City of Angels

By

Rev. T. McGrady

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CITY OF ANGELS

—BY—

FATHER T. McGRADY,
Pastor of St. Anthony's Church, Bellevue, Ky.


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"Christian Socialism," by the Rt. Rev. George Montgomery, Bishop of Monterey and Los Angeles, California, is rather a remarkable production. It is an attempt to refute the principles and demonstrate the impossibility of collective ownership. The Bishop is undoubtedly a very sincere man, with the noblest intentions and the highest sense of justice, and with his profound scholarship and deep consideration for the rights of the laborer, I am surprised that he does not abandon the old school of economics and accept the only scientific solution of the industrial problem. On the fourth page of his pamphlet, the learned prelate says: "In every contest between employers and employees, there are three parties concerned,—the employers, the employees and the community affected. It is the community, or public, that demands certain work to be done—and if that public did not exist there would be no employer and no employee." If the community is a party to the contest and has a right to demand the service of our industrial machinery, it has also the right to own the industrial machinery. Let us suppose that, in a strike, the community should decide in favor of the employees, and command the manufacturer to give a wage of five dollars per day. If the manufacturer should refuse to comply with the injunction, what would the Bishop do with the manufacturer? Force him to abandon the business or resign in favor of some other party? But let us suppose that no other party would comply with the provis-
ion? Then the community itself would be compelled to take charge of the business. But if the community has a right to operate one plant, it has a right to operate every establishment and business concern in the nation. The community demands certain work to be done, and therefore it has a right to a certain service. Now if the community has a right to a certain service, it has a right to that service at the lowest possible cost. A private company will furnish gas to the city at one dollar per thousand feet, whereas it costs the company, for plant, labor and salaries, only thirty cents per thousand feet. The community has a right to demand gas at forty cents. But the company replies that they would then make no profits. The community says, "We are not looking after your profits, we are looking for cheap gas. Your profits do not make the gas any better; we do not get any benefits from your profits, and we fail to see how we can pay you for something that we do not get. We can build a plant and furnish gas at forty cents, and, after hiring the laborers, and paying salaries to superintendents, etc., in ten years we will have a surplus large enough to redeem the money expended in the foundation and equipment of the plant, and then we can furnish gas at thirty cents. Now this is a business proposition. We will give you forty cents for gas and let you hire your own employees and superintend the work yourselves, and in ten years you must reduce the gas to thirty cents. If you do not accept this offer, we will build our own gas works and hire employees and superintendents." The company refuses to accept the terms, and the community builds a municipal plant. The electric light plant, the water supply and street cars come under the management of the community for economic reasons, as in the case of the gas supply. Now this is all legitimate according to the Bishop, for he believes in municipal ownership, and the city has a right to operate these public utilities when it can get cheaper and better service. No man is compelled by law to pay one dollar for a service that he can
get for fifty cents. The people find that they have made wonderful improvements by municipal ownership. They get gas light for forty cents, arc lights on the streets for forty dollars per annum, water at ten cents per thousand gallons, and can ride all over the city on the street cars for two cents. But the people require other services. They cannot live on gas, water and electricity. They want shoes, and they find that they can build a factory and pay all expenses of labor, etc., and at the same time afford to sell a pair of shoes for sixty cents which now cost three dollars. They have a right to cheap services, and the community establishes a shoe factory. They also require clothes, and by owning their own establishment they can purchase a garment for one dollar that now costs them five dollars. They have a right to cheap services, and the people establish woolen factories. Then they say why should we pay handsome profits to the steel trusts, the iron manufacturers, the meat merchant and other business firms and corporations?

The capitalists are living on the people, and therefore the people must pay for these ornaments. But the people think, and they come to the conclusion that they can dispense with these ornaments to a great advantage, and hire their own employees, including clerks and superintendents, and furnish their homes with every comfort and luxury at the cost of production. But what benefit would that be to the laborer? The same benefit that it would be to the community. It would give the community the commodities of life at the least cost, which signifies, ultimately, at the least expenditure of labor power, for all wealth is created by human toil, and every commodity represents a certain amount of "congealed labor." Today the laborer gets, we will say, one dollar and eighty cents in the shoe factory, and this sum is a large average, and he requires six pairs of shoes for his family, which will cost him eighteen dollars; that is, at three dollars a pair, the six pairs will cost him the equivalent of ten days labor. The community sells
the same quality of shoes at sixty cents a pair, and the laborer with two days work, with one dollar and eighty cents per day, can furnish his family with six pair of shoes, instead of working ten days, as he does under the present system. Therefore the laborer can procure the comforts of life with one-fifth the labor time, or with two hours work per day. But the toiler needs a suit of clothes, and a suit of clothes is worth six pairs of shoes. The operative in a clothing establishment needs six pairs of shoes. The shoe worker, under our present industrial system gets one dollar and eighty cents per day, and he must labor ten days to have enough of money to go to the store and buy a suit of clothes. These commodities pass from the factory to the wholesale house, then to the retailer, and each must make a profit on the articles. Many commodities pass through half a dozen hands before they reach the consumer, and each taking a profit, the price of the article is augmented many fold. The laborer in the woolen factory makes one dollar and eighty cents per day, and it will require ten days labor to purchase six pairs of shoes. If the community created and manipulated its own supplies, the article could be purchased at cost of production, transportation and exchange, and the shoe worker could get a suit of clothes for two days labor and the woolen operative could get six pairs of shoes for two days labor. In all other industries the same advantage would be felt, and the work day could be reduced to one-fourth, or perhaps one-fifth of its present duration.

