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The Grievances

—OF THE—

WAGE - WORKER.



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A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY THE

REV. M. P. DOWLING, S. J.

PUBLISHED BY

WILLIAM H. HUGHES.

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NOTICE.

At the request of the Foley Guild, under whose auspices this lecture was delivered, THE MICHIGAN CATHOLIC presents it in pamphlet form, with the consent of the reverend lecturer.

WILLIAM H. HUGHES.

Detroit, April 15, 1890.

THE GRIEVANCES

OF THE

WAGE - WORKER.

Rev. M. P. Dowling, S. J., President of the Detroit College, says *The Michigan Catholic*, delivered an eloquent and highly interesting lecture at Ann Arbor on Sunday evening, March the 9th, his subject being "The Grievances of the Wage-Worker." The lecture was given under the auspices of the members of the "Foley Guild," an organization composed of the Catholic students of the State University.

Seldom or never has a more delighted, cultured or appreciative audience assembled to listen to an orator in this "Athens of the West." An hour before the commencement of the lecture all the available sitting room was taken, the aisles crowded, and hundreds were unable to gain admission into the building. The audience was friendly, yet critical, and the learned Jesuit's masterly discourse was warmly applauded throughout.

The following is a verbatim report of the lecture :

SOCIAL DISCONTENT DEEP-SEATED.

At a time like this when social discontent is deep-seated, wide spread and ominous; when so many toilers are discontented with their lot ; when the American principle of equality has run itself aground on the self-contradictory maxim that "one man is as good as another and a great deal better;" it is worth our while to turn our gaze on the con-

dition of the wage worker, and see what society has done, or failed to do to ennoble and sanctify labor.

The atmosphere is thick with wild and visionary schemes for ameliorating the condition of the laboring classes; false and destructive theories of political economy are set in motion by self-confident but ignorant men who have not mastered the first elements of that difficult science; every saloon is a rostrum for the preaching of socialism; every new political agitation is leavened with hypocritical professions of regard for the toiler; every ambitious sycophant is trying to make capital out of the strained relations between the elements of modern life; there are ceaseless conflicts between labor and capital resulting from the cutting down of wages; there are strikes and lock-outs and riots attended with needless and criminal destruction of property; there are endless conferences which serve only to increase the mutual distrust of employed and employer; from every side the wage worker is pushing the attack; from every point of view he is studying to solve the problem, whether labor must eventually be crushed under the heel of pitiless and organized oppression called by the names of corporation, trust and monopoly. The grievances of the daily toiler are too real to be ignored, concealed or questioned. Still it is certain that he will not improve his condition by listening to communistic agitators who show him only the humiliating side of his state, who kindle in his soul the flames of envy, who put into his hand the torch or the dynamite fuse and thrust him forward to the attack against wealth in the hope of profiting by the confusion and sharing the spoils when disorder has made pillage possible. Trust them not; they betrayed your fellows yesterday, they will betray you tomorrow; trust them not, for they will only use you as a tool or as an accomplice.

CHRISTIANITY DAWNED.

When Christianity dawned upon the world, labor was an object of sovereign contempt and universal reprobation. The greatest geniuses of paganism weighed it in the balance only to pronounce an anathema upon it and declare it unworthy of freemen. Formed on such teaching the citizen disdainfully turned over the instruments of labor to

the slave. To justify the cruelties practiced upon this outlaw of public opinion, philosophers suppressed the grand tradition of the unity of the human race and erased the slave from the book of humanity, or held that he possessed only as much of the man as was needful to make him feel his frightful degradation, only soul enough to contain all the vices of humanity. Human wisdom by the mouth of Seneca spoke its last word, and Plato pronounced its final judgment, while Aristotle with his usual precision summed up his proper condition; the slave was living property, an animated instrument—*mancipium*—a thing which could be taken into the hand and crushed. If the wretch tried to escape the terrible martyrdom of the *ergastulum*, where his misery ripened under the keeping of a slave only a little less despised than himself, the master branded his forehead with a red-hot iron; if the master was killed and the perpetrator of the crime was not discovered the whole household of slaves were put to death. Slavery—that is toil, was vileness steeped in blood.

But Christianity took with one hand the countless legions of slaves, and with the other the selfish and fierce race of freemen, led both up to the altar, taught them their true condition and mutual relations when she said, “Down on your knees, you are both children of the same Father; learn to respect one another as brothers; repeat together the *Our Father*.”

THE TOILER ENNOBLED.

Thenceforth all shadow was removed from the life of the toiler, and Christianity declared by anticipation of 1800 years whatever there is of truth in the formula found in our own Declaration of Independence, that all men are created free and equal. They are all children of God, all sprung from the same Father of the race, all possessed of immortal souls, all entitled to the knowledge of the truth, all holding equal rights to life and the pursuit of happiness.

This levelling of prejudice was brought about, because God heard the groans and sighs of the army of labor in its unmerited debasement. To elevate man and show him that toil is worthy of man, He submits to it, espouses it, and proclaims it not unworthy of God; for when a

sudden flood of radiance swept over the hidden life of Christ and revealed Him to the world, it was found that He had devoted thirty years, the flower of His youth, the vigor of His developed manhood, hardening His hands by working with tools and earning His bread by the sweat of His brow, like the children of the poor. Are you tempted to ask why? Do you feel like saying, "waste no more years at Nazareth, conceal your mission no longer?" Are you inclined to write over the door at Nazareth, "years lost?" Stop! Write it not, think it not, for these obscure years of Christ, the toiler, were unspeakably fruitful. Workshop of Nazareth, you have made the workman grand; you have taught him his true nobility. You answer more eloquently than beautiful discourses the sophisms and criminal invitations of professional agitators. Turn your gaze to the East, wage-worker. Christ, the toiler, emerges from the twilight of paganism and reaches forth his hand to you. Beside Him move with head erect through the world; you will not find a single soul he has loved so well and has honored so much as you. To the proud who frown down upon you, you can say, "Notwithstanding its humiliations and its trials, I love my state, because it throws back the reflection of thirty years of divine life and labor. They have won for me the letters patent of true nobility." If nature murmurs you have wherewith to rebuke it, "Silence, I am not above my Lord and Master; if He became a toiler, why should not I?"

