

SOCIALISM

IN THE LIGHT OF RIGHT CONDUCT AND RELIGION

REV. PROFESSOR A. GOSMAN
AUGUSTINE CHURCH, HAWTHORN,
AND
PRINCIPAL OF THE CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE OF VICTORIA,

MELVILLE, MULLEN AND SLADE, BOOKSELLERS
262 AND 264 COLLINS STREET
STILLWELL AND CO., PRINTERS. 195A COLLINS STREET
1891
PRICE ONE SHILLING

To Mr. THOMAS RUSSELL, EAST MELBOURNE,

MY DEAR SIR,—

I HAVE much pleasure in associating your name with the publication of these Lectures, in grateful acknowledgement of your good deeds to the Augustine Church and Sunday School, of which it is my happiness to be the Pastor and of much to myself and family.

I am my dear Sir,

Yours truly,

Hawthorn,
February 9th, 1891.

A. GOSMAN.

PREFACE.

The following Sunday evening lectures were delivered to my own Congregation during last winter. They were reported pretty fully in the Melbourne *Herald*, and they are now published almost as they appeared in the columns of that newspaper. They do not profess to discuss the more intricate questions of industrial and political Socialism, as that would have been out of keeping with their character and purpose. They aim rather at giving instruction and guidance to those who look to the pulpit for the discussion of such questions as have a close and vital relation to the life that now is, as well as that which is to come.

A. G.

SOCIALISM.

LECTURE I.

The word Socialism is at present in every one's mouth ; and those who do not like to use words and phrases they do not fully comprehend are asking what this Socialism is, of which they hear so much, and concerning which they know so little. Like most other words, it has a wider and a narrower range of meaning, and everyone must train himself to distinguish the particular sense of the word in the connection in which he finds it. The habit of strict and accurate definition of terms would prevent many a useless controversy, and greatly aid one's mental improvement. In its wider and looser sense it may be defined as—That modern movement within the domain of civilisation, which has for its end or object the removal of all unjust social inequalities ; the prevention of whatever tends to the impoverishment and degradation of the masses of the people ; and the adoption of such measures as shall better their condition, and equalise the distribution of wealth.

In a general sense, therefore, all combined efforts for the amelioration of society may not altogether inappropriately be called Socialistic movements.

But there is a narrower and more restricted usage of the word, that may ere long; in the struggle for existence, overwhelm the loss definite meaning. When employed in this specific sense, it refers to a certain class of doctrines, or to certain organisations of men, on the bases of one or other of these doctrines, in which, not the general aims of Socialism when used in its looser signification are most prominent, but the mode or modes by which those objects are to be reached. There are varieties of Socialists even within this more limited circle, but anyone may be regarded as a Socialist who invokes the power of the State to accomplish the aims of Socialism, by legislating over the whole area of our industrial and educational activities, limiting the freedom of the individual, in so far, especially, as it is supposed to be hurtful to others, and securing the greatest amount of happiness to all, by the equitable distribution of the combined wealth of the whole community to each member of it, according to his necessities.

There are also Socialists who seek to reach these objects by destroying the State, and overthrowing all modern institutions, who are also called Anarchists. Communistic Socialists are those who would have all things in common, either by voluntary combination, or by State authority.

The principles or data of Socialism lie at the very foundation of our nature. Man is made for society; and combination for common purposes is one of those forces in man that he can no more ignore than he can sail his ship over the ocean without respect to either tides or winds. It is one of the great crises in one's life to wake up and to become conscious of what that means when he says "I am." It is a thought full of awe and significance to the conscious that we possess a personal existence, and to feel that, amid all the changes and diverse experiences of life, the thread of our identity is never broken. But along with this consciousness of the sameness of ourselves along the whole line of our history, there is also the consciousness that we are not the only living intelligent beings. Our social environment is part of our very existence. We are not here of ourselves, but of our parents who preceded us. No one can do everything for himself, even when he reaches maturity. And when we are sick, or feeble, or aged, if life is not to be squeezed out of us by force, we have to depend upon others both for food and shelter. Man is the crown of creation, but the crown is not the individual radiance of his personal endowments, but is in that necessity and capacity for combination with his fellows which give stability to the family, strength to the State, and in

ten thousand ways contribute to the happiness of mankind. When two men have a common interest, they combine or unite to secure that interest; and Socialistic organisations may exist from such small and temporary unions as that, to the creation of nations and the extension of empires.

Socialistic doctrines and Socialistic organisations are around us everywhere, not only as the outcome of man's Socialistic nature, but of that inborn impulse that belongs to the social man as well as to the individual man, to seek his own happiness and advancement in union with others, and to choose the best means known to him for the attainment of these ends. These ends then constitute the aims of Socialism to which we shall now more particularly direct your attention.

The aims of Socialism may be conveniently classified under the three following heads;— 1st. The equitable diffusion of wealth. 2nd. The abolition of all class privileges and distinctions based on legislation, and at variance with the doctrine of the political equality of man. 3rd. The universal diffusion of such an education to the individual, as shall fit and qualify him for taking his place and discharging his allotted task in the social machine.

The first and the most obtrusive aim of Socialism is the equitable diffusion of wealth. The extremes of society, from the point of view of possession, are simply appalling. If there is a place on the surface of the globe where the rich and the poor meet together as men, as human beings, it must be some region whose encircling barriers of isolation prevent all intercourse with the rest of the world. The gap or chasm between extreme poverty and great riches is so wide, that the bitter cry of distress from the one never reaches the ears of the other, save by some messenger of mercy who hears the cry of the one, and speaks it in the ear of the other. For a man or a woman, or a family where there are young children, to be without food, for no fault of their own; to feel the gnawings of appetite until nature is maddened into crime, or weakened into disease; to be without sufficient clothing to keep the cold from them; to live in a room without furniture, without comfort or convenience of any kind, and foul with overcrowding and the hopeless accumulations of untidiness, with no star of hope trembling on the horizon of the darkness which encircled them, is a situation so distressing and heartrending, that no one with human instincts can contemplate such a scene without strong emotion, taking now the form of pity, now of indignation, and everywhere that of enquiry, Why are these things so? and, Is there no remedy? If man cannot live without bread, why are so many born to die?

But the picture of abject poverty would, if possible, be less distressing and perplexing were it not that there are at the same time instances of such extravagant living, luxury, and waste, as to convince us that poverty and want are not caused by any lack of the means of subsistence, but of some blundering in their distribution. The luxurious and expensive habits of some sections of society are not only all injury to those who indulge in them, and undermine all healthy social virtues, but they are a challenge to the hunger-bitten members of society to rise against such all order of things; and rather than submit to be starved out of existence within sight of plenty, Samson-like, to pull down the pillar of our modern civilisation, and involve all in one common ruin. The feast is too often held over the hollow chamber of hunger, in which the most destructive explosives are silently gathering their forces, and when extravagance reaches its fullest development, these forces become actively dangerous, and a single spark falling into the midst of them may result in the explosion that would shake society to its very foundations.

How to prevent the poor from becoming poorer; how to prevent the rich from becoming richer, and so equalise the distribution of wealth, is one of the chief problems that Socialism has set itself to solve; and however difficult it may be, and notwithstanding the obstacles that have to be encountered, it is not too much to say

that the very existence of society, not to speak of its happiness, depends on the satisfactory solution of that problem.

It may be said, and no one would call it in question, that a great deal of the poverty, and the misery which accompanies it, are brought about by the improvidence and waste of the poorer classes themselves. But anyone who wastes, and is improvident, cannot be in a position of abject poverty. A man who has only half a slice of bread to live on in the twenty-four hours, is not likely to throw away the crust, and it is with the abject and honest poor that Socialism concerns itself first of all. The question is, "Why should anyone who is able and willing to work want bread, when there is plenty for everyone and to spare?" It is no answer to say it has always been so, and will continue to be so in all time to come. Science mutters its phrases about "Nature's laws," of "struggle for existence," and "survival of the fittest"—principles which, if logically and consistently carried out., would lend to social war, and the extermination by the strong of every useless or idle member of society.

It is not our province here to discuss the various theories proposed for the more equal distribution of wealth. We have only to note carefully what Socialism aims at in this connection, and look at them in the light of right conduct and religion. It is enough for us to know that Socialism contemplates the rooting out of poverty, and the thorough draining and cleansing of the soil from which it draws the materials of its growth, and to point out that, ethically, it is in perfect accord with the highest standard of righteousness; and religiously, his part of that Divine plan which contemplates the highest good of all in every part of their being—a plan of which Nature gives us occasional glimpses, which is also a natural deduction from the belief in the Divine Fatherhood, find which finds its highest utterance, in the words of Jesus who told His disciples that if God so clothed the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, life will not overlook the higher necessities of those who bear His image, and who naturally cry to Him in time of need.

It has been said bitterly by some, that if Christianity is to be tried by its fruits, it has signally failed in working out the social redemption of mankind. But if Christianity has failed, so has legislation, so has the press; combinations amongst workmen themselves, in fact, must also be admitted to be failures. There is no other conclusion to which we can come than that the race has failed, and what comes after that it would be impossible to conjecture. But such judgments are based upon a totally wrong conception of what failure is. Man everywhere must work out the problem of his existence, individually and socially, in an atmosphere of freedom and experiment. His failures and bitter experiences are the conditions of his future amelioration. He cannot by any external force be put right, and by the same force be kept right. He must find out the right, and by experience learn to know that his happiness consists in doing it. Now, the very fact that society is awakening to a consciousness of its misery, proves that its past experiences have not been useless. For it is with societies as with individuals—the road to reformation and happiness passes through the field of sorrow, and there one begins to discover the sharpness of personal accusation and the bitterness which springs from a sense of failure and wrong doing.

The second aim of Socialism is the legislative or political equalization of all the subjects of the State. It was not intended, nor was it possible of realisation, to reduce all to the same dull level of uniform existence. Men could not be turned out like bricks, for although we are all formed of the dust of the earth under the hand of the Great Artist, no individual form has ever been turned out exactly like another. The evil lies in the imposition of disabilities which create class antagonisms—in the maintenance of old feudal and military distinctions, which would be perfectly harmless in themselves, were it not for the fact that they cannot be kept up without cost. and as they are regarded for the most part as unproductive, they are an unnecessary burden upon the resources of our times. In connection with this part of my subject, allow me to express my regret that, as a community, we appear to be getting far too

anxious for titles and social honour, and by far too subservient in the respect we pay to them. If the multiplication of "Sirs" proceeds for the next few years as rapidly as it has of late, there will be few left to covet the distinction. Nothing can possibly be an honour or adorn a title that has not true human worth and character behind it ; and we are indebted to Socialism for reminding us that all men within the State are born equal, and that the disturbance of that balance, no matter how little, will bring about its results in the shape of bitterness of spirit and crime.

The third aim of Socialism follows necessarily from the other two, namely, the diffusion of such an education to the individual as shall qualify him for taking his place, and discharging his allotted task in the great social machine.

One of the most striking features in modern civilization is its increasing complexity, which on a superficial view of the matter, threatens to crush out individualism, or the egoistic element in modern life, and to make altruism triumphant over the entire field of human activity. But a closer inspection of the ethical principles that regulate the movement of masses of men, will make it manifest that social stability and progress are not to be attained by the sacrifice of the individual ; but on the other hand, as a matter of fact, they are absolutely dependent upon individual culture and advancement. It is capable of demonstration, that society cannot rise above the level of the individuals of which it is composed ; and hence the necessity of universal education, a necessity which the majority of Socialists fully recognise. Their aim in this direction is to extend the benefits of education to every individual in the community, and to make such provision for this purpose, that not a single member of the State, however poor, shall be excluded from the benefits which education is meant to impart. . If society may be compared to a pyramid, the education of what are known as the masses, may be represented as the broad solid foundation stones on which the whole superstructure rests.

In the light of right conduct, the education of the people requires neither apology nor vindication. If we are to govern ourselves in accordance with the democratic spirit of the age, failure and disaster are inevitable without education ; and without special training, how can we know anything of these natural laws which underlie and determine all social movements, and which no blundering legislation can overthrow or destroy. It would be the height of criminal folly to give the command of a ship to him who knows nothing of navigation ; equally foolish and criminal it would be to hand over the government of a State to those who know nothing of the science of government, and whose legislative measures are only a kind of tinkering the defects of previous unskilful workmanship.

And as for religion, is it not a fact, that religion has been the patroness of education in all ages. Christianity is founded on the Bible, and the Bible is a literature, although that does not, fully describe it. To understand Christianity, one must study the Bible and know something of its parts, and the relation they sustain to each other; and he into whose soul the Bible has poured its living tide, cannot be regarded as altogether uneducated. He will be qualified above many for the duties devolving upon him in almost every relation of life. For, although the Bible is small in Comparison with the extensive area of modern literature, it contains in its concentrated essences, everything necessary to the maintenance of intellectual and moral life, the growth of the soul, and of sustained and well-directed energy.

LECTURE II.

SOCIALISM AND INFIDELITY

In my last lecture on Socialism, I endeavored to characterise some of the Socialistic movements of the day, with special reference to their aims. These aims were found to be of a just and generous character, and such as commended themselves to those who desired to see the removal of all unnatural and unnecessary inequalities amongst men, and the uplifting of the poor from want and social degradation. All movements that are under the guidance of intelligence, must of necessity have purposes or aims, more or less clear, before them. And when that purpose is not only intelligent, but moral and benevolent, it approves itself so far to the judgment and sympathy of all right-thinking and well-disposed persons. All Socialistic movements, as far as their aims are concerned, are of such a character ; and to that extent should receive the cordial support of all who are earnestly working to advance the welfare of all sections of the people.

