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Norwood Press:
J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith.
Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

PREFACE.

THESE Essays are the outcome of discussions in which the writer has been engaged on the several questions, and are partly drawn from papers contributed by him to different periodicals.

Of the subjects some are specially British, though not without interest for a citizen of the United States; others are common to both countries.

Some service may be done by bringing an important question into focus, even when the reader does not agree with the opinions of the writer. The opinions of the present writer are those of a Liberal of the old school as yet unconverted to State Socialism, who looks for further improvement not to an increase of the authority of government, but to the same agencies, moral, intellectual, and economical, which have brought us thus far, and one of which, science, is now operating with immensely increased power. A writer of this school can have no panacea or nostrum to offer; and when a nostrum or panacea is offered, he will necessarily be found rather on the critical side. He will look for improvement, not for regeneration; expect improvement still to be, as it has been, gradual; and hope much from steady, calm, and harmonious effort, little from violence or revolution. In his estimation the clearest gain reaped by the world from all the struggles through which it has been going, amidst much that is equivocal or still on trial, will be liberty of opinion.

It will be found that the subjects are treated for the most part historically, or on general principles, and that the political student has seldom encroached on the domain of the practical statesman.

The thanks of the writer are due to the proprietors and editors of the *North American Review*, the *Forum*, the *Nineteenth Century*, and the *National Review*, for their courtesy in permitting him to draw upon articles which appeared in their periodicals, as well as for the privilege which he has enjoyed of being one of their contributors.

CONTENTS.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION.

THE belief that the human lot can be levelled by economical change, and the desire to make the attempt, are at present strong; they are giving birth to a multitude of projects, and in Europe are threatening society with convulsion. In America the possession of property is as yet more widely diffused than in Europe, while the hope of possessing property is still almost universal. Eagerness to grasp a full share of the good things of the present life has been intensified by the departure, or decline, of the religious faith which held out to the unfortunate in this world the hope of indemnity in another. "If to-morrow we die, and death is the end, to-day let us eat and drink; and if we have not the wherewithal, let us see if we cannot take from those who have." So multitudes are saying in their hearts, and philosophy has not yet furnished a clear reply. Popular education has gone far enough to make the masses think, not far enough to make them think deeply; they read what falls in with their aspirations, and their thoughts run in the groove thus formed; flattering theories make way rapidly, and, like religious doctrines, are received without examination by the credulous and uncritical. The ignorant readers of a socialistic philosopher, while they are incompetent to understand or scrutinise the arguments addressed to their intellects, imbibe the appeal addressed to their feelings and desires, which are fortified by the impression that they have philosophy on their side. The number of actual Communists or Socialists in any country is as yet small compared with that of the population at large. Of what is

called Socialism in Germany much appears to be mainly a revolt against the burden of military service and taxation. Yet Socialistic ideas and sentiments spread especially among the artisan class, which is active-minded, is gathered in commercial centres, lives on wages about the rate of which there are frequent disputes, is filled with craving for pleasure by ever-present temptations, and stirred to envy by the perpetual sight of wealth. Envy is a potent factor in the movement, and is being constantly inflamed by the ostentation of the vulgar rich, who thus deserve, almost as much as the revolutionary artisans, the name of a dangerous class. This is the main source of that sort of social revolution which may be called Satanism, as it seeks, not to reconstruct, but to destroy, and to destroy not only existing political institutions, but the established code of morality, social, domestic, and personal. Satanism manifests itself in different countries under various forms and names, such as Nihilism, Intransigentism, Petrolean Communism,[1] the dynamite wing of Anarchism; Nihilism being defined with more startling sharpness than the rest, though the destructive spirit of all is the same. Social innovation is everywhere more or less allied with, and impelled by, the political and religious revolution which fills the civilised world; while the revolution in science has helped to excite the spirit of change in every sphere, little as Utopianism is akin to science.

No man with a brain and a heart can fail to be penetrated with a sense of the unequal distribution of wealth, or to be willing to try any experiment which may hold out a reasonable hope of putting an end to poverty. By the success of such an experiment, the happiness of the rich, of such, at least, of them as are good men, would be increased far more than their riches would be diminished. But only the Nihilists would desire blindly to plunge society into chaos. It is plainly beyond our power to alter the fundamental conditions of our being. There are inequalities greater even than those of

[1] One of the French Communists, it seems, rejoices in the name Lucifer Satan Vercingetorix.

wealth, which are fixed not by human lawgivers, but by nature, such as those of health, strength, and intellectual power; and these, almost inevitably, draw other inequalities with them. Injustice is human, and where inequality is the fiat, not of man, but of a power above man, it is idle, for any practical purpose, to assail it as injustice. The difference between a good and a bad workman is, partly at least, the act of nature; yet to give the same wages to the good workman and the bad, as Communists propose, while it might be just from some superhuman point of view, from the only point of view which humanity can practically attain, would be unjust.

The universe may be tending to perfection, but perfection has not yet been nor is its general law. If Schopenhauer had said that this was the worst of all conceivable worlds, he would plainly have been wrong. It is possible to conceive a world without affection, beauty, or hope; but when he said that it was the worst of all possible worlds, that is, the worst of all worlds that could subsist without dissolution, though he might still be wrong, he was not so plainly wrong. Look where we will, we see disorder, destruction, cruelty struggling with order, achievement, and beneficence. Evolutionary progress itself has gone on since the beginning of geologic time by the elimination or decimation of races, with much suffering to the eliminated or decimated. Animals live by preying on other animals, inflicting pain and sometimes torture on their prey. This is part of the constitution of the world. Can anything be less like perfect justice than the distribution of lots amongst living creatures of every kind through the whole scale? The human frame is full of imperfections, and liable to a thousand diseases, some of which may be caused by imprudence or vice, but others by mere accident. The natural character of man is full of evil and destructive passions. The world in which man lives wears everywhere the same doubtful aspect. The weather ripens the harvest and blights it; the wind wafts the ship and sinks it. An earthquake engulfs Lisbon, while they are dancing at Paris. Beauty is intermixed with ugliness. The shapeliness of the

horse, the brilliancy of the bird of paradise, are mated with the loathsomeness of the puff adder and the toad. Imperfection apparently extends as far as the telescope can range; to the solar system in which there are evidences of irregularity and wreck, as well as a moon devoid of atmosphere and covered with extinct volcanoes, and even to the universe beyond, if science has witnessed the destruction of a star. Yet some of us imagine that the law of the social frame is perfection, and that from the enjoyment of that perfection we are debarred only by iniquitous and foolish laws or by the selfishness of a privileged class, so that by repealing the laws and overthrowing, or as the Jacobins thought, guillotining, the class, we may enter into a social paradise. The French Revolution was a dead-lift effort to level the human lot and make felicity universal. It swept away abuses, a great part of which Turgot, had he been allowed to accomplish his task, might have quietly removed. But it brought on an avalanche of crime and suffering; it produced at once a disorganisation of commerce and industry, involving the deaths of a million of persons by misery; afterwards it gave birth to a military despotism and the Napoleonic wars; and it has left behind as its legacies the volcanic passions with which Europe still heaves, and which are always threatening it with earthquakes or eruptions. After all, the complaints of the French artisan about the inequalities of wealth and the distinctions of class are just as passionate as ever. Apparently, to lacerate and convulse the social organism is only too possible, to transform it is beyond our power. This does not make it the less our duty and interest to remove every social injustice that can be removed, and level every unrighteous inequality that is capable of being levelled. It limits effort only by regulating hope. It bids us look for improvement, not for regeneration, and prefer gradual reform to violent revolution.

The plans of innovation proposed vary much in character and extent. Those which here will be briefly passed in review are Communism, Socialism, Nationalisation of Land, Strikes, plans for emancipating Labour from the dominion of Capital,

and theories of innovation with regard to Currency and Banks, the most prominent of which is Greenbackism, or the belief in paper money. This seems a motley group, but it will be seen on examination, that there runs through the whole the same hope of bettering the condition of the masses without increase of industry, or of the substantial elements of wealth, and without limiting the multiplication of their numbers. Through several there runs a tendency to violence and confiscation. It may be safely said, that all the movements draw their adherents from minds of the same speculative class, and that industrial revolution is not, like industrial reform, often recruited from the ranks of steady and prosperous industry. Lassalle, the creator of German Socialism, and the brilliant genius of the whole movement, is described to us as "a fashionable dandy noted for his dress, for his dinners, and, it must be added, for his addiction to pleasure." "Chivalrous," we are told he was, "susceptible, with a genuine feeling for the poor man's case and a genuine enthusiasm for social reform; a warm friend, a vindictive enemy, full of ambition both of the nobler and more vulgar type, beset with an importunate vanity and given to primitive lusts, one in whom generous qualities and churlish throve and strove side by side, and governed or misgoverned a will to which opposition was almost a necessary and native element." [1] He was tried for sedition when he was twenty-three, upon which occasion, though his opinions can hardly have been matured, he declared himself a social democrat and revolutionary on principle. Much of his energy was spent during eight years in championing the cause of a countess, for whom he at length procured a divorce and a princely fortune, receiving as his reward a handsome annuity.

Of Lassalle, of Karl Marx, of socialistic writers generally, it may be said that they think almost exclusively of distribution, paying little attention to production. Production is the more important factor of the two, but it affords no material for the agitator. Let the fruits of labour by all means be as fairly distributed as possible, still we cannot live by distribution.

[1] See *Contemporary Socialism*, by John Rae. Page 65.

By Communism is here meant the proposal to abrogate altogether the institution of property. The reply to that proposal is that property is not an institution but a fixed element of human nature. A state of things in which a man would not think that what he had made for himself was his own, is unknown to experience and beyond the range of our conceptions. A monk may abjure property even in the work of his own hands, but he feels that this is an abnegation and a sacrifice. The author of the saying that property is theft affirmed, by his use of the word theft, the rightful existence of property, and it is highly probable that as a literary man he would have asserted his claim to copyright, which is property in its subtlest form. In early times property in land was not individual but tribal; it is so still in Afghanistan, while in Russia and Hindustan it is vested in the village community which assigns lots to the individual cultivators; still it is property; squat upon the land of an Afghan tribe, or of a village community, Russian or Hindu, in the name of humanity, and you will be ejected as certainly as if you had squatted on the land of an English squire. In primitive hunting-grounds and pastures, property was less definite; yet even these would have been defended against a rival tribe. Property in clothes, utensils, arms, must always have been individual. Declare that everything belongs to the community, still government must allot each citizen his rations; as soon as he receives them the rations will be his own, and if another tries to take them he will resist, and by his resistance affirm the principle of individual property.

Religious societies, in the fervour of their youth, have for a short time sought to seal the brotherhood of their members by instituting within their own circle a community of goods. The primitive Christians did this, but they never thought of abolishing property or proclaiming the communistic principle to society at large. Paul distinctly ratifies the principle of industry, "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." "While the land

remained," says Peter to Ananias, "did it not remain thine own; and after it was sold was it not in thy power?" Christian communism, so-called, was in fact merely a benefit fund or club; it was also short-lived; as was the communism of the Monastic orders, which soon gave way to individual proprietorship on no ordinary scale in the persons of the abbots.

