

Private property has been denounced as the source of injustice, of greed, of theft, murder, prostitution, and other corruptions. Millions insist on making the community or state the chief or sole owner. Shall communism or socialism supersede our present system?

How about the unearned increment? Is it the result of exploiting labor?

Shall the accumulation and concentration of wealth be limitless? Shall the state try to control inheritances?

Might and privilege have heretofore been the chief makers and executors of the law. Shall this continue to be the case, or shall equity and humanity prevail?

Numerous other momentous questions are involved—questions which affect not only economics, but also our Churches and our civilization. They require profound philosophy for their apprehension, to say nothing of their solution. Shall now these themes, which involve our highest interests, be left to the arbitrament of class prejudice and passion, or shall they be impartially studied, and then settled on the principles of right and Christianity? Surely to ministers of the Gospel the first and strongest appeal with respect to the social question is that it be profoundly studied and thoroughly mastered. Why can they not take the lead in passing from the shallow view to the deep, from exciting details to the underlying principles, and from the pimples on the surface to the organic disease, of which they are but the manifestation?

#### Papers on Social Science and Comparative Religion.

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#### IX.—SOME PHASES OF GERMAN SOCIALISM.

SOCIALISM is not, as some suppose, the vagaries of harebrained revolutionists. It is a carefully thought out scientific system. It represents the convictions of men who are terribly

in earnest; and it cannot be denied that they have something to be earnest about.

Socialism is a power which no civilized government any longer ignores. But its movements are such as cannot ultimately be controlled by a police force whose function is to keep the peace with a club. It represents an evolution—perhaps a revolution—whose hand can be stayed only by securing to society in some better way than that which it proposes certain general results at which it aims.

There are inequalities in society which seem to be inevitable. There are other inequalities which are the result of injustice. Man's blood cries from the ground against his brother, and the cry of the laborer who has reaped down the fields and whose rightful share of the product has been kept back by fraud, has entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Something has gone wrong in the management of human affairs.

The socialist believes that he has found the deep seat of that wrong. He boldly parts company with orthodox theology, declaring that the trouble is not in depraved human nature, but in a false basis of society; and he sets about to remedy the evil by a revolutionary scheme, social, economic, political, which has never been equaled in magnitude, and whose far-reaching consequences probably no mind has adequately conceived.

The promulgation of this remarkable philosophy began within the present century, and the development of the socialistic idea as a practical force in the state belongs to the last half of the century. The English Socialist Owen laid his scheme for a socialistic community before the House of Commons in 1817. Saint-Simon's speculations took a definite socialistic direction during the same year. Fourier published his great work, "*Théorie des Quatre Mouvements*" in 1808, but it had no influence until the theories of Owen and Saint-Simon were on the