But a movement may have everything to commend it to the heart and the judgement in so far as its professed aim is concerned, and yet fail to secure the hearty co-operation of those whose sympathies would give both character and force to the movement. The end may be good, but the means taken to secure the end may be neither wise nor just. In the domain of the purest morals, the end can never justify the means. Purity of motive is no justification of moral wrongdoings ; and that principle is not in the least weakened when applied to the actions of societies and nations. The means, therefore, must be in strict accordance with the right in connection with all social movements, otherwise they will not only fail to secure their ends, but increase the very evils they were called into existence to remove.

Now, to a very large extent, if not to an alarming one, some of the Socialistic movements of the day have become identified with sentiments of an infidel character. In the present lecture, I propose to indicate how far this identification extends ; the causes which underlie this alliance between Socialism and Infidelity, the dangers that threaten all Socialistic movements that ignore moral and religious nature of man, and how new dangers may be avoided.

Infidelity, like Socialism, is a work of somewhat indefinite signification ; but I use it here as equivalent to the denial of the existence of God, whether such denial exists as a speculation or in the form of thoughtless indifference. Atheism may be purely negative, and, like Agnosticism, refuse to believe in the existence of a supreme intelligence, on the ground of want of evidence ; but it may also become dogmatic, formulating a creed, from which the notion of God is not only excluded, but opposed and denounced. Materialism is atheistic when it denies the existence of anything beyond matter and force ; and Positivism allies itself with this philosophical system, on the ground that we have nothing whatever to do with what lies outside our senses and our present wants. There is also a Secularism which is atheistic, which may be described as that movement in modern Politics which ignores the religious sentiment; regarding man simply as a being that has to be fed, clothed, and housed, with a due regard to comfort and decency ; and if educated at all, to receive no more training than what is necessary for the daily grind of an existence very little above that of all animal. Infidelity in this sense is not merely direct antagonism to religion, but it is also sheer indifference to it. But, wherever it exists, and in whatever form, it degrades and imperils whatever it allies itself with ; all Socialistic movements are weak and doomed to failure, just in proportion as they are prevailed and dominated by the Spirit of Infidelity.

The hotbed of Atheistic Socialism is France, and more particularly Paris. According to some French Socialists, the notion of God, that is, religion, lies at the root of all the evils that at the present day afflict society. Hence, no improvement can possibly take place, so long as

people are so foolish and wicked to believe in the existence of any intelligence beyond or above themselves. They say, if there is a moral governor over man and nations, he is either deficient in power or in goodness ; for if human misery and wrong exist, and continue to exist, it must be either because this ruler has no power to remove them, or that he does not choose to do so, which would indicate a defect of goodness.

From France we may pass over into Russia, and there also we shall find Atheistic Socialism, in the form of Nihilism, in a very active condition. Czardom is despotism, both political and religious ; hence the Nihilist of Russia, in seeking to over throw Czardom, contemplates, with a lively satisfaction; a state of society without government, without God, and with no other religion than that of humanity. It is not always safe to infer that the sentiments of the rank and file of any organised movement are those of their recognised leaders, and Atheism may not after all prevail so extensively amongst the Nihilists of Russia as one would be led to expect from what is known concerning them and their doctrines; for the Russians are naturally a very religious people, and it is not easy, even under the severest provocation, to stamp out a natural instinct. Atheistic Socialism prevails in Germany, and amongst the Germans in the United States, but not nearly to the same extent as in France and Russia. Still less does it exist, save in the form of Atheistic Secularism, in Great Britain and her dependencies. Let it be noted, however, and remembered, that. Atheistic Socialism exists more in the form of a sentiment, a spirit, than a dogma, embedded in a definite creed. As such; it pervades the whole atmosphere of thought, and lurks in places where it is not always to be detected. It is not necessary in connection with any Socialistic organisation to make the denial of the existence of evil a condition of membership. All that is required is simply to ignore its existence, and to regard all religious consideration, if not superstitious obstacles to true progress as matters beyond the sphere of human interests.

The causes that underlie Atheistic Socialism are many, and a knowledge of some of those causes is absolutely necessary to a true and just estimate of modern Socialism. Moreover, it is of supreme importance that we clearly discriminate between Socialism and the infidel spirit that may dominate it in certain quarters. Let us not mistake its accidents for as essentials. It is unnecessary to remind you of the fact, that the human mind was made to think, to form opinions; and think it will, in spite of every device that may be formed to control or check it. It is perfectly absurd to talk of this erring reason of reason of man has nothing else to fall back upon for the proof, and the confirmation of truth, but his reason ; and if that cannot be trusted, the whole superstructure of knowledge is built on a foundation of sand, and may any moment become a shapeless ruin. Now, when anyone wakes up and becomes conscious of this power of thought within him, and feels that he is free to exercise it, he at once brings all his already acquired knowledge to the test of reason, and seeks to acquire conviction by examining the foundations on which all knowledge rests, rejecting what appears to him to be inconsistent with his primary and necessary beliefs. And what is true of the individual is true of society ; for society is made up of individuals. Scepticism is first of all then a healthy and natural movement of the spirit, and so long as man continues to be a searcher after truth, so long will he come under the influence of a natural inquisitiveness which makes doubt the fore-runner of certainty.

But, in addition to the natural inclination of the mind towards Scepticism, there are special causes at work at the present time, which satisfactorily account for the existence and prevalence of infidel sentiments in connection with Socialistic movements. Of these, we may mention the following : The higher thought, or philosophical speculation, is responsible for some forms of unbelief. The material world vanishes before idealism, and the personality of God disappears in the all-prevading impersonal reason. If we can know nothing but our own state of consciousness, it is clear we cannot know God, save as a thought, which, if thought can create, it can also destroy. Proofs of the existence of God, evidence of design, and

demonstrations of His being and attributes, have lost much of their force and argumentative value for this generation. And where belief in the existence of God continues to be an article in one's religious creed, it is not a conviction which the force of argument, or the weight of evidence, creates, but which both the heart and the reason demand as a necessary postulate, or universal synthesis, explaining all things, itself unexplained and unexplainable. This notion of God is like the light, which reveals whatever it falls upon. But if we ask what God is, or what light is, there is no reply, save that God is God and light is light. The progress of modern science has also had something to do with the growth of infidel sentiments within the area of Socialistic movements. The scientific spirit is inductive, experimental, and revels in a region of inevitable sequence, and the supremacy of law. Within this region there is no room for a free intelligence, and hence He is dispensed with as something unknown to science, and wholly unnecessary to thought. Closely allied with this scientific tendency is the movement for the temporal and physical welfare of the people. To want bread and to be badly clothed, are evils that require no elaborate arguments to prove their existence. Hunger makes itself felt, and where it exists it claims the first attention, while the demands and necessities of the spirit do not, unless in exceptional cases, so assert themselves to the exclusion of all other subjects of interest. Hence Socialistic movements that have their origin in social inequalities and wrongs, set themselves, first of all, to serve men's physical condition, and become oblivious to his higher wants, and to the impossibility of so separating one part of his life from another as to make the attainment of physical happiness a real possession, without, at the same time, adjusting his relation to God and the spiritual universe.

It must also be confessed that the Churches themselves have contributed to the growth of this Atheistic Secularism in modern Socialistic movements. Entrenched within their dogmatic fortification, and absorbed with the routine of their ritualistic observances, the representatives and adherents of ecclesiastical Christianity have taken little or no interest in movements outside their own boundaries. And when they have condescended to notice them, it has been too often with words of protest and denunciation. The Socialists of the Continent of Europe know nothing of religion save what is before their eyes, and consequently, their knowledge must be very defective. Nor must we overlook the fact, that prejudice and misrepresentation make the ecclesiastical world look a great deal worse than it really is.

Let us now glance at the dangers which threaten all Socialistic movements that are not under the influence of the religious spirit. First of all, no movement for the betterment of human nature can be successful that ignores the religious nature of man. That man is made to fear God, and find satisfaction in His worship, may be accepted as an essential part, of his complex nature. He is made to eat and sleep ; his hands tell us he was made to labour, and his brain that he was made to think. He has a conscience which provides him with moral distinctions, and when the shadow of the infinite falls upon him, he awakes to a sense of the presence of God, and the spirit of Divine worship asserts itself as naturally as the sentiment of admiration finds utterance in the presence of the beautiful. Now to ignore this fact, is to leave out of count the most important element in the forces that operate in the building up of our character. An engineer that has to span a river with a railway bridge, has not only to see to his foundations, but whether his bridge will bear the weight of the winds that sweep over it and under it. So it is with all Socialistic movements that are strong and healthy ; they must take into account the movements of the upper world of thought and of religion if they are successfully to attain the ends at which they aim.

Another danger in ignoring the religious element, comes to us when the unexpected happens, or when our plans fail of their accomplishment by no apparent fault of our own. If God rules the world, and men do not recognise that fact, there is no possibility of avoiding friction, and for any movement to be out of harmony with God's mode of moral government,

is for that movement to be in a position of peril and danger. The laws of a country under Constitutional government, are positive forces in that community. When anyone sets himself against these laws, he will very soon discover they are stronger than he, and provocation beyond a certain point, may prove the criminal's destruction. So it is with the government of God, of which Nature is one of the fields of its operation. We must take into our calculation the Divine will, for it is true, scientifically as well as religiously, that whatever is not in harmony with the will of God must come to naught. It is not only foolish, but dangerous, to fight against God. An appeal to history will confirm this position, for history is the record of God's providential dealings with mankind. Atheistic Socialism, and atheistic legislation have both hitherto proved their incapacity to grapple with human problems, or successfully carry out schemes for the amelioration of any section of society. Brotherhood assumes the equality of man ; but on what does it rest, and what binds it together—if you take away the notion of it common fatherhood? For as the material earth enspheres itself around the centre of gravity, so the individual elements of the spiritual world find their centre and bond in Him, in whom we all live and move and have being. Further, if the religious sentiment has had an evolutionary development, it is unscientific to imagine it can be eradicated by any revolutionary movement that contemplates its overthrow. To seek to suppress it by force, and in the interests of freedom, would be despotism of the most cruel character, and a return to barbarism, which kills for an opinion, and puts a premium on hypocrisy and crime.

We shall now point out how the dangers to which we have alluded may be avoided.

In the first place then, it is of supreme importance for us to know that as God and religion are in everything, so we should endeavour to look at all the movements of society as under the control and direction of God. Let us not be guilty of the heresy of supposing that religion is something by itself, that can be taken up or let down without in any way disturbing or influencing any other part of our nature. The man who is a saint on Sunday, and something else through the week, is that something else on Sunday as well. What a sublime and elevating thought it is to see God in everything, and to feel it is impossible to eliminate Him from any part of His vast creation. He is in every atom of matter, and in every vibration of force. It is His voice we hear in the murmuring stream and the sighing winds. He is in every leaflet, and it is He who gives strength to the oak. He is to be found in the lovely valley, and He is enthroned on the mountain tops. He is the light of the sun, and He glitters in the distant stars. We can no more ring the sap of the notion of God from His works, than we can drain the ocean, or blot out the light of the sun. We have our intellectual being from Him, and the warm affections of the heart. It is His voice we hear in the warnings and admonitions of conscience, and all our ways are under His directing providence. Where then can we go where He shall not be? Or what can we do where his help is not needed, or His opposition feared ? And if it is so, then let all Socialistic movements be penetrated with the thought of God. If those movements aim at the welfare and elevation of society, they must be in the line of God's benevolent purposes. Let us then recognise His authority, invoke His blessing, learn to obey His will, and let us assure ourselves of this, that no cause can possibly be defeated that has God on its side ; for greater is He that is for us, than all that can be against us.

In the second place, we should endeavour to hold up before men a more perfect and attractive notion of God than the most of them seem to possess. The idea of God, unfortunately, even amongst those who profess to love and serve Him, requires purification and expansion. The infidelity of some people is simply an incapacity to believe in God as he is represented to be in popular religious speech and writing. God is not a being of infinite power alone. He is also infinitely wise and good. He has no pleasure in the miseries of man, nor in the death of the sinner. When we think of Him under the designation of the Divine Fatherhood, the human intellect can soar no higher. Now what is repulsive, or unnatural, or unreasonable in the thought that God is the father of the human race ? The whole tendency of

His government is to promote virtue, and increase happiness, not by any supernatural bestowment which would destroy both our intellect and will, but by helping us to attain the perfection of our nature in the conflict of life, and in making us strong in moral character and excellence. When the day dawns upon the earth, the shadows of night flee away, and every object stands out clear and distinct in the light of the sun ; so when the dawn of a people's knowledge of God and a broader faith creeps over the minds of men, the night of superstition shall fade away, and all contradictions and doubts, and even mysteries, shall disappear in the pure light of God. But perhaps the most important and valuable antidote for the poison of Atheism, that has entered so largely into Socialistic movements, is a deeper, purer sympathy with man as man. The worship of humanity in its true sense will be its redemption. Both morals and religion teach us we are to love man, irrespective of rank, wealth, or learning. The brotherhood of man knows no limit but that of the race. It rises above colour and country, and embraces all time in its sweep. It goes back to the cradle of mankind, and looks forward to his enthroned manhood. To love our fellowmen is to love God ; and if a Socialist professes to love all men, the love of God surrounds that man like an atmosphere. It is this spirit of humanity that is rising and flowering in every land ; rippling the surface of human thought over which it is its mission to brood, and filling the prophetic ear with the music of approaching blessedness. It is this spirit alone that will save us from the Animalism and the Atheistic Secularity that hang around us now like a funeral pall, and that threaten to stifle us with the unwholesome atmosphere of the grave. But notwithstanding this aspect of the question, Infidelity is not altogether an unmixed evil. It may be compared to a hurricane sweeping through a forest, which brings down many a weak and dying branch, and even uproots trees that have failed to grasp with sufficient force the soil from which they drew the materials of their growth. But as in Nature, so also in the world of thought—the calm succeeds the storm, and winter gives place to spring ; and soon again the tempest-swept fields are covered with verdure and beauty.

