From Revolution To Revolution

An Address in Memory of the Paris Commune of 1871

By GEORGE D. HERRON

CHICAGO
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY
118 Kinzie Street
FROM REVOLUTION TO REVOLUTION.

I.

I do not think that I need to tell the story of the Paris Commune, as it is called, to an audience of Socialists. You know the story of how the people of Paris arose in revolt, in the autumn of 1870, against the surrender of the city by the government of France to the German conquerers; how the popular uprising against the Germans without the walls soon developed into the armed protest of the city against the centralized and corrupt authority of the French States; how, as the alarmed propertied classes withdrew from the struggle, and as its burden and tendency depended more and more upon the working class, it became proletarian in character and economic in its purpose. The word “commune” really meant “community”; it was the term by which the townships or groups of townships in the city were known in France. The revolt of the Commune of Paris against the Germans, and against the usurping government of France, was a community seeking to restore something like the ancient privileges of an independent free city of the Middle Ages. As is ever the case, the real labor and fighting devolved upon the wage-workers, from whom was drawn the best of what was known as the French National Guard. The frightened “defenders of order and property” made terms with the government of the miserable Thiers at Versailles, and abandoned the real defenders of Paris to their fateful struggle. Then came the betrayals, the misleading of the leaders, the final
failure, and the governmental murder of men, women and children to the number of thirty thousand. By the time the spring of 1871 was past, the capitalist class that had betrayed the revolt had appropriated all its fruits.

It is a strange story, this lucent epoch of the Paris Commune; and it is history's supreme tragedy. There is no martyrdom so splendid, no sacrifice of a people so great. There is not any protest of the common life against oppression so disinterested and so truly noble, so worthy of being sung in epic and told in story, as this mighty martyrdom of the working class of Paris in the spring of 1871. It marks the high tides of human feeling and action. It is a spectacle that surpasses in significance almost every other martyrdom of history—the spectacle of a whole people going not only to death but to accepted oblivion, to foreknown obloquy and disgrace; a whole people dying in an ecstasy of devotion to a betrayed and lost cause—girls and children leading in this sublimest abnegation.

And in what kind of a light do the Commune-rads still appear to the world? The novelist and the historian, the politician and the priest and the king, and all the retainers of the ruling class, have stamped the Communards with infamy. The Paris "Commune," in the popular mind, was a time of red and meaningless terror; a time when the sheer lust of killing and stealing and burning took possession of the people. It is supposed that the ruffians and thugs, the assassins and the offscourings of the nations gathered together in Paris in order to glut themselves with crime, with the blood and goods of the propertied and the respectable.
And yet, as any sane or scientific study of the period shows, the time when the working class was in actual control of the affairs of Paris, free of its own leaders and getting along without government, administering society through the simple law of association for the common good, was a time of unequaled human order, elemental law and real liberty. At no other time or place has life been so free and safe, with so small an average of human misery, with so large a fund of secure fellowship, and with so hopeful and common a well-being. Even capitalist properties were more sacredly protected by the Commune than by the capitalist administration itself. Indeed, that brief time when the working class was triumphant in Paris, when it arose above traitors within the walls and the foreign foe without, when it dismissed or ignored the government and became its own law and order, is a sort of oasis in the long desert of human exploitation and tyranny; a sort of glad and beatific moment, a momentary and prophetic springtime, in the long procession of the changing forms of parasitism and hypocrisy and brute force which we know as law and government.

In the glad day when truth can stand on its feet and face the world unafraid, naked and unashamed, and when the poet comes who shall sing the true epic of the time which we to-day celebrate, those few days of the working class administration of Paris will be seen as the forerunner, the John the Baptist, of the better days that will come under the co-operative commonwealth, when these evil days of capitalist misgovernment, with its prostitution of the common life, shall have passed away forever.
But it is not to retell the story of the Paris Commune that I am in Faneuil Hall to-night. It is to see if we can together consider some of the lessons of the Commune and its failures in their relation or application to the Socialist movement to-day. When I use the word "failure" in this connection, I am speaking, of course, of the defeat of the Commune in the attainment of its immediate object, not of its pregnant influence upon subsequent revolutionary effort. Speaking after the manner of men, it was a failure; it died in the trenches; it went out in such a governmental orgy of murder as had not taken place since the great religious wars. What are the lessons of this failure to the Socialist movement of this time? This is the question and the theme which I bring to you.

