# WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

It is necessary, at times, to go back to first principles, and in view of the nonsense that has recently been, and is being, talked about Socialism it may be worth while to set out briefly what Socialism really is.

We have been told that the Budget is Socialism, or, at least, Socialistic; why, we have so far been at a loss to discover. It is suggested, however, that the Budget is a Socialist Budget because it devises fresh means for taxing the rich. But that has nothing whatever to do with Socialism. Under present conditions taxation is raised for the purpose of carrying on the government of the rich, by the rich, for the rich, and the rich themselves raise the revenue for carrying on their own government. If one section of the rich governing class pay more than their proper share to the cost of government and another pay less than their proper share, that is a matter in dispute between the two sections concerned. It is of no importance to the general body of the people, or the working class.

Socialism is not thin-end-of-the-wedge taxation of unearned increment, any more than it is Tariff Reform, Free Trade or Protection. All taxes are raised today for the maintenance, preservation and administration of the existing social order. For this purpose—one which is of vital interest alone to the class which rules—certain revenues are required. In the main, these revenues must be drawn from the wealth which is acquired day by day from the unpaid labor of the working class. They must be drawn from this source, because there is none other available, except the slight margin beyond actual bare subsistence which the producers of all the wealth are able to secure, and which they spend on petty luxuries.

The ruling class—greedy, avid, chargined at not having stripped the workers quite bare in the process of exploitation—display extraordinary ingenuity in developing devices for tapping this second source of revenue by means of indirect taxation.

So clever and greedy have they been in this direction, indeed, that they manage to raise nearly half their total revenue in this fashion!

Socialists wish to cut off this source of revenue altogether by abolishing all indirect taxation; and by raising the whole revenue by direct taxes on all incomes above a certain minimum; thus making the ruling class pay, themselves, for their own business. But even if that were done; if no revenue were raised by indirect taxation, but every farthing was paid by the ruling class out of the surplus value they extract from the workers; that would not be Socialism. The class monopoly of the means of production and of existence, with the class domination based thereon, would remain unimpaired, and the subjection and exploitation of the producers would continue as heretofore.

But if the abolition of indirect taxation, and the relief of the working class from all fiscal burdens, would not be Socialism, still less can any device for relieving one section of the ruling class of taxation at the expense of another be so described. The possession by A of a piece of land which B requires in order to build a factory or warehouse or dwelling-house thereon, as a means of exploiting the workers, enables him, it may be, to exact from B an inordinate and ever-increasing share of the surplus value which the latter acquires in the course of exploitation. The latter, therefore, may quite reasonably desire to relieve himself of some part of his burden of taxation by taxing the "unearned increment" of A; but whether he succeeds in doing this or not makes not the slightest difference to the exploited workers. Taking the rate of exploitation as two-thirds—a moderate estimate, generally conceded by the best authorities; for every three pounds' worth of wealth the workers produce they receive one pound and the ruling class take two. Now, whether B shares the two pounds equally with A, and pays all the taxes himself, or whether he is compelled to give A thirty shillings out of the two pounds and then compels A to pay all the taxes; or whether A is able to get only fifteen shillings from B and still pay a large proportion of the taxes—all these considerations are obviously matters of moment for A and B, but are of no concern whatever to the producers, who are despoiled of two out of every three pounds they earn, however their despoilers may share out their plunder. The taxation of "unearned increment," therefore, or any other kind of juggling with the incidence of taxation, is mere burden-shifting, and cannot properly, by any stretch of language or the imagination, be described as Socialism.

Nor is it Socialism to use any part of revenue so raised in giving doles to the producers in the shape of old age pensions or "labor exchanges." Socialism means the abolition of the exploitation of the workers, not that some small portion of the results of exploitation should be given back to them to mitigate their misery. It is better, of course, that they should get back some, however little, of the robbery of which they are victims, than lose all; but this method of feeding the dog off his own tail is not Socialism by any means.

Socialism is not some special method of taxation, nor is a Socialist a Budget possible in a capitalist State. But neither is Socialism any of the other things it is often supposed to imply, nor are these things Socialism.

Socialism means, essentially and fundamentally, the social ownership, social control and social use of all the material means of social life; and the consequent abolition of the class domination on the one side and subjection on the other which necessarily and naturally arises from the class ownership, control and use of these things. That is Socialism, and anything short of that is not Socialism. Anyone believing in that and working for that is a Socialist, and anyone not so believing is not a Socialist, whatever he may call himself. Agitation directed to winning converts to that objective is Socialist propaganda, and legislation directed towards its realization is Socialist—or Socialistic—legislation.

