

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CAPTIVITY

Slaves of the Vineyard of Monopoly.

Imprisoned by land monopoly, what time superstition holds their fellows in thrall, captains of industry seek to overtake the devastation and poverty of society by intensive production. For a long time their efforts appear to be successful, but misfortune overtakes and dogs their footsteps.

To those who clearly see the road to freedom, mankind in the mass learns so slowly that the day of liberation seems afar off. It seems as though every idol in the paradise of fools must be cracked up and pulverised by the operation of Natural Law before bruised Humanity consciously recognises the Rule of the Land.

James Watt, who invented the modern steam engine at the end of the eighteenth century, was aware of the hostile environment surrounding new ventures. In a letter dated April 17, 1786, he wrote to his partner Boulton disapproving of the action of an assistant in showing the new child of progress to those who reap and do not sow.

He said: "Everything which renders us conspicuous should be avoided; let us be content with *doing*. John Rennie no doubt has vanity to indulge as well as us, but he should be curbed and the bad consequences pointed out to him. Dukes and lords and noble peers will not be his best customers."

It was at this period when, before the French Revolution, the Physiocrats, Quesnay, Le Mercier de la Rivière, Turgot and others, were endeavouring to liberate France by means of the Subvention Territoriale. Alas! came along the Red Terror, and the perishing people, who had not learnt their lesson and who were attacked by aberrated "rescuers" from without, wandered into aimless mazes with the halter

of superstition round their necks, in due course to be harnessed by the tyrant Napoleon to the car of imperialism.

Watt, like Adam Smith and other enlightened Englishmen, was fired by the enthusiasm of the French patriots, and in a letter of February 10, 1787, to his friend l'Abbé Colonne, expressing admiration of the way the *Contrôleur-Général* proposed to simplify taxation, said, "But that part of our patriots who are not over-liberal fear that he will, by freeing your commerce and agriculture from its shackles, make France too rich and too great for the welfare of Britain and its trade. We argue otherwise, for we say that if these measures contribute to increase your manufactures or commerce, that our Government will be obliged to lay aside the erroneous part of their system, and free our manufactures from their grievances, and that the richer France becomes, the better customer she can be to Britain, and that at the worst, if no change of system is adopted here, and our trade becomes ruined by the aggrandisement of yours, that you will have made France so desirable a country that all active men, who are not rooted to the soil like so many vegetables, will remove thither, and help to make it still greater, leaving our tyrannical landholders to pay the National Debt, to eat their own corn, and muddle their undertaking with their own ale."

The inventor referred to a small treatise on the subject of taxation "which I composed in a fit of rage at the imposition of several new taxes on manufactures: but which I have reason to believe was productive of no good effects, so infatuated is our Government in its endeavours to kill the hen which lays the golden eggs, and so tenacious are our landed gentlemen of *what they call property*, reckoning us poor mechanics no better than the slaves who cultivate their vineyards. . . ."

Modern Intensive Production.

The story of the farmers, who fondly imagined that as the domestic pets of the predatory landlords they would not be devoured, is being repeated in the case of the artisans and craftsmen, who became manufacturers, miners, shipbuilders and traders, employing the reservoir of landless wage slaves at minimum wages. These latter were thus enabled

at odd moments and in varying degrees to improve their condition.

Wealth producers are naturally impelled to co-operate, because in production twenty men working in fellowship produce more than twenty men working singly. There is a constant tendency to satisfy desire by the expenditure of the minimum of effort, so that compulsory co-operation is an anomaly. In any system requiring compulsion, self-interest is extinguished and the full benefits of co-operative effort are not secured. Slave labour at all times is inefficient and unsatisfactory, and impulsion can always outrun compulsion.

The invention of the steam engine enabled private enterprise to get a start upon the elastic barrier of the land profiteer, and for a time substantial benefits accrued to manufacturers and other wealth producers employed intensively. It marked the birth of the so-called middle class, the continued existence of which now seems imperilled.

As in the case of the farmers, who introduced the Dutch methods of agriculture, the natural co-operation of craftsmen in manufacture who introduced steam-power has decayed into compulsory industrial slavery. Leadership within the closing barriers of the land blockade has deteriorated into slave-ownership.

Manufacturing Tantamount to the Intensive Cultivation of the Land.

Under the guiding influence of human thought and action, the raw materials taken from the earth by the miners and quarrymen are transformed into new and useful forms by the manufacturer, much as the intensive market gardener grows flowers, fruit and vegetables. The potentially stored up, and the kinetic heat and light of the sun, are as potent and necessary for the "growing" of houses, bridges, ships and locomotives as in the culture of cabbages.

Raw materials can only come from the earth, that is to say, from the soil, the air or the water upon the surface of the earth. There is nowhere else than upon the earth that the process of converting raw materials into manufactured forms can be carried on. Houses can only be erected upon it, trains can only run upon it, and shippers and traders

must have stations and sites for mooring berths, warehouses and offices of administration.

All wealth producers, and those who serve and depend upon them, work upon land in the economic sense, upon materials drawn from the land, sometime, somewhere, somehow. Even the "Johnnies-head-in-air," who have not wit enough to realise the importance of their relationship to the earth, come themselves from the only source of riches, and are returned to it after they have ceased from their protestations. Nor can they take away with them the title to their own honest labour, nor the robbery of that their fellows are justly entitled to.

The superstition that a few may own the source and mother of wealth, to which labour is the husband, and that these few may compel all others to pay tribute to them for life, is an adequate cause for the huddling of people into slums, the depopulation of the country-side, the unemployment and poverty of the would-be industrious, and the monstrous inequalities threatening the very existence of civilisation such as it is.

The Effect of Vested Ignorance upon the Production of Goods.