Unfortunately for the peace and contentment of the family and society we do not hear such language in the mouth of the wage-worker of to-day, for the Christian spirit has disappeared in the vortex of unsatisfied ambitions which, now more than ever, carry away all religious thought.

TOIL AN UNWELCOME BURDEN.

Toil is a burden most men carry with impatience, and seek every means, fair and foul, to shake off—at most, submit to with melancholy and sullen resignation. Hence there is no risk to life or limb that they will not undertake for money. They will burrow into the earth like moles. They will wear out their lives half-a-mile under ground,

where, naked, burning, gasping for breath, they will work a quarter of an hour and rest for three. They will dive into the sea like fishes of the great deep, till their eyes start from their sockets, their ears are filled with blood and the flesh creeps. They will confine themselves in the deadly caisson, from which they issue like paralytics, to fall back upon their death beds. Capital knows that, if the wages are attractive, men will jeopardize life till it seem an ignoble thing hardly worth preserving.

This fatal ambition to escape toil and its consequences at one fell swoop accounts for the speculating and lottery mania. It fills our hospitals, insane asylums and penitentiaries. It is at the root of all the swindling, confidence games, pocket-picking, burglaries, highway-robberies, safe-blowing, forgery, embezzling and absconding, with which the daily papers fairly teem. Men no longer recognize the formal decree passed on man, "Earn thy bread in the sweat of thy brow." They must become rich at once, and at any cost, or life is not worth the living.

TOIL THE PRIMORDIAL LAW.

Yet toil is the primordial law contemporaneous with the appointment of man to the sovereignty over lower creatures. That law has been made painful by original sin, but it would have existed if man had not fallen. Man was to be king; he was, according to Genesis "to subdue the earth and rule over it." But he was not to be an idle king, even in the days of his innocence, for he was put into a paradise of pleasure "to dress it and keep it." It would have been a pleasure, still toil would have been the law. But since the fall of man the law of labor is more imperative still, because there are two august laws grouped around the primordial law, the law of expiation and the law of preservation.

THE LAW OF EXPIATION.

The first law is the law of expiation. To expiate, pain is necessary. The toiler need not seek it elsewhere than in labor. He finds it in the meanness of his fellow men, in the care, anxiety, anguish, decep-

tions and interminable series of trials attendant on a state of toil; the loss of place, reduction of wages, hard times, uncertainty of the future, all of which form the most painful of mortifications, because they confront him every day and every hour. In the distribution of crosses the laborer is not forgotten.

Still it would be folly to imagine that the toiler is only he who wearies his muscles with physical toil, who with blackened or begrimed face, lacerated or blistered hands, works the rebellious metal, who digs ditches, carries heavy burdens, plows the earth or loads the truck.

There is another order of labor, no less necessary and no less wearying, because it oppresses the mind with endless care. Whilst it is considered more honorable and worthy of ambition to be a statesman, a legislator, a judge, a doctor, a literary or scientific man, an artist, a banker, a railroad magnate, an employer of labor, it is wrong to suppose that these occupations imply an idle and a painless life. The wear and tear of life as often send such men to an untimely grave as they do the toiler. The hours of the night are often added to the working hours of the day in calculating or planning for the preservation and increase of wealth; considering how bills are to be paid and maturing obligations met, how creditors may be induced to be forbearing. These are problems taxing the mind of the employer during the silent watches of the night, when the employes are sleeping the dearly bought sleep of exhaustion. It may be folly for them to try continually to amass more wealth rather than enjoy what they have, but I am only speaking of a fact, that they feel the full force of the decree, "Thou shalt earn thy bread in the sweat of thy brow."

Efforts have been made to classify the members of society on the basis of wealth, occupation or talent. There are the upper and lower classes, the working classes, the industrial classes, the criminal classes, the dependent classes, the dangerous classes, the privileged classes, and so on without end. Without finding fault with such divisions, we can safely say that there are really but two grand classes in society the noble and the ignoble, the honorable and the dishonored.

The obscure laborer earning but ninety cents a day and living honestly upon that, the drudge in a mean hotel or restaurant, the stoker who spends his life shovelling coal among the glowing furnaces down in the hold of an Atlantic-liner, the foot-man, the ostler, the shoe-black, the chimney-sweep, the over-worked and under-paid factory girl working at the meanest trade, wearing out her life and strength in a tobacco shop or candy factory, or trying to fulfill the impossible wishes of unruly children whom she nurses; all these, if they gain honestly the bread they distribute to the needy ones dependent upon them, if they stretch themselves Christ-like upon the cross of labor, if they are true to the generous instincts of manhood and womanhood, are noble in the highest sense of the word and belong to the peerage of merit.

But they who repudiate labor at the cost of crime; they who insolently plant their feet upon the neck of the toiler and look down upon him in fancied superiority; they who make mere pleasure the business of their lives, who leave no room for generous impulses and pander only to their selfish lust or greed, who feel no sense of responsibility and are guided by no principles of honor; though all the wealth and luxuries of the world were at their command, though their millions rise up mountain high like a hecatomb of woe from the dead level of wretched pauperism which they have created, are ignoble, dishonorable, base, the blood-thirsty parasites of honest industry. Their classification is unquestionable.

THE LAW OF PRESERVATION.

The second law is the law of preservation. When creation was completed God saw that all things He had made were very good. Immense forces were stored up in the universe, gravity, air, light, heat, magnetism, cohesion, attraction, chemical agents, salutary but unknown plants and minerals. Man must conquer and discipline, perhaps discover these forces, make them useful for the development of his social, physical and moral life. To enjoy these gifts of the Creator, man must labor. Stone, wood, metals, delicate elements must take new shapes in the laborious hands of man.

So too there is a whole army of powers within us that must be exercised and expended in one way or another, if not in the noble and sacred activity of labor, in the odious and execrable activity of vice. Whoever rebels against the law of labor will prostitute his powers to the gratification of unworthy passions. He will either be a vulgar debauchee, a libertine ruining his health, his life, his family, or a debased accomplice of villains, prepared to resort to any trickery or violence needful to evade honest labor.

To those who do not grasp the principles I am trying to establish and who exclude all but the material aspects of man's condition and refuse to believe that he is a dethroned sovereign paying the penalty of the misuse of his liberty and other spiritual powers, there is no key to the solution, no means of unraveling the mystery.

CONTRASTS OF MODERN LIFE.