Associations, called communistic, have been founded in the United States. But these have been nothing more than common homes for a small number of people, living together as one household on a joint-stock fund. Their relations to the community at large have been of the ordinary commercial kind. The Oneida Community owned works carried on by hired labour, and dealt with the outside world like any other manufacturer; nor did it make any attempt to propagate communistic opinions. A religious dictatorship seems essential to the unity and peace of these households; but where they have prospered economically the secret of their success has been the absence of children, which limited their expenses and enabled them to save money. Growing wealthy, they have ceased to proselytise, and, if celibacy was kept up, have become tontines. They afford no proof whatever of the practicability of communism as a universal system.[1]

What is the foundation of property? We do not seek for its theological foundation or for its moral foundation, but for its economical foundation. Its economical foundation is that it is the only known motive power of production. Slavery has its whip; but, saving this, no general incentive to labour other than property has yet been devised. Communists think that they can rely on love of the community, and they point to the case of the soldier who they say does his duty voluntarily from a sense of military honour. It is replied that, so far from being voluntary, a soldier's duty is prescribed by a code of exceptional severity, enforced by penalties of the sternest kind.

That the family and all its affections are closely bound up

[1] See Appendix.

with property is evident; and the Nihilist is consistent in seeking to destroy property and the family together.

Tracing property to its source, we find it has its origin, as a general rule, not in "theft," but in labour, either of the hand or of the brain, and in the frugality by which the fruits of labour have been saved. In the case of property which has been inherited, we may have to go back generations in order to reach this fact, but we come to the fact at last. Wherever the labour has been honest, good we may be sure has been done, and the wealth of society at large, as well as that of the worker, has been increased in the process. Some property has, of course, been acquired by bad means, such as gambling speculation, or unrighteous monopoly, and if we could only distinguish this from the rest, confiscation might be just; for there is nothing sacred in property apart from the mode in which it has been acquired. But the tares cannot be separated from the wheat; discrimination is impossible; all that we can do is to discourage as much as may be bad modes of acquisition and refuse to pay homage to wealth ill acquired. Hereditary wealth, owned by those who have themselves not worked for it, strikes us as injustice; often it is the moral ruin of the heir, who sinks into a worthless sybarite. To prevent its excessive accumulation is a proper object of the lawgiver, and in fact such has been the tendency of legislation wherever inheritance is not bound up with political institutions such as the House of Lords. But to abolish inheritance seems out of the question. Bequest is merely a death-bed gift; if we forbid a man to bequeath his wealth, he will give it away in his lifetime, rather than leave it to be confiscated. A great inducement to saving will thus be lost, and without saving where would be the means of increased production, and how would the economical world advance? The waste of hereditary wealth in idle hands is to be deplored. But we have admitted that this is economically as well as physically an imperfect world. After all, in an industrial and commercial community like the United States, or even England, the amount of inherited wealth must bear a small proportion to

that which is the product of industry and for which service has been rendered to the community by its possessor.

That wealth is often abused, fearfully abused, is too true; so are strength, intellect, power, and opportunities of all kinds. It is also true that nothing can be more miserable or abject than to live in idleness by the sweat of other men's brows. But this is felt, in an increasing degree, by the better natures; private fortunes are more held subject to the moral claims of the community; a spontaneous communism is thus making way, and notably, as every observer will see, in the United States. Charitable and benevolent institutions rise on all sides. In the United States munificence was not arrested even by the Civil War. This under the dead level system of Socialism would necessarily cease, and would have to be replaced by taxation administered by State officials. The sight of wealth no doubt adds a moral sting to poverty. The ostentation of it, therefore, ought to be avoided, even on the ground of social prudence, by the rich. But the increase of wealth, instead of aggravating, improves the lot even of the poorest. In wealthy communities the destitute are relieved; in the savage state they die.

By Socialism is meant the theory of those who for free markets, industrial liberty, competition, private contract, and the present agencies of commerce, propose in various degrees to introduce regulation and remuneration of industry by "the State." What is the State? People seem to suppose that there is something outside and above the members of the community which answers to this name, and which has duties and a wisdom of its own. But duties can attach only to persons, wisdom can reside only in brains. The State, when you leave abstractions and come to facts, is nothing but the government, which can have no duties but those which the constitution assigns it, nor any wisdom but that which is infused into it by the mode of appointment or election. What, then, is the government which Socialism would set up, and to which it would intrust powers infinitely greater than those which any

ruler has ever practically wielded, with duties infinitely harder than those which the highest political wisdom has ever dared to undertake? This is the first question which the Socialist has to answer. His school denounces all existing governments, and all those of the past, as incompetent and unjust. What does he propose to institute in their room, and by what process, elective or of any other kind, is the change to be made? Where will he find the human material out of which he can frame this earthly Providence, infallible and incorruptible, whose award shall be unanimously accepted as superior to all existing guarantees for industrial justice? The chiefs of industry are condemned beforehand as tyrannical capitalists. Will the artisan submit willingly to the autocratic rule of his brother? If he would, is it conceivable that a man whose life had been spent in manual or mechanical labour would be fit for supreme rule? The question, What is the government to be, once more, presents itself on the threshold and demands an answer. To accept an unlimited and most searching despotism without knowing to whose hands it is to be entrusted would evidently be madness. Curiously enough, from nearly the same quarter from which comes Socialism, with its demand for paternal government, comes also Anarchism, demanding that there shall be no government at all. It is idle to form theories, whether economical or social, without considering the actual circumstances under which they are to be applied, and the means and possibilities of carrying them into effect. This is the merest truism, yet it is one which, so far as we know, Socialism neglects.

Despotic a government must be, in order to secure submission to its assignment of industrial parts and to its award of wages, especially if the wages are to be measured not by the amount or quality of the work, but by some higher law of benevolence or desert. Despotic it must be to enable it to compel indolence to work at all. Its power, practically, must be made to extend beyond the sphere of industry to social, domestic, and individual life. Resistance to its decrees could not be permitted, nor could it be deposed in case of tyranny

or abuse. Liberty, in short, would be at an end, and it is difficult to see how progress could survive liberty. The inventor of each utopia assumes the finality of his system. He takes it for granted that time, having now produced its perfect fruit, will bear no more. But history and science tell us that time is likely to bear new fruit without end.

Assignment of manual labour and payment for its performance by a paternal government are conceivable, though not practically feasible. But how could men be told off for intellectual labour, for scientific research, for invention? Could the socialistic ruler pick out a Shakespeare, a Newton, or an Arkwright, set him to his work and pay him while he was about it? What security would there be against a lapse into intellectual barbarism? Is not Socialism a manual labourer's dream? Of the artisans whom these theories flatter, all whose trades minister to literature, art, or refinement would be in danger of finding themselves without work.

Some Socialists propose to cut up the industrial and commercial world into phalansteries, or sections of some kind, for the purposes of their organisation. But industry and commerce are networks covering the whole globe. To what phalanstery would the sailors, the railway men, and the traders between different countries be assigned?

Take any complex product of human labour, say, a piece of cotton goods worth a penny. Let the Socialist trace out, as far as thought will go, the industries which, in various ways, and in different parts of the world, have contributed to the production, including the making of machinery, shipbuilding, and all the employments and branches of trade ancillary to these; let him consider how, by the operation of economic law, under the system of industrial liberty, the single penny is distributed among all these industries justly, "even to the estimation of a hair," and then let him ask himself whether his government, or his group of governments, is likely to do better than nature.

Socialists claim the Factory laws as a recognition of their principle and as opening the door of industrial revolution.

But it is difficult to see why the enforcement of hygienic regulations or safeguards for life and limb is more socialistic in the case of a factory than in the case of a city, or why the protection of women and children who cannot protect themselves against industrial cruelty and abuse is more socialistic than the protection of them against wife-beating or infanticide. How far legislation shall go in this direction must be determined not by any theory, socialistic or anti-socialistic, but by the character and circumstances of the particular community. In some communities strict legislation will be required in cases where in others individual intelligence and individual sense of duty will suffice. That the Factory Acts have not induced any radical change in the industrial system the complaints of the Socialists themselves are proof.

Ownership of public establishments and services, again, is a question apart, defined by the necessities of government, and involves nothing socialistic. Government obviously must own everything necessary to public order or national defence; it must own the postal service, to which its protection is plainly necessary, and to the postal service the telegraphic service may be reasonably united. On the other hand, the National workshops at Paris, the creation of the socialist Louis Blanc, were a failure; even the Government dock-yards in England, though rendered necessary by the exigencies of national defence, are said to be conducted less economically than private ship-yards. Australians tell us that with them government ownership of railways answers well. There is no reason why it should not, provided the government is pure. The cost of competing lines is saved, and if the stimulus of competitive enterprise is withdrawn, that of administrative emulation may take its place. Countries might be named which, if the government owned railways as well as subsidised them, would be plunged into corruption. In all government establishments there is danger of corruption, still more of laziness, torpor, and somnolent routine.

More truly socialistic is the assumption by the State of the duty of popular education. The prevailing opinion is that it is

the manifest duty of the State to provide schools for everybody's children out of the public taxes. It might be thought that nothing was more manifest than the duty of every man to provide education as well as food and clothes for his own children, since it is by his act that they come into the world; or less manifest than the duty of the prudent man who defers marriage till he has the means of bringing up a family, to provide as a tax-payer for the schooling of the children of his less prudent neighbours. The wisdom which sets itself above justice ought to be very high. There are some, it seems, who would not only educate the children of the poor gratuitously, that is, out of the public taxes, but would give the school children meals and even clothes at the public expense. They can scarcely doubt that of such a system of almsgiving, widespread pauperism would be the fruit. When the duty is undertaken by the State, parental duty in regard to education and whatever goes with it of family character, must expire. Let those who think that the intellectual fruits of the State machine substituted for voluntary agencies are entirely satisfactory, read the series of papers in the New York *Forum*,[1] giving an account of a tour of inspection among the public schools of the United States. The formation of character and manners the system hardly professes. If it did, the manners would too often belie the claim. It lacks motive power in that line. The original New England school was the school of a small group of families carried on under the eyes of the parents, not unparental, therefore, and it was intensely religious. These conditions are changed. Politics too and ward-demagogism lay their hands on the election of school trustees. The high schools are largely accused of helping to set the farmer's sons and daughters above farm work, and sending them, for what they think higher employment, to the already over-crowded cities. If this or any other mischief is being done, there is no remedy. You cannot stop the State machine. What is voluntary, when it fails, stops of itself. However, State education is commended to us on the ground of political necessity. We are

[1] Vols. IV., V., and VI.

told that we must educate our masters. Popular ignorance with popular suffrage would be fatal to the community. This puts State education not on socialistic grounds but on that of political necessity, and necessity, whether political, military, or sanitary, must be supreme. The worst of it is that unless the truancy laws are more strictly enforced than is usually possible in a democracy, the dangerous classes are not in school.

Differentiation marks advance, and a centralisation which should reduce all functions to those of a single organ, would be not an advance but a degradation in the political as in the animal world.

