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By Edward Livermore Burlingame

SOCIALISM.
By Francis A. Walker.

Three words have, of recent years, become very familiar, and yet not of less and less, but of more and more, formidable sound to the good and quiet citizens of America and of Western Europe.

These words are: Nihilism, Communism, Socialism.

Nihilism, so far as one can find out, expresses rather a method, or a means, than an end. It is difficult to say just what Nihilism does imply. So much appears reasonably certain—that the primary object of the Nihilists is destruction; that the abolition of the existing order, not the construction of a new order, is in their view; that, whatever their ulterior designs, or whether or no they have any ultimate purpose in which they are all or generally agreed, the one object which now draws and holds them together, in spite of all the terrors of arbitrary power, is the abolition, not only of all existing governments, but of all political estates, all institutions, all privileges, all forms of authority; and that to this is postponed whatever plans, purposes, or wishes the confederation, or its members individually, may cherish concerning the reorganization of society.*
* M. Anatole Leroy-Beanlien, In an essay on Nihilism. says: "Under its standard we find revolutionists of all kinds — authoritarians, federalists, mutualists, and communists — who agree only in postponing till, after their triumph shall be secured all discussion of a future organization of the world."
Confining ourselves, then, to the contemplation of Socialism and Communism, let us inquire what are the distinctive features of each.

Were one disposed to be hypercritical and harsh in dealing with the efforts of well-meaning men to express views and feelings which, in their nature, must be very vague, he might make this chapter as brief as that famous chapter devoted to the snakes of Ireland — "There are no snakes in Ireland." So one might, with no more of unfairness than often enters into political, sociological, or economic controversy, say that there are no features proper to Communism as sought to be distinguished from Socialism; no features proper to Socialism as sought to be distinguished from Communism.

If, however, one will examine the literature of the subject, not for the purpose of obtaining an advantage in controversy, or of finding phrases with which malice or contempt may point its weapons, but in the interest of truth, and with the spirit of candor, he will not fail to apprehend that Communism and Socialism are different things, although at points one overlays the other in such a way as to introduce

more or less of confusion into any statement regarding either.

May we not say?

1st. That 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 where it has appeared, asserts its claim to control every interest of human society, to enlist for its purposes every form of energy.

2d. That so far as wealth becomes the subject matter of both 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 question of distribution, with or without assent to the doctrine of an equal distribution 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 expenditures.

3d. That 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 eye of the politician or the statesman. Communism is, if not moribund, at the best everywhere at a standstill, 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.

Let us, then, confine ourselves to Socialism as our theme, the purpose being not so much to discuss as to define, characterize, and illustrate it.

A definition of Socialism presents peculiar difficulties.* The question, Socialism or non-Socialism? regarding any measure; Socialist or non-Socialist? regarding any man, is a question of degree rather than of kind. Let us, then, undertake to distinguish that quality which, when found above a certain degree, justifies and requires the application of these epithets—Socialism and Socialist.

* "I have never met with a clear definition, or even a precise description, of the term." — The Socialism of our Day, Emile de Laveleye.

I should apply the term socialistic to all efforts, under popular impulse, to enlarge the functions of government, to the diminution of individual initiative and enterprise, for a supposed public good. It will be observed that by this definition it is made of the essence of socialistic efforts that they should arise from popular impulse, and should seek a public good. This, it will be seen, makes the motive and the objective alike part of the character of the act — say a legislative measure — equally with the positive provisions thereof.

"To enlarge the functions of government." It may be asked, to enlarge them beyond what starting-point or line? in excess of what initial dimensions? Herein lies the main difficulty of the subject; hence arises the chief danger of misunderstanding between the writer and his reader; and it is probably to the lack of a standard measure adopted for the purpose of this discussion that we are to attribute, more than to any other cause, the vague and unsatisfactory character of the critical literature of Socialism. As you change your starting-point in this matter of the nature and extent of government function, the same act may, in turn, come to appear socialistic, conservative, or reactionary.

A person considering the direction and force of socialistic tendencies may take, to start from, any one of an indefinite number of successive lines; of which, however, the three following are alone worth indicating:

1st. He may take a certain maximum of government functions, to be fixed by the general consent of fairly conservative, not reactionary, publicists and statesmen, adopting, perhaps, the largest quantum, which any two or three writers, reputed sound, would agree to concede as consistent with wholesome administration, with the full play and due encouragement of individual enterprise and self-reliance, and with the reasonable exercise of personal choices as to modes of life and modes of labor; and may identify any act or measure, proposed or accomplished, as socialistic if, under popular impulse, for a supposed public good, it transcends that line.

2d. He may take a certain minimum of government functions, which we may call the police powers.