The change in material conditions involved by transferring the class ownership of the means of production into social ownership will necessarily result in the modification of all social relations and the whole of social life in all its aspects. But with these we are not primarily concerned. We have no concern with a man's religious beliefs or with his opinions on marriage, medicine or dietetics. We have, it is true, to fight institutional religions and social conventions where these oppose themselves as obstacles to the material development. Apart from that we, as Socialists, are not directly concerned. Changes and modifications in these matters must follow, not precede, economic change. First change the material conditions and all these other things will be added unto you.—H. Quelch in Justice, London, England.

### Well-informed Editors (?)

Comrade W. W. Tucker, of Vernon, B. C., wrote to the Montreal Weekly Star for information about the Socialist movement in Canada. The following is the letter he received in reply. The letter speaks for itself. When the editor of the biggest paper published in Canada shows such absolute ignorance of the Socialist movement the Socialists can make up their minds that the capitalists have a cinch on Canada. The following is the letter.

Mr. W. H. Tucker, Vernon, B. C.

Dear Sir:—In this free and liberty-loving country where any man may call himself a Socialist and name a creed to suit his views it is difficult if not impossible to say just exactly what Socialism is. Politically there is no Social party in Canada. There are no Socialists in the House of Commons and so far as we are aware there is no leader in Canada to whom the Socialists owe allegiance.

As to your question whether Socialism would abolish poverty and war we are not able to answer this question. To us it seems incredible that any type of socialism with which we are familiar is at all likely to accomplish such beneficiary results.

Yours truly,
Editor Family Herald & Weekly Star.

### White Slave Traffic

"At about $1800 a head, the average price of negro girls on the auction block fifty years ago, the 300,000 white slaves in the United States today represent an investment of $540,000,000. Each year 67,000, or $120,000,000 worth of these women, are sacrificed in the highly financed districts of vice throughout this country, and an equal number of recruits are procured each year to take their places. Of this vast army of unfortunates, whose march from the home to the morgue or the insane asylum by the vice route has been shown by statistics to average but five miserable years, Chicago to-day contributes 37,000."

In these words, Dr. Jean T. Zimmerman, president of the National White Cross League, in an address before the Woodlawn Woman's Club of Chicago, recently strove to impress upon her audience the extent and horror of the traffic in women.

The scientific socialist, unlike his utopian brother, is not an artist. He does not paint pretty pictures of the future. It is with reluctance that he even depicts the broad outlines of the co-operative commonwealth which is to be. He is concerned, not with schemes, but with tendencies. He does not believe that societies can be made and remade at will. He understands that society is an organism, subject to all the laws of growth that govern other organisms; and it is upon the operation of these laws that he relies for the realization of his ideals.—W. R. S.

# Toilers and Idlers

Our Serial Story

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(Continued.)

## CHAPTER VII.

A stamping noise came from the cellar stables in the yard; an echo of shrill childish voices. Otherwise it was very quiet. The open window let in fresh pure air; rays of sunlight played on the wall. It was curious to watch the shapes of birds and animals in the plaster ceiling, made by cracks and lumpy accidents.

He dozed and yawned and stretched himself in rare content. The early stiffness in joint and muscle was felt no more, but it was still an intense pleasure to rest after hard work. He recalled the delight of falling asleep last night. Sleep after wholesome fatigue, innocent of a thousand torments—the noises of the city, the quiet of the country, a window open an inch too wide, a wrong pillow, cares anent social matters, schemes of revenge, self-pity and self-disgust. And now when he awoke, instead of languor, enlivened by cold water and tonics, a natural vigor and strength, clear head, appetite. At the thought he bared his arms to feel the firm, swelling muscles. If the skin was no longer white and soft, neither were the arms tender, fat, effeminate. It was as well the room had no mirror; he would have been satisfied with the new firmness of features, but the unshaven cheeks might have shocked his fastidious taste.

Various ideas, more or less novel, came to him.