One thing of which I have spoken is inadequate leadership. The working class of Paris depended upon leaders outside of its own experience. These men, both military and political, who first led the Communist revolt, were men without knowledge of the real mission of the working class in human evolution, and without any sense or aim or goal of economic and social justice. They were, for the most part, discredited military leaders, or politicians who had lost their games in the old political parties. They really had no interest whatever in the emancipation of the working class; nor had they any understanding of its needs, its rights, or its future; they were only interested in using the working class to place and perpetuate themselves. And, of course, the moment the revolt became manifestly proletaire, and consequently abandoned and betrayed by
propertied interests, these leaders could do nothing but botch and mangle, and deliver the people as sheep to the slaughter. And the lesson is this—that no set of leaders from without the experience of the working class can lead it into the achievement of its freedom. It is from within, from its own labor and struggle and growth, from its own human clay and fashioning, from the bone of its bone and the flesh of its flesh and the blood of its blood, that the working class must beget the leadership that is to set it free. It must be its own Moses and achieve its own liberty, and those whom it accepts in any sense whatever as teachers or leaders must not be men who have tried and failed to make positions for themselves with the capitalist order of things, but men who have willingly taken their places in the struggle and the loss of rejected humanity, asking nothing for themselves but the privilege of serving unnoticed with the rest. It is only two or three days ago that a very eminent politician admitted to me frankly that he was waiting to see which way the people would move, in order to decide whether he should join the Socialist movement. Such as he have been the bane of the people in all ages—I mean of the people who do the world's work, who bear its burdens, who support its life, and on whose backs the world's civilization builds; I mean the world's disinherited producers, forever led from one form of bondage to another, from one charnel house of death to another, from one method of exploitation to another, by leaders who use the people to gain power for themselves.

The working class does not need leadership so much as it needs comradeship. The world
has really had enough of leaders. The hero and the leader, even the teacher and the prophet, will in time go the way of the king, the baron, the capitalist and the priest. In the last analysis, it is the friend and companion that the people need; it is the co-operation and fellowship of all people working together for the exaltation of the common life. It is not out of place to quote Browning at a Socialist meeting, is it?—

"Man is not Man as yet. Nor shall I deem his object served, his end attained, his genuine strength put fairly forth, while only here and there a star dispels the darkness, here and there a towering mind o'erlooks its prostrate fellows; when the host is out at once to the despair of night, when all mankind alike is perfected, equal in full-bloom powers—then, not till then, I say, begins man's general infancy."

All this is pertinent and urgent; for the chief menace to the Socialist movement in America in the near future is the sort of man I quoted a moment ago—the politician waiting to move whichever way the people move. The moment the movement becomes clearly inevitable, the moment it begins to conquer something of political power, that moment the politicians will come, and the priests and the grafters, and all the losing parasites of menaced parties and institutions. And why? Not because they are interested in the emancipation of the working class, or in the procuring of a free and decent society, but just because they are interested in place and position for themselves, and would exploit the Socialist movement to that end.
Again, there was not yet at the time of the Paris Commune a real consciousness of itself as a class on the part of the working people. I know that the term “class consciousness” is offensive to many, both without and within the Socialist movement. I know that it is often used in a way that makes it seem like a tiresome and commonplace cant. Those who do not understand the history of the term mistake class consciousness for class hatred. None the less, it remains true that until the working class becomes more vividly and intensely conscious of itself than it now is, until it realizes that it is the disinherited owner of the world that it has built on its own back, until it understands that there can be no possible identity of interest or reconciliation between itself and the employing or ruling class, its struggle toward emancipation will be blind and unintelligent, betrayed and baffled and compromised, and without that nobility and comprehension which should mark the greatest cause to which man has ever been summoned.

In meeting the issues of life and society, we must begin with fact and not with sentiment. The class question is not as to whether we like to have classes or not; the question is: Are there classes in society as it is now constituted? And is the present constitution of society founded upon the division of the people into classes? And do class antagonisms and social destruction inhere in the nature of a class society? No one disputes the affirmative answer to this question. Not even the most horrified and sophistical opponent of the idea of the class struggle can deny the fact of the class structure of existing society. And if I
am to do anything whatever, even as a social coral-builder, toward making the world equally good and resourceful and loved for all men, I must begin with the fact that all that we know of as civilization, up to the present time, has been the institutionalized expression and defense of one class of people living off another class. There are no words that can make this fact hideous and ghastly enough, or vivid and revolutionary enough—the fact that society and its institutions are organized for the purpose of enabling some people to live off of other people, the few to live off the many. There is no language realistic enough, or possessed of sufficient integrity, to lay bare the chasm between the possessing and producing classes; between the class that works and the class that reaps the fruit of that work; between the class that is grist for the great world-mill of economic might and the class that harvests that grist. And until the working class becomes conscious of itself as the only class that has a right to be, until the worker understands that he is exploited and bound by the power which his own unpaid labor places in the hands that exploit and bind him, until we all clearly see that what we call civilization is but the organized and legalized robbery of the common labor, until we have a revolutionized comprehension of the fact that our churches and governments, our arts and literatures, our education and philosophies, our morals and manners, are all more or less the expressions and deformities of this universal robbery, drawing their life and motives out of the vitals of the man who is down and unprivileged, out of his unpaid labor and exhausted life—until then, I say, our dreams and schemes of a common
good or better society are but philistine utopias, our social and industrial reforms but self-deceit, and our weapons but the shadows of stupidity or hypocrisy. A civilization that is fundamentally parasitical, that has its birth and breath and being in the power of one class to take what another class produces, cannot be so reformed or added to as to bring forth economic justice or any kind of emancipation; or so ordered as to procure equality of opportunity and free individuality.