3d. He may draw his pen along the boundary of the powers of government as now existing and exercised, perhaps in his own country, perhaps in that foreign country which he regards as the proper subject of admiration and imitation in the respect under consideration.

There is a certain advantage, as some people would esteem it, in adopting the first or the third method of determining the initial line for the purposes of such a discussion. That advantage is found in the fact that the conservative writer, placing himself on the actual or on the theoretical maximum of government functions, can treat as a public enemy every person who proposes that this line shall be overpassed; and can employ the term socialistic, as one of rebuke, reproach, or contempt, according to his own temper. The line thus taken becomes the dividing line between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, making it easy to mark and to punish the slightest deviation.

On the other hand, he who takes as his initial line the minimum of government functions, which may, in severe strictness, be called the police powers, and regards all acts and measures enlarging the functions of government beyond this line as more or less socialistic, according as they transcend it by a longer or a shorter distance, under a stronger or a weaker impulse, cannot use that term as one of contumely or contempt, inasmuch as in every civilized country the functions of government have been pushed beyond the mere police powers.

For one, I prefer to take the line of the strict police powers of government as that from which to measure the force and direction of the socialistic movement, even if it is thereby rendered necessary to forego the great controversial advantage and the keen personal pleasure of hurling the word Socialist, in an opprobrious sense, at the head of anyone who would go farther in the extension of government functions than my own judgment would approve; nay, even if I shall thereby be put to the trouble of examining any proposed act or measure on the ground of its own merits, in view of the reasons adduced in its favor, and under the light of experience.

In this sense the advocacy of a socialistic act or measure will not necessarily characterize a Socialist. Socialism will mean, not one, but many things socialistic. Thus, for example, protection is socialistic. Yet the protectionist is not, as such, a Socialist. Most protectionists are not Socialists. Many protectionists are, in their general views, as antisocialistic as men can well be.

The Socialist, under this definition, would be the man who, in general, distrusts the effects of individual initiative and individual enterprise; who is easily convinced of the utility of an assumption, by the State, of functions which have hitherto been left to personal choices and personal aims; and who, in fact, supports and advocates many and large schemes of this character.

A man of whom all this could be said might, in strict justice, be termed a Socialist. The extreme Socialist is he who would make the State all in all, individual initiative and enterprise disappearing in that engrossing democracy of labor to which he aspires. In his view, the powers and rights of the State represent 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. So much for the Socialist.

Socialism, under our definition, would be a term properly to be applied (1) to the aggregate of many and large schemes of this nature, 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.

Such would be the significance properly to be attributed to the terms Socialist and Socialism, consistently with the definition proposed to be given to the word socialistic — viz., that which causes government functions to transcend the line of the strictly police powers.

Even this line is not to be drawn with exactitude and assurance, though it is much more plain to view than either of the other two lines which, we said, might be taken for the purposes of the present discussion. The police powers embrace, of course, all that is necessary to keep people from picking each other's pockets and cutting each other's throats, including, alike, punitive and preventive measures. They embrace, also, the adjudication and collection of debts, inasmuch as, otherwise, men must be suffered to claim and seize their own, which would lead to incessant breaches of the peace. They embrace, also, the punishment of slander and libel, since, otherwise, individuals must be left to vindicate themselves by assault or homicide. Whether we will or no, we must also admit the war power among those necessarily inherent in government.

Is this all which is included in the police powers? There are several other functions, for the assumption of which by the State the preservation of life and liberty, the protection of property, and the prevention of crime are either cause or excuse.

Foremost among these is the care and maintenance of religious worship. It is not meant that, in all or most countries, the justification for the exercise of ghostly functions by the State is found in the utility of religious observances and services in repressing violence and crime. But in the countries farthest advanced politically, the notion that the ruler has any divine commission to direct or sustain religious services and observances is practically obsolete; and, so far as this function is still performed, it is covered by the plea which has been expressed. Eminently is this true of France, England, and the United States. Few publicists, in these countries, would presume to defend the foundation of a State religion, de novo, as in the interest of religion itself. So far as the maintenance of existing

establishments is defended, it is upon the ground that violence, disorder, and crime are thereby diminished.

Take the United States, for instance, where the only survival of a State religion is found in the exemption of ecclesiastical property from taxation, equivalent to a subsidy of many millions annually. Here we find this policy defended on the ground that this constitutes one of the most effective means at the command of the State as conservator of the peace. It is claimed that the services of this agent are worth to government more than the taxes which the treasury might otherwise collect from the smaller number of churches and missions which would survive the assessment of the ordinary taxes; and that the remaining taxpayers really pay less, by reason of the reduction in violence and crime hereby effected.

Now, in so far as this plea is a genuine one, it removes the exemption of Church property from the class of socialistic measures. The prevention of violence and crime is the proper function of the State, according to the lowest view that can be taken of it; and if a certain amount of encouragement and assistance is extended to religious bodies and establishments, genuinely in this interest, no invasion of individual initiative and enterprise can properly be complained of.