"But how is that possible?" the Bishop will exclaim. "The people now work ten hours a day and you would reduce it to two or three hours a day!" The difficulty will be elucidated to the satisfaction of every thinking mind. Under our present system there is an enormous waste of wealth and labor power. Thousands of men are engaged in traveling for business corporations, and the commercial agents draw handsome salaries, patronize the best hotels, and expend liberally in many other ways. There are thousands of men employed in
the printing trade, advertising the commodities of merchants and manufacturers. It is estimated that over two billion dollars are spent annually in the City of New York for advertisements. There are thousands of stores in a community where one would be sufficient. Therefore, you have a thousand sets of clerks, bookkeepers, distinct managements, rent accounts, etc. Seventy-five dollars will pay for the cost of labor and material in a piano which sells for two hundred and seventy-five dollars, and this leaves a profit of two hundred dollars. Of course, a large share of this profit is spent in paying for advertisements and other expenses connected with the sale of the article. The Kroger Grocery Firm of Cincinnati makes twenty per cent. on its sales. The cost for labor, rent, light, etc., is ten per cent. of the profits, leaving a net profit of ten per cent. for Kroger, who turns over his money every three weeks, or seventeen times in a year, and therefore he makes one hundred and seventy per cent. annually, after paying all expenses. If these profits were expended in wages, and the waste of labor eliminated by consolidation, the employees would have the full value of their toil, and they would get five times as much as they get today. All this enormous expense comes from the toiling masses, for labor creates all wealth. There are ten butcher shops in a community, and each one has a wagon, and they all cover the same ground, and hence five hundred per cent. of labor power and labor time is wasted. Two wagons could do all the work in less time. There are ten dairymen, ten grocerymen, and ten more selling vegetables, and they all visit the same streets and the same squares. These are a few illustrations taken from thousands that could be enumerated. Under collectivism, all these useless expenditures will be eliminated, and business will be conducted on a grand scale and with great economy. If the post-office were a private corporation, you would pay at least twenty-five cents to send a letter through the mails. There would be a thousand small postal services in every large city,
and there would be a thousand solicitors canvassing trade, representing the business interests of the establishment, glorifying the facilities of transportation and the adequacy of their system of delivering mail. A man, with a few hundred dollars, not being able to find remunerative employment, would open a postal establishment on the corner, and the next day you would be visited by his representative, who would denounce the postal system conducted by Jones and Wilson and Mulcahy, and declare that his house was the only reliable firm in the business, and every day the community would be entertained with myriad lies of divers color, degrees and magnitude. If the community were the sole capitalist, these, who spend their time in useless work, would be given employment that would advance the interest of society, and enhance the wealth of the nation; the waste of competition would be eliminated, the number of clerks and superintendents would be reduced to a minimum, the noxious parasites, who perform no useful functions would be dismissed and necessitated to labor in some capacity, and the army of toilers would be multiplied four or five times, and the hours of labor would be diminished proportionately. The manufacturer today goes into the market to purchase a ware known as labor power. Since the laborer is compelled to exchange his labor power for the means of subsistence, the law of competition will reduce the price of the merchandise to the cost of production. The laborer requires rest to repair the waste caused by his day of sturdy toil. He also needs food, clothing and shelter, that he might continue his efforts the following day, and his wage must be sufficient to supply these wants, otherwise he will perish. But the nerves and tissues and cells succumb to the ravages of time, and the laborer, worn out with years of toil, will, some day, pass beyond the shadows of the tomb. Production, however, does not cease; other laborers fall into the ranks to fill the places vacated by the victims of death, and therefore it is necessary that the working class, as a class, have sufficient to rear
a family, that the children of the toilers might continue in
the footsteps of their fathers. Hence wages is regulated by
the cost of living and rearing a family. The laborer is able
to supply the means of subsistence for himself and his fam-
ily with two hours labor daily. This is called necessary labor,
for this amount of labor is required to meet the necessary ex-
penses of supporting his family. During this necessary time
the employee is working for himself, and gets the value of all
the wealth he produces. But the workman is hired for ten
hours. In the meantime he creates ten dollars worth of
wealth. This money is divided into several portions. The
manufacturer pays one dollar in the replacement of the ma-
chinery worn out in creating the ten dollars worth of wealth;
two dollars for the materials which are transformed into the
new commodities, and one dollar and forty cents in wages to
the laborer, who performs the work of transforming the raw
material into the articles which constitute the ten dollars of
new wealth. The sum total in material, machinery and wages
is four dollars and forty cents. There is yet the sum of five
dollars and sixty cents left, and this is the surplus value
created by the unpaid toil of the laborer. It is called surplus
value, because it is created by the surplus labor of the work-
men. The necessary labor was the time that the laborer spent
in creating the wealth necessary to purchase the means of sub-
sistence. In two hours the workman creates two dollars of
new wealth. The raw material used in ten hours is equivalent
to two dollars, and the raw material used in two hours would
be one-fifth of that sum, or forty cents. The laborer wears
out one dollar's worth of machinery in ten hours, and the one-
fifth of that sum, or twenty cents in two hours. Adding the
forty cents and the twenty cents, makes sixty cents, and de-
ducting this sum from the two dollars worth of work created,
the laborer has one dollar and forty cents for his two hours
work. When the laborer has earned the money necessary for
his subsistence, he has the right to quit and go home and enjoy
the society of his family and the pleasures of mental recreation. But the employer insists that he shall work eight hours more, and this time is called the surplus labor time, that is labor time which is not necessary for the maintenance of the employee; labor time which the employee does not use for his own benefit, but which he uses for the benefit of his master. It is therefore unpaid labor. We might represent the manufacturer thus speaking to his slave: "You have now earned enough of wealth to provide for yourself and your family for one day. You have also paid for the material and machinery which you have used. It is only nine o'clock yet, and you can now work the rest of the day for me." The laborer creates two dollars worth of wealth in two hours, and at the same rate, he will create eight dollars worth of wealth in eight hours. The manufacturer has already paid the laborer for his day's work with the proceeds of the first two hours, and now he has no expenses to meet but the loss in the machinery and the material used in creating the new wealth. The laborer wears out ten cents worth of machinery in one hour and in eight hours he wears out eighty cents worth of machinery. The employee likewise uses twenty cents worth of raw material in an hour, and in eight hours he uses one dollar and sixty cents worth of raw material. Adding the eighty cents and the dollar and sixty cents, we have the sum of two dollars and forty cents. Deducting the sum of two dollars and forty cents from the eight dollars worth of wealth created in the last eight hours' labor, and we have five dollars and sixty cents, the surplus value, after paying every item of expense, and this is appropriated by the manufacturer and is called his profit. Now the people have discovered this fraud; they fail to see why a man should work two hours for himself, and eight hours for the benefit of his employer, and they say: "It is not only our right to produce for ourselves, but it is our duty. We owe this duty to our families, our children and our fellowmen, and therefore we shall operate our own industries
and abolish the masters and give the workers the benefit of the surplus value, which now redounds to the glory of the capitalist, but not to the glory of the community." And lo! this is Socialism. I will further illustrate the advantage of collective production and distribution. There are two men living on small farms, each containing ten acres. Their tools consist of hoes and other crude implements, and they must work very hard, and the remuneration of their labor is barely sufficient to provide their families with the necessaries of life. They have read of the advantage of co-operation, and they decide to experiment. They combine their small savings and buy a horse, and the next year they spend their scanty means in purchasing plows and other implements of agriculture. They extend their fields by pulling down the fences, and unite their efforts in raising a crop of corn and wheat. The results are satisfactory, and other indigent farmers offer to enter the co-operative scheme, and they are accepted. There are now ten rustics in the combination, and they discover that the results of their efforts are multiplied, and they speak in the highest terms of the benefits accruing from co-operation. Finally one hundred farmers enter the combination, and now their labors are so remunerative that they can have all the luxuries of life, and not work more than seven months in the year. Later on one thousand families are comprised in the co-operative plan, and each man now enjoys all the advantages of rural civilization by working five hours per day during seven months in the year. The community increases until it numbers one hundred thousand families, and their benefits are proportionately enhanced. But they find that the railroads impose an exorbitant tax on them for the services of transportation, the grocer lives on their labor, the shoe manufacturer grows wealthy at their expense, the iron dealer draws large profits from their toil, the clothier bleeds them to build a palatial residence for his daughter, and a host of other parasites wax strong on their flesh and blood. The farmers hold a convention, and decide to
institute the other industries necessary to supply their requirements. They go to the overcrowded cities and they find a thousand shoe-workers who labor in the fetid atmosphere of the factory, from early dawn till the twilight shadows fall athwart the heavens, and then go home to the ill-ventilated, dark and dingy garret in the noisome tenement district where they live on the coarsest food. Their days are full of sorrow, and they are glad to get a few hours of oblivion in the silence of the night. The farmers appeal to these unfortunate sons of toil to "come with us to the shady wood and the silvery brook, and we will give you all the luxuries of life, with four hours of daily labor." A factory is established in the rural district, the hopes of the toilers are realized, and a new impetus is given to the co-operative scheme. A woolen factory is established, a clothing house is opened and a grocery store supplies the community at the lowest possible cost. The whole state is ultimately incorporated in the movement, and the plan is imitated by other commonwealths. The several States hold a convention, and it is decided to select the most fertile lands for farming purposes, devoting one section to the growth of wheat, while another is devoted to the production of corn, a third section is used for the cultivation of cotton and sugar cane. The factories are located in the sections that afford the best facilities for the production of the several commodities. By the division of labor, the productive power of the community is augmented, and the general prosperity is enhanced. The latest improvements are introduced; men of genius are pensioned and devote their time to the study of mechanics and the utility of thermal, chemical and electrical forces, and the results of their efforts are employed for the benefit of the community. Railroads are built connecting the various districts, and bringing the agricultural and manufacturing population in close proximity, and thus reducing the cost of exchange and transportation. The members of the co-operative enterprise are now supplied with
the best educational facilities, the ablest medical attendance, the latest methods of production, the most advanced system of locomotion and all the blessings of civilization, with the least expenditure of labor power. The example is an incentive to struggling humanity throughout the country; other States affiliate with the movement; the foundation of our present economic system is sapped; people rebel against exploitation and refuse to patronize private enterprises; the capitalists can get no sale for their commodities, for the masses have learned that it is more profitable to produce for themselves than to produce for the aggrandizement of commercial magnates; the dividends of the large corporations are diminished, and are ultimately destroyed; the trusts are annihilated and the stockholders seek admission into the co-operative industries, and the nation is the sole producer and the banner of Socialism floats on the breeze, and millions of tongues sing an anthem of joy in the roseate dawn of a new era in the history of the world, and the nations of the earth celebrate the triumph of justice and love.