LECTURE III.

SOCIALISM AND ANARCHY.*

Almost every modern movement aiming at the welfare of the people is burdened by some unnecessary weight, and retarded by obstacles that are put in its path by well-meaning but, mistaken friends, whose alliance is a source of weakness and not of strength. As the river is coloured by the soil through which it flows, and as in times of flood it carries on its troubled bosom much of wreckage from the banks it has overflowed, so great public movements are characterised by the imperfections and falsehoods of the times in which they exist, and when exceptionally active, carry along with them the evidences of their own destructive forces. On all public questions, modern society has a tendency to extremes, and shows a wonderful partiality for half truths. Everywhere, authority is in danger of running into despotism, freedom into license, and religion into superstition ; and the development of these extremes is generally in proportion to the activity of the movement.

In my last lecture I endeavoured to point out that Socialism, in so far as its aims were concerned, had nothing in common with Infidelity. In some of its wilder and revolutionary forms, Socialism has its origin in a deep-seated discontent, which is also the root of much of the scepticism of modern times; but in so far as Socialism was identified with unbelief in the popular mind, its triumph within its legitimate bounds was needlessly postponed. For Socialism, in its wider acceptance, has nothing whatever in it that can possibly be construed into hostility to religion, It is, therefore, a matter of deep and sincere regret that anyone should associate Socialism with Infidelity. No one who professes to be anxious to raise men into a higher state of temporal existence, requires to give up all belief in man's spiritual nature and necessities, and society may be sick at heart and sadly out of point but surely it does not follow that because it is so, there is no Supreme Intelligence in Nature, and no Father in Heaven for man to cheer him in life's pilgrimage, and afterwards welcome him into everlasting habitations.

But there are other alliances and dangers that impede the great Socialistic movements of the day besides that of Infidelity. There is the spirit of Anarchy or revolution, which is too frequently associated with Socialism, to the disparagement of the latter and loss. In the popular estimation, a Socialist is too frequently regarded as a wild, reckless, property-destroying, life-taking creature, a sort of wild animal of the carnivorous species, that must either be caged or killed. There are, of course, Anarchic Socialists, but all Socialists are not Anarchists. Socialism, when under the fever of Anarchy, is the wildest and most dangerous form of it, and the most unreasonable, but at the same time, the most impracticable of them ail. Its very extravagance is the source of its weakness and the ground of public confidence, that the solution of the social and industrial problems is not with the Anarchists. The word Anarchy simply means the absence of all Government, or authority, and hence the results which naturally flow from the absence of supreme authority, in the shape of confusion and crime. An Anarchist, therefore, is one who traces the miseries of society, not only to the abuses of Government, but to Government itself, and who believes that if there is a millennium for the race, which many of them doubt, it will not be reached until every form of authority and despotism be swept away. He has no definite creed as to the future; he is not under the influence of any constructive ideas, he simply believes that society has become so rotten and corrupt, that amendment is utterly hopeless. His creed in relation to modern civilisation is, "cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground." Revolution, he believes, must precede reformation ; but revolution must come, whether it brings reformation or not. It is a

* See note appended to this lecture

bold and daring policy, which makes the heart of the timid beat with a nervous fear, and makes wise men ask how it has come about that such an unreasonable and diabolical belief should be entertained by anyone not altogether destitute of the instincts and feeling of the race.

It is difficult, perhaps, for us in Australia here, to understand why it is there are Anarchists even amongst ourselves, and in almost every civilised nation of modern times. Still, when we reflect for a little on the conditions of large masses of people in some of the nations of Europe, our surprise is not that there are Anarchists, but that their numbers are so small. What would any of us men think, were we compelled to live on the scantest fare, and shiver in the cold, clad in the most beggarly clothing, to see no opening anywhere for escape, and to feel that every day our prospects were getting darker and move hopeless ; to have the miserable profits of our labour wrenched from our hands by unscrupulous officials of the State, and our persons liable to be dragged to prison without a trial, and left there to pine away in misery or neglect, or to be banished to work like slaves far from the home of our early affections, where escape was next to impossible ; to know that our fellow-creatures in other and happier lands were not oppressed as we were, and to feel this most keenly of all, that nothing in the shape of remonstrance or appeal would in the slightest degree mitigate the severity of our lot ? What would our feelings and opinions be, I ask ? And yet such is the condition of hundreds and thousands of our fellow-creatures. Anarchy is the child of misgovernment and oppression, and when stung into madness by its unnatural Parents, it will seize any weapon that lies at its hand, either for defence or revenge.

In estimating the spirit of Anarchy, as active revolution, there are three things which belong to it which may be regarded as its distinguishing marks, In the first place, it is the creed of despair. There is no star of hope on the dark back-ground of its midnight firmament. Its torch is not only reversed, but quenched. Disappointment and failure have snapped the chords of heroic effort, and paralysis is making rapid and dangerous approaches to the heart. It believes that they who occupy the seats of authority and have their feet on the necks of their victims, cannot be pulled out of dull by any force save that which will involve all in one common ruin.

Hence, in the second place, Anarchy is the spirit of revenge. It says, if we cannot get our rights and enjoy the fruit of our labour, we shall prevent others from enjoying even what they may have a right to. Revenge lies deep in the human heart, nor under the most favourable influences of religion can it be altogether eradicated. How much stronger, therefore, it must be when it springs into activity from a sense of wrong, and the vision of a state of comfort, from which they who are under its influence, feel themselves to be hopelessly cut off. Anarchy is the creed of destruction and terror. When there is no hope for it in active warfare, it works by dynamite and the dagger. So long as it is a mere speculation, it does little harm to society, however much evil it may work in the individual whose mind is filled with its ghastly images. You may hear it talked on a Saturday afternoon on the Melbourne wharf, but no one sleeps the less soundly that the red flag has fluttered over him for a little. But when it proceeds to demolish public buildings, destroy public property, and kill in cold blood citizens and rulers, it becomes necessary that it should be resisted by all the means society has devised for its own protection and safety. There are Anarchists who, were they not opposed and prevented from giving full practical effect to their revolutionary programme, would abolish the present relation of master and servant, and in seeking to make all masters, would unquestionably succeed in reducing us all to slavery. All voluntary associations under the protection of law—the necessity of the present order of things, according to the Anarchic creed—would be, plucked up and thrown to the waste. Government, whether autocratic or constitutional is, according to Anarchists, nothing but tyranny, and it also must be abolished. Whispers are sometimes heard that even marriage, which, according to these people, is

domestic despotism, would give way before a freer order of things where no law would interfere and no fear of punishment restrict the fullest exercise of personal liberty.

Let us now bring Anarchy to the bar of right conduct and religion, and pronounce that sentence upon it which seems to be just, and according to righteousness.

In the first place, Anarchy is condemned because, it is blind to the good that is in modern civilisation. It will not admit there is any such anywhere to preserve society from putrefaction. This is nothing but moral blindness.

“There is no lack of kindness in this world of ours,
Only, in our blindness, we gather thorns for flowers.”

Although there is much of shoddy and scamping amongst our hand workers, they are not all hopelessly incompetent and corrupt. There are hundreds of thousands of honest men in business, notwithstanding the revelations of the Insolvency Court. The Humane Society has every year a long list of those who have done some deed of heroism, for which they are to be commended and honoured, and this is one of the most pleasing aspects of the yearly celebration, that its ranks are largely composed of our native born. The white flower of a blameless life grows in many an obscure corner, and plants of the most delicate fragrance may even be seen to grow near the margin of those streams of lava and accumulation of ashes which passion and lust throw out of their volcanic heart. Modern society is, no doubt, frivolous and painfully pleasure-seeking, but there is a little of affection left in the heart of parents for their children, and children for their parents. There is too much self-seeking and petty ambition in our public men and selfishness everywhere, from the humble cot to the lordly mansion ; but all men are not cowards or sycophants. Let some sudden danger threaten our coasts, or seek to deprive us of our liberty, and public spirit would roll in like a mighty flood, and fill every bosom, proving that patriotism was not dead, but only sleeping. Now, on what principle of justice, or mercy, or of humanity, or even of economics, are we asked to destroy all this at the bidding of Anarchic revolutionary Socialism ? Why is the ship that is difficult of navigation through overloading or leakage, to be ruthlessly sunk and not brought into port to be lightened or repaired? We crush the quartz for the sake of the gold ; but Socialism would throw the quartz into the sea, and thus destroy both quartz and gold. The thin streak of dawn in the morning sky is the promise of the day, and hope waits for the time when the mountain peaks shall catch the rising sun, and the valleys be flooded with light. But Anarchic Socialism would over fly from the light, and be the companion of night and of earth's dark shadow. As yet, at all events, the words of wisdom and moderation in respect to the modern world are these :—“Kill it not, for a blessing is in it.” And not the judgment of despair—“Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground.”

But, in the second place. Anarchy in its confident predictions of the speedy abolition of all authority, greatly over-estimates its own strength, and under-estimates the forces that any moment can be brought against it. Intellectually, it is weak. Its high-sounding phrases are often as destitute of sense, as of argument. Many of its organisations are held together by the oath of secrecy, and the fear of assassination. It has no territorial basis of operation, and it is deeply conscious that it can only succeed by terror. But although its programme is destruction and murder, society is not much alarmed, for it knows it can protect itself, whenever Anarchy comes out of its hiding places to give effect to its policy of terrors. It is absurd to suppose that we would stand still and let Anarchists blow up our public buildings, set fire to our houses, and indulge in wholesale plunder and crime.

Revolution or civil war, is not in all cases wrong; there are times when it is dictated by the highest patriotism, but it is sheer recklessness for any cause to provoke a conflict in which it has not the slightest chance of success, and thus to court a destruction which is inevitable.

In the third place, Anarchy is opposed to the analogy of Nature and to the law of historic evolution. That Nature is our great lesson book, few will deny. The rivers that take their origin along the mountain ranges meet with many obstacles in their course as they flow onwards to the sea ; but these they overcome by the force of their character. If they cannot wear away what impedes their onward flow, they will wind round the obstruction. They never think of surrender or dissipation. Plants do not wither and die because as they shoot upwards through the soil they meet with obstacles and dangers. There is a splendid courage at Nature's heart which raises her above despair, and makes her vigorous unto the end. Even in our own body, when we are wounded and bleeding, the watchful guardians of our life will rush through a thousand channels to heal the breach and prolong our existence. But Anarchy's cure for all diseases of the social system is not cure, but cutting at the roots, and an arrest of all vital energy against which the voice of Nature protests with unmistakable emphasis; for Nature seeks to cure, not to kill. Nature is no Anarchist. The process of destruction and decay is not let loose upon any organism, until the vital bond has been broken and life has fled. But Anarchy, as a policy, runs right athwart the evolution of nations. That there is such a thing as historic development, no one with any knowledge of the history of the race will be prepared to deny. By slow, but by sure, steps mankind is rising from lower to higher levels. Comparing epochs within the same century, the difference may not be preceptible, but as a thousand years are but a footstep in the march of the race, we must make the comparison with long periods intervening. Evolution has its crises, its epochs of varied crowding, but revolution is not of Nature, but of man, and to suppose that any good can come out of a policy of destruction is to shut our eyes to the lessons of Nature, and the admonitions of history.

In the fourth place, where can Anarchists point to a single instance of the success of their policy ? For almost every political nostrum you may find an historical illustration and argument; but the failures of Anarchy are unrelieved by a single gleam of success. Its history, in so far as it has one, is written in blood, which not even a thousand years of the sunshine of peace will be able to lick out of the records of human suffering. The French Revolution dawned with bright hopes for humanity ; but alas how soon were those hopes extinguished before that tornado-blast of Anarchy which swept through the nation, and which from that time to this, has filled the minds of men and monarchs with images of horror and blackness.

And, lastly, let us suppose for a moment that Anarchy, after a fierce conflict with law and order, should triumph. What then? Kings and Emperors have disappeared, buried under the wreck of their own palaces. Churches have been desecrated, and no bishop or priest or minister has been left to preach the Gospel, or comfort the dying. Children have no parents but the State, and there is no crime because there is no law. Were such a state of things even desirable, what guarantee would we have of its continuance? Would the Socialists of the Anarchic type be a loving brotherhood, and would they enter upon a permanent peace when all their enemies were annihilated? Would they not rather turn their arms against each other, and fight until nothing was left to testify to their existence but their broken weapons and their mutilated bodies? It would be a strange cure for obesity to put the fat one in the fire, for from his blackened bones no new life could spring ; and Anarchy is not purification by fire, but destruction, from which may the God of Nations and the Father of Mankind preserve us ! There is not much fear of any serious outbreak of Anarchic Socialism in these colonies, nor yet in the mother country. Here, at all events, we have bread to eat, and wherewithal to be clothed, although there are some who have to bear privation, and that for no fault of their own. The working classes have abundant leisure, and the means of attending such amusements find excitements as are congenial to them. Under these sunny skies and protected industries, we ought to be a happy and contented people. Our prosperity may be symbolised by a bale of wool, a bag of wheat, and a bar of gold. Anarchy will not grow in such a social soil as ours, rich in all the elements of national prosperity. But let us not

contract the fatal habit of believing that what is will continue to be. Work may be hard to get and be miserably rewarded. Our granaries may, like those of Egypt in Joseph's time, become empty, and famine may stare us in the face. A thousand contingencies may arise that will put the stability of our institutions to the severest tests; and it is in times of distress and public commotion that Anarchy lifts up its head, and enters upon a career of destruction and bloodshed. Our best safeguard, even against that, is not in the multiplication of restrictive laws, nor in pandering to the prejudices of the people, nor by fits of public generosity, nor by a State education that makes no provision for the moral and religious nature of the children in our public schools ; but by righteousness in all our actions and by the love of God and of each others—a love which will make labour and self-sacrifice our deepest, most lasting, and purest enjoyment.

