

there is so much distress, so much want; what is the cry that goes up? What is the current explanation of the hard times? Overproduction! There are so many clothes that men must go ragged; so much coal that in the bitter winters people have to shiver; such over-filled granaries that people actually die by starvation! Want due to over-production! Was a greater absurdity ever uttered? How can there be over-production till all have enough? It is not over-production; it is unjust distribution.

Poverty necessary! Why, think of the enormous powers that are latent in the human brain! Think how invention enables us to do with the power of one man, what not long ago could not be done by the power of a thousand. Think that in England alone the steam machinery in operation is said to exert a productive force greater than the physical force

of the population of the world, were they all adults. And yet we have only begun to invent and discover. We have not yet utilized all that has already been invented and discovered. And look at the powers of the earth. They have hardly been touched. In every direction as we look, new resources seem to open. Man's ability to produce wealth seems almost infinite—we can set no bounds to it. Look at the power that is flowing by your city in the current of the Mississippi that might be set at work for you.

So, in every direction, energy that we might utilize goes to waste; resources that we might draw upon are untouched. Yet men are delving and straining to satisfy mere animal wants; women are working, working, working their lives away, and too frequently turning in despair from that hard struggle to cast away all that makes the charm of woman.

The Human Sacrifice for Profit

If the animals can reason, what must they think of us? Look at one of those great ocean steamers ploughing her way across the Atlantic, against wind, against wave, absolutely setting at defiance the utmost power of the elements. If the gulls that hover over her were thinking beings could they imagine that the animal that could create such a structure as that could actually want for enough to eat? Yet, so it is. How many even of those of us who find life easiest are there who really live a rational life? Think of it, you who believe that there is only one life for man—what a fool at the very best is a man to pass his life in this struggle merely to live? And you who believe, as I believe, that this is not the last of man, that this is a life that opens but another life, think how nine-tenths, ay, I do not know but ninety-nine-hundredths, of all our vital powers are spent in a mere effort to get a living; or to heap together that which we cannot by any possibility take away. Take the life of the average working man. Is that the life for which the human brain was intended and the human heart was made? Look at the factories scattered thru our country. They are little better than penitentiaries.

I read in the New York papers a while ago that the girls at the Yonkers' factories had struck. The papers said that the girls did not seem to know why they had struck, and intimated that it must be just for the fun of striking. Then came out the girls' side of the story, and it appeared that they had struck

against the rules in force. They were fined if they spoke to one another, and they were fined still more heavily if they laughed. There was a heavy fine for being a minute late. I visited a lady in Philadelphia who had been a forewoman in various factories, and I asked her, "Is it possible that such rules are enforced?" She said it was so in Philadelphia. There is a fine for speaking to your next neighbor, a fine for laughing; and she told me that the girls in one place where she was employed were fined ten cents a minute for being late, tho many of them had to come for miles in winter storms. She told me of one poor girl who really worked hard one week and made \$3.50; but the fines against her were \$5.25. That seems ridiculous; it is ridiculous, but it is pathetic, and it is shameful.

But take the cases of those even who are comparatively independent and well off. Here is a man working hour after hour, day after day, week after week, in doing one thing over and over again, and for what? Just to live. He is working ten hours a day in order that he may sleep eight, and may have two or three hours for himself when he is tired out and all his faculties are exhausted. That is not a reasonable life; that is not a life for a being possessed of the powers that are in man, and I think every man must have felt it for himself. I know that when I first went to my trade I thought to myself that it was incredible that a man was created to work all day long just to live. I used to read the "Scientific American,"

and as invention after invention was heralded in that paper, I used to think to myself that when I became a man it would not be necessary to work so hard. But, on the contrary, the struggle for existence has become more and more intense. People who want to prove the contrary get up masses of statistics to show that the condition of the working classes is improving. Improvement that you have to take a statistical microscope to discover does not amount to anything. But there is not improvement.

Improvement! Why, according to the last report of the Michigan Bureau of Labor Statistics, as I read yesterday in a Detroit paper, taking all the trades, including some of the very high priced ones, where the wages are from \$6 to \$7 a day, the average earnings amount to \$1.77, and taking out waste time, to \$1.40. Now when you consider how a man can live and bring up a family on \$1.40 a day, even in Michigan, I do not think you will conclude that the condition of the working classes can have very much improved.

Here is a broad general fact that is asserted by all who have investigated the question, by such men as Hallam, the historian, and Professor Thorold Rogers, who has made a study of the history of prices as they were five centuries ago. When all the productive arts were in the most primitive state, when the most prolific of our modern vegetables had not been introduced, when the breeds of cattle were small and poor, when there were hardly any roads, and transportation was exceedingly difficult, when all manufacturing was done by hand—in that rude time the condition of the laborers of England was far better than it is today. In those rude times no man need fear want save when actual famine came, and owing to the difficulties of transportation the plenty of one district could not relieve the scarcity of another. Save in such times no man need fear want. Pauperism, such as exists in modern times, was absolutely unknown. Every one, save the physically disabled, could make a living, and the poorest lived in rude plenty. But, perhaps, the most astonishing fact brought to light by this investigation is that at that time, under those conditions, in those "dark ages," as we call them, the working day was only eight hours. While, with all our modern inventions and improvements, our working classes have been agitating and struggling in vain to get the working day reduced to eight hours.