It is not a question of individuals that we are discussing—not the distinction which our vulgar and brutal moralities make between the so-called good and the so-called bad; it is a question of the quality of civilization. I am defining or characterizing the civilization we now have as an impersonal yet universal beast of prey, expressing the power of the ruling and possessing class to absorb, and to convert into ever-increasing power to absorb, the whole output of the life and labor of humanity. There have never existed other than predatory civilizations. And our institutions, morals and creeds have but served to keep the people submissive to the depredations of the ruling class. To this end have the powers that might happen to be at any given time always been invested with the hypocrisy and threat of a divine origin.

Yet strip possessing class institutions of their vestures of fraud and force and you behold the stolid or cunning parasite. Take the standing armies of the world, with their millions of men taken from productive labor to be supported by the labor of others, and compelled to serve and revere a glorified criminality—for certainly nothing now is so low in the scale of
human occupations, so loathsome and really cowardly, as the modern military, with its picnics of loot and murder. Take this military system and look at it and consider whence it comes. What are its guns and navies, its bespangled officers and bedizened ranks? They are the forcibly withheld and parasitically consumed labor of the laborer. That which glitters on the officer's shoulder straps is the unpaid labor of the consumptive girl in the sweatshop, or of the miner in the Virginia coal mines. The annual riot of capitalist lawlessness, the annual orgy and pandemonium of capitalist prostitution, that breaks out at Washington and yet solemnly commands the sacred respect of seventy millions of people—whence and what are its power, its disposal of the affairs of the nation, its billion dollar disbursements? They are all the unpaid and ravished labor of the laborer. It is unpaid labor that towers in the steeples of our churches, that sits in our Legislatures, that builds palaces on our avenues, that blossoms in our shameless fashions, that drones in our academies and rituals, that produces our war novels and our insipid poetry, that raises our shameless ideals of "the strenuous life," or sings in Mr. Kipling's brute heroics. Our poisoned thoughts, our petty and servile motives of life, the very air we breathe, are but the color or movement of this unpaid labor. Our civilization and all the civilizations that have been are, but institutionalized unpaid labor, organized and glorified for the purpose of keeping labor unpaid and submissive. As I have said, there are no words red and living enough in human experience to state this fact. There is no power in the human tongue, no dynamic in the human pen, that can
portray the awfulness of a world that builds its glories and its gods, its temples of trade and law and religion, its forms of beauty and systems of good, upon an economic might that is but conventionalized robbery of the common labor of mankind. The history of the world is but the struggle between unpaid labor and those who possess its products. And the struggle must go on until the man who is down shall be purified and enlightened to get up; until the man who works shall have the whole results of his work; until every class but the working class has ceased to be, with every member of that class a creator and a poet, a philosopher and a dreamer, and a soul of endless beauty.

So here is one lesson of the splendid and fruitful failure of the French Commune—the lesson that the working class must become conscious of itself as distinct in interest and struggle and destiny from every other class. Notwithstanding the Communist Manifesto, notwithstanding the energies of the International, the Parisian workingmen did not understand that the safety of their cause could lie nowhere but in their own hands; that there could be no possible identity of their interests and the interests of the possessing class, or of the discarded political or military retainers of that class. The mission of the working class in reconstituting society, in the conscious and deliberate creation of a co-operative and socialized world, was not yet clear. Thus the danger to our American Socialist movement is not that it may array class against class. Our danger is that we may have a Socialist movement that is not class conscious; a Socialist movement that shall concede some identity or
reconciliation of interest between labor and parasitism; a Socialist movement that shall accept the enthusiasms of discarded politicians or evangelists, or bow down to the wooden images of middle class moralists. I am not speaking as a Marxian or a dogmatist, and I know that Socialists may be given to phrases that become a cant quite as repulsive as the cant of religious emotionalism and its orthodoxy. And I know, and am constantly urging that the Socialist propaganda of Europe will not answer for America without being recast in the spirit and moulds of American experience and history. But I do speak as one who believes that the integrity and achievements of the Socialist movement, that the quality and finality of the freedom and justice it may win for man, will depend upon a comprehensive, patient and noble recognition of the class structure, class antagonisms and parasitical nature of the society that now is. And all this to the end that it may do away with all classes forever, and that there may be one people, with one common joy and well-being, and one strifeless movement toward perfect and universal harmony.