Can the good Bishop condemn the two men who began the co-operative movement? Did they not have a right to ameliorate their condition by the force of combination? If the two first men were justified, then the ten were justified, and the hundred and the thousand, and the ten thousand and the million and the hundred million. But the hundred million constitute the nation. Therefore the people have a right to nationalize the means of production and distribution, and Socialism is founded on justice and equity, and its wisdom is beyond a question of doubt.

The Bishop says: “Whilst one man, or many men, have the right to quit work, other men or many men have the right to take up the work, if they wish to. If this right be not conceded, then individual, personal liberty is denied at the very moment that it is asserted.” I must differ with his Lordship on this vital point. If the right be conceded, then personal
liberty is denied. Every man has a right to the product of his toil. Even the old parties grant this assumption—at the time of election. All wealth is created by labor. Adam Smith says, "Labor is the real measure of the exchangeable value of all commodities. The real price of everything, what everything really costs to the man who wants to acquire it, is the toil and trouble of acquiring it. What is bought with money or with goods, is purchased by labor. That money or those goods contain the value of a certain quantity of labor which we exchange for what is supposed to contain the value of an equal quantity." Wealth of Nations, book 1st., Chap. 5, page 38. This is an admission that labor creates all values, that is all exchange values. The price of an article is its exchange value and the price of the labor incorporated in that article. This doctrine is universally admitted by the classical economists. Let us give an illustration. The farmer raises a bullock which he slaughters for meat. The hide is carefully removed, salted and dried, and sold to the tanner where it is converted into leather and the leather is transferred to the factory and made up into shoes. In estimating the value of the shoes we must consider the labor of the farmer, the labor of the tanner, the labor of the chemist who compounded the tannings with the gelatins and albuminoids, the labor of the thousands who made the machinery in the factory and the labor of the thousands who transferred the leather into shoes. The quality of labor in each case is different, and the skill of the operatives is different. But labor today is social, and we must use the unit of social labor as the standard. One thousand men working in a factory can make five thousand pairs of shoes in a day, which means an average of five pairs for each man, whereas, one individual working with the simple instruments of the eighteenth century would not make more than one pair a day. The value of the shoes made by the laborer who works with antiquated utensils is not measured by the time that is spent at the bench but according to the
time that is socially necessary with our improved machinery to make a pair of shoes. Again the quality of the hides and shoes is different and they cannot be compared, for there is no relation between things of a different nature. But while the quality of the article is different there is a common ingredient in every kind of commodity, and that common ingredient is labor. We say that ten pairs of shoes are worth one suit of clothes, because the labor incorporated in ten pairs of shoes is equivalent to the labor incorporated in one suit of clothes. But the labor which makes the shoes is not the same kind of labor which makes the clothes. “With reference to use value,” says Karl Marx, “the labor contained in a commodity counts only qualitatively but with reference to value its counts only quantitatively and must be reduced to human labor pure and simple.” (Capital, Book 1st., Chap. 1, Sec. 2, p. 13). The quality of the labor expended by one man is expressed in the shoes which have not only value, or exchange-value, but also use-value, as it serves a certain purpose, like the labor incorporated in the clothes. But in exchanging articles we do not compare their use-value, but their exchange value. I exchange a house for a boat. The house affords shelter and the boat enables me to brave the flood. The use-value in each case is different, but they have the same value or exchange-value, for one value is considered the equivalent of the other, because there is an equal quantity of human labor in each. Two men begin life together at the age of twenty. One is a common laborer, and makes five hundred dollars annually. The other learns a trade, and spends ten years in acquiring perfect skill, and in the meantime receives no compensation. At thirty the common laborer has already made five thousand dollars, and the mechanic has made nothing. Supposing that the average life is forty years and the two men would have ten thousand dollars each at the end of that time. But the common laborer makes ten thousand dollars in twenty years, and the mechanic makes ten thousand dollars in ten years, and therefore one
day's labor of the mechanic is worth two days labor performed by the unskilled worker. The time spent by the mechanic in learning his trade, is added to the value of his labor. In both cases the value of labor is measured by the unit of abstract labor time. A day's labor of the mechanic contains twice as many units of abstract labor time, as a day's labor of his companion. Let us presume that one hour of abstract labor time is a unit of value. A day's labor of the unskilled worker has ten units; and a day's labor of the mechanic has twenty units. All grades and qualities of labor can be reduced to the unit of abstract labor time. In making a pair of shoes, the labor of the farmer who raised the animal, the labor of the tanner, the chemist, the machinist and the shoe-workers, are all reduced to the unit of abstract labor time, and are incorporated in the shoes. Professional labor is no exception to this standard of measure. There are two boys in school, and having passed through the course of studies, one becomes a machinist and the other devotes his time to literature and philosophy. At the age of twenty they separate. Each has inherited twenty thousand dollars. The machinist works at his trade and makes one thousand dollars annually. The other continues his studies and travels abroad to become acquainted with the works of art in foreign lands, and spends a number of years in foreign universities, and frequents the halls of science that he might bathe his soul with the light of knowledge and return to his native country laden with the thoughts of the world's noblest minds. At the age of thirty-five he begins life in earnest, but without a cent of money, for his inheritance has been exchanged for the opportunities of acquiring knowledge. The machinist has saved his inheritance, and after having paid for his maintenance has increased the original sum fifteen thousand dollars and his wealth now amounts to thirty-five thousand dollars. He has improved his skill, and at the age of thirty-five he is able to command a salary of two thousand dollars annually, and he manages to save fif-
teen hundred dollars a year. If we take forty-five years as the average life, the machinist will have $50,000 at the end of his days. The scholar has nothing at the age of thirty-five, and now he is offered a position on the rostrum by a lecture bureau. How much is his time worth? His abstract labor time is worth the same as the abstract labor time of the machinist. He should therefore make as much in ten years, the ordinary term of human life, as the machinist has at his death. But the machinist has $50,000, and he lecturer should make $5,000, after paying his expenses that he may have as much as the machinist. The concrete labor time of the lecturer is worth five times as much as the concrete labor time of the machinist, for one year of the concrete labor time of the lecturer contains five times as many units of abstract labor time as one year of concrete labor time of the machinist. The $20,000 of inheritance which is $20,000 worth of abstract labor time, and the fifteen years spent in acquiring knowledge, are added to the value of the ten years of concrete labor performed by the lecturer. If the shoe manufacturer makes one million pairs of shoes in a year which he sells at three million dollars, he has the value of three million dollars worth of concrete labor which can be reduced to the measure of abstract labor time. Let us suppose that one dollar is the unit of abstract labor time. The farmer’s concrete labor amounts to one hundred thousand units, the tanner’s to one hundred thousand units, the chemist’s to one hundred thousand units, the machinery represents five million units, and it will last ten years, and therefore one million units is worn away in a year; and the work of the other laborers represents two hundred thousand units. Adding these sums together we have 1,500 thousand units, which is equivalent to 1,500 thousand dollars. The manufacturer takes this money and pays for the raw material, which includes the work of the farmer, the tanner, the chemist, and he likewise compensates himself as superintendent, and then he puts aside $500,000 to pay for the
