

The socialist has painted too black a picture. It is not merely that he has contrasted the dreamed ideals of socialism with the actual facts of the competitive order; he has viewed those actual facts out of all perspective. In his survey of society the one instance of failure is ever present to his gaze, the nine of success do not come within the range of his misery-focused lens. He cannot see the woods for the few decaying branches on the trees. His ear is attuned only to inharmonies. He sees the reeking foster of the slum, but is blind to the millions of homes in city and town and country where hard work brings forth its fruits of modest comfort and life is held well worth the living. He is alert to the occasional failure in adjustment of supply and demand, but passes over the continuous miracle by which the products of the ends of the earth are brought to each man's door and the world's markets made one. He culls industriously the instances of graft and dishonesty in contemporary business life, no difficult task, and presents them as typical of current practice, forgetting the sound basis of the majority that provides the drab background for the scarlet sins, forgetting that no enduring commercial structure can be built on fraud, that general honesty and fair dealing are absolutely indispensable to the working of our complicated and interdependent industrial system, that the fabric of credit which the most few generations have reared assumes a general high standard of business ethics—not the perfect standard of the closet moralist, but a pretty presentable work-a-day approximation; that, in short, unless there existed a general expectation of soundness, honesty, and experience, the operations of the exceptional work would be impossible. He is like the yellow journal which mirrors not life, but the exceptional sensation and crime that mer life leaves John Smith in obscurity if for a lifetime he does honest work and devotes himself to his home interests, and exalts him to front-page publicity if on a day he loses himself in drink and murders half the family.

The socialist indictment, again, ignores the stronger points of the existing order. Under this system the most powerful and abiding forces in average human nature, self-interest and family interest, are harnessed in society's service. The experience of centuries it was noted in Lesson V has shown that, day in and day out, the average man will not labor steadily and effectively unless there is some direct connection between his effort and the welfare of himself or family. Men will throw uncounted energy into a sport or a hobby; a fortunate few find their day's work of absorbing interest; in times of crisis many will give life itself for their fellows. But in the daily round of routine toil, with no drums beating, no hobby-interest leading on, we find that the spur of necessity, the lure