Another and apparently a closely related instance of the extension of State functions is found in the promotion of popular education, either through the requirement of the attendance of pupils, or through provisions for the public support of schools, or through both these means.

Now, here we reach an instance of an impulse almost purely socialistic for the enlargement of the functions of the State. It is true that the plea of a service to government in the way of reducing violence and crime through the influence of the public schools, is often urged on this behalf; but I, for one, do not believe that this was the real consideration and motive which, in any instance, ever actually led to the establishment of the system of instruction under public authority, or which, in any land, supports public instruction now. Indeed, the immediate effects of popular instruction in reducing crime are even in dispute.

In all its stages this movement has been purely socialistic in character, springing out of a conviction that the State would be stronger, and the individual members of the State would be richer and happier and better, if power and discretion in this matter of the education of children were taken away from the family and lodged with the government.

Of course, it needs not to be said that this is a socialistic movement which deserves the heartiest approval. Not the less is it essentially of that nature, differing from a hundred other proposed acts and measures, which we should all reject with more or less of fear or horror, solely by reason of its individual merits as a scheme for accomplishing good, through State action, in a field properly pertaining to individual initiative and enterprise.

There is another important extension of State functions, very marked in recent times, for which a non-socialistic excuse might be trumped up, but for which the real reason was purely and simply socialistic. This is the construction and maintenance of bridges and roads at the public expense for public uses. One might, if disposed to argue uncandidly, adduce the military services rendered by the great Roman roads; and, thereupon, might pretend to believe that a corresponding motive has led to the assumption of this function by the State in modern times. The fact is, that until within seventy, fifty, or thirty years the bridges and roads of England and America remained, to an enormous extent, within the domain of individual initiative and enterprise. Even when the State assumed the responsibility, it was a recognized principle that the cost of construction and repair should be repaid by the members of the community in the proportions in which they severally took advantage of this provision. The man who traveled much, paid much; the man who traveled little, paid little; the man who stayed at home, paid nothing.

The movement, beginning about seventy years ago, which has resulted in making free nearly all roads and bridges in the most progressive countries, was purely socialistic. It did not even seek to cover itself by claims that it would serve the police powers of the State. It was boldly and frankly admitted that the change from private to public management and maintenance was to be at the general expense for the general good.

Is there any other function arrogated by the State which may be claimed to be covered by the strict police powers? I think that the repression of obtrusive immorality — that is, immorality of a gross nature which obtrudes itself up on the unwilling — may reasonably be classed as coming within the minimum of government function. Sights and sounds may constitute an assault as well as blows; and it falls fairly within the right and duty of the State to protect the citizens from offences of this nature.

Have we now exhausted the catalogue of things which maybe claimed to be covered by the police powers of the State? I answer, No. One of the most important remains; yet one of the last — indeed, the very latest — to be recognized as possibly belonging to the State under any theory of government. I refer to what is embraced under the term sanitary inspection and regulation.

That it was not earlier recognized as the duty of the State to protect the common air and the common water from pollution and poisoning was due, not to any logical difficulty or to any troublesome theory regarding governmental action, but solely to the fact that the chemistry of common life and the causation of zymotic diseases were of such late discovery. We now know that there is a far heavier assault than can be made with a bludgeon; and that men may, in the broad daylight, deal each other typhus, diphtheria, or small-pox more murderously than ever a bravo dealt blows with a dagger under cover of darkness. Yet, so much

more are men moved by tradition than by reason that we find intelligent citizens who have swallowed the exemption of five hundred millions of Church property from taxation, on the ground that a certain *quantum* of preaching will prevent a certain *quantum* of crime, have very serious doubts about the propriety of inspecting premises which can be smelled for half a mile, and whence death may be flowing four ways, as Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates parted from Eden and "became into four heads."

I do not mean to say that I should hesitate to approve of sanitary inspection and regulation, carried to their extremes, if they were as socialistic as anything ever dreamed of by Marx or Lasalle. For such good as I see coming from this source, in the reduction of vicious instincts and appetites, in the purification of the blood of the race, in the elimination of disease, I would, were it needful, join one of Fourier's "phalanxes," go to the barricades with Louis Blanc, or be sworn into a nihilistic circle. But in correct theory it is not necessary for the strictest adherent of the doctrine of limited powers to desert his principles in this matter. The protection of the common air and the common water comes within the police powers of the States by no forced construction, by no doubtful analogy.

Is there any important function remaining which may properly be classed among the purely police powers? I think not. Does someone say, You have not mentioned the care and support of the helpless poor? The experience of the Romans, and even the condition of the law of almost all countries of Europe in modern times, proves that this is not one of the necessary functions of a well-ordered State.