A special form of Socialism is Agrarianism, which demands the Nationalisation of Land. This has received an impulse from recent legislation for Ireland. Not that the Irish tenant farmer is an agrarian socialist, or a socialist of any kind; what he wants is to oust the landlord, and have the farm to himself; if you demand, as a member of the community, a share of his land, he will give you six feet of it. He exacts a heavy rent for a little croft from the farm labourer in his employment. The sirens of Nationalisation have sung to him in vain. Nor did the framers of the Land Acts profess to abrogate or assail private property in land; they professed only to adjust by legislation a dispute between two classes of property-holders which threatened the peace of the State. But the natural consequences have been a general disturbance of ideas, and an increase of hope and activity among the apostles of agrarian revolution.

These theorists hold that private property in land is "a bold, base, enormous wrong, like that of chattel slavery." Mr. Herbert Spencer had said, "Had we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of its heritage, we might make short work of the matter." To which the Nationalist replies: "Why not make short work of the matter anyhow? For this robbery is not like the robbery of a horse or a sum of money, that ceases with the act. It is a fresh and continuous robbery that goes on every day and every hour." It is proposed

to forfeit, either openly, or under the thin disguise of a use of the taxing power, every man's freehold, even the farm which the settler has just reclaimed by the sweat of his own brow from the wilderness; and it is emphatically added, in language which sounds like the exultation of injustice, that no compensation is due; the man being merely ejected from that which never belonged to him, as a wrongful possessor is ejected by a court of law. That the State has, by the most solemn and repeated guarantees, ratified private proprietorship and undertaken to protect it, matters nothing; nor even that it has itself recently sold the land of the proprietor, signed the deed of sale, and received the payment. Aghast, perhaps, at his own proposal, the reformer afterwards suggests that in mercy, not of right, compensation for improvements, though not for the land may be granted. But if the nation compensates for all improvements, it may as well at once give a deed of quit claim for the land.

In the first place, how do the Nationalisers mean to carry into effect their schemes of resumption? They can hardly suppose that large classes will allow themselves to be stripped of all they possess, and turned out with their wives and children to beggary, without striking a blow for their freeholds. There would probably be civil war, in which it is by no means certain that the agrarian philosopher and his disciples would get the better of the owners and tillers of land; while, if they did, social peace would hardly ensue.

In the second place, as it is to the government that all land, or the rent of all land, is to be made over, we must ask the agrarian socialist, what form of government he means to give us? The theorists themselves denounce, as loudly as any one, the knavery and corruption of the politicians, who would hardly be made pure and upright simply by putting the management of all the land of the nation into their hands. Utopians are always forgetting that in introducing their systems they will have to deal with the world as it is.

Why is property in land thus singled out for forfeiture; and why are its holders selected for especial denunciation? Be-

cause, say the Nationalisers, the land is the gift of God to mankind, and ought not to be appropriated by any individual owner. This would preclude appropriation by a nation, as well as appropriation by a man; but let that pass. In every article which we use, in the paper and type of the very book which advocates confiscation, there are raw materials and natural forces, which are just as much the gift of God as the land. God made the wool of which your coat is woven to grow on the sheep's back, and endowed steam with the power to work the engine of the mill. God, for the matter of that, gave every man his brain and his limbs. Land is worth nothing, it is worth no more than the same extent of sea, till it is brought under cultivation by labour, which must be that of particular men. The value is the creation of individual labour and capital, in this case, as in the case of a manufacture. Circumstances, such as the growth of neighbouring cities, may favour the landowners. Circumstances may favour any owner or producer. They may also be unfavourable to any owner or producer, as they have been of late to the landowners and agricultural producers in England; and unless the State means to protect the holder of property against misfortune it has surely no right to mulct him for his good luck. The coal and iron beds of Wyoming and Montana, we are told, which to-day are valueless, will in fifty years from now be worth millions on millions, simply because in the meantime population will have greatly increased. They will be worth nothing unless they are worked, and where is the wrong if metals or beef or wool or anything else is worth more to the producer when produced in the midst of a swarming population than when produced in a desert?

Nor is there anything specially unjust, or in any way peculiar, about the mode in which the labourer on land is paid by the landowner or capitalist. Every labourer virtually draws his pay from the moment when he begins his work. He draws it in credit, which enables him to get what he wants at the baker's and grocer's, if not at once in cash.

All land will, of course, fall under the same rule. The lot

on which the mechanic has built his house, will be nationalised as well as the ranch.

It would appear that natural produce, being equally with the land the gift of the Creator, should be equally exempt from the possibility of lawful ownership, so that we should be justified in repudiating our milk bills because cows feed on grass.

Is Poverty the offspring of land-ownership or the land laws? Any one who is not sailing on the wings of a theory can answer that question by looking at the facts before his eyes. Poverty springs from many sources, personal and general; from indolence, infirmity, age, disease, intemperance; from the failure of harvests and the decline of local trade; from the growth of population beyond the means of subsistence. If the influence of the last cause is denied, let it be shown what impelled the migrations by which the earth has been peopled. Poverty has existed on a large scale in great commercial cities, which the land laws could but little affect, and even in cities like Venice, which had no land at all.

The increase of poverty itself is a fiction. The number of people, in all civilised countries, living in plenty and comfort, has vastly increased; and though, with a vast increase in numbers, there is necessarily a positive increase of misfortune and destitution, even the poorest are not so ill off now as they were in the times of primitive barbarism, when famine stalked through the unsettled tribes, though there was no "monopoly" of land. The London slums are hideous, but they are a mere spot in a vast expanse of decent homes, which is represented as not only the mate of poverty, but its source. The two or three millions of English in the days of the Plantagenets had more room and larger shares of the free gifts of nature than the thirty millions have now. But the working classes of those days lived in chimneyless hovels, and, as Dr. Jessop thinks, had, in Norfolk, but a single garment, not more wearing linen then than wear silk now. Loathsome diseases such as leprosy were common, and a third of the population was carried off at once by the Black Death. Local famines were

frequent, owing to the want of machinery of distribution. If dissatisfaction was not manifested in strikes, it was manifested in the insurrection of Wat Tyler. Is there less poverty in unprogressive countries, such as the kingdoms of the East, or Spain and Italy, than in those which have been the seats of progress? That, of the increased wealth of England and other industrial countries, the largest share has gone to wages seems to be clearly proved. Nor can it be doubted that the remuneration of manual labour has risen, compared with that of intellectual work.

We cannot all be husbandmen or personally make any use of land. What we want, as a community, is that the soil shall produce as much food as possible, so that we may all live in plenty; and facts as well as reason seem to show that a high rate of production is attained only where tenure is secure. The greater the security of tenure, the more of his labour and capital the husbandman will put into the land, and the larger the harvest will be. It has been said, and though an overstatement, the saying has truth in it, that if you give a man the freehold of a desert, he will make it a garden, and if you give him the lease of a garden, he will make it a desert. The spur which proprietorship lends to industry is proverbially keen in the case of ownership of land. The French peasant is a remarkable proof of this. Originally, all ownership was tribal; and if tribal ownership has, in all civilised countries, given place to private ownership, this is the verdict of civilisation in favour of the present system. Where tribal ownership has lingered, as in Russia and in Afghanistan, general barbarism has lingered with it. The idea that a wicked company of land-grabbers aggressed upon the public property, and set up a monopoly in their own favour, is a fancy as baseless as the Social Contract of Rousseau, or any of the other figments respecting social origins which our knowledge of primeval history has dispelled. Did this extraordinary fit of spoliation come without concert upon every one of the countries now included in the civilised world? Where are the records or the traces of this series of events?

Is it intended that the tenure of those who are to hold the land under the State shall be secure? If it is, nothing will have been gained; private property, and what, to excite odium, is called monopoly, though there are hundreds of thousands of proprietors, will return under another form. The only result will be a change of the name from freeholder to something expressive of concession in perpetuity by the State; and this will be obtained at the expense of a shock to agriculture the immediate effect of which might be a dearth. That we have all a right to live upon the land is a proposition, in one sense, absurd, unless the cities are to be abandoned, and we are to revert to the primeval state; in another sense, true, though subject to the necessary limit of population. But what Nationalisation practically proposes is, that a good many of us, instead of living, shall, by reduced production, be deprived of bread and either be driven into exile or die.

The Nationalisation movement sometimes assumes the name of the Single Tax movement, which promises us unspeakable benefits if we will throw the whole burden of taxation on unimproved land. Who would be found to hold land? Shift the incidence of taxation as you will, it makes itself felt directly or indirectly by the whole community. If justice is to reign in the fiscal region, the service rendered by government, whether national or municipal, ought to be as far as possible the measure of taxation, and there is nothing to which government and police render so little service as unimproved land.

When we talk of Nationalising, it is well to remember, that though territory is still national, nations no longer live upon the produce of their own territory alone, and that the scope of plans of change must be enlarged so as to embrace the commercial world.

A milder school of agrarian socialists proposes to confiscate only what it calls the unearned increment of land, that is, any additional value which, from time to time, may accrue through the action of surrounding circumstances and the general progress of the community, without exertion or outlay on the part of the individual owner. Very sharp and skilful inspectors

would be required to watch the increase and to draw the line. A question might also arise, whether, if unearned increment is to be taken away, accidental decrement ought not to be made good. But here, again, we must ask, why landed property alone is to be treated in this way? Property of any kind may grow more valuable without effort or outlay on the owner's part. Is the State to seize upon all the premium on stocks? A mechanic buys a pair of boots; the next day leather goes up; is the State to take toll of the mechanic's boots?

The fact is, that the vision of certain economists is distorted, and their views are narrowed by hatred of the landlord class. Too many landlords are idle and useless members of society, especially in old countries, under the operation of lingering feudal laws; but owners of other kinds of hereditary property are often idle and useless too. That the land should have been so improved as to be able to pay the owner as well as the cultivator, does the community no harm. This we see plainly, where the owner, instead of being a rich man, is a charitable institution. Nor, is any outcry raised, when the same person, being owner and cultivator, unites with the wages of one the revenue of the other. The belief that there is some evil mystery in rent, has been fostered by the metaphysical disquisitions of economists, who seem to have been entrapped by their disregard of any language but one. Rent is nothing but the hire of land, and there is no more mystery about it than there is about the hire of a machine or a horse. In Greek, the word for the hire of land and of a chattel is the same.

The desire of confiscating the property of landowners is, in European countries, closely connected with the objects of political revolution. But public spoliation, though it might commence, would not end here, nor would there be any ground for fixing this as its limit. Let a reason be given for confiscating real estate honestly acquired, and the same reason will hold good for confiscating personalty, the labourer's wages, and the copyright of the author and the plant of the journalist who wins popularity by advocating spoliation of his neigh-

bour. If property is theft, the property in the Savings Bank is theft like the rest.

