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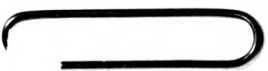
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THE PROLETARIAN GOSPEL OF
GALILEE

IN SOME OF ITS PHASES

Socialist
Religion & Soc

THE PROLETARIAN GOSPEL OF GALILEE

IN SOME OF ITS PHASES

BY

F. HERBERT STEAD, M.A.

Warden of Browning Hall

1894—1921

1922

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TO THE
LABOUR LEADERS
OF THE WORLD

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If any blames me,
Thinking that merely to touch in brevity
The topics I dwell on, were unlawful,—
Or worse, that I trench, with undue levity,
On the bounds of the holy and the awful,—
I praise the heart, and pity the head of him,
And refer myself to THEE, instead of him.

ROBERT BROWNING.

INTRODUCTION

THE GROWING DEMAND FOR THE PRO- LETARIAN GOSPEL

No one will dispute that among the forces which dominate our life to-day, one of the chief is Labour. As I have said elsewhere : “ The ascendancy of Labour in the life of to-day is obvious. Announced a generation ago, disbelieved, then derided, now dreaded, it is everywhere tangibly present. It holds in its hands the levers of the subtle mechanism which supplies our food, our shelter, and every means of communication. The world, always dependent upon Labour, was not aware of the fact. Now it is aware : and Labour is aware.” The Labour movement is manifestly the growing event of modern history.

**Labour in the
Ascendant.**

Almost within living memory we have seen most phases of its main advance. We have seen Labour—white and black—emancipated : Labour protected by a great array of Factory Acts ; Labour given the rudiments of education ; Labour enfranchised : Labour organising itself in Trade Union, Co-operative Society, and ever larger

**Its Steady
Advance.**

Federation ; Labour as a national unit, and tending to become an international unit ; Labour a world force claiming not merely political sway, but a share in the management of industry ; making governments and the largest aggregations of capital tremble at its approach.

Relation to
Religion.

How does this new giant stand in the presence of the oldest and most authoritative expression of human life ? How does self-conscious Labour relate itself to Religion ? The answer to this question is given in a series of Labour Weeks and Conferences held in Browning Hall, 1910—1919.* In the record of an International Conference in 1919 it is pointed out : “ On the Continent religion has been too largely the bulwark of the upper and official classes, a convenient department of State for the buttressing of the established order. In this country, thanks to the variety and vitality of the Free Churches, the official grip has been much slackened. But even in this country, whatever be the numbers of the working class in attendance on this or that denomination, organised religion has been to a very great extent under middle and upper class direction. English religion has been painfully bourgeois. It has rarely or never been frankly proletarian.”

We cannot expect Labour to continue in religious vassalage to the classes whose yoke

* See list of books on p. xxvi.

in other spheres it is resolutely breaking. Attention was called in the record already cited to one "terrible fact." "For well-nigh a hundred years, since the first Reform Bill, the church and chapel-going people have had absolute political and industrial control of the people of Great Britain; and at the close of their ascendancy what do we find? Nearly one-third of the people insufficiently fed, insufficiently clad, and insufficiently housed, slums blotting our cities and villages, and at the same time unprecedented aggregations of wealth. The planting of a few missions, more or less imperfectly equipped, in the back streets of our great cities, or the establishment of a few remedial agencies here or there, cannot for a moment outweigh the damning fact. The religion of the middle and upper classes has apparently allowed them to leave things to come to this dreadful pass."

**An Awful
Fact.**

In America the sway of plutocracy is said to be even more repellent to the artisan. Quite recently a meeting of Christian ministers in the centre of the steel industry was confronted with the official figures of a Government return which showed that in time of peace steel workers were employed mostly from 60 to 70 hours a week, often from 70 to 80, and in not a few cases more than 80 a week; they were also kept at work on Sundays as well as weekdays. The ministers expressed not a word of regret or

**An American
Instance.**

protest, merely lamented the lack of diligence among the working men! But a protest against Sunday football was brought forward with intense zeal. It transpired later that one of the chief ministers present was a millionaire, his wife a multi-millionaire in the steel industry, and that the company present included the pastors of nearly all the steel millionaires of the city. In churches so financed and shepherded, the modern working man can hardly be expected to feel much at home. An Italian taxi-driver is reported as saying, "We cannot see religion for the Church."

**The Inner
Religion of
Labour.**

So, we are reminded, self-conscious Labour, repelled by the alien atmosphere of bourgeois religion, has begun to inquire whether within itself there is not found something of the nature of a religion to satisfy its needs. On the Continent Social Democrats have discussed whether or not their own principles supplied the requisite religion. In Great Britain the inner religion of the Labour Movement has found its own distinctive expression, given at length in the Labour Weeks cited. The reader will probably wish to have a brief and consecutive narrative of the facts.

**The
Browning
Settlement.**

The story hangs round the Browning Settlement. This Settlement was founded exactly twenty-seven years ago. It stands at the very heart of Central London, in what Sir Walter Besant called "the metro-

polis of the working classes," the two millions dwelling south of the Thames. The Settlement was commenced under a very strong sense of mandate from the living Christ. Its inaugural address declared that it stood for the Labour movement in religion. The Labour movement in general was described as an endeavour to get for the workers more of the good things in life. The Labour movement in religion was an endeavour to get for them most of the best thing in life. It was then pointed out that the leaders of British Labour were mostly religious men. It was said—in 1895—
 "There is among the workers of this land a great and rising tide of religious life. It runs very largely outside of the Churches. It has been flung waste and wide, without proper means of outlet. But there are signs that it is washing out channels for itself." This Labour movement in religion might shortly be described as the call of the Christ to the workers of the world, and their response to His call.

**"The Labour
 Movement in
 Religion."**

With these convictions the Settlement began. Every May since, Labour Day or Labour Sunday has been kept as a religious festival, at which the address was given almost invariably by a Labour leader. But before the aim so expressed could be worthily attained, Providence put into the hands of the Settlement certain great movements of social beneficence. The provision

**From Labour
 Day to
 Labour Week.**

The Brown-
ing Record.

of work for the workless on a national scale was first obtained by the Queen's fund for the unemployed, which Her Majesty allowed to be stated as initiated by her at the suggestion of the Settlement. The movement of old-age pensions, played with by both the historic parties in the State and dropped by both, as involving an expenditure too colossal for either to undertake, was mysteriously entrusted to the Settlement and carried, after ten years' agitation, to victorious enactment. The demand for national old-age homes in place of the workhouse was also launched by the Settlement, and by a wonderful answer to prayer was made legally possible. The Settlement also pressed on the authorities the solution to the housing difficulties of London to be found in improved locomotion—a better organised system of transit for sweeping the central and congested populations out into the suburban area. The strategy of Providence so disclosed seems to have proved to the working people beyond dispute the genuine purpose of the Settlement to ameliorate their lot. It also brought the Settlement into closest touch with the leaders of British Labour. So was made possible a fuller development of the Labour movement in religion.

Instead of keeping the first of May as a religious celebration of Labour Day, the first seven or eight days of May were kept

as a Labour week, consisting of two meetings on Sunday and one in each of the intervening evenings. The addresses delivered were an appeal to the workers for personal religion, and the appeal was made by Labour leaders, mostly Labour Members of Parliament. Six such Labour weeks were held. The speakers included the most prominent, powerful, and trusted members of the Labour Party. Six had been chairmen of the party in the House of Commons ; more than that number have since become Ministers in office. The theme of their speeches was described by foreign witnesses. A German pastor declared it was the message and spirit of primitive Christianity. A Danish visitor said they laid all their stress on two things : first, personal devotion to Jesus Christ ; and second, the Kingdom of God ON EARTH.

