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### THE RECONSTRUCTION OF LABOR.

The history of modern society is a history of revolution;—from the imperial rule of Rome to the social system of the half-Christianized barbarians of the Northern Nations, as from this in turn to the Feudal system and *villanage*. Feudal tyranny and slavery have followed the Roman, in dying out as social power, and as a political system it received its final coup de grace at the Revolution, sometimes called the French.

Industry has superseded Feudalism as the controlling power of society, and the influence which belonged to Lord and Baron is wielded by capitalist, director and manufacturer, well called "captains of industry."

To all such changes the Church of Christ cannot be indifferent. She would ill represent her Founder, had she no compassion for the miseries which caused them, and which they caused;—no hope for the future of the world as she sees heaven and earth shaken by God's hand, that what can be shaken, and is unworthy, may be removed.

The Church, to be true to herself, should assume a more direct relation to social difficulties and problems. Their solution lags because she fails to contribute her fair share to the solving of them. Her great principles are for the well-being of all, and the balance and perspective of truth is lost when selfish human nature has the chance to ignore them. Society has indeed its own great laws, but all laws work injustice in some way. It is, for instance, the law that wealth and power shall accrue to those who have it,—to him that hath shall be given,—and every present acquisition is a means to future selfish aggrandizement. This is the law of society, but she must bring the Gospel, must proclaim that, "Evil's triumph is its greatest loss;" must set up a worthier standard of success, and show that this is not success, but in the long run the most disastrous failure. She must re-adjust the balance by re-affirming eternal principles. Her care, in so far as she is true to herself, is to be the patron of the weak,—the protector of the down-trodden. To be unable to maintain one's own place, is the best claim to her services.

This office of the Church must, of course, be especially exercised towards what are sometimes called "the lower classes." Revolution cannot destroy social power, while it may change its form and transfer its possession. Now so long as power exists it may be abused, that is, made to subserve merely selfish purposes; and the abuse of such power is essentially tyranny, a thing as natural and as common in the Industrial as in the Feudal stages of society. To the eye of sense nothing is more absurd than to point out any essential connection between the outrages of the Feudal baron and those of the modern capitalist;—the wrongs of the halberd and of the yard-stick. But "the end of philosophy is the intuition of unity" (Bacon), and there is under their formal diversity an essential unity. Both these tyrannies are the exercise of power, which exists for the good of all, to the detriment of the many; both fall within the sphere of the Church's activities, in that they are wrongs which the State cannot reach, or only by revolution.\*

That abuses and tyrannies as actually exist in modern times, as of old—that there are Industrial as well as Feudal tyrannies—is plain from the repeated rebellions against the modern "captains of industry." Strikes, lockouts, trade's unions, and the atrocious means they sometimes employ, all attest with what excessive friction, wear and tear, the system of free and unlimited competition

\*We say "by revolution," for the foundations of society rest on the laws of *metum* and *tum* as of old on the rights of the seignor,—to interfere with either is to subvert either form of society. In the case of the baron, this has actually been done, and he has been deprived, in large measure, of the power which he held for the common weal, when it was found that the common weal could be best promoted by other means. But the capitalist is as truly a public official as was the baron; the State is the source of all power, so also is it the depository of all rights, the sovran owner of all property, a right which it reserves in "confiscation." The capitalist is but a "tenant at will," an official *quod placitum*. The State owns all by the same right by which it rules, and the possession of property is no more sacred and inalienable than is that of power. The right of taxation implies this,—the right to take one per cent. in value, implies the right to take one hundred per cent. in kind. These facts should be remembered in connection with the confiscation question.

has worked. We are assured, indeed, that these arise only from stupidity of the workmen, who fail to see that the interests of labor and capital are identical,—that the great "law of demand and supply" governs all things to which all must submit. Men say this who laugh to scorn the idea that this identity of interests (or a much closer one) between master and slave, availed for the protection of the latter; who do not listen for an instant the despot's whine about "a happy prosperous people," that only fail to see "what is good for them," who know that the action of the great law of supply and demand would, if uncontrolled, sweep all our American manufactures out of the market in three months, and supply their place by the wares of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield. The shoe pinches somewhere and no amount of logic will convince the wearer that it does not.

The modern discontent, like the old one, has its stages of growth which are worthy of the closest study, beginning in each case with inarticulate and dumb revolts, like the old wars of the *Jaquerie* in France, and the aimless trades' riots in England that prevailed in the earlier half of our century in England.

