

societies together for their good, and made possible the splendid progress which has marked the last fifty years.

On a false foundation, Socialism is trying to erect a superstructure of false premises. Paint and decorate it as you will, fill the gorgeous fabric with pictures to allure, and with music to attract, it will but become the more dangerous trap for the unwary. In our cities there are expert inspectors regularly appointed under municipal laws to condemn dangerous structures, but in our Social and Political world the practice seems to be to let those who are so foolish as to embark in such an enterprise bear the consequences, taking no precaution against the danger to which legitimate institutions are exposed.

The whole conception embraced in the Socialist creed is confined within the limits of idealism. There is nothing natural or practical connected with its formula which is founded on fiction, and yet it seems there are many people in this practical age who, enticed by the fanciful pictures presented, accept it as the new gospel and preach it as the only means of regenerating, renovating, renewing and readjusting the social structure of the whole world and to turn it into a paradise on earth.

If this gospel were to remain the harmless dream that some people claim it to be, then there would, indeed, be little cause for anxiety concerning it—but is it harmless? Is there really no need for taking precaution or of offering opposition to its spread? Let us examine; let us probe deeper and see.

When the converts and adherents of this new gospel, in immense numbers, join themselves together into clubs, lodges, societies, etc., and consolidate into national and international leagues for political purposes—when they individually and collectively solemnly pledge themselves to follow a certain leadership—when they vow fealty to their creed and renounce their personal independence, adjure their religion, foreswear their allegiance to their country and loyalty to its government, regardless of the consequences to themselves or their fellow citizens—when, I repeat, they are willing to do this and much more for the sake of what they call the Great Cause, can they, in reason, be looked upon as a harmless organization?

When this organization holds conventions composed of leading members or elected delegates from all quarters of the globe—when these delegates discuss and denounce existing institutions, propose and pass resolutions demanding their abolition and overthrow, when they pass laws for their own government in accordance with their professed creed and issue dictatorial manifestoes of world-wide significance, giving directions and instructions to their millions of devotees, can it be said in reason that they are entirely harmless?

Do the governments of Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States look upon organized Socialism as harmless and unworthy of notice? Do not political parties that are in power seek to placate and cajole this Socialism, while they have to resist its encroachment and presumptuous dictation?

Do not political parties that are in opposition seek to win the support