Six Labour Weeks.

The Settlement which thus elicited the believing voice of British Labour is pan-denominational, worked and supported by persons belonging to all Churches. To promote religious intercourse between the workers, there was formed what is called a Fellowship of Followers. It is no Church, still less a new sect. It is a company of persons who have set their hand to this declaration : " Jesus said, If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. Meaning so to follow Him, the undersigned are enrolled in the Fellowship of Followers."

Fellowship of Followers.

In the Labour week meetings the people were earnestly urged to sign there and then this declaration on printed slips laid in the benches, and at the next monthly meeting of the fellowship to sign the roll. At the first Labour week as many as 160 persons signed or re-signed the roll, and among these signatories were the most dynamic speakers. At the present time there are enrolled in this concert of confession no fewer than twenty-five past and present members of the Labour Party in the British House of Commons. With one significant exception, that list includes all the most important and powerful leaders of the party. Not since the Solemn League and Covenant has there been a more memorable document in the political history of British religion than this roll of the Fellowship of Followers. Here is a company of men, on their advent into Parliament, in the formative years of their Parliamentary history, avowing themselves followers of Jesus and stating that their one aim is to make His Will prevail in public life, to diffuse a religious atmosphere in the Legislature, to give statutory expression to His care for the widow and fatherless and homeless and crippled and aged and all that have need, to take stumbling-blocks out of the way of love to God and love to man, to make real the Fatherhood and the Brotherhood as manifest in Jesus. These are the explicit declarations of the men

**A Historic
Roll.**

themselves, given with transparent sincerity and burning zeal. Is it any wonder that shortly after the first Labour weeks a Liberal Member stood up in the House of Commons, and said, "Do you ask who created the British Labour Party? I will tell you. It was created by Jesus Christ."

As is witnessed by these books, the Labour weeks have created a profound impression. Their proceedings have been published in whole or in part in English, Danish, Finnish, Spanish, Dutch, German, and one address in the kindred Science week has appeared in Arabic, published at Cairo. These books have been warmly welcomed by the Archbishops and by many other leaders of Churches at home and abroad, and amongst them professors of theology, Reformed and Lutheran. One of the latter described the Danish translation as the best work in living theology he had seen for many a long day: it was minted from life. The Bishop of Winchester wrote to one of the Labour weeks: "The Church is not only a teaching Church, but a learning Church," and he was grateful that that Church had much to learn from these addresses—by Labour men, Nonconformists, or of no Church at all! The Bishop of London preached on Labour week before the Church Congress in 1911. He declared the British Labour movement to be essentially a religious movement, and, demanded that in face of these utterances

In many
Languages
and Churches.

of British Labour the whole tone and texture of the Church of England should be altered. One of the most impressive of the speakers was a Roman Catholic. These are a few of the testimonies given. There are many others, which go to show that we are here in the presence of a new fact, a new synthetic fact, a unitive influence operative in European Christendom.

**European
Labour Week.**

The series of Labour weeks culminated in that of 1915. It was addressed not merely by British Labour leaders, but by a Norwegian delegate sent from the Social Democratic parties of Norway and Sweden, by the official editor of the organ of the Swiss Social Democracy, by M. Vandervelde, the elected head of the International Socialist Bureau, and M. Longuet, then member of the French Chamber of Deputies, and grandson of Karl Marx. The Norwegian and the Swiss spoke as avowed believers. MM. Vandervelde and Longuet declared themselves agnostics, but both anticipated for religion a future greater than its past had been. They bore glowing tribute to the influence of genuine Christianity, especially as shown by British Labour leaders, and insisted that it was not sufficient to reform conditions merely : we must also reform the soul. M. Longuet bade us go back to Christ and practise His beneficent revolution ! So the long feud between Labour and religion was publicly healed by the most eminent of leaders. And at once

both great forces were enlisted in a crusade for the abolition of war, the programme of which has been already in part fulfilled and has been further vindicated by the logic of international needs. Here again appears a new synthetic tendency, an influence extending over a significantly wide area of life.

The absence of men at the war made further Labour weeks impossible. But early in 1919 arrives an adjuration from Helsingfors couched in terms of prophetic earnestness, urging the Browning Settlement to resume its work in furtherance of the Labour movement in religion by convening an International Conference in the autumn. So comes about in the first week in September, 1919, the International Conference on Labour and Religion. It is certainly one of the most remarkable series of meetings. It includes representatives from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Belgium, Greece, and the United States. Its Labour representatives reach from extreme right to extreme left. In religion there are present Parsi, Brahman, agnostic, nondescript, as well as many varieties of Christian.

The conference is opened by the Right Hon. George Barnes, Labour Member of the War Cabinet, who makes a great speech on the dangers of materialism to the workers. He warns them against thinking too little of those unseen forces which in the long run move the world. He insists that the Labour

**International
Conference,
1919.**

**Memorable
Speeches.**

movement is no mere affair of bread and butter ; it is essentially a religious question, a question of man's proper place as man. The Norwegian Social Democrat follows with an inquiry whether Socialism has lost its soul. But the main question before the Conference is : Is there a religion implicit in the Labour movement, and can it be made explicit ? Both questions are answered unanimously in the affirmative by men of all shades and grades of thought. The first Labour Lord Mayor of Bristol says the Labour movement is based on the fundamentally religious ideas of sacrifice and service, the spirit of fellowship and brotherly helpfulness, and the ideal of justice. Mr. George Lansbury, most lovable of men and extreme of agitators, editor of the *Daily Herald* and devout Anglo-Catholic, declares the religion in the Labour movement to be already explicit in the brotherhood of man based on the Fatherhood of God, manifest in Jesus Christ and His Sermon on the Mount. A Parsi, head of the Labour Union of Madras, Mr. Wadia, asserts that Indian Labour is essentially religious, and recognises the brotherhood of religions. In his Trade Union Hindus of all castes, Moslems, Parsis, Christians, work side by side in amity, believing there are many roads but only one goal.

In picturesque contrast is Senator Vinck, from Belgium. He declares himself an

agnostic. Before the war he was an admirer of German culture, but the war has convinced him of its essential immorality. Its doctrine of "Success, whatever the means!" whether Prussianism or Bolshevism, threatens the very existence of civilisation, if not of humanity itself. Therefore he has started a movement for training the conscience, for inculcating what he calls "transcendental principles of morality," without which society cannot be saved. Let us not quarrel about origins, but formulate the principles. He thinks we need a comprehensive formula to embrace all upward workers in the Labour movement. He himself believes that Christ has given the best formula. He has the pretension to act as a Christian, though he can no longer believe as a Christian. He holds that over against their opponents, who speak in the Name of Christ, the Socialists are the Christians in Belgium. But now they need to think of their positive responsibilities, their ethical problems, and the religious implications of the Labour movement. He says that he cannot accept the "anthropomorphic Divinity of Christ," but he does not disguise the fact that the moral homage of his life is paid to Jesus.

A Belgian
Agnostic.

