for the earnestness with which they have recommended peace

* There is no "individualising," in the sense meant, when a Government official admits the claims of certain applicants for poor-law relief and refuses those of others. The official is only empowered to decide to what legal categories the applicants belong. There should be no administrative freedom beyond what is conferred by the law administered.

between peoples; for the emphasis and outspokenness with which they have condemned the wars which originate in personal ambition, in the pride or selfishness of dynasties, and in the vanity or envy, the blind prejudices or unreasoning aversions of nations. They have certainly no sympathy with Jingoism.

Yet on the whole Socialism does not tend to give to the world peace. It is far indeed from being really rooted as some have pretended in the love of man as man. The fraternity which it proclaims is narrow, sectional, and self-contradictory. Such love as it can be honestly credited with possessing is very inferior to the pure, unselfish, all-embracing affection enjoined by Christ and eulogised by St. Paul. It is a class feeling, partial in its scope, mixed in its nature, half love and half hate, generous and noble in some of its elements but envious and mean in others.*

Hence while Socialism denounces the wars for which Governments are responsible, it at the same time inflames passions, favours modes of thought, and excites to courses of conduct likely to give rise to wars even more terrible and fratricidal.

* The defectiveness of the socialistic conception of fraternity is by no means visible only in bad feelings and bad actions towards those who are not manual labourers. It is likewise very strikingly exhibited by the extent to which Socialism belies its professions of sympathy even with the operative classes. Socialistic legislation and socialistic intervention in regard to labour have been largely characterised by injustice and cruelty to the classes of workers most in need of fair treatment and generous aid; largely in favour of the strong and to the injury of the weak—expatriated foreigners, non-unionists, and women. This aspect of Socialism, especially as it has manifested itself in France, has been effectively dealt with by M. Yves Guyot in "La Tyrannie Socialiste," 1893.

The enmities of class which it evokes may easily lead to greater horrors than those of nations. It is mere credulity to suppose that Socialism is tending to the abolition of war. Wherever there is prevalent a militant and revolutionary Socialism civil war must be imminent and large armies prime necessities. Were Socialism out of the way we might reasonably hope that the calamity of a great European war would not be wholly without compensation, inasmuch as it might issue in a general disarmament. But so long as in every country of Europe there exists a Socialism ready in the train of such a war to imitate the deeds of the Parisian Commune we cannot reasonably cherish any hope of the kind. At present our civilisation, it has been aptly said, "has an underside to it of terrible menace; as, in ancient Athens, the Cave of the Furies was underneath the rock, on whose top sat the Court of the Areopagus. The Socialism of our day is a real Cave of the Furies. And the Furies are not asleep in their Cave."* The socialistic spirit must be expelled before there can be social peace.

Further, while Socialism has so far favoured internationalism it has, as a general rule, discountenanced patriotism. Of course, no one denies that there has often been much that was spurious and foolish, blind and evil, in patriotism, or at least in what professed to be patriotism; much, in a word, deserving of censure and contempt. For discountenancing anything of that nature no blame attaches

* R. D. Hitchcock, "Socialism," p. 1 (1879).

to Socialism. But unfortunately it has also assailed patriotism itself. Pages on pages might be filled with quotations from socialistic publications in proof of this. Mr. Bax does not misrepresent the common strain and trend of socialistic opinion and sentiment on the point when he writes thus:—"For the Socialist the word frontier does not exist; for him love of country, as such, is no nobler sentiment than love of class. The blustering 'patriot' bigot, big with England's glory, is precisely on a level with the bloated plutocrat, proud to belong to that great 'middle class,' which he assures you is 'the backbone of the nation.' Race-pride and class-pride are, from the standpoint of Socialism, involved in the same condemnation. The establishment of Socialism, therefore, on any national or race basis is out of the question. No, the foreign policy of the great international socialist party must be to break up those hideous race monopolies called empires, beginning in each case at home. Hence everything which makes for the disruption and disintegration of the empire to which he belongs must be welcomed by the Socialist as an ally."*

That those who are blind to the significance of individuality should thus see nothing to admire in nationality is just what was to be expected. Nationality is for a people what individuality is to a person,—that in it which determines its distinctive form of being and life, which confers on it an organic and

* "The Religion of Socialism," p. 126. On the relation of Socialism to patriotism the reader may profitably consult Bourdeau, pp. 86-91 of the work already mentioned.

moral character, and which impels it to assert and maintain its rights to a free and independent existence and to a national and full self-realisation. Socialism is only logical when it proposes to treat national individuality in the same manner as personal individuality. But it is none the less erroneous on that account.

Nationality is a great and sacred fact. No other principle has been seen in our own age to evoke an enthusiasm more intense, sacrifices more disinterested, exertions more heroic, than that of nationality. Faith in it has built up nations under our very eyes. When the peoples of Europe renounce this faith which has been instilled into them by the words and examples of a Gioberti and Maniani, a Mazzini, Garibaldi and Kossuth, a Quinet and Hugo, and a host of kindred spirits, for belief in the principle of national disruption and disintegration inculcated by socialists and anarchists, sophists and sceptics, they will make a miserable exchange. The sense of nationality and of its claims, the love of country, patriotism, is neither a fanatical particularism nor a formless egotistical cosmopolitanism. It no more excludes than it is excluded by the love of humanity. Purged from ignorance, so as to be no blind instinct such as makes the wild beast defend its forest or mountain lair, and purged from selfishness, so as to manifest itself not in contempt or enmity towards strangers but in readiness to make whatever sacrifices the good of our own countrymen calls for, it is a truly admirable affection, binding, as it does, through manifold ties of sympathy the members of a common-

wealth into a single body, raising them above themselves through a consciousness of duties to a land and people endeared to them by a thousand memories and associations, and so inducing and strengthening them to conform to all the conditions on which the harmony and happiness of national life depend.*

We pass on to consider how Socialism stands related to *justice*. Justice and benevolence, righteousness and goodness, are neither identical nor separable. The goodness which does not observe and uphold justice is not true goodness; the justice which does not seek to promote the ends of goodness is not true justice.

True love of man seeks the highest good of man, which certainly includes righteousness (justice); it will use any means, however painful, which will

* Bishop Westcott has in the following lines beautifully indicated how true patriotism will operate in social and economic life:—"The Christian patriot will bend his energies to this above all things, that he may bring to light the social fellowship of his countrymen. He will not tire in urging others to confess in public, what home makes clear, that love and not interest is alone able to explain and to guide our conduct—love for something outside us, for something above us, for something more enduring than ourselves: that self-devotion and not self-assertion is the spring of enduring and beneficent influence: that each in his proper sphere—workman, capitalist, teacher—is equally a servant of the State feeding in a measure that common life by which he lives: that work is not measured but made possible by the wages rendered to the doer; that the feeling of class is healthy, like the narrower affections of home, till it claims to be predominant: that we cannot dispense, except at the cost of national impoverishment, with the peculiar and independent services of numbers and of wealth and of thought, which respectively embody and interpret the present, the past, and the future: that we cannot isolate ourselves as citizens any more than as men, and that if we willingly offer to our country what we have, we shall in turn share in the rich fulness of the life of all." —"Social Aspects of Christianity," pp. 45-6.

stimulate and aid man to realise his highest good, and to become what he ought to be. The sense of justice can be satisfied with nothing short of the realisation of righteousness itself; it cannot seek or be satisfied with punishment for its own sake. A man who punishes merely because punishment is deserved, and rests content when deserved punishment is inflicted, cannot be a good man, inasmuch as he seeks not the good of the person he punishes. And he is not even a just man, for it is not the realisation of righteousness but only the punishment of crime that he seeks. Any being who is in the highest and widest sense just, who is truly and completely righteous, must be also benevolent, gracious, and merciful, because a genuine and perfect righteousness desires not only to punish sin but to destroy it and to make every being wholly righteous; and the attainment of this can alone satisfy also absolute love, generosity, and compassion. Conversely where there is perfect love, a faultless and unlimited benevolence, it must seek the righteousness through which alone its end, the utmost welfare of all, can be reached.

Socialism does well then when it insists that human society ought to be founded on justice and that all the relations of men in society should be conformed to justice. There may be virtues which deserve at times more praise than justice, but it is only when they are in accordance with justice. All affections and all courses of conduct into which the sense of justice does not to some extent enter, are not entitled to be regarded as virtues; and if con-

trary to justice they are vices. Every State, commonwealth, nation, ought to be ethically organic and healthy, and it can only be so when unified, inspired, and ruled by the idea of justice, negative and positive.

While Socialism, however, rightly dwells on the necessity and importance of justice in the institutions and conduct of society it fails to conceive aright of its nature. Its exaggerated conception of the claims of the State and its erroneous economic doctrines make it impossible for those who accept them not to entertain also the most perverted views of justice.

Mr. Henry George must leave on every reader of his eloquent pages the impression of being an exceptionally large-minded, good-hearted, rich-natured man. And yet how deplorably false to his better self have his socialistic illusions caused him to be. As we have already had to indicate, his sovereign remedy against poverty is the appropriation by the State of the value of land without compensation to its owners. He has also argued that the nations of the world should repudiate their debts. And he has blamed the Government presided over by honest Abraham Lincoln for not devolving the whole cost of the war which preserved the American union and abolished slavery on a few wealthy citizens; for "shrinking from taking if necessary 999,000 dollars from every man who had a million." Compared with such views as these, Weitling's justification of petty theft as a legitimate means of redressing social wrongs seems almost pardonable. One may easily find far more excuse for an ignorant and wretched

common pickpocket stealing a handkerchief or a purse than for great and civilised nations, jealous of their honour and reputation, committing such acts of gigantic villainy as those of which Mr. George approves.

I have just referred to Mr. George merely for the sake of illustration. He is not at all exceptional in the reference under consideration; and, as a matter of course, does not go even so far in the advocacy of iniquity as those who are more thoroughgoing Socialists. Mr. Gronlund, for example, holds that men have got no natural rights whatever; that the State gives them all the rights they have; that it "may do anything whatsoever which is shown to be expedient"; and that, as against it, "even labour does not give us a particle of title to what our hands and brains produce."

All thorough Socialists who think with any degree of clearness, must be aware that what they mean by justice is what other people mean by theft. But few of them, perhaps, have so frankly and clearly avowed that such is the case, as Mr. Bax in the following noteworthy sentences:—"It is on this notion of *justice* that the crucial question turns in the debates between the advocates of modern Socialism and modern Individualism respectively. The bourgeois idea of justice is crystallised in the notion of the absolute right of the individual to the possession and full control of such property as he has acquired without overt breach of the bourgeois law. To interfere with this right of his, to abolish his possession, is in bourgeois eyes the quintessence of injustice. The

socialist idea of justice is crystallised in the notion of the absolute right of the community to the possession or control (at least) of all wealth not intended for direct individual use. Hence the abolition of the individual possession and control of such property, or, in other words, its confiscation, is the first expression of socialist *justice*. Between *possession* and *confiscation* is a great gulf fixed, the gulf between the bourgeois and the socialist worlds. . . . *Justice* being henceforth identified with *confiscation* and *injustice* with *the rights of property*, there remains only the question of 'ways and means.' Our bourgeois apologist admitting as he must that the present possessors of land and capital *hold* possession of them simply by right of superior force, can hardly refuse to admit the right of the proletariat organised to that end to *take* possession of them by right of superior force. The only question remaining is how? And the only answer is how you can. Get what you can that tends in the right direction, by parliamentary means or otherwise, *bien entendu*, the right direction meaning that which curtails the capitalist's power of exploitation. If you choose to ask, further, how one would like it, the reply is, so far, as the present writer is concerned, one would like it to come as drastically as possible, as the moral effect of sudden expropriation would be much greater than that of any gradual process. But the sudden expropriation, in other words the revolutionary crisis, will have to be led up to by a series of non-revolutionary political acts, if past experience has anything to say in the matter. When that crisis comes the great

act of confiscation will be the seal of the new era; then and not till then will the knell of civilisation, with its rights of property and its class-society be sounded; then and not till then will *justice*—the *justice* not of civilisation but of Socialism—become the corner-stone of the social arch.*

The reasoning in the above passage may commend itself to advanced Socialists, and has probably been in substance employed and approved of from time immemorial by the members of the ancient fraternity of thieves; but looked at from a logical and dispassionate point of view it is far from convincing.

Mr. Bax's "bourgeois" is one of his favourite "abstractions," but as mythical as "the man in the moon." What he calls "the bourgeois idea of justice" is one too crude and absurd to have been ever entertained by any minority however small. If he had known of even one "bourgeois apologist" who admitted "that the present possessors of land and capital *hold* possession of them simply by right of superior force," he would doubtless have been ready enough to give us his name. His "bourgeois," "bourgeois idea of justice," and "bourgeois apologist" are, in short, mere fictions of his own invention.

It must be admitted, however, that Mr. Bax has represented his Socialist as just as devoid of either common or moral sense as his bourgeois. He represents him as maintaining "an absolute right" of confiscating the property of indi-

* "The Ethics of Socialism," p. 83.

viduals. Socialists generally believe in no "absolute rights," and especially in no "absolute rights" of property. Does Mr. Bax himself hold that either the possession or confiscation of property is absolutely either just or unjust? Does he believe that the justice or injustice of either the one or the other is not dependent on moral reasons or does not presuppose a moral law? If he does not he has no right to identify a struggle for justice with a mere struggle of opposing forces. If he does he ought to hold that might is right, and that confiscation and expropriation by the right of superior force will be justice even in the era of Socialism.

The defectiveness of the socialistic idea of justice makes itself apparent in the socialistic Claim of Rights. The rights which Socialists maintain should be added to those already generally and justly recognised are imaginary rights and inconsistent not only with those which have been gained, but with one another.

They are reducible to three—the right to live; the right to labour; and the right of each one to receive the entire produce of his labour.

(1) There is the right to live, the right to existence. By this right is meant the right to be provided with a living, the right to be guaranteed a subsistence. It assumes that society owes to each of its members as much as he needs for his support, and that those of them who have not been able to procure this for themselves are entitled to claim it as their due, and to take it.

Says J. G. Fichte: "All right of property is founded on the contract of all with all which runs thus: We hold all on the condition that we leave thee what is thine. As soon therefore as any one cannot live by his labour that which is his own is withheld from him; the contract, consequently, so far as he is concerned, is entirely annulled; and from that moment he is no longer under rightful obligation to recognise any man's property. In order that such insecurity of property may not thus be introduced through him, all must, as a matter of right and of civil contract, give him from what they themselves possess enough on which to live. From the moment that any one is in want there belongs to no one that portion of his property which is required to save the needy one from want, but it rightfully belongs to him who is in want."*

This so-called right found an influential advocate in Louis Blanc, and received the sanction of the Provisional Government of France in 1848. A real right, however, it is not. And the State which acknowledges it to be such is unlikely to be able to fulfil what it undertakes. A right constituted by mere need is one which so many may be expected to have that all will soon be in need. Society as at present organised has entered into no contract, come under no obligation, which binds it as a matter of right to support any of its members. It is their duty to support themselves, and they are

* "Werke," iii. 213.

left free to do so in any rightful way, and to go to any part of the world where they can do so.

Of course, were society organised as Social Democracy demands: were the collectivist system established: it would be otherwise. When society deprives individuals of the liberty of providing for themselves where and how they please; when it appropriates the capital and instruments of labour of all the individuals who compose it; it obviously becomes its bounden duty to supply them with the means of living. That the establishment of Socialism, however, would thus originate such a right is no indication that it is a genuine right, while it is a weighty reason for not establishing a system which would impose on society so awful a responsibility.

"Society," thus wrote the late Dr. Roswell D. Hitchcock, "in absorbing the individual, becomes responsible for his support; while the individual, in being absorbed, becomes entitled to support. This was the doctrine of Proudhon's famous essay. Nature, he said, is bountiful. She has made ample provision for us all, if each could only get his part. Birth into the world entitles one to a living in it. This sounds both humane and logical. And it is logical. The right of society to absorb, implies the duty to support; while the duty of the individual to be absorbed, implies the right to be supported. But premiss and conclusion are equally false. Society has no right to absorb the individual, and consequently is under no obligation to support him so long as he is able to support himself; while the

individual has no business to be absorbed, and no right to be supported. Experience has taught us to beware of the man who says that society owes him a living. The farmer has learned not to leave his cellar door open, when such theorists are about. Society has entered into no contract to support anybody who is able to support himself, any more than Providence has entered into such a contract. Providence certainly is a party to no such contract; or there was a flagrant breach of contract in the Chinese famine lately; and there have been a great many such breaches of contract, first and last."*

The denial of the right in question does not imply the denial of duty on the part either of individuals or of communities towards those who are in want. Duty and right are not always and in all respects co-extensive. The individual is in duty bound to be not only just but generous and charitable towards his fellow-men; but they have no rights on his generosity and charity, as they have on his justice. The only right which a man has that is co-extensive with his duty is that of being unhindered in the discharge of his duty. As regards his rights in relation to others his duty may very often be not to assert or exercise them.

So with a community. A community may often be morally bound to do far more on grounds of humanity and expediency than it is bound to do of strict right or justice. For example, although parents have not a natural right to demand that

* "Socialism," pp. 49-51.

the State shall educate their children, and may rightfully be compelled by it to educate them at their own cost, yet it is of such vast importance to a State to have all its citizens, even the poorest, physically and intellectually, morally and spiritually, well-trained, that it may be amply justified, from the point of view of the national welfare, in providing for all its young people an adequate education, the burden of defraying the expenses of which may fall chiefly on the richer class of parents, and, to a considerable extent, on those who are not parents.

Holding that the support of the poor who are unable to work is only a matter of charity, does not imply that support is not to be given, or that in the case of the deserving poor it ought not to be given liberally and in such a way as may inflict no sense of humiliation on the recipients. When men have worked steadily and faithfully during the years of their strength in any useful occupation a system securing for them pensions in old age would only, I think, be the realisation of a genuine right which they had fairly and honourably earned. Those who bring about the realisation of this right will deserve to rank high among the benefactors of the working classes and among true patriots.*

(2) The right to labour. It should be distinguished from "the right to existence," although

* There is a good essay by Dr. Julius Platter on *Das Recht auf Existenz* in his "Kritische Beiträge zur Erkenntniss unserer sozialen Zustände und Theorien," 1894. The lengthy chapter professedly devoted to the *droit d'existence* in Malon's "Socialisme Intégral" (t. ii. pp. 119-168) really treats of charitable assistance, public beneficence, and social insurance.

it has often been confounded with it. The right to labour can belong only to those who are capable of labour, and implicitly denies to them the right to existence, the right to be supported, merely because of destitution. Were the right to existence affirmed without condition or limit few would be likely to claim a right to labour for such means of existence as they already had an acknowledged right to simply in virtue of needing them.

The "right to labour" (*droit au travail*) is altogether different from the "right of labour" (*droit de travailler*) which Turgot, in a famous edict signed by Louis XVI. in 1776, describes as "the property of every man, and of all property the first, the most sacred, and the most imprescriptible." By the "right of labour" was meant the right of every man to feel freedom as a labourer; the right of every man to be uninterfered with by Monarchs or Parliaments, by Corporations or Combinations, in his search for labour, in the exercise of his faculties of labour, and in the disposal or enjoyment of the products of his labour. The "right to labour" means a right on the part of the labourer to have labour supplied to him, and necessarily implies that labour must be so organised and regulated that all labourers can be supplied with labour. The one right—that affirmed by physiocratists, economists, free-traders, and liberals of all classes—signifies a right to such liberty as cannot be withheld without manifest injustice. The other right—that demanded by Socialists—signifies a right to such protection as can only be secured through the

withdrawal of liberty. What is claimed by the spurious right is virtually the abolition of the genuine one.

The basis of right is not charity but justice. Hence a right may not be withheld from any one; whoever is refused his right is defrauded. Any State which recognises the right to labour breaks faith with the citizens, deceives and mocks them, if it fail to supply them with the labour of which they are in need.

But can a State reasonably hope to be able to provide labour for all its citizens who may be in need of it? Not unless it be invested with vast powers. Not unless it be allowed to dispose of the property and to control the actions of its members to a most dangerous extent.

Recognition of the right to labour must, it is obvious, of itself create an extraordinary demand for the labour which the State acknowledged itself bound to supply. For it could not fail to take away from individuals the motives which had constrained them to seek labour for themselves, to be careful not to lose it when they had got it, and to make while they had it what provision they could for supporting themselves when they might not have it. In other words, the State, by assuming the responsibility of finding and providing labour for the unemployed would necessarily encourage indolence and improvidence, favour the growth of irregular and insubordinate conduct among those engaged in industrial occupation, diminish individual enterprise and energy, and deaden the sense of personal

responsibility. And the obvious consequence of its thus demoralising its citizens by leading them to trust to its intervention instead of depending on their own exertions is that it would find itself necessitated to employ and support them in large numbers, and in always increasing numbers, as they would become continually less inclined and less fitted to take care of themselves.

It would, of course, be in seasons of industrial and commercial depression, when there was least demand for the products of labour at prices which would cover the cost of their production, that the greatest number of men would apply to the State to implement its declaration of the right to labour. But during such a season a British Government, were the right to labour embodied in British law, might find itself bound to provide labour for millions of persons. To meet such an obligation it would require to have enormous wealth at its disposal; and that it could only procure by an enormous appropriation of the capital of individuals.