Property in land is not like property in goods, because an assumption of absolute ownership in land on the part of any person is a perpetual denial of the equal right of others to live. Consider the effect upon employment and production of the power given to the landed monopolist to withhold the use of land for way-leaves, either by blank refusal or conditional upon the payment of exorbitant "dead rent," indemnities and legal costs, and payment of royalties.

In agriculture, one thousand men debarred from growing food-stuffs does not begin and end in one thousand men being unemployed on gardens and farms. It means also that hundreds of others, who would otherwise have transported, manufactured and retailed the articles made from the cereals, fruit and vegetables grown by these labourers, had they been allowed, are debarred from earning a living. Similarly, in the primary industries of coal and oil winning, the mining of metals, quarrying and clay getting, there are far-reaching effects to follow when labour is debarred or restricted by the

toll-gates of privilege in its application to the source of riches.

Not only is one industry, say engineering, irrevocably dependent upon mining, agriculture and all other industries for prosperity, but individuals with useful services to offer for the conservation of happiness in exchange for goods and other services must go short when access to land is denied to industry by the vested ignorance of the community. Doctors who care for the health of the body, ministers and teachers who devote themselves to the training of the mind and the building of character, musicians and dramatists who amuse, delight and instruct, are rendered idle or are poorly paid, along with clerks, draughtsmen, designers and chemists.

Some slight conception of the effect is given when a strike or lock-out takes place in a primary industry like coal-mining. Such a temporary disturbance in the great body of industry is like the ever-widening circles produced by a stone thrown into a pond, which in time reach and disturb areas far away. But whereas a strike or lock-out creates a temporary disturbance in industry, the continuing wrong in land tenure creates a permanent, universal, malignant disturbance in production, which tends gradually to get worse, and which cannot be gauged in its great extent because there is no peaceful prosperity to measure it by.

The Effect of Vested Ignorance upon the Production of Ills.

It is not surprising, in the circumstances, that although the power-loom has reinforced handwork, that the steam shovel and motor-plough have assisted the spade, that the electric crane has been put alongside the hand winch, that although wealth production in its multifarious intensifications has been introduced into every direction, yet the masses of wage and salaried slaves have not obtained anything like commensurate benefit in lightened toil and anxiety.

The wealth producers, whether leaders or rank and file, have not more leisure than before these inventions existed, but less, because "it is the pace that kills." They, not less than those who have the miserable leisure of unemployment thrust upon them, are not able to aspire to higher things in the pursuit of happiness. For relaxation they fly to

mental and physical intoxications, and, strained by overwork, pursue transient excitements in error for enduring happiness.

In spite of the ingenuity expended in labour-saving devices, little children are yet called upon to toil when they should be occupied in healthy games or in the joyous cultivation of their awakening physical and intellectual powers. Women prematurely lose their health and comeliness in soul-and-body destroying drudgery or atrophy into social molluscs and vampires.

Industry rarely accumulates happiness for the mellow ripening of old age, but rather ills which overburden worn-out lives, filling anxious decline with deepening shadows of misery. The less fortunate have to be supported by their children, which is unnatural, or they are scantily assisted with State doles to exist in the earthly hell of humiliation.

Labour-saving devices, instead of lightening human toil, have only made available a greater reservoir from which is drawn the crazy sacrifices of aberrated intelligence. Instead of profuse production in the "key industries" of peace by speedy and thorough methods we have therefore profuse production in the "key industries" of war. Poison gas, shells, torpedoes, guns, battleships, aerial bombing machines increase at a greater rate than food, clothing, houses, utensils, gardens and services necessary for human happiness.

Many who build houses for others live overcrowded in hovels themselves; many who produce food for their fellows have famished dependents; and many fabricators of fine raiment are themselves and families clothed shabbily. Many makers of furniture and household requisites have themselves to go without, and although they produce for others with such wonderful facility, the vast majority of hand and brain workers in present circumstances cannot command for themselves the desirable commodities they fashion with the materials provided with such profusion by Nature.

Nevertheless, these are the inevitable consequences of the land blockade, which creates niggardly production and the unemployment which results in forced labour sales.

Trade Unions and Craft Guilds.

All craftsmen feel the terrible consequences which arise from the one-sided competition of men for jobs, but few

know why this unnatural competition exists. Even the followers of Karl Marx in the workshops, feeling far remote from the land, fail to realise the significance of his most important statement: "The basis of modern Capitalism is the expropriation of the labourer from the soil." (*Das Kapital*, last chapter.)

Trade unionists and craftsmen in the past, instead of seeking to abolish the unjust system, thought that the iniquity of property in land was only an unimportant part of social maladjustments. They have therefore largely wasted their energies in vain collective bargaining for higher wages and shorter hours of labour.

They have always been defeated, even when apparently they were most successful, because, just as in virtue of the "corner" made by land monopoly taxes can be handed down upon industry, so likewise any general improvement in industrial conditions is absorbed by restriction of supplies and higher prices in the already straitened market. This process is finally reflected in higher rents, higher taxes of Government to aid law and order against a disappointed proletariat, and greater "profits" to monopolists who flourish owing to the land blockade, within which barrier the "vicious circle" moves.

By means of the limitation of those permitted to learn a trade, together with artificial restriction of output, trade unionists struggled to keep their wages almost level in purchasing power during the fifteen years prior to the Great War, but in the same period the unskilled labourer found that commodities were put increasingly further out of the reach of his purchasing power. Indeed, in general, food prices rose concurrently twice as fast as wages, and the condition of the unskilled labourer became pitiable in the extreme.

The Minimum Wage Myth and the Sham Housing Scheme.