The contrasts presented by modern life are startling and inexplicable to them. Wealth, too often making a seditious display of its useless grandeur, ostentatiously flaunting its gaudy and jewelled trappings in the face of misery; taunting it with its impotence to enjoy life; exciting hate, provoking to revolt, suggesting projects no less criminal than dangerous to the masses. What wonder if, without correct principles to guide them, they welcome theories attacking the rights of property, and that they are constantly asking the question, "*Why?*"

WHY SUCH INEQUALITY.

Why should some be ever toiling and others ever spending and enjoying what the toiler's labor has won? Why should they respect a social system which devotes the sweat and labor of the many to the profit and pleasure of the few? Why should men be reduced to machines with no grander aim than the development of material interests? They ask that terrible question "why?" as they point to puny infants suckling dry and shrunken breasts in a fair island beyond the sea, to starving children eating the sea weed flung up against the shore by the pitiless ocean; to men with bones jutting forth from skin which hangs like a beast's hide around them, as they appeal for the

mercy of employment in their native land, where industry has been stifled by iniquitous laws. They ask "why?" as they point to youth stunted and starved in the coal mines of England, yea and America, while the coal baron squanders the dividends wrung from their misery, as he rents the parks of decayed noblemen, dresses his wife in diamonds, yachts on the Mediterranean, fishes on the coast of Norway and buys up the art treasures of Italy. They ask "why?" as they point to manhood condemned to enforced idleness on account of the truckling legislator who fears to support a just law lest it might injure his political future, to industry crouching under the guns of massed capital. Why is the produce of labor apportioned in an inverse ratio to the toil, so that he who never labored gets the largest portion, while the most exhausting bodily labor cannot count with certainty upon earning the very necessities of life? Why are the poor forced to live in kennels and huddled together in places not down in the city plats or numbered in city directories, heaped together like spoils on a battle field, lifted up to public derision like trophies on a bloody spear? Well may we fear the result, if the hot, fevered and fateful breath of such misery puts the world in flames.

THE SORES OF LAZARUS.

Sit down, if you will, to count the sores of the modern Lazarus. His food is insufficient and unwholesome, and he has been suffering from short allowance since childhood. His home is a coffin-house, close, unhealthy, over-crowded. When he works it is in a tainted atmosphere, but often he is out of work, shut out at short notice because his employer found some new contrivance that rendered him unnecessary. The days of the old fashioned shoe-maker are numbered, and soon the type-setter will pass away and be unknown.

When machinery first became the order of the day the drooping hopes of industry revived. The inventor summoned the masses and ranged them before the machine of his creation. Men, women and children came to admire the work of genius, and to demand, as if it were a thing of life, whether it would lessen their hours of toil. What was the answer? It made their condition more deplorable. It

called the child of nine and ten years away from the games of childhood and the tasks of school, the mother from the bosom of her family, to put them both into competition with the father ; and soon all felt how precarious the existence of the " factory hand " dependent upon a machine. Long dazzled by the wonders wrought by the machine, its power, its productiveness, the wealth it accumulated, the owner forgot the man at the side of the machine and the family behind it, and paid no attention to the living " capital " on which he fattened. He sent Bibles to India and South Africa, he whined over vivisection, he established hospitals for strayed and suffering animals, he supported societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, it was only of his own flesh and blood he thought nothing, beyond calling it when he wanted it for a service and dismissing it with a pittance.

Now Lazarus can read. He can think, and does think the present division of the world's goods between himself and Dives desperately unfair—he growls to his comrade, " Let us right this matter, we have the power."

CAUSES OF DISCONTENT.

And mark you, it is not merely a question of money, wages or social advantages. The toiler is not discontented because he is obliged to work and walk; it is the carriage of his neighbor speeding by and covering him with dust that shuts out the horizon of his joy. It makes him a plebeian. He can do without the carriage, but he stops to think why his neighbor cannot do without it as well. There is an ill defined feeling in his breast that he has been robbed of something, he feels that there is something in the way of his happiness. Is it the State? Then the State must change or go. Is it the Government? Then the Government must change or go. Is it the existing social order? Then the social order must change or go. But the social order cannot go. Then it must be revolutionized. If there is no hope but in a complete upheaval and overthrow of all existing institutions, the sooner the struggle between the masses and the classes comes, the better. This cry is now more universal and imperative

than ever before. Wealth, power, privilege are challenged and compelled to prove their right to live. The social problem is the problem of the hour; it dwarfs and overshadows all others.

THE NECESSITY OF REFORM.

People are slow to catch up the significance of great popular movements. They don't want to acknowledge that their cherished institutions need reformation. France would not acknowledge that there was a social question till the Reign of Terror convinced her. She forgot the lesson and the Commune came to enforce it. Germany would not acknowledge it till Socialism came thundering at the gates of the imperial palace. She legislated against the new disease. Did it disappear? Ask the electors who returned well nigh forty socialist representatives last week. England would not believe that there were grievances to redress in Ireland, till the wheels of government were clogged by the obstructive tactics which compelled her to change traditions of parliamentary liberty dating back to the early days of the British constitution. Dynamite and Nihilism in Russia, Revolution in Italy and Spain, Anarchy in the streets of Chicago, the grimy miner issuing from the mines of Belgium and confronting the mailed lines of soldiery, were needed to convince the world that the toiler has grievances to be removed, and that knowing his power he intends to exact their removal. As an answer to their outburst the prime minister maps out a haughty program, "to the sick laborer, help; to the aged laborer, a pension; to the able bodied laborer, the right to work." The program is not realized. Laborers out of work pass one another on all the highways leading to great cities.

Men always had grievances and always will. There was a time when they bore them in silence because they believed their case hopeless. That day has passed. Now there is such enthusiasm about righting a real or imaginary wrong that it almost makes a man happy to have a grievance. He would be sorry to lose his grievance, because he would thereby lose caste among his fellows. He enters one of the lodges of his craft, he listens to the fiery denunciations of the third rate mechanic; for violent measures are seldom urged by a first-

class workman, who readily finds steady employment and good wages. As he never knew before that he was such a woefully abused man, he ventures to dispute the facts and conclusions of the incendiary speaker. He is almost threatened with expulsion for his pains. "You are not in sympathy with the toiler. What! A man without a grievance! What business have you here? You will never make an agitator."