loss in machinery. At the end of the year all his expenses are paid and his machinery is in the same condition as it was when he began, and therefore he is even and has his salary for managing the work. But there is a sum of 1,500 thousand dollars left, and this represents 1,500 thousand units of abstract labor time and is the product of the concrete labor of the shoe-workers. There are five hundred employees in the establishment and the average product of each man is $3,000 annually, or, say, ten dollars per day. The men have a right to ten dollars per day because they have created ten dollars per day after paying all expenses, and the Democrat and Republican orators at election time, say that every man is entitled to the product of his toil. Well, if every man is entitled to the product of his toil at election times, he is entitled to the product of his toil at any other time, and at all times. But the manufacturer is paying his men two dollars per day, and pocketing the remainder, or he is making a clear profit of eight dollars per day from the product of each laborer. The employees rebel against this injustice and demand a higher wage. The manufacturer refuses to comply with their wishes, and maintains that he has a right to all they produce except what is necessary to keep them and their families in "frugal comfort." The men remonstrate against the decision of the employer and finally they throw down their tools and abandon the factory. The discharged men plead with their comrades who have filled their vacancies. "You are depriving us of the opportunity of enjoying the product of our toil." The "scabs" reply, "We are American citizens, and we have the right to work whenever and wherever we can get the employment." The union men, for we presume that the strikers are union men, and the others are "Scabs," the union men answer, "We admit that you have the right to work whenever and wherever you can get the employment, as long as you do not interfere with our rights. But you do interfere with our rights, when you work
for two dollars per day, when you are worth ten dollars per
day, for you reduce the wages of your fellow men.” Again
the “Scabs” respond: “We are American citizens and may
work for board if we choose, and it is not your affair. Dear
friends you are denying the rights of personal liberty, you are
denying the right of the freedom of contract which is the glory
of our modern industry.” The union men may say, “We grant
that you are American citizens, but there are laws even for
American citizens which compel you to respect the rights of
others, and your innate rights, which are guaranteed by the
constitution of the United States, are limited by the innate
rights of your fellow men. You cannot interfere with our in-
nate right of enjoying the product of our toil, and if you work
for two dollars, you rob us of four-fifths of the wealth we
create, for your wages determine our wages; the manufacturer
will not give us ten dollars per day when you are willing to
work for two dollars per day.” “Yes, but we own our labor
power,” say the “Scabs,” “and we have the right to sell it at
any price. Our labor power is our own property and we can
dispose of it as we like.” “Your houses are your property,” re-
ply the union men, “but you cannot dispose of them as you
like. You may use them but you cannot burn them.” “That
is true,” the “Scabs” say, “because by burning our houses, we
endanger the property of our neighbors, and the flame from
the conflagration might ignite the adjoining residences and
drive a dozen families into the streets without a home and
reduce them to beggary.” “The same argument applies in
our case,” reply the union men. “By working for two dollars
per day you reduce our means of subsistence, deprive our chil-
dren of education and leave us no hope in our old age but the
dark shadows of want, misery and despair. If your compliance
with the will of the manufacturer did not interfere with our
rights of enjoying all the wealth we create, then you would be
justified in selling your labor power at any price; but when
your reduced wages robs us of eight dollars per day, you are guilty of injustice."

What will the Bishop say to this argument? I have purchased a farm of land, and, of course, it is my property, and I have perfect dominion over it, according to the Bishop. There is a river running through the place, and I divert the current of the stream and lead it from its natural bed, and the waters, leaving my premises, flood the property of my neighbor, and destroy his crops. Would the law tolerate this abuse? It would not. I might divert the stream, in its course through my farm, so as to use the water for some particular purpose, but the law would compel me to direct the water back to the original bed before it would leave my premises. The farmer could not change the course of the river so as to deprive a neighbor of the use of the water. A person is never permitted to use his property to the damage of another party. This is natural justice. Hence the worker cannot sell his labor power to the detriment of his fellow worker. But another inference is drawn from the proposition. If a man owns a dollar that he does not create, then he is enjoying the wealth created by some other man. If all men owned the means of subsistence, no man would sell his labor power below its real value, that is, he would demand all that he creates. This would destroy the profit system and capitalism must perish. Capitalism, or private capital utilized for profit, presupposes a vast army of people who have nothing to sell but their labor power, as I have proved in my pamphlet, "A Voice From England." In England the guilds were destroyed and the peasants were expropriated to create a surplus of labor power for capitalistic exploitation. The means of subsistence being appropriated by a certain class of society called the capitalists, the workers are compelled to seek employment from this class, and competition forces them to exchange their labor power for the bare necessaries of life. In the early days of industry the producer worked with his own tools which were very simple, and he re-
ceived the full value of the commodity. But the capitalist came on the stage, and he established a big factory, and by the division of labor increased its productivity and diminished the cost of his commodities and the handicraftsman, not being able to compete with the capacity of the large manufacturer, was compelled to close his little shop and seek employment elsewhere. The capitalist who could command the most labor power was in a position to crush his competitors, and the small capitalist sought protection by combining with another manufacturer, thereby reducing expenses and enlarging the capacity of the establishment. A machine is invented which displaces one-half the labor force, and the large capitalist is again in a position to reduce the cost of production and drive his competitors from the field of industry. Many perish in the struggle, and those that survive combine with others and increase the magnitude of their capital. This calls for a counter combination. New methods of production appear on the market, and the man with ample capital purchases the machinery and again he destroys the business of his competitors. Many are stranded in the tidal wave of progress, and those that still remain on the bloody sand, augment their capacity with the addition of more capital, in order to compete with their rivals in the market. These combinations are multiplied year by year, until their magnitude is gigantic. The individual worker is no more, for he has long since perished in the struggle for existence. Competition forced the small capitalist to combine and hence the origin of the partnership. The law of competition still followed the wake of industry, and the partnership of two or three individuals became too small to produce at the fallen prices, and small partnerships combined and formed corporations. These vast industrial organizations were necessitated by the law of competition to increase their magnitude and the trust, which is the combination of several corporations was born amidst the sound of battle and the ruins of homes and the ashes of business establishments. Private
capital necessitates industrial strife, exploitation, spoliation and expropriation. The Bishop denies the right of monopoly, and therefore he denies the right of private capital. The manufacturer has a right, according to his Lordship's doctrine, to employ a thousand men, and the exercise of that right destroyed the handicrafts. The large capitalist destroyed the small capitalists. The partnership annihilated the business of the individual, the corporation annihilated the partnership and the trust annihilated the corporation, and below the foundation of the industrial fabric, are the millions of toilers who are robbed and bled and sacrificed to support the mighty pyramid of capitalism. The Bishop says that monopoly is wrong, but monopoly is the product of private capital. "It is the right and the duty of the state," he says, "to see that private ownership" (by which he means private capital) "be not used in a manner that would be detrimental to the public good." Who constitutes the public? The majority of the population. In the United States today six per cent. of the population own eighty-three per cent. of the wealth. The masses of the people are dispossessed; the middle class are vanishing, and in a few years more we will have a few millionaires, or billionaires, ruling a nation of paupers and slaves. Six per cent. of the population owning and using the wealth of the land to enthrall and degrade ninety-four per cent! But the Bishop would prevent this despotism. How? By legislation. But the capitalists are the legislators. They control the nation. They rule in the halls of Congress, in the Senate chamber and direct the decisions of the judicial bench. The capitalists possess the economic power and the economic power colors and governs the political power and every other power. In the pristine days of the human race, every individual provided for his wants. He would take his bow and arrow and go into the forest and kill a deer or a buffalo. He was his own warrior, and he would stand in the door of his tent with his burnished blade in his hand to defend his wife and sleeping