IV.

Another lesson of the Commune of 1870-71. It was the precipitation of a struggle upon the working class for which it was not prepared. Upon the one side was the Parisian proletaire, suddenly lifted with a great hope for the freedom of those who should come after him, finding the supreme exaltation of his life in his death for that hope. On the other side was the capitalist class, tired of Napoleon III., whom it had used and exhausted, its interests now
safely in the hands of its wretched creature, Thiers; secretly negotiating with the Germans for the slaughter of the French workingmen; guilefully inciting the very revolution that was the proletaire's inspiration and sacrifice. This has been the tactics of the possessing class in all history—to precipitate premature revolt on the part of the disinherited or enslaved class when sheer brute conservatism no longer answered, and when compromise could no longer put off inevitable revolution. Whenever a great initiative begins to grow into a menacing movement toward liberty, its defeat or deflection often comes from the precipitation of conflicts for which it is not ready. The oppressed are prone to let their oppressors fix the day and the hours when the yoke shall be broken. The world's rulers have always been instinct with the evil wisdom of how and when to incite the disinherited to premature and futile revolt, in order that the revolt that is final and fruitful might be postponed or destroyed. Millions of workers, through many red centuries, have fruitlessly died in the very revolts against their masters which the masters themselves had secretly arranged and inspired. And this will continue to be so until the workers shall consciously, intelligently and deliberately choose the day and hour and method of their own deliverance.

There is no lesson more urgent than this for the American Socialist movement. And the lesson is enforced by the history of every important strike. The Debs strike at Chicago, the massacre of the Coeur d'Alene miners, the murders of Homestead and Hazleton, the recent coal strike in Pennsylvania, the Albany street car strike, and indeed the whole increasing la-
bor struggle of America, arc vivid with the efforts of capitalists to precipitate riot and bloodshed for the purpose of discrediting and disheartening organized labor. As the Socialist movement grows, it must be prepared for the fact that politicians and the military, capitalist emissaries in labor ranks, hasty leaders in the Socialist movement, and all classes of capitalist retainers, will seek to precipitate struggles or conflicts for which the movement is not ready. I have reason to say that it is already a settled capitalist purpose and tactic, in case it should become evident that Socialism was about to conquer political power through the suffrages of American voters, to precipitate a revolution of force on the part of labor before the Socialist movement is strong or wise enough to take care of it. It is the capitalist who would like to have us try to win the day with guns and bricks in our hands, rather than with intelligence in our heads and comradeship in our hearts. And whoever counsels violence in these days may be safely set down as a conscious or unconscious emissary of capitalism, a conscious or unconscious traitor to the Socialist movement. We must be wise enough, and have faith enough in our cause, to refuse to let those who would destroy us appoint the hour and manner of the decisive conflict. We must be sane and brave enough not to accept our appointments for battle from capitalist hands. We must be bold and true enough to refuse to be governed by the irritations that are meant to drive us to premature revolt. It is one of the marks of greatness to know how to bide one's time—greatness in a cause or greatness in an individual. And it is the mark of one's faith in his cause, or of a cause's faith in
itself, that the man or the cause know how to
wait until the clock strikes the hour for finality
of action; and yet to wait with that confidence
and poise and calm from which goes up a
chronic enthusiasm that is as a sheet of flame.

A factor in making the Socialist movement
of Germany great is the knowledge and patience
which refuse to let it be hurried into premature
revolution. If the Kaiser and the governing
class could precipitate armed conflict to-day,
there would still be hope of setting back the
triumph of the revolution. But the Socialist
leaders of Germany know that every day of
delay adds to the certainty of the revolution’s
triumph, and the secure establishment of the
co-operative commonwealth.

V.

Again, we now understand better than the
comrades whose sacrifice we commemorate to-
day the economic motive of our human evolu-
tion. Whatever terms the struggle may appear
in, it is none the less true that the history of
the world has pivoted itself upon the struggle
for bread. Up to the present time, economic
conditions have been the compelling motives of
great historic changes, or of the lack of changes.
All real revolts, in their last analysis, have
been motivated by intolerable economic condi-
tions; and wars of conquest, however disguised,
have been wars of theft, the predatory expedi-
tions of economic might.

