

# SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

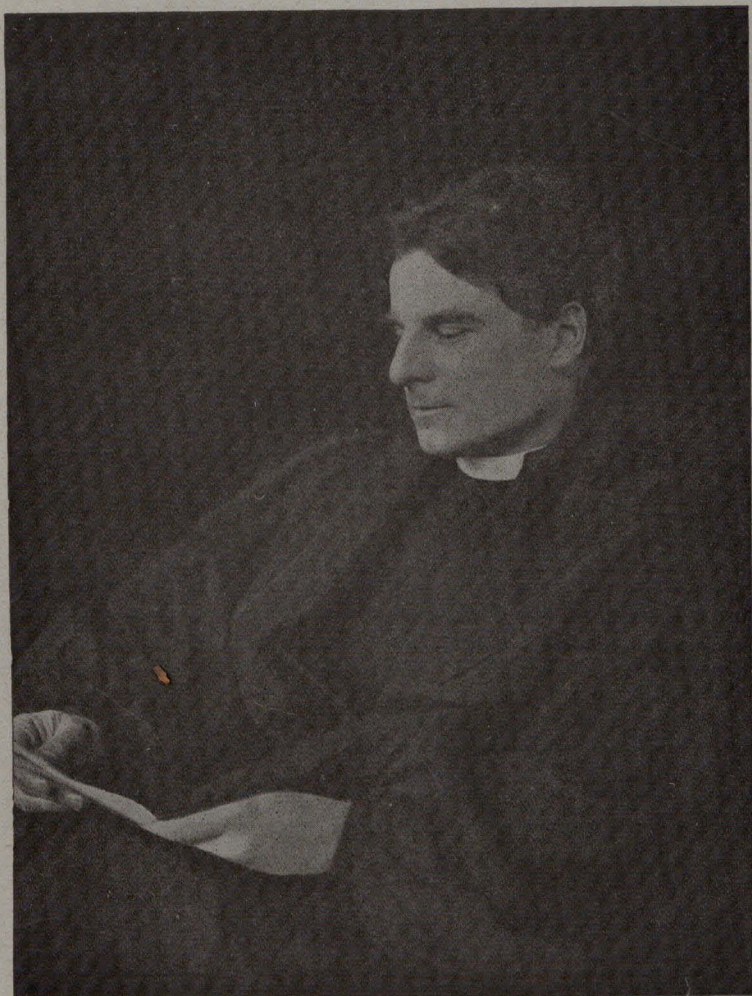


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BY THE  
Rev. PERCY DEARMER, D.D.

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Fabian Tract No. 133.

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# SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

NEW EDITION.

BY

The Rev. PERCY DEARMER, M.A., D.D.

PROFESSOR AT KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples."—THE MASTER.

"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."—ST. JOHN.

"In whatsoever way a man can do good to his neighbor, and does not do it, he shall be deemed an alien from the love of God."—ST. IRENÆUS.

"If you wish to love your neighbor as yourself, divide your money with him."

—ST. AUGUSTINE.

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# SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

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THE REV. PERCY DEARMER, M.A., D.D.

Trinity Church, New York

It is a well-known fact that the Christian religion has been the great power in the world for the last two thousand years. It has been the source of all our highest ideals, and the foundation of all our noblest institutions. It has been the great unifying force of the human race, and the great power for good in the world. It is the only religion that has been able to stand the test of time, and to remain the same to-day as it was in the days of Christ. It is the only religion that has been able to give birth to a new and better world, and to make of this world a more beautiful and more just place than it was when Christ came. It is the only religion that has been able to give birth to a new and better man, and to make of this man a more noble and more virtuous being than he was when he was born. It is the only religion that has been able to give birth to a new and better society, and to make of this society a more harmonious and more just one than it was when it was first formed. It is the only religion that has been able to give birth to a new and better world, and to make of this world a more beautiful and more just place than it was when Christ came. It is the only religion that has been able to give birth to a new and better man, and to make of this man a more noble and more virtuous being than he was when he was born. It is the only religion that has been able to give birth to a new and better society, and to make of this society a more harmonious and more just one than it was when it was first formed.

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## SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

"I seriously believe that Christianity is the only foundation of Socialism, and that a true Socialism is the necessary result of a sound Christianity."

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE, 1849.

It is extraordinary how little many Christian people realize the meaning of their own religion, so that they are actually shocked very often at Socialism; and yet all the while Socialism is doing just the very work which they have been commanded by their Master to do. This fact is so obvious that no representative and responsible Christian body can be found to deny it.

Take as an example of this the most representative official English religious gathering possible—the Pan-Anglican Conference of Bishops which met at Lambeth as long ago as 1888.\* These prelates, drawn from all parts of the world, belonging by birth to the propertied classes, by station to the House of Lords, and by tradition to the Tory Party, made a solemn pronouncement on the subject of Socialism. Here, if anywhere, we should find a denial that Socialism was Christian. But no! They turned and blessed it. Here are the words of their Encyclical:—

The Christian Church is bound, following the teaching of her Master, to aid every wise endeavor which has for its object the material and the moral welfare of the poor. Her Master taught her that all men are brethren, not because they share the same blood, but because they have a common heavenly Father. He further taught her that if any members of this spiritual family were greater, richer, or better than the rest, they were bound to use their special means or ability in the service of the whole. . . . It will contribute no little to draw together the various classes of society if the clergy endeavour in sermons and lectures to set forth the true principle of society, showing how Property is a trust to be administered for the good of Humanity, and how much of what is good and true in Socialism is to be found in the precepts of Christ.

So, then, in 1888, when there was no Labor Party or press, we parsons were told in the most solemn way by our official leaders that we were to be social reformers, to preach the Brotherhood of Man, and to show "how much of what is good and true in Socialism is to be found in the precepts of Christ." In writing this tract, therefore, I am but obeying the instructions of my Fathers in God.

An old agricultural laborer once admitted to me that Socialism was "all backed by Scripture"; and I need hardly remind anyone who reads his Bible, that if I were to put down every passage that

\* Ten years before this Tract was written in 1898. The next Lambeth Conference, 1897, endorsed this and strengthened it. So did the next in 1908 and 1920.

makes for Socialism, I should want a pamphlet several sizes larger than this. But nothing is more futile than the unintelligent slinging of texts; and I shall therefore confine myself strictly to the *central features* of Christianity, and not pick out chance sayings here and there, since that could be done with the writings of every great moral teacher that has ever lived. Christianity is different. It does not only provide a few noble sayings that Socialists would welcome. It *is* Socialism, and a good deal more.

And because I have only space for the central features of the Christian faith, I must pass over the magnificent utterances of the Old Testament prophets and confine myself to the strictly Christian documents, and in these to the sayings and doings of Christ and His Apostles, with a reference to some leading principles of the Church universal.