"I have never been so immensely well off. What is the reason? Is physical health the entire secret of happiness, just to eat, drink and sleep? Or, more likely, work has an effect on the mind as well as the body; the mind is exercised, fed and refreshed. Work brings joy and harmony. Any kind of work, anywhere, not a special far-off imported brand as one used to fancy. But it certainly seems odd in one way that the less a man has the happier he is.—It seems odd because man is used to treat himself worse than his horse or dog. He would never think of making a dog happy by giving him too much biscuit, a dozen blankets, nothing to do but whine in a kennel. We believe so thoroughly in our superiority to the animal kingdom, despite the scientists, that we act worse than the animals.

"I can imagine comments at the Belvedere. Where are those anecdotes? One might advise them to stop killing themselves. Ask them to visit me in office hours, if they can get up early enough.

"It might be better for one to open a studio. Why not? Paint ten hours a day, make it work. The main thing is to work. I would let the landscapes go, take up something about people and things, life itself. What a subject, 'Scenes from a worker's life.' Nothing could be more picturesque.

"Picturesque labor? Ah, yes. Does it seem like that to the men who do not work as a recreation? The health and joy of toil must be realities in every case; but that does not hinder conditions. Take for example the consumptive molder, who ought to be in a hospital; the hungry apprentice; the painful struggles of the Day family through illness; the man without a foot whose humility and cheer make blacker the wrong done to him. . . It is evident I have been thinking about the welfare of a certain worthy young man. He is well; the world is well. But it is hardly time to go into business or paint pictures—walking off with a bow of thanks for the gift of life, health, happiness."

Such reflections were ended by a mild knock at the door and a discreet voice, "May I come in, sir?"

It was Rensen's valet with two suit cases of clean linen.

"Good morning, Williams. So you got my wire?"

"Thank you, sir. Only this morning, owing to my negligence."

"I hope you are quite well."

"Thank you sir. I am glad to find you so well."

Williams bent himself and carefully unpacked the suit cases, distributing the contents between the mantle, closet and shelf and a chair, as if all was quite natural. On second thought he took the articles from the chair and replaced them in one of the cases. It occured to him to dust the stove with his handkerchief. He arranged the shoes beside the bed and drew the window shades a trifle. Williams was rather stout, pink cheeked, with sparse hair parted in the middle; he dressed well and looked like a retired financier.

"Nothing surprises you," said Rensen, sitting up in bed.

"On the contrary, sir, I am perpetually surprised." The man inserted a new pair of laces in the foundry brogans.

"Of course. You are too well bred to show it."

"Yes, sir. When I was with Lord Stevelstoke in Petersburg—but history repeats itself. Occurances recur."

"What do you mean by that? Was there much talk at my disappearance?"

"Yes, sir; there was general solicitude at the club, and a number of telephone inquiries. I feared lest the newspapers might get on the track. Happily I was able to allay undue alarm."

"What means did you use?"

"I informed some of our intimate club friends, sir, that, as it happened with Lord Stevelstoke in Petersburg, the absence was probably due—not improbably due—to an interprise of gallantry. I hope, sir, that was a prudent step?" The man dropped his eyes.

"Explain yourself." Rensen was largely indignant. "What ground had you to circulate any such nonsense?"

"I am very sorry, sir, if my discretion was at fault."

"You got that up, I suppose, as the most natural and creditable excuse."

"Not entirely, sir. Knowing the direction of your walk that morning, and how conspicuous was your appearance—compared to the usual business throng of that hour—I ventured inquiries of the police officers along the avenue. No names, of course, were mentioned, since the description sufficed. I learned at length that you had met a tall, uncommon person—seemingly a young stranger or one out of her native sphere. Apparently, that is—. I was reassured, sir."

Rensen, angry and ashamed, looked out of the window.

The respectful valet placed a shaving outfit on the mantel. He tried three razors on his thumb, shook his head and began to strop a fourth razor. An expression of dismay came over his smooth, mild face as glancing round the room he saw no sign of hot water.

"Does it still look to you as it did?" said Rensen, and immediately regretted the question.

"I confess, sir, I am rather puzzled." His polite eyes swept around the room and scanned the empty trucks in the tenement yard. "The environment is scarcely what one might expect—and yet, Lord Stevelstoke— May I fetch some hot water to shave, and assist you to dress."

"No," said Rensen, disgusted at the idea of personal services.

"Do you intend to rest awhile, sir?"

"I don't need you at all, Williams. You may go back to the club and not come here again until you're sent for."

"Beg pardon, sir. Are you dissatisfied with me?"

"Not personally. I don't need you now, that's all. If people ask any questions, just say I'm quite well and attending to my own affairs."

