

armed, ill-clad, undisciplined, ignorant, got the worst of these encounters from the start. At times they enjoyed a little success and many a lordly castle went up in flames while its inmates died in various unpleasant ways.

### **A New System.**

Feudalism, however, ran its course, and a new system sprang up. A new class forced its way to the front and made a bold bid for supremacy. This was the trading or bourgeois class. The history of this class is practically a history of modern industrial development.

The fore-runner of the present ruling and owning class were the small traders of free cities. These acquired wealth by their operations, and grasped at power. With the growth of industrial life and manufacture they eventually became the dominant factor. With the decay of feudalism the feudal serfs were forced from the land and into the rising commercial centres of modern civilization. The power of the nobility decayed. This new system of slavery which we have with us to-day brought no great amelioration or bettering of the condition of the great mass of the people—the “freed serfs.” To them it was but an exchange of masters. The tools of production speedily became so costly, with the development of capitalism, that their acquisition by the workers was practically impossible. The ownership concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. Under capitalism the tools of production may be said to take the place of the land under feudalism—to represent the things to which the workers must have access to live. These tools of production being at present in the hands of a small class in society the modern “free” workers are forced to depend upon this class for access to them. The