Is it said that Christian morality will not permit that the helpless poor shall suffer or, perhaps, starve? Whenever the State shall undertake to do all or any very considerable part of what Christian morality requires, it will become very socialistic indeed.

Having now beaten the bounds of the police powers, and having decided that all extension of government activity beyond those bounds is to be held and deemed socialistic, it is proposed to offer certain distinctions which appear important.

And, first, a measure is not necessarily of a strong socialistic savor merely because it implies a large, perhaps a vast, extension of the actual work of the State. Take, for example, the English Government's acquisition of the telegraph lines, and its performance of the work connected therewith. This was not done under a socialistic impulse. In England the telegraph service has always been closely affiliated in the public mind with the postal service; and, consequently, when the former had come to be of sufficiently wide and general use to make it worth while for the State to assume the charge, it was done in the most matter-of-fact way. It was no more socialistic than the addition of a few thousands of new post-offices to the existing number would have been.

On the other hand, the assumption of a new service by the State is not relieved from the charge of being socialistic, even grossly socialistic, by the fact that such a service is closely analogous to some other which all citizens have long agreed to place in the hands of government. Take, for example, the matter of "free ferries," which has been mooted in Boston and in New York, and doubtless elsewhere. This proposition has always been greeted by conservative men of all parties as highly and dangerously socialistic; and yet the analogy between free ferries and bridges free from toll is very strong. A ferry-boat is little other than a section of a bridge, cut away from moorings, and propelled backward and forward by steam; and it may conceivably cost less and create less disturbance to navigation to use the latter than the former means. For instance, it might cost two millions of dollars to throw an adequate bridge from Boston to East Boston, for the transit of passengers and freight. But suppose the point is raised that the bridge will interfere continually with the use of the harbor, to an extent involving immense losses to trade, and that the amount proposed to be expended upon the bridge would pay for the construction and operation of a line of ferry-boats. Is not the analogy close? And yet I agree with the objectors in this case, that the establishment of free ferries would be a long and dangerous step toward Socialism.

Even where the new function appears to be only the logical carrying out and legitimate consequence of another function well approved, there may be a step toward Socialism involved in such an extension of the State's activity and responsibility.

In illustration, I might mention the matter of free text-books in our public schools. Public provision for gratuitous elementary education, although manifestly socialistic within our meaning of that term, has come to be fully accepted by nearly all citizens as right and desirable. In discharging this duty, the State, at immense expense, builds and furnishes school-houses, employs teachers and superintendents, buys supplies, and gives each boy or girl the use of a desk. Yet the proposition to make the use of text-books free, has met with violent opposition; has been defeated at many points; and wherever it has been carried, is still regarded by many judicious persons as a very dangerous innovation. Yet, as has been shown, this measure seems to be but the logical carrying out and legitimate consequence of a function already assumed by practically unanimous consent.

Still another distinction has become necessary of recent years, and that is between the assumption by the State of functions which would otherwise be performed wholly or mainly by individuals and those which would otherwise be performed wholly or mainly by corporations. "We shall have occasion hereafter to speak of the relation of the State to the corporation.

One further distinction it may be well to suggest — viz., that the vast importance, even the absolutely vital necessity, of a service, whether to the community at

large or to the subsisting form of government, does not, by itself, constitute a reason for the performance of that function by the State. Let me illustrate. In his address, as President of the Association for the Advancement of Science, at Aberdeen, in 1859, Prince Albert said: "The State should recognize in science one of the elements of its strength and prosperity, to foster which the clearest dictates of self-interest demand." Last year, Sir Lyon Playfair, in his address as President of the Association, quotes these words, and enforces the same thought. Yet it does not follow from the importance of science to the State, that science should be directly fostered or supported by government. It might conceivably be that science would do its work for the State better if the State itself did nothing for science, just as many persons who hold that religion is essential not only to the peace and happiness of communities but even to the existence of well-ordered governments, yet hold that the State can do nothing so beneficial to religion as to let it completely and severely alone.

Still another class of considerations must be borne in mind in measuring the extent of the socialistic advance involved in any given extension of the functions of government. These are considerations which arise out of the peculiar genius of a people, politically, socially, industrially. A certain act, or measure, which would be a monstrous invasion of personal liberty and individual activity in one country, would be the merest matter of course in another. The natural aptitudes, the prevailing sentiments, the institutions, great and small, the political and economic history of a nation, have all to be taken into account in deciding how far an extension of the powers of government in a given direction indicates socialistic progress.

Yet, while this is true, there will be observed some very strange contradictions in the adoption, in certain countries, of principles of legislation and administration which cross, in an unaccountable way, the general spirit of their people.

