

The Inception of Slavery.

So far removed in the dim past is the period of human development previous to the appearance of slavery that it has left little historic trace beyond the scattered remains of primitive handiwork that have been unearthed from time to time and any conception of that period would be almost impossible were it not for its present day survivals, the races yet existing in a state of primitive savagery.

By piecing the information derived from a study of these races, together with what can be gathered or guessed from the prehistoric remains, such knowledge as we have on the subject has been attained.

The characteristic that marks the ante-slavery period from ours is the non-existence of property in the true sense of the word. Personal possessions the primitive savage has, such as his weapons and his dwelling, but the resources of the earth, being free of access to all, are the property of none. For property is not so much the assertion of the claim of the individual as owner as a denial of the claim of all others to ownership.

The Economics of Savagery.

The economics of this period are as simple and crude as its tools but are nevertheless worthy of attention as, owing to that very simplicity they afford a clearer conception of the fact that labor is the determining factor in comparing the values of articles. A fact of supreme importance to the Socialist conception.

Production under savagery differs from that of today in being hand production instead of machine, and individual instead of social production. That is to say, each article produced is completed by one individual instead of being as it is to-day the result of the toil of a whole army of workers each one doing a little to it. Furthermore under savagery articles are produced for use, under capitalism, for profit.

The elimination of these three factors, social production, machinery, and profit, reduces economics to their simplest form.

What exchange, or barter, of articles would take place under savagery would be carried on clearly upon the basis of the labor involved in producing the respective articles. Thus a savage wishing to barter, say, ornaments for weapons would exchange them upon the basis of the labor it would cost him to produce either. He would know how long it took him to make the ornaments and he would have a pretty good idea how