Peasant proprietorship is as much opposed as anything can possibly be to nationalisation of land; so the Nationalisers, when they approach the peasant proprietor, speedily find. But there are some who look to it with unbounded hope. The political arguments in its favour are well known; among them is the adamantine resistance which it offers to communism of all kinds. Economical considerations are apparently against it, since a farmer on the great scale in Dakota will raise as much grain with a hundred labourers as is raised by ten times the number of French peasants. Socially there are arguments both ways. The advantage, and, indeed, the ultimate existence of the manorial system, must depend upon the presence of the landowner upon his estate and his performance of his duties to his tenants. But the life of the peasant in France, and even in Switzerland, is hard, and sometimes almost barbarous, while he can scarcely tide over a bad harvest without falling into the money-lender's hands. On the American continent, where the people are more educated, their tendency seems to be, when they can, to exchange life on the farm, which they find dull and lonely, for the more social life of the city. Perhaps the time may come when agriculture will be carried on scientifically, and upon a large scale, to furnish food for an urban population. The life on a great farm will be social, and will exercise higher intelligence than spade labour. England, the enthusiasts of peasant proprietorship should remember, is organised on the manorial system, not only with manor houses but with large farms and large farm buildings to correspond. Do they intend to clear away the large farm buildings as well as the manor houses, and to construct a set adapted to small holdings in their room?

Liberation of labour from the exactions of the capitalist is the hope of those who set on foot co-operative works. These, hitherto, have generally failed from inability to wait for the

market, and tide over bad times, from want of a guiding hand, and from the unwillingness of the artisan to resign his independence and his liberty of moving from place to place; though the last cause is less operative with the submissive Frenchman than with his sturdy English or American compeer. Capital, spelt with a big initial letter, swells into a malignant giant, the personal enemy of labour; spelt in the natural way, it is simply that with which labour starts on any enterprise, and without which no labour can start at all, unless it be that of the savage grubbing roots with his nails. It includes a spade as well as factory plant that has cost millions; it includes everything laid out in education or training. We might as well talk of emancipating ourselves from the tyranny of food or air. Every co-operative association must have some capital to begin with, either of its own or borrowed, the lender, in the latter case, representing the power of large capital just as much as any employer. The aggregation of great masses of capital in one man's hands is a social danger, and one against which legislators ought, by all fair means, to guard, though it is sometimes not without a good aspect; witness the New York Central Railroad, which could hardly have been brought to its present state by managers under the necessity of providing an equally large dividend every year. But the operation of the joint-stock principle, it seems, is evidently producing a gradual change in this respect. It will often be found that the rate of profit made by a great capitalist is far from excessive, though his total gains may be large. Mr. Brassey's total gains were large, but the rate of his profits did not exceed five per cent, while it is very certain that without him ten thousand workmen, destitute of capital, scientific skill, and powers of command, could not have built the Victoria Bridge. Co-operative farming seems to hold out more hope than co-operative manufactures. Still it would need capital and a head.

To get rid of competition, and substitute for it fraternity among workers, is the other aim of co-operation. But the

co-operative societies must compete with each other, while, as buyers, having regard to cheapness in their purchases, they will themselves be always ratifying the principle of competition, and, at the same time, that of paying the workmen not on the fraternal principle, but according to the amount and value of his work. Every heart must be touched by fraternity and wish that co-operation could take the place of competition, which, in its grinding severity, is too like many other things in this hard world. But, after all, choose any manufactured article, consider the multitude of people who in various trades and different countries have co-operated in the production, yet have not competed with each other, and it will be seen that, even as things are, there is more of co-operation than of competition among the workers.

Co-operative stores have nothing but a misleading name in common with co-operative works. They simply bring the consumer into direct relation with the producer, and give him the benefit of wholesale prices, which may be perfectly well done, so long as the officers of the association can be trusted to exercise for the society the same degree of skill and integrity in the selection of goods which the retail tradesman exercises for himself. Retail establishments, however, of the ordinary kind, but on a large scale, like that of the late A. T. Stewart, in New York, with low prices, and, best of all, ready-money payment, afford the practical benefits of co-operation.

From Unionism and strikes, again, too much seems to have been hoped by the workingman. They have not seldom enabled him to make a fairer bargain with the master, and they are perfectly lawful; though it is daily becoming more apparent that the community, to save itself from the misuse of Unionist power, must steadfastly guard the liberties of the Non-union men. But the idea that strikes can, to an unlimited, or, even, to a great extent raise wages, seems unfounded. The screw may be put upon the master, but it cannot be put upon the community; and it is the community, not the master, that is the real employer. The community

which buys the goods ultimately settles the price, and, thereby, finally determines the wages of the producers, notwithstanding any momentary extortion; nor can it be constrained, by striking, in the end to give more than it thinks fit and can afford. The workman who strikes himself buys everything as cheap as he can, and in so doing he is keeping down the wages of those whose labour produces the article to the lowest point in his power. By strikes, carried beyond a certain point, capital may be driven away, and the trade may be ruined, as trades have been ruined, but the rate of wages will not be raised. The master, though he is the immediate employer, is the agent through whom the community pays the workmen. To the men, his commercial relation is at bottom that of a partner, taking out of the earnings of the business the share which is due for capital, risk, and guidance. Masters are beginning to mark this fact in a kindly way, by giving shares in the concern or premiums to the men, while they retain the guidance in their own hands.

Strikers should never forget that they are themselves buyers as well as producers, and, therefore, employers as well as employed; so that if they can strike against the rest of the community, the other trades can strike against them, and wages being thus raised all round, nobody will gain anything. They ought also to remember that they are parts of an industrial organism, on the well-being of which as a whole that of all its members depends, and which is deranged as a whole by the disturbance of any portion of it. A strike in one section of a trade throws out of work hundreds of men, women, and children, in the other sections. A strike in certain departments, such as that of railways, will stop the wheels of commerce and industry; in others, it will cause incalculable loss and suffering. Suppose, when an artisan had been hurt by the machinery, the surgeons were to put their heads out of the window and say they were on strike.

Artisans are in the habit of speaking of themselves exclusively as workingmen. Everybody who is not idle is a workingman, whether he works with his brain or with his hands,

and whatever part he may play in the service of a varied and complex civilisation.

We may relegate political economy to Saturn but we shall find that it will return. Malthus will return; not the immoral ogre painted by fancy, but the perfectly moral and benevolent observer, who pointed out a most important fact, though he partly overlooked the limitations. If the number of guests at the table of life is increased without limit, each man's share of the feast must be diminished or some must go unfed. If by the growth of the artisan population the labour market is overcrowded, strike as often as you will, there cannot be employment with good wages for all. The idea that multiplication of labourers, without increase of the natural means of production, will increase the produce seems to possess some minds, but it scarcely needs confutation.

It cannot be doubted that these unhappy wars between employer and employed have given birth to a set of men who subsist by industrial war. In the journals and speeches of these men nothing is said about the improvement which the artisan might make in his own condition by thrift, temperance, and husbandry of his means; he is told only of the advantage which he might gain by industrial revolution. Nor is anything said about the efforts which undeniably are being made by the employer and by society at large to raise the lot of the artisan. Before the men themselves the hope of rising into a higher grade of industry is not set. They are led to regard themselves as destined to the end of their days to be members of a union of wage-earners always doing battle with their masters. The artisan is always the "toiler," the other classes are "spoilers," and the drift of the preaching is that the spoilers ought to be made to disgorge, and are lucky if they escape condign punishment. The underlying notion seems to be that capitalists and the wealthy class, whatever may be done to them, will always be in existence and will present themselves like sheep for an annual shearing. But these sheep, once sheared, will grow no more wool. Men will not earn and save wealth for the despoiler.

Then there is the hope of vastly increasing the wealth of the world in general, and that of the poorer class in particular, by means of an inconvertible Paper Currency. Of this illusion, it may be truly said, that not the wildest dreams of the alchemist, or of those adventurers who sailed in quest of an Eldorado, were a more extraordinary instance of the human power of self-deception. Among the champions of paper currency there are, no doubt, many who know too well what they are about, and whose aim is to defraud the creditor, public and private, by paying off the debt with depreciated paper, an operation the sweetness of which, in the United States, under the Legal Tender Act, has been already tasted. But there are also honest enthusiasts, not a few, who sincerely believe that a commercial millennium could be opened by merely issuing a flood of promissory notes and refusing payment. This prodigious fallacy has its origin simply in the equivocal use of a word. We have got into the habit of applying the name money to paper bank-notes as well as to coin. The paper being current as well as the coin, we fancy that with both alike we buy goods. But the truth is that we buy only with the coin, to which, alone, the name money ought to be applied. The bank-note is an instrument of credit, like a cheque; not money itself, but an order and a security for a sum of money, which, the note being payable on demand, can be drawn by the holder from the bank, or the government, when he pleases. When a man receives a bank-note, he has virtually so much coin as the note represents put to his account at the bank by which the note is issued. The note is a promissory note, and the bank in increasing the number of its notes, like a trader who increases the number of his promissory notes, adds, not to its wealth, but to its liabilities. In the slip of paper there is no value or purchasing power; nor can any legislature put value or purchasing power into it. Greenbackers point to the case of postage stamps, into which, they say, value has been put by legislation. But a postage stamp is simply a receipt for a certain sum paid to the government in coin, and, in consideration of which, the

government undertakes to carry the letter to which the receipt is affixed.

No paper money, it is believed, has ever yet been issued except in the promissory form, pledging the issuer to pay in coin, upon demand, so that each note, hitherto, has borne upon the face of it a flat denial and abjuration of the Greenback theory. Suppose the promissory form to be discarded, and the bill to be simply inscribed "one dollar," as the Fiat-money men propose, what would "dollar" mean? It would mean, say the Greenbackers, a certain proportion of the wealth of the country, upon which, as an aggregate, the currency would be based. What proportion? Let us know what we have in our purse, and what we can get in exchange for the paper dollar on presentation; otherwise commerce cannot go on. This, however, is not the most serious difficulty. The most serious difficulty is that while the coin, which a convertible bank-note represents, is the property of the bank of issue, the aggregate wealth of the country is not the property of the government, but of a multitude of private owners. The government is the possessor of nothing except the public domain and a taxing power, the exercise of which it is bound to confine to the actual necessities of the State. In issuing an order for a loaf of bread, a coat, or a leg of mutton, to be taken from the possessions of the community at large, it would be simply signing a ticket of spoliation.

Ask the Fiat-money men whether they are prepared to take their own money for taxes, and you will get an ambiguous reply. Some of them have an inkling of the fatal truth, and answer that the taxes must be paid in gold. The faith of others is more robust. But it has been reasonably inquired why the government, if it can with a printing machine coin money at its will, should pester citizens for taxes at all.

That the foreigner will take the national Fiat-money, nobody seems to pretend. Yet, if there is real value in it, why should he not? All the better, say the Greenbackers; if he will not take our money, he will have to take our goods. Then you will have to take his goods, and the commercial world will be

reduced again to barter without a common measure of value, which would not be a great advance in convenience or in civilisation. Besides, trade is not merely a direct interchange of commodities between two countries; it is circulation of them among all countries, the United States sending cotton to England, England calico to China, and China tea to the United States, which, without a common standard of value, would be next to impossible.

In one sense, of course, government can, by its fiat, put value into paper. It can make the paper legal tender for debts; in other words, it can issue licenses of repudiation, and these licenses will retain a value till all existing debts have been repudiated, and all existing creditors cheated; but from that time their value will cease, since everybody, from the moment of their issue, will refuse to advance money, or sell on credit.