### How Christ Came.

How did Christ come into the world? That is the most important point of all, the most central. We Christians believe that God the Son became man. He could have come in any class He chose, and the Jews expected the Messiah to appear as a great Prince. If Christ had come thus, as an Oriental potentate, in pomp and luxury, with a crowded harem and troops of soldiers, the influential Jews of the day would have welcomed Him. But He was born in a stable. He came as a working man. He worked at His own trade till He was thirty; and then, choosing other working men as His companions, He tramped about the country as one that had not where to lay His head; doing innumerable secular works of mercy, besides preaching spiritual regeneration; and blessing the poor, while He condemned the rich and denounced the proud teachers and leaders of the national religion; and, after three years, He was executed by the law of the land, because He preached revolutionary doctrines, which the common people "heard gladly," but which were detested by the religious authorities of the day.

This was not only a reversal of all that the Jews expected, but it was also a new phenomenon in the world's history. No one before had ever thought of setting on such a basis the message of social regeneration. Nay, even the noblest of Greek philosophers, the constructors of ideal States, had utterly failed to take account of labor, and had based their ideal republics upon slavery. To Plato, even, the masses had but "half a soul"; while Aristotle, who regarded slaves as "living machines," and women as nature's failures to produce men, wrote: "Certainly there may be some honest slaves and women; nevertheless it may be said that women generally belongs to an inferior species, while a slave is an utterly despicable being" (*Polit.* i, 13). And in Athens, B.C. 300, the slaves numbered about 400,000 out of a total population of 515,000. Ancient society was also based upon infanticide.

But by the Incarnation not only was labor given its true position, but the unity of the whole human race was proclaimed. Humanity in its solidarity was taken upon Himself by the Divine



Word, and every human being declared to be an infinitely sacred and precious thing, with transcendent rights to the fullest development.

### Everybody Knew It.

Nor was there any doubt about it from the first. Christ's Mother knew it as soon as she knew that He was to be born of her ; and she sang that revolutionary hymn, the *Magnificat*, which is still, curious to relate, repeated every day at Evensong in church : " He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, He hath put down the mighty from their seats, And hath exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He hath sent empty away " (*Luke i*, 51-3). And at His Nativity there was a similar demonstration of social fellowship as inseparable from true religion : " Glory to God in the highest," the angels sang, " Peace on earth ; Goodwill among men."

The man who was sent as Christ's forerunner, to prepare the way before Him, knew it also. " Every valley shall be filled," he cried (*Luke iii*, 5), " and every mountain and hill shall be brought low," putting the *levelling* principle in a nutshell. And when the people asked him what they ought to do, he just told them to practise communism : " He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath food let him do likewise " (*Luke iii*, 11, R.V.).\* Is it not just what Socialists are trying to do—to level up the valleys, to scatter the proud, to fill the hungry by an equal distribution, —and to change an unchristian state of society, under which it is the *poor* who are sent empty away ?

The first public utterance of our Lord Himself proclaimed the same social revolution. On that solemn occasion when He began His mission, He went into the Synagogue at Nazareth ; He took the roll of the Hebrew Scriptures, and, out of all the sayings therein, He chose this one : " The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor : He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty them that are bruised, To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord " (*Luke iv*, 18, R.V.). Could anything be more significant ?

### Wanted, Orthodoxy.

And now I come to the question, What did Christ Himself teach ? He taught much about God, but He also taught much about men.† Religion has these two sides, and both are of immense importance.‡

\* I quote from the Revised Version when it seems to bring out best the meaning of the original.

† Let it be clearly understood. This Tract is not written to belittle the Godward side of religion, or to condone that lack of spirituality which is too common already. But its subject is the Duty to our Neighbor which is as much neglected as the Duty to God.

‡ It is noteworthy that the great Pagan writer, Lucian, was as much struck by the social as by the theological side of the new religion. In the passage where he notices the existence of Christianity, he remarks : " It was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers, from the moment that they are con-

We hear, and we need to hear, a great deal about our Duty to God ; but how about that other Duty which our Lord declared to be "like unto it"—the Duty to our Neighbor? The Church Catechism\* teaches all its little children that it is just as imperative to love our neighbor as ourself as to love God. And surely what we have to show Christian folk is not that we want them to embrace some strange new form of Christianity, but that we want them to be faithful to the old ; not to give up their faith, but to hold it in all its fullness ; not to be unorthodox, but to be really orthodox—orthodox about this Duty to their Neighbor, which St. John, the most profoundly spiritual of all the Bible writers, declares to come before the Duty to God : "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John iv, 20).

What, then, was the social teaching of that Man, who came to reveal God to men, and yet whom St. Peter described afterwards (*Acts* x, 38) as one who "went about doing good"? We will take the four most prominent forms of His teaching—His Signs, His Parables, His Sermon, His Prayer.

### Christ's Signs.

Very often when we go into church we find the congregation singing some hymn which expresses the utmost weariness of life and the keenest desire to die and pass to the "better land." Stout old gentlemen and smart young women sing it lustily ; and we know that they are singing a lie ; for if they were told that they were to die to-morrow, they would not find it at all weary "waiting here." That is an instance of the heresy of modern popular religion. Christ taught exactly the opposite. The vast majority of His miracles restored men to health and life, and enabled them to go back to their work, and to enjoy the measure of life which God allots to mankind. Death in old age, when a man's work is done, is not a sad thing ; but death in youth, or in the prime of life is piteous, horrible, abnormal : and so are sickness and deformity.

Christ, then, devoted a large portion of His time to fighting against disease and premature death, and He wept when a friend had been carried off in his prime. Our Bible often calls these acts miracles ; but this is a mistranslation of the original Greek, which calls them *signs*—that is, significant acts. If we, then, realize their significance, if we are imitators of Christ in this, too, according to our power, we shall heal sickness, and fight against disease and death, in the workshop and in the slum dwelling ; since all sanitary and social reform is but carrying out on a larger scale the signs which our Lord wrought for our example.† For instance, of the children born in the working classes, about twice as many have died as among

verted. . . . All this they take quite on trust, with the result that they despise all worldly goods alike, regarding them merely as common property." Lucian's *Works* (H. W. and F. G. Fowler's translation), vol. iv, p. 83.

\* "I learn two things : my duty towards God, and my duty towards my Neighbor. . . . to love him as myself, and to do to all men," etc.

† "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also ; and greater works than these shall he do ; because I go unto the Father " (*John* xiv., 12).



the well to do.\* And yet, if we even offend or despise one of these little ones, He tells us (*Matt.* xviii) it were better for us that we were cast into the sea with a millstone about our neck! It is surely no empty form that to the most respectable congregations it is said from the altar Sunday after Sunday, "Thou shalt do no murder." For we are all sharers in this ghastly holocaust, and the blood is on our hands, unless we are laboring with all our power to prevent it.

But, further, we learn from the signs of Christ not only to save life and health, but to increase its comfort, as He did at the feeding of the multitudes—and its merriment, as He did at the Cana marriage feast.

### Christ's Parables.

Many of the Parables, too, deal with social questions. Many are terrific attacks on money-making, and one was the inspiration of that epoch-making treatise on economics, Ruskin's "Unto this Last." Another was commonly supposed to be difficult only because people did not see that money, the "Mammon of Unrighteousness," must be used so as to make friends—not of Mammon, but of men,† and not enemies—a Socialist moral, as Archbishop Trench himself explained in his standard work on the Parables.