His condition reminds me of the good natured employer who was stretched out on a bag of flour as one of his employes passed by. "Hello John!" said he, "let me ask you a question. Suppose you had three wishes, what would be your first wish?" "My first wish would be to have all the money I want." "Good! What would be your second wish?" "To have nothing whatever to do but enjoy myself." "Well, what would be your third wish?" "My third wish;"—John had pretty much exhausted his repertoire of wishes by his comprehensive first and second, so he was compelled to scratch his head to get his ideas in motion. "Well, what is your third wish, John?" "Oh, I suppose I would want shorter hours and higher wages."

ALL AGITATION NOT REVOLUTIONARY.

Wealth and power set down all agitation as revolutionary, a repetition of the French Reign of Terror substituting disorder for order, anarchy for law, atheism for religion. But does it never occur to them that if the old French regime had made human and Christian use of their privileges, if they had opened their eyes and their ears, their hearts and their purses to suffering, if they had recognized that the swarming millions they despised as canaille were human beings like themselves, God's immortal creatures with human rights, something more than food for powder, human chattels and instruments of pleasure, that awful revolution had never come to appal the world by its ferocity.

Suppose these movements are a revolt against the existing order. What then? What is the existing order? Is it so absolute and perfect that it cannot be touched without crime or sacrilege? Is it open to

no improvement? Is there no fraud or wrong mixed up with it? Was the existing order framed for the benefit of the whole community or a select few? The established order is not the same to-day as it was last century, yet people might have complained as logically against a change which has since been shown a true benefit. The old order is continually yielding to the new and deserves to yield at times. I know full well that every change does not mean progress, yet I know too that every change is not to be condemned simply because it is a change. There may be evil agents among workmen taking advantage of the prevailing spirit of discontent to preach universal upheaval, the overthrow of the Government, the family, the altar; but it is wrong to identify the movement of labor with these elements. They are only a scum. They would have no place or function if there were not a universal and abiding and well defined conviction in all classes that the social and industrial world needs rehabilitation of some kind.

THE GRIEVANCE STAND-POINT.

The grievance standpoint is this: Labor is habitually wronged by the employer and not sufficiently protected by the State. The wages are inadequate, the working hours too long, there is no fair division of the profits accruing from the laborer's toil and skill. Consequently there is not sufficient rest and recreation, not good enough clothing, housing, food; not a fair enough chance of advancement for the toiler and his family. As no fair dealing is to be expected from employers, who are content to pay starvation wages, if they are not forced to do more; as all capitalists have become money grubbers, slavishly doing its bidding, the wage-worker must take the case into his own hands.

REMEDIES PROPOSED.

What is the remedy proposed? Laissez faire, freedom of contract, temperance, thrift, emigration, national insurance, co-operation, profit sharing are some of them. To-day Edward Bellamy prescribes nationalism, yesterday Henry George prescribed the abolition of private ownership in land, the day before Herbert Spencer

prescribed spontaneity and liberty, not equality. Proudhon declared that property was theft, Karl Marx scorns to invoke the aid of legislation, despises Trades' Unions which secure only grudging concessions and claims that a violent subversion of the social order is the only remedy. Though the theory of Henry George is but of yesterday, it is already thrust aside to make way for its brilliant rival, nationalism. More as a reminiscence than a reality, it is worth while to characterize and show its inherent weakness.

HENRY GEORGE'S THEORY.

Henry George maintained with Herbert Spencer that private ownership in land is the source of trouble ; if that could be made to disappear, the social problem would be solved. He maintains that private ownership of land is unjust, that the equal use and enjoyment of land by all men is a natural and inalienable right. What is the basis of this right ? "Man belongs to himself," says Henry George, and therefore whatever he makes and produces, and only what he makes and produces, is his own as against all the world. But as man cannot make or produce land, so he cannot acquire any title to private property in land.

His whole theory rests upon a false proposition. It is not true that man belongs to himself, because in virtue of the very principle he lays down, that the making of a thing gives the maker title to what he makes, man unquestionably does not belong to himself but to God, his creator.

But even if this proposition were true, and it be admitted that man really owns himself, this fundamental proposition would compel George to go further and deny that there is or can be any such thing as a title to any private property whatever, whether real or personal, land or anything else. If all human title to land can be brushed aside on the ground that man did not make the land, all title to personal property could be extinguished for the same reason, because man did not make the material which constitutes the very substance of all kinds of personal property.

If a man who acquires by inheritance, purchase or exchange who ap-

propriates a piece of hitherto unappropriated land, who clears the forest, plows the ground, plants trees, builds a house, digs a well, acquires no title to this land because he did not make it, it is hard to see how a man who digs down into the bowels of the earth and draws forth coal, iron, copper, silver and gold has any title or can communicate any title to those things, since he did not make or produce them; or how an industrious farmer can forbid a tramp to take corn from his crib or cut bacon from his meat house, since these articles of food are drawn from the substance of the land, and the farmer did not make or produce them. He cannot even possess title to a team, because he did not make them. His principles, then, if followed to their logical consequences, require him to deny the justice of man's title to personal property.

There is no reason why communities should not hold land in common, no reason why people migrating to a new and unoccupied country should not realize the dreams of Henry George, no reason why an old and settled community should not hold the soil in common, if they can honestly acquire ownership to it. But all that is quite different from the confiscation of land which would follow upon the assumption that private ownership of land is against natural justice. No wonder that this theory has yielded to the velvety touch of Bellamy.

EDWARD BELLAMY'S THEORY.

Edward Bellemy is the newest teacher of paternalism. The latest fad is the nationalization of all industries, the formation of a great stock company of all the people. Social evils and inequalities would disappear if the government owned all the industrial machinery of the land, the street cars, the railroads, the telegraph and telephone service, the express business, the gas and electric lighting, and the coal mining. If the State becomes sole owner of property, sole educator, landlord, manufacturer and preacher, if it absorbs all corporations and trusts and capital, then the millenium will come. Then the compensation of the worker will be adequate, his hours of labor reasonable, its condition safe and healthful, the sick would be guaranteed sup-

port, the disabled and superannuated pensions. This is a brilliant future to contemplate—on paper. It is popular, it is airy, it is romantic; but it is an utopia. It has all the weak points incidental to every other form of socialism. It is illogical, unjust, impractical and not permanent and final. It gives the death blow to labor as well as to property.

