

obtaining with the remainder sundry articles more or less necessary to health, comfort and decency. To him it makes no difference whether the articles he requires are made on one side of the Atlantic or on the other; but it makes a great difference what he is obliged to pay for them; how much of his surplus grain and meat, tobacco and cotton must go to secure a certain definite satisfaction of his urgent and oft-recurring wants. If he must needs pay some one to stay out of American agriculture and do this work, his surplus will not go so far as if he were allowed to pay some one to stay out of English agriculture to do it.

623. What the State Can Do.—But here the State enters and declares that it is socially or politically necessary that these articles, these nails, these horseshoes, this cotton or woolen cloth, or what not, shall be made on this side of the Atlantic. That necessity the agriculturist, as consumer, can not be expected to feel; he does not care where the things were made; he only wants them to use. He does not care who makes them; he does not even care whether they are made at all; they would answer his purpose just as well were they the gratuitous gifts of nature, spontaneous fruits of the soil, or the sea, or the sky. Whatever his own economic theories may be, he will, as purchaser, every time select the cheapest article which will precisely answer his need. He will not, of his own motion, pay more for an article because it is made on his side of the Atlantic than he could get an equally good article for, bearing the brand of Sheffield or Birmingham or Manchester. But if the State says he must, he must; and consequently the American maker of this article is by force of law admitted to a participation in the abundance enjoyed by the American agricultural class. The tiller of the soil is now compelled, by the ordinance of the State, to share his bread and meat with the maker of nails or of horseshoes, of cotton or of woolen cloth, just as he was before compelled by the ordinance of Nature to share his bread and meat with the blacksmith, carpenter and mason, the schoolmaster, lawyer and doctor.

It is perfectly true, therefore, as the protectionist asserts,

that a tariff of customs duties upon foreign goods imported into new countries tends to create and maintain high rates of wages in the factory industries. But for protective duties, those articles which, in their nature, can be readily and cheaply transported will be produced predominantly in countries where the minimum standard of mechanical wages is set by agricultural conditions far less favorable than those which obtain in the United States, in Canada, or in Australia.

But while the law thus can and does create high rates of wages in factory industries, it does not and it can not create the wealth out of which that excess of manufacturing wages over those of older countries is paid. That wealth is created by the labor and capital employed in the cultivation of the soil.

XVIII.

SOCIALISM.

624. Difficulty of Defining Socialism.—It is not easy to define the word socialism, for the purposes either of controversy or of description. It is, perhaps, impossible to give a definition which shall be satisfactory to all. One man invidiously calls another a socialist, only to receive the same appellation himself from a third person differing from him in political opinion. Let us, however, do the best we can, in the confusion which prevails on this subject, to characterize socialism.

We find that term applied to a great variety of political schemes, in all of which is present one quality, in higher or lower degree. This quality is the essence of socialism; and, as it is found more and more fully developed, the socialist character of any political scheme becomes more and more distinctly pronounced. We may apply the term, socialistic, to this quality.

625. Meaning of the Word Socialistic.—What then does the word socialistic signify? I answer, it is properly applied to an unconscious tendency or a conscious purpose to extend

the powers of the state beyond a certain necessary, minimum, line of duties, for a supposed public good, under popular impulse. It may be added, though rather in explanation than in qualification of our definition, that the supposed public good in view generally involves a greater or a smaller change in the distribution of wealth, as effected under the rule of competition and individual initiative. This, however, is not always the case.

626. Anarchism.—We have spoken of extending the powers of government beyond a necessary, minimum, line of duties. What is that line? On this question opinions differ, but I deem it conducive to a clear understanding of our subject to conceive that line as drawn along the Police Powers of the state. Those, indeed, who call themselves Anarchists hold that government is not a necessary means of social existence; but that, on the contrary, government produces most of the very evils which are made the excuse for government. They profess to believe that government represses individual activities for good, at many points, and paralyzes forces which otherwise would continually operate to ameliorate the conditions of life, to harmonize social relations, and to give inspiration and impulse to human efforts seeking at once the good of the individual and of the community. The Anarchist even asserts that certain vicious and destructive appetites and passions, which have been held to be inherent in human nature and to place the necessity of government beyond the possibility of question, are, in fact, generated by government itself, and would soon disappear in a state where no man presumed to make a law for another or to place any restraint upon his actions.* Apart, however, from the small and as yet insignificant body of men known as Anarchists, it is held by all persons, of high or low degree, of much or little political experience, that government is at least a necessary evil; and most men cheerfully submit to whatever restraints or sacrifices are involved in its maintenance. There are certain func-