The right of the citizens to labour implies the duty of the State to provide labour. But to provide labour means providing all that renders labour possible; all the money, materials, tools, machinery, buildings, &c., required for carrying on labour. That clearly involves on the part of the State the necessity of incurring vast expense, and, if only a temporary emergency be met thereby, vast loss.

Further, the so-called right in question implies the right to appropriate labour, to be paid at the

current and normal price of such labour. The State, and public bodies, have often in hard times given masses of the unemployed work and wages. But the work given in such cases has always been work of the kind which it was supposed that any person could do somehow, and which it was not expected, perhaps, that any person would do well; and the wages given have generally been only such as were deemed sufficient to keep hunger away. Now, that is consistent and defensible in the present state of opinion and of law, but not if the unemployed be recognised to have, instead of merely the claim which destitution has on humanity and charity, a real and strict right to be provided with labour. In the latter case there could be no justification of setting the most dissimilar classes of workmen to the same kind of work, without regard to what they were severally fitted for. If a weaver or watchmaker has a right to be provided with the means or instruments of labour those which they are entitled to receive cannot be the pick, spade, and wheelbarrow of a navvy.

Further, if there be a right to labour men employed by the State ought in no circumstances to be paid less for their labour than men of the same class who are employed by private individuals. In a word, if there be a right to labour it must be one which may well be formulated as it was by Proudhon in the following terms; "The right to labour is the right which every citizen, whatever be his trade or profession, has to constant employment therein, at a wage fixed not arbitrarily or at hazard,

but according to the actual and normal rate of wages."*

But the acknowledgment by the State of the right to labour thus understood would obviously lead to the destruction of the present economic régime. It would make it necessary for the State to undertake such an organisation of labour as would produce a complete social revolution. It would devolve on it the duty of engaging in every kind of industry and trade; of becoming a capitalist and an undertaker and manager of labour to an enormous and indefinite extent. The end of this could only be that the State would find itself compelled to suppress all freedom and competition in the sphere of economics, to appropriate all the means and materials necessary to the carrying on of all branches of industry and commerce, and to take all labour into its own employment and under its own guidance. The affirmation of the right of individuals to labour is thus by implication the denial of their right to property. The former right can only be given effect to through a transference of the ownership of the means of production from private holders to the State or community. Well might Proudhon say, as he did one day in 1848 while engaged in a discussion with the then French Minister of Finance: "Oh! mon Dieu, Monsieur Goudchaux, si vous me passez le droit au travail, je vous cède le droit de propriété."

Notwithstanding, however, that the whole social-

* "Le Droit au Travail et le Droit de Propriété," p. 13, ed. 1850.

istic system would naturally evolve and establish itself from acceptance of the right to labour, contemporary Socialism has shown little zeal to get the right affirmed and guaranteed by law. This may on first thoughts seem strange; but Socialists have had considerable reason for their reticence and self-restraint in this respect. To recognise the right in the existing economic order would in all likelihood speedily result in such serious troubles as would discredit those who were responsible for the step and cause a reaction from Socialism. Doing so proved fatal to the French Republic of 1848. Even Victor Considérant and Louis Blanc acknowledged this, although they contended, and perhaps justly, that the workmen of Paris left the Provisional Government no option in the matter. The events of that period form a page of history bearing on the right to labour not easy either to forget or misinterpret; and they go far to explain why since 1848 the right in question has been so little insisted on by the advocates of Socialism.*

Apparently Socialists have, in general, come to see that the right to labour cannot be made effective in the capitalist era. Possibly those of them who have reflected on the subject may have felt

* In the present year there has been a movement in Switzerland in favour of the inscription of the right to labour in the National Statute Book. At the date of writing this note (June 30th) I do not yet know whether or not the 50,000 signatures of legally qualified voters required by Swiss law to be appended to any petition for an alteration of the Swiss Constitution have been obtained; but I believe it to be very unlikely that the alteration proposed will receive much support in the Federal Assembly, where, I understand, there are not more than three or four Socialist deputies.

that it would be difficult to prove that it could be made effective even in the collectivist era. In my opinion that would be very difficult indeed to prove.*

The right to labour as understood by Socialists finds no support in the idea or sense of justice. The claim to be unhindered in the search for labour and in the exercise of one's powers of labour for one's own advantage is manifestly just. The claim to be

* In an article on "The Right to Labour," published in the May and June numbers of *The Free Review*, Mr. J. T. Blanchard makes a praiseworthy attempt to show under what conditions the right to labour can be made effective in the Socialistic régime. He regards them as these three:

- (1) *The growing utilisation of all the forces of nature, including land;*
- (2) *A wise regulation of the birth-rate; and*
- (3) *A widening of markets, an increase in the demand for goods.*

As to (1), Mr. Blanchard has forgotten to deal with the arguments of those who contend that under a régime which would suppress individual initiative and enterprise, and dispense with motives to personal exertion to the extent that Collectivism inevitably must, the utilisation of the forces of nature would proceed more slowly than now. This is a large and serious omission.

As to (2), most Socialists will probably be surprised and disappointed to hear that any regulation of the birth-rate will be needed in the Collectivist era. What surprises and disappoints me is that Mr. Blanchard should not have told us what he means by "a wise regulation of the birth-rate." Can any other regulation of it be wise than such as may be effected through some moralising men and women that they will be habitually self-restraining, prudent, and right-minded? If Mr. Blanchard means by "wise regulation" what some of his collaborateurs—what the members of the Malthusian League and many Socialists—mean by it, it is what would lead to the most shocking demoralisation of the labouring classes. Like Mr. Blanchard, I accept every essential proposition contained in the theory of Malthus. But Malthus would have disowned with horror the Malthusian League.

As to (3), Mr. Blanchard does not seem to realise that consumption is conditioned and limited by production; that markets cannot be widened *ad libitum*; that an effective demand for goods is one which implies possession of the means of paying for them. Failure to perceive this elementary truth is often apparent in the writings and reasonings of Socialists.

provided with labour by the labour and at the expense of others is of an entirely different character, and manifestly unjust.*

(3) The right of the labourer to the whole produce of his labour. This alleged right had been announced and advocated more than half a century before Marx undertook its defence. Among those who preceded him were William Godwin, Charles Hall, William Thompson, Infantin and Proudhon.†

According to these precursors of Marx, what the labourer is naturally entitled to receive in return for his labours is the entire use of all the things which he actually produces by it; and what prevents him from obtaining his due, the whole fruit of his labour, and compels him to accept instead, under the name of wages, a mere fraction thereof, is the power which wealth gives its possessors to take advantage of those who are in poverty. Hence they regarded rent, interest, profits, and, in a word, all the components of the wealth

* The most important book on the right to labour is:—"Le Droit au Travail à l'Assemblée Nationale, recueil complet de tous les discours prononcés dans cette mémorable discussion par MM. Fresneau, Hubert Delisle, Levet, Cazalès, Lamartine, Gaultier de Rumilly, Pelletier, A. de Toqueville, Ledru-Rollin, Duvergier de Hauranne, Crémieux, Barthe, Gaslonde, De Luppé, Arnaud (de l'Arriège), Thiers, Considérant, Bouhier de l'Ecluse, Martin-Bernard, Billault, Dufaure, Glais-Bizoin, Goudchaux, Lagrange, Félix Pyat et Marius André (textes revus par les Orateurs)", suivis de l'opinion de MM. Marrast, Proudhon, L. Blanc, Ed. Laboulaye et Cormenin; avec des observations inédites par MM. Léon Faucher, Wolowski, Fréd. Bastiat, de Parien, et une introduction et des notes par M. Joseph Garnier. Paris, chez Guillaumin et Cie. 1848."

† The history of the claim put forth on behalf of labour to a right to the full product has been carefully traced by Professor Anton Menger—"Das Recht auf den vollen Arbeitsertrag in geschichtlicher Darstellung." 1891.

of the rich, as appropriations of the products of the unpaid labour of the poor.

Marx accepted this doctrine, argued very elaborately and ingeniously in its support, and had extraordinary success in persuading certain classes of persons to believe that he had proved it. Such was his relationship to it. He did not originate it. And, as has been shown in former chapters, he did not really prove it. There is no likelihood that it ever will be proved.

The right in question has never been recognised in practice. The "state of nature" to which some would trace it back, is itself a myth. Where social bonds are weak and loose, as among many rude peoples, right is largely confounded with force, and the prevalent rule of distributing wealth is

"the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

Where social bonds are strong and firm, where the principle of liberty or individuality is feeble in comparison with that of authority or of society, and the man is merged in the family, clan, city, or nation, the produce of the labour of all the members of the community is regarded as belonging to its head, to the patriarch, chief, or king. The rights of labour are more fully acknowledged at the present day than they have been in any previous period of the world's history. But nowhere even now do labourers of any class receive in return for their labour all that it produces.

Ought they to receive all that their labour produces? This question suggests the naturally prior one: What is meant when we affirm that all that labour produces should belong to those whose labour it is? And obviously this latter question may be answered in two ways. For, labour may either be credited with producing all that it is the direct factor of producing—all that it seems to immediate outward sense to produce; or, it may be granted that labour is so dependent on and aided by other factors of production that its real produce is less than its apparent produce, and it is only entitled fully to receive the former. The first meaning is the only one which is either clear or definite. It is also the only one which admits of any socialistic application. Let us, therefore, realise what it implies.

Houses are things produced by labour. Here, let us say, is a house worth five thousand pounds. Apparently it is wholly the product of the labour expended on it; directly it is exactly in every respect what that labour has made it to be. If, then, the right under consideration, understood as indicated, be a real right, the house itself is the natural and just reward of the labours of those engaged in the building of it, and they have been defrauded unless they have received either the house itself, or its full equivalent—*i.e.*, as much in wages as would purchase the house.

The claim which the right alleged, thus understood, would confer is certainly not one that can be charged with obscurity or vagueness. It is

beautifully clear and definite. But it is none the less a very extraordinary one. It is so exorbitant that workmen, by insisting on it, would ruin instead of enriching themselves. Were those whose occupation it is to build houses to claim to be the proprietors of the houses which they built nobody would employ them. The trade of building houses would cease to exist. Every man would be compelled to build his own house or to do without one.

In existing social conditions the claim is also manifestly unjust. Labour divorced from land and capital cannot be entitled to receive the whole produce. Before the workmen who make a house can claim with any appearance of justice to have earned it by making it, the ground on which it stands, the materials of which it is composed, the capital expended on their maintenance when engaged on it, and everything else required to attain the result reached, must have been their own. But none of these conditions are fulfilled, or can be fulfilled, so long as the old order based on the individual appropriation of land and capital endures.

True, Socialists maintain that the conditions ought to be fulfilled; that land and other national agents should be free to all; that capital should bear no interest or profit; and, in short, that every institution and arrangement which prevents the labourer from receiving the full produce of his labour shall be done away with. But even were this proved it would not in the least follow that the abstractions from the produce of labour referred to are not morally de-

manded in society as actually constituted; all that would be made out is that it is a duty to endeavour so to reconstitute society that there will be no warrant for such abstractions, and that the claims of perfect or ideal justice in regard to the remuneration of labour should be satisfied. Until, however, the revolution effecting such reconstruction has been accomplished in a just way the rights inseparable from the actual constitution of society cannot justly be disregarded.

I do not admit, of course, that Socialists have shown that there is any ethical necessity for such a reconstitution of society as would secure to labour alone all that is produced. In previous chapters (iv.-vii.) I have argued to the contrary, and endeavoured to point out the futility of their reasons for representing private property in land and capital, rent, interest, and profits as essentially unjust.

Nor do I grant that even were society organised on collectivist principles labour would or could be put in possession of the whole produce. There must still be abstractions therefrom of the same nature as those which are now made, although they might, perhaps, be called by different names. That they would be less in proportion to the whole produce than at present is very doubtful.

There has never yet been delineated an ideal of society which would, if realised, secure to labour all that Socialists promise it. The ideal of Social Democracy could, it is obvious, only be carried out by a system of officialism not likely to be less expensive and burdensome than landlordism or capitalism.

No *social* state, indeed, is conceivable in which the so-called right of labour to the entire produce can be satisfied. Wherever there are social ties and obligations men must give as well as get, pay for assistance afforded as well as be paid for services rendered. The only state of human existence in which labour can be reasonably expected to get the entire produce is a non-social state. A man has only to renounce all social advantages, to go where the bounties of nature are still unappropriated and to employ in his labour his own resources and instruments, skill and strength, and he will not only deserve but actually get all that he produces. Yet what he gets will most probably be much less than he might have got in the social state, notwithstanding its inevitable burdens.

If labour be allowed to be only one of the factors of production, and all that it produces only a part of what is produced, the right of labour to all that it produces can, of course, only mean a right to such part of what is produced as may be its due, as may be reasonable and just. The right thus understood cannot be denied, but neither is it worth discussing. What is it that is due, reasonable, just? We are left to find that out; and no one has yet discovered, or is likely to discover, that what is due to labour is any definite proportion or invariable quantity of the total produce of the work done in any occupation or trade, community or nation.

We have now seen the defectiveness of the socialistic idea of justice, and how it has given rise

to demands for fictitious rights. It has still to be added, however, that socialistic teachers have been particularly chargeable with the error of dwelling too exclusively on rights and insisting too little on duties. All who are ambitious of being party leaders are sure to be tempted thus to err, seeing that all classes of men with class aims, with party interests, prefer hearing of their rights to being reminded of their duties. Working men will hear you gladly if you expatiate on their rights and the duties of their employers. Employers will admire your good sense if you defend their rights and dwell on the duties of the employed. To teach to rich and poor, employers and employed, to all classes of men alike, the obligations of duty first, and their rights next, and as arising from the discharge of their duties, is very far from being the shortest or the easiest path to popularity or to any of the ends which the demagogue seeks. But it is the only one which will be pursued by those who aim solely and unselfishly either at the private or the public good of men.

Rights, indeed, are precious and sacred. Often when we might forego them were they merely our own, we are in duty bound to assert and vindicate them because they are also those of others. In the course of the struggle for "rights" great and indubitable services have been rendered to mankind. Nevertheless, the alone properly supreme and guiding idea of life, whether personal or social, is not that of right but of duty. Only the man whose ruling conviction is that of duty can be morally

strong, self-consistent, and noble; can control his own spirit, conquer the world, sacrifice himself for others, and in all relations act as becomes a being in whose nature there is so much that is spiritual and divine. Only a nation pervaded by a sense of the supremacy of duty, and by that respect for divine law, and that recognition of the claims of self-denial and self-sacrifice for others, for ideal ends, and for great causes, which are involved in the sense of duty, can be one in which class properly co-operates with class for the good of the whole, in which individual and sectional interests apparently conflicting are successfully harmonised, and in which the citizens, notwithstanding all natural inequalities and all diversities of position and circumstance, form a true brotherhood.

Tell men only of their rights; tell them only that others are wronging them out of their rights to liberty, to property, to power, to enjoyment, and that they must assert and secure their rights; and you appeal, indeed, in some measure to their conscience, their sense of justice, but you appeal as much or more to their selfishness, hate, envy, jealousy; and if you infuse into them a certain strength to cast down and pull to pieces much which may deserve demolition, you render them unlikely to stop where they ought in the work of destruction, and utterly unfit them for the still more needed work of construction. Hence all revolutions which have been effected by men prejudiced and excited through such teaching have been, even when essentially just, disgraced by shameful ex-

cesses, and only very partially, if at all, successful. Those who have gained rights which they have been taught to think of as advantages, but not as responsibilities, always abuse them. No society in which men who have been thus perverted and misled are in the majority, no society in which the sense of duty does not prevail, can fail to be one in which class is at constant war with class; can enjoy peace, security, or prosperity.

This truth has found its worthiest prophet and apostle in Joseph Mazzini; and to his writings, and especially to his work "On the Duties of Man," I refer such of my readers as desire fully to realise its significance. He rightly traced to disregard of it much of the moral weakness and disorganisation of that Democracy for the advance and triumph of which he so unselfishly laboured; and he justly held the one-sided moral teaching of the revolutionary and socialistic propagandists of the age to have been largely responsible for that disregard itself. There has certainly been no improvement in this respect since he wrote. The Socialism of to-day is more radical and revolutionary in its proposals, more intent on class and party advantages, and more averse to dwell on the supreme and universal claims of duty than were the forms in which Socialism appeared in the earlier half of the century. The spirit which animates Social Democracy is the very spirit which Mazzini was so anxious to see cast out of Democracy. The Mazzinian and the Marxian ideals of democratic society are moral contraries. Immense issues depend on which of them may prevail.

While the common error of Socialists is insisting on rights in a way inconsistent with the primacy of duty, the error of uprooting and annulling rights through affirming a false conception of duty is not unknown among them. Mr. Gronlund, for example, conceiving of the State as strictly an organism, and actually related to its citizens as a tree to its cells, denies that individuals have any natural rights, and affirms that the State gives them whatever rights they have. "This conception of the State as an organism," he says, "consigns 'the rights of man' to obscurity and puts duty in the foreground."* And certainly it consigns the rights of man to obscurity; entirely robs man of his essential and inalienable rights as a moral agent. But this is done not by putting duty in the foreground; it is done by obliterating duty, and substituting for it servility. What is got rid of is morality altogether, alike in the form of duty and of right.

Other Socialists reach a similar result by investing the will of the majority with absolute authority in the moral sphere. It is interesting to note, however, that those who prefer this course consider that the will of the majority is only to be thus revered as the source and law of right and duty when it has adopted a socialistic creed. At present "the will of the majority" is only a *bourgeois* idol, which may properly be treated with contempt, but in the enlightened era which is approaching it will be a

* "The Co-operative Commonwealth," p. 84.

socialist deity, and its decrees must be reverently received and implicitly obeyed. This is the socialistic form of the *cultus* of the majority. In every form, however, any such *cultus* is obviously incompatible with a true view of the nature and claims of morality.

CHAPTER XI.

SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.

How is Socialism related to Religion? To this question different and conflicting answers have been given.

1. Some have held that there is no essential relation, no natural or necessary connection, between them. It cannot be denied that they may act, and really do act, on each other; but it may be denied that they ever so act otherwise than casually, or, in other words, owing to the influence of circumstances, the conjuncture of contingencies. And this denial has been made. Socialism, according to those to whom I refer, is occupied only with economic interests, and has properly nothing to do with religious concerns, while Religion is a "private affair," one intrinsically spiritual and individual. A Socialist may be of any religion or of no religion. In discussing Socialism it is irrelevant to refer to Religion. To attach any importance to imputations of materialism, infidelity, and atheism against Socialists is "bad form"; it is to have recourse to an unfair and happily almost obsolete style of controversy. "We have found by the experience of centuries that these weapons are the most readily turned against the best and wisest

men, and we no longer employ them in our political and economic warfare." *

There must be admitted to be some truth in this view. The economic and the religious questions in Socialism are not only separable but ought to be so far separated. Socialists are fully entitled to expect that their economic hypotheses will be judged of, in the first place at least, on economic grounds, apart from religious and all other non-economic considerations. The critic of Socialism may be justified in confining his attention to its economic doctrine. No person is bound to treat of any subject exhaustively. That there are religious as well as non-religious Socialists is undeniable; and to impute falsely materialism, infidelity, or atheism to any man, wise or foolish, good or bad, is obviously unjustifiable. The experience of centuries has undoubtedly shown it to be grievous error to drag Religion irrelevantly into any discussion, or so to make use of it as to embitter and degrade any discussion.

Still the view in question is, in the main, erroneous. There is not enough of truth in it to have gained it much acceptance. Of all views on the relation of Religion to Socialism, it is the one which fewest people have been found to adopt. And Socialists have as generally and decidedly rejected it as non-Socialists. The religious among them are almost unanimous in holding that

* Mr. Bosanquet in the Preface to his translation of Schaffle's "Impossibility of Social Democracy."

Religion, as they conceive of it, is necessary to the completeness and efficiency of their Socialism. The non-religious among them, with rare exceptions, look on Religion as naturally antagonistic to the growth and triumph of all genuine Socialism.

It would have been strange if it had been otherwise. Socialism is not pure science, not mere theory; it is a doctrine or scheme of social organisation. Can any such doctrine or scheme ignore or exclude consideration of Religion, and yet not be seriously defective? Surely not. Social organisation is not merely economic organisation; it implies the harmonising of all the factors, institutions, and interests of society, political, moral, and religious, as well as economic. Economic organisation, indeed, can no more be successfully effected if dis severed from religion than if dissociated from morality or political action. The life of a society, like the life of an individual, is a whole, and all the elements, organs, and functions which such life implies are so intimately interconnected that each one influences and is influenced by all the others. They cannot be separated without injury or destruction to themselves and the entire organism. Dissection is only practicable on the dead. All attempts at mere economic organisation must necessarily be unsuccessful; and so far from its being irrelevant in discussing Socialism to refer to Religion any examination of Socialism which does not extend to its religious bearings must be incomplete. The experience of centuries should indeed warn us to be on our guard against recklessly

charging economic or political systems with atheism, but it should no less warn us against fancying that such systems may ally themselves with atheism or irreligion without loss of social virtue or value.

2. Another view of the relation between Socialism and Religion is that it is one of identity; that they are substantially the same thing; that Socialism in its perfection is Religion at its best.