Thank you, sir. There are a number of minor matters, such as the two spring suits and the overcoat lately ordered. Shall we have the tailor wait, or—ah—"

"Don't bother me, Williams. Pay everybody, and send everything back. Do what you like."

"Thank you, sir. Good morning—Ah, how stupid of me. These are some letters that came recently."

"Williams!" The man came back.

"I beg pardon, sir."

"Do you know what you are?"

"I beg pardon, sir."

"You are the parasite of a parasite."

"Thank you, sir," said Williams, bowing himself out with a dubious gentle smile. He closed the door softly.

Rensen immediately thought he ought to have told him to look for another position. The salary of the parasite's parasite was enough to support at least four families of workingmen.

The letters of principal interest came from his aunt and from Gracia Blake-Lawrence. The former inquired with stately affection what had happened to her dear nephew all this time; hoped he was doing nothing to endanger his health, and told about a new charity in which the old school society folk were interested. A playful stroke of sarcasm was aimed at the increasing tendency to self-advertisement among fashionable people, even conservative families; but what could one expect of a time when young matrons had secretaries to write their social notes? Mrs. Sarah Rensen Moriss' stately amiable personality, almost a relic of a past age, came up vividly as he read. It was really too bad he had neglected the old lady, who probably cared more for him than anybody else in the world

The other letter, on fawn color rough sheets, scented with ylang-ylang and bearing a gilt monogram, had a tone of pretty petulance.

Gracia reproached him for breaking an engagement to a dinner dance. The rudeness of his conduct almost made her hysterical, but at the last moment she rembered she had not declined the escort of a Sardinian nobleman. . . . Papa was complaining he had no one to gamble with at the club. He seemed to know about the disappearance but would not tell, only laughing and saying nonsense. In fact, everybody was saying funny things, which, whether one believed them or not, were painful to a true friend. Gracia on her part was willing to forgive all, if the wanderer would take her to the last opera of the season and give his word of honor that he was not in a plot to foist Sardibian nobility upon her. A postscript referred to the cut of a new Paris frock.

(To be continued)

### O Pubblebub President

The following frenzy is put forth by that frenzied financier, T. Lawson. The Montreal Star publishes it under the heading, "Has T. W. Lawson gone crazy?" The people are easy marks and Lawson knows it and knows they will stand for any dope he wants to sling them. The only thing that Lawson really fears is Socialism. Socialism is the one thing that will win for the common working people freedom from the trust problems and the trust grip. The following is the effusion.

"Salutations, O mighty Trusts."
"Salutations, O Pubblebub President."
"You before me, Gaston."
"I to thy rear, Alphonse."
"Salutations, O mighty Trusts."
"Salutations, O Pubblebub President."

And from the depths, subcellaring the coalbin, came forth a squeak like into that of a vaccinated, anti-toxined house:

"And is there no relief for us, the Peepul, O Pubblebub President?"

And from the iced ridgepole of stilted prices came a squeaked echo:

"No relief for us, the Peepul, O Pubblebub President?"

The mortage crop is always good.

# THE PEOPLE'S POEMS

### How Long, O Labor, Say?

By A. B. Clinch.

How long shall mammon rule our land,
How long its power sway?
How long the world bow at its shrine,
How long, O Labor, say?
How long shall workers toil and sweat
In mill, shop, field and mine,
While idlers rich, in mansions grand,
Debauch in lust and wine?

How long shall those who make all wealth
Get but a paltry share,
While he who owns but does not work
Becomes a millionaire?
How long shall labor in factories slave
Long hours in tainted air,
While owners back in foreign lands
With ne'er a thought or care?

How long shall poodles of the rich
Be gorged with cream and meat,
While children of the working men
Oft faint for crumbs to eat?
How long shall grasping capital
For profit white slaves sell
To be the serfs of mammon's lust
Bound in a living hell?

How long shall idler's cats and dogs
Bask warm from winter's cold,
While workers' children shivering lie
'Neath coverings thin and old?
How long shall pets of idle rich
In silks and pearls be decked,
While Workers' children dress in rags
Which scarce their lives protect?

How long shall "Interests" rule parliament
Controlling court, the press
While toilers plead for rights denied
And languish in distress?
How long shall jobless workingmen
By stealth, in box cars ride,
While those who filched the wealth he made
In palace cars abide?