Thus England, whose population is decidedly the most strongly anti-socialistic in the world, was for hundreds of years the only country in Europe in which was formally acknowledged the right, the complete legal right, of any and every man to be supported by the State, if he could not, or did not, find the means of his own subsistence.

From the foregoing definition and distinctions let us proceed briefly to characterize certain measures of a socialistic nature proposed or advocated by men who are not Socialists; who neither avow nor would admit themselves to be such; who, accepting, on the whole, the sufficiency of individual initiative and enterprise to achieve the good of society, have yet their scheme, or budget of schemes, for the general welfare, which would operate by restricting personal liberty and by substituting public for private activity. Time would not serve to canvass the merits or defects of these schemes as measures for accomplishing certain specific social objects. We can only dwell upon each, in turn, long enough to indicate its individual character as more or less socialistic.

1st. The most familiar of schemes for promoting the general welfare, by diminishing the scope of individual initiative and enterprise, is that known by the name of Protection to local or, as it is in any locality called, native industry.

Protectionism is nothing if not socialistic. It proposes, in the public interest, to modify the natural course of trade and production, and to do this by depriving the citizen of his privilege of buying in the cheapest market. Yet the protectionist is not, therefore, to be called a Socialist, since the Socialist would not only have the State determine what shall be produced, but he would have the State itself undertake the work of production. It is not my purpose to discuss protection as a scheme for accomplishing its professed object. Indeed, I should have had occasion to bestow upon it but a single word, merely to characterize it as a socialistic measure, were it not for the conviction that the forces of the age are tending strongly in this direction. In my judgment we are on the eve of a great protectionist agitation.

And the demand for the so-called protection of native industry is to be a popular one in a degree never before known. In England the restrictive system of the earlier period had been imposed by privileged classes, and was broken down by a truly popular uprising. In the United States the history of the restrictive system has been different. My esteemed friend, Professor Sumner, took the platform, three years ago, with the avowed purpose of attacking protectionism, no longer as inexpedient, but as immoral; and he proceeded, with a vigor which no other writer or speaker on applied economics in this country has at command, to stigmatize the forces which have initiated and directed our tariff legislation as all selfish and false and bad. Now, I can't go with Professor Sumner in this. Fully recognizing that our successive tariffs have largely been shaped by class or sectional interests, with, at times, an obtrusion of mean motives which were simply disgusting, as in 1828, I am yet constrained to believe that the main force which has impelled Congress to tariff legislation has been a sincere, if mistaken, conviction that the general good would thereby be promoted. Yet, after all, it has been the employing, not the laboring, class which has conducted the legislation, maintained the correspondence, set up the newspapers, paid the lobby, in the tariff contests of the past.

The peculiarity of the new movement is that it is to owe its initiative and its main impulse to the laboring class.

What strikes me as most important, with regard to the future, is the consideration that, while protectionism is to become a dogma and a fighting demand of the out-and-out Socialists everywhere, it would be in a consummated system of protection that the rampant, aggressive, and destructive Socialism, which is such an object of terror to many minds, would find an insurmountable barrier. Socialism can never be all we dread unless it become international; but the consummation of protectionism is the destruction of internationalism.

2d. Another threatened invasion of the field of industrial initiative and enterprise is through laws affecting labor, additional to the body of factory legislation now generally accepted.

There is not a feature in the existing body of factory legislation in England which owes its introduction to political forces set in motion by mill and factory operatives. Even in the United States, except solely in the instance of that piece of wretched demagogism known as the Eight Hour Law, passed by Congress without any intention that it should be enforced, our labor legislation has not, in general, been due to the efforts of the operative classes as such, but to the general conviction of the public mind that so much, at least, was fair and just and wise. The labor legislation now impending is not intended to abide the decision of an impartial jury. It is asserted, by those who claim especially to represent the interests of labor, that their class are about to undertake to carry, by sheer weight of numbers, measures to few of which could they hope to obtain the assent of the disinterested portion of the community.

Surely we have here a very grave situation. It may be that the power of wealth and trained intellect, superior dialectical ability, the force of political and parliamentary tactics, with the conservative influence of the agricultural interest, would, in any case, defeat legislation hostile to the so-called interests of capital. Doubtless, too, we of the class who are disposed to maintain the status underrate the moderation, selfcontrol, and fairness likely to be exercised by the body of laborers. Yet it is not easy to rid one's self of the apprehension that this new species of socialistic legislation will be carried so far, at least under the first enthusiasm of newly acquired power, as seriously to cripple the industrial system. He must be a confirmed pessimist who doubts that, sooner or later, after however much of misadventure and disaster, a modus vivendi will be established, which will allow the employing class to reassume and reassert something like their pristine authority over production—unless, indeed, this harassment of the employer is to be used as a means of bringing in the *regime* of co-operation, so ardently desired by many economists and philanthropists as the ideal industrial system.