This is a view which has been widely entertained. The Socialism which appeared in France in the early part of the present century, although it originated in the irreligious materialism and revolutionary radicalism of the latter part of the preceding century, came gradually after the Restoration to assume an anti-revolutionary and comparatively religious character and tone. Saint-Simon closed his career with presenting his social doctrine as a New Christianity, the result and goal of the entire past religious development of humanity; and on this New Christianity *Enfantin* and his adherents sought to raise the New Church of the future. *Fourier*, *Considérant*, *Cabet*, and *Leroux* all felt that society could not be held together, reinvigorated, and reorganised by mere reasoning and science, but required also the force and life which faith and religion can alone impart. At the same time, like Saint-Simon, they regarded historical Christianity as effete and sought to discover substitutes for it capable of satisfying both the natural and the spiritual wants of man. The great aim of *Auguste Comte* from 1847 until his death in 1857 was so to transform his philosophy

into a religion that it would be adequate to the task of organising and regulating all the activities and institutions of humanity. In Germany *Fr. Feuerbach*,* *Josiah Dietzgen*,† *Dr. Stamm*,‡ *Julius Stern*,§ and others, have presented substantially the same view.

In England it has found an advocate in *Mr. Bax*. The following words of his are as explicit as could be desired: "In what sense Socialism is not religious will be now clear. It utterly despises the 'other world' with all its stage properties—that is, the present objects of religion. In what sense it is not irreligious will be also, I think, tolerably clear. It brings back religion from heaven to earth, which, as we have sought to show, was its original sphere. It looks beyond the present moment or the present individual life, indeed, though not to another world, but to another and a higher social life in this world. It is in the hope and the struggle for this higher social life, ever-widening, ever-intensifying, whose ultimate possibilities are beyond the power of language to express or of thought to conceive, that the Socialist finds his ideal, his religion. He sees in the reconstruction of society in the interest of all, in the rehabilitation, in a higher form and without its limitations, of the old communal life—the proximate end of all present

* "Die Religion der Zukunft," 1843-5.

† "Die Religion der Socialdemokratie," 3 Aufl., 1875.

‡ "Die Erlösung der darbenenden Menschheit," 3 Aufl., 1884.

§ "Die Religion der Zukunft," 3 Aufl., 1889, and "Thesen über den Socialismus," 4 Aufl., 1891.

endeavour In Socialism the current antagonisms are abolished, the separation between politics and religion has ceased to be since their object-matter is the same. The highest feelings of devotion to the Ideal are not conceived as different in kind, much less as concerned with a different sphere, to the commoner human emotions, but merely as diverse aspects of the same fact. The stimulus of personal interest no longer able to poison at its source all beauty, all affection, all heroism, in short, all that is highest in us; the sphere of government merged in that of industrial direction; the limit of the purely industrial itself ever receding as the applied powers of Nature lessen the amount of drudgery required; Art, and the pursuit of beauty and of truth ever covering the ground left free by the 'necessary work of the world'—such is the goal lying immediately before us, such the unity of human interest and of human life which Socialism would evolve out of the clashing antagonisms, the anarchical individualism, religious and irreligious, exhibited in the rotting world of to-day—and what current religion can offer a higher ideal or a nobler incentive than this essentially human one?" *

The attempts which have been made to identify Religion and Socialism are not without interest. They show us how social theorists the most hostile to current Religion are constrained to acknowledge that something of a kindred nature and power is

* "The Religion of Socialism," pp. 52-3.

indispensable to the higher life of man and to the progress and prosperity of communities; that a positive faith which may not inappropriately be termed religious is an essential condition of healthy development. They testify also to an eagerness in their authors to believe that a golden age, a time of bliss, is near—one in which all antagonisms will be reconciled, and all the wants of the human spirit satisfied, which is itself of pathetic interest, springing as it does from sheer hunger of soul. There is nothing in their principles or in their arguments to justify their optimism. Their wish is sole father to their thought. Faith is seen still struggling to rise in them, although they have cast away all its supports.

Criticism of the attempts referred to is not necessary. While professing to preserve Religion, they in reality suppress it. They would "abolish current antagonisms" by sacrificing the spirit to the flesh and the "other world" to this world; by denying God and deifying humanity. The identification of Socialism and Religion at which they arrive, assumes the identity of Religion and Atheism. They neither solve antinomies of thought nor reconcile antagonisms of life; they neither remove intellectual difficulties nor serve practical ends. Those who have regarded them as great philosophical achievements have been deceived by equivocal terms and boastful pretensions.

3. Another view as to the relation of Socialism to Religion is that it is essentially one of harmony—Religion and Socialism implying, supporting, and supplementing each other.

This view prevails among those who accept Religion in its proper acceptation, and who at the same time believe, or fancy they believe, in genuine Socialism. It is prevalent, therefore, among so-called Christian Socialists, whether actually Socialists or merely pseudo-Socialists. The great majority of so-called Christian Socialists are, in my opinion, not really Socialists. They are simply good Christian men anxious that society should be imbued with the spirit and ruled by the principles of Christ, and that Christ's Church and its members should faithfully discharge their duties to society. As all good and Christian men must do, they wish to see all men happier than they are, oppression of the weak by the strong and of the poor by the rich prevented, hatred and strife between classes ended, a better distribution and better use of wealth attained, the ties of human brotherhood universally felt, and righteousness established in all the relations of life. And, therefore, they are not unwilling to be called Christian Socialists. But real Socialists they are not. They do not believe that all property should be either collective or common. They acknowledge the right of the individual to rule his own life, and not to be used or abused as the mere instrument of Society. They differ decidedly from real Socialists as regards the signification of liberty, equality, and justice.

Those who first bore the name of Christian Socialists in England were Christians of a type as healthy, beautiful, and noble as God's grace working on English natures has produced. Maurice, Kingsley, Ludlow, Neale, and Hughes deserve to be lovingly

and reverently remembered by many generations. The movement which they promoted was one in every respect admirable. And the name which they gave to it had at least the merit of expressing clearly why they so named it. This was because they held that Christianity and Socialism were in their very natures closely and amicably connected. It was because they believed that all social disease and disorganisation were caused by disobedience to the divine laws; that Christianity was as pre-eminently the power of God unto social as unto personal salvation; and that by Socialism ought properly to be meant the Christian view or doctrine of the life of society—just Christianity considered in its application to the purifying and perfecting of that life. Nothing less than Christianity, they felt, could overcome and expel the evils of the reigning industrial system, and bring about even such an economic organisation of any commonwealth as must be effected if God's kingdom is ever to be established in it; and equally they felt that so long as Christianity was unduly confined to churchly or ecclesiastical spheres of action, and did not go forth courageously to conquer the entire world to God, to imbue with the spirit, and subject to the law of Christ, trade and commerce and the whole of ordinary life—so long, in other words, as Christianity was separated from what they understood and wished others to understand by Socialism—it must be untrue to itself, unworthy of its origin, feeble and despised. Hence and thus it was that they conjoined Christianity and Socialism, and regarded "Christian Socialism" as

the embodiment of "a new idea" which had entered into the world in the nineteenth century, and was as distinctive of it as that which gave rise to Protestantism had been of the sixteenth century. In the sixteenth century Christianity required to take the form of Protestantism; in the nineteenth century it ought to manifest itself as Socialism.*

To the so-called "Christian Socialism" of Maurice and Kingsley in itself we are far from objecting; but we cannot admit that "Christian Socialism" was a proper name for it, and hence cannot see in the existence of the movement which was thus designated any reason for thinking Christianity and Socialism to be naturally and harmoniously allied. Canon Vaughan has said: "The 'Christian Socialism' (as it was styled) with which the honoured names of Maurice and Kingsley were identified forty years ago, and the much more recent movement of the Catholic and Protestant Churches of Germany in a similar direction—these are enough of themselves to prove that Socialism, rightly understood, has no necessary connection with religion and unbelief."† But where is the proof? The "Christian Socialism" of Maurice and Kingsley supplies none unless it was not merely so styled, but truly so styled, really Socialism, Socialism rightly understood. And that is what it certainly was not. Maurice and Kingsley did not teach a single principle or doctrine peculiar to Socialism. The portion of the teaching

* J. M. Ludlow in the introductory paper to the "Christian Socialist."

† "Questions of the Day," pp. 251-2.

of the French Socialists which they inculcated with such intense conviction and great effectiveness was the purely Christian, not the distinctly Socialistic portion. In condemning selfishness, in inveighing against the abuses of competition, in urging recourse to co-operative association, and in preaching justice, love, and brotherhood, they followed a good example which these Socialists had set them, without committing themselves to the acceptance of any specifically socialistic tenet. When they maintained that social reorganisation must be preceded by individual reformation; that trust in State aid or legislation was a superstition; that self-help was the prime requisite for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes; that co-operation should be voluntary and accompanied by appropriate education; that so far from private property being robbery, it was a divine stewardship; and that men could never be joined in true brotherhood by mere plans to give them self-interest in common, but must first feel that they had one common Father: they struck at the very roots of Socialism.

The combination of Socialism with Religion even in the form of Christianity is certainly not impossible. It has actually taken place. There are unquestionably so-called "Christian Socialists" who are at once sincere Christians and genuine Socialists. Those who profess themselves to be Christian Socialists are apt to be led by the motives which induced them to do so, and even by their very profession itself, far beyond such so-called "Christian Socialism" as that of Maurice and Kingsley. Some of the

Christian Socialists at present in England display none of the jealousy of State interference with individual rights, or of the respect for the institution of private property, shown by those whose successors they claim to be. Witness the Rev. Mr. Headlam. There can be no doubt that he has managed to combine in his mind and doctrine Christianity and Socialism. This, however, is no proof that they are naturally connected. The mind of man can make the most unnatural and irrational combinations. The actual conjunction of belief in thorough-going Socialism with faith in Christianity is, consequently, no proof that they are naturally connected, or rationally and harmoniously related. Mr. Headlam believes in a Socialism which aims at robbery on a gigantic scale, and in a Religion which forbids all dishonesty. What does that prove? That Socialism and Christianity are closely akin? No! Only that Mr. Headlam, like all other men, may regard incompatible things as consistent.

In Germany both the so-called "Catholic Socialists" and the so-called "Protestant" or "Evangelical Christian Socialists" made from the first excessive concessions to Socialism. Such representatives of the former as Bishop von Ketteler, Canons Moufang and Haffner, and Abbot Hitze, and such representatives of the latter as Dr. Stöcker and Todt were at one in inviting the State to intervene for the protection and aid of the working classes to an extent which could hardly fail to introduce a very real Socialism. The Protestant and Catholic Socialists of Germany have been charged

with seeking to outbid each other; they have obviously been influenced by the desire to counteract the prevalent revolutionary and anti-religious Socialism. They agree in encouraging the State to extend and increase its already exorbitant power and activity. The leading Catholic Socialists of Austria (Baron von Vogelsang, Count von Kufstein, Fathers Weiss and Costa-Rossetti), demand from the State such an organisation of industry and such regulation of the relations of capital and labour as would leave little room for individual liberty or enterprise. Certain French Catholic writers have recently been advocating the same policy.

These movements show that both Catholic and Protestant Christians may lapse into socialistic aberrations, but not that they can do so without declension from Catholic and Protestant doctrine.

As to Catholic doctrine, that has been set forth in its relation to the labour and social question with an authority which no Catholic will dispute, and an ability and thoughtfulness which all must acknowledge, by the present Pontiff, Leo XIII., in a great historical document, the Encyclical: "Rerum Novarum." There Socialism as a solution of the social question is tested by the standard of Catholic doctrine, and judged accordingly. The judgment pronounced on it is one which leaves no room for a Catholic becoming, without the most manifest inconsistency, a Socialist in the proper sense of the term. It is an express condemnation of the absorption of the individual or the family by the State, of the communisation of property, and of the

equalisation of conditions, which are the distinctive characteristics of Socialism; an express condemnation of Socialism in itself as uncatholic and unchristian. In his Encyclical the Pope recognises no such distinction as that of a true and a false Socialism, but treats as false all that is truly Socialism.*

The Protestant view regarding the labour and social question is almost identical with that so skilfully presented by the Pope as Catholic, and can only cease to be so by ceasing to be Christian. Catholics and Protestants hold as Christians a common deposit of truth absolutely essential to the welfare of society and of the labouring classes; and they can neither consistently nor wisely surrender a coin of it for one which has come from the mint of Socialism.

Christianity and Socialism, then, are not so related as those who are styled Christian Socialists

* Objections may, I think, be legitimately taken to the affirmation in the Encyclical of the right of the labourer to a minimum wage. Its chief defect, perhaps, is want of explicitness. Does it mean that the employer of labour is bound to pay to those whom he employs wages which although not more than necessary to their reasonable and frugal comfort, are yet more than he can pay without producing at a loss? I do not suppose that the Pope intended to affirm this; but he has been so understood, and in consequence claimed or blamed as a Socialist. For the allegation that he has sanctioned the theory that wages ought to be determined by wants I can perceive no grounds.

It may here be added that the social question as related to Christianity on the one hand and to Socialism on the other, has been judiciously and ably treated by some of the Catholic clergy, and especially by some of the Jesuit fathers—*e.g.*, V. Cathrein, A. Lehmkühl, Th. Meyer, &c. See *Die Sociale Frage, beleuchtet durch "die Stimmen aus Maria-Laach."* The widely-known work of Dr. Ratzinger, "*Die Volkswirtschaft in ihren sittlichen Grundlagen,*" 1881, is eloquent and interesting, but not infrequently unguarded and extreme.

imagine. What is called Christian Socialism will always be found to be either unchristian in so far as it is socialistic, or unsocialistic in so far as it is truly and fully Christian.

4. The relation of Socialism and Religion has likewise been represented as naturally one of antagonism.

This is the view most prevalent even among Socialists themselves. It is the view generally, and indeed almost exclusively, accepted by Social Democrats. The doctrine of Social Democracy is based on a materialistic conception of the world. Its advocates assail belief in God and immortality as not only in itself superstition but as a chief obstacle to the reception of their teaching and the triumph of their cause.

This view is regarded, of course, by religious Socialists as a serious error. They deplore it as a misfortune that Socialism should have been conjoined with a philosophical hypothesis which inevitably brings it into conflict with religion. They deny that there is any necessary or logical connection between the economic and the atheistic teaching of the Social Democrats; and affirm that a true Socialist ought in consistency to be a religious or even Christian man.

Nor in so judging are they wholly mistaken. Socialism in every form, that of Social Democracy included, contains principles which can only be fully developed in an atmosphere of Religion. Its best features in all its forms are of Christian derivation and can only attain perfection as traits of Christian

character. Socialism is not essentially or necessarily atheistic. It is not the compulsion of mere logic which has constrained Social Democrats to commit themselves to the advocacy of Materialism. Historical and practical considerations, the social considerations under which their scheme of Collectivism originated and took shape and the services which Materialism seemed adapted to render in propagating it, were doubtless those which had most influence in leading them to do so.

Nevertheless the union of Socialism with Materialism must be acknowledged to be a very natural one. Were it not so it would not be the common fact it is. Had Socialists not had some strong reasons for resting their economic proposals on materialistic presuppositions they would not have done this, as they could not fail to be aware that they must thereby evoke the opposition of the whole Christian world. They must have deemed the creed of Materialism so especially favourable to the success of their Socialism as to justify the risks and disadvantages to their cause obviously inseparable from allying it to an atheistical philosophy.

Were they mistaken in thinking thus? I believe that they were not. But for the prevalence of materialistic views and tendencies Socialism would assuredly not have spread as it has done. It is only when the truth of the materialistic theory is assumed that the socialistic conception of earthly welfare, or social happiness, as being the chief end of human life, is likely to appear to be reasonable. If there be no other life for men

than that which they live in the flesh, then, but only then, is it natural to conclude that their sole concern should be to get while on earth all the happiness which they can. A philosophy which maintains the existence of God, the supremacy of a Divine moral law, the reality of an unending life, plainly cannot forward the designs of those who aim at the entire subjection of the individual to society so consistently or effectively as one which affirms that there is nothing supramaterial, nothing higher than man himself, no life beyond the grave, no absolute good. The adherents of Social Democracy have not erred in thinking that Religion with its hopes and fears, Theology with its doctrines of the invisible and eternal, and Spiritual Philosophy with its theses based on speculative and moral reason, are serious obstacles to the realisation of their plans. That they will come to dissociate their Socialism from Atheism and Materialism is, in my opinion, extremely improbable. For, although they would thereby disarm the hostility of many who are at present necessarily their opponents, they would also immensely decrease the number of those who would care for, or could believe in, their Socialism. It is only on those who are without religious faith that socialistic schemes exert a strong attractive and motive force. The most completely socialistic schemes are those which are freest from the contact and constraint of religion.*

* The following extract from a paper of the Right Rev. Abbot Snow, O.S.B., may partly confirm and partly supplement the preceding observations, and also be of interest as showing the relation of Socialism to Religion

We have come, then, to the following conclusions as to the relation of Socialism to Religion. It is not a merely casual relation, a merely possible or accidental connection. Socialism, in seeking a satisfactory organisation of society, aims at what can only be accomplished with the aid of Religion, and when full justice is done to it. If it misconceive the nature of Religion, take up a false attitude to-

as viewed by a thoughtful Catholic writer: "To a Catholic his faith and his religion are paramount; for them he will sacrifice goods and life if necessary, placing his eternal welfare above temporal prosperity. Until he ascertains the position of his faith and religion in the new society proposed by Socialism, a Catholic will instinctively be suspicious of the absence of religion in the advocacy of social schemes, and anticipate danger to his faith. So that whether Socialists are loudly hostile to religion, or whether they passively suppose that religion and belief in God will pass away, or whether they simply ignore religion, a Catholic can scarcely associate with them in their schemes without having his faith undermined to a greater or less extent. The danger may be the better understood by explaining the tendency of Socialism to ally itself with theism and religion. These points may be briefly noticed. In order to reconstruct society on a socialistic basis the accumulation of power and wealth and land, now in the hands of a comparative few, must be sequestered and secured for the common good. Precautions must also be taken to prevent the recurrence of the irregularity. The condition of the masses must be raised, poverty and want must disappear, labour must be regulated, the general welfare must be adjusted so as to secure happiness and content to all. To attain this involves certain theories or principles to justify the revolution. The present notions of rights, duties, and justice require modification. The end and object being the general good of all men and to secure equal rights and position to all, the leading idea in socialistic theories is mankind taken collectively, the human race in general, or, as they call it, the solidarity of humanity. Whatever tends to the good of mankind generally, is good and right; whatever tends to the advantage of the individual at the expense of the community, is evil and wrong. Each one is bound to labour for the community and not for his own aggrandisement, and his goodness or badness depends on the fulfilment of that duty. The highest aim of all good men should be to increase the temporal prosperity and happiness of all collectively. Thus the whole range of thought and effort is limited to material prosperity in this life. In this state of things it is evident that religion and the next

wards it, or fail to assign due importance to it as a social force, it must necessarily be a defective and false theory of society.

The forms both of Socialism and of Religion, however, are many, and so we cannot affirm in a general way much more than that what is true in the one cannot be brought into agreement with what is false in the other.

world would create a difficulty. It is difficult to fit God and His worship into such a scheme. Religion presents a future life more noble and lasting than the present, having its own rewards and punishments awarded to conduct in this life, and not dependent merely on the service of humanity but on the service of God. Any act is good or bad according as it pleases God, and not simply as it tends to the general good of men collectively. Again, religion aims primarily at individual sanctification for happiness in the next life, and only secondarily for the material prosperity of all in this. Now, religion and the worship of God is a standing fact, and the Socialist in dealing with it, seeing that it is opposed fundamentally to his aspirations for humanity, either denies and seeks to abolish it or he strives to make religion consist in the service of humanity, and both alternatives necessarily tend to atheism, and hence the alliance. Furthermore, Socialism wages war against all class distinctions, and especially against the governing class. In the socialistic state the government must be by the people for the people. No power or pre-eminence can be held that is not entirely under the control of the people. Hereditary rank, class privileges, individual rights, will disappear. All authority and power must be derived from the people, be exercised in their name, and be terminable at their will. In such a state what place is there for ecclesiastical authority? Religion supposes an authority derived from God to regulate a system for the worship of God. The Catholic Church has a hierarchy of officials—pope, bishops, and clergy—with authority to command the obedience of the people independent of the State. These officials cannot rule at the will of the State, nor can their authority be derived from it. Hence sacerdotalism becomes one of the bugbears of Socialism. Unable to arrange their ideal State to include an independent ecclesiastical authority, Socialists are led to abolish religion in order to get rid of its ministers. They are of the governing class, and let them disappear with the rest. Thus the process of general levelling and the abolition of independent authority leads to the negation of religion and formal worship of God, and makes Socialism tend to atheism."—*The Catholic Times*, August 10, 1894.

The relation between them is not one of identity. They are two, and distinct. Each is only itself. Those who would identify them try to do so by sacrificing one of them to the other. The Socialists who profess to do so while retaining the name of Religion reject the reality which it denotes. Their view is essentially the same as that of the Socialists who maintain that Socialism is inherently and necessarily antagonistic to Religion.