NOTE.

My use of the word anarchy in this lecture, has been called in question by some professed anarchists, namely, on the ground, that there are anarchists who do not come under the description of the text. The real genuine anarchist, we are told, is one who believes “in the fullest equal liberty for each individual,” who “pins his faith to education, passive resistance, and peace methods generally. Rather than participate in the compulsion of the ballot box, he abstains from voting, in the hope of eventually destroying the institution of government as its source.” Further, “we are assured that he looks upon the State as a highly artificial contrivance, which stunts human growth, and serves only to protect those who neither toil nor spin, but luxuriate on the labours of others.”

To these criticisms, I desire to say (1) that they are for the most part irrelevant. As to the sense in which I employ the word anarchy, I plead usage, the final arbitrator in all these matters. I am quite aware of the etymological origin of the word, and of its primary signification, as simply indicating the absence of government or rule. But words are very much given to travel from the place of their birth, and the word anarchy is no exception, for it would be almost impossible to eliminate from it the chaotic and destructive elements that have now entered into its range of meaning. For example, an anarchist, according to Webster, “in one who excites revolt, or promotes disorder in the State.” Usage most certainly sanctions this employment of the word in popular discourse, nor would, it be difficult to prove this assertion by numerous quotations from modern authors of reputable authority.

But (2) the most superficial reader can hardly fail to see that in this lecture I am not dealing with anarchic sects, or schools, if they may be so called, but with the principle or spirit of anarchy as akin to revolution, and in combination with modern Socialistic movements. That I am amply justified in the views I have expressed on Anarchic Socialism, will appear from the following quotations which could be largely multiplied. In the first chapter of Bellamy's “Looking Backwards,” we have the following words :—
“The nervous tension of the public mind could not have been more strikingly illustrated than it was by the alarm resulting from a small band of men who called themselves anarchists, and proposed to terrify the American people into adopting their views, by threats of violence, as if a mighty nation which had put down a rebellion of half its own members, were likely to adopt a new social system out of fear.”

In his appeal to the young, Kropotkin tells the slaves and down-trodden toilers of our modern civilization that they are a multitude which no man can number, an ocean that can embrace and swallow up all else, and concludes with these words :—“When we have but the will to do it, that very moment will justice be done—that very instant the tyrant of the earth will bite the dust.”

It may be contended, of course, that those words are simply figurative, and are in perfect accord with that faith which “pins itself to education and peace methods generally.” But with

one exception in history—Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon—I am not acquainted with anyone whose education was promoted by being compelled to bite the dust. The vast majority of those who have taken up that position have been compelled to do so against their will ; and if so, in what way can the millennium of anarchy be brought about but by the free application of that very authority and force some of them are so fond of denouncing?

The writer of the article Socialism, in the "Encyclopaedia Britannica," referring to Bakunin, says of him—"Nothing can be clearer, or more frank and comprehensive in its destructiveness, than the Socialism of Bakunin. It is revolutionary Socialism based on Materialism, and aiming at the destruction of external authority by every conceivable means The anarchy of Bakunin is therefore essentially the same as that of Proudhon, but expressed without paradox, and with a destructive energy which has seldom been equalled in history."

It is quite unnecessary to multiply quotations of a similar character, which lie at our hand in socialistic literature. If these are not sufficient to produce conviction, no accumulation of evidence will accomplish it. There may possibly be amongst the anarchists a Quaker sect ; but the vast majority of those who believe in "liberty, fraternity, and equality," would not scruple in the least, to provoke and support rebellion to give effect to the doctrines of their creed.

LECTURE IV.

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISTIC THEORIES.

Hitherto we have been dealing, for the most part, with the negative aspects of Socialism, and with some of its non-essential characteristics. In so far as the movement attracts to it Atheistic or Anarchic elements, to that extent are the true aims and principles of Socialism in danger of being misunderstood, and its progress retarded. There is nothing in the creed of Socialism that necessitates anyone who professes it to be either an Infidel or an Anarchist. That so many Socialists are both, is a matter for profound regret, as well as for the sake of those who cherish and profess such opinions, as for the character and the success of the movement itself. Leaving now the negative and critical treatment of our theme, we are face to face with some of the great problems of Socialism, and the theories propounded for their solution. It is a hopeful sign of the times that the demand is made everywhere for some attempt to be made to alleviate the sufferings and miseries of the industrious poor, and I shall glance at some Communistic Theories put forth for the rectification of wrongs, and the more equitable distribution of wealth.

The word Communistic, like the word Socialistic itself, has not a well-defined border-line around it. It does not admit of precise application. Although not the best word, perhaps, that could be found, its use by me on this occasion is to give prominence to a feature common to all forms of communions, namely, that of combination or union in contra-distinction to individualism and unchecked competition. Wherever two or more persons unite for a common purpose and the necessity for union on the part of individuals lies at the very root of human nature, there we find the germ of association or Communism. In some of its higher flights of speculation, it pictures to itself the possibility of destroying poverty and vice by abolishing the right of private property, and making the entire city, and even nation, an organised whole for the purpose both of production and distribution, giving to each constituent member according to his necessities.

The main problem which all forms of Socialism assiduously set themselves to solve, arises out of what is understood by the labour question. Every one coming into the world, has from the first certain wants that must be supplied if the life that has been conferred is to be maintained and enlarged. To these natural wants everyone has a right, which to deny or deprive him of, would be equal to the denial that he had any right to existence. But to meet human wants in all their number and variety, man must work; for while Nature has given us the materials necessary to maintain life, the stern duty has been laid upon us, that we must work if we would eat. The relation between supply and demand, although subject to a thousand fluctuations, has ever a manifest tendency towards equilibrium, for social forces are as much under law as physical ones; but it does not follow that those forces cannot be coordinated by human intelligence and will; neither does it follow that all who are conscious of wants, and who contribute their share of work in meeting them, have an equal proportion of the products of industry. Rather, is it not the case that many have far below their necessities, while others revel in abundance, luxury, and extravagance? This question will be put until a satisfactory answer is returned—not by the hungry alone, but by everyone in whose heart the faintest sentiment of brotherhood has a place. Why should anyone want, if the earth yields her increase in sufficient quantities for man's use, while he does his part in the work of production, and in bringing it within reach of the consumer? If matters are not satisfactory here—and no one will affirm they are—something must be wrong, for it is not our Heavenly Father's pleasure that any should perish with hunger or by anything else. If the associative

machine does not work smoothly, it is not the fault of the original maker, but of that unskilful apprentice hand whose mission it is to learn wisdom by experience. To find out what is wrong in our social life, Communistic Theorists have given themselves up with wonderful devotion and self-sacrifice ; and if they have not fully unravelled the tangled skein of modern industry, they deserve well for having made the attempt. No one, unless convinced of their practicability, is under any obligation to accept them, but the duty of understanding them is paramount.

If we take the phrase Communistic Socialism, and apply it with some latitude of meaning, we shall discover the existence of three types of association in which the fierceness of individual competition has been modified, and where, for the purpose of having things in common, personal liberty has voluntarily conditioned and restricted itself. These three are— (1) Trades' Unionism ; (2) Co-operation, or Profit-sharing ; (3) Communism, properly so called where the State as a social unit becomes the sole producer and distributor, where all capital is State property, and where distribution is made to everyone according to his wants. Trades' Unionism can hardly be called a Communistic notion. At the same time, it may be convenient to discuss it here, as it is union for definite purposes, and individualism is subordinated to a greater or less degree as Socialistic aims and methods are in the ascendency. The purposes for which Trades' Unions exist is the protection of the workman against the evils of unrestricted competition, against the ascendency of capital, and the injustice of class legislation, by which he may be injuriously affected.

Trades' Unionism has made itself pretty conspicuous of late, and having passed the period in which it had to struggle for existence against innumerable foes, it has now entered upon the stage of toleration and patronage in which its usefulness may possibly be somewhat curtailed. Up to the present time, it has had many a conflict and many a victory. It has pushed up wages in almost all departments of labour beyond the line of bare existence ; it has rescued women and children from some kinds of work for which they were not fitted, and shortened their hours where they are still permitted to use their hands. The Eight Hours' system is one outcome of Trades' Unionism, and one of its legislative triumphs, and many useful measures initiated by it are amongst the glories of our Statute law. The late Labour Conference held in Berlin, under the auspices of the Emperor of Germany may also be regarded as the fruit of this tree ; and although the findings of the Conference have not the force of legislation, they cannot fail in largely contributing to the emancipation of labour and the amelioration of the working classes in all parts of the world.

It has been objected to Trades' Unions that they engender a haughty spirit of independence in their members; that they are more frequently tyrannical in their policy than guided by wisdom, and a due consideration for the rights of others ; that their demands for a share of the profits amounts sometimes to a demand for the whole of them, and that individual talent and genius are kept down and discouraged under some sentimental theory of equality, and justice to the incompetent and the least skilful. The indictment is not entirely without justification ; but what associations of men are free from similar charges? Societies will often do acts from which its members would individually shrink. The Church of Christ theoretically, is composed of saintly men, and the ends for which the Church exists are the noblest that can occupy human thought, or engage human action, and yet so frequently has the Church tyrannised ; how often sought her own aggrandisement, forgotten the poor specially committed to her trust, and excommunicated those for whom Heaven's gate was thrown wide open? It is not for the Church at least to cast a stone at Trades' Unions on account of their follies and excesses. And against this charge of levelling and tyranny may be put the Spirit of self-sacrifice which the more skilful workman cheerfully submits to, for the of his less skilful brother, and for the general welfare of his class.

But while giving all credit to Trades' Unionism for the substantial triumphs of which it may well be proud, and while commending the heroism and self-sacrifice of many of its members in the cause of emancipation of labour, it does not appear to me to have the full solution of the social problem either in its aims or its methods. It may help to keep up wages within certain well-defined laws; but what of the mass who press upon the outskirts of regulated labour and if not already starving are within a few hours' march of destitution? Trades' Unions are by no means indifferent to the sad conditions of many of their fellow-creatures, and substantial charitable donations frequently find their way to those who are in want of the barest necessities of existence. But men are now beginning to see that, although benevolence is one of the divinest of virtues, it cannot efficiently grapple with the poverty which, if not increasing in intensity, is yet pressing upon the public heart and conscience with a weight that has never been felt before. Trades' Unionism contemplates only one aspect of the social problem—the defence of the labourers and the elevation of labour to its just and proper place in our social fabric. But the satisfactory solution of the labour question, however important and necessary it may be, would not in itself lift society from the slough into which it has fallen. If combined labour dictates to capital, combined capital will assuredly next dictate to labour; and when both forces reach their maximum strength by union, we shall have a conflict as severe and deadly as a battle with arms between nations. The last weapon of Trades' Union is force—for a strike is an appeal to force. And nothing has the elements of endurance in it that rests upon a foundation of force. It is still true, although the lesson has not yet had its full influence in determining conduct, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Strikes are, in fact, the modern form of warfare, and all along the boundary between labour and capital we may hear the clink of hammers closing rivets up, arming the knights of both camps, for, let us hope, a final struggle. After which, perhaps, wisdom and justice, shall be brought into the field as the final arbitrators in a treaty of perpetual peace. Then society may take up the song, and shout it forth joyfully :

No longer hosts encount'ring hosts
Shall crowds of slain deplore
They hang the trumpet in the hall,
And study war no more.

After Trades' Unionism, the principle of Co-operation and Profit-sharing naturally comes up for consideration and discussion. A great deal has been said lately in favour of this plan, and many patrons have expressed their belief that it will ultimately do more for the working classes than any other scheme that has ever been devised. Combinations, well organised and well directed, will certainly accomplish what individual effort in its sum total would be powerless to effect. But Co-operation is simply an attempt to make the workman a capitalist. Profit-sharing means more than bare wage^s, and takes us into the region of capital at once. The workman who becomes a member of any co-operative society must have had something to invest beyond his labour ; and that pre-supposes on his part the habit of saving and skilful management of his affairs. But where such individual virtues as these are found, the social problem has advanced a long way in the direction of a satisfactory solution. Were all who have to labour with hand and head strong, healthy, industrious, and thrifty, the area of comfort would be very much larger than it is at present. Poverty and destitution would be reduced to comparatively narrow limits, and charity would be relieved from the burden and pain of that depressing hopelessness which the contrast between the necessities of the poor and the resources at her command ever produces—a helplessness which cripples effort, and dries up the sources of benevolence.

Co-operation and Profit-sharing have been also strongly recommended on economic grounds. It is believed that they would bring the producer and the consumer nearer each

other, and so dispense with that very unpopular character called the middle-man, whose numbers are said to be fat in excess of the requirements of distribution.