In all the cases known to economical history in which governments have issued inconvertible paper, depreciation has ensued, and such value as the paper has retained has been exactly in proportion to the hope of resumption. When cash payments were suspended in England, at the crisis of the French war, the depreciation was comparatively small, simply because the hope of resumption was strong. The guillotine was plied in vain to arrest the rapid fall of French Assignats, though these were not absolutely fiat-money, but bonds secured on the national domains, which were good security for the original issue. Confederate paper money, with the defeat of the Confederacy, lost the whole of its value, or retained a shadow of it only through stock-jobbing tricks. In San Domingo a gentleman, having tendered a silver American dollar in payment for his coffee, received from the surprised and delighted keeper of the coffee-house an armful of paper change. Washington, while he was saving his country, was being robbed through the operation of inconvertible paper currency of part of his private estate; and the effects, moral and political, as well as commercial, of the system, during the Revolutionary War, were such that Tom Paine, no timid or

squeamish publicist, recommended that death should be made the penalty of any proposal to renew it. In all cases where specie payment has been resumed, the State, in addition to the loss incurred through disturbance and demoralisation of commerce, has paid heavily for the temporary suspension, because its credit has been suspended at the same time, and it has had to borrow on terms worse than those which it could have obtained in the money market, had its integrity been preserved.

The value is in the gold. It is in exchange for the gold that, whenever a sale takes place, the commodity is given. Trade was originally barter, and, in the sense of being always an interchange of things deemed really equivalent in value, it is barter still. I give a cow for three sheep, and then give the three sheep for a plough, which it is my ultimate object to purchase. What the three sheep here do in a single transaction, is done in transactions generally by gold. This fundamental and vital fact is obscured by the language even of some economists who are sound in principle, but who speak of the precious metals as though their value were conventional, and like that of symbols or counters. It is nothing of the kind. The first man who gave anything in exchange for gold or silver, must have done so because he deemed gold or silver really valuable; so does the last. The precious metals, probably, attracted at first by their beauty, their rarity, and their natural qualities; then, they were felt to have special advantages as mediums of exchange and universal standards of value, on account of their durability, their uniformity, their portability, their capability of receiving a stamp, of being divided with exactness, and of being fused again with ease. Thus they, and, in the upshot, gold, displaced all the other articles, such as copper, iron, leather, shells, which, in primitive times, or under pressure of circumstances, were adopted as mediums of exchange and standards of value. As was said in the time of Edward VI. in a protest against the debasement of the currency, "By the whole consent of the world gold and silver have gotten the estimation above all other metals, as

metest to make money and be conserved as a treasure: which estimation cannot be altered by a part or little corner of the world, though the estimation were had but on a fanciful opinion, where indeed it is grounded upon good reason, according to the gifts that nature hath wrought in those metals whereby they be metest to use for exchange, and to be kept for a treasure: so as in that kind they have gotten the sovereignty, like as for other purposes other metals do excel."[1] But the precious metals have now the additional value derived from immemorial and immutable prescription, which would render it practically impossible to oust them, even if a substance promising greater advantages for the purpose could be found. The French Republicans tried to change the era, and make chronology begin with the first year of the Republic, instead of beginning with the birth of Christ. But they found that they were pulling at a tree, the roots of which were too completely entwined with all existing customs and ideas to be torn up. It would not be less difficult to alter the medium of exchange and standard of value over the whole commercial world. A value which is moral, or dependent on opinion, is not the less real; the value of diamonds, as symbols of wealth and rank, may be dependent, not only on opinion, but on fancy, yet it is real so long as it lasts. An enormous find of gold would, of course, by putting an end to its rarity, destroy its value; this is a risk which commerce runs, but it does not seem to be great. Any inconvenience that might arise from the bulk and weight of the precious metals, is indefinitely diminished, while in use they are vastly, and in an increasing degree, economised by the employment of bank-notes and other paper securities, for gold, which are currency, though money they are not.

There ought surely to be no such thing as Legal Tender, even in the case of convertible paper currency, either on the part of the government or on the part of private banks. It is plain injustice to compel us to take anybody's paper as gold. If the government is solvent and its security is

[1] See Mr. Richard Bagley's *Ireland under the Tudors*, Vol. I., p. 371.

good, the paper is sure to be taken in preference to carrying about a weight of specie. Legal Tender confuses the ideas of the people, shakes commercial morality, and prepares the way for the attempts of the Fiat-money man, and for all the mischief which they breed.

Of Bimetallism we must speak with respect, since it has such an advocate as Mr. Grenfell. Yet the answer to the question seems to have been given with characteristic force and pungency by Lowe: "I congratulate you on the discovery of the philosopher's stone. If saying that one metal shall be equal in value to another can make it equal, you are fairly entitled to claim to have discovered the secret of boundless riches. But why bimetallism only? Why not trimetallism or quadrimetallism? It is as easy to say that copper is equal to gold as silver." Gold and silver are two commodities, each of which has its value settled by qualities and circumstances over which legislatures have no control. Relative or proportional value can no more be legislated into a commodity than can absolute value. By the act of a government or a combination of governments, silver or any other metal may authoritatively be made legal tender in a certain proportion to gold, so far as the power of that government or combination of governments extends. This may be done with greater ease if the community or communities are not in active commercial intercourse with the rest of the world. To have two standards is to have none. It has been said that it matters not whether cloth is bought by the yard or by the ell. It matters, however, whether you have one yard measure or two, one of three feet and the other of three feet and a quarter. It was proposed, the other day, in America, to keep up the price of silver by making all the servants of the government wear silver buttons. It was asked in reply whether the servants were to pay for the buttons, or the public; as, in the first case it would be a tax on the servants, in the second, on the public, for the benefit of the Silver men, and the money might as well have been handed to them at once. But we should also have been told why the public was interested

in keeping up the price of silver any more than the price of salt. It was mainly the influence of the Silver men, not the prevalence of the bimetallic theory that carried the Silver Bill. The market is flooded with silver, and if silver were monetised there would be a deluge. It is mournful that an industry should be depressed, but of all ways of relieving it the most costly is derangement of the currency. If the tobacco interest is depressed, are we to remonetise tobacco? Combined with the silver interest in the agitation was the recrudescence of Greenbackism and the desire of the debtor class, especially the heavily mortgaged, for an easy mode of paying their debts. Nor was the South unwilling to see a partial repudiation of the Federal war debt. The struggle against Greenbackism after the war was severe, though honesty and a regard for national credit prevailed. In the Silver law and its consequences we see one more proof of the formidable influence of sectional interests in party government when parties are nearly balanced. With the movement of the Silver men and Greenbackers in the United States concurred that of the Civil Servants in India, and a great point was made by Bimetallists of this concurrence. But in regard to such a question as a change in the world's currency, the pressure of two great special interests was surely a warning to be cautious. The interests themselves are part of the commercial world, and will lose in the end by derangement of the currency, though they may gain by a bonus for a time. Adherence to the gold standard does not preclude the "free coinage" of silver to any extent for auxiliary use, the range of which each country may determine for itself.

With belief in Fiat-money are often combined fancies about the tyranny of banks, and a desire to wreck and plunder them by an exercise of the legislative power, or to seize the business and its profits, and place them in the hands of the government. Especially it is proposed to take away the circulation of bank-notes, and the profits belonging to it. Banks are vital organs of a commercial community, which, in seeking their destruction, would show as much wisdom as a man would show in

seeking the destruction of his own heart or lungs. They perform for us three indispensable functions, of which the first is the safe-keeping of our money, which, otherwise, we should have to keep in our houses at our own risk, as was the practice of Mr. Pepys in the reign of Charles II., and as is still the practice of the French peasant, who hides his hoard in a hole in the wall. The second function is that of economising gold, and at the same time sparing us the inconvenience of carrying about a mass of specie, by issuing bank-notes, which, being secured upon the whole estate of a chartered corporation, may, in general, be accepted without scrutiny, and thus form a paper currency, though it can never be too often repeated that they are not money. It is hard that those who are always declaiming against metallic money for its cumbrousness, and because, as they say, it lies dead and inert, should fail to acknowledge the service rendered by the banks of issue, in thus giving the metal wings, and making it do its work for commerce in a thousand places, while it is locally laid up in one. The third function, which is the offspring of comparatively modern times, is that of enabling us to trade on credit. This the banks do by discounting paper for the trader, whose resources they have satisfactorily examined, and whose commercial character they approve. In this way, they both substantiate and regulate credit, neither of which could be done without their agency, by the mere representations of the trader himself, or by private inquiry into his means. To stop the action of the banks in this department would be to stop trading on credit. Credit also is becoming a monster, and if there were no trustworthy means of measuring, regulating, and restricting it, a monster it would be.

The financial destructive grudges the banks the profits of their circulation, and wishes to transfer them to that which he calls the State, but which, it is necessary always to bear in mind, is in fact simply the men who compose the government. Why not grudge the banks the profits of the discount business, and propose to transfer that to government in the same way? Why not do the same with all other trades by which profit,

and often unfair profit, is made? Why not make the issuing of bills of exchange or promissory notes, why not make the supplying of the community with clothes or shoes, a monopoly in the hands of the government? What is there about the money trade in particular to make us desire that it should be put into the power of the politicians? Judging by experience, it would be about the last branch of commerce on which we should wish them to lay their grasp.

It is the business of government to put its stamp on the coin, in order to assure the community that the coin is of the right weight and fineness. This public authorities alone can satisfactorily do, and they may now be trusted to do it, though, in former times, kings were in the habit of defrauding the subject by debasing the coin. But here the duty and the usefulness of government in regard to the currency seem to end. The volume of bank-notes issued ought to be regulated, like that of all other commercial paper, by the requirements of the day, that is, by the number and amount of the transactions; and it will be so regulated while it is in the hands of the banks, which will not fail to issue all the bills for which there is real need, while, if they issue more than are needed, the bills will begin to come back upon their hands. But government can no more decide what amount of notes is required than it can decide how many promissory notes or bills of exchange or dock warrants ought, at any given moment, to be afloat. Setting government to settle the circulation of paper is having the barometer regulated by superior wisdom without reference to atmospheric pressure.

The Bank Charter Act of Peel and Overstone was the offspring of the alarm caused by the failure of a number of private banks of issue. With deference to such high authorities, some would say that it might have been better to adopt proper safeguards in the way of inspection and other precautionary regulations. The Act has gone into operation only to a limited extent, having put an end to the existence of a few only of the private banks of issue, all of which it was intended gradually to extinguish. It has been thrice suspended at

a commercial crisis, each suspension being attended with all the inconvenience and injustice of arbitrary intervention; and its general effect, whenever tightness is felt, appears to be to produce a sort of nervous contraction, which itself tends to the acceleration of a crisis.

Ordinary banks, being private institutions, are amenable to the law; in truth, there is nothing of which the politicians are fonder than harassing them with legislation. But a party government, supported by a majority, is its own law, and can do whatever its need or its cupidity inspires, without regard to the interests of commerce. Even the most commercial of such governments, when in want of money, does not shrink from issuing legal tender currency, without reference to the state of the money market. The American Silver Bill, again, shows what we might have to expect of the power to which it is demanded that the functions of the banks should be transferred. Would commerce have an hour of security, or be able to conduct any of her operations in peace and confidence, if the hand of demagogism were all the time upon her heartstrings?