Nor is the relation between Socialism and Religion essentially one of harmony. Those who imagine that it is are for the most part not really Socialists, but mean by Socialism merely sociability, philanthropy, co-operation, and the like, and by Christian Socialism "Social Christianity," "Christian social ethics," or Christianity applied to the improvement and guidance of the life and conduct of society. The genuine Socialists among them are hazy or mistaken in their notions of the nature of Christianity.

The view that Socialism and Religion are naturally antagonistic is substantially correct. The antagonism, indeed, is not direct or inevitable. There is not an immediate or logically necessary connection between Socialism and Atheism or Materialism. A Socialist may be a religious man, or even a zealous Catholic or Protestant. But a connection which is not direct and necessary may be indirect and natural. And such is the case here. Were it otherwise the actual relations between Socialism and Religion would not be what they are. The almost universal hostility of Socialism to Religion is not explicable by merely historical causes, although the influence of these

need not be denied. It also implies that the ideal of human life which Religion brings with it is irreconcilable with that which Socialism presents. In holding that Socialism and Religion have principles and tendencies which naturally bring them into conflict we are at one with the vast majority of Socialists themselves.

We need not treat further of the relation of Socialism to Religion in general. It is of much more importance to consider how Socialism and Christianity bear on each other. For the vast majority both of Socialists and of Anti-Socialists Religion means practically Christianity. It is only in that form that they know it or feel any interest in it. Christianity is the only Religion which confronts Socialism as a formidable rival and foe. It is the only Religion which Socialists feel it necessary steadily and zealously to combat.

All modern Socialism has grown up within Christendom, and is the product of causes which have operated there. With comparatively few exceptions its adherents may be reckoned among "the lapsed masses" of Christendom. The same influences which have diminished the membership of the Christian Church have filled the ranks of Socialism. The causes which are now strengthening Socialism at the expense of Christianity are, for the most part, those which had previously produced large bodies of Atheists, Secularists, and Political Radicals and Revolutionists.

These causes are numerous and of various kinds:

speculative and historical, scientific, moral, political, ecclesiastical, and industrial. I shall make no attempt to treat of them here; to do so even in the most summary manner would require a special chapter. The Church, however, may well seriously inquire what they are, and how she should act with regard to them. Had she better adjusted her conduct in relation to them; had she more truly discriminated between the good and the evil, the essential and the accidental, in them; had she read with clearer insight the signs of the times and listened more readily and reverently to the words of God in the events of history; had she been more filled with the spirit and more obedient to the precepts of her Founder and Lord; fuller of life, of light, and of love; and more faithful and earnest in the discharge of her social mission: she would not have had to lament that so many had left her and gone over to the enemy. The first and chief work which the Church of Christ has to accomplish in dealing with Socialists is to bring them back to the Christian fold from which they have wandered away beyond the sound of her voice. Her main difficulty with them, perhaps, is to get them to listen to her. They are at her doors, yet to all practical intents are more inaccessible to her than the Chinese or Hindus.

Catholic writers have often attempted to throw the blame of this state of matters on Protestantism, arguing that the revolt in the sixteenth century against authority in the Church, weakened it also in the world, and has continued to exercise on

society a dissolving and corrupting power, of which Socialism is the natural outcome.* This is surely an insufficient explanation. Protestantism was not an assault on authority, but essentially an appeal to authority, true and divine authority, that authority a recognition of which is the only and the adequate defence against both the despotic and the revolutionary tendencies of Socialism. Besides, Socialism springs even more from the abuse of authority than from illegitimate resistance to it. Catholicism tends more to Socialism and less to Individualism than Protestantism. Socialism preceded as well as accompanied the Reformation. In countries where Protestantism took firm root, Socialism has been late in appearing, and now that it has appeared in them it is very far from confined to them. Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, and Austria are not Protestant countries, and yet a very virulent sort of Socialism is at work in them.

The Reformation, I admit, was not an unmixed good. Protestantism has shown, and is everywhere showing, tendencies to disruption and dissolution which bode ill for the success of its endeavours to leaven society with the Gospel, even in the countries where it is most dominant. So long as it is content to remain broken up as at present into competing and conflicting denominations, it cannot possibly discharge effectively the duties to society, and especially to the poorer classes of society,

* For a full statement of the argument referred to see the treatise of M. Auguste Nicolas, "Du Protestantisme et de toutes les hérésies dans leur rapport avec le Socialisme." Bruxelles. 1852.

which are incumbent on the Christian Church. The unity of spirit and of organisation which characterises the Catholic Church ought to be of immense advantage to her in the work of bringing Christianity to bear on the amelioration of social life. But she has defects which more than counteract these advantages, and which make her certainly not less responsible than the Protestant Church for the rise and spread of Socialism. Neither Church should attempt to exonerate herself by throwing blame on the other. Each should rather seek to find wherein she has been herself at fault, and how she may best amend herself. They should be willing to co-operate as far as they can in measures which tend to the safety and welfare of society. It is alike the duty and the interest of both to endeavour to remove the evils to which Socialism mainly owes its strength. It is foolish for either to pretend that she alone has the right to combat or the power to conquer these evils.

Some of the socialistic enthusiasts in the earlier half of this century represented Socialism as the very Gospel which Christ had promulgated. In their view Christ had been merely a social reformer; and Christianity, as taught by Him, had consisted exclusively of a few simple practical truths, designed and adapted to be the seeds of a fruitful harvest of social welfare throughout the future of the human race; while all in it, as it has come down to us, which refers to the direct personal relationship of the soul to its God, to sin and redemption, to a divine life and an eternal world,

had not entered into the thought of Christ, but had been added by popular superstition and priestly invention, and ought to be swept away.

This is not a view which will bear examination. It has no historical basis. There is not a particle of evidence for the existence of the socialistic Christ. The Christ of history was the Christ who taught that God was to be regarded before man; that the soul was more than the body; that eternal and spiritual wants were more urgent than temporal and social ones. He came to set men right towards God, and said comparatively little about their relations to Cæsar and society, being aware that the man whose heart is right towards God will be right also towards every creature and ordinance of God. He died on the cross as the author of an eternal salvation, and not as the promulgator of a political panacea. The truths which He taught with reference to man's direct personal relationship to God, those so rashly pronounced to be the products of craft and credulity, have an infinite value, independent of any bearing which they may have on the life that now is. At the same time, it is especially in these truths that even the moral and social power of the Gospel is concentrated,—its power to quicken and leaven, to pervade and transform, to bless and beautify every phase of human nature here below.

Christianity is not dependent on any form of social polity or organisation. This is one marked feature of distinction between it and the economy which preceded it. That economy comprehended a political constitution for the Jewish nation as well

as a Religion. The inseparable interweaving of the sacred with the civil, if indeed we can speak of the civil in such a case, constituted the Theocracy. The Gospel has come free from all the restrictions which made the Mosaic dispensation fit only for a single people at a particular stage of civilisation, and acted upon by special influences. It was meant to sanctify man's life in every form that life can assume; to pervade law and government through all their changes and stages with its own spirit; to make all the kingdoms of this world provinces of the kingdom of Christ; and in order to effect this it has necessarily not been committed to any one political system, any one type of social organisation. In order to influence for good every kind of polity, it is indissolubly bound to none. It stands above them all, unfettered and independent, in order that it may be able to aid and strengthen them all, and free to reprove and correct them all.

Christianity is no more inseparably bound to the existing order of society than it was to that of Imperial Rome or Feudal Europe. The existing order of society is perceptibly changing under our own eyes, and will undoubtedly give place to one very different. Christianity can accommodate itself to manifold and immense changes. It can accommodate itself to any merely economic and political changes, and has no reason or call to attack any economic or political system simply as economic or political. So far as Socialism confines itself to proposals of an exclusively economic and political character, Christianity has no direct concern with it. A

Christian may, of course, criticise and disapprove of them; but it cannot be on Christian grounds; it must be merely on economic and political grounds. Whether land is to be owned by few or many, by every one or only by the State; whether industry is to be entirely under the direction of Government, or conducted by co-operative associations, or left to private enterprise; whether labour is to be remunerated by wages or out of profits; whether wealth is to be equally or unequally distributed, are not in themselves questions of moment to the Christian life, or indeed questions to which Christianity has any answer to give.

Socialism and Christianity, however, are by no means entirely unrelated. Nor is their relationship merely antagonism. Socialism is of its very nature, indeed, erroneous and of evil tendency, seeing that one-sidedness and exaggeration are precisely what is distinctive of it; and it does not contain any truth or any good principle which is exclusively its own. But it is not, therefore, to be thought of as without any truth or good in it; or as to be utterly condemned and opposed. There is much in it which is not distinctive of it or exclusively characteristic of it. It is to a large extent an exaggeration or misapplication of principles which are true and good, which Christ has taught and sanctioned, which the Gospel rests on and must stand or fall by; and Christians will betray Christ and the Gospel if they desert these principles, or depreciate them, or allow them to be evil spoken of, or act as if they were ashamed of them, because Socialism has so far recognised and adopted them.

Let us take note of some of the features of Socialism which cannot fail to receive the approval of every intelligent Christian.

1. In all its forms it is the manifestation of desire to know the laws of social life, the conditions of social welfare. Even the most fantastic of its systems testify on the part of those who originated them and of those who accepted them to the operation of a belief that the social world is, like the physical world, a world of law and order; a world to be studied in the spirit and by the methods of science; a world which science will eventually conquer and possess. This grand conviction is of comparatively recent origin, and, indeed, has only come to be universally entertained in the present century. Socialistic theories were among the early expressions of its prevalence, and it has to a considerable extent propagated itself by means of them. They may be regarded as preludes to a true Sociology or Social Science. The Social Science not of the present only, but of the future also, must be ascribed in some measure to Socialism, either as consequence or counteraction. And so far as this has been the case the Christian must see good in it. Christianity has the greatest interest in God's laws being brought to light in every region of His dominions. It is even more, perhaps, to be desired on its behalf that the laws by which God governs humanity should be known than that those by which He rules the physical creation should be known. So far as socialistic theories are the results of honest efforts to throw light on the constitution and order of the

social world, Christianity, which is of the light and favours every effort to increase light, will not refuse to welcome them.

2. Socialism has assailed the competency of the older Political Economy to guide and govern society. Political Economy was gradually raised by the labours of a series of eminent men, of whom Adam Smith is the most famed, from a rudimentary and confused condition to the rank of a science rich in important truths as to labour, capital, wages, rents, prices, interest, population, &c. These men were keenly alive to the enormous evils which had resulted from the guardianship exercised by the State over industry and commerce, from the privileges granted to guilds, and corporations, and classes, from legal restrictions on activity and enterprise; and they deemed it the prime duty of the State to cease from interference, to remove old restrictions, and to leave individuals alone so long as they do not defraud or injure others. They maintained that Governments should let labour and capital develop themselves freely within the limits of morality, in the confidence that, as a general rule, each man knows best how to manage his own affairs, and that if individuals be left to seek, as they please, without violence or injustice, their own advantage the self-interest of each will tend, on the whole, to the common good. They did not pretend that economic truths were alone necessary to the welfare of mankind, or that Political Economy was the only social science, or that *laissez-faire* was a rule without exceptions. Unfortunately, however, many who professed to

apply their teaching to practice acted as if that had been the sum of it. They talked and behaved as if the heaping up of wealth were the one thing needful for society, and as if it were a crime to put almost any restraint on the process. Under the plea of industrial freedom they claimed social license, rights of oppression, fraud, and falsehood. For the nefarious deeds to which their ruthless greed prompted them they sought exculpation from the reproaches of their consciences in the plea that the pursuit of self-advantage could not fail to promote the benefit of the community.

Socialists have striven in vain to refute the leading doctrines of Political Economists, and to prove that compulsory regulation of labour should be substituted for free contract. They have signally failed in their attacks on Political Economy as expounded by its scientific cultivators. But they have not been without success in discrediting the views and conduct of those who appealed to it with a view to justify evil practices in the maintenance of which they were interested. They have been able to show that there is no warrant for believing in the sufficiency of the operation of merely economic laws to produce social welfare, in universal selfishness tending to universal prosperity, in competition producing only good. Thus far they have had truth and historical experience on their side. And thus far their teaching has been in conformity with Christianity, which tells us that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh from the mouth of God; which leads us to see that no one class of nature's

laws is sufficient for man's guidance, and that even all nature's laws are very insufficient, where human virtue and divine grace are wanting; that selfishness, unresisted and uncorrected, must lead not to national prosperity, but to national ruin; and that all the wisdom which rulers can exercise and all the charity which Christians can display, will be fully required to control its action and to counteract its effects.

3. Socialism has helped to emphasise and diffuse the truth that the entire economic life of society should be conformed to justice. If we ask its adherents what they mean by justice, we will generally find that it is what other men would consider injustice. But they have had at least the merit of insisting on the supremacy due to considerations of justice in the regulation of the collective life of society as well as of the personal life of the individual. They must be credited also with the further and closely related merit of having searchingly diagnosed the moral diseases of society as at present constituted, of having persistently dwelt on and boldly denounced its sins and shortcomings, and of having thereby contributed to rouse, widen, and deepen in the public mind a consciousness that all is far from being wholly well in contemporary Christendom, and that our so-called Christian England, for example, is still chargeable in many respects with the violation of justice and the non-fulfilment of duty. But so far as they have done and are doing this they have so far done and are doing what the Hebrew prophets laboured to do in

Ancient Israel, and must be regarded as unintentionally co-operating in the performance of a duty which is imperative on the members, and especially on the spokesmen, of the Christian Church.

4. Socialism is to a considerable extent an expression of the idea of fraternity, an embodiment of belief in the brotherhood of man. It proclaims the principle of human solidarity: that men are members one of another, and that the aim of each of them should be to seek not merely their own good, but also the good of others, and of the whole to which they belong. It owes largely its existence, and almost all that is best in it, to the spirit of sympathy with those who are in poor circumstances and humble situations; to solicitude for the welfare of the great mass of the people. It insists most emphatically on the claims of labour, and on the urgency of striving to ameliorate the condition of the class the most numerous and indigent. But there is thus far nothing in Socialism which is not derived from Christianity. The purest and most perfect love to man, the love to man which is conjoined with and vivified by love to God, was fully revealed by Jesus Christ. The law of His kingdom is the royal law of love. Men cannot be true Christians unless they feel and act towards each other as the children of the one Heavenly Father, loving even their enemies, seeking to do good to all whom it is in their power to benefit, and showing themselves in all human relationships not merely faithful and just, but also self-denying, merciful, and charitable. Christianity has sanctified poverty

and dignified toil as no other system or agency has done. Anti-Christian societies have as yet done so exceedingly little in comparison with the Church to console and help the poor, that they can make no reasonable claim to be more in sympathy with them or more anxious for their welfare.

5. The lively sense of the evils arising from competition and the strong desire to substitute for it co-operation generally evinced by Socialists are, it may be added, entirely in harmony with the spirit of Christianity. Socialists err, indeed, when they represent competition as in itself unchristian; and when they propose to suppress it by compulsory collective association they recommend a slavery inconsistent with the freedom and responsibility implied in Christian liberty. To do away with competition in the various departments of industrial, commercial, and professional life would be to inflict on society a serious injury; and it only can be done away with by universal compulsion, an entire subjection of individual wills to social authority, wholly at variance with a Christian conception of the nature, dignity, and duty of man. Yet Socialists have often ample reason for representing competition as anarchical and excessive, as hatefully selfish and productive of the most grievous wrongs; and they are irrefutable so long as they are content merely to maintain the desirability of reducing it to order, keeping it within moral limits, and restraining and counteracting the evils of it. Co-operation, moreover, even of a free or non-socialistic kind, although incapable of suppressing competition, may thus organise it, modify its

character for the better, and lessen its abuses. And so far as it does this, Christian men cannot fail to welcome it as a practical manifestation of the love and brotherhood which their Religion demands; as a confirmation through action of faith in the truth that Christian society as well as the Christian Church ought to be a body which God has so "tempered together that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another, and whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it, or whether one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

I have now indicated some respects in which Christianity and Socialism must be regarded as in the main agreed, and must proceed to refer to some respects in which they may be regarded as on the whole opposed. The reference will be of the briefest kind, as most of the points have already been more or less under consideration in other relations.

First, then, Socialism is antagonistic to Christianity in so far as it rests on, or allies itself with, Atheism or Materialism. It does so to a very large extent. The only formidably powerful species of Socialism is that which claims to be scientific on the assumption that modern science has proved the truth of the materialistic view of the universe and of history, and shown Christian and all other religious conceptions and beliefs to be delusions. Manifestly, however, to the extent that Socialism thus identifies itself with an anti-religious Materialism, it comes into conflict with Christianity; and the struggle between them must be one of life and death.

Christianity assumes the truth of faith in God, the Father Almighty, Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth, infinite in power, wisdom, righteousness, and love; and although it does not despise matter, or depreciate any of its beauties, excellences, or uses, it certainly treats it as merely the work and manifestation of God, and as meant to be instrumental and subordinate to the requirements of spiritual and immortal beings.

Secondly, Socialism is antagonistic to Christianity, inasmuch as it assumes that man's chief end is merely a happy social life on earth. The assumption is a natural one in a system which regards matter as primary in existence, and human nature as essentially physical and animal. This almost all Socialism does. Even when it does not expressly deny the fundamental convictions on which Christianity rests it ignores them. It leaves out of account God and Divine Law, sees in morality simply a means to general happiness, and recognises no properly spiritual and eternal life. It conceives of the whole duty of mankind as consisting in the pursuit and production of social enjoyment. Hence its ideal of the highest good, and consequently of human conduct, is essentially different from the Christian ideal. And thus it necessarily comes directly into conflict with Christianity.

Socialism owes much of its success to the very poorness of its ideal. Because superficial and unspiritual that ideal is all the more apt to captivate those in whom thought is in its infancy, and the spirit asleep. It is just the ideal of the common

worldly man boldly put forth with the pretentious claim to be the ripe product of modern wisdom. To be as rich as one's neighbours; to have few hours of work and abundance of leisure and amusement; to have always plenty to eat and to drink; to have every sense, appetite, and affection gratified; to have no call or need to cultivate poverty of spirit, meekness, penitence, patience under affliction, equanimity under oppression, or to suffer from the hunger and thirst after righteousness which no acquisition of rights will ever fill, has always been the ideal of many men, but never, perhaps, of so many as in the present day. And what else than this is the ideal of "a good time coming," of which Bebel and Stern, Bax and Bellamy, and so many other socialist writers have prophesied, and which so many so-called Christian Socialists even ignorantly identify with the coming of the kingdom of God on earth foretold by Christ? It is so little else that there is no wonder that those who are already wholly out of sympathy with the Christian ideal should gladly accept an ideal which is virtually just their own clearly and confidently expressed. The Gospel of Socialism has, it must be admitted, one great advantage over the Gospel of Christ. It needs no inner ear to hear it, no spiritual vision to discern it, no preparation of heart to receive it; were it wholly realised mere bodily sense and the most carnal mind could not only apprehend but comprehend it.

At the same time there is a considerable amount of truth in it. It exhibits the *summum bonum* as not merely individual but social; inculcates, although

with questionable consistency, unselfishness and self-sacrifice; and assigns great importance to what is undoubtedly most desirable—a general betterment of the earthly lot of men.

Thirdly, Socialism comes into conflict with Christianity inasmuch as it attaches more importance to the condition of men than to their character, whereas Christianity lays the chief stress on character. Socialists are not at fault in maintaining that material conditions have a great influence on intellectual and moral development, and that there is a correspondence between the political, literary, and religious history of humanity and its economic history. Those who deny this reject a truth of great scientific and practical importance, and one which has been amply established by Economists of the Historical School, by Positivists, and by Socialists. The Christian has no interest to serve by disputing it; on the contrary, it is his manifest interest to accept it to the full, and to recognise as obstacles to the realisation of Christianity not merely purely spiritual evils, but also such things as bad drainage, unwholesome food, inadequate ventilation, uncleanly and intemperate habits; and, in short, all that tends to degrade and destroy the bodies, and through these the souls of men. Human life is a unity in which body and mind, the economic and the spiritual, the secular and the religious, are inseparable, and of which the whole is related to each part or phase, and each part or phase to the whole.

Where the Socialist errs is in conceiving of what is a relation of complex interdependence as one of

simple dependence; is in taking account only of the action of material and economic factors of social development on intellectual and spiritual conditions, and ignoring the action of its intellectual and spiritual factors on material and economic conditions. The whole historical philosophy on which Social Democracy rests is vitiated by this one-sidedness and superficiality of treatment. It is a philosophy which explains history by one class of causes, the physical and industrial, and which assigns no properly causal value to intellectual faculties, to moral energies, to scientific and ethical ideas, and to religious convictions. But so to account for history is flagrantly to contradict history, which clearly testifies that its economic, intellectual, and spiritual development are, as Rossi says, "although not unrelated yet not necessarily conjoined or uniformly connected." Their relationship is due to the fact that all history, economic, intellectual, and spiritual, is essentially the work of man himself, a being at once economic, intellectual, and spiritual. It is in the main not what any conditions or factors external to man make it, but what men make it; and its character depends in the main on the character of the men who make it.

Where Socialism fails in its explanation of history is just where it also comes into conflict with Christianity. It overlooks or depreciates the importance of the inward and spiritual, while Christianity fully acknowledges it. "The kingdom of God," which was so largely the burden of Christ's preaching, and which the Christian believes

that history is evolving, is a life which develops from within. "The kingdom of God is within you." The healing of society, according to the Christian view, must come from God, commence at the centre in the hearts of men, and work outwards. It is only through improvement of the lives of individuals that there can be a real and radical improvement of the constitution of society. Without personal renovation there can be no effective social reformation.