After Senator Vinck stands up Charles Gore, late Bishop of Oxford, highest of High Churchmen. With great deliberateness of speech and intense earnestness he seeks to

Bishop Gore.

make explicit the religion implicit in the English Labour movement. He lays down three principles in the creed of British labour. (1) The brotherhood of man, based on the purpose of the universe as expressed in the Fatherhood of God ; (2) The moral sovereignty and leadership of Jesus Christ, " a Name hardly ever received without enthusiasm in the Labour movement " ; (3) The power and the presence of an organising, guiding, enriching spirit, which is the Spirit of Jesus. Dr. Gore closes with the wonderful confession that though he does not much believe in a great many movements for religious reunion, he does not think we have gone one-tenth of the way we might have gone in organising the people in all religious bodies or without specific religious adhesion who are at one in believing in the Labour movement, and are profoundly conscious that there is One Name of social salvation, the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Here indeed is a portent—a High Church Bishop of the standing of Charles Gore, looking to the religious reunion of the future crystallising about the Labour movement !

**A Brahman's
Demand.**

Next day the leader of Labour in Leicester, a man beloved of the whole city, maintains that the Church is not the true representative of Jesus Christ to-day. It is for the workers to re-interpret Jesus to the present age, and to convey the new message to all

lands. A Brahman in British uniform gets up to ask that men like Gore and Lansbury be sent as missionaries to India. Himself a Brahman, he admits that Christianity has a great message for the world, including India. The whole world needs religion to-day more badly than ever, and Labour needs it most of all. "We need a twentieth-century Church for a twentieth-century people."

At a later meeting the Right Hon. Arthur Henderson, who is now standing on the steps of the throne of political power, insists that the need of the world to-day is a democratised Christianity and a Christianised democracy, living in daily fellowship with the Divine Democrat. The last day of the Conference is occupied in appointing a Continuation Committee and in summarising the religious characteristics of the Labour movement as enumerated at the meetings. The intention is to send a carefully prepared statement to every important Trade Union in the world, asking for endorsement, addition, or amendment. The desire is to obtain a genuine and as far as may be universal expression by organised labour itself of the faith which it holds, and the proposal is to make this faith the theme of world-wide propaganda carried on by Labour Evangelists, men and women supporting themselves by their daily work and devoting their spare time to this new evangelism.

To elicit the
Soul of
Labour.

**A New
Synthesis.**

Such in roughest outline is the new outburst of religious life that we are here contemplating. No one will cavil at it who believes in the great promise of the out-poured Spirit which came through Joel. Not through consecrated priest or official prophet alone is the Divine inspiration to come, but through the lowest ranks of labour, engaged in servile tasks, men and women that are slaves! Nor will any shallow sneer at "syncretism" avail with those who remember that the Parsi Cyrus was acclaimed by the prophet Isaiah as the Lord's Anointed, or that Jesus found greater faith in the Roman centurion than in Israel. It may seem strange that the dreams of synthesis cherished by learned professors of comparative religion should be on the way to practical fulfilment not by sage or philosopher, but by those who have been scornfully described as the horny-handed sons of toil. Yet, after all, is it not eminently like Jesus that He should so bring it to pass that men in all religions, no longer quarrelling over differences, but filled with the earnest desire to minister to "the least of these"—to meet the needs of the most needy—to achieve their common practical ends in the Labour movement—should find themselves marching side by side as comrades and brothers.

Here, for example, was Cardinal Gibbons, foremost Roman prelate in the Western

**The late
Cardinal
Gibbons.**

Hemisphere, honouring the convener of these Conferences with a letter in which the aged saint declared, "I heartily approve of your efforts. . . . You have my blessing and best wishes in this movement."

The attitude of Latin agnostics to this movement is one of the most significant things about it. Their craving for "transcendental principles" which they know are not yielded by their previous agnosticism, their feeling out after something Beyond that shall give security to civilisation and humanity, is one of the most beautiful and touching consequences of the great world tragedy through which we have been passing. But what is the movement to which these seekers after light attach themselves? It is not any nebulous philosophy of religion, not any bloodless theory of morality. No. These Latin agnostics cordially attach themselves to that Labour movement in religion which in its twentieth-century manifestation is headed by the definite avowal of the foremost British Labour leaders that their one purpose in life is to follow the Christ. No doubt those social leaders of the Continent feel strongly the influence of the British Labour leaders, who are now setting the pace to the Labour movement of the whole world. But does not M. Vinck's acknowledgment that he tries to live as a Christian, and that the best formula for combining all the upward workers in the

Attitude of
Agnostics.

Labour movement has been given by Christ, suggest that they feel the fascination of the supreme Personality stripped of every accretion, ecclesiastical and dogmatic? Is it not that Jesus of Nazareth, lifted up from the earth of sordid ecclesiasticism and from the trampled mud of theological controversy, is drawing men to Him from the most unexpected quarters?

What the
Proletariat
needs.

This rapid narrative will appeal differently to different minds. May it not be of service in showing whither the heart of modern man is turning? As we see how the proletariat of the world turns sorrowfully away from the Churches but joyously towards the real Jesus, are we not encouraged to uncover more resolutely the essentially proletarian character of His original gospel of the Kingdom of God? Can we not make clear that there lies the true antidote to all that is evil, alike in *Bourgeoisie* and in Bolshevism?

Hence this
Book.

This is the motive which led to the delivery in Browning Hall, to the workers of Walworth, of the eight addresses which follow. They owe not a little of their significance to the relation in which they stand to the series which preceded them. They are the continuation of the British Labour weeks, 1910 — 1914, of Science week, 1914, of the International Labour week, 1915, and of the International Conference on Labour and Religion in 1919, with its Continuation Committee which met

in May, 1920. In the pages which follow there is no attempt at anything of the nature of a complete statement of the original Proletarian Gospel. Only "some of its phases" are presented. And these are selected as in line with the seventy-two meetings in which Labour has uttered its soul.*

While this volume was in the printer's hands the author resigned the position which he had held for twenty-seven years as Warden of the Browning Settlement. At the close of 1921 he ceases to be responsible for the conduct of the work.

* Most of the introduction was published in an article "Religion in the Labour Movement," which appeared in the *London Quarterly Review*, the editor of which kindly allows its reproduction here.

LIST OF BOOKS

REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

“The Kingdom of God : Plan of Study.” By F. Herbert Stead. T. & T. Clark.

*“Eighteen Years in the Central City Swarm (Browning Settlement, 1895—1912).” Holborn Press.

“How Old Age Pensions began to Be. Record of a Social Marvel.” By F. Herbert Stead. Methuen. 1909.

*“Labour and Religion : Record of Labour Week, 1910.” Holborn Press.

*“Christ and Labour : Labour Week, 1911.” Holborn Press.

*“The Gospel of Labour : Labour Week, 1912.” Holborn Press.

*“To the Workers of the World : Labour Week, 1913.” Holborn Press.

“The Soul of Labour : Labour Week, 1914.” Holborn Press.

“Science and Religion : Science Week, 1914.” Holborn Press.

“Together at Last : International Labour Week, 1915.” Holborn Press.

“The Religion in the Labour Movement : International Conference, 1919.” Holborn Press.

* Out of print.