* The reader who may be interested to see the most and best that can be said in behalf of this strange doctrine of anarchy, is referred to an article by Prince Kropotkin in the *Nineteenth Century* for August, 1887.

tions known as the police powers, which are, with substantial unanimity, admitted to belong to government. These are, speaking in a very general way, the protection of life, person and property and the preservation of the civil peace. These powers clearly embrace the repression of obtrusive vice and the protection of the common air and the common water from pollution. The term socialistic can not be properly applied to any measure undertaken, in good faith, for the attainment of these objects. In a highly organized industrial or social state, the police powers will naturally be exercised through agencies and instrumentalities unknown in a more primitive condition; but these are not, on that account, to be considered in any degree socialistic, so long as they are directed toward the end indicated.

627. Examples of Socialistic Measures.—Whenever and wherever, for any supposed public good, measures are undertaken or proposed, from a popular impulse, or in obedience to a popular demand, which carry, or would carry, the functions of government beyond the line we have drawn, the term socialistic is properly to be used, not as a term of reproach or contumely, but as a strictly descriptive title. The line of the police powers may, in any given instance, be transcended by much or by little; the object sought may be thoroughly practicable or wildly fanciful; the results may be highly beneficial or deeply injurious to society; but every measure or proposal of the nature we have described is socialistic. Thus, public schools are distinctly socialistic. Education is a matter proper to individual initiative and enterprise, within the family or, by voluntary association, within larger groups. It is only during the last twenty years that this function has been assumed by government in a country so free, prosperous and enlightened as England. When this great step was taken it was distinctly and unmistakably socialistic, yet not the less meritorious and beneficial. That step had been taken, generations before, in the United States, with the consent of all parties and all classes, and with the happiest results in peace, order and prosperity. On the other hand, the government in England owns and operates the telegraph, a policy from which

we in the United States shrink with reluctance as dangerously socialistic.

628. Public roads and bridges also exhibit the socialistic character in a highly marked degree. In a very primitive state of society, where, yet, all the police powers are fully exercised, each man looks out for his own paths of travel or transport, and maintains his own communications with friends and neighbors, across the commons or through the forest. Even after roads are laid out, and, later still, are graded, drained and perhaps paved, at great expense, and streams and ravines are bridged, this work continues to be regarded as altogether a matter for private enterprise. Individuals or associations lay out the roads and build the bridges, collecting toll from every one who passes over them. Those who use the roads much pay much; those who use them little pay little; those who stay at home pay nothing at all. At last* there comes a time when it is seen that, though this function naturally belongs to individuals, and has indeed been exercised by individuals with a reasonable degree of success, yet a great public advantage will result from making these avenues of communication free to all and supporting them thereafter at the public expense. The step thus taken is purely, highly socialistic. The responsibility, the labor, the expenditure involved in these undertakings pass from private citizens to public officials. Individuals no longer pay for this service according to the proportion in which they enjoy it. Each contributes, whether he will or not, to the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, which he may use much or may not use at all.

629. Protectionism is purely and highly socialistic. Its purpose is so to operate upon individual choices and aims, so to influence private enterprise and the investments of capital, as to secure the building up, within the country concerned, of certain branches of production which could not be carried on,

* The general movement by which roads and bridges have almost universally been made free, began, even in the most enlightened countries, only sixty or seventy years ago.

or would grow but slowly, under the rule of competition and individual initiative. With this object in view, government begins by preventing the citizen from buying where he can buy cheapest; it compels him to pay ten, thirty or fifty per cent. advance, it may be, upon the prices at which he could otherwise purchase; it even assumes the right to make existing industries support the industries which are thus to be called into being. Not incidentally, but primarily and of purpose, it affects vitally every man's industrial conditions and relations. It does this for a supposed public good.

630. *The Socialists.*—We have, perhaps, sufficiently illustrated the significance of the word socialistic. What then is socialism? Perhaps we had better first ask, who is a socialist? Under our definition, the advocacy of a socialistic act or measure will not necessarily characterize a socialist. Thus, protection, as we have said, is socialistic. Yet the protectionist is not, as such, a socialist. Most protectionists are not socialists. Many protectionists are, in their general views, as strongly anti-socialist as men can well be.

The socialist is one who, in general, distrusts the effects of individual initiative and enterprise; who is readily convinced of the necessity or utility of the assumption, by the State, of functions which have hitherto been left to personal choices and personal aims; and who, in fact, approves and advocates many and large schemes of this character.