History has been the struggle on the part of
those who made bread but did not have it
against those who had bread, but did not make
it—the word “bread” here symbolizing all the
things that go to make up opportunity and priv-
ilege. Bread to eat means opportunity to live,
and means power in one's hand. To be certain of one's bread is to have the ground of liberty beneath one's feet. And to have power over another's bread, power to give it or take it away as may serve one's interest, is to have the power of life and death over another. And this is the one and only blasphemy, the supreme and desecrating sacrilege, from which all blasphemies and sacrileges and human wrongs spring, that some people should control the lives of other people, their thoughts and deeds and aspirations, their judgments of right and wrong, the labor of their hands, the uplifting or the prostrating of their souls. And the basis of this ancient and universal wrongdoing, making history seem but a flood for the destroying of the human spawn, is the ownership of bread. This is why history is the struggle of those who produce bread against those who possess it—the struggle of the breadmakers against the bread owners for increasing scraps of power which the ownership of bread puts into the hands of the world's masters. The struggle for bread is the struggle for life in all its expression—the struggle for equality of power and opportunity to be and to blossom. Until bread and all that bread means are communized and equalized and made as certain and free as the air we breathe, liberty cannot be said to have begun its real work. This is not to say that man lives by bread alone; it is to say, as I have elsewhere and often said, that until all men have free and equal bread, no man may freely and completely live.

This economic motive lies deep in religion and politics, even where it is least apparent. Both Buddha and Jesus were seeking escape for their followers from spiritually destructive
economic conditions, and both were insistent in their communism. The final overthrow of Christianity by Constantine, "the great Christian Emperor," compared with whom Napoleon was a bright and shining saint, was essentially a police measure for preserving their properties to the possessing class of the Roman Empire; preserving them from the menace of early Christian communism. Constantine's vision of the cross in the sky, by which sign he was to conquer, was a capitalist vision; for the capitalist religious and military police are prolific in visions and revelations which make for the protection and increase of the properties of their masters. The wars of the Crusades were on the one side an escape from intolerable economic conditions in Europe, and on the other side vast and deadly expeditions of loot and murder. The great religious wars were always at bottom economic—a struggle between the possessing class and the class that had been dispossessed.

Nothing illustrates this better than the development and outcome of the French Revolution. It was essentially a middle class overthrow of the feudal class. But it was the peasant who did the fighting and won the victories; and it was Rousseau, whose heart and motive were with the peasant, who furnished the revolution's philosophy and dynamic. Upon the victories of the long-starved peasants capitalism laid its secure foundations. After reaping the fruits of the great revolution, it used Napoleon until it had used him to its full; and then combined with the English Pitt, and his limitless power of gold to bribe, to overthrow Napoleon by cornering and withholding the supplies of his army until it should be delayed for
the winter to overtake it on the march to Moscow. Great and forceful as was Napoleon, he was never great or mighty enough to escape being an unconscious or unwilling puppet in the hands of the possessing class, as he at times dimly knew.

The clear seeing of this economic motive of history will alone save us from the tragedies and follies of compromise. For there is a sense in which most of the world's great battles have been sham battles, fought by the orders and for the interests of the possessing class, with the real human battle forever unfought among the shadows. Already is past history overflowing into the present through all sorts of efforts to confuse the real issue and struggle before us. On every side are propositions, political and industrial, based upon an assumed identity of interest between the possessing and working classes. There are boards of arbitration, municipal ownerships, direct legislation, tenement house committees, social reform leagues and plans for social betterment, and innumerable large and small schemes for exploiting the revolution while seeking to blind it. Now, as ever, the owning class is preparing to give the people a few more crumbs of what is theirs, in order to prevent them from demanding that which they must in the end demand, if there is ever to be freedom and right in this world—namely, the whole produce of their labor, and the common ownership of its materials and machinery. Compromise and apathy, servility and mediocrity, are now having their day in every walk and work of life; and these are ready to poison and drain the Socialist movement. Great initiatives and revolutions have always been robbed of definition and issue
when adopted by the class against which the re-
volt was directed. Constantine destroyed
Christianity by adopting it; the pope did the
same for St. Francis and his Christian renais-
sance; the nobles and princes did the same with
the Reformation in Germany and England.
The capitalist class reaped the harvest of the
French Revolution, and of the matchless mar-
tyrdom of the Commune of 1870-71. By the
time the American Revolution had come to its
final issue and government, by the time the
fruits of the Declaration of Independence and
of Valley Forge were ready to be reaped, it was
not the ideals of Rousseau or Jefferson or Paine
that prevailed, but the American Constitution—
that monumental and comprehensive deceit, de-
liberately devised for the purpose of prevent-
ing the people from governing themselves, and
of keeping the affairs and issues of government
in the hands of the possessing class. It is only
a few years ago that Wendell Phillips was
mobbed on this platform, and that William
Lloyd Garrison was dragged through your
streets with a rope around his neck by the
thugs and ruffians of the commercial classes
who were enraged and murderous because of
the interference of agitators with their trade
in the South, and who represented all that was
respected or respectable in Boston. Yet these
same commercial classes reaped much of their
wealth from what Garrison and Phillips sowed,
and through the processes of the Civil War.
And it would probably be impossible to find in
Boston to-day a son or grandson of the com-
mercial classes that set hired assassins and ruf-
fians upon the heels of the early abolitionists
who is not socially accredited as a descendant
of one of the old abolition families. The so-
called higher life of Boston is to-day practically a parasite upon the glory of the men whom its fathers outraged, imprisoned, reviled, mobbed and hired shot.