It is easy to admit Bellamy's postulates; disparity of wealth, social inequalities, industrial slavery, political corruption, the inefficiency of constitutional guarantees to secure equal rights, the evil effects of wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, the corrupt use of money to procure and prevent legislation, all this is admitted; but it is difficult to believe that nationalism is the remedy. Will not the political corruption he deprecates be rather increased than diminished, when additional patronage is given to the politician for partisan purposes, and additional means or motives furnished for intimidation, bribery and cynical toleration of fraud. And how would the citizen be industrially better off, if all the nation's wealth were concentrated in the hands of a few politicians who rule the state, than in those of syndicates and great capitalists? Would we fare better and be more cheaply and efficiently served? Bellamy conditions the obligation of the citizen to work upon his strength to work, but his right to support upon citizenship only. But what will he do if the citizen refuses to work, when all incentive for work is taken from him or his livelihood is guaranteed without effort. On what basis shall a man be suspended or discharged from employment, and what shall he do if he is discharged? If unworthy of occupation in one department, on what principle shall he be received into another and how shall he support himself unless he is? Upon what basis will citizens be assigned to this or that position? Will it be that of talent, influence, age, size, education? Will it be after competition, mental or physical tests, by lot, or in consequence of length of service and superiority of record? How and by whom will chiefs of departments be selected, and if there is to be perfect equality, has not one man as much right to be an officer as another? What right has anyone to establish grades among equals and yet how can even reconstructed society exist without them?

The realization of the proposed plan requires as a first step the acquisition by the nation of the present industrial machinery of the country. How will it begin, by confiscation? How can it be accomplished without injustice? What definite plan can be suggested for taking the very first step? Even supposing they had answered the question *why*, the all-important question *how*, still remains unanswered by the nationalists. Vague and unsubstantial theories will not suffice. No social edifice can be built with the plans and specifications thus far provided.

SOCIALISM ANNIHILATES LABOR.

Socialism annihilates labor; it supposes virtues man has not. It supposes that he will devote his talents, powers and industry to the common good without any return. But indolence and selfishness are too deeply rooted in man's nature. We see this in the feuds and lawsuits consequent upon the division of property. Survivors prefer to cast obloquy on the dead and to awaken memories that had better be forgotten, rather than forego any portion of the inheritance. If we have no right to expect the spirit of sacrifice among relatives, what reason have we to suppose that it will exist among men who are nothing to each other and perhaps enemies. Man is naturally opposed to effort. You can rouse him from indolence when you say, "Work, and all you earn will be yours. You will enjoy the home won by your own labor." Encouraged by such guarantee he starts out as gaily as a bird that sings to the morning sun. He transforms deserts, he levels hills, he fills valleys, he plans and executes, he digs ditches, he drains marshes, he covers the land with crops, he builds houses and he stores up grain. His industry will brave the fury of the seas. He will gather in the the deadliest climates wealth and honor, and carry them home to enjoy with his family. The certainty of receiving the benefit of his toil nerves him. But he will not labor for the State and society. That is too intangible an abstraction. If he makes fifty cents a day he wants it for himself and will not share it with the idler and criminal who lurk in the shadow of the free school and library to murder him on his homeward way. It is useless to argue with him

for he will ask that troublesome question, "Why?" Why should I water with my sweat, fields that will belong to the stranger as much as to me! Why sow if others are to reap? Why wear myself out from morning till night if I get no more than those who sleep or play? And he quietly folds his arms and does nothing. "But you cannot take anything out of life with you." "That is true, but I have children. There is a dear little one in the cradle and every time she opens her arms to me and turns her eyes upon mine, she seems silently to implore me not to leave her to the mercy of a cruel world." So this socialism annihilates labor.

SOCIALISM GIVES THE DEATH BLOW TO PROPERTY.

But socialism also gives the death blow to the rights of property which are recognized even by the savage. The fruit he plucks is for himself, the game he kills is his, the skins with which he covers himself are his own, the space where he erects his wigwam belongs to no one else. All people recognize that right; it is at the head of all codes of law. Three thousand years ago God wrote it with His own finger, when He traced the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." That is, thou shalt not take away from another what belongs to him if he be reasonably unwilling. The duty upon your part supposes the right upon his. If you cannot take it, it is because he owns the thing. Perhaps we hear oftener of the rights of property than we do of its duties; but the words still represent a great truth.

The solution proposed by socialism is impossible. The change suggested can never take place. It is like the proposition of the shrewd barber who put up over his shop the legend, "Shaving done for nothing in this shop to-morrow." It was always to-day and to-morrow never came.

According to their respective advocates, each theory lacks but a very little of meeting all requirements. We are reminded very much of the little Irishman, full of bad whiskey, who went into a saloon as if he wanted some one to knock a chip off his shoulder or tread on the tail of his coat. As no one seemed to notice him, he finally yelled out, "I can whip any one in this shop." He was obliged to

repeat the offer several times before any notice was taken of him. Finally, tired by his persistency, a strapping fellow who was sitting against the wall in the corner began to unlimber himself and uncoil his huge body preparatory to an investigation of the case. He walked over to the little Irishman with the inquiry, "Did you say you could lick any man in the shop?" The little fellow stood looking up at him for quite a while undecided what to answer, till at last he found speech and replied, "I can whip any man in this shop—purty near, purty near."

THE IDEA OF DIVISION IS POPULAR.

Men readily catch the idea of a division. We are all a unit when there is a question of getting something for nothing. Divide, divide is a very popular cry among those who have nothing to divide. But suppose a division did take place, how long would it last? It is easy to tell how much each man would have if a given domain were parcelled out. It is a mere sum in arithmetic. So many acres divided among so many men, gives the answer x . But how long will each possess that which he receives in that division. He will take a year to gather a crop. But suppose that through misfortune, or negligence, or intemperance, or want of thrift, one man fails to gather his crop, what will prevent the inequality from beginning right there?

INEQUALITIES INEVITABLE.