"When Adam delved and Eve span,  
Who was then a gentleman?"  
asked Jack Straw and the Kentish villeins, in the year of grace 1381. Here was an uprising based on principle, enunciating a general truth which impugned the Feudal system, giving a blind, blundering voice to a hundred hitherto inarticulate rebellions, itself growing clearer in the course of the ages, until it spoke, divested of its falsehood, in clarion tones, in our great Declaration: "all men are born free and equal." Have our modern rebels no "prophetes" or "out-speaker" of what is boiling in their hearts? In the year of grace 1848, was proclaimed by Proudhon and the Socialist phalanx that "la propriete c'est le vol, property is robbery," that a solidarity of interest based upon a new and compulsory "Socialist" system of labor-organization, was the need of the 19th century.

"But Socialism is dead beyond recovery. Who are the Socialists of the year of grace 1867?" This, indeed, is true to the ear, but not entirely true. Every great revolutionary movement has its forerunners and premature revolts, its blundering and one-sided prophets of the Jack Straw sort; it often seems to have died in the suppression of some immature insurrection. There were Reformers before Luther, democrats before Franklin, and because they failed, the world-historic movements they represented were not suppressed. The reformation and the revolution were yet to be, and the burning of Huss and the beheading of Rienzi, did not withstand their coming. Nor did the *coup d'etat* answer Proudhon's questions. In Homer the incipient democracy of Greece is represented by the ugly, bow-legged, chattering Theristes, who is paid for his insolence with "a bloody weal" across his back, but Theristes ripened into Praxiteles, Eschylus, Demosthenes and Plato. What will Theristes-Proudhon ripen into?

The outlook for the reconstruction of labor, the readjustment of its relations to capital is not in the direction of socialism, though that system has asked questions which call urgently for practical answers,—which it was itself unable to answer. There would be little security felt in a future ushered in by a revolutionary subversion of vested rights,—little prosperity under a system which would put the active and the indolent on the same footing,—little happiness in a social order, which would ignore the foundation-stone of all rational society, the family tie. But if the socialist cannot build he can destroy; if he cannot create he can criticize. His denunciations of the selfishness and greed of competition sounded very much like some New Testament texts on "the unrighteous mammon," "the love of money," &c. His book made ideal carried one back somewhat to the days which followed Pentecost, and suggested ugly comparisons. But we look for the solution elsewhere.

What is the relation of the Church to these great historical revolts against the social leaders? In the first, the Church of the middle ages bore an honorable part. She was in the main faithful in her proclamation, that the serf was a man not a thing, a being made in the image of God, a temple of the Holy Ghost, a brother of the Lord Christ, not to be trampled on, but to be re-

verenced. Let us honor the brave priests and bishops of that age, who often sold the chalice from the altar, that they might redeem the captive and emancipate the slave; even while they did not intend all the good they did. For they taught more than they meant to teach, and when the *villem* became a freeman, he learnt to stand upright in the presence of the priest, as well as of the baron, and, with Luther, to refuse to let the shadow of any man fall between him and God. The word of their testimony was as the spell that the children read from the Black Book of the old magician, not knowing its full intent, but they had summoned up a "spirit from the vasty deep," which they could not lay to rest again, and it destroyed them.

But what is the position of the Church in the present crisis? She stands, we fear, much where the Church of the middle ages stood, bearing a testimony against the oppressor in her every message of the Gospel, but shrinking from its practical application,—more ready to proclaim great principles, than to guide men to the use of them. What is it but her message, that shakes Europe with the three magic words: "Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!" What is Socialism but a caricature of life social results she is pledged to bring about? What is that "harmony of interests," which the economist and the statesman look forward to as the social millennium; but another aspect of that kingdom of heaven "which is righteousness and peace"? What are all these rebellions of labor against capital, but repetitions of her own message, that gold is less precious than he who works in it? What is this talk of "the dignity and sacredness of labor," but a travesty of His words, who taught that the sowing of wheat, the spreading of the fisher's net, the building of houses, the pruning of vines, the baking of bread, the bargaining of the market-place, were ordained as signs of the kingdom which He came to establish? May not even this foolish eight-hour-movement be at bottom a justifiable protest against the notion, that the working-man must live by bread alone, that he is a tool and not a person?