Another, that of the Good Samaritan, it is very necessary to remember for this reason: that it gives an entirely new meaning to the word "neighbor." When Jesus was asked what was the first commandment, He gave a remarkable answer (*Matt.* xxii, 37). The first part, "Love the Lord thy God, was expected: it was doubtless embroidered on the philactery of the lawyer who asked the question. But Jesus added an unexpected second commandment—"a second is like unto it" (not "the second" as in the A.V.). He must at some time ransacked the Old Testament, to find that chance utterance about loving one's neighbor, buried away in a corner of Leviticus. And there "neighbor" only meant a man's own kith and kin.‡ But when Jesus, in answer to the question "Who is my neighbor?" (*Luke* x, 29) told the story of the Good Samaritan, He expressly showed that He meant by neighbor every human being all the world over, including "enemies" even. So it is not really true to say that our Lord, in saying "Love thy neighbor," etc., and "Do to others," etc., was only repeating an Old Testament maxim. It was, as He said, "a new commandment."§

Look at the "Parables of the Kingdom." They expressly confute the common notion that the Kingdom of Heaven is something only in the next world, and that men are set only to save what Kingsley called "their own dirty souls." For these Parables are quite

\* *Local Govt. Bd. Rep.*, 1912-13:—Upper middle classes, 77 per 1,000; wage-earners, 133 (agricultural, 77); miners, 160; unskilled, 152. Infant mortality is decreasing.

† "Make to yourself friends by means of the mammon" (*Luke* xvi, 9, R.V.).

‡ "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (*Leviticus* xix, 18).

§ "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love another" (*John* xiii).

unintelligible unless we believe that our Lord came to found a great human Brotherhood—to set up an ideal of goodness and beauty, and to unite men together in the practise of it, here and now, on this earth. He came thus on a social mission to bind men together in love, as well as to purify their individual souls. And so He said that this “Kingdom of Heaven” was like a draw-net (*Matt.* xiii, 47), not consisting only of converted persons, but of every kind; and like a field (xiii, 24) where the tares and wheat grow together; like a grain of mustard seed (xiii, 31) in the way it should grow; and like leaven (xiii, 33) which should spread till it had made the whole world good.

But the last parable He ever uttered is the most important of all; because in it He gave us a picture of the actions for which God judges us. If we know how we shall be judged, then we know what we have to do—how we are to be true Christians. And what does this great Parable of the Judgment (*Matt.* xxv, 31-46) tell us will settle our fate in the next world? Extraordinary to relate, it is just the opposite to what the professedly religious world has been saying, and just the very thing that the Socialists teach. We shall be saved or condemned according to our acts of social service, Christ tells us, saying nothing about church-going, or conversion, or orthodoxy; for these latter are nothing unless they are so genuine as to have a practical result. “Faith without works is dead” (*James* ii, 14-26). We shall be placed on His right hand if we have fed and clothed and helped others—not merely among our own friends, for sinners do that\* but those who cannot help themselves; and our Lord, in a magnificent passage, asserts the solidarity of all mankind in Him, by identifying Himself even with the poor wretch in an unspeakable Eastern prison. Then, turning to those on His left, He says: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into the ‘fire of the age,’” not because you were heathens or agnostics, but because “I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of these least, ye did it not unto me.”†

### Christ's Sermon.

And this great principle, that what we do is of far more importance than what we profess, is made the clinching passage of the Sermon on the Mount (*Matt.* vii, 16-26)—“By their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father.” What that Will is we shall see further on. But here

\* “For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again” (*Luke* vi, 32-4).

† St. Basil, in his Homily on Riches, shows the feeling of the early Church about this parable when he says: “The robber is not even arraigned [at the Day of Judgment] but the unsocialist [*ho akoinonetos*] is condemned [*katakrinetai*].”



I will point out how this Sermon directly contradicts modern individualism, both secular and religious.

Our religious individualism is condemned in three prominent characteristics—its self-righteous censoriousness ("Judge not . . . Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye"—vii, 1-5); its parade of "charity," falsely so called, and subscription lists ("But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee" \*); its love of cant ("And when thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets"—vi, 5-6).

And now for what the Sermon says about secular individualism. Here are the Beatitudes, with which the Sermon begins, printed by Ruskin side by side with their modern perversions:—

#### CHRIST.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: † for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness (dikaïosunē ‡); for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

#### PRESENT-DAY.

Blessed are the rich in flesh: for theirs is the Kingdom of Earth.

Blessed are they that are merry; and laugh the last.

Blessed are the proud: in that they have inherited the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after unrighteousness (injustice): in that they shall divide its mammon.

Blessed are the merciless; for they shall obtain money.

Blessed are the foul in heart: for they shall see no God.

Blessed are the war-makers: for they shall be adored by the children of men.

To which one might add two further parallels to the two remaining Beatitudes:—

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are ye, when man shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Blessed are those who persecute the lovers of justice: for they prevent the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are ye, when the Press shall speak well of you, and praise you; for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Besides this, the following principles are also taught in the Sermon on the Mount: Love of our enemies, anger being a form of murder (*Luke* vi, 27; *Matt.* v, 21-44); affirmation instead of oaths:

\* *Matt.* vi, 1-4, R.V. Not "Shall reward thee *openly*," which is a late addition by some scribe who hankered after antithesis and so destroyed the real point.

† St. Luke has simply "the poor," and follows immediately with "Woe unto you that are rich"; and scholars think that St. Luke gives the original which was modified by St. Matthew. (See, e.g., *The Study of the Gospels*, by Dr. J. A. Robinson, pp. 76, ff.) "Poor in spirit," of course, does not mean poor-spirited, but simply the not caring about private property. Poverty in Christ's time *did not imply pauperism or degradation*, but such a simple life as the fisherman-apostles lived.

‡ I.e. "justice": see p. 15.

avoidance of capital punishment, and of all litigation and retaliation (*Matt* v, 33-41) ; a warning that we are not to insist on the "rights of property" (v, 40) ; a command to give to every one that asks our help (v, 42) ; a command to lend without asking interest or even the principal back (*Luke* vi, 34, 35) ; the wrongfulness of all forms of "making money" (*Matt.* vi, 19-21), and the consequent impossibility of serving God if we serve Mammon (vi, 24) ; that "thrift" is not the right way to abolish poverty (vi, 25-34). But that God wishes all men to have good food, and drink, and beautiful clothes (vi, 29-32) without either the grinding worry of poverty or the deadening lust of riches (vi, 24, 31, 34) ; and that this happy state of things is to be obtained by our seeking, first of all, two things—the holy brotherhood and the Justice of God. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (vi, 33). Seek ye first the divine society and the divine justice, and all these things—clothes more beautiful than Solomon's, and good food and drink—shall be added unto you. Be social, godly, just, and you shall have Utopia. But the modern world is anti-social, selfish, unjust, and we have—London !

It may be urged that some of these precepts of the Sermon are ideal, and not practicable under present conditions. This is true. But it proves that a social system under which the precepts of Christ cannot be carried out is not a system which Christians can be content with. Christianity is in fact far ahead of us ; and we have to assist in developing society in the direction of this ideal. So far as we can see, that direction is also the direction of Socialism ; although as man develops from his present rudimentary condition to the glorious future which evolution and the Gospel foretell, he may pass beyond the ideal of present-day Socialism to something vaster and more sublime.