The principle of Co-operation must approve itself to all who are capable of estimating its advantages, but it must be confessed with regret that its progress has not been so rapid, nor its results, so satisfactory, as its advocates naturally expected. All the causes of this want of success may not be apparent, but there are some that lie on the surface, to which we may briefly refer. To much importance has been attached to the abolition of the so-called middle-men, who in certain positions are indispensable in the distribution of productions. A load of bricks, for example, can be taken out of a cart and stacked a few yards away by a line of, say three men, handing them to each other, much more rapidly, and therefore economically, than by each man making a journey from the cart to the stack. The middle-man here, who simply stands still between the cart and the stack, is doing as much work as either of his companions, and it would be no gain to the other two to dispense with his services. But there is a class of middle-men who can be dispensed with without any loss to any but themselves. They are the secondary employers of labour at famine prices, for which labour they themselves receive fair remuneration. They are the scouts of belligerent capital, and enrich themselves by the spoils they seize from defenceless labour. The tide of public opinion is happily setting in strongly against any unnecessary increase of the distance between real employers and the unemployed. Their interests are not the same, as some affirm, but the chances of friction would certainly decrease in proportion to the directness of their relations. Then there is no denying the fact that co-operation and industrial associations and limited companies all tend to discourage individual talent and enterprise, by narrowing their sphere of activity, and withholding from them both encouragement and reward. On the other hand, Co-operation pre-supposes and demands, both in the individual and in the aggregate, a high state of civilisation. But what we are in search of is not something that will be adopted in society when it reaches a high state of moral development, but a scheme for present necessities, and that will also contribute to that development. But even if this co-operative principle were to fail, its very failure would hasten on the millennium of labour by creating that necessity which is the mother of invention.

The third Communistic theory already referred to is Industrial Communism, properly so called.

All kinds of labour combination and co-operation are Communism in the bud, but it is not until the community or the State becomes the sole producer and distributor, private property being abolished, the wealth of the nation held in common, and the whole body of the people organised into a vast industrial army, that Communism reaches its fruition. Many of you have read "Looking Backwards," by Edward Bellamy. The purpose of the author in that popular little book appears to be to give a picture of the condition of society under Industrial Communism. He describes the social state as one of harmony and peace. There is no poverty, and no superfluous wealth. The labour difficulty is at an end, and all social distinctions have passed away. There is no fierce competition anywhere, no over-production, and no waste. Every constituent member of the community must work, and the State guarantees to all citizens necessary maintenance and reasonable comfort.

"Looking Backwards" requires that we should go to sleep till the year 2000, and sleep over for a shorter period than that is apt to be haunted with dreams. And this book is a dream, not like those that Joseph had when a lad, which were in his case the outcome of the prophetic instinct, but a dream fantastical and impractical. No system of social amelioration can be permanent or satisfactory that merges the individual in the community. It is the personal factor that gives value to States, and all voluntary associations and legislation are valuable only in so far as they conserve individual liberty, promote individual happiness, and the higher types of individual character. Between Anarchy in its purely negative aspect, and

Communism on the other, we have to seek a middle way, equi-distant between the falsehood of extremes. And this is a moral and religious duty, as well as a great social and economic question. The discovery of this middle way will be revealed to us as the reward of faith in the goodness of God, as the Land of Promise was given to Abraham for the same reason, if we continue to believe in the fact of His active government, even in the midst of modern Chaos. Every man who strives to do right in all things and at all times, is helping forward the Divine order. For to those who know what God's will is, and who do it,, there is not only for them harmonious relations with the moral Governor of Mankind, but they become fellow-workers with God in the redemption of the race according to His eternal purposes.

LECTURE V.

SOCIALISM AND LEGISLATION.

The surface of the globe is, happily, not, all one continuous stretch of dreary uniformity, either of land or water. What light and shade ever play upon the face of the deep ? While the solid part of the world's surface is made up of valley and plain, of little hills and lofty mountains, of island continents and storm-battered promontories. And as it is with the surface of the earth, so is it with the races of mankind that have made it their habitation, and who live upon what the kindly earth yields for their maintenance. We are not all black, nor all white, nor all copper-coloured. Even within the narrower classification, what varieties of colour and character do we meet ? It is the same blood that circulates in our veins, but its volume and momentum admit of infinite modifications, so much so that not two individuals are exactly alike. Within the wide area of the race there are larger and smaller groups distinguished by some common characteristic of origin or language, and in these distinctions we have the basis of National life and State organisation. A Nation or State is not a voluntary association. It is not a temporary combination of individuals united for some definite purposes. It is as much the product of natural law as the growth of a tree, or the rise and fall of the tide. It may be defined as an organised community, occupying a definite portion of the earth's surface, and subject to some supreme power for the purposes of government. What these purposes are it is not always wise to determine, but no State can exist in the absence of sovereign power, invested either in a single person or in the voice of the whole community. We live here under a system of government called constitutional, in which supreme authority is embodied in the laws of the land ; laws not springing directly from the will of the people, but originated, discussed, and passed by the people's representatives in Parliament assembled, and assented to by the Crown. A law, therefore, may be defined as the command of the State prohibiting certain acts, or enforcing certain duties, and securing observance of the same by the infliction of penalties on the disobedient. The very essence of law, founded on legislation, is force. And it may be well here to give a few examples of its power in the machinery of Government. The law can take a man out of a comfortable compartment in a railway carriage, and land him unceremoniously on the platform, for neglecting to provide himself with a travelling ticket before starting. The law can impose a very heavy fine upon anyone and appropriate a considerable portion of his estate, if he is not sufficiently careful to observe the law in any important matter ; as we may see in the case of him who was recently fined £100 for some irregularity in the celebration of a marriage—all the more censurable on his part, considering his extensive experience in this line of business. The law can take away our personal liberty if we are found guilty of certain crimes ; and if anyone in Australia here should, as some do, help himself to money to which he has no just claim, and make off to some distant part to spend his ill-gotten store, the long arm of the law, stretching over continents and seas, and guided by an eye that penetrates into the darkest recesses of crime, can single him out, even amid the millions of London, and bring him back to receive the just punishment of his criminal folly. But the power of the law does not stop at imprisonment, even for life, for if anyone should, with deliberate intention, commit murder, the law decrees the death penalty. And as an illustration of the power of the law, capital punishment exhibits it in its most striking and solemn manifestations.

It is this power of the law, imparted to it by legislation, that has induced a large section of modern socialists to seize it as a weapon for the purpose of working out their schemes of social reform and political freedom. To abolish all class distinctions, equalise the distribution

of wealth, and ultimately to reduce State action to a minimum, if not to abolish it altogether, democratic socialists do not trust so much to the growth of public opinion, as to the spread of intelligence, as to the efficiency of legislation. They profess to have no faith in active revolutionary movements, but place great faith in the ballot box and Parliamentary representation. As a matter of fact, the majority of electioneering conflicts, both in England and on the Continent, turn on some question of State socialism. No attempts are made by socialists of this class, to conceal either their aims or their methods ; nor are they working without encouragement or hope. There are two modern movements they point to with pride, each of which they claim for their cause, both as a triumph and as an ally. The first is the undoubted progress of democratic ideas everywhere, whose gathering forces are frequently compared to a rising tide, that will ere long sweep away or submerge everything erected to arrest its progress. The other movement in the trend of modern legislation in a socialistic direction. During the last fifty years, legislation has been completely revolutionised in respect to its aims and functions. In those good old times to which those who hate change fondly refer, the State was not supposed to have more to do than to defend the people from aggressive warfare from without, and from crime within. With an army for the one, and a police force for the other, what more was needed or desired. The sphere of legislation was definite and narrow, and social questions were almost wholly ignored. With the Reform Act of 1832, the era of Socialistic Legislation may be said to begin—not that all such legislation was neglected up till this time, but that it henceforth partook largely of that characteristic feature. By Socialistic Legislation, we mean laws for the protection of workmen in connection with certain kinds of labour, the protection of the consumer in regard to the purity of his food ; the education of all classes of the community ; and generally such restrictions upon individual freedom and unlimited competition as were supposed necessary to lessen the burdens of life, and establish just and righteous relations between the several component parts of the Commonwealth.

The amount and character of such legislation within recent times, would hardly be credited without an appeal to the facts of the case. And one of the least hopeful signs of the times is this, that notwithstanding all that has been done, and what yet fully reasonably be expected for bettering the condition of the people generally, there would exist still such a deep-seated discontent in the minds of so many—a discontent that looks as if it would defy every effort to dislodge it.

The freedom of the subject has been somewhat circumscribed in connection with factories and coal mines, the sale of poisons, and the use of firearms. The freedom of the subject is not permitted unlimited sway in overloading ships and sending them to sea—a kind of floating coffins—to find their speedy resting-place in a watery grave. The freedom of the subject is somewhat interfered with in preventing the adulteration of food, and the accumulation of unwholesome nuisances. And is not the freedom of the subject of little account now in the matter of education, which has become compulsory, and brought within reach of the poorest subject?

The progress of Socialistic Legislation raises the question of the proper functions of the State, and of the relation of the individual to law and government. Unless we have some clear and definite notion of the relation of the State to the individual, and the individual to the State, we are in danger of becoming the abettors of the evils of popular clamour, or the victims of unreasonable fears. Your duties as citizens and members of the State should not be discharged on grounds of mere expediency, but of morality and religion. To vote, for example, thoughtlessly, or because of some favour bestowed or expected, is an injury to the sacred cause of democratic government, the best efforts of which are real, however difficult it may be to trace their course. One may neglect his private devotions, and injure no one but himself ; but a wrong done in the sphere of social and political activity carries consequences

to our neighbours, which no one who is not wholly given over to selfishness will deliberately commit.

In order to our enlightenment and guidance in these matters, we must fall back upon experience. History is the store-room of practical knowledge. To elaborate an ideal State out of our own imagination may be a pleasant exercise, but it is almost always unprofitable labour. Narrowing our observation to our own country, and within our own times, we may affirm that there are some things which the State alone can do, and which it does well. In addition to the maintenance of the Army and Navy, which certainly comes legitimately within State functions, if the State is to exist at all, there is the post office, which is emphatically a socialistic institution. Did you ever think of the value, and importance of the mail service to the whole community ? As the network of nerves over the bony skeleton of the body, so are the ramifications of the postal organisation of the empire. From the crowded city to the lonely hamlet in the bush, there is no place entirely cut off from its lines of communication. What messages of joy and sorrow it carries ; what threats and implorings ; what losses, what gains ! And yet, considering the magnitude and variety of its work, how few mistakes and failures are there ! Let us thank God for the post office. It is one of those things which the State alone can do, and we are glad to be able to say that the State does it well.

There are some things the State does which clearly lie within its province, but which it does not do well. Of these, we may mention the regulation of the liquor traffic, and the mode in which justice is administered. In regard to the former, it is not saying too much to affirm that legislation here may not inappropriately be described as a series of failures. No sooner is one Act passed than there is a demand for some alteration or amendment. This failure may be traced to an untutored fondness for restriction and prohibition, and at the same time a singular indifference to the power and efficiency of positive legislation. the traffic in intoxicants is exceptional, and requires exceptional treatment ; but there are positive evils arising out of the traffic that should be dealt with before repressive measures of an indirect character should be thought of. Amongst, the many evils springing from the intemperate use of strong drink, public drunkenness is not the least conspicuous. And yet how feebly is this crime dealt with ! It is a very grave offence against society for one to appear in public in a state of helpless or dangerous intoxication. If it is necessary to bind certain persons over to keep the peace, it is also of the utmost moment to bind over others to keep sober. And if any one is unable to do so, it must be because he is a confirmed criminal or a lunatic. But in either case he should be dealt with accordingly. This is what is meant by positive legislation, attacking evils directly as they arise, rather than legislating for those that are simply imaginary, or have not the taint of crime in them by any standard of ethics. It is no doubt a good thing to remove temptation from the weak ; but it is better, by all possible means and moral forces, to make the weak strong, for then temptation will lose its power, or become the means of giving additional strength to virtue.

With regard to the mode in which justice is administered, it must be obvious to all that it would be a great gain if the procedure of our Law Courts were much more expeditious, and less costly. Haste here would not only be unseemly, but defeat the very ends of justice. But, at the same time, no one can shut his eyes to the fact that the "law's delay" is sometimes both vexatious and ruinous, even to the successful plaintiff. What the community wants is justice, not an exhibition of legal skill by opposing barristers, at the cost of the litigants. Reform is much needed in this direction before it can be said that this part of the functions of the State, is well done. When justice is the luxury of the wealthy only, the causes of the poor must frequently go unredressed.

But there are some things which that State ought to do, but, which unfortunately it neglects. Our modern civilisation and favourable climate generate an immense amount of

energy beyond what is required for procuring the means of subsistence. The popularity of football is largely to be attributed to this cause. That it not only meets a natural demand for recreation, but helps to scatter the overflowing energies of those who have not been overwrought, or exhausted by labour. On the whole, it is better for the exuberant animal spirits of the youthful portion of the community to find a vent in this way, rushing like steam through the escape pipe, rather than by repression to become a dangerous explosive force. The enthusiasm for football surely reached its climax the other Saturday afternoon, for as I passed in the train, I saw nothing but a broad, circular band of umbrellas, beneath which, I suppose, there were thousands of eager eyes watching the erratic course of a piece of inflated leather ! Now, here is a fine field for the legislator and the patriot. In a democratic community, every man should be trained to be of service in the event of threatened invasion. And there are hundreds and thousands of young men amongst us who would be vastly the better for a little physical education, with military drill. There is no reason why, under proper management, such a training should fan the war flame into a dangerous intensity. It would be advantageous to themselves, and a protection to the community, to take some of these big lubbering fellows, so light above and heavy below, who gather about street corners in search of what they call amusement, and give them a manly bearing, and something to do that would lift them out of the ranks of dangerous idlers. Volunteering did wonders for the Home land about thirty years ago, when a French invasion was by no means a baseless fear; and although our horizon is not darkened by any such apprehension, we may raise the social standard considerably if the State would make ample and liberal provision for the proper military training of all able-bodied men. We should then not only increase our sense of security, but profitably employ the surplus energy of those who have nothing better to do on a Saturday afternoon than watch the progress of a football match.

It would be well also if our legislators would turn their attention to the desirability of framing some scheme of National insurance against accident and death for the benefit of the labouring classes. The principle of compulsion in operation in other directions, may be applied here without injuring the subject, although it might interfere with his liberty in the reckless expenditure of his wages. If the State could only direct into such profitable channels the savings which our free system of education confers upon the people at large, there would be fewer appeals to the liberality of a generous public.