Fourthly, Socialism is antagonistic to Christianity in so far as it does injustice to the rights of individuality. There is no Socialism, properly so called, where the freedom to which individuals are entitled is not unduly sacrificed to the will of society. A Socialism like that of Social Democracy, which would refuse to men the right to possess private property or capital, which would give them no choice as to what work they are to do, or as to the remuneration which they are to receive for their work, would manifestly destroy individual liberty. To pretend, as its advocates do, that it would establish and enlarge liberty is as absurd as to assert that things equal to the same thing are unequal to each other, or any immediate self-contradiction whatsoever. What such Socialism directly demands is slavery in the strictest and fullest sense of the term.

From all such slavery Christianity is meant to free men, yet without rendering them lawless or allowing them to disown any of their social obligations. By causing them to realise their direct

personal responsibility to God for all their actions, and their infinite indebtedness to Christ, it makes it impossible for them to accept any merely human will, law, or authority as the absolute rule of their lives. The Christian is a man with whom "it is a very small thing that he should be judged of any man's judgment," seeing that "He that judgeth him is the Lord"; who feels that "each one of us shall give account of himself to God"; who acknowledges "but one Master, even Christ." Dependence on God implies and requires independence towards men. The service of Christ is true liberty. "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The liberty with which Christ makes His people free, spiritual liberty, is as inherently irreconcilable with the slavery which Collectivism would introduce as with the slavery in the classical world and the serfdom in the mediæval world which it has destroyed. All the religious reformations and political revolutions through which human freedom has been gained and human rights secured have been but the natural sequences and continuations of the vast spiritual change in human life effected by Christ, immeasurably the greatest Reformer and Revolutionist who has ever appeared on earth. What Socialism unconsciously aims at as regards freedom, as regards the rights of individuality, is the reversal of His work in history; is the accomplishment of a vast anti-reformation or counter-revolution. Is it likely that an attempt so reactionary will succeed? Is it desirable that it should?

I might proceed to mention other respects in which genuine Socialism and genuine Christianity are more or less opposed. But it seems unnecessary to do so, especially as some of the most important of these respects have been virtually indicated in the preceding chapter, seeing that wherever Socialism contradicts moral truth it also contravenes Christian faith. And at several points Socialism is, as we have seen, at variance with true morality. At all such points it is also at variance with Christianity.

For Christianity is ethically all-comprehensive, as a religion which would "give to all men life, and that always more abundantly," must be in order to attain its end. It seeks the fulfilment and honour of the whole moral law. It appropriates and transmutes into its own substance all true morality, but adds thereto nothing which is morally false or perverse. Its Ethics is perfect both in spirit and principles, although it has often been most imperfectly understood and applied, even by thoroughly sincere Christians, and although from its very perfection it can never be perfectly either apprehended or realised by beings so imperfect as men.

In the Ethics of Socialism there are no elements of transcendency, infinity, spirituality; all is commonplace, definite, and easy of comprehension. Its inspiration must, therefore, be exhaustible, its power of raising man "above himself" comparatively small; its successes indecisive and temporary. But it is further, as has been previously indicated, in many respects plainly false and of evil

tendency. Christianity is free from all its faults. More than eighteen hundred years ago it was born into a world in which they were universally prevalent. From the first it avoided and condemned them. So far as the contents of socialistic Ethics are exclusively its own and contrary to the precepts or spirit of Christian Ethics, they are not new discoveries or virtues, but old pagan delusions and vices which have sprung up where Christianity has ceased to exert its due influence.

There is nothing ethically valuable in Socialism which is not also contained in Christianity. All its moral truths are Christian truths. It is only praiseworthy when it insists on the significance and application of principles and precepts which have always been inculcated by Christianity. In other words, Christian Ethics is sufficient if Christians understand it aright and follow its guidance faithfully. As regards moral doctrine there is need of Socialism only when and where Christians are unintelligent or unfaithful. All that is morally good in Socialism, all that is elevating and generous in its aspirations, can find satisfaction in Christianity, and will even only find it there. Were it not so it might admit of doubt whether in so far as they come into conflict Christianity or Socialism will triumph. As it is so there can be no room for doubt on the subject. In virtue of all that is excellent in itself, Socialism must reconcile itself with Christianity, which has all that excellence, and more. Will it persist in assailing it merely on the strength of what is evil in itself? It may; but

when a war comes to be reduced to one between good and evil, truth and error, only the veriest pessimist can entertain any doubt as to which cause will conquer and which will suffer defeat.

Christianity and Socialism are very differently related to Economics and Ethics. Christianity has spoken with authority on all moral principles: it has propounded no economic views. Socialism rests on, and centres in, economic hypotheses and proposals. Hence Christianity cannot come into direct conflict with Socialism in the sphere of Economics as it may in that of Ethics. It is concerned with the economic doctrines of Socialism only in so far as they bear an ethical character and involve ethical consequences. Unfortunately Socialism has put forth economic proposals tainted with injustice and likely to lead to social ruin. As to these doctrines it is only necessary to say that genuine Christianity stands wholly uncommitted to any of them. It cannot with the slightest plausibility be maintained to have taught the wrongfulness of private property or to have recommended the abolition of differences of wealth. It supplies no warrant for representing individual capital as essentially hostile to labour or for exhibiting the payment of labour by wages in an odious light. It suggests no wild or fraudulent views regarding currency or credit. It encourages no one to confiscate the goods of his neighbour under cover of promoting his good. It is in its whole spirit opposed to the delusion that riches are in themselves an end, or an honour, or a blessing. It is not fairly chargeable with any

socialistic aberration. It is wholly free from association with either economic or moral falsehood. This is a mighty advantage for Christianity even regarded merely as a social power. For society can only prosper permanently through conforming to truth. No error will in the end fail to injure it.

But of all truth, none is so capable of benefiting society as the truth in which Christianity itself consists. Were all men but sincerely convinced of the Fatherhood of God, of the love of Christ, of the helpfulness of the Holy Spirit, of the sacredness of the obligations of human brotherhood, of the unspeakable importance of the dispositions and virtues which the Gospel demands for the present as well as for the future life, society would soon be wondrously and gloriously transformed. As regards social as well as individual regeneration and salvation, Christ is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

II.

THE Christian spirit is divine, but not disembodied. It has had appointed for it a body through which it has to operate on society somewhat as the individual soul does on the world through its corporeal organism. The Church is the body of Christ; in Him it is one and indivisible, alive and powerful; by Him it is quickened, enlightened, inspired and ruled. It comprehends all those in whose life is His life, and who are the obedient organs of His will; all those who, however otherwise different and divided, are of "one heart and one soul" through

having "the same mind which was in Christ." It exists to manifest the spirit, to apply the wisdom, and to continue the work of Christ, in order that the name of the Father may be universally hallowed, His kingdom fully established, and His will perfectly done even here on earth; and this it can only do through self-denial, self-sacrifice, and continually doing good, or, in a word, only in so far as it lives and works as Christ did.

The Church is not identical or coextensive with the kingdom of God. It lies within the sphere of the kingdom which it has been specially instituted to establish and extend. The sphere of this kingdom naturally embraces all human thought and life, every form of human existence and every kind of human activity, and not merely what is distinctly religious or ecclesiastical. It is rightfully inclusive of philosophy, science, art, literature, politics, industry, commerce, and all social intercourse. The kingdom of God can only have fully come when entire humanity is filled with the spirit, and obedient to the law, of Christ. And the Church, the whole body of believers, the vast host of Christian men and women in the world, has assigned to it the task of humbly and faithfully labouring to bring about the full coming of the kingdom of God.

The relation of the Church, in this its primary and chief acceptance, to what are called *social questions* is very obvious; but it is not on that account to be inattentively regarded. It is just the Church in this sense of the term which it is of supreme importance should be got to interest herself adequately

and aright in these questions—the Church as consisting of not the clergy only, but of all who desire to live and work in the spirit of Christ. The power of the clergy to act beneficially on society, however unitedly and strenuously it may be exerted, cannot but be slight indeed compared with the power which the Church might exert. I believe that there is no social power in the world equal to that which the Church possesses; and that no social evil or anti-social force could long resist that power were it wisely and fully put forth. The Church can only do her duty towards society through all Christian men and women doing their duty towards it.

The social mission of the Church can only be accomplished by the Church as a whole—by the Church in its most comprehensive, and at the same time most distinctly Christian, acceptance. Nothing can be more incumbent on the clergy than to bear this constantly in mind, and continually to stir up the laity, who are just as apt to forget it, to a due sense of what their Church membership implies, or, in other words, what participation in the life and work of Christ implies, so that when the Church in its holy warfare against the evils in society moves into action it may always be with the consciousness that its every member is expected to do his duty.

It is chiefly by acting on and through the Church, and by exciting the Church to faithfulness in the fulfilment of its social mission, that the clergy can promote the good of society. The Church has a social mission. It is one which is included in its

general mission as the Church of Christ; one which it cannot neglect without unfaithfulness to Christ; one which it can only discharge by following the example, teaching the doctrine, and acting in the spirit of Christ. The mission of the Church is essentially the complement and continuation of that of Christ. It is to heal and sanctify both individuals and society; not only to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, but to transform humanity itself into a wholly new creature in Christ Jesus.

That the Church has such a mission is so plainly taught in the New Testament that it has been always more or less acknowledged both by profession and practice. The Church has in every generation felt in some measure the necessity of dealing with questions which were the social questions of that generation; in every age it has so far sought to adapt both its teaching and its action to the tendencies and wants of society in that age.

One often hears it said at the present time that the Church has hitherto dwelt too much on individual aspects of the Christian faith, and comparatively disregarded public life; that the claims of personal religion have been too exclusively insisted on and the claims of social religion too much forgotten. And certainly a considerable amount of evidence might easily be adduced in support of the statement. Yet it is very doubtful if it be really true as a general proposition. I believe that if we look closely at the history of the Church from its foundation to the present time we shall rather conclude that she has on the whole erred more in the

contrary direction; and that she would have done more good both to individuals and to society if she had thrown itself with less absorbing ardour into the questions of the day. The questions which have most violently agitated the Church in the past have for the most part been, or at least seemed at the time to be, questions vitally affecting the welfare or even the very existence of society.

The mission of the Church in relation to social questions is at present special only in so far as the social questions themselves are special. They are so obviously and to a large extent. Wherein? There can be little hesitation as to the answer. It is that they are now to an extent unknown in any other age *labour questions*; that they centre in and are dependent on what may be called in a general way *the labour question* far more than they have ever done before in the whole history of the world. This labour question itself, it is true, is only a form of a question as old as history, the question of the unequal distribution of material goods among men, but it is a new and extraordinarily developed form of it, and it is influencing the life of the present generation far more widely, subtly, and powerfully than it influenced the life of other generations in other forms. How the question has come to be what it is, and to have acquired such significance as it has, only the history of industry and of the industrial classes during the last hundred years can adequately explain, and I cannot, of course, enter here upon so vast a subject as that. I shall, therefore, simply venture to express the opinion that for the clergy-

men of this country just now a study of the industrial history of Britain during the last hundred years will be found at least as instructive and useful as the study of any hundred years of its ecclesiastical history, and more so than the study of any hundred years of its history of which wars, or civil commotions, or political struggles were the most representative features.

That the labour question should be the chief question of the day is not to be regretted. What it means is not, as some would have us believe, that manual labourers were never so defrauded and oppressed as at present, but that they were never before so free, possessed of their rights to the same extent, so fully conscious of the value of the services which they render to society, so confident of their power to obtain what is due to them, so full of hope, aspiration, and ambition. And all this is well. Every improvement which has taken place in the condition of the labouring classes should be matter for rejoicing. It is not only their right but their duty to seek still further to better their lot. Every step which they take of such a kind as will really raise them to a higher level and happier state deserves only commendation and encouragement.

But it does not follow that there are no elements of evil in the present situation, or, in other words, in the circumstances and in the conditions of life which now give to the labour question its absorbing interest. On the contrary, it is obviously a situation full of tendencies towards division and strife, and even towards disorders and revolution; one in which

many unreasonable claims are advanced, in which much of the vaulting ambition which overleaps itself and falls on the other side is prevalent, and in which dangerous passions are widely diffused. It is a situation in which charlatans and fanatics, vain and violent and selfish men, misleaders, naturally find no difficulty in obtaining believers and followers; and in which "double-minded men, unstable in all their ways," are greatly multiplied, and very like indeed to "waves of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

When a stream of social tendency flows strongly in any direction the Church is just as likely to go too far with it as not far enough. It is told of Leighton that when minister of Newbattle he was publicly reprimanded at a meeting of Synod for not "preaching up the times," and that, on asking who did so, and being answered, "All the brethren," he rejoined, "Then if all of you preach up the times, you may surely allow one poor brother to preach up Christ and eternity." Whether the story itself be true or not, it conveys a great truth. Preaching up Christ and eternity is needed in all times. No teaching which does not will much profit any time.

The sort of preaching to the times in which Leighton could not join passed away in Scotland and was succeeded by a very different style of preaching, which he would have disliked still more, inasmuch as it was still more occupied with time and still less with Christ and eternity. It aimed chiefly at being judicious and practical, at promoting refinement and enlightenment, good sense, good con-

duct, personal happiness, and social contentment; and, doubtless, it was not altogether unprofitable, but as certainly it failed on the whole even more than the excess from which it was a reaction.

It is perfectly possible still to err in the same way. It is even not unlikely, owing to the interest now so widely and keenly felt in social questions, that many of our clergymen may take to discoursing on them to an extent which will do far more harm than good. They may deem the discussion of such themes as Socialism, Landlordism, Law Reform, the Duration of the Labour Day, a Living Wage, the Wages System, and the like, the preaching which our times require. They may deal in their pulpit ministrations with such social and economic questions much in the same way as the rationalist preachers of Germany in the latter part of the eighteenth century dealt with moral and even agricultural questions. I trust, however, that they will receive more wisdom, and be guided to handle the Divine Word more faithfully.

The clergyman who feels a call to propound his views on social and industrial problems should find, as he easily may, an opportunity of doing so simply as a citizen, claiming and using the freedom to which every citizen is entitled; he ought not, in my opinion, to do it as a minister of the Divine Word, and an accredited representative of the Church. The Gospel does not contain solutions of these problems. Those who pretend that it does make claims on its behalf which can only tend to discredit it. It reveals, however, principles and spiritual motive forces

which are essential to social welfare and to the right solution of social problems. And the preaching of the Gospel which will have the most powerful and beneficent influence on society will be that which brings these principles most clearly into the view of society and these forces most fully into action on it; the preaching which so exhibits the Gospel that it will shine full-orbed on all social relationships, and radiate from its own entire divine nature the light and heat, the vigour and fruitfulness, which the social world needs.

The preacher who lacks faith in such preaching, and whose ambition is not satisfied by it, shows an inadequate appreciation of the Gospel and of his own office; and when he betakes himself to the direct discussion of social problems, and thus thrusts himself into competition with the professional politician, the economic specialist, the newspaper editor, and others, whose experience and knowledge in relation to them are likely to be greater than his, he displays much unwisdom. He comes down from a position of advantage on which he is strong, and from which he can, without competing with any man, co-operate with all classes of men who are working towards the true amelioration of society, and takes his stand on lower and less solid ground, where all around him is contention, and where he is very apt to be weaker and less useful than other men. There must on the whole be loss in that. The power of the pulpit for good to society will certainly not be increased but decreased by ministers of the Gospel forsaking their own special work of preaching the Gospel for that of

mere lectures on social themes, or of social agitators, or of politicians, or of journalists, of all of whom there is no scarcity in this country at the present time, and who are discussing social questions during six days of every week throughout the year as actively as there is any necessity for.

I do not say that the preacher may not treat of social questions at all. I fully admit that he may have good reason to refer to them occasionally, or even frequently, and very plainly. What I hold is that he ought always in doing so to keep the great facts and truths of the Gospel bearing on them clearly in his own view and before the view of his hearers; that he should never follow applications so far that the Christian principles which underlie them are in danger of being lost sight of; and never forget that it is only in so far as things and questions can be looked at in relation to Christ, and through the medium of the light which shines from Christ, that he as a Christian preacher has any special call or right to deal with them.

Maurice and Kingsley set, I think, in this respect an admirable example. While perfectly faithful and fearless in rebuking the evils and indicating the requirements of their time, they anxiously sought to do so from the Christian standpoint; and even, we may say, from the very centre and heart of the Gospel. It seemed to them that the deepest and most distinctive truths of Christianity were so wonderfully adapted to the constitution of the human spirit and to the wants of human society that if properly presented they could not fail to receive from the evidence

of that adaptness afforded by their effects a most powerful confirmation. They were convinced that faith in the Tri-unity of God, or in the Incarnation, could certify itself to be true by its power to redeem humanity and sanctify life. They believed that all history was meant to be made a magnificent and conclusive apologetic of Christianity.

While the Christian minister ought to exercise prudence and self-restraint in the respect indicated, there is no phase or question of social life, or, indeed, of human life, on which he may not be warranted or even called to speak words of exhortation, commendation, or rebuke; none as to which it can reasonably be said that it lies wholly beyond the sphere within which he as the preacher of Gospel truth may rightly intervene. The principles of the Gospel are designed to pervade, embrace, and direct the whole life of man, and the minister of the Gospel is bound to endeavour to apply its principles to the whole of that life. If he would be loyal to Christ he must refuse to conform to any human authority or human prejudice which would assign a merely external conventional limit to the fulfilment of his duty, or to the freedom of his office; which would say to him, for example, "This is business, or this is politics, and therefore it is not within your province." To all such dictation his reply should be: "My province is as wide as my Master's, and includes all things in so far as they are either moral or the reverse, either Christian or unchristian." He should recognise no arbitrary outward restraint. What he must not cast aside are simply the reason-

able and external restraints of the Christian spirit itself—those of Christian wisdom, justice, and love. Reverencing these, he will learn when to speak and when to be silent, how far to go and when to stop.

The Church ought to aim at fulfilling her social mission wholly in the spirit of her Lord and from a sincere, unselfish sense of duty to Him. She should acknowledge allegiance to Him alone; beware of every unholy alliance with the powers of the world; flatter no class of men; and allow no class of men to patronise her, or to use her for their own purposes. She should impartially and disinterestedly seek the good of all men, and deliver to all her God-given message with boldness and honesty, with simplicity and earnestness, with compassion and love.

Her duty in this respect, while very plain, is certainly far from easy. She has few, if any, entirely disinterested friends. All political parties aim more or less at making political capital out of either supporting or assailing her. Rich and poor, capitalists and labourers alike, so far as they have class interests, wish her to promote their own, and so far as they have prejudices will resent her disturbing them. She cannot too strongly realise that her strength is in the name of the Lord alone; and that truly to benefit any class of men, rich or poor, she must not be the Church of that or of any class alone, but the Church of the Living God, with whom there is no respect of persons, and who seeks the highest good of all men. It is

especially desirable that the clergy should be fully imbued with this consciousness as they are especially called to win all men to the cause of Christ and to a comprehensive practical recognition of the obligations of duty. Obviously while they cannot succeed in this work without zeal, they cannot in many cases even attempt it without doing mischief if their zeal is of a partisan character. As regards labour difficulties especially, whether they are to do good or harm by even referring to them must depend chiefly on whether or not they do so with fairness, with full knowledge, and an obvious desire for the true good of all concerned.

A considerable number of working men are alienated from the Church because they deem that her influence has been exerted on the side of the wealthier classes. They look upon her as an ally of capitalism; and they justify on this ground their neglect of religion. And it must be admitted that the Church has often shown a deference to rank and wealth altogether at variance with Christian principle. The worship of Mammon is too common in the house of God. The competitive and mercantile spirit of the age has entered to a deplorable extent into our ecclesiastical denominations. There are far too many congregations in our large cities drawn almost entirely from the capitalist class.

The Church should endeavour to remove such causes of disaffection. It is foolish of those who desire her welfare to try to increase or universalise competition and mercantilism within her borders instead of labouring to diminish and counteract

them. The ministers of the Church should do their utmost to bring rich and poor together on the footing of Christian equality and brotherhood, and so to act towards them that no man can justly suspect that he is less esteemed than another merely because he is poorer. It is no part, however, of their duty to working men to spare any unworthy feeling or to confirm them in any error which they may entertain. It is no part of their duty to take the side even of working men in any merely class struggle; in any struggle where they have not also clearly on their side reason, justice, and religion. It is, on the contrary, their duty to rise above all party prejudices, passions, and interests; and to speak to all parties *the truth in love*. They have to endeavour to bring home to workmen an adequate sense of the sacredness of the duties of labour; a conviction that the relations between employers and employed are moral on both sides; and a consciousness of their indebtedness to society as well as of the indebtedness of society to them. Our age is democratic. The ordinary run of politicians are sure, therefore, to flatter those whom they call the people. If clergymen do so also, enormous mischief will be done to the commonwealth and great injustice to divine truth.