How long shall these conditions last?
How long, O Labor, say?
Till "workers of the world unite"
There'll be no better way.
Till nature's gifts by all the world
Are owned and used by all;
Till all mankind co-operate,
And hear each brother's call.

Then shall be realized in fact
The brotherhood of man,
And each shall serve the good of all
In every way he can.
Then shall all strive for excellence,
For beauty, knowledge, health
Then shall be ushered in the world
Our longed-for commonwealth.

### The Double Curse

Kathryon Dell Dunlap.

The thought here suggested to the writer by a personal acquaintance with a section hand who toils all day long for $1.25 a day. On this meager sum he supports a wife and four children. Obviously they have few clothes and scanty food with little choice in regard to either. While within the circle of out knowledge there are beneficiaries of the worker's earnings who toil not, neither do they spin, yet they dwell in palaces, are arrayed in fine linen and fare sumptuously every day. Furthermore this hard working man is constantly haunted by a fear of losing his job. He was afraid to lay off when his child was ill least his place should be taken by another.

"By the sweat of your brow, ye shall eat," God said:
Not, ye shall labor and still want bread.
Not, ye shall swelter from sun to sun
That others may feast who have nothing done.
Not, ye shall struggle and worry, too,
In fear of a day when there's naught to do.
Ah, me, the pain of this double curse!
God's sentence was hard, man made it worse.

"Give us work!" but the capitalists said "No."
"Lest the markets get choked and the prices low."
"And why are the markets o'er stocked, can'st tell?
Are the people o'er clothed. Are they fed too well?"
No work for the men! O woe of woes!
And what will their families do?—God knows!
Think of the pain of this double curse!—
God's sentence was hard, man made it worse.

### CIRCULATION STATEMENT

Following is the circulation of COTTON'S for the issue of last week Dec. 2nd.

| | |
|---|---|
| Ontario | 1372 |
| British Columbia | 841 |
| Prov. of Quebec | 906 |
| Nova Scotia | 461 |
| Alberta | 334 |
| New Brunswick | 242 |
| Saskatchewan | 208 |
| Manitoba | 165 |
| Elsewhere | 61 |
| Yukon Territory | 6 |
| Prince Edward Island | 4 |
| Total | 4600 |
| Gain for week | 40 |

Total issue for last week 6,000.

### Some Definitions

The "Intellectuals" are those who espouse the cause of socialism from devotion to an idea. They come mostly from the middle class.

The "Proletarians" are those who advocate collectivism because they want better food, better clothing, better shelter, more leisure, security of employment and kindred things. They are mostly wage workers.

The "Sentimentalists" are those who join the socialist movement from humanitarian considerations.

The "Impossibilists" are these who oppose the Socialist Party entering municipal campagins or pressing forward palliative measures in legislative chambers.

The "opportunists" are those who advocate immediate demands (reforms) being placed in the platform and on election manifestos.

W. R. S.

### GOOD BOOKS TO CIRCULATE

The following little books should be read by every Socialist, and passed along to those who wish to study socialism. They are attractively bound, and can be carried comfortably in the pocket. Read them in the order as here presented:

1. "Merrie England," by Robert Blatchford. Has made over a million Socialists.
2. "The Socialists," by John Spargo. An easily understood presentation of scientific socialism.
3. "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," by Frederick Engels.
4. "The Communist Manifesto," by Marx and Engels. Necessary to every Socialist.
5. "Value, Price and Profit," by Karl Marx. One of the text books of the international movement.

The price is 10 cents per copy. Fifty cents takes the bunch from Cotton's Book Department.

### System to Blame

In propaganda aim at a system, not at persons. Level your attacks against the system which makes it possible for our Rockefellers, Jay Goulds, Andrew Carnegies and Rothchilds, to rob society of the wealth which it collectively produces. Thrust your sabre at the system which produces a luxurious snobbocracy on the one hand and a penurious democracy on the other, which dooms millions to a life of poverty and degradation, which brands labor with inferiority, which fills our penitentiaries with criminals and our cities with brothels and dens of vice. For, mark you, individuals are not responsible for the system, but the system is responsible for the individuals. It is the system which produces a Russel Sage and the cunning blower of Russel's deposit safes.

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What we need is not so much a better political economy as a better social conscience enlightened by love. It is treason to humanity, and irreligion of an inexcusable sort, to assume that hate and greed will inspire man to do more or better work than love and self-sacrifice.—B. F. Mills.

Agitation and education spell realization.


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