Indirectly, too, the Church has an immense interest in these questions, in seeing that these classes are not led by blind instincts, but should be taught the best means to their reasonable ends. The working-men are the ruling power in civilized nations. In France, whose electric influence controls the politics of Europe, the working classes are the power behind the throne, the bag of rats which the house of Bonaparte will ever keep shaking, in order that they may carry it in safety. In England, a month has not elapsed since the three estates passed the sovran power from the hands of the great middle class to those of the working men; from the classes who fill the churches and chapels, to those who seldom darken their doors; from those who "have a stake in the country," to those who will vote between a scanty breakfast and an uncertain dinner. It cannot be denied, that this class have been alienated from the Church by her utter want of sympathy with their needs, by her failure to realize Christianity in any but its individual aspect, by her close association with the wealthy and middle classes. And yet, it was not always so. Protestantism, Puritanism, Methodism, have all in turn found their origin in this substratum, and raised large masses of the people to a higher social standing. But all these have spent their force, and now seek their converts elsewhere. Methodism, even, is of the past, and cannot take hold of the masses as it once did, nor will any mere Methodism be able to do so in the future. The man who shall be to the Secularists of Sheffield, what Wesley was to the miners of Cornwall, will see Christianity as well in its social aspect, as he saw it in its individual; will show it as the patron of the poor man here, as well as hereafter. It must attest its power and mission by the miracle of social regeneration; and lay hold of that aspect of truth which our age most especially feels the truth of, that it may lead the age into all truth.

The contest between government and the subject, which broke down the Feudal system, was not settled by elaborate arguments to prove an existing solidarity of interests, that the prosperity of the people was also that of the ruler,—arguments which ignore the invariable short-sightedness of greed and ambition. The solidarity existed, but the captains of Chivalry went on doing what

well,—killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. That great issue was solved by making the governors and the governed identical in fact as well as in interest,—by placing the power of the State in the hands of the people. But how shall labor and capital be identified, unless by a new distribution of property and the subversion of all our social arrangements? Our answer lies in one word, and that word is not Socialism, nor Agrarianism, nor universal Confiscation, but Co-operation, which may do for labor what Democracy has done for power. Men wise to know the times, see in it the little cloud that is rising, no larger than one's hand, from the sea, bringing the showers that are to flood the parched and cracked earth.

The practical principle of this system is, that the employers and the employes are the same persons, the capital of their common business or craft being furnished by joint-stock contributions, and the profits being equally divided among all the working partners. This leaves all questions of the hours and remuneration of labor in the hands of those who are most concerned; destroys the ruinous competition for employment which follows any slackness in trade; gives every workman that direct interest in the quality of the manufacture, which hitherto belonged only to the master; puts an end to the heart-burning that workmen feel, who think that the labors of the many are going to enrich the few,—a feeling which, more than any actual grievance, lies at the root of their chronic discontent;—and gives to all such a chance of social advancement as will go far to bridge over the chasm between the "upper" and "lower classes." It takes away those class feelings, which have rendered the workingman apathetic to the Church and dangerous to the State; it is one step further in the development of the Christian ideal of society, nearer to the millennium day that saint and sage alike rejoice in looking forward to.

But we must not expect, nor dread, too much from Co-operation. No social arrangement will subvert mammon-worship, though improved social arrangements may go far to promote fairness between man and man. The function of the capitalist, too, will not be destroyed, nor even for any right end impaired, though it will have lost much of its power for evil. He will have, besides his other much cherished "free competitions," to compete with Co-operation. He will be by the nature of things compelled to care more for the welfare of his employes, whom he once left to the tender mercy of "general laws." He will realize, as never before, that "solidarity of interest" that we hear so much of. But capital will still be power, and property will still be the means of gaining more; just as in the parallel social revolution against Feudalism, the "gentleman" to whom Jack Straw bore such a grudge, is not obsolete, nor powerless, though he can no longer indulge in the luxury of a private gallows. The nobility of England will hold their own in the New Householders' Parliament by the simple force of social prestige, although they dare not intimidate a single voter. And in the matter of labor a compromise has already been reached, which embraces many of the advantages of Co-operation, viz: the distribution of all profit above a certain per cent. (say 15) among the employes of the establishment.

Co-operation is being fast naturalized in America, and in some localities has the entire control of important branches of industry. Its main attractions, however, in this country are not co-operative factories but co-operative stores; not means to escape from the tyranny of capitalists so much as from the extortion of middle-men. But in England it especially flourishes, and is welcomed by statesmen and clergymen of every school as the most promising means for the elevation of the working classes, and for sweetening the social atmosphere. Seven years ago 160 towns in Great Britain were specified as localities where co-operative stores or factories were already established, and always with the most gratifying results. On the Continent, as in Mulhausen in France, and elsewhere, it is equally favored, though too much mixed up with Socialistic fancies to admit of an International Co-operative Congress being allowed in Paris during the Exposition season. That it is not socialism but the destroyer of socialism, we are most firmly convinced. We bid it "God-speed," assured that every social advance is a Christian gain.