PROLETARIAN GOSPEL OF GALILEE

I

THE CHAMPION OF THE PROLETARIAT

WORDS, like rivers, travel far from their source. The proletariat meant at first in ancient Rome the common people who had no share in the government of the State, but whose chief function of service to the State was to produce offspring. To the lordly eyes of the upper classes they were simply breeders—breeders of men to till the soil and wield the sword. So to the patricians of later times the same classes were but “hands” in industry and “cannon-fodder” in war. In these democratic days, when almost every man and woman has a vote, there is in the old Roman sense no such thing as a proletariat. But the name has stuck to the common people from the old days, and although they have not merely a share in the government but have the decisive voice in the election of Parliaments, they are still called the proletariat.

**Once Breeders
only.**

Now Rulers.

By proletariat to-day we may understand in general the daily or weekly wage-earners and their families : those who do not live on rent or interest but only on their labour. In Scripture they are known as the poor in distinction from the rich. In

**“The
Masses.”**

2 PROLETARIAN GOSPEL OF GALILEE

the language of Gladstone they are the masses as distinct from the classes. In the dialect we have picked up from German and French revolutionaries they are the proletariat as opposed to the *bourgeoisie*.

In these few addresses I wish to put clearly and concisely what has, I hope, been apparent throughout the whole of the life of the Browning Settlement—that the original Gospel is firstly and mainly good news for the proletariat. The Gospel of Galilee was a Proletarian Gospel.

**The Village
Carpenter.**

First we look at the Great Herald of the Gospel. Jesus belonged to the proletariat. He was an artisan, a carpenter, engaged probably in the building trade. He was the eldest in a large family of sons and daughters. He had to support His widowed mother and help her to bring up His sisters and brothers. His only schooling was what He received in the village synagogue and in His home. As son of a workman and as a workman Himself, He lived in His village home until He was about thirty years of age. Then He came out into public life.

What brought Him out ?

**The Call
from Above.**

News reached Him of a great social agitator, a reformer whom the Jews called a prophet, who was declaring that the long-expected Social Revolution was now bursting on the world. His phrase was, the Kingdom of God is at hand. He bade the crowds that flocked to him to give up all that was bad in their lives, to make a fresh start, and, as token thereof, to bathe their bodies clean. So he was called John the Bather, or Baptiser, or Baptist. Jesus went to him. He went full of the glory of the hope of the coming Social Revolution, when the judgment of God would free the people from their oppressors and establish the ideal realm of justice and of plenty. He heard John's message.

He was bathed by him in the River Jordan, and as He rose from the water there burst upon His enraptured soul the consciousness of His great vocation : He was chosen of heaven to inaugurate the Social Revolution—to bring in the Kingdom of God. He was hurried away by the overmastering Force which had laid hold of Him into the solitude of the prairie.

There He battled out the problems which you and I are facing to-day : Was the Social Revolution to march, as Napoleon said his army marched, upon its stomach ? Was it to be merely the satisfaction of material needs and physical appetites ? Or, again, was the Social Revolution to be won by sensational appeals to the sense of religious wonder ? Was it to be achieved by supernatural magic ? Yet again, was it to be brought about by violence ? The proletariat led and armed by Him would make short work of the oppressing and possessing powers : the Empire of the world would be His in a trice, if He would but adopt this short cut to triumph. Jesus fought and flung each of these three proposals : He knew them to be the lure of the Opposing Force.

Facing our Problems.

Conqueror in the inward struggle, He set out, this young workman, on His career of propaganda. It was the most wonderful career of propaganda ever known to man. It was also one of the shortest. It may have been three years. It may have been only twelve months. But, shorter or longer, it made Him for all time the Champion of the Proletariat.

A Unique Propaganda.

He went where the common people gathered. He used the synagogue as a modern agitator might use the Brotherhood platform or the Adult School. In the village where He had been brought up, He is reported as making His programme-speech. He declared Himself in favour of the under-dog every

Launching the Programme.

time. He said it was His special job to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the prisoners and comfort for the blind and bruised. His fellow-villagers took offence at Him, because He was just one of them, one of the common people, a carpenter, whose brothers and sisters were nobody in particular. So they flung Him out.

**Choice of
Chums.**

He went off to a fishing village on the Lake of Galilee. There He began to choose His chums. His first choice was of two working fishermen, brothers. His next choice was of two brothers, also fishermen, but whose father was an employer, who hired men to fish with his sons. But whether they came from homes of the well-to-do or of the poor, Jesus reduced them all to common poverty. They left all and followed Him. They joined Him in His propaganda. In His homely phrase, they became fishers of men.

Authoritative.

There had been propagandists in Israel before Jesus. The great line of the prophets led up to Him. But from the first two things marked Him out from all who had gone before Him. One was the convincing authority with which He spoke. His personal force impressed deeply those who heard Him. But it was nothing foreign or outside to them. It won instant approval from their consciences. When He spake "I say unto you," each of them felt: "Yes, that's right. That's just what I too would say." The second thing was

Kindhearted.

His kindheartedness. His sympathy ran out to men. The sight of suffering broke loose in Him a great fount of pity. His love poured out in magnetic stream to the fever patient, the paralytic, the blind, the maniac: and healed them.

Here indeed was a new kind of propagandist. He not merely struck home to men's consciences like the prophets of old. His eyes embraced men. His heart closed round them. He knew the worst

that was in them, but He expected the best. His presence was like the atmosphere of spring ; men's souls before Him burst into bud and blossom of high and generous purpose. Even the sodden daughters of shame, saddest of all victims of selfish exploitation, found His pure chivalry encircling them ; they grew into pure women again as they came into touch with Him.

A propagandist who loves, how irresistible He is ! Jesus was the Champion of the Proletariat. He stood up for the downtrodden and exploited and disinherited. But His love could reach out to exploiters of a peculiarly hateful type. The profiteer in ordinary goods is deservedly unpopular. But the profiteer in tax-gathering is odious : the man who exacts more taxes than are due and makes his pile by doing so. Yet one of these men Jesus deliberately chose to be His chum and fellow-propagandist. Needless to say, that ended his exploitation and extortion. The wealthy " publican " became one of the poor apostles.

As can be readily imagined, this warm-hearted propaganda among the poor and despised and hated caused great offence among the respectable supporters of the old order and among the religious authorities. They denounced Him as a demoniac. Even His own family turned against Him and said He had gone mad.

Jesus more and more took to the open. He went out into the prairie and the crowds followed Him. He got a little boat which took Him from shore to shore of the Galilean lake and gave Him a platform from which He could address the crowds upon the shore. This little boat was to Him what his horse was to John Wesley or the motor car is to the modern agitator.

As the opposition of the authorities deepened Jesus began to organise His followers and systema-

An Unpopular Choice.

" A Demoniac."

Founding the Church.

6 PROLETARIAN GOSPEL OF GALILEE

tise His propaganda. Out of an immense crowd which He had swept through with His healing power, restoring the sick among them, He looked and chose and called out those who should be His followers. From them in turn He chose twelve. He gave them the title of apostles. So He founded the new society. It was formed for the twin aims of fellowship and propaganda.

A Charter of Revolution.

His inaugural address showed Him and them as essentially champions of the proletariat. "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. You are the heirs of the Social Revolution. Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye who are persecuted and boycotted in service of the cause; you are heirs of the inspired past; to you are the birthright and insignia of heaven!" Then He went on to pronounce woe after woe upon the rich, the surfeited, the gay and the universally popular.

The Little Flock's Imperial Future.

So He chose, so He charged His company of propagandists. They were all poor men, poor to begin with or making themselves poor by giving away all that they had; and to this little group was to be given the dream of the ages, the hope of all time. "Fear not, little flock!" He cried: "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

The Crowning Credential.