It may be forgivable for unthinking people, like children, who in a railway train think it is the landscape which moves, to fancy that good wages is the cause of high prices, but it is difficult to repress a feeling of contempt for "Liberal" reformers, and even Labour representatives, who endeavoured to fix wages according to the cost of living. It became

fashionable, for those who believe that kindness can be put in the place of justice, to measure to the nearest farthing the cost of maximum bearable domestic discomfort, and to associate themselves with a "National Minimum Wage" policy and an alms-"Housing Scheme."

Highbrowed politicians and super-writers upon economics really thought it was necessary to dispense charity to the indispensable labourer to enable him to subsist. They were deaf to the call of Justice.

Subsequent to the signing of Peace in Versailles, the "Great Charter of Labour" has been put forward as a plank of the League of Nations enthusiasts, some of whom thought that an "International Minimum Wage" might be fixed. Others, sublimely innocent of the true state of affairs, joined hands with the delighted monopolists of every country. The well-intentioned ideal is a system of tariffs arranged by the League, so that the cost of living may be kept the same in every country, *maintaining* the existing standard of living.

"He passionately desired an international comity of goodwill, but while he wished this country to be an asylum to persons from foreign countries, he desired protection from spies. He was aware of the danger of blackleg cheap foreign labour, and he appealed to the Home Secretary to take steps to maintain the standard of living of the British workmen." (Mr. Ben Tillett in the House of Commons.) Mr. Ben Tillett was doubtless misled by appearances. It is incredible that a Labour Member should deliberately imply that the labour of his workmates was overpaid and that foreign spies might discover this awkward fact!

Hatred of the Foreigner and the Employer.

Not seeing that poverty arises from the embargoes put upon free production in their own country, there is a tendency for trade unionists to attribute their misfortunes to other things. They frequently, and in varying degree, blame foreign competition for low wages, and distrust and dislike the foreigner accordingly, and at the same or at other times blame their employers for selfishness in paying such low wages, forgetting that employers compete severely with each other for work as the employees of customers.

How employment and wages of industry can be increased in the long run by the reduction of the number of employers, which happens when the foreign customer is excluded by preventing him from paying for commodities and services in return, is possible only in the hallucinations of economic enclosure.

Federations, Trusts and Rings.

Employers in an evenly balanced society would earn profits or wages which would represent the due reward of their industry. Living, on the contrary, within the same hostile environment due to the land blockade as their fellow-producers, the trade unionists; their federations, combines, trusts and rings acquire the same malignant characteristics as the unions in the unnatural struggle for existence.

While the original intention of such leagues may have been to favour beneficial co-operation in trade and commerce, they are gradually forced by circumstances into oblique directions, to their ultimate disadvantage.

This tendency is accelerated by taxation according to "ability to pay," which in the endeavour to pass on causes them to restrict still further the already "short supply" and in concert to plunder the consumer. But since we cannot hurt others without hurting ourselves, in militating against the consumer the combinations of employers and unions of employees find the struggle for existence harder as time goes on. Crises recur from time to time in which there is "overproduction" due to underconsumption, because the producers themselves are consumers of each other's products, deprived by circumstances of the power to purchase.

Moreover, the leagues and unions do not collaborate to improve production and exchange to the advantage of industry as a whole. They contend with each other, and league preys upon league, as union jostles with union in the losing game of "beggar my neighbour" for everyone.

Economic Aberrations.

Like the trade unionists in general, the federationists are in the main obsessed with the fallacy that the "means of production" is capital, and that wages, salaries and other

profits come in some mysterious way out of capital. They do not comprehend that all wealth is the product of hand and brain or mind applied to land in some form or other, and they do not recognise sufficiently clearly that in a great measure what is returned in their balance sheets as "capital assets" is as substantial as the foam of the sea.

In their philosophy of economics it is not taught that real capital in the form of buildings, machinery and stock-in-trade is employed by labour, but—weirdest of doctrines!—that capital employs labour.

Under the influence of this superstition, which is of the psychology of captivity, it is difficult for them to believe that when labourers, skilled and unskilled, including craftsmen, clerks, draughtsmen, salesmen, travellers, managers, foremen and directors, receive the just reward of their industry in economic free competition, there would be true co-partnership, in which each producer would have a fair share in the possession of the farms, factories and circulatory services. In such a case there would be no outside bondholders or usurious so-called capitalists, but each business would become a co-operative one, possessed by the persons engaged in it or serving them.

In the economic enclosure of restricted opportunity and niggardly production of goods it is hard for the captives, wriggling to escape from the horrible consequences of cut-throat competition, to believe that competition in economic freedom with equality of opportunity for all is enjoyable. It does not easily come within the field of their narrow vision that such competition is the healthy rivalry of emulation making for progress, prosperity and happiness—is indeed co-operation to serve consumers.

Secondary Capitalistic Monopolies.

All capitalistic monopolies have their origin in the slavery arising out of land monopoly. Beginning in honest husbandry, manufacture or commerce, wealth concentration, due to the exploitation of the dispossessed, leads to the establishment of powerful commercial magnates. It was so in the case of the Merchant Princes of Italy, of the Hanseatic League, and it is to-day of the Big Five Meat Trust of Chicago and the great banking amalgamations.

Many of these monopolies are "vertical" trusts, that is to say, their power is entrenched doubly, because they monopolise mineral deposits in the earth by the acquirement of "rights" and governmental "concessions" over the public domain. The Standard Oil Trust holds extensive tracts of oil-bearing regions, obtained by the coalescing of many other companies and the "freezing" out of others. By closing up wells to restrict supply, the trust is enabled to tax and plunder the consumer. They can do this because, paying no rent to the public, it costs nothing to hold valuable oil-bearing land out of use.