If this is to be so, there will not be lacking a flavor of poetic justice, so far as the American manufacturer is concerned.

The advocate of co-operation, appealing to the admittedly vast advantages which would attend the successful establishment of the scheme of industrial partnership, might say that thus far cooperative enterprises have not succeeded because, with small means, they have had their experiments to make; their men to test and to train; their system to create. Let us, he would continue, handicap the long-established, highly organized, well-officered, rich, and powerful *entrepreneur* system, so that vast bodies of goods, made with the highest advantages from wealth, capital, and organization, may not be poured out upon the market in

floods, to sweep away the feeble structures of newly undertaken co-operative enterprises. Let the community consent, for the general good, to pay a somewhat higher price, as the consideration for the establishment of a system which will, in the result, not only secure a larger creation of wealth, but will settle the questions of distribution, promote good citizenship, and forever banish the spectre of Socialism from the world!

3d. Other measures of a socialistic nature, strongly urged at the present time, have in view the control by government of the ways and agencies of transportation and communication. All over Europe the telegraph service has been assumed by the State; and, to a large extent, the railroads also have come under government ownership or management. In some degree this has been due to the suggestions and promptings of military ambition, but in a larger degree, probably, it expresses the conviction that all railroad service "tends to monopoly;" and that, therefore, alike fiscal and military reasons and the general interest unite in dictating that the monopolist shall be the State.

On the continent of Europe the State's acquisition of these agencies of transport, so far as it has gone, has not been due to popular impulse; the management of the roads so acquired has suited well the bureaucratic form of government, while the thoroughness and efficiency of the civil service has, in the main, secured good administration.

Here or in England, on the other hand, such an extension of the powers of the State would have a very different significance, a significance most portentous and threatening; while even the regulation of railroad management, except through the establishment of effective and summary tribunals for the correction of manifest and almost uncontested abuses, would, according to my individual judgment, be highly prejudicial, and even pernicious, upon anything resembling our present political system.

4th. Still another suggested enlargement of public activity is in the direction of exercising an especial oversight and control over Industrial Corporations, as such.

The economic character of the industrial corporation very much needs analysis and elucidation. A work on this subject is a desideratum in political economy. So little has the economic character of this agent been dwelt upon, that we find reviews and journals of pretension, and professional economists in college chairs, speaking of legislation in regulation of such bodies as in violation of the principle of Laissez Faire. But the very institution of the industrial corporation is for the purpose of avoiding that primary condition upon which, alone, true and effective competition can exist.

Perfect competition, in the sense of the economist, assumes that every person, in his place in the industrial order, acts by himself, for himself, alone; that whatever he does is done on his own instance, for his own interest. Combination, concert,

cohesion, act directly in contravention of competition.

Now, combination will enter, more or less, to affect the actions of men in respect to wealth. But such combinations are always subject to dissolution, by reason of antagonisms developed, suspicions aroused, separate interests appearing; and the expectation of such dissolution attaches to them from their formation. The cohesion excited, as between the particles of the economic mass which the theory of competition assumes to be absolutely free from affiliations and attractions, is certain to be shifting and transitory. The corporation, on the other hand, implies the imposition of a common rule upon a mass of capital which would otherwise be in many hands, subject to the impulses of individual owners. But it is because the hand into which these masses of capital are gathered is a *dead hand* that the deepest injury is wrought to competition.

The greatest fact in regard to human effort and enterprise is the constant imminence of disability and death. So great is the importance of this condition, that it goes far to bring all men to a level in their actions as industrial agents. The man of immense wealth has no such superiority over the man of moderate fortune as would be indicated by the proportion of their respective possessions. To these unequals is to be added one vast common sum, which mightily reduces the ratio of that inequality. The railroad magnate, master of a hundred millions, leaning forward in his eagerness to complete some new combination, falls without a sign, without a groan; his work forever incomplete; his schemes rudely broken; and at once the fountain of his great fortune parts into many heads, and his gathered wealth flows away in numerous streams. No man can buy with money, or obtain for love, the assurance of one hour's persistence in his chosen work, in his dearest purpose. Here enters the State and creates an artificial person, whose powers do not decay with years; whose hand never shakes with palsy, never grows senseless and still in death; whose estate is never to be distributed; whose plans can be pursued through successive generations of mortal men.

I do not say that the services which corporations render do not afford an ample justification for this invasion of the field of private activity. I am far from saying that, whatever injuries one might be disposed to attribute to the unequal competition between natural and artificial persons, thus engendered, the evil would be cured by State regulation and control. Government will never accomplish more than a part of the good it intends; and it will always, by its intervention, do a mischief which it does not intend. My sole object is to point out how deeply the industrial corporation violates the principle of competition, and how absurd it is to claim for it the protection of Laissez Faire!