Their propaganda, like His, was limited to no class, but was chiefly directed to the poor. This fact gave Him great certainty of His supreme vocation. His old leader, John the Bather, had been put in gaol for daring to denounce a king's vices. John sent to ask Jesus if He were really the destined One. Jesus sent as His answer evidence of His healing deeds; but the climax of His credentials to the last of the prophets was, "To the poor the glad propaganda is brought."

For glad-hearted propaganda it was. He called it Good News. We have rather smothered the radiant joyousness of His phrase under the ordinary associations of "Gospel." He was no gloomy or austere ascetic, aloof from the happy natural joys of men. He was fond of a feast. He was so hearty a table companion that His enemies called Him a glutton. He was amongst His friends like the bridegroom among the wedding party, the effluent centre of social happiness.

**A Radiant
Propaganda.**

His method of propaganda was like Him. He was no lonely tramp on the stump; no solitary demagogue. His was a social propaganda. He took His chums with Him, not merely men but women also: "many women." Doubtless He scandalised the Jewish teachers, who looked down upon women as unfit for the company of serious men. But Jesus, the Radiant Companion, could not go alone. He went about the hills and dales of Galilee with a company of from twenty to thirty men and women; the twelve apostles and probably as many more women. He was telling people about the new society, and of this new society He brought with Him a sample, a model in miniature. It was a moving ray of social sunshine; a group of open-air gladness; a fellowship of love. This was distinctive of Jesus.

**A Travelling
Company—**

**—of Men and
—Women!**

When His companions were fairly saturate with His brightness and vibrant with His magnetic force, He sent them out on systematic tour over all the towns of Palestine. They went two by two; not as solitaries, but as companions they must proclaim the new social order.

**No Solitary
Evangelists.**

It was among the common people they went; and it was the common people who welcomed them. When they came back, flushed with the success of their tour, Jesus rejoiced in spirit that the Good News, hid from the wise and understanding,

had been revealed unto babes ; to the simple-hearted, childlike common folk.

**In Inter-
mittent Exile.**

But the respectable and the powerful and the possessing classes could not stand this propaganda. They made up their minds that Jesus must be put out of the way. They were out to kill. So for a long time Jesus was really driven into exile east and north among the non-Jewish peoples. He went as far north as Tyre and Sidon. Ever and again He would return to Israel. Ever and again the people welcomed Him. But ever, too, came the authorities to challenge Him and to dispute. It became increasingly evident that the people of Israel would not as a whole accept His good news. Himself and the little group around Him became the sole hope of the future. His followers began to feel that everything depended on Him. He was everything to them.

**"Thou art
the Christ."**

One time He was far away north, in exile among strange people, and He asked His friends who they really thought He was. The New Social Order, the Kingdom of God, was, all the Jews believed, to be inaugurated by a great and mysterious Person anointed for the purpose, who was called therefore the Anointed One, or in Greek, the Christ. And one of the twelve, Peter, dared to answer that Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth, the strolling propagandist, was the Christ ! The Christ was the highest personality in the mind of the Jews. His was the Will that was to rule, His the Spirit that was to fill the Kingdom of God. The consciousness of His vocation, which burst upon the mind of Jesus with such force at His baptism, had now mastered Peter. His faithful few knew Him henceforth to be the Christ.

**The Inev-
table Doom.**

And on that conviction Jesus said the whole of His future following would depend. But at once He checked the ambitions of His circle by telling

them that He was doomed. The authorities would never rest until they had His blood. He must die, but His death would not be fatal to His great enterprise. Rather would it prove the stepping-stone to fuller life and vaster glory.

And now He put Himself in the foreground as never before. "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me!" Attachment to Him was essential to the attainment of fuller life for oneself or for the world. Whoever would serve the true Social Revolution must know how to die, must trample under foot all fear of death and dishonour, must snap all that chained him to himself, so attaining a glorious freedom to do and dare and achieve.

**The Pivotal
Personality.**

This lofty consciousness was confirmed in Him by a burst of inspiring fellowship from the Unseen. His three choicest friends saw Him radiant upon the mountain top, conversing with two of the greatest souls in the inspired past of Israel.

He came down from the mount to begin His resolute and majestic march to Jerusalem, the city where death and shame awaited Him. At times His face set clear and hard as a diamond, as He looked southward to His doom. At other times His step swung out and His eyes shone with a terrible glow of purpose, as though He were treading the world beneath His feet. So awful was His bearing that His followers shrank back and He strode on alone.

**The March
towards
Death.**

And now when the religious leaders of the day met Him He retreated not, nor retired into exile. He met them face to face and foot to foot, till they quailed before Him. His great soul was kindled into anger by their gross insincerities. They made vast pretensions to piety. But He knew their real rapacity. They mocked at His denunciation of Mammon worship; for "they were lovers of

**Flaying the
Pious
Humbugs.**

money," and they chose the helpless for their prey. "They devoured widows' houses and—for a pretence—made long prayers." In His story of the traveller robbed and wounded, Jesus made a hero of the despised Samaritan, but held up to contemptuous disparagement the priest and Levite. He unmasked the religious humbugs. He almost fayed them. Woe after woe fell from His lips upon the scribes and Pharisees, like cut after cut of a lash dipped in vitriol. It was Jesus who took the comparatively innocent word which meant "actor," and made it for ever odious and execrable as "hypocrite." "Whited sepulchres full of all rottenness": mine-traps; straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel; veritable children of hell—these are some of the strokes with which He scourged them. So He left them writhing in the pillory of history.

**Candid Friend
of the Rich.**

Jesus was the Champion of the Proletariat. But He was no embodiment of class hatred. He dined with rich men. He loved rich men. Yet He hid not from them the stern demands of justice. He made their lavish charity look despicable by the side of the gift of the poor widow. He bade them disgorge their ill-gotten wealth—the Mammon of Unrighteousness, He called it—and distribute to the poor. He said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.

**A Tragic
Triumph.**

Such bold teaching kept piling up the resentment of the powerful classes until it reached the point of tragic explosion. They were on the watch. They were ready to pounce. And He was marching openly into their lair. He was nearing Jerusalem. But they found, to their amazement, that the common people were rising to welcome Him with great enthusiasm. His approach to the capital swelled into a great popular demonstration.

The crowds of pilgrims made Him their hero. They cheered Him. They chanted His praises. They paved His path with their garments. They escorted Him with palms in their hands. The triumphal entry thus given Him by the warm hearts of the common folk and by the children, He accepted. He rode along, not on the war-like steed, but on the lowly ass.

Here indeed was an affront to the ruling powers. But He went on to strike a yet more challenging blow.

It was the time of the great feast. Literally millions of Jews came from all parts of the world. They wanted to buy sheep and oxen and doves for sacrifice. They brought their local monies and wanted an exchange into the currency of Jerusalem. And the chief priests were acute enough to seize the opportunity of this world-market. They let the cattle-dealers and the money-changers set up their business in the very courts of the Temple. You may be sure that the chief priests derived a handsome revenue from the market dues. And the cattle-dealers ran up the price of their stock to an exorbitant figure ; the supply was limited ; the demand was enormous. The Jew trader would not miss the chance of charging heavily. And the men who came from far would find their carefully saved up money melt in the exchange to a very small amount. Jesus found in the courts of the Temple and at full blast the hateful excesses of profiteering ; profiteering by the money-changers in selling local money ; profiteering by the dealers in sheep and oxen ; and behind them all, profiteering by the chief priests. Jesus knew these things of old, knew how the poor pilgrims had been skinned and bled by these sharpers. And all these infamies of exploitation were made the more hideous and horrible because carried on in

**The Temple
Market.**

**Profiteering
Rampant.**

the very holiest centre of the people's religion. Jesus could stand it no longer. "What," He cried, as the lightnings of wrath blazed from His eyes and His tones swelled into a voice of thunder, "Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? and here they are, gathered from many lands far and near: but ye have made it a den of robbers."