The power of the Steel Trust is due in a great measure to an exclusive possession of coal and ore deposits, the working of which they restrict and control for the purpose of obtaining profiteering prices from consumers. The increasing difficulty in obtaining timber supplies is not because timber in the world is being used up at a greater rate than it is being replaced by new growths. This is simply the psychological effect upon the minds of deluded consumers. The fact really is that the natural forests of Europe, America and elsewhere have fallen into the hands of the few, who enslave the many in precisely the same way that the coal trusts do.

The short supply of food and other raw materials by the action of land-withholding gives rise to speculative buying and selling of commodities by middlemen. These exchange gamblers do immense harm by the exaltation of prices and the "cornering" of cargoes, which they never see and never intend to retail themselves. The prices may be forced up by this false commerce to such a height that there is recurring congestion at the docks, warehouses and railway sidings because speculation has run beyond the purchasing power of the legitimate consumer.

In such cases operators, in holding up against the extreme necessity of the community, hoping vainly to obtain a price which will cover them from loss, have fallen victims to their own greed.

There may be a spectacle, therefore, of appalling waste of perishable goods at the clearing centres at times when the community is confronted with famine. Dockers and warehousemen, prevented day after day from the carrying out

of their duties, may be thoroughly disgusted, and it is not surprising that they sometimes complete the disorganisation by obstinately refusing to work, when at last they are allowed to proceed, unless they are paid some addition for time wasted.

The misdeeds of the dockers are held up for execration by the hate propagandists, and the public are led to believe that the high prices are entirely owing to the high wages of workmen. As a curiosity of the psychology of captivity, it is by no means infrequent that the superstitious people are told by their favourite newspapers that the high prices are due to their own insatiable "greed." This piece of impertinence is, of course, the corollary of the fiction that it is high wages which is the sole cause of high prices.

The middlemen gamblers, when successful, are openly admired by the sycophants of our modern banditti, and it is indelicate in their presence to draw attention to the original cause of restriction of supply which rendered the intermediate robbery possible.

Superfluous middlemen and their disastrous gambling could never flourish in a profusely supplied and regular market. Moreover, the power of the "vertical" trust to restrict supply at the source could not long survive the payment of "dead" rent to the community for the portion of the public domain which it monopolised. It is the omission to take the economic rent that attaches to land by reason of the growth and progress of society for public purposes which is the cause of unemployment, scarcity of goods, speculation, inefficiency, low wages, and concomitant high prices.

The disappearance of unemployment means the abolition of wage slavery or so-called capitalism, because it is this unemployment which prevents profits, the reward of industry, salaries, all included in the term "wages," from rising to the economic maximum.

As civilisation is at present constituted, endeavour is directed not towards progress, but towards the deterioration of the standard of living. The race is not in the pursuit of improvement in conditions of life, but a foolish competition in the art of "doing without," and this very attainment is put forward as a Christian duty by gloomy clerics and those who grind the faces of the poor.

Monopolies fostered by Excise and Customs.

The action of the excise duties tends to prevent the establishment of new breweries and distilleries, which would otherwise induce healthy competition in the service of the public.

By means of adequate restriction of supply (the demand remaining not less than before among a population seeking to drown its woes and sorrows in strong drink) the existing breweries and distilleries find it easy to pass on to the consumer increases in taxation plus a tax for themselves. The prices are increased, and/or a poorer and more pernicious product is retailed. The powerful "trade" may make a pretence of opposition to the imposition of excise duties for the purpose of deluding the consumer, but they would be as eager as the most valiant teetotaler in resisting their abolition.

Importers of tea, coffee and tobacco are given a similar privilege, the import duties on these articles of common consumption discouraging the springing up of new traders. It is, of course, the consumer and not the Chinaman or other foreign producer who pays the tax, which bears most severely upon the poorest of the population. In all such cases the price is put up more than sufficient to cover the increased taxation as it takes place.

In countries like America, which adopted import duties upon manufactured articles supposed to be paid by the foreigner, the specious plea is made by "big business" that "The duty is put upon goods to cover the differential between the American and foreign standard of wages for the protection of the working man." This hypocrisy is discounted by the fact that wages and salaries in the businesses so "protected" are upon the average lower than in similar concerns built up in the face of foreign competition.

Import duties foster the formation of trusts, which buy up or "freeze" out all employers who refuse to enter the "ring." The monopoly once formed, works are run short-time or are closed down, staffs are reduced, and prices are raised to the point at which the greatest plunder is obtained, having regard to the differentiation of supply and demand.

Sometimes the increased price checks demand further than is expected, and the momentum of production carries

supply beyond what has been calculated upon. This is called "overproduction" by "big business," although dependent industry in the home market may be going short because consumers cannot afford to pay the higher rate.

Until the trust can adjust matters by discharging more "hands," and until the enslaved customers of the monopoly recover themselves, the "overproduction" is "dumped" into some foreign, not necessarily free-trade, country. This action greatly enrages the manufacturers in the foreign country, who are doing all they can probably to build up a monopoly there for themselves.

Were there free production, the expediency of free exchange would never be questioned. The dreaded foreign competition would then be seen to be a bogey, while the so-called "dumping" would be regarded with as much amusement as a shower of unexpected presents from an unlikely quarter.

It is the scramble which ensues owing to the embargoes put upon free production within the limits of each country that is responsible for the "jungle theory of international relations." Tariffs do harm neighbouring peoples, but they harm the "protected" nation very much more. Nevertheless, in short-sighted revenge, a tariff war may be started, in which reprisal is followed by counter-reprisal. International hatred grows ever stronger, ending in the will to war, and the belligerents do not see that they are individually and collectively to blame in clinging to a superstition, a deference to which strikes a fatal blow at the root of real prosperity and happiness.

Monopolies fostered by Domestic Tariffs.