The person of whom all this could be said might properly be called a socialist; yet there are many such persons who would wish, after enlarging the powers of government at many points, correcting, as they conceive it, many of the infirmities and evil liabilities of society by force of law, and introducing incentives and impulses which, as they believe, can only be administered by the organized power of the State, still to leave individual initiative and enterprise the general rule of life. The extreme socialist is he who would make the State all in all: private enterprise, personal choices and aims being lost in the general movement of a society dominated and directed by a majority vote. In the view of the extreme socialist, the powers and the rights of the State are the sum

of all the powers and all the rights of the individuals who compose it; and government becomes the organ of society in respect to all its interests and all its acts.

631. Socialism.—The term "socialism" may, then, properly be applied (1) to the aggregate of many and large schemes for the extension of the powers of the State, actually urged for present or early adoption; or (2) to a programme contemplated, at whatever distance, for the gradual replacement of private by public activity; or (3) to an observed movement or tendency of a highly marked character in the direction indicated.

It will be seen that socialism and anarchism are in theory absolutely antipodal. The former would proceed by magnifying the powers of the State and enlarging the sphere of its operation, until personal choices and aims should wholly disappear in respect to all matters in which others, or the community as a whole, could possibly be interested. The complete establishment of socialism would, therefore, involve a tyranny more far-reaching and searching than that of the most absolute despotism ever founded among men. Anarchism, on the contrary, aims at the complete abolition of government: the removal of every form of restraint, leaving personal aims and choices wholly unchecked by law or authority, subject only to moral influences, to persuasion and to the force of public sentiment.

632. Socialism vs. Communism.—The distinction between Socialism and Communism is not to be drawn so easily. The two schemes have, necessarily, much in common; while the boundaries of that which, theoretically, each has to itself have been much confused by vague or passionate treatment. In a previous publication,* I have sought to express as clearly as the nature of the case would allow, the essential differences between Socialism and Communism, as follows:

1st. Communism confines itself mainly, if not exclusively, to the one subject matter—wealth. On the other hand, Socialism, conspicuously, in all its manifestations, in all lands

* Scribner's Magazine. January, 1887.

where it has appeared, asserts its claim to control every interest of human society, to enlist for its purposes every form of energy.

2nd. So far as wealth becomes the subject matter both of Communism, on the one hand, and of Socialism, on the other, we note a difference of treatment. Communism, in general, regards wealth as produced, and confines itself to effecting an equal, or what it esteems an equitable distribution.

Socialism, on the other hand, gives its first and chief attention to the production of wealth; and, passing lightly over the questions of distribution, with or without assent to the doctrine of an equal division among producers, it asserts the right to inquire into and control the consumption of wealth for the general good, whether through sumptuary laws and regulations, or through taxation for public expenditure.

3rd. Communism is essentially negative, confined to the prohibition that one shall not have more than another. Socialism is positive and aggressive, declaring that each man shall have enough. It purposes to introduce new forces into society and industry, to put a stop to the idleness, the waste of resources, the misdirection of force, inseparable, in some large proportion of instances, from individual initiative; and to drive the whole mass forward in the direction determined by the intelligence of its better half.

4th. While communism might conceivably be established upon the largest scale, and has, in a hundred experiments, been upon a small scale established, by voluntary consent, Socialism begins with the use of the powers of the State, and proceeds and operates through them alone. It is by the force of law that the Socialist purposes to whip up the laggards and the delinquents in the social and industrial order. It is by the public treasurer, armed with powers of assessment and sale, that he plans to gather the means for carrying on enterprises to which individual resources would be inadequate. It is through penalties that he would check wasteful or mischievous expenditures.

If what has been said above would be found true, were one studying Communism and Socialism as a philosophical critic,

much more important will be the distinction between them to the eyes of the politician or the statesman. Communism is, if not moribund, at the best everywhere at a stand-still, generally on the wane; nor does it show any sign of returning vitality. On the other hand, Socialism was never more full of lusty vigor, more rich in the promise of things to come, than now.

633. It seems only needful to add, that, while the doctrines of Anarchism, Socialism and Communism are respectively held by not a few sincere and disinterested men, of a high order of intelligence, large numbers of those who embrace one or the other of these systems do so with no appreciation of the differences between them, being influenced wholly by a general discontent with the results of the existing social and industrial order, either as affecting themselves or as controlling the fortunes of their class. In addition to these, every public demonstration of socialistic or communistic organizations almost inevitably draws out a swarm of "lewd fellows of the baser sort," who for the time attach themselves to that party, out of a general hatred of law and order, or in the hope of plunder, or from a delight in riot and mischief.

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