Do these facts show improvements? Why, in the rudest state of society, in the most prim-

itive state of the arts, the labor of the natural bread-winner will suffice to provide a living for himself and for those who are dependent upon him. Amid all our inventions there are large bodies of men who cannot do this. What is the most astonishing thing in our civilization? Why, the most astonishing thing to those Sioux chiefs who were recently brought from the Far West and taken through our manufacturing cities in the East, was not the marvelous inventions that enabled machinery to act almost as if it had intellect; it was not the growth of our cities; it was not the speed with which the railway car whirled along; it was not the telegraph or the telephone that most astonished them, but the fact that amid this marvelous development of productive power, they found little children at work. And astonishing that ought to be to us; a most astounding thing!

Talk about improvement in the condition of the working classes, when the facts are that a larger and larger proportion of women and children are forced to toil. Why, I am told that, even here in your own city, there are children of thirteen and fourteen working in factories. In Detroit, according to the report of the Michigan Bureau of Labor Statistics, one-half of the children of school age do not go to school. In New Jersey, the report made to the legislature discloses an amount of misery and ignorance that is appalling. Children are growing up there, compelled to monotonous toil when they ought to be at play; children who do not know how to play; children who have been so long accustomed to work that they have become used to it; children growing up in such ignorance that they do not know what country New Jersey is in, that they never heard of George Washington, that some of them think Europe is in New York. Such facts are appalling; they mean that the very foundations of the republic are being sapped. The dangerous man is not the man who tries to excite discontent; the dangerous man is the man who says that all is as it ought to be. Such a state of things cannot continue; such tendencies as we see at work here cannot go on without bringing at last an overwhelming crash.

I say that all this poverty and the ignorance that flows from it is unnecessary; I say that there is no natural reason why we should not all be rich, in the sense, not of having more than each other, but in the sense of all having enough to satisfy completely all physical wants; of all having enough to get such an easy living that we could develop the better

part of humanity. There is no reason why wealth should not be so abundant, that no one should think of such a thing as little children at work, or a woman compelled to a toil that nature never intended her to perform; wealth so abundant that there would be no cause for that harassing fear that sometimes paralyzes even those who are not considered "the poor," the fear that every man of us has probably felt, that if sickness should smite him, or if he should be taken away, those whom he loves better than his life would become charges upon charity. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin." I believe that in a really Christian community, in a society that honored not with the lips but with the act, the doctrines of Jesus, no one would have occasion to worry about physical needs any more than

do the lilies of the field. There is enough and to spare. The trouble is that, in this mad struggle, we trample in the mire what has been provided in sufficiency for us all; trample it in the mire while we tear and rend each other.

There is a cause for this poverty; and if you trace it down, you will find its root in a primary injustice. Look over the world today—poverty everywhere. The cause must be a common one. You cannot attribute it to the tariff, or to the form of government, or to this thing or to that in which nations differ; because, as deep poverty is common to them all, the cause that produces it must be a common cause. What is that common cause? There is one sufficient cause that is common to all nations; and that is, the appropriation as the property of some, of that natural element on which and from which, all must live.

Life Harder Than in the Dark Ages

Take that fact I have spoken of, that appalling fact that, even now, it is harder to live than it was in the ages dark and rude five centuries ago—how do you explain it? There is no difficulty in finding the cause. Whoever reads the history of England, or the history of any other civilized nation (but I speak of the history of England because that is the history with which we are best acquainted) will see the reason. For century after century a Parliament composed of aristocrats and employers passed laws endeavoring to reduce wages, but in vain. Men could not be crowded down to wages that gave a mere living because the bounty of nature was not wholly shut up from them; because some remains of the recognition of the truth that all men have equal rights on the earth still existed; because the land of that country, that which was held in private possession, was only held on a tenure derived from the nation, and for a rent payable back to the nation. The church lands supported the expenses of public worship, of the maintenance of seminaries, and the care of the poor; the crown lands defrayed the expenses of the civil list; and from a third portion of the lands, those held under military tenures, the army was provided for. There was no national debt in England at that time. They carried on wars for hundreds of years, but at the charge of the landowners. And, more important still, there remained everywhere, and you can see in every old English town their traces to this day, the common lands to which any of the neighborhood was free. It was as

those lands were enclosed; it was as the commons were gradually monopolized, as the church lands were made the prey of greedy courtiers, as the crown lands were given away as absolute property to the favorites of the king, as the military tenants shirked their rents, and laid the expenses they had agreed to defray upon the nation in taxation, that bore upon industry and upon thrift—it was then that poverty began to deepen, and the tramp appeared in England, just as today he is appearing in our new States.

Now, think of it—is not land monopolization a sufficient reason for poverty? What is man? In the first place, he is an animal, a land animal, who cannot live without land. All that man produces comes from land, all productive labor in the final analysis consists in working up land; or materials are drawn from land into such forms as fit them for the satisfaction of human wants and desires. Why, man's very body is drawn from the land. Children of the soil, we come from the land, and to the land we must return. Take away from man all that belongs to the land, and what have you but a disembodied spirit? Therefore, he who holds the land on which and from which another man must live, is that man's master; and the man is his slave. The man who holds the land on which I must live can command me to life or to death just as absolutely as though I were his chattel. Talk about abolishing slavery—we have not abolished slavery—we have only abolished one rude form of it, chattel slavery. There is a deeper and more insidious form,