There always were inequalities and there always will be. There is a hierarchy in the members of the social bodies just as there is in religion and in heaven. This inequality cannot be removed because the cause cannot be suppressed. They are the consequences of original sin. If there is one thing clear, it is the necessity of suffering. It has been the condition of our fathers, it is our own and will be our children's. No human effort can save us from it. There always will be orphans and widows and mothers weeping unconsolably at the side of the coffin of the dear one departed. Man is destined to live in society, and that implies mutual succor, reciprocity of services and interchange of courtesies. If all are masters who will do the men-

ial work? Each man is condemned thereby to isolation, and what happiness would there be if each was to do everything for himself. Demand absolute equality and you pronounce the sentence of death upon society.

INEQUALITY IN TALENT.

All men have not equal talent. Who will give talent to a man who lacks it or prevent an unprincipled but highly gifted scamp from getting the better of a dull and stupid but honest man? If, in spite of all my effort, I am not skillful enough to compete with my fellow tradesman, will not my customers prefer to deal with him. As I stand idle at my door a former patron bids me "good morning," as he passes on to a tradesman in the next block. I say to myself, "Why does not so and so deal with me any more?" "You didn't suit him." "But I tried my best." "That makes no difference, he wanted a neat fitting garment and you gave him one that hangs on him like a bag. He wanted an easy pair of shoes. You made him a pair that tortured him at every step." "But I tried to fix them." "Too late, your reputation for intelligent and capable workmanship has gone. That man has left never to deal with you again. When he went home he found that your goods were shelf-worn and soiled, and they were worn out in a week." "Yes, but people ought to be more charitable." "You did not ask for charity, you asked for a chance to show that you could compete with others on equal terms."

INEQUALITY IN INDUSTRY.

All have not equal industry and energy of character. Some give way at the first obstacle. Instead of surmounting it, they stand there wringing their hands, or oftener still turn aside to the saloon to drown their cares. While the wife prays and the children plead, the man does nothing but drink. Meanwhile the creditors carry off the goods, the rent remains unpaid, the family are reduced to beggary, and the father becomes a sot because he has no courage, perseverance or character. Some hardly get their heads above water when they stop working, take to reading the papers and talking politics, while they hire others to do the work which they should do themselves. They go about with their hands in their pockets; they blossom forth into

full fledged bosses. They see money coming in and they forget that it should go out to pay debts. What system of socialism will prevent ruin in cases such as this?

INEQUALITY IN HEALTH.

No reorganization of society can guarantee equality in physical strength, bodily health, or can protect us from consumption, fever and all those ills that bring weariness and exhaustion, and end with a doctor's bill and undertaker's reckoning. A man that comes into life maimed or crippled cannot enjoy it as well as others can; and if an accident supervene, even in the case of an able bodied man, the little laid by for a rainy day must go. Must the division begin anew at every point where the equality ceases? If socialism has a remedy proposed by the sons of toil, their masters have quite a different solution.

THE CRY OF THE MASTERS.

The masters cry out, "Restrain the lower classes." It seems that it is always the lower classes that are at fault, according to those easy chair reformers. Restrain the masses, but how? Maintain a public force always prepared to stifle at birth any attempt at disorder. Have police, militia, Pinkertons. Let this organization extend over society like an immense net so that nothing can escape. Is this the final outcome at the close of the nineteenth century? After so many discussions, changes, reforms, efforts, is public order at last resolved into a question of force, as if man were a brute? The rich upon one side and the poor upon the other, and public authority between, with its cannon and Winchesters, gattling gun and patrol wagon is a spectacle worthy our attention. All this paraphernalia is merely to make up for want of moral means.

MORAL MEANS SUGGESTED.

"Well, then, let us use moral means. Let us teach the poor man that he has an interest in respecting the property of the rich." It is easy to say in fine language that the poor are interested in public order, that such a consideration alone should make them submit to the established order without any word of principles or morality. But you

do not catch the difficulty. He wants to exchange places with you. He does not care to convince you, but he is putting once more the troublesome question "*Why?*" *Why* should he not sit comfortably at ease in your office with his feet on the table and his head tilted back, altogether absorbed in the luxury of a 25 cent cigar which sends its blue wreaths of smoke curling to the ceiling; *why* should he not enjoy your elegant carpet and the fine works of art and all the benefits of luxury, whilst you sit with your bare feet on the bare floor of a hovel after your day's work studying, how you will get work on the morrow, and what are the prospects of a dinner for yourself and family. He wants to know *why* you should not be down in the ditch, bailing out the water and laying pipe for \$1.25 a day, and why he should not be on the curbstone chatting with his friends and ordering you about. He would like to be in the position to suggest contentment to you and have you in his place listening to all that high-strung morality. He would like to indulge in sermonizing, while you are suffering the want that he suffers, and listening to his good advice. It is easy to write books explaining the doctrine of respect due to property. But if there is no moral law, no morality, no future, no God, then it is to his interest to get as much as possible of what you have. If a man is to live only for this world, it is to his interest to enjoy himself as fully as possible here below, and the only consideration is to avoid being caught in any villainy that will satisfy his lust or his greed. When a social upheaval takes place the established order is momentarily dethroned by a riot and the law disappears, property is plundered and the rich man loses; but what harm can befall the poor man? Will he be robbed? Misery tempts no cupidity. But he will find no work: hunger will be his lot. But don't you see that he gambles at a high stake? The chances of loss, the want of work are compensated by the hope of sharing the booty. "But he will not be allowed to keep what he has." Are examples so easily forgotten? He sees that many of his fellows will suffer. He may be among the unfortunates himself, but misfortune can bring him only what he is accustomed to. Put him into prison if you will and it is not worse than his daily condition. Give him prison fare, it is his ordinary diet. Deprive him of his liberty, toil never allowed him any liberty. Put him under turnkeys, his "bosses" are

worse than any prison guard. Fling upon his shoulders the convict's garb, it is better than what he is accustomed to. It is not strange that he risks an increase in his privations in the hope that he will be delivered from them perhaps forever. Here is an instance. The military were drawn up in solid mass on one side of a barricade, a mob of communists upon the other, when the leader of the rebels rushing forward cried out to them, "Come on, you cowards! What are you afraid of? You can lose nothing but your chains, and perhaps you can win the world." That is ever the unexpressed thought of the mob. Public force, wisely employed, private interests well understood, are not efficacious expedients.

INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION.