Bank-notes, though not legal tender, cannot, in the ordinary course of trade, be refused, unless there is some public reason for mistrusting the solvency of the bank. This is the ground for subjecting this particular class of commercial companies to special legislation; and it is the sole ground; there would, otherwise, be no justification for an interference with the trade in money more than with any other trade. Nor has a government the slightest right to compel the banks to take its bonds, as the condition of permitting them to pursue an honest and indispensable traffic, or to levy tribute upon them in any other way. On the other hand, the stockholders of banks must not suppose that they, of all investors in commercial enterprises, are entitled to the intervention of government when their affairs are mismanaged by directors of their own choosing. If they invoke such aid, they will once more practically point the moral of the fable of the horse and the stag.

The notion that society is an organism or growth must not be carried too far; we have an individuality and a power of acting on the general frame, which the parts of an organism have not. But this view is, at least, nearer the truth than the idea which underlies all Socialism, that society can be metamorphosed by the action of the State, an imaginary power outside all personalities, superior to all special interests, and free from all class passions. Nothing, indeed, can be less free from class passions than the movements which have been here passed in review. Social hatred is a bad reformer, and the struggles to which it has given birth have almost always brought to the community, and even to the most suffering members of it, far more loss than gain.

To speak of Protection would be opening a wide subject, and one which perhaps scarcely falls within the scope of this paper. There are men, sensible in other things, who imagine that they can increase the wealth of a country by taxation. So long as governments and armaments are maintained on the present scale of expenditure, every country will need import duties, and must have its tariff. The only alternative, at all events, is direct taxation. Absolute free trade, therefore, is at present out of the question, and the different tariffs must be regulated according to the circumstances and the special industries of each community. Every nation will claim this right. England, who has her tariff like the rest, wisely lets in free the raw materials of her special industries and the food of her innumerable workmen, while she taxes finished articles of luxury, such as tea, wine, and tobacco. Free traders, British free traders, especially, have left this too much out of sight, and have compromised their theory by that error. But that taxation can add to wealth, that governments can increase production by forcing capital and labour out of their natural channels, that the interest of the people will be promoted by forbidding them to buy the best and cheapest article wherever it can be found, are notions which, if reason did not sufficiently confute them, have been confuted by expe-

rience. Under the free system the industries of England have been developed, and her wealth has increased out of all proportion to the growth of her population, and to an extent perfectly unrivalled. The verdict of economical history through all the ages is the same. Nobody proposes to draw Customs lines across the territory of any nation, and the commercial advantages of freedom of exchange know no political limit, though in passing from nation to nation fiscal necessity intervenes. What is the proper commercial area of Protection, Protectionists have omitted to explain. The workman does not gain by Protection; he is only transferred to an artificial industry from a natural industry, which would otherwise develop itself, and in which, as it would be more remunerative, employment would be more abundant. The master manufacturer is the only man who gains; to him the community, under the Protective system, pays tribute; accordingly, in countries where the system prevails, he is generally a Protectionist, and uses not argument alone, but the Lobby, and influences of all sorts, to keep up the tariff; he will even do his utmost to encourage expenditure, rather than that the scale of duties should go down. Nor can he be much blamed, when the government has induced him to put his capital into the favoured trade, and stake his future on the continuance of the favour. Political or social motives there may conceivably be for Protection, as well as for any other sacrifice of commercial interest, such as war itself; but the commercial sacrifice is a fact which cannot be denied. To foster by protective duties or bonuses infant industries, which may afterwards sustain themselves, and perhaps draw emigration to a new country, in itself might be a rational and legitimate policy, if the nation could really keep the experiment in its own hands. But artificial interests are created, a Ring is formed, and the nation loses control over its tariff. Such, at least, is the case with communities governed as are those of the American continent. The field of political economy, as a region not in the air but on the earth, and the tendencies, capabilities, and forces of society with which the economical legislator deals,

must be treated as they really are. The connection of political economy with politics is a blank page in the treatises of the great writers.

Steady industry, aided by the ever-growing powers of practical science, is rapidly augmenting wealth. Thrift and increased facilities for saving and for the employment of small capitals will promote the equality of distribution. Let governments see that labour is allowed to enjoy its full earnings, untaxed by war, waste, or protective tariffs. The best of all taxes, it has been truly said, is the least. With equal truth it may be said that the best of all governments is that which has least occasion to govern.

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[1] Among other signs of the social and industrial unrest of the age has been the production of a number of utopias such as "The Coming Race," "News from Nowhere," "Cæsar's Column," and "Looking Backward," the last named being the most widely circulated and popular of all. As the rainbow in the spray of Niagara marks a cataract in the river, the appearance of utopias, has marked cataracts in the stream of history. That of More, from which the general name is taken, and that of Rabelais, marked the fall of the stream from the Middle Ages into modern times. Plato's "Republic" marked the catastrophe of Greek republicanism, though it is not a mere "utopia" but a great treatise on morality, and even as a political speculation not wholly beyond the pale of what a Greek citizen might have regarded as practical reform, since it is in its main features an idealisation of Sparta. Visions of reform heralded the outbreak of Lollardism and the Insurrection of the Serfs. The fancies of Rousseau and Bernardin de St. Pierre heralded the Revolution. Rousseau's reveries, be it observed, not only failed of realisation, but gave hardly any sign of that which was really coming. The Jacobins canted in his phrase,

[1] The substance of this paper appeared in the *Forum* under the title of "Prophets of Unrest."

but they returned to the state of nature only in personal filthiness, in brutality of manners, and in guillotining Lavoisier because the Republic had no need of chemists.

There is a general feeling abroad that the stream is drawing near a cataract now, and there are apparent grounds for the surmise. There is everywhere in the social frame an outward unrest, which as usual is the sign of fundamental change within. Old creeds have given way. The masses, the artisans especially, have ceased to believe that the existing order of society, with its grades of rank and wealth, is a divine ordinance against which it is vain to rebel. They have ceased to believe in a future state, in which Dives and Lazarus are to change places. Of labour journals secularism is the creed. Social science, if it is to take the place of religion as a conservative force, has not yet developed itself or got firm hold of the popular mind. The rivalry of parties for popular favour has made suffrage almost universal. The poor are freshly possessed of political power, and have conceived vague notions of the changes which, by exercising it, they may make in their own favour. They are just in that twilight of education in which chimeras stalk. This concurrence of social and economical with political and religious revolution has always been fraught with danger. The governing classes, unnerved by scepticism, have lost faith in the order which they represent, and are inclined to timorous and hasty abdication. Some members of them, partly from genuine philanthropy, partly from ambition, partly perhaps from fear, are, like the aristocracy of the *salons* in France in the last century, dallying with revolution. The sight of accumulated wealth has stimulated envy to a dangerous pitch. This is not the place to cast the horoscope of society. We may, after all, be exaggerating the gravity of the crisis. The First of May hitherto has passed without bringing forth anything more portentous than an epidemic of strikes, which, though very disastrous, as they sharpen and embitter class antagonisms, are not in themselves attempts to subvert society. A writer who has surveyed all the democracies, says that the only country on

which revolutionary Socialism has taken hold is England. German Socialism appears, as was said before, to be largely impatience of taxation and conscription. Much is called Socialism and taken as ominous of revolution which is merely the extension of the action of government, wisely or unwisely, over new portions of its present field, and perhaps does not deserve the dreaded name so much as our familiar Sunday law. The crash, if it come, may not be universal. Things may not everywhere take the same course. Wealth in some countries, when seriously alarmed, may convert itself into military power, of which the artisans have little, and may turn the scale in its own favour. Though social science is as yet undeveloped, intelligence has more organs and an increasing hold. The efforts which good members of the employer or wealthy class are making to improve social and industrial relations, though little recognised by labour journals, can hardly prove altogether vain. The present may after all glide more calmly than we think into the future. Still there is a crisis. We have had the Parisian Commune, the Spanish Intransigentes, Nihilism, Anarchism. It is not a time for playing with wild-fire. Though Rousseau's scheme of regeneration by a return to nature came to nothing, his denunciations of society told with a vengeance, and consigned thousands to death by the guillotine, hundreds of thousands to death by distress, and millions to death by the sword or by the havoc and pestilence which follow in the train of war.

The writer of an "utopia," however, in trying to make his fancy attractive by contrast, is naturally tempted to overpaint the evils of the existing state of things. "Looking Backward" opens with a very vivid and telling picture of society as it is:

"By way of attempting to give the reader some general impression of the way people lived together in those days, and especially of the relations of the rich and poor to one another, perhaps I cannot do better than to compare society as it then was to a prodigious coach, which the masses of humanity were harnessed to and dragged toilsomely along a very hilly and sandy road. The driver was hungry, and permitted no

lagging, though the pace was necessarily very slow. Despite the difficulty of drawing the coach at all along so hard a road, the top was covered with passengers, who never got down, even at the steepest ascent. These seats were very breezy and comfortable. Well up out of the dust, their occupants could enjoy the scenery at their leisure, or critically discuss the merits of the straining team. Naturally such places were in great demand, and the competition for them was keen, every one seeking as the first end in life to secure a seat on the coach for himself and to leave it to his child after him. By the rule of the coach, a man could leave his seat to whom he wished; but on the other hand, there were many accidents by which it might at any time be wholly lost. For all that they were so easy, the seats were very insecure, and at every sudden jolt of the coach persons were slipping out of them and falling to the ground, where they were instantly compelled to take hold of the rope and help to drag the coach on which they had before ridden so pleasantly. It was naturally regarded as a terrible misfortune to lose one's seat, and the apprehension that this might happen to them or their friends was a constant cloud upon the happiness of those who rode."

And what are the feelings of the passengers toward the hapless toilers who drag the coach? Have they no compassion for the sufferings of the fellow-beings from whom fortune only has distinguished them?

"Oh, yes; commiseration was frequently expressed by those who rode for those who had to pull the coach, especially when the vehicle came to a bad place in the road, as it was constantly doing, or to a particularly steep hill. At such times the desperate straining of the team, their agonised leaping and plunging under the pitiless lashing of hunger, the many who fainted at the rope and were trampled in the mire, made a very distressing spectacle, which often called forth highly creditable displays of feeling on the top of the coach. At such times the passengers would call down encouragingly to the toilers at the rope, exhorting them to patience, and holding out hopes of possible compensation in another world for the hardness of their lot, while others contributed to buy salves and liniments for the crippled and injured. It was agreed that it was a great pity that the coach should be so hard to pull, and there was a sense of general relief when the specially bad piece of road was gotten over. This relief was not, indeed, wholly on account of the team, for there was always some danger at these bad places of a general overturn in which all would lose their seats."

