

## THE FARMER QUESTION.

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they are well fitted. But we, as members of the great working class, as necessary cogs and wheels in the machinery of production, are called upon to sanction, and even second their endeavor. To fit ourselves for this mission is our duty to the race to which we belong, to humanity. Therefore, we must understand that our interests are bound up with the interests of our class, the working class. A form of society, a system that will free the world from unemployment, that will give to the wage-worker, the full product of his labor, that will take from the capitalist the power to exploit and rule, will free the farmer from his arch-enemy, the capitalist, and his economic enemy, the out of work wage-workers, who continually flood his field of production, making a chronic oversupply of farm produce which keeps prices down, as explained above.

It will be noticed that though there is a difference of opinion among Socialists as to where and how the farmer is exploited, there is no difference of opinion as to the remedy. We all agree that the farmer is being exploited and that organization and co-operation of all the workers, is the remedy.

In an article in a former issue, the writer makes the statement in effect, that there would be no oversupply if all had the amount of food they need. I do not know whether this is correct or not but I am very sure, if it is not, that there would be no difficulty in persuading the surplus farmers to go back to some other occupation, providing they had security and assurance of a comfortable "living." Many of us do not exactly love the farms or the life, and if society decides that it is necessary that we remain on the farms and do our best to provide the world with the raw material for the manufacture of food, we must be compensated for our labor equally with any other worker, no matter whether nature rewards our labor with a lavish or a stingy hand.

Read and study fellow farmer, don't let the fact that you have to hire help to get in your seed, or to take off your crop, for which you are charged more than you think you should be, warp your judgment and make you a traitor to your class, and a tool of your enemy, the capitalist. Wages, (the price of labor-power) are set by supply and demand, just as the price of any other commodity is set. When men were plentiful in 1913, I have seen good men getting as low as 50c a day, and I never knew a farmer pay more than he had to, because the wage was too little. It is not the avarice of the men which sets the price of labor-power (though all want as much as they can get,) but an economic law.

The capitalist system is the cause of all our troubles. Systems, like other forms of life, are born, grow, come to maturity and decay. We are living in an epoch when a system is decaying, and are privileged to live at a time when a new system is being born.

Read and study, so that the new form of life may be ushered into existence with as little pain as possible. Pain there must be, to the

## The Materialistic Origin of Three Pillars of Modern Society

PROFESSOR Edward Jenks in his "Short History of Politics," states that there is no political institution of greater importance, none has been the subject of greater controversy, than the institution of property. "There is none, therefore," he says, "more fit for the application of the 'historical method' which knows no prejudices and admits no passions, but simply relates facts."

Around this institution of property, the central pillar of class societies, the political activities of society may be said to have raged for ages. Contrary to the opinions of many people, property is not coeval with man. Our historical method of enquiry shows that there was a time when neither land nor other means of existence were personal property, but were instead owned in common. Certain savage tribes in the hunting stage of development even today illustrate this, in that the individual only appropriates to himself his personal adornments, clothing and certain weapons. All the members of the tribe share in the proceeds of the day's chase and camp and live together. This restricted idea among savages, ancient and modern, of what should be personal property is the result of their material environment. Hunting and fishing, when the implements of the chase are crude and undeveloped, can only be practiced jointly. Also the savage is surrounded by such perpetual danger from both real and imaginary terrors that he can not exist in a state of isolation.

However, wherever man has advanced into the pastoral stage, the conditions of this kind of life produce a change in the ideas of property. The rudimentary idea of the savage hunter undergoes a development. The necessities of life are more plentiful and more certain. The individual can produce more than is absolutely essential to his existence. "The continued association," says Jenks, "of the herdsman with his cattle and sheep, his perception of the increased advantages which can be derived from them—their hides, wool and milk—strengthen the relationship between him and them. In this stage moveable chattels, (i.e., "cattle") may fairly be said to have reached the stage of property, even of individual property. But so also

human race as a whole, but the pain may be lessened if all the tissues of the live part of society, the working, the producing class, will bend their energy to the task before them and give to their children and their children's children, a system that is alive, healthy and vigorous. Shall we be doing our duty to our children if we oppose the inauguration of a system that is for their well-being, that is necessary to their very existence? Shall we tell them "when the fight is over and the battle won," that we did all we could to prevent the system ever being born, and that instead of educating ourselves and others for the great change, we were among those who refused to be educated, were among the tissues which had to decay along with the decaying system? H. F. S.

must wives, children and slaves. As we have seen, the perception of the value of human labor leads to a desire to appropriate it." In those times the chief appropriation took the form of chattel slavery. Here we reach a new stage which marked a most profound and radical departure in social evolution. Individual property underwent an extension, and slavery, and probably permanent marriage became two of our great institutions.