"A Den of Robbers!"

Robbers—that was Jesus' name for the profiteering exploiters before Him! Then in a flame of indignation He swept the Temple clear of the traffickers; upset the tables of the money-changers and, planting His disciples as special constables, He would not allow a vessel of any kind to be carried through the courts. He had purified the Temple.

Murderous Fury.

This high-handed act of enraged violence it was that sealed His doom. You can imagine the fury of the profiteers. Just when they were making money hand over fist, suddenly this Man had destroyed their trade, driven them out in ignominy, and called them robbers! You can imagine the rush of the cattle-dealers and money-changers to the chief priests: "We paid you your dues, and you let us be ruined by this stranger." And you can fancy the feelings of the chief priests, smarting under the double blow; their gains would go; and they had been pilloried before the people as making the Temple a den of robbers. Their greed was badly hit; and so was their reputation for sanctity. This Nazarene had made Himself impossible. He must be put to death. They sent out their police to arrest Him as He harangued the people. But the people as they hung around Him formed an unconscious bodyguard. The police could not get at Him. And those policemen who did get near were so charmed with what He was saying that they did not want any longer to apprehend Him.

So the chief priests tried to put him in the wrong before the people. They came and demanded from Him: "By what authority doest thou these things? We are the Temple authorities. Thou hast taken on thyself to meddle with our courts and to interfere with what lies in our jurisdiction." Jesus in reply put a poser to them which they dared not answer, for fear of the people. So He declined to give them His authority.

**The Challenge
Flung Back.**

More than ever necessary was it, they felt, to put down this daring Usurper; who overrode their authority, who defied all attempts to bring Him to book. He must die.

See the coil of motives that wove the fatal plot. Their Temple dues were in danger; that was Mammonism, that was the profiteering conspiracy. Their religious authority was in danger; that was professional and perfunctory piety which was up in arms, as well as menaced power. And they feared Rome would take occasion from this Nazarene's upheaval to destroy the Jewish nation. That was panic-struck Nationalism.

The Plot.

But how could they get hold of their foe? At last Mammon, whose servants they were, opened the door to them. One of Jesus' own apostles came and bargained with them: what would they give him if he led their minions where they could seize Jesus unawares and away from the protecting mob? Judas got his price.

So Jesus was trapped at the dead of night in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was carried off in custody and hurried through trial after trial; condemned, and condemned as worthy of death, until the Roman Governor sentenced Him to crucifixion—all in less than twenty-four hours. And He, the Champion of the Proletariat, was slowly done to death by the *bourgeoisie*.

**Seizure and
Death.**

We ask again, what led His foes to close on Him

**The Leagued
Foes of the
Proletariat.**

and exact His blood? The greed of gain in the Temple traffickers, in the money-loving Pharisees and in the wealthy Temple priests. Religious fanaticism in scribe and Pharisee and Sadducee alike, horrified at His claim to be the Christ. The timorous Nationalism which feared He might cause a collision with Rome. A cautious Imperialism which would brook no rival to Cæsar. And a dread of mob-violence.

Are not these the standing foes of the proletariat—profiteering, pious bigotry and jealousy, nationalism, imperialism, and mob-rule? Is it any wonder they combined in mortal attack upon the chief Champion of the Proletariat?

They did their worst. But they failed. The unconquerable purpose of His life proved unconquerable in His death. His death sealed it with Eternal Victory.

The evidence tendered not by Mary or Peter or the eleven or the five hundred alone, but by millions of believers since cannot be shattered. Jesus who lived and died is alive for evermore.

**The Cham-
pion Uncon-
quered.**

II

THE CENTRAL MESSAGE TO THE PROLETARIAT

THE message with which the Supreme Propagandist roused the proletariat of Palestine was given in one sentence : " The Kingdom of God is at hand." The Kingdom of God—round that phrase were grouped all the doings and sayings of Jesus. It was an idea quite familiar to the common people of His time. It had had a long and wonderful history. It was at least a thousand years old. It had grown from small and slight beginnings. It had widened, it had deepened, with the people's life.

Short
Sentence :
Long
Story.

At first the Kingdom of God was but the realm over which David was king ; the size of a small English county ; then it reached the size of Wales ; then, at its greatest extent, it was about the size of England. It was peopled by Judah and Israel and many subject nations.

The Actual
Origin.

It was soon broken up. It became a great memory, and it supplied the basis for a great and growing ideal.

Even under David it was an international State. And international it continued to be in all the later stages of the idea. At first the people hoped only for the restoration of David's kingdom ; then for the inclusion of Egypt and Assyria ; then for its extension over the Mediterranean seaboard. Finally, came a vision of the Kingdom as a kingdom of humanity, symbolised by one like unto a Son of Man, containing all peoples, nations and languages, and destined to last for ever.

The Growing
Ideal.

While world-empire after world-empire had risen and fallen, this hope hovered over the soul of Israel; until Jesus came. Then He declared that at last the hour had struck; the time was fulfilled; the Kingdom of God was at hand; the International State was even at the doors. "All peoples, nations and languages" were included in Jesus' International. His was the first International in the all-inclusive sense. The central theme of His propaganda was the advent of the True International.

A Realm of
Peace—

It follows at once that the Kingdom of God is a realm of universal peace. For when all peoples, nations and languages are in one State, there is no longer room for war. And the long line of prophets proclaimed with one voice that the anticipated commonwealth will be one of permanent and universal peace. Jesus announced the coming of a world always and everywhere at peace. Wars and rumours of war were but birthpangs of this new era.

—of Justice

When we ask what this universal realm was like inside, we are met with the answer from all the prophets: It is a realm of justice. Amos, one of the earliest of these social agitators, in his denunciations of expropriating landlords and dishonest merchants, demanded and foretold first and foremost justice. And a German Social Democrat has pronounced the religion of Amos to be the permanent religion of the proletariat. Perhaps justice has to our ears a stern Roman sound about it. The better word, more tinged with Hebrew tenderness, is righteousness. The Kingdom of God is the universal realm of right, or Righteousness. And Hosea enriched this idea with the thought of what is right to one's kin—kindness, mercy, humanity. Isaiah, the young leveller, cried down with all that is up. "The loftiness of

—of Kindness

man shall be brought down, and the haughtiness of man shall be laid low ; the Lord alone shall be exalted." Pride of station, pride of wealth, pride of power, should all be abased. So to righteousness and kindness was added humility. And Jeremiah described the realm as one not of outward compulsion but of inward obedience ; not the law without but the law within should rule. All men should be in such close touch with the Divine as spontaneously to do the right. Ezekiel, furious with the ruling classes of his day, the shepherds of the people who fed themselves but fed not the sheep, foretold a State in which all shepherds would be done away ; God alone would shepherd the people ; there should, in fact, be no ruling classes ! The Spirit of God pervading the people should make them a united and living organism.