Let Socialists take knowledge and warning. The possessing class is getting ready to give the people a few more crumbs of what is theirs in order to prevent them from taking the whole. If it comes to that, they are ready to give some things in the name of Socialism in order to avert the Socialist reality. The old political parties will be adopting what they are pleased to call Socialist planks in their platforms; and the churches will be coming with their insipid "Christian Socialism," and their hypocrisy and brotherly love. We shall soon see Mr. Hanna and Bishop Potter, Mr. Hearst and Dr. Lyman Abbott, and even Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Bryan, posing as reasonable kinds of Socialists. You will find the name of Socialism repeatedly taken in vain, and perhaps successfully. You may see the Socialist movement bridled and saddled by capitalism, in the hope of riding it to a new lease of capitalist power. Yea, many and full of guile will be the Socialist propositions emanating from capitalist sources, all having for their sole purpose the defeat of Socialism through the improvement of conditions under capitalism, and through the so-called ownership of certain items of capitalist production and transportation.

But Socialism, like liberty or truth, is something you cannot have a part of; you must have the whole or you will have nothing; you can only gain or lose the whole, you cannot gain or lose a part. You may have municipal ownerships, nationalized transportation, initiative and referendum, civil service reform, and many
other capitalist concessions, and be all the far-
ther away from Social Democracy. So long as
the foundation of society remains capitalistic,
so long as there remains a single stronghold of
the capitalist mode of production, so long as
some people are able to own or control the bread
and things upon which all people depend, just
so long will we have the myriad horrors of the
capitalist state—the sorrow and blight of poverty
and the idiocies and brutalities of wealth; the
tyrannies of the capitalist state and the shame-
lessness of capitalist religion; the constant baf-
fling of the hopes of reformers and the react-
ions of spent revolutions and enthusiasms. In-
dustry must be socialistically born again, in
its whole being and motive and action, before
society can see the co-operative commonwealth.

It is all one to the capitalist, in the last anal-
ysis, what names or terms you have, so long as
you leave with him the sources of industrial
control. It is all one to the capitalist whether
you have a Republican or a Democratic party,
whether you have a Protestant or a Catholic
faith, whether you are a Jew or a Mohammed-
an or a Buddhist or an Agnostic, whether you
have a republican or a monarchical form of
government, whether you have public or private
schools, whether you have educated or illiterate
ignorance, he will use them all for his own
power and increase. Just so long as you have
a capitalist class employing a working class,
just that long will capitalism reap not only the
fruits of the world's labor, but the fruits of its
ideals and aspirations as well, and shape its
arts and literatures, and give voice to its pul-
pits and universities. You may have any kind
and number of reforms you please, any kind
and number of revolutions or revivals you
please, any kind and number of new ways of doing good you please, it will not matter to capitalism, so long as it remains at the root of things; the result of all your plans and pains will be gathered into the capitalist granary. There is nothing growing out of the human soil, nothing growing out of the human soul, nothing springing from the human heart, nothing coming from the human hand, not a prayer of sorrow or hope, not a joy that leaps in the blood, not a noble renunciation of an uplifted martyrdom, not a communion of mighty lovers, not a tear of the sweatshop mother over the coffin of her child, that will not add to the capitalist grist, so long as labor is so directed as to drive the capitalist mill. There is no way of preventing or averting the fact that the whole output of the world's thought, the totality of its line and action, the fruit and fragrance of its blossoming, will but add to the power of the few to despoil the many, so long as the private ownership of the tools and sources of the common labor continues; so long as the toil of humanity is but for the profit of the capitalist instead of for humanity's common good and beauty; so long as life remains what it now is for the bulk of mankind—a bitter and uncertain struggle for existence, an exhausting and deadening game of chance, a pitched battle from childhood to the grave for the chance to earn or keep one's bread. So long as the sources and means of the people's bread are privately owned, just that long will the minds and bodies of the people be owned. There can never be such a thing as self-ownership of the individual, with the freedom and fellowship that inhere in self-ownership, until there is a common ownership of the world's bread supply.
It is upon this socialized economic ownership that the spiritual blossoming of man depends.