5th. Another direction in which progress toward Socialism has been made, of late years, is in respect to the housing of the poor. In the first instance, and this was but a few years ago, the measures proposed to this end were covered by a plea which veiled its socialistic character. Here, it was said, is a railway entering a city. By authority of law it blazes its way over the ruins of hundreds or thousands of

workingmen's houses. At least let the government repair the wrong it has done! Let it put the working-men where they were before this exertion of authority. In like manner parks are created for the public good, narrow streets are widened into magnificent boulevards, always through the destruction of hundreds of humble homes. In like manner, again, the State, in a proper care for the life or health of its citizens, condemns certain dwellings as unsanitary, and orders them torn down. But what of the men, the women, and the children, who, with their scanty furniture and ragged bundles, crouch homeless on the sidewalk as the officers of the law do their work?

But the demand for the exertion of the powers and resources of the State in the housing of the poor, has not stopped upon this initial line. The views of many persons of high intelligence, in no way Socialists, have advanced, during a few years of discussion, to the conviction that the State has a large and positive part to perform in respect to the habitation of its citizens. It is not in contemplation that the State shall build all the houses in the land; nor, on the other hand, is provision for the pauper class at all in view. What is intended is that the State shall set the standard for the minimum of house accommodation which is consistent with health and decency; building houses enough to provide, in the simplest and cheapest manner, for all who cannot do better for themselves elsewhere; and thereafter to wage relentless war on all "shanties," "rookeries," and "beehives" used for human habitation; to pull down all that stand, and to prevent the erection of any resembling them in the future.

Of course, the virtue of this scheme, from the point of view of anyone, however favorably disposed, who is not a professed Socialist, would depend on the simplicity and sincerity with which the principle of the minimum of accommodation was adhered to. The moment the State began building houses for anyone above the poorest of self-supporting workmen, it would not only double and quadruple the certain cost and the liability to evil consequences, but it would be taking a monstrous step toward Socialism. In undertaking such a scheme a State would, in effect, say, there is a class of our citizens who are just on the verge of self-support. The members of this class are, in the matter of house accommodation, almost absolutely helpless; they must take what they can find; they cannot build their own houses; they cannot go out in the country to make their home—that is reserved for the fortunate of their class; they cannot protest effectually against foul and dangerous conditions. Nay, the miserable liability is, that they should, after being crowded down into the mire of life, become indifferent to such conditions themselves, ready, perhaps, to join the mob that pelt's the health officer on his rounds.

In regard to this class the State may proceed to say that neither Christian charity nor the public interest will tolerate the continuance of the utterly hideous and loathsome condition of things which disfigures the face of civilization. The rookeries shall be pulled down, the slums shall be cleaned out, once and forever. For the pauper there shall be a cot in the wards of the workhouse, with

confinement for all, separation of sexes, and compulsory labor for the able-bodied. For every man who is trying to earn his living there shall be an apartment at a very low rent, graded to correspond with the lowest of private rents, in buildings owned by the State, or built and used under State inspection and control. Lower than this the man shall not go, until he passes into the wards of the workhouse. He may do what he pleases in respect to his clothes, his food, his drink; but in this matter of habitation he shall live up to the standard set by the State. He shall not make the home of his family a hot-bed for scarlet fever and diphtheria; he shall not, even if he likes it, live in quarters where cleanliness and decency would be impossible.

Regarding this scheme I have only to say, that if we are not disposed to look favorably on a proposition that the State should undertake an enterprise so new and large and foreign to our political habits (and I sincerely trust no American would be disposed to favor it), let us not shelter ourselves behind the miserable mockery of the Economic Harmonies, as applied to the very poor of our large cities. To assert a community of interest between the proprietor of a rookery, reeking with every species of foulness, and the hundreds of wretched human animals, who curl themselves up to sleep in its dark corners, amid its foul odors, is to utter a falsehood so ghastly, at once, and so grotesque, as to demand both indignation and ridicule.

6th. The last of the socialistic measures to which I shall advert is the proposal for the Nationalization of the Land.

Now, I think I hear one-half my readers exclaim, "The nationalization of the land! Surely, that is Communism, and Communism of the rankest sort, and not Socialism at all!" while the other half say, "Socialistic indeed! Well, if the man who advocates the nationalization of the land is not to be called a Socialist out and out, whom shall we call Socialists?" To these imagined expressions of dissent I reply, that the project for the nationalization of the land, as explained by John Stuart Mill, for example, has not the faintest trace of a communistic savor; and secondly, while it is highly socialistic, the man who advocates it is not for that reason alone to be classed as a Socialist, since he may be one who, in all other respects, holds fully and strongly to individual initiative enterprise in industry. He might, conceivably, be so strenuous an advocate of Laissez Faire* as to oppose factory acts, public education, special immunities and privileges to savings banks, or even free roads and bridges, as too socialistic for his taste.