Not possessing the revenue from the economic rent of land, the community suffers the heavy expenses due to the necessity of providing for the mentally and physically unfit, sustaining a horde of bureaucratic officials, money-lenders and tax-eaters, and supporting large military establishments for restraining desperate populations within the barriers of land monopoly. Public expenditure is therefore not only high, but it must be met by funds drawn from immoral sources.

In France, for instance, towns are "protected" from the

dumping of food-stuffs and fuel by means of a tariff wall called octroi duties, in much the same way that the coal supply to London was restricted some years ago by means of a tariff upon what was supplied from the provinces.

It is possible that this method is favoured because the consumer is scarcely aware that he is being taxed, and that he cannot easily evade it, certainly not that it is desirable to encourage the production of food-stuffs or the mining of coal within the "protected" city area!

In England there once existed a window tax, and each citizen was assessed according to the area of window glass of his house. Windows got smaller and smaller or were bricked in, and in time almost disappeared. The tax, although several times increased, brought in a falling revenue, and was finally discarded mainly for this reason, and not really in the interests of humanity.

After this atrocity it was thought better by the legislators to place the tariff upon the dwelling-house or factory in the form of rates and inhabited-house duty, and the poor, in spite of all attempts to solve the housing problem, have had to remain overcrowded in bad old houses in a scabious incrustation of decay, or be grateful for tiny brick boxes, fitted with larger windows, it is true, but provided with small back-yards, and generally constructed to meet the requirements of landlordism and the most predatory taxation system of modern times.

Aberrated reformers, viewing things from the inside of the barrier, which they fiercely ignore, can think of no better solution to the housing question than civil barracks financed by grants-in-aid to county and borough councils out of the imperial exchequer. It is of the psychology of captivity that they say private enterprise has failed miserably, and that they imagine, in spite of painful experience to the contrary, that public enterprise has been any more successful.

Consider how private enterprise is penalised. The late Lord Charles Beresford told how they act in China. "Fancy," said he, "a Chinaman has the good sense to build himself a comfortable house or establish a business. Along comes the tax-collector. He looks round and says, 'This house or this place is very good; you must be a rich man; you will have to pay many taxes'—what can you

expect from people who treat their enterprising citizens like that? "

Yet this is precisely how enterprising citizens are treated in Great Britain and many other countries of the supposed superior Western civilisation.

So long as valuable sites are vacant or carrying broken down "improvements," the abusers pay little or nothing towards the communal expenses, as, for example, the policeman who warns off trespassers. If, on the other hand, enterprising individuals wish to make better use of the site, by establishing or extending a useful business, which increases wealth and decreases unemployment, they are confronted with serious hostility.

It is right that the owners of slums (say) should be amply compensated by the new-comers for their private property, but it is not just that industry should have to acquire way-leave by the purchase of land value created not by the holder, but due to the presence of population generally and inflated by speculation upon future prosperity of enterprise. Neither is it just, as an alternative, that labour of head and hand in its necessity should be obliged to submit to an onerous lease for the site, and agree at the end of the period that accumulated capital, or other rewards of industry, should become the property of the ground landlord.

As regards the latter, it is sometimes said in extenuation that the tenant accepts such plundering terms with his eyes open, or in other words, that the robbery is perpetrated in the daylight according to the laws of the country. Also that the landlord, if becoming civility is accorded him by the tenant, will graciously accept an indemnity or premium and grant another lease when the existing one expires. In this way the anxious tenant is shorn periodically instead of being slaughtered outright.

Is not the pathetic gratitude of the lamblike tenant to the kind shearer an interesting psychological study? Nor is the mental attitude of the conveyancing jackals disguised in sheep's clothing, who infest the enclosure, less amusing. Superstition makes fools of us all!

But the industrious user of a site who has paid heavily for it, and the tenant who has made improvements, possibly as

a condition of an extended leasehold, are not long left in the consolation and enjoyment of having bought peace at any price. Like their forefathers who paid Danegeld, they find that fresh invaders appear suddenly to strip them of the remaining fruits of their industry. Along comes the public tax-collector, who, assessing upon the same scale as the brigand, fines occupiers every few months according to their industry and appearance.

The new-comers, possessing better buildings than the previous encumberers of the site, are made to pay in rates and taxes many times more, and the improving tenant also has his assessment raised according to appearances, which may or may not be an indication of his means.

When it is remembered that this sort of thing is almost universal, it does not require much imagination to understand the cause of the shabby, mildewed and blighted general appearance of villages, towns and cities. If the system had been deliberately invented for the purpose, ingenuity could not have been more efficiently misdirected towards the creation of sordid and depressing reality. Enterprise does not pay, because it is severely discouraged by law.

The inhabitants are necessarily affected by their surroundings, and it is no wonder so many captains of industry are the embodiment of blank disappointment and that the masses of the people are hopeless and despondent. Blind as to the cause of the plight, forced optimism substitutes divine discontent, and the apathetic proletariat have to be stung into action by the foolish sarcasm of Government posters on the hoardings¹ directed against their supposed lack of native enterprise.

In such a hostile environment there is ever-present stagnation of industry in varying degree, so that it has been sometimes said "A good war is required to liven up trade."

It is largely due to the domestic tariff of the rates that there is a shortage of houses and other buildings—and in Great Britain the similar taxation of fixed machinery is an added disability to expansion.

¹ This refers to a Government poster following the Armistice, which was framed to the effect that the Germans "are delighted" to hear of the failure of the workers to produce more while their erst-while competitors were *hors de combat*.

At odd times the artificial limitation of these necessities produces a privileged position for those already supplied, and such a condition is intensified when new taxation has been imposed upon industry to support large armies and navies and to pay tribute to moneylenders, as during the Great War. The effect was seen in the prohibitive prices, which were inflated still further by speculation, of building materials among other things.