There are some things which the State attempts to do, but does so badly that it raises the question whether they lie within the proper functions of the State. We have in this colony a National system of education, which no one can say is fulfilling the purposes for which it was enacted. It is a system from which the parents of the children attending school are completely excluded. The local management is simply a name and utterly worthless. How it came to pass that those who are responsible for the proper upbringing of their children could have allowed them to come under the dull monotony of such a secular machine as our present Education Act, is beyond my comprehension. And the mystery is only equalled by the fact that they have submitted so long to such treatment. A system of National education is a necessity of our times ; but the less the State has to do with it directly, the better ; and the more it is under local control, the more likely is it to be both efficient and thorough.

Let us now look at some of the things which legislation should never attempt. And here, the lessons of history should have special prominence. To attempt to squeeze thought, and especially religious thought, into a uniform State mould, to get all to say the same prayers and to go through the same ecclesiastical drill, is as absurd as it is repellant to human nature. And yet it has been tried, but happily with absolute failure as the result. Our Covenanting and Puritanic fathers resisted all such attempts in the face of much suffering, with loss even of life. They have handed down to us a precious inheritance, which we cannot prize too highly or guard with too watchful an eye.

Legislation cannot make men virtuous. I cannot altogether subscribe to the doctrine that it is impossible to make men moral by Act of Parliament. There is an educative influence in law when based on just principles, and what is a moral influence is favourable to virtue. But still personal virtue will not spring up at the bidding of authority. It is based on personal choice, and is first of all an inward sentiment. All that is good and noble in Character comes from the heart, whose beat is that of righteousness and truth. The best legislation will not make a people virtuous if they are not that already, and the worst laws will not make the people vicious if they are not so by deliberate choice and action. Environment is an important factor in character ; but environment is not all, nor is legislation all environment.

But, above all, let us never forget that legislation alone can never make a people happy. The human animal must have more than straw and a stall before he settles down into contentment. We may picture to ourselves a community where there is no poverty ; where there is no want of labour ; where wages are high, food abundant and cheap ; where filth and fever have been swept away by the sanitary broom ; and where crime has been extinguished. And yet amid all this peace and prosperity, we have no guarantee that man will be happy. Who are they at whose ear the demon toad of evil sits and croaks, filling the imagination with pictures of misery and despair ? Not those who have to work for their living; not even those who have to toil for it. The poor have but one anxiety ; the rich are overwhelmed with them. And when to riches there is added idleness, with a craving for sensational amusement, the heart sinks so low under its burdens that it begins to ask the question whether life is worth living. How frequently, alas ! has a suicidal “No” come from the hollow caverns of despair, giving one more illustration of the too much forgotten truth, that happiness must have its seat and centre in ourselves before our surroundings can yield one drop of comfort for the cup of life. The abundance of our corn and wine, may encourage luxury and sloth, and soon bring about depression of spirits and misery; but he is superior to all calamity and even want whose relations with God are filial, and with his fellow men fraternal.

LECTURE VI.

SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

In the previous lectures, I have endeavoured to point out the relation of modern Socialism to Infidelity ; to Anarchy, as active revolution ; to Communism and to Legislation ; and to indicate to what extent the aims of Socialism were modified by these movements. I now propose to inquire how far Christianity is in harmony with the aspirations of Socialists, and where Christianity and Socialism part company.

When we remember that we are surrounded by an atmosphere made warm and bright by Christianity, it would seem be a very useless and superfluous, question to ask, "What is Christianity ?" And yet I am compelled to admit that the amount of popular ignorance on this subject is far in excess of any charitable explanation. Christianity and theology are not identical, as many suppose ; and although we cannot get to know what Christianity is without the Bible, they can be discriminated by broad lines of demarcation, which to ignore would be sure to lead one into confusion and error. Again, Christianity is more than morality. It is not unfrequently said that the essence of religion consists in doing to others as we would that others should do to us. But that rule has almost exclusive reference to conduct, and as a rule of life, it has nothing directly to do with religion ; but Christianity is a religion as well as a system of morals, and no explanation of Christianity is adequate that does not indicate its spiritual, or God-side, as well as that which touches human nature, and gives rules for human conduct. The answer to the question, "What is Christianity ?" should be one that would give definite and accurate information to anyone whose education had not brought him in very close contact with it. Were I challenged to supply such information, I would reply as follows:—"In the first place, Christianity is a religion, a form of worship, and the object of its adoration is the only living and true God, under the three-fold personality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." I am quite aware that such a description may be controverted by Unitarians ; but notwithstanding their demur, they themselves must allow that the main stream of Christian thought, from the earliest ages until now, has flowed between these well defined banks. It is not the truth of Trinitarianism that is here raised and discussed, but simply the fact of its historicity as one of the most prominent characteristics of Christian doctrine. The formula of baptism is as old as Christianity itself, and the doxology had become part of the worship of the Church as early as the second century. Christianity is the worship of God, who is a spirit, in spirit and in truth ; but it has also this peculiar and distinctive mark, that it is the worship of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, not as three Gods, but as God in a mysterious trinity, and no less mysterious union. Like Judaism and Mohammedanism, the religion of Jesus Christ rests upon the doctrine of Divine unity ; but the doctrine of the Divine unity, as taught by Christianity, has a three-fold distinction of persons in it which, with one exception, has been received as an article of faith by all sections of the Church of Christ through all the stages of her history.

But, in the second place, Christianity is more than a system of worship, it is pre-eminently a remedial scheme—a way of salvation. It assumes that the race of mankind is not in its normal or natural condition. That it has, by the free exercise of its own elective powers, fallen into sin, and involved itself in all the sad consequences of transgression. Looking upon man generally as sinned, and all but lost, it comes forward with a scheme of restoration, of forgiveness, and peace. As a system of worship, it inculcates the worship of the Son in the same way, and to the same extent, as we worship the Father ; but as a plan of salvation, Christ is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. To overlook this aspect of

Christianity is to miss not only its most valuable characteristic, but its distinctive mark. Fully to describe a medicine, it is not enough to give the result of a chemical analysis; its healing properties in relation to some particular disease should also be indicated. So it is with Christianity. Any analysis of its doctrinal contents, or summary of its moral precepts, that keeps out of sight its relation to sin and forgiveness, cannot be accepted as full and satisfactory. Sin is death, but Christ, who is Christianity, came into the world to destroy this death, that we might have life; for the very essence of the scheme of human redemption is the proclamation of pardon to all who are willing to fulfil the conditions on which forgiveness is freely bestowed.

Now, this lends us to remark in the third place, that another distinguishing feature of Christianity is its demand for repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ from everyone who aspires to a more than formal connection with that spiritual community known as the Kingdom of Heaven, which the advent of Christianity brought into existence. But, however important these things are, they are not the whole of Christianity ; but rightly to comprehend these, in themselves and in their relations, is to occupy a most favourable position for becoming better acquainted with that system of worship, of doctrine, and of duty, under the designation of Christianity. The keynote of Christian worship is the doxology:—"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost ; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen." The foundation stone of Christian doctrine is the incarnation of the Divine Son, and the Divine sacrifice of Himself for the sins of the world. He is the Son of God, and the Son of Man, as also the Saviour of humanity. The keystone of the arch of Christian duty is faith and trust in this Divine Saviour, who becomes to all who receive Him the strongest governing and propelling force in the new life of devotion to God, and the good of mankind, which is the province of Christ's Gospel to inspire.

If this is Christianity, what is the relation of modern Socialism to it ?

Their lines run parallel for a certain way, but afterwards they seem, to diverge. And the separation becomes more and more apparent the farther we travel from the point of divergence. I shall, therefore, first of all show how far modern Socialism and Christianity run together, and then where, and to what extent; they diverge.

Christianity and Socialism are one in recognising with more or less distinctness the universal brotherhood of man. The founder of Christianity is the Son of Man. He is also the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. The strength of Socialism lies in the fact that it has the welfare of the people as a whole directly before it, and is opposed to all class distinctions and privileges. To represent Socialism as some wild scheme for taking by force the accumulated wealth of the nation, and making an equal distribution of it amongst all, is not only grossly to misrepresent it, but to raise an unnecessary prejudice against a movement whose aims are right, although its methods may not be always wise. This sentiment, the brotherhood of man, finds its tersest expression in the word "fraternity," and the word "equality," with which it is so frequently associated, is its natural outcome and complement. This latter word does not carry with it the notion of perfect evenness and level on the part of mankind generally, but simply an equality in the eyes of the law, and the impartial administration of justice, on the basis of universal brotherhood.

Christianity and Socialism run together also in so far as they both seek common ends. Their aims are benevolent. They are both moved with compassion in the presence of human suffering and wrong. There is a conviction at the heart of both that man was not made to mourn, and that if he does, it is not because it is the inevitable condition of things, or, to put it in religious phraseology, the will of our Father in Heaven ; but from causes which are preventible, and ought, therefore, to be removed. Socialism, if it does not avowedly profess to make men happy, aims at least at these two things:—First, the removal of all those inequalities and injustices that cause so much of the privation and misery we see around us at

the present day, and which it, in common with Christianity, so deeply deplures; and secondly, to bring within reach of all the means of subsistence, and of rational recreation and enjoyment. Were these proposals accomplished, it does not necessarily follow that sunshine would come to the heart, and perfect peace reign in every sphere of our nature; but it would remove the guilt from society of making their acquisition and possession all but impossible.

And Christianity has a message for the body as well as for the soul. The religion of Jesus Christ aims at more than saving one from the terrors of the world to come. It aims at his highest welfare, which cannot be reached unless the whole man is touched and healed. Supreme happiness is the concomitant of perfect health, and the harmonious adjustment of every part of our complex nature. The salvation of Christianity includes bodily soundness as well as spiritual insight and peace; and none is saved, in the fullest sense of that word, whose relations with himself, and the world without, are not consistent, however much delight he may appear to take in psalm singing and religious services.

Christianity and Socialism are also alike in this, that they are both hopeful as to the future. Their creed is not the creed of despair. The darkness that hangs over us is made up of clouds, behind which the sun shines ; it is not the outer skirts of an endless night. The burdened heart is always prophetic ; and nowhere does the star of hope shine so brightly as on the dark background of human sorrow. No movement for the amelioration of mankind would survive for any length of time, were it not for the inspiration of hope; and Socialism in its best estate is sustained and encouraged in its aggressive efforts by the conviction that, in spite of the gloomy outlook of the present, there is a good time coming for the world and for man. And is not Christianity the religion of hope? Its future world is filled with brightness and every tongue is musical with praise.

But having made these admissions, we come to the point where Christianity and Socialism part company. I shall now, therefore, indicate how far they differ, both in their estimate of the evils which afflict mankind, and their methods of removing them.

Socialism, whose range of vision is confined to what is seen and temporal, finds the cause of human misery and wrong in man's surroundings—in unjust and oppressive laws, in social tyrannies and injustices, in commercial frauds and domestic infelicities, and generally in man's inhumanity to man. Christianity does not deny that those are bitter drops in the cup of life. But in answer to the question, from what plant are these drops squeezed? It replies, going to the very root of the matter, that it is sin or rebellion against God, which is the source of all our misery and unhappiness. We are out of joint with our spiritual environment, and there must be a readjustment before there can be harmonious action. The soul was made for God, and never in the nature of things can it be happy until it finds Him, Wherever there is this alienation of the heart to the supreme good, there is the secret of human misery and wrongdoing. The higher derangement disturbs the balance of all our lower energies ; and until Socialism fully comprehends the fact of man's personal relation to God, as that of a sinner against His laws and a rebel against His government, its diagnosis of the cause of human suffering will be superficial and inadequate, and its methods of cure will necessarily partake of the same character. In this respect, Christianity is the much more skilful physician, for it lays its finger on the sore and source of the disease in the state of the human heart towards God, its culpable ignorance of His character and law, and its choice, and love of wrong-doing cannot be made to sin by any force outside himself; he determines himself on the direction of sin, and in cherishing the disposition to do so. In spite of the light of reason and the admonitions find warnings of conscience, he voluntarily tramples upon the higher law of his being, and becomes the slave of his own impulses and passions. Nothing in the universe can make him happy until this rebellion is put down, order restored, and the supreme governing power enthroned.

This divergence, as to the source of human ills, becomes more apparent when we come to examine the respective methods of Socialism and Christianity for their removal. Anarchic Socialism, where it comes short of recommending a policy of violence and active revolution, would abolish all civil law and government, and every custom or institution that does not allow the individual to work out his own redemption, unchecked and unrestrained by any controlling force, save that which his own reason and conscience supply. Communism advocates co-operation and identity of interest over the whole field of our industrial activity. Socialistic democrats put their faith to Acts of Parliament, and would adjust human inequalities by the weapon of legislation. But none of these go deep enough, and none of them can be accepted as a satisfactory solution of the social problem. The aim of Christianity is to establish God's kingdom upon the earth—that is to say, to bring the whole world under Divine law and government, to establish the reign of justice, mercy and peace. But in order to do this, Christianity lays down this condition, that before any one can enter this Kingdom, he must surrender himself without reserve to the new order of things. As the Bible puts it, he must be converted, and become as docile and confiding as a little child before the healing stream of a new life brings freshness and truthfulness to the field of his activities, which before had been bare and barren.

