

est hours, to provide a better means of development than any system of the past.

But what concerns us, who live under the present system is not how much better is this system than the past, but is it perfect? It most certainly is not!

In the first place, the perfect system would provide employment for all, not a man willing to work should be compelled to live in idleness. But statistics show us that thousands of men in our own fair land are forced to idleness. Surely the system which denies work to these strong and able-bodied men who are willing to toil, is not a perfect system. It cannot produce the right kind of men.

Whether this fact is due to unjust taxation, to labor organization, to spend-thrift habits, to badly managed currency, is not a question for us. But what should concern the right thinking economist would be what ethical influence will such a system as we now have, exert upon the rising generation?

Another defect in our system seems to be an insufficient wage. The system known as the Manchester school, and from which we are gradually emerging, declared that the employer should hire his labor in the cheapest market and the laborer should sell his labor in the highest market. That is, the capitalist was to pay as small a price as possible for labor. What this system has produced can be seen from the emigration lists of European countries. What our present system can produce, the future will tell. But certainly it cannot be the duty of the employer to pay the smallest possible wage. There is a certain product of labor and capital and it is certainly the duty of the capitalist to give a just proportion of this product to the laborer in return for just and honest labor. The average rate of wages is one of the elements by which we can determine a fair and just proportion of this product but it is only one of the elements. We have not brought our economic system to its proper ethical basis until we have learned "that it is wrong" as Ruskin says, "to grind up men and women to make a cheap fabric." What is a proper living wage, it is not our province to determine; but it should be such as will provide food and shelter at least. It ought to provide books, pictures and education, it ought to enable the man to earn the livelihood for his wife and children.

Again the system which is to produce men, and good men, must be such as will provide labor of an educative character, or will allow leisure for education. Under the old