The monopolists are short-sighted when they are reluctant to see a change from a rating system which violates the moral law, for we eventually and inevitably suffer ourselves by selfishly subscribing to an unjust arrangement to secure a momentary benefit.

Taxes upon Incomes and Profits.

It is easily demonstrable (see previous chapter) that all taxation is paid by industry. Income tax and the so-called excess profits duty are not only burdens upon trade, but cause poverty to become more widespread.

The majority of the unskilled producers, living as they do, owing to wage slavery, near the border-line of starvation, have their standard of living certainly further depressed by rising prices; but since to exist at all they must have some nourishment, there is a minimum beyond which it is impossible to go without outbreaks of extreme riot and violence. In spite of appearances, all sections of society resist civil commotion, hence there are put forward plans of public and private charity, which outrage human dignity and turn into beggars and paupers men who would support themselves and families, given access to land, the only source of riches.

The history of Christendom, the recent events in Russia, the hanging storm of discontent everywhere, afford ample proof of the futility of the pseudo-charity that discards and denies the great Natural Law of Equity. The justice of Nature laughs at the attempts of men to give alms, or to rob the industrious to give to the voluntary and involuntary loafers of high or low degree, while not respecting the equal rights of all men and women.

In the struggle to avoid unemployment, not only are the so-called unskilled affected, but the skilled and salaried producers have also their standard of living depressed nearer

the level of the unskilled, and this tendency is carried throughout the various gradations of the industrious. The latter category we wish to make as wide as possible, to include teachers, doctors, dentists, nurses, scientists, composers and musicians, poets and writers, and last but not least the mothers.

Taxes upon incomes or profits (which when evaded, as they are extensively, are evaded most successfully by financiers, gambling speculators and non-producers) also simply result in general limitation of output of goods. They cause more unemployment, and the depression of the standard of living for all except the few, who include the monopolists and the tax-eaters. More employees live from hand to mouth, and more employers live upon the verge of failure.

By means of these and other taxes upon production and exchange, the Governments of all countries not only rob their industrious citizens, but encourage the breeding of a multitude of rogues, who as monopolists gather private taxes from the public, or who as bureaucrats eat up the national wealth.

It is useless in these circumstances to urge the speeding up of output within the barriers of denied opportunity, for although the discouraged workers do not really appreciate their captivity, they see that the fruits of their industry fall into the lap of privilege, and that more men are unemployed because of "overproduction" when the narrowed market has been flooded by speedy methods.

The refusal of the exploited workers to turn the treadmill round faster is not because of laziness: "the complaint of labour to-day is against producing for the prodigality of private individuals." (Letter from six A.S.E. Branches to General Secretary Mr. J. T. Brownlie.)

There is a psychological difficulty, however, in the way of a general understanding that all taxes upon production and exchange fall upon the producers and traders and act so as to make profiteering monopolists more powerful. It appears at first sight reasonable to believe that a levelling up of wealth can be accomplished by taking off top branches and throwing these down to the ground.

Superficial thinkers, although they may protest against income tax for themselves, are unable to perceive that unequal distribution of wealth cannot be rectified by super income

taxes or excess profit duties for others. The paradox can only be resolved by looking at the problem from the right point of view, that is, as a dynamic equation and not a static one. The pruning of incomes and profits does not tend to the equalisation of wealth, but instead, causes gross cultures to flourish more luxuriantly amid the keener struggle for existence. The diminishing few wealthy persons become richer in virtue of their increased monopoly power, and poverty creeps in upon them from the circumference.

It is of course true that if evasion could be prevented by superhuman supermen, and all incomes except a National Minimum confiscated, and all profits taken for the State, a levelling up would be accomplished, but it would not be the equalisation of wealth! As among the Terra del Fuegians and other coercive communists, there would be no industrial "surplus," there would be the equal distribution of poverty.

The State is not entitled to pick and choose what it shall tax or take. The State, like the individual, must conform to Natural Law or suffer condign consequences.

Spurious Socialisms : "As against the State, we have no Natural Rights." (Mr. Sidney Webb.)

Just as the ideals of Christians have been decomposed until there are many kinds of Christianity, most of which are wholly faithless to the gospel of Jesus, so similarly the ideals of the Brotherhood of Socialism, which are of His philosophy, have been shattered into countless inversions or slaveries.

Conceived of envy, hatred and malice, engendered in captivity, there is born of ignorance a belief that if the few rich individuals could be stripped of their possessions, then poverty could be eradicated. Nor is this blind antagonism directed against useless landlordism and predatory monopoly, but rather against those whose superior energy and foresight have enabled them for the moment to outrun the wolves of privilege. Such an erroneous belief is at least as dangerous as that no social improvement is needed or is possible.

The false prophets of Socialism may not subscribe wholeheartedly to this error, but they defer to it when they teach that freedom is not possible, even economic freedom. "If a man wants freedom to work or not to work, just as he likes, he had better emigrate to Robinson Crusoe's island,

or else become a millionaire. To suppose that the industrial affairs of a complicated State can be run without strict subordination and discipline, without obedience to orders, and without definite allowances for maintenance, is to dream, not of Socialism but of Anarchism." (Mr. Sidney Webb.)

So little do they know of freedom that they mistake imprisonment upon a desert island for liberty, and the condition of the poor rich millionaire, raised above touch of humanity, surrounded by flatterers and sycophants, as one of happy carelessness!

Therefore they follow the deranged Nietzsche into the further recesses of captivity and echo that "Every strengthening and elevation of the type 'man' also involves a new form of slavery."