### Christ's Prayer.

A prayer is generally considered a particularly "other-worldly" thing, or, at least, when it is concerned with this world, it is nearly always selfish and limited, like the prayers children are taught—"Bless father and mother, and make Tommy a good boy," which curiously illustrates how general is the narrowing of modern religion, and grows naturally in after years to—

Bless me and my wife,  
My son and his wife,  
Us four and no more. Amen.

Our Lord gave us only one prayer, and that quite short, for He set it as a model on which all prayer was to be based. How far we have departed from that model will be clear if we consider its clauses one by one.

The Lord's prayer was originally given for private use.\* Here, then, if anywhere, we shall find Individualism ! Let us see. The Prayer contains seven petitions and three extra clauses. *None* of

\* "But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret" (*Matt.* vi, 6).



these ten parts are individual ; *all* are social, three of the petitions are distinctly what some people would call "worldly," while the three extra clauses are specially inserted to insure the social application of the rest.

OPENING CLAUSE.—"Our Father which art in heaven." At the very outset Individualism is renounced ; though we pray "in secret" we have to say "Our," and to include all humanity in our prayer, approaching God as the common Father of the whole human family. And no one can say "Our Father which art in heaven" unless he has first said "Our brethren which are on the earth."

1ST PETITION.—"Hallowed be thy Name." The first Petition, like the two next, refers to this world. There should be no full-stops between this petition and "In earth as in heaven." In Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament, which represents the high-water mark of biblical scholarship, the clauses are thus printed :—

Our Father which art in heaven :  
Hallowed be thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
In earth as in Heaven :

How, then, is God's Name to be hallowed here upon the earth ? Certainly not by a state of things under which in London alone 1,400,000 people\* are living in want ! If blasphemy in word is wrong, how about blasphemy in *deed* ? Whenever we make any earthly matter the mirror of the love and justice of God we are hallowing His Name, for we are vindicating His righteousness ; but where is the love or justice in modern trade, or politics, or diplomacy ? Ask a City man, and he will reply, with a smile, that business is business ; by which he means that selfishness must be supreme, untinctured by any thought of mutual love or justice. Indeed, a few years ago, before the Socialist protest, every political economist would have told you that men can only be reckoned with as "covetous machines." Now, this is the real blasphemy, the real atheism and materialism. It has driven thousands of working men into revolt against God, because they felt they could not believe in a loving Father when they saw the blank misery and oppression all around them. Yet God made the country, God places man amid lovely surroundings, which are the glory and delight of poet and artist ; and man, modern commercial man, has made the hideous modern town, which shuts out every ennobling influence from those who have to live in it. In fact, it is generally admitted by the most conservative people that "the devil made the town"—that prince of jerry-builders ! To hallow God's name, then, we must make the world a mirror of His love and beauty and justice.

2ND AND 3RD PETITIONS.—"Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done." God has given man free-will because it is better to be free and imperfect than to be an irreproachable machine. But God's evolution of the world is towards perfection. Therefore Socialists

\* Charles Booth, *Life and Labor*, ii, 20-21, 1891. In 1911, 4 persons in every ten died in the workhouse, hospital, or lunatic asylum.—*Registrar-General's Rep.*, 1912.

are right in believing in Utopia ; and as Christians we are bound to be Utopians. People often object that we are dreamy, unpractical people, because we are idealists. But everyone who says the Lord's Prayer definitely proclaims himself a fellow-worker with God for a perfect social state ; he prays for a heaven on earth, for God's will to be as perfectly done here as it is in heaven, for men to be as perfect as the angels, and for this divine evolution to take a social form in the "Kingdom of God." He is *bound*, then, to believe that all our struggles for social and moral reform are leading us to a Utopia. As Ruskin says : "When you pray 'Thy Kingdom come,' you either want it to come or you don't. If you don't, you should not pray for it. If you do, you must do more than pray for it—you must live for it, and labor for the Kingdom of God."

2ND EXTRA CLAUSE.—"In earth as it is in heaven." Our Lord inserts this to make it quite clear that He does not mean us to use the three foregoing petitions in an unreal or other-worldly sense.

4TH PETITION.—"Give us this day our daily bread." When it is evening, and the day's work is over, you are still bound to say this prayer ; for it is morning on the other side of the earth, and there are hungry people in the Antipodes. When your larder is full, you must use it none the less ; for it is not "Give me," but "Give us." And it is not "Give me my daily seven-course dinner and champagne," but "Give us our daily bread." Here, in this short prayer, Christ yet found room for a thorough statement of our most mundane needs—necessities for *all*, but harmful luxuries for no one. If, then, a rich man uses this prayer, he is morally bound to distribute his excess, from his luxury to supply other men's necessities, and to labor for a more equal distribution of wealth.\* For what one man has another cannot have, and every penny one man has above the average product of society forces some one else to have less, and perhaps to lack his "daily bread."

5TH PETITION.—"And forgive us our trespasses." Well, you may say here, at least, is something that has nothing to do with Socialism ! Hasn't it ? Look again.

This also has an EXTRA CLAUSE attached to it, so careful was our Lord to guard against Individualism—"as we forgive them that trespass against us." Here, even here, then, the Christian Faith is social, corporate, reciprocal ; and as we shall be judged by our treatment of our brother, so by our conduct towards him we are forgiven. Christ never allows us to get away from this neighbor of ours. Therefore it was only to be expected that modern heresy should have raised a cry directly the opposite of Christ's principles. "No man shall come between me and my God," was that cry—as if they

\* See, for instance, *Luke* iii, 11, already quoted on page 5, "He that hath two coats," etc. ; *James* ii., 15-17, R.V., "If a brother or sister be naked, and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled ; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body ; what doth it profit ? Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself" ; and also *1 John* iii, 17, "But whoso hath the world's goods," etc., quoted on page 15.



would make private property even of the Almighty! But the teaching of the Lord's Prayer is that *every man* shall come between me and God. God will not even forgive us, unless we "forgive our debtors."

6TH PETITION.—"Lead us not into temptation." It may be objected that nothing so far has been in favour of Economic Socialism, of State Collectivism. This is quite true; for if our Lord had taught economics, instead of religion with its two great Duties, He would never have led the world to brotherhood at all: all real economic and political reform has been the result of moral regeneration, which in turn it assists. True Socialism\* is a much larger thing than Collectivism, which is but one economic scheme for realising it. The methods will change from age to age, as indeed State Socialism has already during the last few years been partly supplanted by Guild Socialism. What abides and grows is the principle of Socialism, which works through both state and municipality, through the guild and the co-operative society, through private effort and public law. Christ taught for all time; and, if He had insisted on Collectivism, men would never have become unselfish enough to attain it. But His teaching and His example are always in advance of us, and thus we are able to develop.