Rev. Edwin F. Hatfield, clerk of our General Assembly, writes to the *Presbyter* in regard to Dr. Hodge's recent "Speech from the Throne" in the *Princeton Review*:

"Dr. Hodge has had very little practical acquaintance with his New School brethren. My acquaintance personally with New School ministers is most extensive. No other man in the churches, probably, has had so large an acquaintance with the denomination. I am familiar with the utterances of our Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies, and I do not hesitate to say, that Dr. Hodge has grossly and inexcusably slandered us, when, after his discussion of what is meant by receiving the Standards as 'the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures,' he proceeds to say: 'What we hold to be undeniably true, as a matter of history, is, that the New School Church do not require, and never have required, the adoption of that system as the condition of admission to their ministry.' This is news to me. It is news to us all. The statement is utterly untrue: I never knew a Presbytery, I do not believe that we have one in our connection, that understands the constitutional question in what Dr. Hodge calls the third sense, or in any other sense than that so admirably given [elsewhere] by the Doctor himself.

"I have taken part in the licensure of nearly 300 students, and in a great number of ordinations, and I make bold to say, that, if any of these students, candidates, and licentiates, in their examinations, had called in question the distinctive doctrines of what Dr. Hodge calls the 'Reformed or Calvinistic System,' and had insisted, that by the system of doctrine contained in the Confession is meant the essential doctrines of Christianity, and nothing more, he would most assuredly have been rejected.

"I am amazed that Dr. Hodge can bring such an accusation against 1,985 ministers and licentiates, all of them conscientious; godly men, every one of whom is ready, I doubt not, to repudiate the imputation—all of whom claim to be honest, in their interpretation of both the Scriptures and the Standards of our Church—and to be, not Arminians in any sense, but Calvinists: True, they may not be of Dr. Hodge's school of philosophy, nor is it required of them by our Book, nor does Dr. Hodge claim that they must be."

THE AUSTRIAN CONCORDAT.—"The Ultramontanes," says the *London Spectator*, of Aug. 2, "have sustained another great defeat. Austria has been regarded as their stronghold, but on the 26th of July, Dr. Herbst brought forward a motion in the Reichsrath [Royal Parliament] avowedly intended to abolish the Concordat with Rome. It authorizes civil marriage, exempts schools from the control of the priests, and establishes inter-confessional [that is, inter-denominational] equality, thus abolishing the three main principles of the Concordat. His motion was carried, in spite of Government, by 130 to 34, only the Tyrolese and Slovaks dissenting, and the Government has already opened negotiations with Rome. It is distinctly understood that if the Vatican will not yield at once, the Concordat will cease to be law without its consent, that document being, as Dr. Herbst puts it, an outrage on the authority of the State. The people are almost unanimous in their abhorrence of its provisions, and even the Emperor will not venture to defend it. A deal fell at Sadowa." "Since that battle Venetia has been liberated, and the last hope of regaining power in Italy finally swept away. The Polish church has been virtually released from Papal authority, the clerical party has been utterly overthrown in Mexico, church property has been sequestered throughout Italy, and ultra-montanism has been expelled from Hungary. The Concordat which had been destroyed there while the Hapsburgs were absolute, required the sanction of the Diet, and with the revival of constitutional life, it silently disappears. It is a frightful list of misfortunes, yet we doubt if the whole together will be so bitterly felt by Rome as this vote of the Austrian Reichsrath.

The Austrian Concordat which became law Nov. 5th, 1855, established throughout the Empire her ideal society. From the Emperor, downward every person, institution and thing in Austria, was intrusted to her; worship was confined to her; every grand transaction of life, birth, marriage, burial, could only be legalized by her assent. The Bishop was the providence of his diocese; the priest the *lar* of his commune; every hospital was surrendered to the nuns; every school to the fathers; every charity to an affiliated order. So perfect was the organization that women died in the Lying-In-Hospitals of Vienna, because none but nuns could attend them, and nuns held their praderies more important than human life.

The whole authority of the Church exercised unchecked for eleven years, has failed to convince a population originally Catholic, that the Catholic ideal is endurable. In vain did the Government plead that the Concordat was a treaty, and beyond the range of discussion. In vain did the Tyrolese and Slovaks, faithful servants of the Church, ignorant and innocent as cows, threaten secession, and denounce "the infidels in Parliament." One German only, voted for the Pope, and he only out of spite, because the resolutions took the gloss off a still stronger measure of his own.