The theories of the fragmentary Socialists are indefinite and their doctrines are mutually destructive. Frequently regarding those engaged in private enterprise as "private adventurers," they ignore that it is private enterprise which initiates, invents, improves and establishes, and forget that it is public enterprise which copies and follows. Yet they frequently applaud the private enterprise of the founders and directors of Co-operative Societies, failing to see that there is no essential difference between a Co-operative Society, the shares of which are held by working men, and the Joint Stock Company, the stock of which may be held by any members of the public.

The co-operative societies compare favourably with the well managed ordinary firm of manufacturers and traders in the payment and treatment of their staffs, but they likewise come into conflict with their "hands" in regard to wages and hours of labour. They cannot, in present circumstances, avoid lock-outs and strikes.

Similarly public enterprises, the shares of which are held by the community, as, for example, the State Church, the schools, the police and military, the post office, telegraphs and telephones, the State mines and railways, where they abound, are they any more successful than private co-operative enterprise? Is the conduct of their affairs more satisfactory? Do they serve the public better? Let us be just; within the barriers of the Great Land Monopoly,

is Government enterprise any less predatory than the "private adventurer"?

We refuse to believe, because experience teaches otherwise, that if controlled by Fabian intellectuals these institutions, upon the same foundation of injustice, would change their present regrettable characteristics—as well expect wolves to devour vegetable-marrows or grapes grow upon the deadly nightshade!

Experience has shown that when these gentlemen of intellect are in control of ministries, they function like the other creatures of circumstances. In Government departments, the acumen of the soundest business man seems to desert him. Saints forget their sacred vows and betray their dearest friends. The Foreign Office of any Government would demoralise the Archangel Michael if he were put in charge. Why should a mere superman presume?

"Socialism is National Organisation." (Sir Leo Chiozza Money.)

In the same category as the State-Socialists, obsessed with the fallacy that social evils arise from the inadequacy or inharmony of natural relations, suffering from the delusion that man by supermen must be artificially organised or improved, are the Protectionists or Tariff "Reformers." These, steadily upholding a vicious system of land tenure at home, seek by governmental prohibition or import taxes to regulate the industry and control the exchanges of their country, so, as they fancy, to benefit trade cramped by land monopoly and suffocated by domestic tariffs. They are like nurses who would give a patient drugs in lieu of fresh air and sunshine.

Also of the same distracted school of thought are the Trade Unionists, who fail to see that low wages and bad working conditions are due to the denial of the equal right of workers to the standing-place and the source of materials upon which they must labour. Their demand, therefore, for a share in the ownership and control of industry remains unsatisfied. Instead of following justice, they employ moral violence in a policy of "Devil take the hindmost." They do not see that wages fall in spite of their violence in times of bad trade, just as they rose without effort on

their part during the Great War, when unemployment ceased.

Tepid Liberalism, decrepit and without vision, regards liberty as a state of benevolent tyranny. It asserts as rights what in themselves are wrongs. Composed of lovers of repose, the lukewarm Liberals and Democrats legislate upon the assumption that human nature is inherently defective and that there is no order or symmetry in natural law.

They take the curious view that mothers of the poorer population are naturally incompetent to feed and care for their own children; that God sends more children into the world than can be provided for; that it is in the nature of the parents' hearts to send their children to work when they should be at play; that men and women live in overcrowded dens, work overtime in dangerous and insanitary occupations, accepting low wages, from choice. Tepid Liberalism is indistinguishable from spurious Socialism.

"Walking through Dry Places, seeking Rest."

Among the delusions occasioned by immersion in superstition, none is so tragical as that the abnormal behaviour of the aberrated captives is an indication of the depths of savagery to which they might sink if liberated.

It is this fear which is always at the back of the minds of the pseudo-Socialists, whether they call themselves Conservatives, Republicans, Liberals or Socialists. They think that civilisation is measured in terms of coercion, repression, bureaucracy and militarism, and are afraid that if the prisoners are given their liberty there will be a relapse into barbarism.

Consequently the prison walls are built higher and higher for the supposed security of "Kultur." From the right point of view, what are looked upon by the "patriots" as evidences of progress are merely retrograde movements towards absolutism, anarchy and final collapse.

Military slavery was adopted by Germany in the belief that it was possible to devise machinery which through human agency would secure for the German Government more wisdom and virtue than the people themselves possessed, that thereby national freedom would be preserved and increased. But liberty was lost to them increasingly.

Britain and America, in fighting the slaves of militarism, thought that the only way to escape the menace was to give up their own liberties in the adoption of Compulsory Military Service. Far from having preserved themselves, their national life exists upon a lower plane of health, and these nations are now living more dangerously than ever. This barbaric development is inevitable if the nations continue to walk through Dry Places.

Communities are menaced by the Industrial Trusts and Trade Unions, which hold the power of life and death over the sapless people of the cities, living in Dry Places far from the bosom of Nature. A trial of industrial slavery by the panic-stricken citizens of Rationed and Organised Famine may be stoutly advocated even by those who conscientiously resisted the Military Service Acts, but who assert that "Every individual should be *compelled* to fulfil some useful function in society."

"The Aristocracy of Land and Debt" have painfully organised and disciplined the complicated State upon many landlord and moneylender treadmills. With preternatural verve the "Aristocracy of Intellect" seize the obvious fact that to complete the national organisation it is only necessary to combine the many treadmills into one all-embracing National Treadmill.

It is proposed to nationalise by purchase all capital (in which they vaguely and erroneously include land), giving the sellers Government bonds in exchange. In some devious way, only known in the secret recesses of the Fabian Society, it is then intended to dissolve the bonds afterwards by means of special taxation or by simply abolishing the currency—it is a detail, and ethics need not trouble an all-highest intellect!