But it is clear to my mind that this 6th Petition impels us to work for the establishment of the co-operative commonwealth. "Lead us not into temptation." Clearly if we twentieth century folk were Anarchists, we should be living in overwhelming temptation; and if you and I, my Socialist friend, were living as Communists, I am afraid we should find that Tom, Dick, and Harry, not to mention Levi and Cohen, would be tempted to take advantage of us. But the State in which we do happen to live is Individualistic, and I need hardly remind you that under this present competitive system the atmosphere of temptation is terrific. In the office and the workshop, in the studio and behind the counter, all day long the voices cry: "Make money, honestly if you can; but, at all events, make money! If you want to get on, you mustn't mind shouldering So-and-so out of the way. You must look after Number One. Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost!"

Now, I think this, more than anything else, has made me a Socialist. I know that money is the main cause of the awful temptations of these modern times, which have seriously made a new gospel, not of good-will towards men, but of "Self-help"; and I want not only to be freed from this temptation myself, but I want "us" to be freed from it, for I know that it is destroying all our nobility of character. If I want, then, mankind not to be led into temptation, I cannot support the present competitive system.

\* "The method of Socialism is co-operation, the method of Individualism is competition. The one regards man as working with man for a common end, the other regards man as working against man for private gain." *Socialism*, by B. F. Westcott, late Bishop of Durham, page 4 (Price 1d. Christian Social Union Pamphlet, No. 3, from Mowbray, 28 Margaret Street, W.). See also Bishop Westcott's *The Incarnation, a Revelation of Human Duties* (S.P.C.K., Northumberland Avenue, 6d.)

Only one means of escape I can see:—to destroy profit-mongering and competition of greed which Christianity condemns, and to establish society on the principles of co-operation, to substitute for the dictatorship of the capitalist "government of the people by the people and for the people, in all the industries and services by which the people live." We cannot at present do away with money in some form, although we are told that money is a root of all evils (1 *Tim.* vi, 10, R.V.). But we can, by basing society on moral principles, minimise the temptation, till humanity is ready for a further step. Thus are we to apply to our present conditions the eternal principles which Christ gave us, and which He gave just that we might apply them from age to age, till God's will is perfectly done, and the whole lump is leavened.

LAST PETITION.—"But deliver us from evil." Unsocial Christians have to learn from this how much of the evil is social, of "the world" as the New Testament so often says, using the word "*cosmos*," which means in the Greek "the order of the world," just as we say "the present social system." And Materialistic Socialists have to learn that it is Evil from which we have to be delivered. Nothing is so shallow as to think that our social disorder is due to economic machinery which can be altered without any change in men's hearts; that is just the stupid materialism of the old political economy turned inside out. Our disorder is due to the evil which made this machinery; it continues because there is so much evil that men tolerate this machinery. Our statute-book is what it is because men are what they are: Socialist Acts of Parliament are only passed as men become more social; and some of the best of those Acts are a dead-letter to-day because men are too selfish to enforce them. When there is less evil in the world, less of that original sin for which the modern name is Individualism, then, and not till then, will the representative bodies which *we* elect allow Socialism to be established. You cannot. it is most true, make humanity good till you have made its environment good; but it is also true that you cannot make that environment good till you have made men better. The two must improve each other. And the perfect State will consist of perfect men and women.

Having now some idea of the drift of Christ's teaching, let us consider a little more fully the two leading principles of Socialism—Brotherhood and Common Wealth—in the light of the whole New Testament.

### Brotherhood.

I need hardly dwell on this. Every Christian admits it—in theory, and would be surprised if the parson addressed his flock as "ladies and gentlemen" instead of "brethren." We only have to make Christians true to the religion they profess, and to have the same religion for week-days as for Sundays. We only have to make the respectable church-goer understand that it is really devilish to stand aloof from those whom he may think beneath



him, since St. John says that "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 *John* iii, 10).

The pity of it is that many a professing Christian does not know anything about this brotherly love. He forgets that he has to love his brother *as himself*; and so the very word "charity" has lost its true meaning, and is even applied to those petty forms of almsgiving which may be justly called the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table.

What we falsely call "charity" the New Testament calls ALMSGIVING, and our Lord, the first time he mentions it, calls it *justice* (*Matt.* vi, 1, R.V.). And yet, when some one cries, "We want justice and not charity," we think he is proclaiming a brand-new Socialist doctrine! The real CHARITY is described at length by St. Paul (1 *Cor.* xiii) as something that "seeketh not her own," but is patient, kind, generous, modest (v. 4), courteous, good-tempered, guileless (v. 5), honest and sincere (v. 6), confident and brave (v. 7). And this virtue is proclaimed by St. Paul as the greatest thing in the world, greater even than faith and hope—two virtues, by the way, which are almost equally necessary for the social reformer. Further, St. John says of this virtue (our translators for some extraordinary reason translated it "love" in St. John, but it is the same Greek word), that if we dwell in it we dwell in God Himself (1 *John* iv, 16), and that "every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God" (iv. 7), while "he that loveth not" (however much he goes to church) "knoweth not God." And it is remarkable that while St. John includes the love of God in this Charity, he expressly describes it as a social virtue—"But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (iii, 17, R.V.). He expressly declares that God is Love, and yet this Divine Love is analyzed by St. Paul as made up of acts of love *to men*.

As the inspired William Blake wrote—

Love seeketh not itself to please,  
Nor for itself hath any care,  
But for another give its ease,  
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.

There is another virtue necessary to brotherhood, which is a watchword with Socialists. It is JUSTICE. You may not think that it occurs often in the Bible. But it does occur eighty-six times. For every time you find the word "righteousness" you may read for it "justice." The word in the original Greek is *dikaïosunē*, which means justice, and is so translated in the Latin Vulgate by *justitia*. No doubt "righteousness" had a much broader sense originally, and should mean more than "justice" instead of less; but it has been degraded, like the word Charity, by modern use. Remembering this, observe that our Lord spoke of "the unrighteous Mammon," that is, of riches as an unjust thing; that he said, "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after Justice."

Every Socialist knows that a main offence against brotherhood is *Idleness*, and he claims that every idler is in fact a criminal. St. Paul is with him, "If any will not work, neither let him eat" (2 *Thess.* iii, 10, R.V.); work, he says, in another place (1 *Thess.* iv, 12), "that ye may walk honestly," being unable to conceive of an honest idler. The Communion Service, too, is with him, "Six days shalt thou labor, with a provision for a weekly holiday. The Catechism is with him, "My duty to my neighbour is . . . to learn and labor truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it *shall* please God to call me." Not "has pleased to call me," as it is generally misquoted. The Catechism does not say that men should be kept down, but that wherever the young may find themselves in after life they are to do their duty. And Jesus Christ gives no invitation to the idler. "Come unto me all ye that *labor*."