It does not in any way follow from the foregoing remarks that the labouring and poorer classes of the community are to be regarded as having no special claims on the sympathy and help of the Church and of the clergy. They have such claims. Poverty and all the hardships and disadvantages of their lot

of themselves constitute claims which the Church and its ministers ought fully and practically to acknowledge. They ought to manifest towards the poor the same spirit of compassion and love which was conspicuous in Christ. They ought to favour all efforts wisely directed to relieve suffering, to diminish misery, and to make the lives of the struggling masses of mankind more hopeful, brighter, happier. They ought always to have the courage to protest against any social injustice or political iniquity perpetrated by the strong on the weak. The clergy are never more clearly in their proper places as citizens than when they are showing their interest in, and lending their aid to, measures which tend to elevate and improve the condition of working men. They ought never to be among those who thoughtlessly or selfishly tell us that "we have heard quite enough of the working man." Those who say so can surely have imbibed little of the spirit of Christ, or must know little of the hard and bitter lot of vast numbers of working men and working women.

There is, perhaps, less hostility to the Church among the rich than among the poor, but the friendship of the rich to the Church may be far from commendable in itself or complimentary to her. It is much to be feared that among the wealthier and more educated classes there are not a few who deem themselves so very superior to their fellow-mortals as to feel that they can themselves quite well dispense with the teaching and ordinances of the Church, but who believe that it is highly desirable for the sake of social order, for the protection

of property, and for the comfort of those who are well provided with the means of enjoyment that her teaching should be accepted and its ordinances revered by what they call "the lower orders."

There can be no portion of mankind more destitute of religion, farther away from the kingdom of God, or in a more lapsed, more helpless, or more hopeless condition, than those who thus value the Church chiefly as a fellow-worker with the police force, and religion chiefly as a safeguard to their own self or class interests. The wildest Socialist who has enthusiasm for an unselfish ideal and is willing to sacrifice his own happiness or life for its realisation has in him far more that is akin to the spirit of Christ than such a patroniser of Christ's Gospel, such a friend of Christ's Church. But that does not release the Church from duty towards such a man. He too has a soul to be saved, and is all the more to be pitied because it is as yet so utterly lost. Such a Dives is a far fitter object of compassion than any Lazarus.

Those who are rich in the world's goods must be taught that only those who are poor in spirit can belong to the kingdom of heaven. They need to realise the responsibilities, the duties, the temptations, and the dangers of wealth. They require to feel that they are not "their own," and that all that they possess is but a loan entrusted to them by their Master for the benefit of His great household. It is essential both to their spiritual welfare and to their social usefulness that they should have impressed on them the conviction that it is a question

of life or death for them to decide whether they will serve God or Mammon. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." These are among the truths of which the Church has to remind the rich man. They are of a kind hard enough for him to learn without being made harder by uncharitable abuse of the rich simply as such. If he learn them, the richer he is the better will it be for society.

There can be no doubt that the Church should do more than she is at present doing for the solution of social and labour problems, in the sense that she ought to do her duty better, present the Gospel with greater fulness and power, push on her home-mission work with increased zeal, give her sympathy and co-operation more heartily to all measures clearly tending to the economic and moral advancement of the community, strive more earnestly to diffuse among all classes the spirit of Christian love and brotherhood, of righteousness and peace, and exemplify in herself more perfectly the beauty of that spirit. As I have already indicated, however, it is not the office of the Church to furnish definite solutions of these problems. Hence her official representatives should be very cautious both as to the extent and as to the temper in which they intervene in disputes regarding them.

Especially is such caution necessary in regard to those deplorable conflicts between labour and capital which are so prominent a feature in the present age.

Of course, if the clergy see any reasonable likelihood of being able to aid in bringing about a compromise between employers and employed which will either preserve or restore peace, either prevent or bring to a close a "strike," they would be neither good citizens nor consistent ministers of the Gospel of peace if they did not gladly embrace the opportunity. But as a general rule they should be very chary of intervention, and particularly when once fighting has begun. They have no authority inherent in their office for laying down the law to either of the contending parties. It is often very difficult, or even impossible, for them, as for all other outsiders, to get at a sufficiently full and accurate knowledge of the facts in dispute. They run great risk of raising false hopes by their intervention, and thus of prolonging strife and misery, and in the end deepening the disappointment of those who are defeated.

Neutrality, then, will be in most cases the only course open to them in the circumstances referred to. But it should be a neutrality which springs not from want of interest or sympathy but from Christian prudence and benevolence. And that it does so should be made manifest by the ministers of the Church both in their teaching and in their intercourse with their parishioners. They should make it their aim to get rich and poor, employers and employed, to meet together as much as possible on equal and friendly terms, as becometh brethren in Christ. They should do their best to get both classes to realise that while they have each their

rights they have also each their duties ; that money given and received is not the only tie between them ; that they are connected by moral bonds, by spiritual relations ; that employers should show all due esteem and a humane, generous, and Christian spirit towards those who are in their service, and the employed all due consideration for the interest of their masters, and all due fidelity in the work which they have undertaken to do.

Then, the ministers of the Church might, I believe, make their intercourse with the working men under their pastoral care more interesting, instructive, and useful than it could otherwise be, were they themselves to make a careful study of the social and labour questions debated around them, and to master the leading principles of economic science as expounded by such truly scientific specialists as Sidgwick, Marshall, and Shield Nicholson. So prepared, they might even at times, in parishes where fit audiences could be found, spread a good deal of beneficial light and help to dispel some mischievous errors by week-day evening lectures on social or economic themes—lectures which might even easily be of an expository, not a controversial or polemic character.

The clergy might also, perhaps, exert a useful influence in the way of encouraging workmen to help themselves. Self-help is the most effectual of all. The working classes have now a power which, if rightly directed and fully utilised, might do an immense amount of good. The most striking exhibition of that power is to be witnessed in their

enormous trades unions and world-wide confederations. At present, however, it is power largely wasted, because applied too exclusively to organisation for war, and too often expended in war which only leads to disaster because it is war against natural law, war which ignores the difference between the possible and the impossible. Were it to a greater extent applied to organisation not merely for the increase of wages but for the general betterment of the condition of workmen, it would be far less wasteful and far more fruitful. It would not be so often expended in war, but it would be much stronger for all just and necessary war. Were the unions and confederations created by it more educative, and more truly democratic in the sense of more really self-governing and less dependent on the advice and guidance of a few leaders ; were they in closer and more amicable relations with the associations and alliances of their employers ; and were they more occupied in seeking the general economic, intellectual, and moral improvement of their members, they would be highly beneficent agencies. Although there are certainly few signs just now of their purposing to move on these lines, we should not despair that good counsel, reflection, and the teaching of experience will in time bring them to perceive that such are the only safe ones.

No absolute distinction can be drawn between political and social questions. Political questions are social questions, and the measure of their im-

portance is the extent to which they affect the condition and character of society.

The man who fancies that the Church ought to have nothing to do with politics, cannot have thought much on the subject. The Church has to do with the Bible, and the Bible is a very political book. The history recorded in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles may be called "sacred history," but it is in the main as much political history as that narrated by Herodotus, Tacitus, or Froude. The prophets preached politics so very largely that no man can expound what they uttered and apply it without preaching politics also. To lecture through the Epistle of James without trenching on the sphere of politics one would require to be not merely adroit but dishonest. It is true that Christ's kingdom "is not of this world," but also true that Christ is "prince of the kings of the earth," and consequently that all political rulers and political assemblies are as much bound to obey His will as ecclesiastical leaders and ecclesiastical councils. Political morality is conformity in certain relations to the divine law which the Church has been instituted to make known and to get honoured in all relations. The Church has, therefore, very much to do with politics. She has to do with it in so far as politics may be moral or immoral, Christian or anti-Christian; in so far as there is national duty or national sin, national piety or national impiety.

The Church, however, has not to do with politics in the same way in which the State has. It is not her province to deal with political measures in them-

selves. The clergy must not thrust themselves into the business of politicians. They are only entitled to watch how the activity of the politician is related to the law of Christ, to inculcate the "righteousness that exalts a people," and to denounce "the sin which is the reproach of nations." But that they are bound to do; and they may render great service to society by faithfully doing it. There would be less political immorality were political sins more certain of being rebuked. If, when murder was stalking through the south and west of Ireland, the clergy of Britain had generally proclaimed as pointedly the obligatoriness of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" as one of them, Professor Wace, did, politicians of all kinds would soon have had their eyes opened to see that they could not hope to make capital out of crime, and Britain would not have been burdened with nearly so heavy a load of blood-guiltiness. It is a great misfortune for a people when it has no prophets of the old Hebrew stamp to arouse its conscience by confronting it with the divine law.

The Church is bound to do her utmost to make the State moral and Christian. This requires her to maintain her own independence; to take no part in questions of merely party politics; to keep free if possible from the very suspicion of political partisanship; and to confine her efforts, when acting within the political sphere, to endeavouring to get the law of her Lord honoured and obeyed in national and public life. She must be subject or bound to no party, but rise above all parties, in order that she may be able to instruct, correct, and rebuke

them all with disinterestedness and effectiveness. When she fully realises this necessity, and acts accordingly, her political influence, far from being lessened, will be greatly increased. It is only when she throws off all political bondage, keeps herself free from the contamination of what is base and corrupt in political life, and stands forth as instituted and commissioned by God to declare His saving truth and righteous will to all men without respect of persons, that she can with the necessary authority and weight condemn all sacrifice of truth to expediency; of morality to success; and of the welfare of a nation, or the advancement of Christianity, or the good of mankind, to the advantage of a party, or the triumph of a sect, or the mean ends of individuals or classes. Only then will she fully exert the immense power with which she has been entrusted for the healing of the nations, for the regeneration and renovation of society. And then, too, the world will be forced to recognise its indebtedness to her; to acknowledge that she has received manifold gifts for men which are indispensable to the welfare of society; that she can render to the State far greater advantages than the State can confer upon her; that she can bring to bear upon the hostile parties in a community a moderating, elevating, and harmonising influence peculiar to herself; that she can touch deeper springs of feeling and of conviction than any merely secular power can reach, and thereby do more to purify public life; and, in a word, that her mission is so wonderfully adapted to meet human wants that it must indeed be divine.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.—THE CHURCH'S CALL TO STUDY SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

The following remarks of the author on this subject have already appeared in print. They are reprinted here because of their close connection with the concluding portion of the chapter.

"The call of the Church to study social questions is not a new one, except so far in form. In substance it is as old as the Church itself. The teaching of Christ and of the Apostles was the setting forth of a Gospel intimately related to the society in which it appeared, and vitally affecting the whole future of the society which was to be. The Church may find in the study of the New Testament the same sort of guidance for its social activity as an individual minister may find in it for the right performance of his pulpit or pastoral duty.

"Just as in the New Testament there are the all-comprehensive and inexhaustibly fruitful germs of a perfect doctrine of the ministry of the Word, and of the pastoral care, so are there of a perfect doctrine of the social mission of the Church. Indeed, the Sermon on the Mount alone contains far more of light fitted to dispel social darkness, and far more of the saving virtue which society needs, than any individual mind can ever fully apprehend, or than the Church universal has yet apprehended.

"If the call of which I have to speak were not thus old as well as new; if it were not a call inherent in the very nature of the Gospel, and implied in the very end of the existence of a Church on earth; if it summoned the ministers of the Word away from the work which Christ had assigned to them; if it required them to discard their divinely-inspired text-book, it could hardly be a true one, and ministers might well doubt if it could be incumbent on them to listen to it. But it is no such call. For, although it be one which summons us to reflect on what is required of us in the circumstances of the present hour—one which is repeated to us by God's providence daily in events happening around us and pressing themselves on our attention—it is also one which comes down to us through the ages from Him who lived and suffered and died in Palestine centuries ago, in order that, as God was in Him, and He in God, all men might be one in Him.

"The call is so distinct that the Church has never been entirely deaf to it. Originating as it did in the love of Christ to mankind, it necessarily brought with it into the world a new ideal of social duty; and it has never ceased to endeavour, more or less faithfully, to relieve the misery and to redress the wrongs under which it found society suffering. In the early Christian centuries, in the time of the fall of the Roman Empire and the formation of the mediæval world, in the so-called "ages of faith," and the epoch of the foundation of modern States, and in all periods since, the Church has had a social mission varying with the characteristics and wants of each time, and may fairly claim to have largely contributed to the solutions which the social problems of the times received. And a zeal guided by prudence, a wise activity in the social sphere, has never done the Church anything but good. When the Church has kept itself to itself, when it has shut itself up in its own theological schools, divided itself into sects mainly interested in opposing one another, and confined its work within congregational and parochial limits; in a word, when it has cultivated an exclusive and narrow spirit, then it has been proportionately unfaithful, disputatious, and barren; its theology has been lifeless and unprogressive, its ministry of the Word sapless and ineffective, and the types of piety and of character which it has produced have been poor and unattractive. In the measure in which the Church is a power for good on earth will it prove a power which draws men to heaven.

"The call of the Church to study social questions has its chief ground or reason in this, that the influence of the Church, if brought rightly and fully to bear on society, must be incalculably beneficial to it. There is no power in the world which can do so much for society as the Church, if pure, united and zealous, if animated with the mind of Christ, and endowed with the graces of the spirit.

"The State can, of course, do for society what the Church cannot do, and has no right even to try to do; but it cannot do for society more than, or even as much as, the Church may do, and should do. The power of the State, just because the more external and superficial, may seem the greater, but is really the lesser. Spiritual force is mightier than material force. Rule over the affections of the heart is far more decisive and wide-reaching than rule over the actions of the body.

"The Church, if it does not destroy its own influence by unreasonableness, selfishness, contentiousness, departure from the truth as it is in Christ, and conformity to the world, will naturally, and in the long run inevitably, rule society and rule the State; and that for the simple reason that it ought to rule them—ought to bring them into subjection to those principles of religion and of morality on which their life and welfare are dependent.

"Of course, if the Church be untrue to itself, unfaithful to its Lord, it will do harm in society just in proportion to the good which it might and ought to do. The corruption of the best is the worst.

"In the truths which it was instituted to inculcate, the Church has inexhaustible resources for the benefiting of society, which ought to be wisely and devotedly used.

"Was it not instituted, for example, to spread through society the conviction that the supreme ruler of society is God over all; that the Prince of the kings of the earth is the Lord Christ Jesus; that the perfect law of God as revealed in Christ ought to underlie all the laws which monarchs and parliaments make; and that whatever law contradicts His law is one to be got rid of as soon as possible, and brought into consistency with His eternal statutes?

"Well, what other real security has society for its freedom than just that conviction? What other sure defence against the tyranny of kings or parliaments, of majorities or mobs? I know of none. The only way for a people to be free is to have a firm faith in God's sovereignty, in Christ's headship, over the nations; a firm faith that in all things it is right to obey God rather than man; that the true and supreme law of a people cannot be the will of a man, or of a body of men, or of the majority of men, or of those who happen for the time to have physical force on their side, but only the will of God, the law at once of righteousness and of liberty.

"The God in Whom the Christian Church believes, moreover, is not only God over all, but God the Father of all; God Who loves all with an equal and impartial love, and Whose love, in seeking the love of all men and the good of all men, seeks also that they should love one another and promote each other's good. The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men are truths which

the Church is bound to endeavour fully to impress on the mind and heart of society; and obviously the welfare of society depends on the success with which this is effected.

"Further, the Church has been instituted to commend to the consciences of mankind the claims of a moral law, comprehensive and perfect so far as its principles are concerned; a law which does justice to the rights and requirements both of the individual and of society, and therefore is free from the faults alike of individualism and of socialism; one which lays the foundations of a rightly constituted family life and of just and beneficent government; and which overlooks not even the least of those virtues on which the economic welfare of a community and of its members so much depends. And to give life and force to the injunctions of this law, so that they may be no mere verbal precepts, but full of divine fire and efficacy, they are connected with the greatest and most impressive facts,—the mercies of God, the work and example of Christ, and the aid and indwelling of the Holy Spirit."

"Does the Church commend this law in all its breadth, and by all the motives which enforce it, as wisely, earnestly, and effectively as it might? I fear not altogether; and yet there is great need that it should; for, if not, there is no other body, no other society, that will. Take even those humble yet most essential virtues to which I have just referred under the name of economic—those personal qualities which make a man's labour more valuable both to himself and others than it would otherwise be, and which further ensure that whatever his wages may be they will not be foolishly or unworthily spent. Are they not apt to be overlooked in our teaching, although they were certainly not overlooked in that of the Apostles? Yet who will do them justice if ministers of the Gospel do not? Will it be socialist orators like those in Hyde Park or Glasgow Green, or gentlemen in quest of workmen's votes to help them into Parliament, or otherwise to raise them to prominence and power? I trow not; they will willingly leave that task to the clergy; and I think the clergy had better do it, and as lovingly, yet as faithfully, as they can. Political economists, indeed, may show, and have abundantly shown, the economic importance of the virtues referred to both as regards individuals and societies; but that, although all that political economists can relevantly do, is not enough; while Christian

ministers can bring to the enforcement even of these virtues far higher and more effective considerations.

"I hasten to add that the Church of Christ has been set up to show forth to mankind a kingdom of God which is both in heaven and on earth. Among multitudes of Socialists there is a quite special hatred against faith in a heavenly kingdom. It is the opium, they say, by which the peoples have been cast into sleep, and prevented from asserting and taking possession of their rights. Exclaims one of them—'When a heaven hereafter is recognised as a big lie, men will attempt to establish heaven here.' Thousands of them have uttered the same thought in other words. Oh, strange and sad delusion! If a heaven hereafter be a big lie, what reason can we have to expect that there will ever be a heaven here? A merely earthly paradise can only be a fool's paradise. Earth is all covered with darkness when not seen in the light of a heaven above it. The preachers of past days, perhaps, erred by laying almost exclusive stress on the kingdom of God in heaven. The preachers of the present day may err by laying too exclusive stress on the coming of the kingdom of God on earth, and so leading some to believe that the secularist Socialists may be right, and that there may be no other heaven than one which men can make for themselves here.

"The great and continuous call of the Church to study social questions arises from her having been entrusted with such powers to act on society, to regenerate and reform, to quicken and elevate society, as I have now indicated. The right application of them is essential to the welfare of society; but such application of them supposes the most patient and careful and prayerful study, the most intimate and living acquaintance with the Gospel on the one hand, and the most thorough insight into the requirements of society on the other, and, in a high degree, the knowledge and the prudence which inform a man when and what to speak, how to say just enough and to refrain from adding what will weaken or wholly destroy its effect. Bishop Westcott's "Social Aspects of Christianity," and Dr. Donald Macleod's "Christ and Society," are greatly more valuable than they would have been if their authors had shown a less exquisite sense of knowing always where to stop; and such a sense, only attainable in due measure by assiduous thoughtfulness, is probably even more necessary in

addressing congregations composed of the poor and labouring classes than those which meet in Westminster Abbey or the Park Church.

"While there has always been a call on the Church to study social questions, there is likewise, however, a special call on the Church of the present day to do so. For, indubitably, all over Christendom there is a vast amount of social rest and unrest. The conflict between labour and capital is one of chronic war, of violent and passionate struggles, which too often produce widespread waste and misery. And closely connected with it is a vast irreligious and revolutionary movement, which sees in Christianity its bitterest foe, and aims at destroying it along with social order and private property. This irreligious and revolutionary movement is to a considerable extent the effect of the conflict between labour and capital, but it is to an even greater extent its cause.

