

of long established custom, and there are others, superior sort of persons, who brush the consideration of these things aside with a haughty superciliousness. Again, there are others who declare flatly that the order of things in social affairs as we find it is by the appointment of Divine Providence, and we are guilty in seeking to disturb it. In other words, these people, to relieve themselves of responsibility and quiet their consciences, would have us believe that the Divine Father, the giver of all good, is the author of wrong and injustice among men. This seems to me little short of blasphemy, yet this is practically the attitude assumed by numbers, even by many who ought to be the moral guides of the people to lead them in the paths of justice and righteousness.

It does not need a lengthened argument to prove that there is something fundamentally wrong in our social system, it is only too palpably manifest that notwithstanding the wonderful increase in the production of wealth in the last half century by discoveries in the arts and sciences, and the application of the power of steam, the rich are only becoming richer and the poor poorer, and more dependent upon the wealthy few.

The production of wealth in one year now in proportion to the population is probably far more than double what it was fifty years ago, consequently there ought to be more for each and all than there was fifty years ago. But what do we see? What is the fact? In proportion as the rapidity of production increases, in that proportion does wealth centre in the hands of a comparatively few. Each successive year the matter becomes worse, and not only an increasing *amount* but an ever increasing *proportion* of the products of labour goes to enrich those of great wealth. It is like sliding down hill, at first going somewhat slowly, but as we proceed the speed increases, and it is not hard to tell what must inevitably be the consequence within a very short period as wealth becomes more and more concentrated in the hands of a few individuals in a few of the great cities. Although we may shut our eyes to it, the ultimate