—of Humility

—of Inward Law,

and Spirit-led.

Those artists of hope, those prophets of Israel, drew glorious pictures of the coming society, radiant with justice and tenderness and humbleness and inward-mindedness, and suffused with the Light from above.

The world-wide realm of peace so pervaded and inspired by righteousness was also a realm of overflowing plenty. At first rural abundance was promised, then urban magnificence, then the inflow of wealth from oversea. The Kingdom of God, as the highest souls in Israel had portrayed it, was the Abolition of Poverty as well as the Abolition of War. " They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." These words were uttered of no distant heaven, but of what was to be on earth. Exploitation shall cease. " They shall not build and another inhabit ; they shall not plant and another eat ; they shall long enjoy the work of their hands." These are the hopes of the proletariat.

Poverty and War Abolished

And this glorious picture of an ideal future was to be made real on earth by one who was generally called the Christ, the Anointed Ruler in the Kingdom of God.

**Jesus in Line
with the
Prophets.**

Jesus accepted and endorsed the prophets' hope. On His lips, as on theirs, the Kingdom of God was a State to include all nations, a State wherein justice, mercy, humility, the law within, the Spirit of the Highest, ruled ; it was also the realm of plenty for all. "Blessed are ye poor," He cried, "for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled."

The plump and well-fed middle classes, who have seldom missed one out of four meals a day, try to think that Jesus could not mean the literally poor and the literally hungry ; that would be too gross and sordid and vulgar ; His words must be given a "purely spiritual" interpretation ! Well, but what about the contrasted woes ? Woe to the spiritually rich ? Woe to the spiritually full ? No, Jesus meant the literally poor and the literally rich, the literally full and the literally hungry. To a mankind one half of whom may be reckoned even now as never having quite enough to eat, these were real blessings. "Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled."

**Real Food and
Health.**

As His words were, so His deeds were. He fed the hungry, He brought glad tidings to the poor. The Kingdom was a feast. And to Him as to the prophets, the Kingdom was a realm of health, of saving health. The inhabitants thereof should no more say "I am sick." And wherever He went, He brought the health of which He spoke. He healed the sick. His was a Ministry of Food, a Ministry of Health, as well as a Ministry of Peace.

Of the Kingdom of God He was continually speaking. It was His first theme. It was His last.

All His parables set forth what the Kingdom of God is like.

In Matthew and in Matthew alone, in place of the phrase the " Kingdom of God " appears mostly, but not always, the phrase " Kingdom of Heaven." But in all the other Gospels and in the rest of the New Testament the phrase is habitually " Kingdom of God." I have noticed that many people seem to have read only the Gospel according to Matthew. They always take its phrasing. So to them the Kingdom of Heaven is a more familiar term. But there can be no doubt that Jesus used the phrase " Kingdom of God." " Kingdom of Heaven," peculiar to Matthew, is only a reverent way of avoiding the supremely sacred Name. Even Matthew uses also the phrase " Kingdom of God." In the crucial passage which gives the supreme aim of life, to which livelihood is altogether subordinate, Matthew reports, " Seek ye first His Kingdom and His justice."

" Kingdom of Heaven."

So no one can deny that the main message of Jesus was the Kingdom of God. Its endorsement of the prophets' highest hopes made it also His main message to the proletariat. It was first and foremost for them. It was obscurity to the intellectuals, to the " wise and understanding." But it was for the poor, the hungry, the tearful, the unpopular, and the simple-hearted common people. So the common people heard Him gladly.

The Main Message to the Masses.

But His message to the proletariat was in some points very different from what the proletariat understood it to be. They thought the Kingdom would immediately appear in its fullness. They expected it to come as a sudden catastrophe. They looked for an invasion of earth by heaven. Innumerable hosts of angels would descend to overthrow the oppressor and deliver the oppressed ;

Sudden Catastrophe Expected, -

the age would be wound up by supernatural power ; the Day of Judgment would arrive ; sentence would be passed on all evildoers, with acquittal and reward for the righteous. Some modern scholars have tried to make out that Jesus held this popular view, and that He expected immediately the Day of Judgment and the end of all things. All His teachings, they say, were meant for the very little while that would elapse before the final catastrophe — were interim teachings. The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man were, they say, eschatological ideas ; that is, concerned with the last things, the wind-up of human history.

—but not by
Jesus.

This web of ingenious theory is broken through by the simple enumeration of the passages in the Gospels where these phrases occur. They are more often used where they do not refer to the last things than where they do.

Need of time
to Grow.

Jesus Himself warns the people against this wild theory. He expressly told the parable of the pounds to correct the expectation that the Kingdom would immediately appear. He told several parables to show that the Kingdom was a thing of growth. It was already there ; it was at hand ; it was in the midst of the doubting Pharisees ; it had come upon them. But it was like a grain of mustard seed. It began in a very little circle—of Jesus and His followers—but it would advance in time to great expansions. It was in the earth as a grain of corn ; it would spring up and grow through many stages—first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. So Jesus taught that the Kingdom of God was actually planted in His lifetime, but would require *time to grow*. The Kingdom was a thing of growth or development or Evolution. It had a beginning small and almost hidden ; but its culmination would be vast and conspicuous. Commencement,

continuation, consummation—these were stages of the Kingdom. The Kingdom was there, was coming, and coming in ever greater fullness, until it should reach completeness. Then would be the harvest, the judgment, the consummation of the age.

Jesus' message differed from the mind of the Jewish proletariat in another way. To them the coming of the Kingdom of God meant the vindication and victory of Israel: perhaps a blessing to certain good Gentiles; but generally terrible punishment for the Gentile nations, especially for those who had oppressed Israel. Jesus, on the other hand, said that the Kingdom would be taken away from Israel and given to other nations. The Jews, the sons of the Kingdom, would be cast out and nations from east and west would be welcomed within. He found greater faith in a Roman centurion than in Israel. Tax profiteers and prostitutes would enter the Kingdom sooner than chief priests. His ideal was a House of Prayer for all the nations. He bade His followers "make disciples of all the nations." Jesus would have nothing to do with the fierce nationalism which blazed up around Him. He based the Kingdom of God on the Internationalism of Faith.

**A Mistaken
Nationalism.**

Then, too, the people thought that the Jewish law—that immense and cumbrous body of rules and regulations about meat and drink and clothes, about work and play, about sacrifice and suffering—was to be made perpetual and universal. Jesus claimed that He fulfilled the law, but actually He repealed it again and again. In one of His homeliest parables He abolished the distinction between meats clean and unclean; "made all meats clean." He denounced the traditions of the elders; reversed Mosaic rules once conceded to the hardness of men's hearts. And in place of the

**The Law
summed up.**

bewildering jungle of particular precepts He put the One Law—Love ; love to God with every power of one's nature ; love to one's neighbour ; love even to one's enemies. And in place of the jealous God of the Rabbis, an omnipotent Shylock rigidly claiming the literal fulfilment of the bond, Jesus put the Heavenly Father who causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on just and unjust alike.

**The old Ideal
made Sub-
lime.**

Take all the wonder-world of the prophets' dreams, a Kingdom of Man embracing all peoples, nations and languages, making a realm of peace, justice, kindness, humility, of spontaneous obedience and Spirit-organised life, of plenty, and health, and overflowing joy, of rural profusion and urban splendour. In place of Yahweh put the Father in Heaven ; in place of fellow-Israelite put brother-man ; in place of the ten thousand precepts of the old law put Love ; in place of a Man of Blood and Iron like David, trampling his enemies into gory dust, put Jesus as the Christ : and you have some idea of the Kingdom of God as Jesus declared it.