child from the knife of the vile assassin. But in the course of ages, man learned that he could economize his forces by the division of labor, and the specialization of functions. A number of hunters united their efforts and invaded the jungles, and with the evening shades they returned to the rude village laden with the victims of their skill in archery. The fisherman abandoned his hook and pole and net, and combined his labor with others who derived their subsistence from the azure deep, and they built a boat and went out on the stormy flood and their toil was remunerated with large results. The fisherman and the hunter exchanged the products of wood and sea for the commodities of the herdsman and agriculturist. The community decided that it was cheaper to hire a number of warriors to defend the village during the absence of the male population, when pursuing their daily avocations, and thus they specialized the different functions of society. Today we have the police service to keep the peace, the army and the navy to defend the nation, the legislative, executive and judicial functions. In former times one man made shoes, another made boats, a third made clothes. But today we specialize our industrial functions and the finished article is the product of many different kinds of labor. A pair of shoes pass through a hundred operations before they are ready for the market. Every day of our existence is dependent on the efforts of thousands of our fellow men. At the head of this vast industrial machinery are a few capitalists, and their voice is omnipotent. The day is not far distant when a Rockefeller or a Morgan can sit in his office and touch an electric button and stop every mill and every factory and every large forge and every large furnace from the frozen banks of the St. Lawrence to the golden sands of the Mexican Gulf, and the people deprived of the means of subsistence, will perish in the streets and the highways.

But I hear the Bishop say, “Smash the trust!” Why? Because the magnitude of the trust makes it a menace to human
life and liberty. The danger of the trust lies in the power of exploitation, and to control the trust or to "smash the trust" means to diminish the extent of its exploiting power, but it would not destroy the exploiting power. If a thousand establishments, representing ten thousand small capitalists, would succeed one trust you would have ten thousand people delivered from exploitation and ten thousand added to the army of exploiters. The Bishop seems to think it is no crime to exploit, provided you do not exploit too many. The number of exploiters sanctifies the exploitation. It is no injustice to exploit the laboring people, if you keep your hands off the capitalist. It is a virtue to exploit fifty millions of people, if twenty-five millions are engaged in the exploitation. If you "smash the trust," why not smash the corporation and the partnership, for they are engaged in the business of exploitation and are crushing the smaller houses? To deliver the people from exploitation by means of "smashing" you must keep on smashing, till you have smashed every instrument of modern industry, and this would put the nation back to a state of barbarism. Does the Bishop believe in a reactionary policy? And if he could bury modern civilization in the gloom and shadows of the lost ages with private ownership of the means of production, the progress of the centuries would beget again the partnership, the corporation and the trust. Our productive system is the development of all past generations. It is the evolution of industry, and society can no more wander back through the labyrinths of history to the shadows of antiquity than the Ohio River can change its current and roll up the Allegheny and the Monongahela. Evolution is progressive, not retrogressive. No human power could plunge the world back into chaos or disperse the atoms of the earth and scatter the nebulae of the universe through the realms of space. The forces of nature have worked on through the ages and gathered up the floating nebulae into globes of fire, and studded the empire of ether with shining suns and planets and
satellites. The laws of industrial development are as inexorable as the centrifugal and centripetal forces, and the centralization of production can no more be impeded than the formation of the spheres. The profit system depends on exploitation, and the magnitude of capital does not alter its nature. But exploitation is wrong, for it deprives the laborer of his product, and when the dominion of capitalism is extended the wrong is intensified till the life and liberty of the nation is in the hands of a despot, and the only remedy for the evil is the socialization of the means of production. The Bishop says that the "true solution of the difficulties will be found somewhere midway between extreme Socialism and that greed and avarice that have made it powerful and possible." To speak of extreme Socialism is like speaking of extreme mathematics or violent and revolutionary physics. Socialism is the nationalization of the means of production and distribution, and anything more or less would not be Socialism, and there is no midway between capitalistic domination and collectivism. The Bishop maintains that "Christian principles only can bring men to the best social system in the world." Your economic system rests on selfishness, even according to the ablest of its exponents, such as Adam Smith in his "Wealth of Nations," and selfishness begets greed and avarice. But this is not all: Our industrial system is founded on exploitation, robbery and injustice. Exploitation is the life and soul of the system, and if you remove the power of exploitation, you destroy the system. As long as you support a system which is founded on injustice and admit the truth of the Bishop's statement, you must have a thousand times more Christianity than you have today, or ever will have under the present system. To be a Christian is to follow in the footsteps of the lowly Nazarene, who said "Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:32. If all the people in the United States would obey this injunction, you would have no poverty, for
Communism, which is more radical than Socialism, would be an accomplished fact. How many Christians in the world realize this precept in their daily lives? At the most not more than one million. Christianity has been on the earth nineteen hundred years. There are sixteen hundred million people in the world, and if it takes nineteen hundred years to give one million people enough Christianity to live according to the teachings of Christ under our industrial system it would require sixteen hundred times nineteen hundred to solve the industrial problem, and that would be rather a long time to fast. A system of economics that is based on selfishness and injustice and inflames the worst passions of the human heart, repudiates the principles of Christianity, and that is the reason that the empire of religion has been losing ground ever since the dawn of capitalistic domination. The Socialists do not repudiate religion, but they say that it does not require religion to plow a furrow and reap a harvest, or dig potatoes and sell butter. These are all business questions, and contain no prophetic thoughts or mysteries of faith. It does not require the aid of Christianity to look through a telescope, for we read of renowned astronomers who did not accept the authenticity of divine revelation, and they were very successful in their observations, for they had no fears that they would discover a star that was condemned. If religion could settle the economic problem, Italy and Spain would be the first countries on the globe. Two and two make four, and all the religion in the world will not alter these figures. Let us apply the same principle to the economic question. When consumption does not equal production, there will be a surplus, and eventually hard times, panics, industrial stagnation, and the small capitalist will be crushed, and his property will be absorbed by his successful competitors, and he will be driven into the ranks of the proletariat; the middleman will lose his home and join the hosts of toilers; the laboring people will be reduced to starvation and the country will be filled with an