Perhaps education will do. That word is in the mouths of all. It proves how keenly the wound on the social body is felt and how urgent is the need of a remedy. Just as in times past the education of the masses was thought to mean revolution, and the government saw in the spelling book the instrument of rebellion, as was plain from the effort made to crush education out of Ireland during the last century, when no knowledge could be acquired by Catholics except in the hedge schools; now it is the opposite extreme, and people imagine that human nature is to be regenerated by a well selected library, that all vices and misery will disappear beneath the influence of reading, writing and arithmetic. Education is the hobby of the age, and like all respectable hobbies it is ridden at a headlong rate and is expected to distance all competitors. I know that it is one of the most important elements in national and domestic prosperity and yet it cannot be looked upon as a panacea for every ill. There is a limit to its power.

It should not attempt too much, else it will run the same risk as the little Jew who came into a railroad station foaming and fuming, in a perfect rage, because he could not get away to a certain place on account of a strike which was going on and which had caused a delay of trains. It seems that some Irishmen had something to do with the matter, and so all his vengeance was directed against them. "Show me an Irishman," he said, "and I'll show you a confounded fool." An Irishman who happened to be standing near walked up to him and

inquired, "What did you say? Show me an Irishman and I'll show you a fool?" The little Jew did not like the herculean proportions of the brawny Irishman, but yet he found it necessary to say something. "Pees you an Irishman?" "Yes, that is just what I am," replied the other. "Then if you pees an Irishman," said the Jew, "I pees the confounded fool."

THE PUBLIC LECTURE.

What hope is to be reposed in the public lecture as a means of reform?

Take Ingersoll as a type of an entire class. He is an iconoclast; a fanatic of the broadest type, whilst denouncing fanaticism; as righteous as any Pharisee of old; intolerant to the last degree, while preaching tolerance; dogmatic, whilst proclaiming against dogma. He would send to hell without mercy—if there was one—anyone who does not believe just as he does. He looks at one side of the question and absolutely refuses to look at the other. If he were so powerfully sympathetic as we would have us believe, he could see, any night he lectures, in any of the great cities, sorrow enough to cast a shadow over the remaining days of his life. He would find hundreds, unlike himself, who are not thankful that they have been born into this world; women poisoned by the leprous touch of lust, sunk in degradation and shame, begun for a mouthful of bread. He would find hearts breaking in agony, eyes blinded with weeping, cheeks scorched with burning tears. He would find the guilty holding high carnival over the bleeding body of prostrate innocence, gaunt poverty staring out through the pinched features of half-starved children, broken hearted widows pointing in grim despair at their homes and asking him, "What are the joys of this world for us?" Can his gospel of fine clothes, good living, comfortable homes, statuary and painting and music do anything for those despairing souls? Let him spend an hour in the home of the aged, and he will see what Christianity is doing to alleviate distress. At the end of the hour I will give him a pen, which he may dip in the deepest gall, and I wager that he will be compelled at last to write as of old, "Take the shoes from off thy feet, for the ground whereon thou standest is holy." Entering that home of the aged he would think that the world had stopped moving sixty years ago. The artist may cease painting the pale faced martyr

amidst the flames. That is an old model. There is a newer one now. Let him go to the "home of the aged," when he wants a martyr; let him limn his canvas with the face of a "Little Sister," and write beneath it the wish of aged poverty, "may your bed be in heaven, Sister, and may we be there to make it for you." For one night's lecture Ingersoll received \$500. Half that sum would be a perfect Godsend, as a whole year's salary, to those despised ministers of God, for whom Ingersoll has nothing but sneers.

And when he has torn down all religious belief, what does he place instead, to ameliorate the condition of the poor? Fine clothes, fine houses, music, painting, statuary, love, womanhood, motherhood. Can folly go further? Is Christianity opposed to music, painting and statuary, the love of home, womanhood, and the highest type of motherhood? What art would the world possess to-day if it were not for the Church! Is the home of the infidel happier than the truly Christian home? Is the mother who holds in her arms her darling babe and as she presses it to her bosom and gazes into its eyes, thinks she sees looking out from their liquid depths the immortal soul of one destined to live forever and forever, less a mother than one who beholds in her child a rude clod of earth without an immortal soul? If fine houses, clothes and other comforts alone bring happiness, how happy the millionaire must be, and how proper it is for the poor to try and dethrone him, in order to obtain a part of what he possesses. The propagation of a sentimental naturalism without dogma or worship may promote poetry and romance among the cultivated classes; it may result in increased admiration for Shakespeare, Raphael, Beethoven and genius of every kind; but it has no power to make the masses contented.

All the natural remedies hitherto proposed offer nothing capable of inducing people to be resigned to the rigors of their lot; nothing to console them in misfortune or render present evils more supportable by the hopes of the future; nothing to inspire respect for the rights of property, obedience to law, submission to authority; nothing to foster gratitude to the powerful classes, because they do nothing but grind the poor; nothing to temper rising hate, diminish envy, soften anger; nothing to raise ideas above what is earthly; nothing to establish solid and enduring morality or restrain from vice and crime.

EFFECTS OF FALSE THEORIES.

By such unsubstantial theories the people are snatched from the arms of truth and know her no more but to curse her. Deprived of the crucifix, the altar, the priest and hope, they are no longer the sons of God annointed with the royal unction of sacrifice and expiation, and destined for the splendors of His empire ; man is only what unbelief has made him, a child of clay, a king of sorrows. He finds himself in the presence of rags without honor. "Put them on," says society. "Why?" "Put them on." "I cannot." "Put them on." "No!" "Put them on; you must," and society flings the rags on his shoulders and sends him forth a rebel. He wears them without hope and sees the rich and prosperous pass before him, inspecting his toil or admiring his brawny arms, and he asks again the terrible question, "*Why? Why* am I poor? What have I done to deserve so much misery?"

HOW THE CHURCH TREATED THE POOR.

Formerly when this question mounted to heart and brain the Church pressed him to her arms and loved him, stifled the first fire of hate with her tears, took him by the hand and opened before him the sacred page wherein he saw Adam bending under the weight of the sentence, "Thou shalt earn thy bread in the sweat of thy brow." She showed him Christ thirty years a toiler, pointed out heaven reserved for those who suffer for justice sake here below, led him by the side of the open grave so that he might see how true it is that this life is but a pilgrimage, and that there is another life beyond this where all social inequalities will be levelled and a new order will begin. She explained to him why he was poor and what it means to be poor, taught him to appreciate the providence of God, who permits inequalities here, because He has all eternity to remedy them. Thus instructed, he understood that this life is but an exile and that suffering may be the crowning mark of God's love and the means of purification from sin.