It is a common idea that the beginnings of society was in the family, but such is not the case. Enquiry has shown that the primitive form of association was the tribe, or more correctly speaking the "pack," as it seems to have resembled more nearly a hunting than a social organization. It was the tribe of later times, which we generally have in mind, which was a federation of class and families.

The earlier form of social unit was what is known as the totem group, which is found universally among savages. The sexes live apart and the unmarried individuals of one totem group may not marry within the totem, but with those of another totem which is fixed upon in accordance with the rules of an elaborate system of relationship. When a man marries, he marries the whole of the women of her totem. Thus all the men of one totem are the husbands of the whole of the women of another totem, of the same generation. It is conjectured that this system grew up out of the desire to prevent the marriage of near relations.

The introduction of the domestication of animals, however, broke this system down and brought in the Patriarchal order and the separate family. Human labor became of value in the sense that it could produce more than was necessary for its subsistence. The tasks of breeding and tending cattle, sheep and goats, by the men, and by the women of spinning wool, milking and making butter and cheese showed this. And a man who has been very successful in cattle rearing requires a number of hands to keep his herds in order.

Permanent marriage is one of the essential features of patriarchal society. To quote Professor Jenks again: "By superficial writers, its appearance is often attributed to some vague improvement in morality or taste. Unhappily the facts point to a much less exalted origin, viz., the desire of man to secure for himself exclusively the labor of woman and her offspring. If the change had come about from exalted ideas of morality, we should probably have found two features in the new system—(1) equality of numbers between the man and the woman; (2) free consent to the marriage on both sides. It is notorious that just the opposite are the facts of the patriarchal system, at any rate at its earlier stages. Polygamy or plurality of wives, is the rule; and while the husband is not at all particular about the conduct of his wife with other men, he is intensely strict about appropriating the whole of her labor; and all

her offspring, no matter who is the real father, belong to him. Again, the ancient forms of marriage by capture, and marriage by purchase, point irresistibly to the conclusion that the woman had little or no voice in the matter. . . . In patriarchal society, the father of a round dozen of strong and well-favored daughters was considered a rich man.

"Slavery arises from the practice of keeping alive captives taken in war instead of putting them to death. In savage days, wars are usually the result of scarcity of food and result in the killing and eating the members of a stranger 'pack.' But, with the increasing certainty of food supply, resulting among other benefits from pastoral pursuits, cannibalism becomes unnecessary, and captives are carefully kept alive, in order that they may labor for their captors. . . . Slavery is an ugly thing, but it is better than cannibalism. Again, however, we notice that the upward step was due, not to exalted morality, but to practical convenience. Morality is the result, not the cause, of social amelioration."

To return to the institution of property. "As soon as we arrive at the agricultural stage we are at the brink of a great development of the idea of property in land. The pastoralist regards his 'country' much as the hunter. . . . There is yet no individual right in land, for the land is still regarded only as pasture and hunting-ground; and there is no need of partition for these purposes. But the agriculturist soon forms new ideas. As each new improvement in cultivation makes land more valuable, the clan, or the family, or the man who made the improvement, becomes less willing to see it pass into the hands of others, less willing to move on to other land on which less labor has been expended. And so agricultural land became appropriated to the clan amongst whose members it was periodically interchanged; and, finally, even this redistribution ceased, and the family, ultimately the individual, became permanently associated with a specific piece of land.

"This is a long step, but it is still far from bringing us to the modern notion of private property in land. All that we have arrived at is that the same man may go on year after year plowing the same piece of land, and it may be, his children after him. But that would not satisfy the landowner of the present day." Landlordism has other features which will be dealt with later.

Thus we see that the conditions for change in society is a change in the manner in which men procure their livelihood; each stage of economic development having its corresponding setting of ideas, social institutions and customs; and that social progress and well-being is involved in the development of the means of production.

News is desired on the organizing of educational classes and on their progress. Drop us a line. We hear that Victoria and Prince Rupert have commenced or are about to do so. What about other places?