army of beggars and tramps. But consumption does not equal production when the workers do not get their portion of the wealth produced. The laboring people constitute seventy-five per cent. of the population, and to equalize consumption and production, they should get seventy-five per cent. of the wealth that they create. But they get only fifteen per cent. of the wealth that they create, and all the religion in the world will not make fifteen equal to seventy-five. The Socialists offer a scientific solution. Under their regime the people would get all they produce, and there would be no surplus, while millions are starving. Christ did not teach science. The object of His incarnation was the redemption of the world from sin, and the mission of His Church is to bear the blessing of salvation to the wildest haunts of men, and through the teachings of her representatives, we learn that she has constantly disclaimed the prerogative of divine authority in the realm of science. Now Socialism is the science of economics, the science of production and distribution, and as such does not make any special provision for religion, though it does not repudiate religion. Like every other science, it leaves religion to rule in the domain of faith and morals. The Democratic and Republican party makes no provision for religion, and yet the Bishop does not condemn them. There are some Socialists in Europe, who, as individuals, have antagonized religion, but there are also some Democrats and Republicans who have antagonized religion, and yet the Bishop does not contend that these old parties are atheistic. Individual Socialists have opposed Christianity, because clergymen, as a rule, maintain that the capitalist has the right of exploiting the laborers, have a right to enjoy the product of the laborers' toil, and they have endeavored to sanctify this robbery with the authority of religion. The governments of Europe persecuted the Socialists, and imprisoned their leaders, and denied them the rights of citizens, and invoked the sanction of religion in their despotic methods, and the pulpits of Ger-
many rang with denunciations hurled at Marx and Lassalle who were hounded from the country, and their disciples languished in dungeons. The Socialists compared the character of the Nazarene, who loved the poor, with the character of their persecutors, who sacrificed the poor on the altar of Mammon, and listening to the ministers who taught that the masses must forever wear the chain of slavery and the rags of poverty for the glorification of the classes, they, not distinguishing between Christianity and its clergy, concluded that religion was the handmaid of capitalism and was the foe of justice and liberty. In 1776 the Thirteen Colonies declared their independence and the sons of the West went forth to battle for the freedom of the land. There were Catholics, Protestants and infidels, in that historic movement, and the Christians did not question the right of conscience, or exclude the infidels, or refuse to accept the Declaration of Independence because it was written by Thomas Jefferson, who repudiated the teachings of the Gallilean. Today we venerate the memory of our patriotic fathers, regardless of their religious convictions, and the children of Columbia kneel at the grave of their heroic dead and kiss the shrines that contain their hallowed ashes, and place their garlands on the tomb where the Sage of Monticello sleeps. Why do we honor the memory of the Revolutionists? Because they drove the British hosts back beyond the billowy deep, and delivered the land from foreign taxation. But would it not have been better to give a small portion of our earnings to the Court of St. James than to give all our earnings to the court of Rockefeller, Morgan, Astor & Co., who spend it at the Court of St. James? Perhaps the Bishop will say that the capitalists do not spend all their money in England, as they make large investments in the empire of Columbia. But I fail to see that this magnanimous generosity alters the case or consecrates the robbery, for the question is not where they spend the money, but whose money they spend. The essence of all slavery consists in the
power of one man to exact the labor of another without a just compensation. Our forefathers, infidels as well as Christians, are glorified for breaking the gyves of political bondage, and the leaders of economic freedom are denounced for attempting to deliver mankind from industrial bondage, which is a thousand fold more galling than the despotism of the British flag. Religious prejudices have been used to justify the bloodiest deeds in the history of the world, and to fan the flames of hatred in the hearts of the multitude. It was used by the Roman Emperors to inspire the rabble with frenzy which they poured out on the defenseless Christians till the cry of the Eagles mingled with the songs of the angels, and the throne of the Caesars became the throne of the Fisherman. It was used by the monarchs of Europe in seeking the blood and purse of Israel, and it blighted the glory of Iberia with the lurid flames of the auto-de-fe. It was used by the Norman Knights to separate the Children of Erin and to crimson the land of saints with the blood of martyrs. It was used in Colonial days by the Puritans of New England who drove the infidel, Catholic and dissenter into the wilds and bound the witch to the stake. The Blue Laws of Massachusetts and Connecticut forbade a Papist, a heretic or a Quaker to remain within the colony, and the children of Baltimore were persecuted in the cradle of religious liberty in the Western Hemisphere. More than a century has rolled away since the guns of Yorktown shattered the British hosts and the Starry Banner crowned the temple of freedom; and within that period the Native American Party, the Know Nothings and the American Protective Association, have poured out vials of wrath on the children of Rome, and yet Catholics forget the past and resort to the same weapons to defeat the champions of economic justice. Protestants and Catholics have met on the field of carnage for three hundred years, in the name of God, religion and morality, and scarcely has the blood been wiped away and the burnished blades restored to their scabbards, when they join hands in a warfare
against the Socialists, in the name of God, religion and morality. These is not a word in the programme of Socialism pertaining to free love and atheism, and it is unjust to condemn a political party, for the private views of a few individuals. It is just as reasonable to condemn science because there have been atheists and immoral men among scientists. Bruno was a metaphysician; Voltaire was a dramatist; Hume and Spinoza were philosophers; Gibbon was a historian; Humboldt was a philologist; Buchner was a physician; Helmholtz was a physiologist; Darwin, Spencer, Huxley and Haeckel were naturalists, and still no man of common sense would condemn metaphysics, philosophy, philology, physiology, therapeutics, history, drama and the study of nature, because these brilliant minds repudiated Christianity, and defended some school of thought at variance with divine revelation, such as desism, rationalism, materialism, pantheism, atheism or agnosticism. Heine, the great poet, was a free lover, and yet the Bishop does not condemn poetry. The leaders of science today are anti-Christian, and still no one condemns science. There are thousands of free lovers and atheists among the Democrats and Republicans, and yet Cardinal Gibbons is a Democrat and Archbishop Ireland is a Republican, and Bishop Montgomery does not condemn the old parties. Socialism does not make any provision for Christianity, and the Democrats and Republicans do not make any provision for Christianity, as religion does not lie within the province of a political party. If the Democrats should decide to adopt the creed of the Methodists, there would be a howl from the Catholics, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Episcopalians, the Jew, the infidel, the agnostic and the atheist. Religion has been excluded generally from our public schools, because there were too many creeds to satisfy, and in places where the Bible is read, the Catholics complain that the Protestants are using our free institutions to propagate their doctrines, and the same people very inconsistently condemn the Socialists for not
incorporating the Bible in their political platform. The Democratic and Republican parties are dominated by Protestants, who do not accept the teachings of Rome and the decrees of the Pope, and if the Bishop were consistent he would condemn the two old parties. Some good Christians are afraid that the Socialists will destroy religion when they get in power, but they need have no fears. Socialism cannot triumph without the assistance of Catholics and Protestants, and as they are in the majority and are such devoted friends, and agree on all questions, and especially the labor problem, they can always control the infidels and atheists in the government. "The home and the family are the first society," says the Bishop. "They are prior to either state or community, and God has intended that neither state nor community shall usurp the paternalism of parents in this society." In one place his Lordship claims that Socialism will not have enough of authority, and in the next breath he contends that it will have too much authority. In one place he says that the people will be everything and the state will be nothing, and again the state will be everything and the people nothing. In one place he says that the father and the children will rule the state, and again the state will rule the father and the children. The men of the earliest society enjoyed the product of their toil and the control of their children, and the Socialists are working to restore their primeval rights which have been annihilated by capitalism which appropriates the product of the laborer’s toil, deprives him of a home, and takes the child from the parental fireside and chains him to the car of Mammon. Today the capitalistic state owns the family, and under Socialism the family will own the state. The Bishop asks for "three things: first, Freedom of individual demand; second, A more or less determinate unit measure of value for purpose of exchange; third, Freedom of the individual to chose an occupation and to qualify for it." You cannot have the first and the third under the domination of capitalism. Let us offer a