Nor does Christianity leave us alone to effect this great change to which it summons us. It supplies us with the loftiest and the purest motives. It promises forgiveness for past sins, on condition of true repentance. It does not, by its liberal offers of mercy, weaken the foundations of justice, for God's mode of punishing sin and saving the sinner, leaves no excuse for under-estimating the enormity of sinning against Him. Christianity surrounds us with companionship congenial to our new feelings, and helpful to us in striving after the perfection of our nature, and the presence and sympathy of the Saviour Himself, as possessed and guaranteed to all who confide in Him and overcome the world by their faith. When trouble comes, Christianity supplies us with strength to bear it; and when we are persecuted and shamefully used, it exhorts, not to retaliate, but to pray for them who abuse us, that they may cease from evil and learn to do well. And when the dark shadows of death gather round us, and the noise of life's machinery falls upon our ear like a distant murmur, the darkness is less heavy and confusing by the presence of Him who conquered death and brought life and immortality to light by His Gospel. Enlightened Socialism is not absolutely ignorant of these things. Like the young man in the story of the evangelist, it is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven ; but when it is converted, for movements, as well as persons, can pass from darkness to light, then the day of the world's redemption shall have dawned.

LECTURE VII.

SOCIALISM AND THE CHURCHES

Language is the expression of thought, the living body in which it dwells and by which it makes its existence known and felt beyond the inner circle of its own consciousness. Christianity is first of all a thought in the Divine mind, and one of the forms of its expression is the visible Church. Christianity, like thought, is internal and invisible ; its movements are subtle and not easily detected ; but when allied to language, it passes from the inner to the outer world, and may then be judged by the common standards of value. The visible Church is one of those channels through which the Supreme Intelligence speaks to the world concerning Himself, and the conditions of human happiness. But language can never fully express thought, of which fact everyone has some knowledge who falls back on his own experience. The visible Church, however perfect in its organisation and widespread in its ramifications, can never adequately give full and clear utterance to the thought of God and His merciful purposes to the race. The language of poets is the highest and richest form of human speech ; but how many thoughts wander spectre-like through the shades for want of some home to dwell in, and hold converse with their kin. If, therefore, we must regard the visible Church as part of the expression of Christianity, let us not forget its incapacity to give full and adequate expression to all that Christianity is. At the same time, it must also be admitted that if the visible Church has not the vital breath of Christianity in every part of it, it is a defective organisation in proportion as that breath is wanting; and when the breath departs, it is no longer a body but a corpse.

In my last lecture on Socialism, I endeavoured to point out how far the religion of Jesus, and modern Socialistic movements were pervaded by the same spirit, dominated by the same aims, and governed by the same methods. Wherein also they parted company, and how far in some directions they diverged. I propose now to bring Socialism and the Churches together, with the view of ascertaining how far they are working together ; how far they are antagonistic; and which of them in the struggle for existence is likely to survive, and be most serviceable to mankind.

By the visible Church, I mean the whole company of believers in Christ's doctrine and scheme of human redemption on the earth at one time. In lofty and venerable' cathedrals, where the solemn chant lingers in echo along the vaulted roof, and worshippers kneel in prayer, and pour out their heart's devotion in liturgic forms that have become sacred by the piety of centuries, part of the visible Church is there, But no less is the Church visibly manifesting its presence in some lonely hut, where two or three workmen, in their every-day garb, meet from week to week, to read their Bible together, speak their wants in their own phraseology to the Great Breadgiver, and encourage each other to live up to Christ's standard of brotherhood. For this visible Church in all its branches, and by whatever system of laws governed, is a great Socialistic institution—a household whose supreme law is liberty, and whose bond is fraternity. The motto of some modern schools of Socialism is liberty, fraternity, and equality ; but this trio of social and political virtues have been the companions of the visible Church through all the stages of her history ; and if original inheritance gives any title to possession, those graces belong to the visible Church more than to any modern movement that claims to be under their inspiration and guidance.

The visible Church is founded on freedom, for the charter of its liberty makes the possession of spiritual freedom the first condition of membership in the household of the Divine Son ; and what we are expected to have on entrance we are exhorted to

maintain, and not to suffer ourselves to be dragged back into bondage and made slaves to the beggarly elements of the world. The visible Church is also the brotherhood of the saved, and while these are, and must be as in all other societies, officers, Government and administration, the underlying foundations are those of fraternity and equality. "All ye are brethren," said the Master, who was at the same time the servant of all, and every departure from the spirit of that solemn declaration of fraternal equality is a violation of the laws of His kingdom. Nor has the history of the visible Church belied the principles that form the foundation-stones of the edifice. From the earliest ages until now, she has, in one or other of her organised divisions, kept up a vigorous warfare with despotism and privilege. When the Jewish authorities commanded the first preachers of the Gospel not to speak at all, nor teach, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, they emphatically refused to do so, and accepted the consequences of their rebellion. The Roman Empire, again and again, during the first three centuries, endeavoured to stamp out the Church by every act of a cruel and oppressive policy ; but in the beginning of the fourth century, the Churches were strong enough to compel the Government to issue an edict of religious toleration through-out the Empire. That display of military enthusiasm in the 11th and 12th centuries, known in history as the Crusades, had more of the brotherhood of Christianity in it than the love of adventure or of war. It was a knell of federation of Christian States, and though wild and impulsive, and characteristic of the age in which it flourished, the fuel which fed the fires of its enthusiasm was dug from Christian mines, and distributed through Christian channels. The enemy fought against a power believed to be antagonistic to the very existence of the Christian Church ; and the glory for which they sacrificed so much, was that of the Cross and its Divine Sufferer.

In the Middle Ages, the torch of learning was kept burning within the enclosures of the Church long after the rude blasts of social strife had extinguished it elsewhere ; and in these same institutions, both piety and charity found a refuge when opposed and persecuted by the world without. The disintegrating forces that were slowly preparing the world for one of its revolutionary stages, known as the renaissance, were regulated and moderated by the gradual increase of those constructive elements which, if they did not originate in the Church, were conserved by her and made of practicable value when the time for their application arrived. It is simply impossible to eliminate the spirit of Christianity from the events that preceded and followed the period known as the great Protestant Reformation.

The history of our own country lifts been, until lately, one of ceaseless conflict between liberty and despotism—between common justice on one hand and privilege and power on the other. The greatest Empire on the face of the earth, at the present time may fairly be said to be the United States of America. It was the Pilgrim Fathers who laid the foundation of that Empire, and that carried with them, to what was then comparatively an unknown land, that love of freedom which was denied them in the country which gave them birth. And when in after years the principle of representative government was infringed, on the part of the authorities then in power, by an attempt to impose taxation without the consent of the people themselves, the Declaration of Independence was the result, and once more the spirit of Liberty and Christianity triumphed. Within our own times also, that great and free people have swept away, in a revolutionary torrent, that foul growth of slavery, whose spreading branches and undergrowth were threatening to weaken and destroy the very foundation of their constitution.

It would be absurd to say that Christianity in the visible Churches originated all these movements, and alone supplied the forces by which they were carried to successful issues. What we should do is first of all to read the facts accurately, and then to find their causes, not by giving prominence to one cause at the expense of the others, but assigning to each its

weight and value. And when US is done no one will deny that the visible Church as contributed, in no small degree, to the advancement, of freedom, the spread of intelligence, and the welfare and happiness of mankind.

This admission is made in too many quarters to admit of any widespread scepticism on the subject ; but it is contended by some, and feared by many, that the work of the Church is done—that she is amongst the things that are old and ready to perish. This judgment, we believe, to be hasty and superficial. If we look carefully into the matter, we shall see such evidences of vitality and adaptation to her surroundings as indicate her acquaintance with where the foundations of rejuvenescence lie. Nothing ceases from its labours until its work is done. There are yet many social problems to be solved, and many wrongs to be redressed, and many wild forces to be broken into regular and useful work. For these purposes the visible church can render valuable assistance; but to reject such help would be foolishness or madness. The visible Church of our day may be said to exist for the following purposes the cultivation of reverence towards the Supreme Being. The importance of this sentiment in the formation of character, and to the peace of society, can hardly be over-estimated. He belongs to a low type of the race who is destitute of veneration, and still lower is he whose soul is the abode of coarseness and profanity. The beauties of nature, the starry heavens, the fathomless depths of space, and the evidences of Divine power and wisdom , create no corresponding emotion in him who has no temple in his soul, and no sense of awe as the Shadow of the Infinite sweeps over the secularised surface of his hardened nature. The Church of Christ exists for the purpose of awakening and augmenting the spirit of reverence, and this reverence is an important and indispensable factor in all schemes of social amelioration.

In the second place, the Church exists for the purpose of instruction and enlightenment. It is a great educational institution, and cannot, without injury to society, be excluded from the circle of labour. Instruction in righteousness is as necessary a demand of human nature as food for the body, or protection from enemies. To regard human beings in no higher light than machines even, carries with it the necessity of the highest polish and efficiency of such machines. But no human machine is at its best whose moral nature is dormant, and where conscience does not enter into the work with scrupulous fidelity. Religion arouses the mind to thought, and speculative theology, although barren as to its results as far as knowledge is concerned, is a mental discipline of the highest value. A community accustomed to discuss the doctrines of the Shorter Catechism, and the last novelty in science or philosophy in its bearing upon revelation, are not in the least likely to become the victims of superstition or the duties of hypocrisy. A calm and patient study of the Books of Proverbs and the Sermon on the Mount is not a bad preparation for grappling with the problems of modern Socialism.

But in the third place, the Visible Church exists for the purpose of teaching men the duty of benevolence. From this source the vast army of voluntary workers in every department of social benefaction is drawn. Millions of children in our Sunday Schools are being taught to fear God and honour all men by unpaid labourers. Our charitable institutions are either sustained by the Churches, or receive from her members substantial help for their maintenance. Her missionary explorers are the pioneers both of science and of commerce, being the first to carry that fine silken thread, the product of her own loom, across the distance which originally separated peoples. and out of which commercial treaties and friendly alliances spring.

But the question now presents itself—Is the modern visible Church doing such work? No institution call rest on its past record, however honourable ; and unless it may be shown that she is an active and potent force to-day, her existence cannot be vindicated.

The modern Church may then be described as possessing some of those characteristics which prove her vitality, and more than justify her existence. In the first place, she is less

keenly alive to the necessity of maintaining and vindicating her doctrinal beliefs than at any past, period in her history. It would be impossible for modern Christendom to have another gathering such as the first Council at Nice. Many of the great controversies between Roman divines and Protestant upholders of the faith are little more, nowadays, than matters of historic interest.

The ten years' controversy in Scotland, which gave birth to the Free Church, could not be entered upon afresh by the immediate successors of the combatants themselves. About forty years ago, Dr. James Morison, a learned divine and eloquent preacher, was put out of the United Presbyterian Church for holding and preaching the universality of the Atonement and a free salvation. A few weeks ago a movement in the same body, to restore Dr. Morison to the position front which he was cast out, was lost only by the casting vote of the chairmen. It is not that the Churches have become indifferent to matters of doctrine ; it is not that they are on the down grade, with a dangerous curve and precipice below ; but simply from the conviction that the battle has been fought and won.

The title deeds of Christianity are now open to the inspection of all, and the chain of evidence that unites them to the Crown grant has not a weak link in it. The visible Church, believing it is no longer required that she should defend her inheritance, is busy with preparations for work and warfare outside her own boundaries.

Another characteristic of the modern Church is, the increase of its social functions, which is simply the forth-putting of the spirit of fraternity. The old-fashioned "tea-meeting" has a good deal of vitality in it yet, especially in country districts; but the younger portion of the Christian community prefer "socials" as they call them, and this is a plant of vigorous growth and large promise. Fifty years ago, when some of us were children, the Church did not mean much. There was a psalm, a sermon, and a sleep ; and if these had by some process been taken away, it would have required considerable scientific skill to tell from the remains the character of the organism to which they originally belonged. Compare the state of matters around us now. We have our Sunday-schools, for the most part bright and cheery ; bands of hope where our future orators are nursed ; Christian Endeavour societies, the training ground for voluntary effort in every form of Church activity ; bands of music and Church choirs, reading societies and sewing bees, and at every milestone on the road another "social," to record work done and brace up for future action. Some of our modern church workers must come pretty nearly up to that state of felicity which speaks of the blessedness of those who dwell in the House of the Lords. Hence, very little increase of such activity would leave little time for duties outside the Church.

This development of ecclesiastical sociality is simply the religious side of our modern life. The industrial revolution that is working so powerfully in modern society is pulling to pieces much of past civilisation, and strong constructive forces are required to save us from disorganisation and Anarchy. And, if anywhere, these elements will be found within the Christian Church. Here there is no privileged class, and the bond of fellowship is the strong Son of God, whose law is love, and whose kingdom is not one of war or force, but righteousness and peace.

Another characteristic of the modern Church is its aggressive activity. The "forward movement" is a call to arms along the whole line of battle. The Church cannot grow by the process of internal assimilation alone. Aggression and annexation are evidences of extending empire, and from whatever cause it, may have originated, the instinct of universal conquest is deeply rooted in the Church of Christ. There never was a time in her history in which she received more general support in the shape of free contributions from her adherents, and there never was a time when more zealous labours for the conversion of the world were put forth by all sections of the Church.

But, notwithstanding this satisfactory and hopeful condition of things, to a very large extent the Church has yet more fully and clearly to realise her mission, and the full recognition of her duty, especially in relation to the problems of modern Socialism. In any coming conflict within the industrial domain, she has to be reckoned with, if not as an organised factor in the council of conciliations, yet as the fountain of these moral principles on which the final adjustments must read. Her influence will depend upon her knowledge of contemporary events, her sympathy with every form of suffering, her denunciation of injustice and wrong, and, above all, her firm and unwavering attachment to those eternal truths on which everything destined to endure must rest. Let us catch the deep significance of those words, "All flesh is grass ; but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever."