These passages have their counterparts in "News from Nowhere," and "Cæsar's Column," the latter of which, inspired

apparently by fear of the Vanderbilts and Astors, depicts New York as miserably enslaved by a bloated oligarchy of millionaires, with its demon fleet of ten thousand air ships. They will sink deep into the hearts of many who will pay little attention to the speculative plans of reconstruction which follow. For one reader of "Progress and Poverty" who was at the pains to follow the economical reasoning, there were probably thousands who drank in the invectives against wealth and the suggestions of confiscation. But is the description here given true or anything like the truth? Are the masses toiling like the horses of a coach, not for their own benefit, but only for that of the passengers whom they draw? Are they not toiling to make their own bread, and to produce by their joint labour the things necessary for their common subsistence? As to the vast majority of them, can it be said that they are leaping and plunging in agony under the pitiless lash of hunger, fainting at the rope and trampled in the mire? Are they not with their families living in tolerable comfort, with bread enough and not without enjoyment? Has it not been proved beyond doubt that their wages have risen greatly and are still rising? Have not the working classes, unlike the horses, votes? Is there really any such sharp division as is here assumed to exist between labour and wealth? Are not many who have more or less of wealth and who could have seats on the top of any social coach, labourers and producers of the most effective kind? Such a writer can hardly be the dupe of the fallacy that those only labour who work with the hands. What is the amount of the hereditary property held by idlers in such a country as the United States, compared with that of the general wealth? Do the holders even of that property really add by their existence to the strain on the workers as the passengers by their presence add to the strain on the horses? Supposing they and their riches were annihilated, would the workers feel any relief? Would they not rather lose a fund upon which they draw to some extent at need? The hereditary wealth which is here taken to be the monster iniquity and evil, what is it but the savings

of past generations? Had those who made it spent it, instead of leaving it to their children, should we be better off? Then, as to the feelings of the rich toward the poor: can a Bostonian, as this writer is, look round his own city and fail to see that heartless indifference has its seat only in the souls of a few sybarites, and that sentiments at all events of philanthropy and charity are the rule?

It is in these utopias that we see most distinctly embodied the belief that equal justice is the natural law of the world, and that nothing keeps us out of it but the barrier of artificial arrangements set up by the power, and in the interest, of a class. Break down that barrier by revolutionary legislation, and the kingdom of equal justice, it is thought, will come. Would that it were so! Who would be so selfish and so ignorant of the deepest source of happiness as not to vote for the change, whatever his wealth or his place on the social coach might be? But equal justice is not the natural law, as the world is at present, toward whatever goal we may be moving. Health, strength, beauty, intellect, offspring, length of days, are distributed with no more regard for justice than are the powers of making and saving wealth. One man is born in an age of barbarism, another in an age of civilisation; one man in the time of the Thirty Years' War or the Reign of Terror, another in an era of peace and comparative happiness. No justice can now be done to the myriads who have suffered and died. Equal justice is far indeed from being the law of the animal kingdom. Why is one animal the beast of prey, another the victim? Why does an elephant live for a century and an ephemeral insect for a few hours? If you come to that, why should one sentient creature be a worm and another a man? In earth and skies, so far as our ken reaches, imperfection reigns. He who in "Looking Backward" wakes from a magnetic slumber to find the lots of all men made just and equal, might almost as well have awakened to find all human frames made perfect, disease and accident banished, the animals all in a state like that of Eden, the Arctic regions bearing harvests, Sahara moistened with fertilising rain, the

moon provided with an atmosphere, and the solar system symmetrically completed. All this is no bar to the rational effort by which society is gradually improved. But it shuts out the hope of sudden transformation. The social organism, like the bodily frame, is imperfect; you may help and beneficially direct its growth, but you cannot transform it. To revolutionary violence the author of "Looking Backward" is himself wholly averse. He uses only the magic wand.

With private property, with which it is the dream of utopian writers to do away, go, as everybody knows, many evils; among others that of inordinate accumulation, of which there may be instances in New York, though it is a mistake to think that accumulation is a matter of modern growth, or that the community was not just as much overtopped by the Medici and the Fuggers of the Middle Ages, the great feudal landowners, and the Roman magnates, as it is by the Vanderbilts and Astors; while the restraints of public opinion were nothing like so strong in those days as they are in ours. On the other hand, it is hard to see how without private property we could have the home and all that it enshrines. But let the evils be whatever they may, no motive power of production, at least of any production beyond that necessary to stay hunger, except the desire of property, is at present known. A score or more of experiments in Communism have been made upon the American continent by visionaries of different kinds, from the founders of Brook Farm to those of the Oneida Community and the Shakers. They have, as has already been said, failed utterly, except in the cases where the rule of celibacy has been enforced, and the members, having no wives or children to maintain, and being themselves of a specially industrious and frugal class, have made enough and more than enough for their own support. Collectively, the community has owned private property like other companies or corporations. The Oneida Community, the most prosperous of all, owned three factories, in which the workmen were employed on the ordinary terms. Barrack life, without the home, has also been a general condition of success.

So it is with regard to competition, that other social fiend of this and all utopians. Nobody will deny that competition has its ugly side. But no other way at present is known to us of sustaining the progress of industry and securing the best and cheapest products. It is surely a stretch of pessimistic fancy to describe the industrial world under the competitive system as a horde of wild beasts rending each other, or as a Black Hole of Calcutta "with its press of maddened men tearing and trampling one another in the struggle to win a place at the breathing holes." It is surely going beyond the mark to say that all producers are "praying by night and working by day for the frustration of each other's enterprises," and that they are as much bent on spoiling their neighbours' crops as on saving their own. Do two tailors or grocers, even when their business is in the same street, rend each other when they meet? Is there not rather a certain fellowship between members of the same trade? Does not each think a good deal more, both in his prayers and in his practical transactions, of doing well himself than of preventing the other from doing well.

The writer of "Looking Backward" himself says that "as men grow more civilised, and as the subdivision of occupations and services is carried out, a complex mutual dependence becomes the universal rule." What is this complex mutual dependence but co-operation?

As a normal picture of our present civilisation, the table of contents of a newspaper is presented to us. It is a mere catalogue of calamities and horrors; wars, burglaries, strikes, failures in business, cornerings, boodlings, murders, suicides, embezzlements, and cases of cruelty, lunacy, or destitution. No doubt a real table of contents would give a picture, though not so terrible and heartrending as this, yet rich in catastrophes. But it is forgotten that the catastrophes or the exceptional events alone are recorded by newspapers, especially in the tables of contents, which are intended to catch the eye. No newspaper gives us a picture of the ordinary course of life. No newspaper speaks of the countries which are enjoying

secure peace, of the people who are making a fair livelihood by honest industry, of the families which are living in comfort and the enjoyment of affection. Buyers would hardly be found for a sheet which should tell you by way of news that bread was being regularly delivered by the baker and that the milkman was going his round.

Centuries unnumbered, according to recent palæontologists, human society has taken in climbing to what is here described as the level of a vast den of wild beasts or a Black Hole of Calcutta. Yet in one century or a little more it is to become a paradise on earth. Not Massachusetts or America only but the whole civilised world will have been regenerated and have entered into the economical Eden. So the writer of "Looking Backward" dreams; and to show that he does not regard this as a mere dream, he cites historical precedents of changes which he thinks equally miraculous, the sudden and unexpected success, as it appears to him to have been, of the American Revolution, of German and Italian unification, of the agitation against slavery. In two of these cases at least, those of German and Italian unity, the wonder was not that the event came at last, but that it was delayed so long. In no one of the cases, surely, is anything like a precedent for so wide and universal a leap into the future to be found. From Dr. Leete, who is the showman of the new heavens and new earth in "Looking Backward," the reader learns that society, in the year 2000, has undergone not only a radical change, but a complete transformation, Boston, of course, leading the way, as Paris leads in the regeneration proclaimed by Comte, and all the most civilised communities duly following in her train. Society has become entirely industrial, war being completely eliminated. No fear is entertained lest when the civilised world has been turned into a vast factory of defenceless wealth, the uncivilised world may be tempted to loot it. Yet this danger is not imaginary if there is any truth in what we are told about the military force lying latent in China, to say nothing of the people of South America, who, though politically unsuccessful, are always showing that they can fight.

The State has become the sole capitalist and the universal employer. How did all the capital pass from the hands of individuals or private companies into those of the State? Was it by a voluntary and universal surrender? Were all the capitalists and all the stockholders suddenly convinced of the blessings of self-spoliation? Or did the government by a sweeping act of confiscation seize all the capital? In that case, was there not a struggle? Was not the entrance into Paradise effected through a social war? A mere "recognition of evolution" by thinkers, the only means suggested, would hardly go far with capitalists or joint-stock companies, nor would they be likely to allow themselves to be stripped by a "political party" so long as they had the means of resistance in their hands. The seer was in his magnetic trance when the transfer took place, and he has not the curiosity to ask Dr. Leete exactly how it was effected. For us, therefore, the problem remains unsolved.

The inducement to the change, we are told, was a sense of the economic advantages produced by the aggregation of industries under co-operative syndicates and trusts, which suggested that by a complete unification of all industries under the State unmeasured benefits might be obtained. "The epoch of trusts ended in the great trust." This implies a practical approval of that tendency to industrial aggregation, which is a most momentous feature of the economical situation, and which in most quarters is viewed with extreme aversion and alarm. But these corporations, syndicates, and trusts, on however large a scale they may be, are still managed each of them by a set of persons devoted to that particular business, and they depend for their success on personal aptitude and experience. Between such aggregations and a unification of all the industries in the hands of a government there is a gulf, and we do not see how the gulf is to be passed. The tendency of industry appears, it is true, to be toward large establishments, the advantages of which over a multitude of petty and starveling concerns, both as regards those engaged in the trade and the consumer, are obvious. But the large

producing establishments are still special, and the advantages of combining iron works with cotton works are not obvious at all.

To the objection that the task of managing all the industries of a country and its foreign commerce (for foreign commerce there is still to be) would be difficult for any government, the simple and satisfactory answer is that in utopia there could be no difficulty at all. The government of a purely industrial commonwealth is itself industrial. It consists of veterans of labour chosen on account of their merit as workers, the identity of which with administrative capacity and power of command, as it is not likely to be tested, may be assumed without fear of disproof. To banish any misgivings which we might have as to the practicability of such a government, the seer points to the part taken by alumni in the government of universities; surely as subtle an analogy as the acutest intelligence ever discerned. The government is to be "responsible" in all that it does. But how in the last resort is responsibility to be enforced and usurpation to be repressed by a community of industrial sheep?

The new organisation of labour has been followed by such a flood of wealth that everybody lives, not only in plenty, but in luxury and refinement before unknown. Everybody is able to give up work at forty-five, that being fixed as the procrustean limit for all constitutions, and to pass the rest of his days in ease and enjoyment. "No man any more has any care for to-morrow, either for himself or his children, for the nation guarantees the nurture, education, and comfortable maintenance of every citizen from the cradle to the grave." All the world dresses for dinner, dines well, and has wine and cigars after dinner. Under all this lurks, it is to be feared, the same fallacy which underlies the theory of Mr. Henry George, who fancies that an increase of population, being an increase of the number of labourers, will necessarily augment production, and consequently that the fears of Malthus and all who dread over-population are baseless. It is assumed that everything is produced by labour. But the fact is that

labour only produces the form or directs the natural forces. The material is produced by Nature, and she will not supply more than a given quantity within a given area and under given conditions. Even in Massachusetts, therefore, which is supposed to be the primal scene of human regeneration, the people, however skilled their labour, and however utopian their industrial organisation might be, unless their number were limited or their territory enlarged, would starve. This is a serious question for a State which "guarantees to every one nurture, education, and comfortable maintenance from the cradle to the grave." As the guarantee extends to the citizen's wife and child as well as to himself, and they are made independent of his labour, the last restraint of prudence on marriage and giving birth to children would be removed. The people would then probably multiply at a rate which would leave Irish or French-Canadian philoprogenitiveness behind, and without remedial action a vast scene of squalid misery would ensue.