few examples. A young man has been working for many years at the small wages of one dollar per day which is barely a maintenance, and he falls in love with a girl of the same condition, and they marry. They desire a nice home with carpets and handsome upholstery and a library, but they have scarcely enough money to purchase the most necessary utensils for housekeeping. The young man continues his work, but he finds that one dollar a day is insufficient for their wants. He would like to see his wife neatly attired, but he has no means of providing the clothes. After a number of years they have quite a family, and they are reduced to beggary. He desires an education for his children, but that is impossible, as they must go to the factory. He would be proud to see his eldest son enter the medical profession, but that is only a dream; for it requires means to realize this desire. He would be pleased to see his children in nice society, but his poverty stands in the way, and when his boys grow into manhood they become habitues of the saloon, the only place where they are welcome. His health is impaired and the doctor advises him to spend a few weeks at the seaside, but he cannot go. There is scarcely a desire that he and his family can satisfy. Another young man learns a trade, and when he has labored for two years at the bench, a machine is invented which dispenses with his skill, and he must seek employment in a new field. There is no opportunity for him except the shoemaker's trade, and he does not like that work, but necessity compels him to select that which he does not like. He would like to be a chemist, but he has no education, and no time for study, and no means to defray the expenses, and he must be a shoe-maker. After a few years a machine is invented, and his services are no longer required. His skill is useless for the machine does his work perfectly. Again he is sent adrift, and after struggling with difficulties of an unconquerable nature, he succumbs to cruel fate and becomes a moral and physical wreck. A girl is working in a store at a salary
of three dollars a week, and not being able to support herself on this miserable salary, she asks for an advance, and the proprietor informs her that her services are no longer required. She seeks employment in a large department store, and she is told that she will be engaged if she is willing to accept a salary of three dollars per week, and forced by dire necessity, she tries to economize and live on this small sum. She complains to her companions and they tell her to get a gentleman friend. She desires to preserve her purity at the sacrifice of her life. She is young, handsome and petite, and soon she follows the example of her associates and sacrifices virtue on the altar of lust in exchange for bread. Is this an overdrawn picture? Not in the least. There is a physician in a certain city of the west, with a population of less than one-half million, who boasted that he was treating sixty girls from a department store in that city. Look at the hopes and homes and lives that are daily sacrificed on the altar of Mammon, and yet the Bishop says under Socialism that we would not have freedom of demand and occupation. A young lady wishes to be a dressmaker, but there are too many dressmakers now. Another wishes to study music, but she must go to a factory. A boy desires to be a bookkeeper, but all the places are filled; another desires to study dentistry, but he has no means. A young man desires to go into business, but he has only one thousand dollars, and that sum is insufficient in these days of commercial splendor. These are a few illustrations that I could extend into millions, and the student of our industrial system can well see that the demands of the Bishop are idle dreams today under the empire of capitalism.

But how would Socialism deal with the problem? There are today one thousand men in a factory and one thousand on the outside trying to get in, but there is no demand for their services. The capitalist has machinery and by working the thousand men he can accommodate his customers. Under Socialism the thousand men on the outside would be taken
in, and with the additional force the work day would be reduced to five hours. Where would the second thousand get their remuneration? From the surplus value which is now pocketed by the capitalist and the amount wasted in seeking a sale for the commodities. A man with some means gives his children an education that they might escape the sad fate of the toiler, and hence there is an abundance of physicians, musicians, dentists, etc., and thus many men adopt the professions without the requisite skill and taste. Under Socialism every toiler would have an ample income and the stigma of disgrace would be removed from the honest laborer; no one would feel dishonored in following the avocation of a machinist, or a shoemaker, and only men of the highest ability would adopt the learned professions. A person could follow any profession or trade, for machinery would be used for the benefit of society, instead of forcing men on the labor market, and there would be no overcrowding. A person could satisfy all his demands, for he would get all the wealth that he would create. There would be a more just and satisfactory unit of measure than we have now; a paper currency representing abstract labor time, as I have explained it in detail, in my novel "Beyond the Black Ocean." We call a certain amount of gold a dollar, because it requires a certain amount of labor to extract the gold from the earth and smelt and coin it. These different grades of labor can be reduced to the unit of common labor or abstract labor. It is much easier to issue a paper currency, which does not cost any labor, to represent labor time, than to spend so much time in procuring the metal which merely serves the purpose of representing labor time. The person holding one hundred of these labor certificates, each certificate representing ten units, and each unit representing one hour of common labor, could command ten thousand hours of common labor, or the equivalent in commodities. The Bishop imagines that he has paralyzed Socialism by presenting some difficulties, or what he calls "Insuperable diffi-
cultivates” in the medical profession. This question has already been treated in my pamphlet, “A Voice From England,” but I will reply to the particular objection presented by his Lordship of Los Angeles. The Bishop says that a certain territory will require the services of one hundred physicians. “How shall they be chosen? All the boys and girls of ten years of age will have a right to demand to be educated for the medical profession.” And this is one of the insuperable difficulties! Education will be free for every one, and all the boys and girls who desire may take advantage of this privilege, which they cannot do today, for the whistle of the mill and factory calls the children from the schoolroom at an early age to the scene of industrial activity, and their education is neglected and they grow up with dwarfed intellects and undeveloped faculties. “But four thousand young men and women present themselves to begin their medical studies,” continues the Bishop, “and of these it may be necessary to select three hundred to allow for deaths. The selection will be made by committee.” The Bishop holds that no committee can make the selection “for there are certain moral and physical qualities ‘required’ in a physician which exhibit themselves only in practice.” Then, when the three hundred are selected, how do you know that they will qualify for service? “No more can be done than to establish a minimum percentage which one must reach” and this will reduce the entire profession to “a minimum of excellence. For nine-tenths of those who, under a system of private competition, would have labored for a maximum of excellence, will, under the new system, labor only for the minimum, which is demanded for earning the daily wage in the public service, the only thing they can aspire to. In a word the entire profession is degraded, and the entire community is put at the mercy of half-educated charlatans.” The teachers in the public school, the officials in the army and navy, are filled by selection, and yet we fail to see the disastrous consequences predicted in the Bishop’s