There is a Socialist song which tells of the time when there shall be "no master"; and here again they can quote our Lord's own words. "One is your Master, even Christ," "and all ye are brethren" (*Matt.* xxiii, 8, 10), "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your servant: and whosoever would be first among you shall be bond-servant of all. For verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto [waited upon], but to minister" (*Mark* x, 42-5, R.V.). It has been rather stupidly objected that St. Paul was in favor of slavery because he told servants to obey their masters. But we have only to remember that the early Christians were so full of the spirit of revolt against the "world" or society under which they lived, that they often had to be held back from ruining the whole cause by disorderly conduct. They knew that they were free, that God was no respecter of persons (*Acts* x, 34), and that however respectable a man was, if he approved of class-distinctions, he was "guilty of all" sin.\* Therefore St. Paul, who was famous as a man that had "turned the world upside down" (*Acts* xvii, 6), had to tell them that nevertheless they must stick to their work.† He took pains to point out that the Christian slaves (who were as churchmen on a perfect equality with the patrician

\* *James* ii, 1-10. See especially vv. 5-9 (R.V.).—"Did not God choose them that are poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him? But ye have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme the honorable name by the which ye are called? Howbeit if ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin."

† This is also true of the early Fathers. They drew a distinction between "natural law" and "human law." They all agreed that both private property and slavery were not in accordance with natural law, being due to man's sinful condition; but they held that they were justifiable under human law. At the same time they taught that to give up both private property and slaves was a good deed, and they set the example of doing so themselves. See A. J. Carlyle, *Medieval Political Theory in the West*, and Professor Nitti, *Catholic Socialism*.



Christians) were to do their service, "not to men," but "as to the Lord" (*Eph.* vi, 7), and he repeats this when he writes to the Colossians, "Servants . . . whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not to men. . . . and there is no respect of persons" (*Col.* iii, 22-5). What St. Paul taught when he wrote to a master may be read in his little letter to Philemon, which is an appeal to a master to receive back a runaway slave, but "not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved" (*Phil.* 16). And, as a matter of history, wherever the Church has been, she has emancipated the slaves, and vindicated the dignity of womanhood.

If we try for a moment to apply the law of Christian brotherhood to our present conditions, it is clear that they cannot stand for one moment before it. All monopolies would go, all class-distinctions would go, and war would be no more. Society would become Socialist, for we are not to lay up treasures *for ourselves* upon the earth (*Matt.* vi, 19), we are each to labor, and to lend without hope of return (*Luke* vi, 34, 5)—interest being the chief modern means of obtaining money without working for it—we are not to maintain our own rights of private property (*Matt.* xix, 21; *2 Cor.* ix, 9; *Luke* xii, 13-21), but are to work in complete co-operation and harmony one with another (*1 Cor.* 12). We are to love our neighbor as *ourselves*, to vote for his interests as our own, to educate his children as we would like our own educated, to feel his wrongs as wrongs done to us—in fact, as an early Christian writer says, "both to work and pray to get him all the good things we have ourself."\* We are to do to him as we would have him do to us were our places changed; and "this is the law and the prophets" (*Matt.* vii, 12). That goes much further than the Socialist maxim, "Each man counts as one, and no man as more than one."

"Thus, if our brother is poor, we must labor for his release from the grinding, harassing toil which shuts out from him the higher things of life.

Ah! but if he is rich, you say, ought we not to congratulate him on his prosperity, and regard his property rights as sacred?

### Common Wealth.

Pardon me, my friend. If you are a Christian, and love your rich neighbor as yourself, you will do all you can to help him to become poorer. For if you believe in the Gospel, you know that to be rich is the very worst thing that can happen to a man. That, if a man is rich, it is with the greatest difficulty that he can be saved; for "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God" (*Mark* x, 25). This is startling now, but it was not less strange and startling to the disciples, who "were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?" But the needle's eye has not grown any larger since then, and the camels certainly have not grown smaller!

\* St. Justin Martyr, *Trypho*, 95.

Certain very superior persons, even among Socialists, have blamed Jesus Christ for so often denouncing the rich. But this is just wherein He showed His wisdom. It was a perfectly new idea at the time ; for even the disciples, who were not rich, were shocked. But after hearing it for nineteen hundred years, Christendom still acts as if it were peculiarly difficult for a *poor man* to enter the Kingdom. And as we look round at both Church and Nonconformist governing bodies, boards of management, and representative assemblies, or at their clergy—bishops, priests, and deacons, and most ministers and pastors—we find as a matter of fact that the poor man *is* excluded, and that the rich have somehow or other all squeezed through the needle's eye, and have comfortably taken over the direction of the poor man's Kingdom ! And the State is worse than the Church ; for at this moment in democratic America every member of the Cabinet but one, according to the *Spectator*, is a millionaire.\* Can we blame, then, our Lord for putting the case so strongly, since even now it has not yet been driven into our greedy heads ? As a matter of fact, the undesirableness of riches is the hardest lesson for man to learn ; and he *has* to learn it, if Socialism is to be established on mutual love, or for that matter if it is to be established at all, because otherwise it is impossible.

How strongly our Lord enforced the lesson I need not remind you. People sometimes try to get out of the Parable of Dives and Lazarus by calling it the Parable of the Bad Rich Man.† It is not : it is the Parable of the Rich Man.‡ Dives was an ordinary person, who was not without the ordinary good nature of the selfish, for he at least allowed Lazarus the hospitality of his doorstep ; whereas nowadays we should send at once for the policeman if Lazarus attempted such a thing. We are told why Dives was punished in Hades : " Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things " (*Luke* xvi, 25).

All true Christians, then, must desire to relieve the rich man of his excess for his own sake, since the inequality that ruins the body of Lazarus ruins the soul of Dives ; and Dives is the more miserable of the two, because the soul is more precious than the body.

\* This was written in 1897 ; but to-day the power of the millionaire has not decreased in America. On the other hand the religious bodies are certainly more democratic, on both sides of the Atlantic, than they were.

† Old-fashioned Bibles give this parable the title of " The rich Glutton," which shows how our grandfathers shut their eyes to its meaning. They might as well have called it " The rich Dandy " ; and indeed there is nothing about gluttony in the parable, the words translated " fared sumptuously " being better rendered by " living in mirth and splendour," as in the R.V. margin.

‡ St. Augustine well says on this point, " Jesus said not, a calumniator ; He said not, an oppressor of the poor ; He said not a robber of other men's goods, nor a receiver of such, nor a false accuser ; He said not, a spoiler of orphans, a persecutor of widows—nothing of all these. But what did He say ? ' *There was a certain rich man.*' And what was his crime ? The Lazarus lying at his gate, and lying unrelieved." Augustine, *Serm.* clxxviii, 3.



St. James perfectly understood this great truth that the social revolution will be really a blessing for the rich. He stated it in the clearest terms : " Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted : but the rich in that he is made low : because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away " (*James* i, 9, 10). This passage, by the way, happens to be the special Epistle for May 1st, which is St. Philip and St. James' Day, and therefore it has been read throughout the Church on every Labor Day for about 1,500 years. It is still bound to be read every May Day. Outside, the Socialist procession may be singing the reactionary Marseillaise, but in Church the reactionary Vicar is reading to his people the Socialist message of St. James ! It is a wonderful world we live in.