It ought to be a sufficient indictment of our present kind of civilization that it can stand only upon the degradation of labor, the servility of the intellect, the prostitution of the State, and the hypocrisy of religion. Our present kind of civilization stands only because the people upon whose backs it builds are not yet wise and strong enough to get up. The moment this blind and bound giant of labor begins to feel his rightful power, the moment he begins to see even dimly for himself, the moment he begins to shake from himself the centuries of enslavement and superstition and exploitation, that moment will man come to himself, and shed our civilization as an evil and monstrous disease.

VI.

Finally, we are to learn from the failure of the Commune the lesson of human solidarity, and especially the solidarity of labor. It is only when the working class understands that by its own solidarity, by its universal co-operation for its own emancipation, it becomes physically resistless and spiritually omnipotent—it is only then that the co-operative dawn will break. The working class of all nations must support and enforce the working class of each nation. The working class of the world must be the right arm of every worker. So long as there remains a single spot upon the earth where a master can have a hireling, so long as from a single man is withheld the equivalent of the whole product of his labor, just so long will liberty be impossible for any man, for any part of the world. There is no
extrication or emancipation for the individual except through universal emancipation and extrication. No man can be free until all men are free.

We have talked much of the brotherhood to come; but brotherhood has always been the fact of our life, long before it became a modern and insipid sentiment. Only we have been brothers in slavery and torment, brothers in ignorance and its perdition, brothers in disease and war and want, brothers in prostitution and hypocrisy; what happens to one of us sooner or later happens to all; we have always been unescapably involved in a common destiny. We are brothers in the soil from which we spring; brothers in earthquakes, floods and famines; brothers in la grippe, cholera, smallpox and priestcraft. It is to the interests of the whole of mankind to stamp out the disease that may be starting to-night in some wretched Siberian hamlet; to rescue the children of Egypt and India from the British cotton mills; to escape the craze and blight of some new superstition springing up in Africa or India or Boston. The tuberculosis of the East Side sweatshops is infecting the whole of the city of New York, and spreading therefrom to the Pacific and back across the Atlantic. The world constantly tends to the level of the downmost man in it; and that downmost man is the world's real ruler, hugging it close to his bosom, dragging it down to his death. You do not think so, but it is true, and it ought to be true. For if there were some way by which some of us could get free apart from others, if there were some way by which some of us could have heaven while others had hell, if there were some way by which part of the world could
escape some form of the blight and peril and misery of disinherit ed labor, then would our world indeed be lost and damned; but since men have never been able to separate themselves from one another's woes and wrongs, since history is fairly stricken with the lesson that we cannot escape brotherhood of some kind, since the whole of life is teaching us that we are hourly choosing between brotherhood in suffering and brotherhood in good, it remains for us to choose the brotherhood of a co-operative world, with all its fruits thereof—the fruits of love and liberty.

Or shall we wait for our rampant imperialism to teach us? For teach us it certainly will, by manifesting anew the solidarity and fate of labor. Imperialism, or the conquest of weaker peoples by the strong, is simply intensified capitalist exploitation. Masquerading under the guise of Christianity and civilization, preceded by the rumseller and the missionary, the vulgar and cowardly modern conqueror is merely the advance agent of the capitalist. And the capitalist has turned imperialist because the people who make the things he has to sell are too poor to buy the things they make, their buying power having been exhausted by capitalist profit making. The greed of capitalism having thus destroyed its own markets, it must send the soldier and the missionary to conquer new markets and cheaper labor. And the new markets and the cheaper labor tend to bring all labor into greater impoverishment and subservience. For, mark you, every American mine opened in the Philippine Islands, every American smokestack that goes up in Cuba, every American cotton factory built in China, every one of the thousands of children working
eighteen and twenty hours in Egypt for seven and eight cents a day, means, under capitalism, that American labor will be dragged down to the level of the cheap labor of Africa and Asia; means that every miner in Pennsylvania will have a harder struggle, and that every girl in a New England cotton mill will have wretchedness added to an already wretched life.