"The matter standing thus, there is a most urgent call on the Church to study how to bring all the powers of the Gospel to bear against whatever is wrong in society, and on the stimulation and strengthening of all that is good in it. Thoughtfulness need not lessen or counteract zeal; it should accompany, enlighten, and assist zeal. If there be an urgent and strong call that the Church in present circumstances should endeavour to act, with all the power with which God has endowed her, for the purification and salvation of society, there must be a correspondingly urgent and strong call for her to study how she may most fully and effectively do so."*

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INDEX

- ABSOLUTISM, the State, of antiquity, not Socialism, 32
 "Abstraction," individualist and socialist, 279
 Abuse of power, Collectivism a great temptation to, 241
 Academic Socialists, 353
 Adam Smith, 357
 Aims of man, 273
 America, 342, 343
 American Socialism, historians of, 35
 Anarchism, literature of, 39; and Communism, 86
 Anarchism, Democratic, 305
 Aquinas, Thomas, 375
 Aristocracy, the truth in the idea of, 307
 Armies of industry, Carlyle on, 229
 Associations, political, 322
 Austria, Catholic Socialists in, 439
 Author, his definition and use of word "Socialism," 17, 21, 28
- BARRY, Dr., his definition of Socialism, 24
 Bastiat, 357
 Bax, E. Belfort, on the teaching of Christ, 96; on position of the working classes, 263; 284, 287, 352, 401, 403, 431, 462
 Bebel, references to, 283, 352, 462; his definition of Socialism, 24; his "Die Frau," 139
 Belgium, 288
 Bellamy, 462
 Bellom, Maurice, 294
 Benevolence, Cumberland inculcates a theory of, 64
 Bible, the, a very political book, 490
 Blanc, Louis, on the duties of Government, 34; on standard of wages, 125; 405, 414
 Blanchard, J. T., on the right to labour, 415
- Blanqui's motto, *Ni Dieu ni maître*, 330
 Böhnert, Victor, 295
 Bonar, Dr., 327
 Bosanquet, his definition of Socialism, 26; on Economical Socialism, 333
 "Bourgeois Family," the, 283
 Bourgeoisie, 387; *bourgeoisie* and *peuple*, 384
 Bradlaugh's definition of Socialism at St. James's Hall, 16
 Britain, working men in, and Socialism, 44; dangers of Socialism in, 45; provoking causes of Socialism in, 46; no warrant for a pessimistic view of coming events in, 46; Socialistic periodicals in, 49 *et seq.*; 288; possible ruin of, by other great military and naval Powers, or by its own people, 325; Democracy of, should not be indifferent to Britain's naval and military supremacy, 310
 Brotherhood, Socialism morally strongest in its recognition of, 381; yet violates it, 386
 Buckle referred to (in Encyclopædia Britannica by Dr. Flint), 72
 Buying out proprietors of land, 222
- CÆSARISM, 336, 342
 Campanella, 283
 Capital and intelligence entitled to remuneration, 112; Marx on, 141, 144, 148, 153, 154, 155, 164, 170, 198, 199, 372; and Interest, 173; Mr. Lecky on, 174; what is it? 156; and labour dependent on each other, 158; and Collectivism, 176; and labour reciprocally essential, 177; as an "historic category," 185; and circulation, 186; "variable," and "constant," 187; robs labour—fallacy of the idea, 164;

- Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Proudhon mentioned in connection with, 164; Schäffle on, 166; mediæval superstition about, 173; collectivisation of, scope and aim of the scheme, 231; its impracticability, 232; and its folly, 239, 241; problem of maintenance of, affected by Collectivism, 246
- Capitalist, a, must be the friend of labour, and those who seek the good of labour should desire increase of capital, 158; the mere, a despicable being, 179; claims of the, to remuneration, incontestible, 171 *seq.*; method of exploitation, 190; workmen's grounds of complaint against, 179; system of an industrial reserve army, 198
- Carlyle on State management of the land, 228; and armies of industry, 229
- Catchwords of parties, 289
- Catholic doctrine and Socialism, 439
- Catholic Socialists in Germany, 438
- Cathrein, 360
- Cave of Furies (ancient Athens), 394
- Chalmers, Dr., his purpose in writing "Political Economy," 280; 353
- Chamberlain, Mr. on political reform, 42
- Champion, H. H., 295
- Character, importance of education in forming, 280
- Charity, 410; and history of Christendom, 390; legal and official, 392
- Chicago martyrs, 35
- Children, transfer of to the care of the State, 286
- Christ, the teaching of, neither individualistic nor socialist, 96; and brotherly love, &c., 388, 307, 394; immeasurably the greatest reformer and revolutionist who has ever appeared on earth, 466
- Christian Socialists, 434
- Christianity not bound to existing order of society, 452; Socialism antagonistic to, 460; meant to free men from such slavery as Socialism imposes, 465
- Church, the mediæval, and social authority, 96
- Church, the, 288, 289, 470 *et seq.*; and Socialism, 289, 290; should aim at fulfilling her social mission wholly in the spirit of her Lord, 481; her duty plain, 481; must not
- be the Church of any class alone, 481; should endeavour to remove causes of disaffection, 482; Dives and Lazarus, 485; should do more for solution of social and labour problems, 486; should point out duties as well as rights to the classes, 488; cannot draw any absolute distinction between social and political questions, 489; has not to do with politics in the same way as the State has, 490; Prof. Wace, 491; call of, to study social questions (supplementary note), 493 *et seq.*
- Claims of proprietors of land, 221
- Clergy, the, 476 *et seq.*; Leighton (quoted), and "preaching up the times," 476
- Colins, an advocate of Collectivism, 87
- Collectivisation of capital, scope and aim of the scheme, 231; its impracticability, 232; to be realised only by revolution—folly of such an attempt, 234; J. S. Mill on, 235; Archbishop Whateley on, 238; means national slavery, 239; a species of slavery, 241
- Collectivism, Schäffle on, 61; the only formidable kind of Socialism, 63; and Individualism contrasted, 64 *et seq.*; Karl Marx founder of, 86; described, 87; and capital, 176; Professor J. S. Nicholson on the proposals of, 233; a great temptation to abuse of power, 241; would cause a longer labour day, 244; would almost entirely deprive us of benefits of foreign trade, 246; the problem of maintenance of capital, 246; incapable of a stable and solid realisation, 245; democratic, Schäffle's objections to, 250; not to be attained by evolution, but by revolution, 269; tendency of, 272; and religion, 277; no religious difficulties under its régime, 277; 358, 360, 375, 389
- Collectivist principles, history of, 87
- Combinations, workmen's, 295
- Commune, Parisian, 395
- Communes, splitting up of Europe into, advocated by fervent Democrats, 304
- Communism, 55; relationship to Socialism, 55; frequency, 55; religious, 56; in Italy and Spain, 59;

- in Europe, 60; democratic, impracticable, 61; Noyes on, 81; Wagner on, 83; Socialism and, 84; creed of, 85; literature of, and Anarchism, 86; 389
- Communist party, manifesto of, by Marx and Engels, 88
- Communitistic experiments applied to industrial problem, 57; frequency of, in United States, conditions of success, 57 *et seq.*; societies, prosperity of a material kind, 84
- Competition, duty of the State in regard to, 119; in relation to pauperism, 120; industrial, is Christian, as shown by Bishop Butler, 122
- Comte, Fourier, and Saint-Simon, men of exceptional constructive power, though unsuccessful, 202; reasons of their non-success, 203
- Comte on historical hypothesis of Marx, 138; and social organisation, 274; on the family, 282; 430
- Condorcet on equality of wealth, 201
- Considérant, Victor, 414, 430
- Co-operation, relation of to Socialism, 294
- Cossa, L., 348
- Costa-Rossetti, 439
- Cournot, 339
- Crown, the British, has been gradually stripped of the power by which it can check or control Parliament, 312
- Cumberland inculcates benevolence, 66
- DAVIDSON, J. MORRISON, on nationalisation of land, 227; 353, 359, 360, 361, 362
- D'Eckstein and other Frenchmen use the word Industrialism preferably to Socialism, 13
- Decrements, undeserved, 218
- Definition of Socialism, no true and precise, possible, 18
- Democracies, State intervention in, 79; ancient and modern democracies compared, 300, 301; in many cases have ended in despotisms, 338; Froude quoted, 338; author's opinion as to duration of democracy, 338; the late M. Cournot cited, 339; De Tocqueville's famous work on "Democracy in America," the author's words in reference thereto quoted, 339 *et seq.*
- Democracy, what is it? 299; etymology of word, 299; only an ideal, 300; manhood and womanhood suffrage a *sine qua non* of, 301; representative system restrictive of, 302, 303; the truth distinctive of, not the whole truth of government, 307; may tend to be, but is not bound to be, republican, 309; human qualities demanded for its success, 322, 323; party spirit its direst foe, 321; prosperity of secured only by toil and thought, 326; and Caesarism of Greece and Rome, and the fate of modern Europe, 336
- De Tocqueville, 339, 340
- Dietzgen, 431
- Discontent inherent in human nature, 263
- Doniel, M., contribution to the history of the imaginary distinction between *bourgeoisie* and *peuple*, 384
- Dove, P. E., on nationalisation of land and rent value of soil, 204
- Dugald Stewart, 353
- ECONOMIC laws limit State action, 73
- Economics, various views of, discussed, 345 *et seq.*; relation to ethics, 348; Ruskin quoted, 351; alleged by Socialists to be unfavourable to morality, because, as generally taught, it assumes, they say, that human nature is essentially selfish, 353; Thos. Davidson quoted, 354; argument disposed of, 357
- Education, importance of, in forming character, 280
- Ego, 378, 379
- Eisenach programme (Social Democratic), 89
- Enfantin, 416
- Engels, one of the authors of the manifesto of the Communist party, 88; quoted, 137, 139; social organisation, 276
- English Socialism, periodicals, and Socialists, contemporary leaders of, 43; Land Restoration League, unwisdom of, 227
- Equality, Condorcet on growth of, 201; the distinctive and favourite principle of Democracy, 315; very often the desire for, is identical with envy, 316; only one strictly-right sort of, 316; political, 316,

- 317; in property, 317; religious, 317
 Erfurt Social Democratic programme, 91
 Estates, Third and Fourth, 383
 Ethical Individualism, 96
 Ethics, relation to economics, 348; true, in conflict with ordinary ethics of Socialism, 369; domestic, 380
 Exclusion, arbitrary, of any class from political activity is a wrong, 317
- FABIAN Society, 43
 Fabians and State intervention, 77; and the theory of value, 183
 Fallacies as to relation of capital and labour, 159 *seq.*
 Family, importance of, 281; 380
 Farmers', tenant, scheme under nationalisation of land, 225
 Ferguson, Adam, 357
 Fenerbach, 431
 Fichte, J. G., quoted, 405
 Flint, Dr., his views on Socialism and social organisation criticised, 260
 Foreign policy of Socialism, 396
 Foreign trade, problem of, 230
 Fortunes, the greatest, made by speculation, 181
 Fourier, one of the founders of French Socialism, 34, 430
 Fourierist societies, 86
 "Fourth Estate," so-called by Socialists, 383; solution of the social question, according to Socialists, only to be obtained by its triumph, 383; really no Fourth Estate at present, 384
 France, not now the country most threatened by Socialism, 34; progress of Socialism in, 54; 288, 341; in 1830-1835, 341; Guizot Ministry (1840-1848), 342; Cæsarism, acclaimed, 342; and the Third Estate, 383 *et seq.*
 Fraternity, belief in the truth of by Socialism, 381; thought of, and charity, 387
 "Die Frau" (Bebel), 139
 Freedom, industrial, democratic, 201
 Free love, 283, 287
 French Academy's definition of Socialism, 15; Anarchist journals, 54; Socialism, founders of, 34; Socialists, 35
 Froude quoted, 338
- Functions of the State, 69
 Furies, Cave of (ancient Athens), 395
- GAMBETTA, famous declaration of, 274
 Garibaldi, 397
 Garnier, 357
 George, Henry, on mutual relations of capital and labour—his hypothesis examined, 162 *seq.*; nationalisation of land, 204; 400, 401
 German Socialism, progress of, 43; literature of, 42, 52
 Giffen on property in land, 219
 Gilman, N. P., 295
 Gioberti, 397
 God, recognition of sovereignty of, 308; love to be given to, 367
 God, Fatherhood of, 470
 Godwin, Wm., 416
 Goschen, Mr., on self-help, 77
 Gospel, the principles of the, designed to pervade, embrace, and direct the whole of the life of man, 480
 Gotha Social Democratic programme, 90
 Government, Louis Blanc on the duties of a, 34; primary function of, to coerce and suppress crime, 37
 Graham, "Socialism New and Old," 28
 Greece and Rome ruined through failure to solve the "social question," 32
 Grievances of labour, 178
 Gronlund, 352
 Guild of St. Matthew, 52
 Gunton's refutation of Marx, 192
 Guyot, Yves, 394
- HAFNER, Canon, 438
 Hall, Chas., 416
 Happiness and wealth, Hobbes, Spencer, Morris, and Belfort Bax on, 262, 263
 Harrison, Mr. Frederic, on the question of producers and products, 115
 Headlam, Rev. Stewart D., 52; 438
 Hedonism, 372
 Hegel on historical hypothesis of Marx, 138
 Held's definition of Socialism, 24
 Helvetius, a representative of ethical individualism, 96
 Historical evolution, ideas of Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Condorcet and Comte on, 267
 Historical hypothesis of Marx and Comte, Hegel on, 138; school, 463

- History, failure of Socialism in its explanation of, 464; sacred and other, 490
 Hitchcock quoted, 406
 Hitze, Abbot, 438
 Hobbes inculcates a theory of selfishness, 64, 96; a representative of ethical individualism, 96
 Holyoake on term Socialism, 12
 House of Commons, 310, 311, 337
 House of Lords, might be greatly improved by direct reform, 312; should be mended, not ended, 312
 Hubert, V. P., 295
 Hughes, 434
 Hugo, 397
 Human liberties, certain fundamental, limit State action, 73
 Human nature, plasticity of, exaggerated by Socialists, 352
 Hume, 357
 Hutcheson, Fras., 353
 Hyndman - Bradlaugh debate in St. James's Hall, 15
 Hyndman's definition of Socialism, 15
- ICARIAN societies—Cabet, 60
 Incomes, earned and unearned, wisdom of State in not attempting to separate, 219
 Increments, unearned, 215
 Individual initiative, Professor Pulszky on, 78; ownership not unjust, 210; action, influence of, on society, 271
 Individualism, date of the term, 13; not to be identified with sociology, 19; an excess as well as Socialism, 64; compared with Socialism, 95; ethical, visible in egoistic hedonism, 96; a System of Politics (Donisthorpe), 98; and Socialism (in Les Progrès de la Science Economique), 99
 Individualist assumptions, 65; religious teaching, 96
 Individuum, 378
 Industrial reserve army, capitalist system of an, 199; freedom, democratic, 201
 Industrialism, 13
 Industry and property, Socialism aims primarily at a re-organisation of, 101; division of the profits of, 117; armies of, Carlyle on, 229; Socialism and the organisation of, 275
 Insurance, labour (compulsory), 293
 Interest, Lecky on, 175
- International feeling, diffusion of, 393; Workmen's Association, fundamental pact of the, by Marx, 88
 Ireland, Socialism in, 54
 Italy, 288
- JANET'S definition of Socialism, 27
 Jesus, quoted, 307, 388, 394
 Jingoism, 394
 John the Baptist, metanoia of, 379
 Joly on Socialism, 86
 Jones, B., 295
 Justice and Socialism, 398; Bax quoted, 401
 Justice (Spencer), 210
- KAUFMAN'S definition of Socialism, 23; Utopias, 34
 Ketteler, Bishop von, 438
 Kingdom of God, 464; Heaven, Socialist delusion as to how it may be established on earth, 351, 378
 Kingsley, 434, 479
 Kirkup on the origin of the word Socialism, 12; his History of Socialism, 28
 Kossuth, 397
 Kufstein, Count von, 439
- LABOUR, the history of, 103; the burning question of the day, 104; the danger of misrepresentation regarding, producing discontent and bitterness, 106; a fallacy that it is the sole source of wealth, 107, 111, 112; dependent on Nature for wealth, 108; Marx's erroneous theory of its exploitation, 109; Adam Smith and Ricardo fell into same error, 110; labourers represent capital, and cannot work without it, 111; does not give value to commodities, 113; not being the sole source of wealth, the whole Socialist doctrine regarding it is wrong, 114; Bastiat and Marx, their views on the point, 114; sometimes asks more than capital can give, 118; and capital, Marx on, 149; grievances of, 178; power as sole source of value, Marx's arguments criticised and examined, 189 *seq.*; day, Collectivism would initiate a longer, 244; the right to, 408 *et seq.*, different from rights of labour, 409 *et seq.*, Turgot quoted; Proudhon quoted, 412; current price of, 412; Switzerland, 414; rights

of, 415 *et seq.*; responsibility of providing, 410, 411
 Labour-insurance, burden of, should be shared by employers and employed, 293; legislation in other countries, 294
 Labour question, the, relation of the Church to, 474
 Lafargue, 283
 Laissez-faire, Adam Smith's formulation of the doctrine of, 71
 Land, nationalisation of the, 202, 220; all rights of proprietorship in, limited, 205; value of, 217; property in, Giffen on, 219; State management of the, 223; nationalised, how it might be dealt with, 223; present proprietors of, reasonable claims of, 221; property in, justice of, discussed, 205, 210, 220; Socialists maintain, should be free, 419
 Lassalle on law of wages, 128
 Laveleye, his definition of Socialism, 27; "Socialism of To-day," 28; on primitive property, 30; on direct government by the referendum, 314
 Law and liberty, 69
 Laws of society, 375; Thomas Aquinas quoted, 375
 Lecky on interest, 175
 Leighton, 476
 Lengthening the labour day, 196
 Leo (Pope) XIII. on the family, 285, 439
 Leroux, Pierre, author of "Humanitarianism," one of the reputed authors of the word Socialism, 11, 13; his definition of Socialism, 17; 440
 Leroy-Beaulieu's definition of Socialism, 16
 "L'état c'est moi," Louis XIV., 334
 Liberty, Spencer's formula of, 68; and law, 69
 Liberty, 374
 Liebknecht and social organisation, 276
 Limits of State action, 71
 Lincoln, Abraham, 400
 Literature of Socialism:—
 Adam Smith und der Eigennutz (Zeyss), 72
 American Communities, &c. (Hind), 86
 Associations Co-opératives en France et à l'Etranger (Hubert), 295
 Assurance contre la Maladie (Belloni), 294

Literature (continued)—
 Bismarck and State Socialism (W. H. Dawson), 42
 Catholic Times (Right Rev. Abbot Snow in the), 443
 Christ and Society (Dr. Donald Macleod), 497
 Christian Ethics (Martensen), 96
 Christian Socialist (J. M. Ludlow in the introductory paper to the), 436
 Church's Call to Study Social Questions (Author), 493
 Code de la Nature (Abbé Morelly), 359
 Comptes Rendus des Séances et Travaux de l'Acad. d. Sciences Morales et Politiques, 384
 Conditions of Labour in Germany (Drage), 43
 Contemporary Socialism (Rae), 28, 97
 Co-operation v. Socialism (Champion and Jones), 295
 Co-operative Commonwealth, 425
 Cours d'Economie Politique (Rossi), 349
 Das Recht auf Existenz (Platter), 408
 Das Recht auf den vollen Arbeitsertrag in geschichtlicher Darstellung (Prof. Menger), 416
 De la Propriété (Proudhon), 212
 Democracy in America (De Tocqueville) 339
 Democratie (Laveleye), 314
 Der Moderne Socialismus in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika (Von Walterhausen), 35
 Die Erlösung der darbenenden Menschheit (Stamm), 431
 Die Frau (Bebel), 24
 Die Naturwissenschaft und die social-demokratische Theorie (Ziegler), 139
 Die Religion der Socialdemokratie (Dietzgen), 431
 Die Religion der Zukunft (Feuerbach), 431
 "Die Religion der Zukunft" and "Thesen über den Socialismus" (Stern), 431
 Die Volkswirtschaft in ihren sittlichen Grundlagen (Dr. Ratzinger), 440
 Die Staatromane (Keinwächter), 33
 Distribution of Profits (Atkinson), 171

Literature (continued)—

Du Protestantisme et de Toutes les Hérésies dans leur rapport avec le Socialisme (Auguste Nicolos), 449
 Economic basis of Socialism, in Political Science Quarterly (George Gunton), 194
 Emancipationskampf des Vierten Standes (Meyer), 28
 Encyclopedia (Herzog-Schaffs'), 85
 Encyclopédie Nouvelle, art. "Bourgeoisie" (Jean Reynaud), 384
 Essays and Addresses (Bosanquet), 334
 Essai sur la Répartition des Richesses (P. Leroy-Beaulieu), 171
 Ethica (Laurie), 375, 379
 Ethics of Free Thought (Karl Pearson), 334, 371
 Ethics of Socialism (Bax), 403
 Free Review, article "Right to Labour" (Blanchard), 415
 German Socialism and Ferdinand Lassalle (W. H. Dawson), 42
 Geschichte des Antiken Kommunismus und Sozialismus (Pohlmann), 33
 Geschichtsphilosophie Hegel's und der Hegelianer bis auf Marx und Hartmann (Barth), 138
 Gewinnbeteiligung (Böhmert), 295
 Hind, "American Communities," 86
 Histoire de Dix Ans (Louis Blanc), 384
 Histoire de la Révolution Française (Louis Blanc), 384
 Histoire du Socialisme (Mallon), 28
 Historical Philosophy in France and French Belgium and Switzerland (Author), 35, 343
 History of American Socialism (Noyes), 35, 81
 History of Co-operation (Holyoake), 12, 295
 History of Socialism (Kirkup), 12, 28
 Humanitarianism (Leroux), 11
 Ideal Commonwealths (Morley's Universal Library), 33
 Impossibility of Social Democracy (Schäffle), 250, 288, 428

Literature (continued)—

Inquiry into Socialism (Kirkup), 20
 Introduction to Political Economy (Cossa), 348
 Introduction to Social Philosophy (Mackenzie), 97
 Introductory Lectures on Political Economy (Whateley), 138
 Journal des Economistes (Leroux), 13
 Kritische Beiträge zur Erkenntnis unserer socialen Zustände und Theorien (Platter), 408
 Labour Movement in America (Ely and Aveling), 35
 La Prétendue Antinomie de Bourgeoisie et de Peuple dans nos Institutions Politiques (M. Doniol), 384
 La Tyrannie Socialiste (Guyot), 394
 Le Collectivisme (Leroy-Beaulieu), 255
 Le Droit au travail à l'Assemblée Nationale, &c., 410
 Le Droit au Travail et le Droit de Propriété, 413
 Le Mouvement Socialiste (Wyzewa), 27
 Liberty (Mill), 66
 Les Origines du Socialisme Contemporain (Janet), 27
 Littré's Dictionary, 13
 Man versus the State (Spencer), 67
 Modern Socialists (Reybaud in *Revue des Deux Mondes*), 13
 Moral Aspects of the Economic Question, 356
 New Moral World (Owen), 12
 Oceana, 338
 On the Duties of Man (Joseph Mazzini), 424
 Philosophy of Law (Stirling), 97
 Philosophy and Political Economy (Dr. Bonar), 327
 Political Economy (Mill), 11, 20; (Roscher), 32
 Political Economy (Dr. Chalmers), 280
 Positivist Review — Frederic Harrison, Dr. Bridges, Prof. Beesly, 52
 Primitive Property (Laveleye), 30
 Principles of Economics (Prof. Marshall), 380
 Principles of Political Economy, &c., (Ricardo), 110