There is no more private property. In its place comes a sense of public duty urging each man to labour. Of the sufficient strength of this we are positively assured, notwithstanding the result of all the experiments hitherto tried. Reality peeps out when we are told that those who refuse to work will be put into confinement on bread and water. This is something like a reversion, is it not, to the coach and horses, with the "lash of hunger"? The occasional necessity of a "draft" is another intimation that Nature, though you thrust her out, will resume her seat.

The stimulus of duty to the man's family would exist no more, when the maintenance of his wife and children was taken off his hands by the State. For the lower natures, though not for the higher, there is to be emulation, which, it is taken for granted, will act on them with undiminished effect when all the substantial prizes have been removed. An appeal is also made to a semi-military sense of honour, and the community is organised as an army, with military titles, apparently for that purpose. But it has been shown, in answer to other

theorists who have pointed to military honour as a substitute for the ordinary motives to industry, that military duty is enforced by a code of exceptional severity. Nor will the military forms and names have much meaning or be likely to animate and inspirit when war, with all its pride, pomp, and circumstance, has been banished from the earth.

All are to be paid alike, on the principle that so long as you do your best your deserts are the same as those of others, though your power may not be so great as theirs. Your deserts in the eye of Heaven, no doubt, are the same if you do your best, and Heaven has the means of ascertaining that your best is being done. But if it is asked what means a board of industrial veterans or their lieutenants, supposing them to be ever so excellent craftsmen themselves, have of ascertaining that every man is doing his best, the answer, we suspect, must be that in utopia such questions are not to be raised. In the present evil world most men do their best, or something like their best, because they have to make their own living and that of their wives and children. Some men, under the voluntary and competitive system, put forth those extraordinary efforts which make the world move on. But the State, though it might command the daily amount of labour by threat of solitary confinement on bread-and-water, could not command improvement or invention. Invention, or discovery, it seems to us, would be little encouraged under the utopian system, since no man is to be allowed to shirk labour on pretence of being a student, a regulation which might have borne hard on Archimedes, Newton, or even Watt. Newton would at all events have had, in obedience to an inexorable rule, to pass three years as a common labourer, and his labour during those three years would have cost the world uncommonly dear. Even the employment of Dr. Leete, the good physician of this piece, for some years as waiter in a restaurant was rather a waste of his, or, to speak more properly, of the State's time.

Money as "a root of evil" has been totally discarded. Its place is taken by credit cards, entitling the bearer, by virtue of his mere humanity, to a share of the national produce.

Wages are a thing of the past. The certificates are to be presented at the government store, for government is the universal supplier as well as the universal employer of labour. Money, it is said, may have been fraudulently or improperly obtained, but with labour certificates this cannot be the case. We hardly see how a government store-keeper at New Orleans is to tell that the certificate was not fraudulently obtained at Boston. How could the title to it be verified in foreign countries where, we are told, by international arrangement it is to be current? Probably in this as in other communistic schemes there is a lurking assumption that the members of the brotherhood would always remain in the same place, and that life will thus become stationary as well as devoid of individual aim. But the weak part of the arrangement betrays itself in the necessity of continuing to use the terms dollars and cents. They are used only, we are told, as "algebraic symbols." Surely the most obvious and the safest course would have been to discard the terms altogether, pregnant as they were with evil associations and likely as they would be to perpetuate the vicious desires and habits of the past. Let another set of algebraic symbols be devised, and let us see how it will work. In the case of the transition from the use of money to that of labour certificates, as in that of the transition from private commerce to commerce concentrated in the hands of government, we should have liked to be present when the leap was taken, or at least to have had some account of the process, especially as it must have taken place at once over the whole civilised world. For commerce, we have seen, there is still to be; the utopian of Boston could not get his wine and cigars without it.

Law as a profession has ceased to exist. Of course where there is no property there can be no chancery suits. As nineteen twentieths of crime arise from the desire of money — not from drink, as the prohibitionists pretend — it follows that in getting rid of money society has almost entirely got rid of crime. Of crime, in the present sense of the term, indeed, it has got rid altogether. A few victims of "atavism" are left

as a sort of tribute to reality, but they generally save the judiciary trouble by pleading guilty, so high has the regard for veracity become even in the minds of kleptomaniacs.

In the present imperfect state of things, the distribution of employments, it must be owned, though partly a matter of choice, is largely a matter of chance and circumstance, the intellectual callings going to those who have the means of a high education. In utopia it will be entirely a matter of choice, after elaborate testing of aptitudes and tastes under the guidance of a paternal government. It is assumed that all employments will attract, since some men, after deliberate survey of all the walks of life, will conveniently choose to be miners, hod-men, "odourless excavators," brakesmen, stokers, or sailors on the north Atlantic passage. Danger is even attractive. Such is the exuberance of public spirit that the government has only to declare an employment extra hazardous and a rush of chivalrous candidates to it ensues. A rush might rather have been apprehended into the lighter callings, especially that of poet. Any repugnance to a particular kind of labour which there might be, will be conjured away by saying that all kinds of labour are equally honourable. Do we not say this now? Do we not feel this now much more than the pessimist admits? Does any one worthy of the name of a gentleman increase the burden which he imposes on his household "by adding to it contempt"?

Everybody is to be highly educated and thoroughly refined. This in utopia will not interfere with the disposition for manual labour, nor will it take away too much of the labourer's time. One question, however, occurs to us. The population cannot have been highly educated when the system was first introduced. How were the ignorant and unqualified masses brought to take part in its introduction, and how was its operation managed before they had been educated up to the proper mark? This is another problem of the transition, the solution of which remains buried in the seer's magnetic sleep.

The relations between the sexes and the constitution of the

family are, of course, to be revolutionised, and the revolution has so far an element of probability that it follows what are supposed to be Bostonian lines. The women are to be organised apart from the men as a distinct interest, under a "general" of their own who has a seat in the cabinet. They would do quite enough for society, they are gallantly told, if they occupied themselves only in the cultivation of their own charms and graces; women without any special charms and graces but those which belong to the performance of their womanly duties as wives and mothers being creatures unknown in utopia. However, for the sake of their health and to satisfy their feelings of independence, they are to do a very moderate amount of work. They have in fact little else to do. They have no household cares, as the State is universal cook, housemaid, laundress, seamstress, and nurse; and "a husband is not a baby that he should be cared for." Maternity, though recognised, is thrown into the background. It is an interlude in the woman's industrial and social life, and as soon as it is over the mother returns to her "comrades," leaving her child, apparently, to that universal providence, the State. Hitherto, it seems, men, like "cruel robbers," have "seized to themselves the whole product of the world and left women to beg and wheedle for their share." By whose labour the world has been made to yield its products for the benefit of both sexes, we are not told. However, "that any person should be dependent for the means of support upon another would be shocking to the moral sense as well as indefensible on any rational social theory." Women in utopia, therefore, are no longer left in "galling dependence" upon their husbands for the means of life, or children upon their parents. Both wife and child are maintained by the agency of the State, so that the wife no longer owes anything to her husband, and the child is at liberty, as reason and nature dictate, to snap its fingers in its parents' face. Does the State give suck, and is the baby no longer ignominiously beholden to its mother for milk? Is not the government composed of persons? Why is dependence upon the persons installed at Washington less

ignominious than dependence upon a husband, a father, or a mother? To some, dependence on the government might seem the most galling of all.

False delicacy is put out of the way, and the women are allowed to propose. They "sit aloft" on the top of the coach, giving the prizes for the industrial race, and select only the best and noblest men for their husbands. Ill-favoured men of inferior type, and laggards, will be condemned to celibacy. From them the "radiant faces" will be averted. These hapless persons are treated with a marked absence, to say the least, of the philanthropy which overflows upon criminals and lunatics, though it seems that the plea of atavism should not be less valid in their case. Has Dr. Leete, when he denies them marriage, found a way of extinguishing their passions? If he has not, what moral results does he expect? He will answer perhaps by an appeal to what may be called the occult "we," that mysterious power which, in an utopia, is present throughout to solve all difficulties and banish every doubt. Nothing can be more divine than the picture which Dr. Leete presents to us; but we look at it with a secret misgiving that his community would be in some danger of being thrust out of existence by some barbarous horde, which honoured virtue and admired excellence in both sexes without giving itself over to a slavish and fatuous worship of either, held men and women alike to their natural duties, and obeyed the laws of Nature.

The government is the universal publisher, and is bound to publish everything brought to it, but on condition that the author pay the first cost out of his "credit." How the author, while preparing himself to write "Paradise Lost," or the "Principia," is to earn a labour credit, we hardly see. The literature of utopia is of course divine. To read one of Berrian's novels or one of Oates's poems is worth a year of one's life. Would that we had a specimen of either! We should then be able to see how far it transcended Shakespeare or Scott. For love stories, we are told, there will be material in plenty and of a much higher quality than there was in the days of coarse and stormy passion. The actual love affair

that takes place in "Looking Backward" certainly does not remind us of "Romeo and Juliet." Of the pulpit eloquence we have a specimen, and it is startlingly like that of our own century. One great improvement, however, there is; the preaching is by telephone and you can shut it off.

The physical arrangements are carried to millenarian perfection. Instead of a multitude of separate umbrellas, one common umbrella is put up by the State over Boston when it rains. The whole community is converted into one vast Whiteley's or Wanamaker's establishment. These visions of a material heaven on earth naturally arise as the hope of a spiritual heaven fades away. A material heaven on earth it is. The arrangements for shopping, like everything else, are divine. Public bands are playing seraphic music through the whole twenty-four hours, and you turn on the piece you like by telephone. Public buildings are palaces, and their equipment is a paragon of luxury. We only wonder how the unspeakable privileges of the city can be extended to the country, and who will be contented to stay in the country if they are not. The American dream is of city life. But let the material happiness be as brilliant as it will, supposing every shadow of economical evil to have vanished, there is one shadow that will not away. It is signified that at a man's decease the State allows a fixed sum for his funeral expenses. This is the only intimation that over the material Paradise hovers Death.

A vista of illimitable progress, progress so glorious that it dazzles the prophetic eye, is said all the time to be opened. But how can there be progress beyond perfection? Finality is the trap into which all utopians fall. Comte, after tracing the movement of humanity through all the ages down to his own time, undertakes by his supreme intelligence to furnish a creed and a set of institutions which are to serve forever. Progress, however, we do not doubt there would be with a vengeance. The monotony, the constraint, the procrusteanism, the dulness, the despotism of the system would soon give birth to general revolt, which would dash the whole structure to pieces.

It may seem that we are guilty of a platitude in seriously criticising a composition the author of which himself perhaps was hardly serious in what he wrote. But the destructive passages, we repeat, tell, while the constructive part, as soon as it is touched by the finger of criticism, vanishes into the inane.