* The name of Mr. Henry George appears on the lists of the New York Free Trade Club.

There is a substantially unanimous consent among all publicists,** that property in land stands upon a very different basis from property in the products of labor.
**"Sustained by some of the greatest names — I may say, by every name of the first rank in political economy, from Turgot and Adam Smith to Mill — I hold

that the land of a country presents conditions which separate it economically from the great moss of the other objects of wealth — conditions which, if they do not absolutely, and under all circumstances, impose upon the State the obligation of controlling private enterprise in dealing with land, at least explain why this control is in certain stages of social progress, indispensable, and why, in fact, it has been constantly put in force whenever public opinion or custom has not been strong enough to do without it." — *Professor John E. Cairne*s.
Nothing has ever been adduced to break the force of Mr. Mill's demonstration that a continually increasing value, in any progressive State, is given to the land through the exertions and sacrifices of the community as a whole.

If private property in land has been created and has been freed from the obligation to contribute that unearned increment to the treasury, this has been done solely as a matter of political and economic expediency. The man who proposes that, with due compensation for existing rights, all future enhancement of the value of land, not due to distinct applications of labor and capital in its improvement, shall go to the State, by such fiscal means as may be deemed most advantageous to all concerned, is not to be called a Communist. He only claims that the community as a whole shall possess and enjoy that which the community as a whole has undeniably created. The Communist is a man who claims that the community shall possess and enjoy that which individuals have created.

So far as England and the United States are concerned, the project for the nationalization of the land, notwithstanding the tremendous uproar it has created, especially in the former country, does not appear to me in any high degree formidable. Doubtless in England, where an aristocratic holding of the land prevails, this agitation will induce serious efforts to create a peasant proprietorship. It is, also, not improbable that the discussion regarding the tenure of the soil will lead to additional burdens being imposed upon real-estate. Yet the advantages attending private ownership, notwithstanding the admitted fact that the system sacrifices, in its very beginning, the equities of the subject matter, are so manifest, so conspicuous, so vast, that there seems little danger that the schemes of Messrs. Mill, Wallace, and George will ever come to prevail over the plain, frank, blunt commonsense of the English race.

The important question remains, In what spirit shall we receive and consider propositions for the further extension of the State's activity?

Shall we antagonize them from the start, as a matter of course, using the term socialistic freely as an objurgatory epithet, and refusing to entertain consideration of the special reasons of any case?

When we consider what immense advantages have, in some cases, resulted from measures purely socialistic, are we altogether prepared to take a position of

irreconcilable and undistinguishing hostility to every future extension of the State's activity? May we not believe that there is a leadership, by the State, in certain activities, which does not paralyze private effort; which does not tend to go from less to more; but which, in the large, the long, result, stimulates individual action, brings out energies which would otherwise remain dormant, sets a higher standard of per
formance, and introduces new and stronger motives to social and industrial progress?

For myself, I will only say, in general, that while I repudiate the assumption of the Economic Harmonies which underlies the doctrine of Laissez Faire, and while I look with confidence to the State to perform certain important functions in economics, I believe that every proposition for enlarging the powers and increasing the duties of the State should be long and closely scrutinized; that a heavy burden of proof should be thrown upon the advocates of every such scheme; and that for no slight, or transient, or doubtful object should the field of industrial activity be trenched upon in its remotest corner. There is something in the very name of liberty to which the heart of man responds; freedom itself thus becomes, in a certain sense, a force, and those who thoroughly believe in individual initiative and enterprise are the best and safest judges of the degree to which restraint may, on account of the imperfections of human society and the hardness of men's hearts, require, in any given time and place, to be imposed upon the choices and actions of citizens.

That enlarging the powers of government at any point where, after due deliberation, it abundantly appears that, in spite of the reasonable preference for preserving individual activity, a large practical gain to the order of society and the happiness of its constituent members will, in the long result, accrue from the interposition of the State; that dealing thus with projects of social and economic reform will, as so many seem to fear, only arouse in the mass of the people a passion for further and further encroachments, and push society more and more rapidly on toward an all-engrossing Socialism — I do not believe. It is the plea of despots that they cannot remit impositions, redress wrongs, or promote reforms, without awakening dangerous aspirations in their subjects and provoking them to ever-increasing demands.

To no such slavish dread of doing right are free nations subjected. It is the glorious privilege of governments of the people, by the people, for the people, that they derive only strength and added stability from every act honestly and prudently conceived to promote the public welfare. In such a State every real and serious cause of complaint which is removed becomes a fresh occasion for loyalty, gratitude, and devotion.