Let the visible Church also avoid the evil of trying to do good by proxy, for the chasm that still yawns between the extremes of society is not to be filled up by hireling labour. In this age of machinery, of organisation, of demonstrations, of noise, and bluster, the personal element is apt to be overlooked and crushed as if it were a thing of no importance. But the value and force of the personal element cannot, without the most disastrous consequences, be so treated ; and I once more lift up my voice in protestation and warning in relation to this crying evil of our times. If one soul is of more value than the whole universe, the highest and most perfect form of Socialism is that which gives the largest play to the individual. In the Church of Christ, the individual is a living stone in the spiritual temple.

LECTURE VIII.

THE SOCIALISM OF THE FUTURE.

Although it is not given to man to know what shall take place on the morrow, there is on his part an old but indestructible desire to peer into it. Coming events, we are told, cast their shadows before ; and upon these shadows many an anxious eye is cast to read the mystery of which they are the forerunners.

There are three different ways that may be mentioned of forecasting the future, and these may be designated the imaginative, the superstitious, and the scientific. The imaginative belongs to childhood and the poets. Under its spell we create worlds of beauty and order out of the materials of our experience, and surround them with an atmosphere of purity and light. No philosophy of human life is satisfactory that would shut out the future, and take away from us all interest in what it has in store for us. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul rests upon a pretty solid basis of conviction, but it is over-arched by a firmament of starry glory—the work of the soul's imaginative energy. By the help of this faculty we hear the whispers of flowers, we converse with birds and four-footed beasts, and hold counsel with the fishes of the sea, and with strange creatures under the wave in their coral palaces. However dark and threatening our horizon may be in after years, it is bright and hopeful in childhood ; or, when in the company of poet minstrels who drive dull care away in the contemplation of a future rich in the colours of the Orient.

But imagination, however original or Divine, can give us no certain knowledge of the future. Rarely are its bright pictures of hope realised; more frequently our castles in the air melt away as we approach them, and leave not it wrack behind.

The superstitious mode of looking into the future is not unfortunately a relic of the past. In spite of the enlightenment of the day its rites are observed in many a dark and guilty corner ; and no amount of failure or disappointment will cause the mind haunted by this spectre to abandon its cherished methods of extracting the secret of the future from the sealed lips of time.

There is a small book of fate which some possess and highly value, to which they appeal in a haphazard fashion, and then regulate their conduct by its responses. There are others who spend money to have their future life told by those who profess to be able to rend it from the lines in the palm of the hand, or from the grounds in the bottom of their tea-cup. The horse-shoe, gilded and draped, so fashionable now-a-days in house decoration, is simply the survival of an old superstition; for there was a time when to touch cold iron was not only supposed to be a charm to ward off evil, but to bring luck to all who were most devoted in the practice of witchcraft's mysteries. Even the Bible, the most practical book in the world, is too frequently pressed into the service of superstition. Foolish people, whose judgement is not sufficiently strong to determine for themselves in the way appointed by God what duty is, will take this book into their hands and open it at random, and determine their future actions, even on important matters, by any chance passage on which their eye may happen to fall. And how many, who ought to know better, lie in dreamy contemplation before the image sketched in the Book of Daniel, gazing upon its mystic toes under the belief that the future history of the world lies in the interpretation of their number and material ; or, worse still, worrying themselves to death over the number of the beasts in Revelation, or the mystery of the seals. Superstition's mystic glass, in which her worshippers profess to see the secrets of the future, is happily getting spotted and dim ; but the sooner it is broken to pieces, and cast to the waste, the better.

In seeking to forecast the future of Socialism, we shall endeavour to keep in check the impulsive powers of the imagination, and still more to give a wide berth to that dangerous coast line that skirts the haunted region of superstition.

The only satisfactory method of dealing with the future, is by the scientific method, and a judicious use of the accumulations of experience. No one can tell to an hour or a day when any particular event will happen, or accurately describe in what direction a certain movement will go, and point out the very spot where it will terminate. If anyone expects me, in discussing the future of Socialism, to predict with the accuracy of positive knowledge what aspect Socialism will present at the end of this century, say, or the middle of next, he will be doomed to disappointment. I have no sympathy with those visionary enthusiasts who profess to be able to give advance sketches of the history of the world, and I feel called upon not only to reject their conclusions, but to oppose their methods. The lamp of reason was given to man to enlighten his darkness ; and we may rest assured of this, that such matters as lie outside the circle of its illumination, are not meant to form part of the stock of our knowledge. In endeavouring, therefore, to say something worthy on the future of Socialism, we must put ourselves under the guidance and authority of those principles or fundamental assumptions that necessarily lie at the basis of all scientific calculations. And there are, it appears to me, three of these that may be referred to in this connection, without whose recognition there can be no intelligent forecast of the future.

The first of these is that of cause and effect, or the full acknowledgment of the fact that the events of history are not isolated, the erratic action of some arbitrary power, but that they stand to each other in the closest relation of antecedent and consequent. Nature pursues her course slowly, and with calm and measured step. She does not indulge in sudden and unexpected leaps, or in contradictions that would upset all our past experiences. She is where she is to-day, because she had reached a certain definite point yesterday ; and her position to-morrow will be the exact result of all the forces in operation to-day. If God is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, so are His methods of government, so also are the laws of Nature ; and the confidence which those facts inspire, is not only the basis of knowledge, but the only sound ground from which to look into the future and prognosticate the course of events. This law of continuity, as it has been called, is simply the old law of cause and effect under a new name ; and that again is only another way of saying that the Supreme Being in whom we believe is unchangeable, without variableness or shadow of turning.

The second principle to be accepted in forecasting the future is, that there is a law of progress in Nature, including human society. The beat at Nature's heart is strong and steady, but one throb is not simply the repetition of another. In every pulsation, there is an infinitesimal advance forward in the direction of some end of larger life and wider intelligence. The existence of eruptions in nature and revolutions in society are not inconsistent either with the law of continuity or that of progress. A crisis, social or political, is not an anomaly, far less anything uncaused, although unaccounted for. It is the natural outcome of previously existing forces, and forms an integral part of Nature's original design. Underlying this law of progress, there must be either choice or chance; the latter is incomprehensible, and if the former must be admitted into the calculation, progress resolves itself into one of the methods of the Divine Government. But let us not forget, that this notion of progress is after all a relative thing. The history of the globe is no doubt a history of progress, from the time in which there was life on its surface to what it is to-day, teeming with every form of animated existence. But it does not follow that perfection belongs to one period more, than to another. The law of progress is simply our reading of the Divine thought in its orderly manifestation ; and our confidence in regard to the future—yea, our insight into

it—depend upon this inwrought conviction, that God will speak to us in time to come in the same language in which He has declared Himself in time past.

The third principle is, the recognition and acknowledgment of the moral government of God, which carries with it the notion of human intelligence and freedom—important factors in all questions of life and conduct. The two former are common to all men, irrespective of their religious creed. This last belongs to that view of the universe which regards mankind as God's children, and the government of God as conducted for the welfare and happiness of the governed. Without the full recognition of the fact of human freedom and responsibility, the history of the race is either a mystery or a failure. It has been said, in such a manner as if a flaw in the argument were impossible, that if sin and misery exist in the world it can only be because God is limited either in power or in goodness. But if man is an intelligent and free being, the terms of the proposition are not exclusive, because the very essence of freedom forbids force; and moral excellence is not a distinction conferred from without, but must be wrought out by the soul itself in accordance with its nature. If the Supreme Intelligence, therefore, has imposed upon the race the task of working out its own moral and spiritual development, it would be very difficult, even on purely rational grounds, to prove that such a policy indicated a deficiency either of power or goodness. It is the child mind under a temporary fit of peevishness that asks the question, 'Why does not God put an end to all sin and suffering at once' and make the world happy by the forthputting of His infinite powers and love? We may well ask what kind of a world that would be in which human freedom was extinguished by a Divine power, and a chasm created between character and happiness. The answer is, that such a world would be no world at all, The fountain of moral goodness must be in ourselves, and it can only be there by our own choice and effort.

These are the principle that ought to guide us in estimating the probable outcome of the various and complex Socialistic movements of the day. He that understandeth those things and believeth them, will not make haste to indulge in airy speculations, or definite predictions ; but under the guidance of what has been, he will look for the working out of contemporary forces in their natural order, with such improvements as may be reasonably calculated by the stages of such advancement in the past. We shall be perfectly safe then, if we affirm the following things with respect to the future of Socialism:—

Firstly:—That social amelioration, coming as it does under the law of evolution, must necessarily advance by slow and steady stages. The infant grows day by day into the child, and the child into the boy or the girl, Then follow youth and early manhood or womanhood. When maturity is attained, we slide down by an easy and imperceptible gradient into the valley of years, where at last we leave our bones to mingle with the dust of generations that have preceded us. No portion of mankind can be lifted up from a lower to a higher stage of civilisation and moral life by the mere application of any external force, nor by the forthputting of supernatural power. The wand of the magician is a toy; the sword of the magistrate may be a terror to evil-doers, but it is powerless to command the moral sentiments. The oak builds itself up from within, and moral fibre is the product of life. It is impossible for a man, whose nervous system has been shaken and shattered by intemperance, to pass suddenly from a condition of instability to that of absolute control over himself by the use of any quack medicine, or by the charms of witchcraft or superstition. And society is a kind of aggregate man—subject to the same laws of development and condition as our individual lives. That fact, when rightly understood, does not make reformation impossible, nor should it cut the traces of effort by which one seeks to quicken the speed of civilisation's car. It should rather inspire us with a more intelligent zeal and a stronger faith, by enabling us to see the real conditions on which permanent success depends.

Secondly.—There is no reason to doubt that labour troubles and social problems will in the future be solved more easily and at less expense than at present. The final arbiter in all disputes is not force, but reason and the equities of the case. Although man is by nature a fighting animal, he is far less so to-day than he was in the past. War, at one time, was the normal condition of matters between nations that lived near each other, but now an armed peace may more adequately describe the state of affairs. Although Europe at the present moment is a huge military camp, there is everywhere a manifest disinclination to cry “havoc, and let loose the dogs of war ;” while everywhere you will hear war denounced as the most wasteful and cruel mode of settling disputes that human ingenuity could invent. Labour strikes are an appeal to force ; they are our modern form of social war, and war under every form is nothing more nor less than an evidence that society, as a whole, has not left behind it all that pertains to a state of savagism. The widespread industrial crisis through which, as a community, we are now passing, is simply a state of siege, but without the protection of walls and battlements which characterised mediaeval times. Irrespective altogether of the merits of the various questions at issue, it may be asked whether the policy of paralysing trade can be justified under any circumstances. Force can only be met by force ; and surely it is time that this clumsy weapon of modern warfare should be abandoned, and allowed to eat itself away by the rust of neglect. The very experiences through which we are now passing, are preparing the way for wiser counsels and more peaceful methods, than those which give victory to the side that lifts the longest purse and the greatest powers of endurance. We feel perfectly certain that if civilisation is not to be buried under a heap of ruins, strikes must cease, and more amicable relations be established between employers and employed, on a basis of freedom and common interest. The outlook is certainly not hopeful at present; but when the watchman is appealed to, he will tell us that when the darkness is deepest the dawn is nearest,

Thirdly.—We may predict with certainty, that Socialism will do much for us in upholding the dignity of labour, and redeeming it from contempt where it is at present looked down upon as degrading. We see around us everywhere a rising public indignation against idlers and loafers. It is a healthy sentiment, to hold up to public scorn all those who live upon the toil or the industry of others. Let us, however, guard against the dangerous fallacy, that those only are workers who labour with their hands. If the wealth of the world belongs to the toilers, as we are often told, who are they, may we ask ? Can we fairly exclude from their ranks those who toil at home, making the fireside bright, and training the children to fill up the blanks in the army of labour, when thinned by accident, sickness and death? Brain workers are also toilers, for as in the body, the hand executes what the brain devises ; so in society, brain and hand can no more be separated in the busy hive of the nation's industry, than in the individual organism. When Socialism succeeds in getting the whole community to look upon labour as a duty and an honour, and idleness as a crime, it will do much to make every mode of money-making infamous that does not meet a legitimate public want, or that is a violation of the equities of exchange.

Fourthly.—The Socialism of the future will bring along with it improved manners and a wider intelligence. The ethics of the street and the pavement have hardly emerged yet from the first Stages of primitive civilisation. The gospel of culture is not that narrow, pedantic, colourless thing which some of its detractors represent it to be, fit only as they insinuate, for dolls and dandies. But in so far as it is a propaganda, it contemplates the uplifting of our entire nature and the whole of society into a higher, larger, fuller, richer life. External polish may pass a man as a gentleman in certain circles where the opportunity of close observation is wanting, but no one is a true and noble man whose heart, is not kind and full of tender

consideration for others. It is no evidence of civilisation to seek to enforce what we believe to be our rights by the free use of brick-bats, hurled at the heads of those who are unable to take the same view of social questions as ourselves. But brick-bats and blue metal are by no means so frequently used now as in former labour struggles. True Socialism is teaching us how much we depend upon each other, how much of evil, how much of good it is in our power to do each other ; and every reformation attempted and victory won over sloth, and dirt, and rudeness, will mark a step upwards in the direction of that sweetness and light, the paradise of the gospel of culture.

The Socialism of the present day is a decided advance on the Socialism of half a century ago ; and the Socialism of fifty years hence will mark another advance in social amelioration. Under the guidance of the little we are permitted to know of the Divine methods, we may safely indulge the hope that the world will slide calmly, and move peacefully into its industrial millennium, when poverty shall be only the memory of a troubled dream ; when the river of crime shall be dried up at its source ; when despotism shall no longer forge her chains or sharpen her weapons against any portion of mankind ; and when work and worship shall become one act of service, whose perennial fountain of energy shall be the love of man, and whose crowning glory shall be the favour of God.