The identity of true Socialism with true Religion is nowhere more clearly shown than in the Christian teaching about riches. The great rival power to God isn't any of the common bugbears of the religious world—not heathendom, or popery, or the public-house, or the theatre—but Mammon. If then, we are fighting against the power of riches, we are essentially Christian. " Ye cannot serve God and Mammon " (*Matt.* vi, 24 ; *Luke* xvi, 13). And St. Paul makes it still clearer when he says (*Col.* iii, 5) that idolatry, the worship of a rival to God, is covetousness. The common religious notion of idolatry is that it consists in putting up graven images in church ; but the New Testament has given the word a different meaning—it is the worship of the graven image upon a coin. Covetousness is now so openly professed that the economists have built a science upon it ; yet St. Paul more than once mentions it as an equally disgraceful thing with nameless vices ; to take a milder instance, he says (*Eph.* v, 5) : " No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolator hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ." And covetousness was the sin of Judas.

Once more, I repeat it. If the love of money is a root of all evils (*1 Tim.* vi, 10), we can only make the people good Christians by substituting for our acquisitive society one in which all are paid justly for work duly done ; " not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others " (*Phil.* ii, 4, R.V.).

### The Christian Church.

What did the first Christians do when their Church was settled in Jerusalem ? They lived as Communists.\* They must have known what the Master really meant, they had heard Him speak, and knew thousands of sayings of His which have not come down to us (*John* xxi, 25) ; they had the Apostles amongst them, and had not the divine teaching on hearsay. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul : and not one of them

\* This Communism was voluntary. " While it remained, was it not thine own ? " (*Acts* v, 4.) They shared out of their own free will, because they felt that it was the right, Christian thing to do ; and this makes it more significant than if it had been forced upon them.

said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own ; but they had all things common" (*Acts* iv, 32, R.V.). And as a natural result of this Communism (as St. Chrysostom reminded his hearers many years afterwards) "great grace was upon them all. For neither was there among them any that lacked : for as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostle's feet : and distribution was made unto each according as anyone had need" (*Acts* iv, 33-5, R.V.). From each according to his ability, to each according to his need !

Thus we have reached from the first proclamation of a levelling revolution to the establishment of a deliberate voluntary communism co-extensive with the first Church.

My task is nearly done. I have only now to point out that this Church is still pledged to Christian Socialism, not only by her first documents, but by her history. The communist experiment at Jerusalem failed, which was significant as showing how intense was the conviction of those who tried it so long before the time was ripe. But the Church did not give up the Socialist ideal for that.\* If it had, then Christ, who promised to be with it even to the end of the world, would have been wrong. There have, indeed, been plenty of bad bishops, and bad priests and people, and periods of corruption and recovery ; but all along, the heaven has been working, and the Kingdom growing nearer and clearer—aye, even amid the deluge of modern avarice. Nor can anyone who has studied the slow processes of evolution in man and nature approve for one moment the ignorant objection that nineteen hundred years is a long time to have taken. It is a short period in the world's history. And all along the corporate Church, as distinguished from individuals, has consistently maintained the same ideal. A form of Communism, confined to religious orders because it could not be practised in the world, has never ceased to flourish ; it has always been held up as an ideal life, and whenever people wanted to be particularly good they have, as a matter of course, lived a communal life, following Christ's advice : "If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor" (*Matt.* xix, 21). At the present day hundreds of thousands of Christians are so living.

It was the Church in early days, as learned Bishop Gore has shown,† that invented representative government. The Church also steadily condemned all receiving of interest on capital down to

\* Note for instance how Tertullian (200 A.D.) appeals to the Socialism of the Church as a thing which can be taken for granted, and which excites the wrath of the pagan world :—"And they [the pagans] are angry with us for calling each other brethren. . . . The very thing which commonly puts an end to brotherhood among you [pagans], viz., family property is just that upon the community of which our brotherhood depends. And so we, who are one in mind and soul, have no hesitation about sharing our possessions with each other." Tertullian, *Apol.*, 39.

† Bishop C. Gore, *The Mission of the Church*, p. 143 ; *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 97-107.



the 16th Century, and canon law still bears witness to this in theory.\* All those whom the Church delights to honor, the Fathers and the Saints, from St. Matthew to the author of the *Utopia*, have practised and preached some form or other of what we now call Christian Socialism.†

In her sacraments she has constantly proclaimed the sacredness of common earthly things ; in Baptism she asserts the absolute right of every human being, however young, or poor, or ignorant, to her brotherhood. Indeed, St. Paul, in his splendid comparison of the brotherhood (1 *Cor.* xii) to the one body with many members, wherein if one member suffer all the members suffer with it, bases his whole contention upon this sacrament of Baptism.‡

In the Holy Communion she has maintained the communal character of the highest form of worship ; for, as the *Didaché* says, "if you are sharers in the imperishable things [*i.e.* communicants], how much more must you be sharers ['communists'] in those things that are perishable" ; "therefore thou shalt not turn away from him that hath need, but shalt share all things with thy brother, and shalt not say that anything is thine own."§ This is just what so shocked people when Mr. Stewart Headlam said that those who come to Holy Communion must be holy communists.

By her very existence the Church declares the solidarity of the human race, and its essential unity, free from all distinction of class, sex, or race, "neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus," as St. Paul insists in three separate epistles (*Gal.* iii, 28 ; *Col.* iii, 11 ; 1 *Cor.* xii, 13).

Much of all this has been forgotten, since Christians have devoted all their energies to breaking up the Church into competitive sects, and fighting with each other, and have made an apotheosis of selfish individualism by the Calvinistic heresies of justification by faith without works, the impossibility of falling from grace, and the still more hideous doctrine of predestination. I simply ask Christians of all kinds to be true to their common mother, the historic Church,

\* Two economic doctrines were not only preached, but enforced by the Church courts and accepted by all business men down to the age of the Reformation. One of these was the prohibition of interest. The other was the doctrine of the "just price," which said that a man was not to ask what he could get for a thing, but was to demand only the just price, *viz.*, what it ought to fetch in order to enable the maker of it to lead a decent life according to a recognised standard. These were not mere pious opinions, but were principles universally practised ; and thus for 1,500 years the "selfish machine" of modern economics was not allowed to exist. See Professor Ashley's *Economic History*, vol. i, chap. 3, and ii, 6.

† Many of the sayings of modern Socialists are indeed but echoes of what is to be found in the Fathers, as well as in later writers, including pioneers of the Reformation like Wyclif and Latimer. The protest indeed of the best men in the Church (as distinguished from the official class) has been greatly continuous.

‡ "For in one spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks whether bond or free" (1 *Cor.* xii, 13, R.V.).

§ *Didaché*, or, "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," iv, 8. This early Greek work (which was not discovered till 1883) belongs probably to the 1st half of the 2nd Century ; but the sentence here quoted was taken from the Epistle of Barnabas which is near it in date.

and not be misled by those who have overlaid her teaching with their own selfishness. And to those who are not conscious Socialists I say, Why not? Have you any reason except a selfish one? Why hold back and be half-hearted? You and we are at one. For Christianity is not mere Individualism. Neither is it mere Socialism and water. It is Socialism and fire—the practical religion of those whose inspiration is “comfort, life, and fire of love.”\* It is also true Individualism; because it proclaimed for the first time the infinite value of every human soul. In a pagan world, based upon the exploitation of slaves, the subjection of women, and the slaughter of infants, Christianity proclaimed that every individual human being is infinitely precious; and because all are infinitely important, therefore all are equally important. But this sublime Individualism was to be realised by an equally sublime Socialism, and Socialism of complete co-operation and brotherly love, in which all the members should work together for the good of the whole body.