The State being then sole Landlord and Capitalist, men, women and children would naturally be State property. Mr. George Bernard Shaw, who will doubtless excuse our taking him seriously at his own request, thus in the language of Nietzsche shows a way out of the tangle of the National Debt: "That measure is resolute Compulsory Civil Service, called by the Trade Unionists Industrial Conscription. . . . Ruthless and thorough conscription of productive labour for all classes alike, and unsparing extirpation of the idler ;

that is the only genuine solution of the financial problem." He thinks, however, that the "Capitalists" who own the Debt will probably repudiate the Debt themselves for the return of their liberty!

Mr. Shaw, whether in serious vein or otherwise, logically takes us to the core of fraudulent Socialism. Vanity and cunning are not going to redeem the world.

The Prison swept and garnished.

It is no part of the policy of the pretentious Socialists to liberate humanity from prison. Their endeavours are limited to the sweeping and the garnishing of man's present quarters. They are really kind ladies and gentlemen who have the uplift of suffering humanity at heart *within the workhouse*, which is to be improved out of all knowledge and fitted with every modern convenience and luxury.

There is to be an equitable rationing system whereby population, food, clothing and housing shall be so regulated that no one shall be aware that a well organised famine is proceeding. Sexual and domestic affairs are to be arranged for us eugenically and hygienically down to the minutest detail.

We are to be obedient to orders, regimented, subordinated and disciplined from the cradle to the grave by paternal bureaucratic experts possessing the wisdom of the ages. Our characters are to be moulded according to selected and well-tested samples already prepared for the millennium by the Fabian Society.

From babyhood onwards we shall be docketed, badged and uniformed into sections, according to some function in society, predetermined by super-anthropologists and judges of heredity. Rebels, who cannot do as they are bid and labour, even though unwilling, for the good of a Collectivist Mathematical Equation, will thus be caught quite early and painlessly exterminated.

"Arty" communal kitchens, nurseries, crèches, schools, libraries, garden city barracks and so forth will be provided for the industrial conscripts, whether they like to be herded together or not.

Just as the thoughtfulness of Prussian officialdom was shown in plentiful provision of relaxation for military con-

scripts, so that longings and vain regrets might be stilled and soothed, so likewise our Fabian Conspiracy has taken into consideration adequate instruction and amusement for those who are to lose the remaining shreds of their liberty in compulsory civil service.

Literature and Art are to be compulsorily administered in the worship of their Thing, and music and dancing are to be at Its service in the relief of the docile inmates, like doses of medicine.

To work for oneself or to co-operate with others voluntarily is Private Enterprise. This is high treason in the Capitalistic State to be founded by our modern Hedonists, who dare to accuse Nature (they do not say God) with cruelty and stupidity. They delude themselves with the belief that it is human nature to prefer slaving for an Equation to being industrious for private gain.

But just as the Trust or the Combine frowns upon the "private adventurer," so the State Monopoly of Collectivism cannot afford to have competitors starting out upon their own. They might discover by inference the extreme inefficiency of the complicated Slave System, which would be fatal to its existence.

Entry of the Seven other Wicked Spirits.

"There is one thing most certain, and that is that only by adequate preparation for war can peace in anyway be guaranteed." (Sir Douglas Haig.) So say the militarists, learning nothing from experience. They are not, of course, different psychologically from the superficial militant Socialists, who say, "The organisation of industry for peace on the same lines as it was organised for war is what we advocate."

Experience has ever shown that peace cannot be guaranteed by preparations for war, likewise when industry is organised for peace on the same lines as it was organised for war there is no guarantee that the seven other spirits more wicked of civil commotion shall not enter.

They entered upon the coercive communism of ancient Egypt. In a Red Terror they dwelt there in revolutionary France, and devoured not only the "Aristocracy of Land and Debt" but also the "Aristocracy of Intellect," children of the Revolution.

As wisdom increases, Man yet becomes more and more impatient of captivity. The unclean spirit of Czardom returned precipitately, accompanied by the seven other spirits more wicked than himself, into Bolshevik Russia. The Communists are only the old Czarists writ large.

There is no peace for the militarists in compulsory "preparedness," and there is none in the extreme of industrial conscription, which resolves into a decomposition of reaction and ends precariously in an absolutism. The last state is invariably worse than the first.

The Great War, awe-inspiring and tremendous as it may seem, is only an incident in a fratricidal struggle caused by the retention of the barriers to man's mental and spiritual evolutionary development. It is of the Psychology of Captivity that war and civil commotion shall continue until the barricades of superstition shall be removed from the path of Justice and Liberty.

"The Path on the Way to Hell is paved with Good Intentions."

"The present position which we, the educated and well-to-do classes, occupy is that of the Old Man of the Sea, riding on the poor man's back ; only, unlike the Old Man of the Sea, we are very sorry for the poor man, very sorry ; and we will do almost anything for the poor man's relief—anything but get off his back." (Leo Tolstoy.)

There is, of course, no intention on the part of the advocates of either civil or military conscription that dangerous living should be the consummation of their policies. Like the Crusaders and the coercive exponents of Kultur, their aims are good, and their attempts to hack a way through are kindly meant.

But benevolent intentions do not ensure peaceful relations. The foundation of peace is Justice, and a Co-operative Commonwealth cannot be established upon physical and moral violence. The State is not entitled to take forcibly the just reward of individual or co-operative industry, or any portion of it, in taxes. The communal revenue is Land Value Rent, which belongs of right to the whole community, no one individual having a greater right to it than another. Justice, and not Might, is Right.

Those who think otherwise are obsessed with the degrading and abject superstition that slavery was the first condition of labour, or, deceived by appearances, imagine that the world is moving not towards Democracy, but the equal sharing of the National Slavery.

Like the astronomers before the time of Galileo, they survey the universe from the inside of a thought prison, which is no pivot for a correct sense of proportion. The true Socialism will be revealed when they learn to change their point of view, guided by Justice, open-eyed, with Mercy.