But perhaps we shall learn in time, before accentuated capitalism has intensified the universal misery of labor. Socialism is already on its way to the conquest of Europe. And it may be that we shall yet behold that glorious uprising of the universal peoples which is to begin man's real history, and the world's real creation—that united affirmation of the world's workers which Socialism foretells, knowing boundaries neither of nations nor sects nor factions, speaking one voice and working together as one man for one purpose, filling and cleansing the world with one glad revolutionary cry. When the peoples thus come, divine and omnipotent through co-operation, the raw materials of the world-life in their creative hands, no longer begging favors or reforms, no longer awed by the slave moralities or the slave religions that teach submission to their masters, but risen and regnant in the consciousness of their common inheritance and right in the earth and its fullness, of which they are the makers and preservers, then will the antagonisms and devastations of classes vanish forever, and the peace of good will become the universal fact.

It is no longer an answer to the cry of the world's disinherited, and it is no answer to anything that I have been crudely saying, to say that conditions or wages are now better
than they once were. If they are, what of it? The answer is an impertinence; it is irrelevant and impudent, as well as stupid and evasive. There comes a time when it is no longer an answer to the slave to tell him that he has corn bread and bacon now, whereas he once only had corn bread and gravy; to tell him that he has mud in the chinks of his cabin now, whereas the wind and the rain once blew between the logs of his cabin wall; to tell him that he is sometimes owned by good masters now, whereas he was once driven under the lash of bad masters. There comes a time when no improved conditions of slavery are an answer to the slave's cry, or will any longer be listened to; a time when only the slave's uttermost freedom, the breaking of his every bond and shackle, will meet his demand or the human imperative. Under the Socialist movement there is coming a time, and the time may be even now at hand, when improved conditions or adjusted wages will no longer be thought to be an answer to the cry of labor; yea, when these will be but an insult to the common intelligence. It is not for better wages, improved capitalist conditions, or a share of capitalist profits that the Socialist movement is in the world; it is here for the abolition of wages and profits, and for the end of capitalism and the private capitalist. Reformed political institutions, boards of arbitration between capital and labor, philanthropies and privileges that are but the capitalist's gifts—none of these can much longer answer the question that is making the temples, thrones and parliaments of the nations tremble. There can be no peace between the man who is down and the man who builds on his back. There can be no recon-
ciliation between classes; there can only be
an end of classes. It is idle to talk of good
will until there is first justice, and idle to talk
of justice until the man who makes the world
possesses the work of his own hands. The
cry of the world's workers can be answered
with nothing save the whole produce of their
work.

VII.

Man is still making history in the dark; evo-
lution is still the working of blind and un-
conscious forces. We yet continue to make pro-
gress through blunder and tragedy and suffer-
ing. We are so close to a past in which man
has taken a step forward only when scourged
and overwhelmed by intolerable wrong and sor-
row. But with Socialism will come a time
when evolution will become conscious and fore-
chosen, and no longer blind and unknowing.
We shall know the way we take, and cease to
be a world of children fighting and crying in
the dark. We shall see where the movement of
life is going, and co-operate with it; we shall
see each new goal, and work toward it know-
ingly. Out of the progress by collision, which
has been the method of the past, out of the
fighting and the lying and the enslaving, shall
emerge the cleansed and transfigured world of
the collective man, with his will to love as the
law of life and progress. The worldman for
whom love has travailed so long shall appear,
choosing and making whatever kind of world
he wills, and the world of victims shall be for-
gotten in the world of creators. And the cradle
of every child shall be an altar of rejoicing and
faith, around which the worship of the race
shall gather, and unto which the wealth of the
world shall flow. Upon the foundation which Socialism shall build, and following the endless impulse to good which it shall at last beget, there will come into being a society that will make each man's life a world-ecstasy, and the common life a heavenly home.
THE MAGAZINE FOR WORKERS

"Absolutely, the finest Socialist publication I have ever come across," is what a man in England wrote in renewing his subscription to THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW, the magazine that fights for the working class.

The Review is the only publication of its kind in the world. It is the only monthly illustrated magazine which is devoted exclusively to the interests of working men and working women. It is the only magazine which actually gets right down into the ranks of the toilers and tells what they are doing and thinking and feeling. It stands for REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM, aggressive and uncompromising. The Review is not only a magazine for Socialists; it is with the workers everywhere in their every struggle, not only in America but in other countries as well. Wherever there is a conflict between men and masters, there the Review has its correspondents and its photographers. Every month it is filled with pictures right from the scene of action. Its articles and stories come not only from trained writers but from the workers themselves. Its circulation has tripled in the last four years. It is growing bigger and better from month to month.

10 cents a copy; $1.00 a Year; 20 copies for $1.00
Special terms to Agents. Address
CHARLES H. KERR & CO. 118 West Kinzie St. CHICAGO
Largest Publishers of Socialist Literature in the World