When that same question is asked now the answer is "Imbecile, coward, fool, why have you allowed yourself to be stripped? What prevents you from recovering what you have lost? Raise your arm and strike; strike, you coward, that is all that is left to you." Thrust man into life only to labor, to suffer, and to die; make him the crip-

pled victim of disease, never destined to feel a helping hand ; give him no proper guide and you have created a rebel against order and authority, a monster crouching and ready to spring upon the throat of anyone who thwarts him. No mere theory can curb him.

WHAT CHRISTIANITY DOES.

But plant Christianity in his bosom to offer an explanation of the riddle of life; show him that however lowly he is not despised, and he becomes a hero, ready to abide by his lot, because it is the dispensation of God for his salvation, and because he knows that God has given him a claim on the charity of others less poor than himself. He sees that if God placed some in poverty, that by patience, humility and resignation they may sanctify themselves. He gives means to others that by charity and almsgiving they may do the same. Charity, or rather considerateness and a sense of duty, stifles in the human heart passions which make poverty and wealth hideous contrasts, full of menace to society. It effaces, as much as can be, the inequalities of condition; it takes from the master his rigidity, his pride, his egotism; it makes the servant devoted, respectful and faithful.

What right has the employer to expect that his employe will look to the interests of the firm, when no pains are taken to give him steady employment, when he is laid off without warning, when every opportunity is used to cut down his wages, when no regard is had for his comfort and convenience, when a helping hand is never extended to him and no concession is ever made without a prolonged contest, when every advantage is taken of the toiler, and he is regarded as a veritable chattel? On the other hand what right has the employe to expect consideration from his employer, when he takes no interest in the welfare of the man who employs him, when he subjects him to loss by slighting his work or makes him lose customers by doing it imperfectly, when he wastes his time and cheats his employer by idling away the hours for which he is paid in full or lengthens out a job because he sees no other work ahead, when he regulates his diligence by the fear of being watched, when he makes exasperating and unjust demands as often as he finds himself in a position to coerce his employer. No sympathy can be expected from mutual relations

founded on selfishness; and these dispositions will never change except under the influence of charitable forbearance and genuine Christian sentiment.

UNHOLY AMBITION.

Without such considerations man cannot resist the thirst for honor at any cost, that ambition resulting from the Pagan practice of living for this life. That unholy thirst tells him, "Onward, onward to honor and wealth." "But conscience is pierced through and through." "Heed not the wound, hide it; onward! onward! onward! to honor and wealth." "But integrity is compromised by dishonesty, trickery and deceit." "So much the worse for integrity; away with uncleanly scruples; onward." "But ruined homes stand in the way, the blighted lives of those who have just as much right to live and enjoy life as myself, rise up before me and move off like spectres as if in dread; broken hearts appeal to me; look, look, you are climbing over the distress of families and the wreck of hopes." "Heed them not; I would make immortal souls stepping stones to my ambition and walk along the brink of hell, for the sake of honor and wealth." Convictions are nothing, sacred oaths are nothing, affections are nothing; all must bow down before the sacred thirst for gold, all except charity. God did not make the rich to absorb but to spread blessings, nor did he make the poor to serve as a background for the splendor of wealth. He made both to establish a current similar to that of nature, whereby the water falling from the mountains to the valleys, remounts from the depths of the valleys to the tops of the mountains, from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven. Christ transformed whatever he touched with His love. He touched the poor and transformed them; He touched human nature and it passed from the sombre shadows of error to the vivifying light of truth. He touched unclean hearts and filled them with chaste love. He touched sickness and death, and sickness became health and death life. He touched the cross, that infamous wood of punishment. He touched it, not with His finger tips, as He did the stricken who asked for pity, but with His whole flesh, and the cross transformed was no longer shameful

THE CROSS THE SYMBOL OF HOPE.

The cross stands aloft the symbol of hope to the generation that has all but apostatized, to society cankered with a new-born paganism. The same Christ that touched and transformed the cross of wood, touched the living cross of human society, the poor, and transformed them. He touched them by words, to console, by example to encourage. He espoused poverty, and under the eyes of the Pharisees carried its consequences. Is that all? No! He entered more deeply into it and made the poor the living representation of His own person, for He attributes as done to Himself whatever is done to the poor. "As long as you did it to one of these, My least, brethren you did it to Me." Hear it and understand it. The poor are equal to others in the essentials of nature and of grace. Rather they excel in nobility, for they are Christ continued, the living crucifix, the sacraments of Christ in flesh and blood. Therefore, bend over them wealth and call them brothers. Think not that He sends the poor, those legions which hang quivering on the flanks of every great city, because He cannot relieve them by His own omnipotence, without the assistance of man. No, He makes them poor and leaves them poor to give others a chance of merit, from which they derive more profit than the poor.

THE APPEAL OF LAZARUS.

It is ever Lazarus that beseeches you. Whether he comes as he once did, clad in heavy ulcers, or in the garb of innocence and childhood, or in the form of womanhood and distress, Lazarus is lying at your door. Slowly tottering from the hovel where he lives, or dies, he creeps forth in rags. His eyelids are red with the rust of ancient tears and his watery eyes palsied with fright to see so much joy about him. Will you "seek" your dogs upon him like Dives, deny him the crumbs that fall from your table, bid him begone because you have nothing for him? But before doing so look at him well, so that you may recognize him when poverty stands in riot over the ruins of heartless wealth; look at him well, so that you may recognize him when he confronts you on the judgment day and flings into your face the memories of the time when social inequalities were despised. Your position and his represent the mutual relations of capital and labor, plenty and want, riches and poverty.

CONCLUSION.

Surveying the entire field calmly, I can see no regeneration of society, no complete rehabilitation of humanity, no re-organization of social life, no restoration of entire equality, no universal panacea, in any of the remedies proposed by reformers. Legislation alone is not sufficient, nor physical force, nor education, nor freedom of contract, nor co-operation, nor profit sharing, nor abolition of private ownership in land, nor nationalization of industries, though each of them may help, if grouped around the spirit of Christianity, which can alone give a proper direction to the efforts made for restoring society to its normal condition.

