

## **Bourgeoisie.**

The capitalist class had humble enough beginnings. Its progenitors were the bourgeois, literally townsmen, of the Middle Ages. A part of the feudal society, they were yet, in a way, apart from it. They were neither nobles nor serfs, but a species of lackeys to the nobility. From them the noble obtained his clothing and the gay trappings of his horse; they forged his weapons and his armour, built his castles, loaned him money. He stood to them in the relation of a consumer, and, as a consumer, he legislated, defining their markets, prohibiting them from enhancing prices, enacting that wages should not exceed certain figures, insisting that goods should be of such and such a quality and texture, and be sold at certain fixed prices.

### **From Serfdom to Wagedom.**

Naturally these restrictions were little to the taste of the bourgeoisie. As trade and commerce increased they found these conditions less and less tolerable. As they grew in wealth and influence they became less and less inclined to tolerate them. In England they had joined with the nobles to weaken the king, and with the king to weaken the nobles. Finally they broke the power of both. In the name of freedom they crushed feudalism. But the freedom they sought was a freedom that would allow them to adulterate goods, that would allow the workers to leave the land and