pamphlet. Every one knows that the corps in public institutions, selected by a board, are far more efficient than teachers in private schools, and State Universities excel all other universities. There would be a minimum of excellence, but that minimum could be made higher than the maximum today. Again there could be grades, and the distinction in itself, without any increase in compensation, would be a powerful stimulant to the physician. All the boys and girls in the community could study medicine, and the one hundred passing the best examination, would be selected. But the others would be disappointed? Perhaps they would, but yet there are ample opportunities for them in other fields, in the trades and industries, and their knowledge of medicine would make them honored members of society. The work day being reduced to a few hours, the young men and women will take a thorough course of studies, for their parents will be in a position to support them, and the institutions of learning being open to the community, all will enjoy the opportunities of acquiring a classical and scientific education. Many, no doubt, will study medicine as an accomplishment, and after they have entered the mill or the factory, they can pass the afternoon and evening in the lecture hall, the library, the laboratory, the dissecting room, and the mechanic will be a more learned man than the ordinary physician today. The medical staff can be filled constantly by the army of young men who are already prepared for the profession by their previous studies. Today the spirit of commercialism is degrading the healing art, and sacrificing the public health. The opportunities are so rare that the professions are crowded with incapable men, and their remuneration is so poor that they lose all interest in their work. The masses of the people are not able to estimate the competency of a physician and the country is filled with charlatans. Drugs are adulterated for profit, and our food is impure, and the people are absorbing poison when they sit down to enjoy a meal or take a remedy prescribed by a phy-
sician. And yet the Bishop glorifies this state of affairs! Abolish the profit system, and you will have pure drugs, pure food, able, earnest physicians who will expend the wealth of their intellects and experience for the public health. I have in my possession a paper read before the Detroit Medical Library Association by George H. Sherman, M. D., in which the author states: “Overcrowding in the medical profession has attracted the attention of physicians for some time, because it not only destroys the possibility of reasonable remuneration for time and labor required, but creates a medical commercialism which is degrading to the profession and injurious to the public health.” Among other reasons the Doctor says that “This overcrowding is brought about by an unnecessary number of graduates from our medical colleges, and by depressed social conditions which make it impossible for people to employ physicians as much as they would care to, and make the payment of professional service often impossible.” Dr. Sherman holds that the remuneration in other employments being so scant and precarious, the young men of the country are entering the professions. “As long as it is easier,” he says, “to earn a living at the practice of medicine than on the farm or at the bench, the sons of farmers and mechanics will continue to study medicine.” And of course you have thousands of physicians who have no talent or taste for the profession, and the public health is sacrificed. “Parents in their anxiety to provide for their children,” continues Dr. Sherman, “often deprive themselves of all the comforts and some of the necessities of life, so that their children may obtain a medical education because they realize that manual labor is not remunerative. This natural tendency will always keep the profession filled up to a point where the professional man’s opportunities will be but little better than those enjoyed by people following other callings.” Dr. Sherman holds that the only remedy is to improve the conditions of the toiler, that the young men of the country will not be
compelled to study medicine to escape the fate of a beggar, and this can be accomplished only by the institution of Socialism. Let us take a glance at the life of the physicians today. He is located in the tenement district and his patients are generally very poor. He is kept busy waiting on these unfortunate people whose habitations are the nurseries of disease and death. In the first place, he will not be able to collect his fees, for even among the middle class the physician does not succeed in collecting more than fifty per cent. of his fees. The physicians of Bellevue have told me that they consider it fortunate to get one-half of their dues, and while there are not very wealthy people in this town, there are no very poor people. If the collections are so small here, what must be the conditions of the practitioners who give medical aid to the poverty-stricken portions of our large cities? There are forty per cent. of the people in America who are not able to pay a physician for his services. What is to be done with those people? Let them die in their fetid cellars and miserable garrets? These are questions for the Bishop to answer. Is it possible that those who use their influence in robbing the poor of their earnings are aware of these facts? Can the physician afford to render his services without remuneration? How can he live? Can you expect him to be faithful to patients who give him no compensation? Will he respond to their calls at all times? Will he arise from his couch in the silence of the midnight hour, and brave the frost and snow and wind and rain, to administer to the dying pauper? Will he not wait on the patients who reward his services and let the beggars perish in their loathsome dens? And even if he should respond to their cries, will he not first call to see his other patients and let the pauper wait till the last, till he has finished his daily rounds, till the poor man is so far gone that he is beyond the power of medical skill. But let us presume that he can live on the air, and that none of the difficulties mentioned stand in his way. I will give an illustration taken
from Kropotkin’s “Advice to the Young.” A physician enters a tenement house to administer to a sick woman. He is just beginning life and his heart is full of sympathy for suffering humanity. He finds his patient lying on a bed of straw, in a corner of the room, which is dark and dingy and ill-ventilated. The woman is an employee in a sweat-shop, and gets three dollars per week. The physician sees that she is suffering from overwork and insufficient nourishment, and he advises her to spend two months at the seaside. The woman smiles, and it is a sad smile, the smile of disappointment and mockery. “Doctor,” she says, “I have no money. When I was working, my wages were scarcely sufficient to keep me in this miserable hovel, and cover me with rags, and since I have been sick, I have depended on the charity of a few poor neighbors.” “But my dear woman,” the physician replies, “you must leave this habitation immediately and go to the seashore, or you will not be living a week. You are exhausted, and you must have rest and nourishment.” The poor woman replies: “Doctor, go into the next room, and you will find five little children, victims of a malignant fever. They are alone, lying together on the floor. Their mother is working in a factory, and can not afford to give them her attention. Occasionally a neighbor comes to give the children a drink and a little food. They are perishing from hunger and neglect. Let me die, Doctor, for I am old and my life is sad, and there is no hope for me on earth, but go in and relieve those little children.” What will the Bishop say to this? Will he still praise a system which curses the earth with poverty and frustrates the purpose of medical skill? Will he still deride the pretentions of Socialism which would banish poverty from every land and prevent seventy per cent. of disease and enable the physicians to prescribe the essential remedies and alleviate suffering humanity? The Bishop claims that “any organization that hinders the laborer from investing his savings in the way in which he believes to be best for the permanent utility
of his family” is despotic and degrading. The present system hinders the laborer from making any investments, by simply appropriating his earnings for the “permanent utility” of the capitalist, and the laborer is relieved of all responsibility. Socialism would secure to every man the product of his toil, and the right to spend it as he wishes. The laborer might build a palace with his savings, and adorn it with costly furniture. But he could not employ it to rob his fellowman, and he could not use it to exploit the toiler and grow rich at the expense of those who have nothing “to invest.” Equal justice to all without special favor to any, is a rule of simple justice, says the Bishop, but it is a rule that does not prevail today, and cannot prevail till the pillars of capitalism are demolished, till the altar of Mammon is annihilated, till the throne of plutocracy is reduced to ashes and the banner of Socialism floats over the “Land of the free and the home of the brave!”
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