And to those Socialists who are not consciously Christian, I also say, Why not? You are serving Christ. You and we are at one. We are fighting against the same evils. Look at old devotional books, and you will find at the beginning the ancient tabulated lists of virtues and vices. You will see that we love the same things that you love, Justice, Love, Hope, Fortitude; that we are commanded to do the same “Corporal Works,” to feed, give drink, and clothe. Nay, that we have to fight the same things. There are four “Sins crying to Heaven for Vengeance”; only four, but two of these are Murder and the Sin of Sodom, and the other two are Oppression of the poor and Defrauding the laborers of their wages. You will find, moreover, “Seven Deadly Sins” which you will see at once are just the anti-social sins which you are fighting—Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, Sloth; and you will observe that, with one exception, none of these seven shock the respectable public, though Socialism does. You will further observe that four of these sins—Pride, Covetousness, Envy and Sloth, and often Gluttony as well—are popularly regarded as very gentleman-like qualities.

Will you, then, realize—and it is time you did!—that what you and every good man are fighting, is nothing else than wickedness, and none the less wickedness because it is embodied in statute-books and economic formulæ? Beneath all your political work you have to convert the heart of man. And it is a tough job. You won't convert him by pointing to his interests. He is singularly blind about them, and always has been. You will only convert him by giving him a moral ideal. Is there a better one than Christ? If so, how is it that Socialism can only be spread in those countries where the

\* The *Veni Creator* in the Prayer Book translation. Love or universal charity is the “new commandment” of Christ—the “*novum mandatum*” from which we get our name for “Maundy” Thursday, when Christ said this, and washed the Disciples’ feet. All three chapters of the Great Discourse (*John* xiii—xvi) should be carefully studied.



people have professed the Christian faith for many hundreds of years? The Church has made plenty of mistakes, and its members have committed ruinous sins like other people, and always there have been many Judases within the camp selling the Christ for pieces of silver; but its united voice, its official documents, its pattern saints have seldom faltered; and at least it has driven into men's hard hearts some touch of brotherly love, and has made Socialism already almost possible in Christian countries.\*

This Socialism is its own old teaching revived. It is getting to understand that; and the age of social lethargy and religious competition is passing away. Every Socialist who understands how deeply religion has been concerned in every movement that has ever won the enthusiasm of men, every Socialist who realizes how enormous is the work before him, must welcome the assistance of this ancient and imperishable organ of love and justice. And every Christian who rejoices in the singular growth of religious zeal in recent years must long to see all that huge force given to the service of the Humanity which Jesus Christ has taken up into the Godhead.

For the man who loves much is a Socialist, and the man that loves most is a Saint, and every man that truly loves the brotherhood is in a state of salvation.

We know that we have passed from death unto life,  
Because we love the brethren.

\* If the men of England will take their place and vote in the Parochial Church Councils which were created in 1920, they can make the old Church new and young again. Hitherto labor folk have done little more than grumble. Labor, for instance, got into Parliament in 1906, but did nothing to help the Government in appointing bishops. The Church has been what the people have made it. Now the people have a further chance; for the Parochial Councils make popular representation directly possible.

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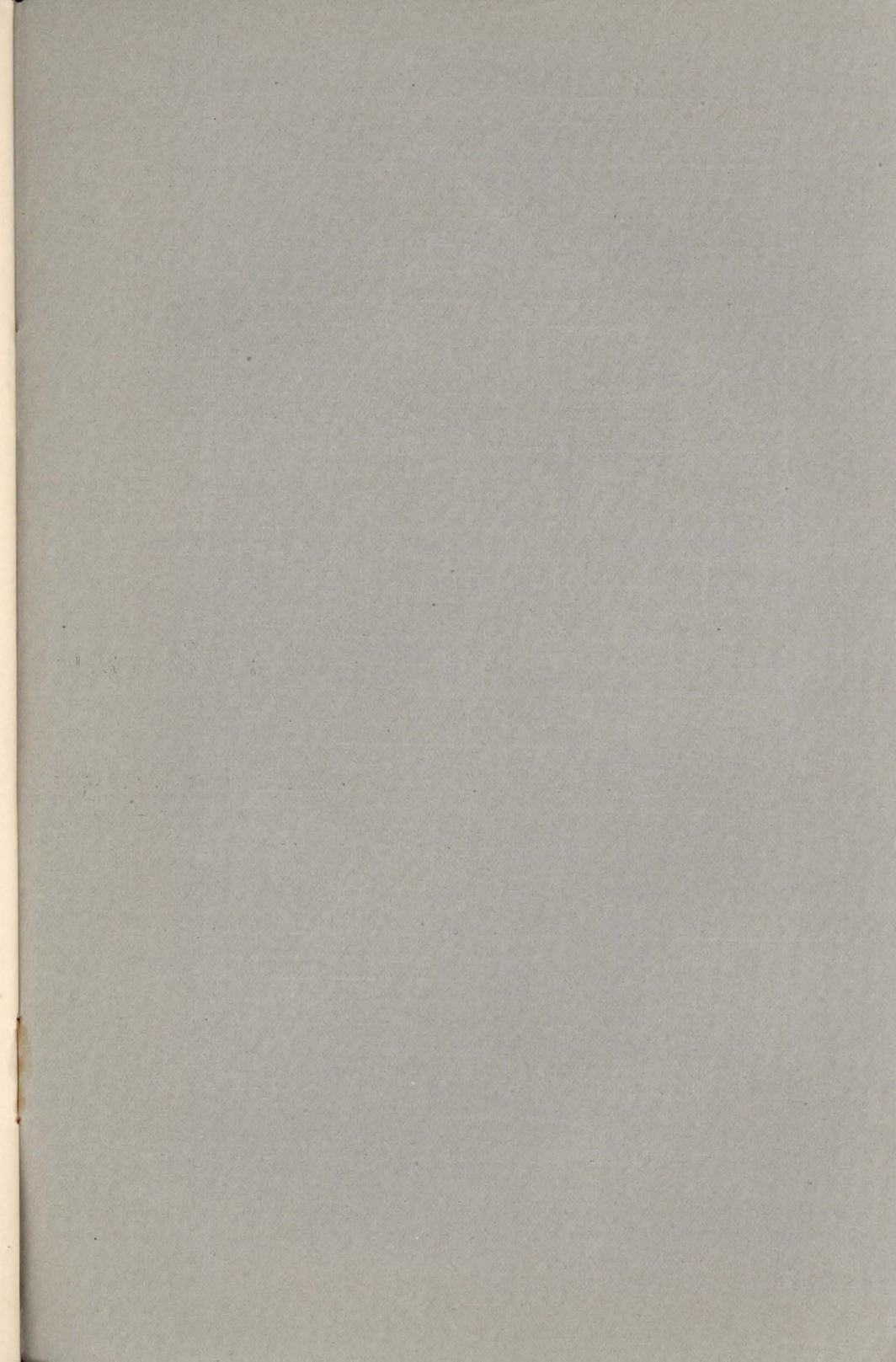
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