Literature (*continued*)—
 Profit-sharing between Employer and Employé (Gilman), 295
 Progress of the Working Classes (Giffen), 171
Progress: organ of the Salem Literary Society, Leeds, 260
 Questions of the Day, 436
 Quintessence of Socialism (Schäffle), 62, 254
 Religion of Socialism (Bax), 396, 432
 Right to Labour (*see Free Review*)
 Schönberg's Handbuch der politische Oekonomie (H. von Scheel in), 26
 Scuole Economiche della Germania (Cusumano), 42
 Social Aspects of Christianity (Westcott), 282, 398, 497
 Socialism (Westcott), 26
 Socialism, &c. (Morris and Bax), 285
 Socialism and Christianity (Barry), 24
 Socialism; its Causes and Remedies, 391
 Socialism (Hitchcock), 395, 407
 Socialism New and Old (Graham), 28
 Socialism of To-day (Laveleye), 27, 28
 Socialisme Intégral (Malou), 408
 Socialisme d'Etat (Leon Say), 42
 Socialisme Chrétien (Joly), 86
 Sozialismus, Sozialdemokratie und Sozialpolitik (Held), 24
 Subjects of the Day (Holyoake), 24
 System der Sozialpolitik (Julius Wolff), 263
 Tableau historique des progrès de l'Esprit Human (Condorcet), 201
 Tableau historique des Instituts (Ortolan), 210
 The impossibility of Social Democracy (Schäffle), 134
 Theory of Moral Sentiments (Buckle), 72
 Unseen Foundations of Society, 344
 Unto this Last (Ruskin), 351
 Uj on the Love of Our Neighbour (Bishop Butler), 368
 Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums, und des Staats (Engels), 139
 Utopias (Kaufman), 33

Literature (*continued*)—
 Wages Question, The (Walker), 161
 Wealth of Nations (Adam Smith), 72
 Werke (Fichte), 405
 Littré's definition of Socialism, 15, 23
 Louis XIV., "L'état c'est moi," 334; XVI., 409
 Lubbock on primitive Socialism, 29
 Ludlow, 434; cited, 436
 McLENNAN on primitive Socialism, 29
 Mackenzie, J. S., on Socialism as an individualistic theory, 97
 Macleod, Dr. Donald, "Christ and Society," 497
 Majority, the will of a, no more binding on reason or conscience than that of a minority, 315; will of, 425; *cultus* of the, 426
 Malou, Histoire du Socialisme, 28
 Malthus, 357, 415; would have disowned Malthusian League, 415
 Maniani, 397
 Mammon, worship of, too common in the house of God, 482
 Man, aims of, 273; relation to wealth, 347; held by Socialists to be the creature of circumstances, 352; irresponsibility assumed by Socialists, 352; history of, has been mainly not the product of matter, but the work of man, 352; occupies in the world three distinct positions, 368; is a rational and responsible agent, 369; rights of, 385, 425; the duties of, Mazzini on, 424
 Mandeville, a representative of Ethical Individualism, 96
 Marriage, Morris and Bax on, 284; Schäffle, 288
 Marx, Karl, his definition of Socialism, 24; his efforts to make Socialism scientific, 40; his political errors, 75; the founder of Collectivism, or Communism, 86-88; error of his theory of the exploitation of labour, 109; on standard of wages, 126; teaching mainly drawn from English economists, especially Ricardo, 136; bibliography of his historical hypothesis, 138; theory of value examined, 139; on relation of labour to capital, 149; his deductions from the doctrine of surplus-value, 153; theories as to capital and value, 183; teaching, error of, and its cause,

194; his inferences examined, 196; on surplus population, 198; expressed his conviction that Britain would be the first to adopt his system, 336, 416, 417
 Materialism, union of Socialism with, 452 *et seq.*
 Maurice, Christian Socialist, 434; his treatment of social questions, 479
 Mazzini, 397; on the duties of man, 424
 Menger, Prof. Anton, 416
 Meyer, Rudolph, Emancipationskampf des Vierten Standes, 28
 Mill, J. S., on the origin of word Socialism, 12; his essay on Liberty, 66; his definition of Socialism, 20; on the principle of State intervention, 66; on Collectivism through revolution, 234; opinion of Parliament, 310
 Minority, will of, 315
 Misery, human, chiefly due to personal vices, 379
 Mixed elements in Socialism, 9
 Monarchies, absolute, 341
 Monarchy, the truth in, 307
 Moral and religious Socialism (Harrison), 115
 Morality and Socialism, 344 *et seq.*; morality not ignored by Socialism, 344
 Morelly, Abbé, 359
 Morris and Bax on the marriage system, 284, 287
 Morris, William, on the influence of education, 281; on position of the working classes, 263
 Moufang, Canon, 438
 NATIONALISATION of land discussed, 204, 210, 220; recommended by Henry George, A. R. Wallace, Patrick E. Dove, and others, 204; would answer no social question—would settle none, 223; and problem of foreign trade, 129
 Nationalised land, how it might be dealt with, 223
 Nationality, 397
 Neale, 434
 New Church, the, of the future, 430
 New fellowship—Carpenter, Edward, "Towards Democracy," "England's Ideal," Adams, Maurice, quoted, 52, 53
 "New Society," the, 285

Nicholson, Prof., on Adam Smith, 72; on the proposals of Collectivism, 233
 Ni Dieu ni maître, Blanqui's motto, 330
 Nihilism (or Anarchism), not Socialism, description of, 36; relation to Socialism, the ideal proposed, 37; the fallacy of the theory, means of realisation too revolting, 38; a disease rather than an error, 39
 Noyes on Communism, 81
 OFFICIAL machinery limits State action, 75
 One-man rule, can only be necessary in evil times, 306
 Operatives, destitution among, chiefly confined to two grades, 297
 Opinion, change of, in regard to State intervention, 76
 Organism, term applicable to the State only metaphorically, 378; Laurie quoted, 378
 Ortolan on property, 210; on use and abuse, 210
 Over-driving in short hours, 196
 Owen, Robert, as to origin of words Socialist and Socialism, 12; references to, 352, 372
 Ownership, individual, not unjust, 210
 PALESTINE, in the time of Christ, 388
 Paley, a representative of ethical individualism, 96
 Parliament, British, 310; J. S. Mill's opinion of, 310; degeneration of, 311; is there any remedy? 311; payment of members would do harm, 311; affirmed by Mr. Gladstone to be without limits to its right of action, 313; grave and irreconcilable differences between the two chambers should be decided by the nation, 313; referendum, 314
 Party spirit, 321; direst foe of Democracy, 321
 Patriotism and Socialism, 395; Bax quoted, 396
 Paul, St., 394
 Pauperism and competition, 120
 Pearson, Karl, quoted, 334
 Peasant proprietors' scheme examined, 224
 Pecqueur, French Socialist, 87
 Periodicals, English Socialist contemporary, 43

- Phileas of Chalcedon, 33
 Plato, "Republic," 97; referred to, 282, 283, 323
 Pöhlmann on primitive Socialism, 33
 Political reform, Mr. Chamberlain's programme of, 42
 Political economy professes to exhibit those economic laws which must be observed, 75; Ricardian creed of, erroneous, 75; Marx and Lassalle, 75; and its teaching, 75; system, British, pervaded with dishonesty, 311; equality, 316
 Poor, the, 382, 388; no blame to those who stir them up by lawful means to better their condition, 382
 Poor Law, old English, Fawcett quoted, 391
 Pope, 367
 Pope Leo XIII. on the family, 285
 Positivism, 52
 Poverty, abolition of, 388
 Prairie value, 174
 "Preaching up the times" by the clergy, 476
 Primitive Church, the, 86
 Production and value, Marx' theories as to, 183
 Production and products, Mr. Frederic Harrison on the question of, 115
 Professional Socialists in Germany, 42
 Profit-sharing by employes, 295
 Profits of industry, division of, 117
 Proletariat, the, 387
 Property, Spencer, Proudhon and Ortolan on, 208 *seq.*; collective, and individual, legitimacy and justice of, respectively considered, 210; personal, in land, discussed, 205, 210, 229; inequality as regards, 318; State not entitled to enforce equal distribution of, 319; transference of, 344
 Proprietors of land, reasonable claims of, 221; buying out, 222; peasant, scheme examined, 224
 Prosperity of communistic societies almost exclusively of a material kind, 84
 Protestantism, 436
 Proudhon, definition of Socialism, 23; and French Socialism, 34; on the nature of property, 184; definition of property, 210; essay on Nature, 406; 416
 Public opinion limits State action, 80
 Pulszky, Prof., on individual initiative, 78
 QUINET, 397
 RAE, "Contemporary Socialism," 28, 97
 Reformer and revolutionist, Christ immeasurably the greatest who has ever appeared on earth, 466
 Reichstag, number of socialist deputies in the, 43
 Religion, 317, 319, 320; and Socialism, 426
 Religion, societies and, 84
 Religious teaching, individualist, 96; difficulties, none under régime of Collectivism, 277
Rerum Novarum, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII., 439
 Reybaud, Louis, one of the reputed inventors of the word Socialism, 11, 13
 Reynaud, Jean, 384
 Ricardian creed of political economy erroneous, 75
 Ricardo on law of wages, 128; without him no Marx, 136
 Rich and poor, 386
 Right, abuse of, 207
 Rights, claim of, socialistic, 404
 Rights, no absolute, in anything, 206
 Rights, 421 *et seq.*
 Rights of man, 385
 Rodbertus, his indirect influence on social democracy, 87
 Rome, Greece and, ruined through failure to solve the "social question," 32
 Roscher on primitive Socialism, 32
 Rossi, 349, 464
 Ruskin on the influence of education, 281; references to, 359, 360, 363
 Russia, 341
 SAINT-SIMON, one of the founders of French Socialism, 34; on standard of wages, 125; 373, 430
 Salvian, 366
 Savings, on workmen, 262
 Savings Banks, 293
 Say, 357
 Schüller on Collectivism, 61; on Capital, 167; on the marriage tie, 288; his objections to democratic

- Collectivism, 134, 250; "Quintessence of Socialism," 254
 Scheel's, Von, definition of Socialism, 27
 Science, art and literature, and Socialism, 291
 Scottish Church Society Conferences, 498
 Self-help limits State action, 77; Mr. Goschen on, 77
 Selfishness, Hobbes inculcates a theory of, 64, 96
 Self-love in relation to wealth, 364, 365, 366; Butler on, 366; Pope on, 366
 Sermon on the Mount, precepts of, 379
 Shakers, societies—Ann Lee, 60
 Slavery created by the collectivisation of capital, 241; which Socialism would introduce, 286, 465, 466; demanded by Socialism, 465; Christianity meant to free men from all such, 465
 Smith, Adam, and *laissez-faire*, 71; Professor Nicholson on, 72; quoted, 353
 Social Democratic Federation, 43; programmes, 87 *et seq.*; Democracy, 88; development, Engels on, 137; Statics (Spencer), 209; practicality of, 258; present prospects of, discussed, 265; organisation, Comte and, 274, 326 *et seq.*; Dr. Bonar quoted, 327; religion of, 330; a somewhat highly developed form of Socialism, 373; S. S. Lauric quoted, 374
 Social Democrats, 353
 Social questions, relation of the Church to, 471
 Socialism, proposes a renovation of society, 10; discussion necessary before acceptance of the proposition, 11; origin and date of the word, 12; currency of the term, 12, 13; author's definition and use of the word, 17, 21, 28; a tendency and movement towards an extreme, 18; contrasted with Individualism, 18; no true and precise definition of, possible, 18; not to be identified with sociology, 19; is it an essential or accidental phase of development? 22; and Individualism the Scylla and Charybdis of society, 23; to attain one's own good is to strive for the good of others, 23; history of, 28, 35; primitive, two views of, 28; beyond recall, 31; primitive, McLennan, Lubbock, and Roscher on, 29, 32; the State absolutism of antiquity, not, 32; diffusion over the Continent, 34; founders of modern, 34; France, the birthplace of, 34; pre-revolution theories in France, 34; Saint-Simon and Fourier, 34; in Spain and Italy, 35; in Switzerland, 35; advocates of, in United States supplied by European countries, 35; in Belgium, 36; in Russia, 36; Anarchism or Nihilism, not Socialism, 36; Germany, progress of, in, 40; success of, in, exaggerated, 40; indebted to German thinkers—Rodbertus, Winkelblech, Marx, Lassalle, Schüller, 40; Professorial Socialists, 42; Britain, in, 43; Christian, of Maurice and Kingsley, &c., not socialistic, 43; British, not unlike Nebuchadnezzar's "great image," 49; Communism and Collectivism, the two chief kinds of, 54; in Scotland, 54; and Communism, 84; in a sense, extremely individualistic, 97; and Individualism, antithesis of, fundamental in politics, 98; Laurent, Professor Carle, Mr. Wordsworth, Donisthorpe, and Mr. Maurice Block on this aspect of the question, 98; aims primarily and specially at a thorough reorganisation of industry and property, 101; economics of, the work chiefly confined to consideration of, 102; what would it substitute for competition? 123; Collectivist, rests on doctrines propounded by Rodbertus and Marx, 136; Utopian and Scientific (Engels), 137; a theory as to the organisation of society, 156; and capital, 157; critical and constructive, 202; its growth and outcome (Morris and Belfort Bax), 203; and social organisation, 256 *seq.*; and social organisation, Dr. Flint's views on, criticised, 260; and the organisation of industry, 275, and the family, 283; and marriage, 286; in relation to the Church, 290, to science, art, and literature, 291, to employers, 292; to co-operation, 294; its various forms, 299; connection between, and De-

mocracy, 299; the symptom of social unrest, 328; dangerous to Democracy, 330; has no admiration of the Parliamentary system, 332; Economical (Mr. Bosanquet on), 333; contemporary, 335; desires to serve itself heir to the Absolutism of past ages, 335; from it society is in danger of a fearful despotism in the near future, 335; morality of, 344 *et seq.*; Duke of Argyll quoted, 344; has not ignored morality, 344; moral presupposition and tendencies, 345; bearing of on morality, 345; denounces Political Economy as non-moral or even immoral, 345 *et seq.*; ethics of, in direct conflict with true ethics, 369; as a whole rests on a non-religious conception of the universe, 370; Karl Pearson quoted, 370; reason why in conflict with morality, 377; its relation to social morality, 380; morally strongest in its recognition of brotherhood, 381; condemns war and the oppression of the poor and feeble, 381; often contradicts in practice the principle of brotherhood, 382-383, 386; and religion, 427 *et seq.*; Bosanquet quoted, 428; economic and religious questions in Socialism separable, 428; there are religious Socialists, 428; France, 430; Saint-Simon and Enfantin, "New Christianity," 430; opinions of Fourier, Considérant, Cabet, Leroux, Comte, 430; in Germany, Feuerbach, Dietzgen, Stamm, Stern, 431; in England, Bax (quoted), 431; Christian Socialists, those who first bore the name in England, 434; Rev. Abbot Snow quoted, 443; in relation to Catholic doctrine, 439; antagonistic to Christianity, 460, 463; where it falls in its explanation of history, 464; overlooks or depreciates the importance of the inward and spiritual, 464; pretence of, that it would establish and enlarge liberty absurd, 465; demands slavery, 465; unconsciously aims at a reversal of the work of Christ in history, 466; ethics of, devoid of transcendence, infinity, and spirituality, all is commonplace, 467; not related to Christianity in the same

way in Economics as in Ethics, 469
 Socialist delusion regarding man and society, 352
 Socialist demands and persecution, 81; Deputies in the Reichstag, 43; reasoners leave out of account society altogether in the matter of production, 115; error regarding standard of wages, 225; chief reason of the, 373
 Socialistic Utopias, 33; League, 43; periodicals in Britain, 43; criticism of society, how it has been directly and indirectly useful, 257; solution of the social problem—Engels and Liebknecht, 276
 Socialists, professional, in Germany, 42; English, contemporary leaders of, 43; number of, 43; manifesto of, 92; German, literature of, 42, 54; more successful critics than constructors, and the reason why, 203; striving to convert Democrats to their faith, 335; some retain their belief in God and religion (Anglican High-Churchmen, Roman Catholics), though such are comparatively few, 370; in relation to the poor, 386; peace recommended by, 394; French, 437
 Societies and religion, 84
 Society, influence of individual action on, 271
 Society, may sometimes exact sacrifices from its members, 375; Socialist delusion regarding, 352
 Sociology, neither Socialism nor Individualism to be identified with, 19
 Sociology, 454
 Soil, rent value of, 204
 Spain, 288
 Speculation, the source of the greatest fortunes, 181
 Spencer, Herbert, on Socialists, 15; on State intervention, 67; formula of liberty, 68; his error regarding the duty of the State towards the destitute, 121; on the right to use and abuse, 209; his argument for legitimacy of private property criticised, 209, 298
 Stamm, 431
 State intervention, Mill on principle of, 66; Spencer on, 67; in democracies, 79; functions of the, 69; and the Fabians, 71; action limited

by moral laws, 71; by certain fundamental human liberties, 73; by official machinery, 75; intervention, change of opinion in regard to, 76; by economic laws, 73; by self-help, 77; by the state of public opinion, 80; functions divided into necessary and facultative, 80; duty of, to repress excesses of competition; and destitution, 121; wisdom of, in not interfering with earned and unearned incomes, 219; management of the land, Carlyle on, 228
 State, the, as an organism, 425; Gronlund quoted, 425
 Stern, 352, 431, 462
 Stewart, Dugald, 357
 Stirner, Max, a representative of ethical individualism, 96
 Stocker, 438
 Suffrage, universal, 318, 331, 332; manhood, 301; womanhood, 301
 Supply and demand, the just standard of wages, 124
 Surplus population, Marx on, 198; value, deductions of Marx from his doctrine of, 153
 Sweaters, 297
 TENANT-farmers' scheme, under nationalisation of land, 225
 Theocracy, 308
 Theocratic idea, the, 314; democracy the form of government which can least afford to dispense with it, 314
 Third Estate, the, 383; victory of, in France and other countries, 384
 Thomas Aquinas, 375
 Thompson, Wm., 416
 Todt, 438
 Trade, foreign, Collectivism would curtail benefits of, 246
 Turgot, quoted, 409
 Turkey, 341
 UNDESERVED decrements, 218
 Unearned increments, 215
 United States of America, supreme court of justice can veto the legislature, 313
 Universal brotherhood, 393
 Use and abuse, Herbert Spencer on the right to, 209; Prudhon and Ortolan on, 209, 210
 Utilitarianism, 371, 372
 Utopias, Socialistic, 33

VALUE, Marx theory of, examined, 139 and production, Marx theories as to, 183; of land, 217
 Vaughan, Canon, on the Christian Socialism of Maurice and Kingsley, 436
 "Vita del Diritto" (Carle), 98
 Vogelsang, Baron von, 439
 Votes, do not necessarily imply equality, 318
 WACE, Professor, 491
 Wages, supply and demand the just standard of, 124; socialist error regarding standard of, 125; Saint-Simon on standard of, 125; Blanc, Louis, on, 125; Marx on, 126; law of Ricardo and Lassalle on, 128; as a badge of slavery, as it is stated to be by Engels, Marx, Lassalle, Hyndman, Morris, and George, is a misrepresentation, 129
 Wages-contract, alleged injustice of, contrary to fact, 131
 Wages-system, voluntary, contracts with compulsory system of Collectivism, Schaffle quoted, 134; though not perfect, may be defended, 135; question, Prof. Francis A. Walker, on, 161
 Wallace, A. R., recommends nationalisation of land, 204
 War, 395
 Wealth, the result of labour and capital intelligently combined, 112; no one class alone produces, 116; Condorcet on equality of, 201; and happiness, Hobbes, Spencer, Morris, and Belfort Bax on, 262; 345; man in relation to, 347; Pelegrino Rossi quoted, 349, 350; Ruskin's definition of, 351, 359; Davidson on, 354, 364
 Webb, Sidney, "Socialism in England," 54
 Weiss, Father, 439
 Weitling, 400
 Westcott, Bishop, his definition of Socialism, 25; on the family, 282; "Social Aspects of Christianity," 497
 Wateley on collectivist organisation, 238
 Will, mere, not righteous will, but may be tyrannical or slavish, 315
 Wolf's, Prof., of Zurich, criticism of Marx, 191
 Womanhood suffrage, 301

- Women and children, appropriation
of labour power of, 197
Women, 285; movement for securing
equal rights with men, 286
Woolsey (President), on Communism,
in Herzog-Schaff's Encyclopædia,
85
Working men specially interested in
Socialism, 9; classes, Morris and
Belfort Bax on the position,
263
Workmen, payment of, 35
on, 351, *Scotsman* on, 351
Workmen saving on, 262
Workmen's combinations, 2
Workmen's grounds of complaint
against capitalists, 179
Wyzewa's definition of Socialism