

The coming age, Issue 2

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PEACE -- INTERIOR AND ECONOMIC

BY BOLTON HALL

We mental scientists have acquired power in a greater or less degree,—for what? To relieve ourselves of anxieties and pains? If so, that is pure selfishness. If that be the only object, I warn you that you will lose the power. Yes; because you have enlarged your perceptions, you will suffer more than you could have suffered before.

That is the common history of those who give mental science up. They feel the new thought, are lifted up by it and appropriate to themselves all they can of it. They fail to share it with those about them, and—they lose it; the faculty which they neglect fades out.

For what is the power? To teach it to others? It will take long to instruct the immeasurable masses of mankind. The poverty and ignorance of the millions make it almost hopeless to reach even a tithe of them. Charles Booth writes of the "Submerged Tenth," it should be the submerged nine-tenths, overwhelmed with the common anxiety of how to get a living, subject to the degrading terror of losing their positions. They are bowed down with the knowledge, as they become more enlightened, that if they keep their positions it is only at the cost of keeping some one else out of a position. These people are the many, and they create the atmosphere of fear against which we mental scientists strive, and against which, if we go no farther, we must strive in vain.

To educate the leaders? That is only to fix them still more firmly upon the backs of the people; and, however they may desire it, the leaders cannot change the conditions of injustice until the people desire the change. Stephen Maybell says:

A political Utopia would be a physical heaven concealing a spiritual hell,—a monstrosity. Society cannot be made to show forth the fruits of justice, which are righteousness and peace, while the desire of justice is not in the people.

For what is the power? To do good in the world, to make men more successful in their undertakings? Suppose that I am in the dry-goods business, and that I attain a thorough poise, adopt the best methods, and make no mistakes. I will sell more goods and get more money; but no more goods will be sold on account of that. I will merely sell some which somebody else would otherwise have sold. Even if I sell them at less expense, and therefore cheaper, I do it to the injury of others, who will lose that trade, that is to say, will lose their living; for competition has reduced the profits of business to a mere living for the ordinary run of merchants.

If I farm successfully, no more produce will be eaten than if I failed, and just as many hundreds of thousands will still go hungry; for the people have only a certain amount to spend on vegetables and fruit, and I cannot increase that amount; I can only grow the amount that the market can take, which some one else would have grown had it not been for me.

Is the power in order to heal diseases? But you will save lives and thereby increase the efficiency of the workers; and we have such overpopulation already that we cry for laws restricting immigration; and we have such overproduction now that we have to consolidate and to form trusts to stop it.

Is the power to be used to enlighten men? Why? That they may attain happiness? But the more men see the more they will understand that economic conditions force them to live upon their fellows. Existence is tolerable now only because we do not know all the misery of which we are part cause. The wisest of men mourned that he saw so much; he said: "So I returned and saw all the oppression that is done under the sun; and behold the tears of them that were oppressed and there was no comforter, and on the side of the oppressors there was power; but there was no comforter. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Besides, nothing enlightens the ordinary man so much as the pain he suffers from his own folly, and nothing shows him so well that all men are his brothers as to find that he suffers for their errors as well as his own.

"If a man came to me with the gout, do you think I would heal him? "Not at all! I would show him that he ate too much and worked too little, and that as long as he lived that way he ought to have the gout!" Why should we help him to break into the kingdom of heaven physically, when he is unwilling to enter in by the gate?

So also of society. While we live upon our fellows we ought to suffer. Not only the rich who are on top, but the poor also, because, to quote again from the "Science of the Millennium," "the poor are guilty of the sins of the rich; the poor are the many and the rich are the few, and the many make the conditions of which the rich are a part."

We may humanize men. we may educate them, we may heal them, but they will, none the less, live upon the bodies of each other: for they cannot help it any more than you and I can help it now.

There is not enough employment for every one, and those who are employed do not get the full product of their toil.

Says Chief Engineer Martin of the Brooklyn Bridge: "There is scarcely a day passes that from ten to twenty men, sober and industrious,—often first-class mechanics, carpenters, engineers, machinists, etc., —do not apply at the bridge for work; and they are willing to work for any wages to support themselves and families." I could relate numberless cases of a like character, to substantiate this statement, were it

necessary.

The magistrates of the eight Brooklyn City Courts state this even more strongly in the leaflet published by the Brooklyn City Mission and Tract Society.

So that if you work, you work at the cost of keeping some one else idle, or of taking part of the reward of his labor from some one. If every one did get the full reward of his labor, where would rent of land come from? For rent is a part of the product that is taken away for permission to work at all: and every one of us must either pay rent to another or collect it for ourselves.

This is not the divine intention, and we must find out what the divine intention is, seeking out the ways of Cod, by which we have moral and economic life; for we cannot help men by merely trying to nourish our own growth.

There are three stages of moral growth, to which and by which we can help mankind economically: first, to understand that a kingdom of heaven can be attained upon earth; then to desire to get there; after that comes the knowledge of the way to the kingdom, in which we shall find our peace. For peace can never be perfect or permanent until it is merged and broadened into the peace of Cod, that is, the peace of the kingdom upon earth.

If then, we are to realize in ourselves, we must study the economic side of the universe as well as the spiritual; we must exhibit a system of society which will make peace about us possible, and accordingly we must destroy by the divinely appointed means the monopolies with which all men, willingly or unwillingly, throttle each other.

And the fruitful mother of monopolies is monopoly of land.