**In Progressive
Realisation.**

It was there in the tiny circle that revolved round Jesus. It has been growing through the generations like a grain of mustard seed. It has passed through many stages, as diverse as blade from grain and ear from blade. It is spreading, a beneficent leaven, over the continents and races and civilisations. It is making regions of the Unseen more real and palpable. It is the advancing and pervading Social Organism of the Christ, the Body Politic which under all disguises is growing towards the fullness of the stature of Christ.

**An Ideal
without a
Rival.**

And it holds the field to-day against all comers. There is no social ideal that can for a moment compete with it. There is no social movement which has its driving and its staying power.

It offers the true International Ideal. The League of Nations, as pictured by its most fervid supporters, is a pale image, a spectral suggestion, of its Kingdom of Humanity including all peoples, nations and languages.

Schemes for the abolition of poverty as of war, of disease as of drudgery, are but gleams and flashes of the One True Light which burns with unflickering radiance through the Kingdom. The completest and most comprehensive dream of Co-operation is but an echo of the great word of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God is the social transcript of the personal character of Jesus, working out through the generations a Humanity like Him, inspired and impelled as He was by the indwelling Spirit of the Highest.

And this Kingdom is the gift of the Father. We can seek it but we cannot create it. It is there for our finding and our receiving. We can accept it. We cannot earn it. It is a citizenship and a franchise open to all ; a fellowship with all the holiest and best seen and unseen ; a freedom of love to be bestowed upon all.

**The Gift of
the Father**

This Kingdom of God is at hand. It lies all around us as an ocean of light, ready, if we but open the sluices of our will, to flood our lives with radiance celestial. The Kingdom of God is among you. Receive it as a little child.

Amongst Us.

This most stupendous and salutary of all Social Revolutions is waiting to break upon the world, if only men will believe and receive. It is our wills that hinder. It is Christ's Will that hastens.

Hinder Him no more. Join up with those who, following Him, make real upon earth the Kingdom of God.

III

FATHERHOOD AND BROTHERHOOD

**Brotherhood
Accepted.**

BROTHERHOOD is a word that is dear to the workers of the world. It is already recognised and accepted by them. The strength of the Brotherhood Movement suggests how strongly the idea appeals to the British people. Among the millions of workers enrolled in Trade Union and Friendly Society, it is the proper form of reference and address. Members are brothers. It is Brother Smith, Brother Jones, Brother Robinson, who are spoken of. European Social Democracy seems to prefer the more militant title, Comrades. But it is inspired by a genuine passion for human brotherhood. And for more than 100 years what has been the State motto of the millions of liberated France? What are the words inscribed on all the public buildings of France? Liberty, equality, fraternity. That famous triplet becomes, in words more easy to our mother-tongue, Freedom, a fair chance for every one, and Brotherhood. Brotherhood is the national motto of the French. Brotherhood, as the climax of Freedom and Equal Opportunity, has gone wherever the tide of the French Revolution has gone. So far as public recognition is concerned, among the proletariat of the modern world, Brotherhood has fairly come to its own.

**Wherein It
Consists.**

But wherein does this human brotherhood consist? What makes men brothers to each other? Is it physical resemblance? Is it the likeness of

form and feature? Hardly. For some apes are nearly as like some men as some men are like some other men. No, it is not the animal qualities we have in common with the beast that make us men and brothers. It is not our common love of comfort, our desire for food, shelter and play. The same qualities are found in the household cat! Yet we can never speak of "brother cat" as we speak of "brother man."

"What is a man
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more."

But we are something more. And it is that something more which makes us brothers. It is the human over and above the animal. It is all those wonderful moral and spiritual qualities which we sum up in that one word, "Soul." And it is the kinship of soul to soul "the world o'er" that makes men brothers "for a' that and a' that."

Who made that fact live? Who set it rolling along the minds of men throughout Christendom and beyond? Who gave it the deep meaning it bears to-day?

JESUS. More than any one else, Jesus.

We hear Him say "to the multitudes with His disciples, All ye are brethren." Or, as we would say to-day, "you are all brothers." To all sorts and conditions of men the word went forth, You are all brothers.

There are a great many people who will accept and applaud the idea of brotherhood as it reaches them with the flavour of Jesus' spirit. As a working man once said to me, "The brotherliness of Jesus—that I could not resist." There are a great many more who welcome the idea of brotherhood without a thought of what gives it warrant

Source Un-
recognised.

and truth. They are like birds singing on the topmost twig of an oak. They never think of the deep, deep roots far out of sight, which alone make the oak of brotherhood possible.

It is said of the Chicago sky-scrapers, those lofty buildings which rise to a height of 100 to 120 feet, that their foundations, hidden below the surface, cost far more than the huge super-structure which towers heavenward. The office boy who day after day is shot up by the elevator to the topmost storey little thinks of the immense amount of labour and of steel that were sunk in the soil to make the building possible. Just as little does the French working man who cheers fraternity think of the deep foundations on which Brotherhood is based. Let us explore those foundations.

**Jesus' Root-
thought.**

Brotherhood was not the deepest thought in Jesus' life. He has given a flavour and a fragrance to the word it never had before. But it did not express what lay closest to His heart. As we call to mind the things He said, there was one word ever uppermost on His tongue: there was one thought that was at the very basis of His soul. That word, that thought, was Father.

**The All-
Perfect
Father.**

The heart of Jesus was in closest touch with the Heart of all things; He felt each heartbeat throbbing Father, Father. His sensitive soul, so quick to respond to every wrong, so swift to welcome whatever was beautiful and good, so true as to scorn all sham or make-believe, found everywhere around Him the presence of an all-perfect Life. There are acids which, poured into a seemingly colourless liquid, will at once reveal by change of colour or by sudden effervescence the presence, if only in the minutest trace, of some substance otherwise unknown. So the loving sympathy of Jesus, poured forth unstintedly upon

the life about Him, frothed and foamed in violent reaction from the sin of men, but in contact with the underlying all-pervasive Life showed not a trace of revulsion or criticism ; only joyous and adoring acquiescence. Through all His utterances from first to last shine the Vision and the Sense of an all-perfect Being ; and His chosen Name for this Being was Father ; Father in Heaven ; Heavenly Father ; the Father bending out of Heaven.

Jesus was a Hillman. From earliest childhood He had roamed among the mountains amid which Nazareth raised its brow. He was through life a passionate lover of mountain heights. He was at home among the trees and the flowers and the grass. He had the artist eye that saw in a single flower more beauty than in the pageantry of the most glorious courts. But in all the moving panorama of earth and sky He felt His Father. The Father clothed the grass of the field with a raiment of colour more exquisite than all the pomp of Solomon. It was the Father who cooled the air and quickened the earth by sending rain from heaven. It was the Father that sighed or sang in the breeze. The Father made the sun to rise. What a glimpse shoots there into the very heart of Jesus !

The Father
in Nature—

“ What soul was His when from the naked top
Of some bold headland He beheld the sun
Rise up and bathe the world in light !
Far and wide the clouds were touched
And in their faces could He read
Unutterable love.”

It was a vision of the Father.

“ In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired.”

—in Animal
Life

Quick was His eye and warm was His heart for the animal life that fluttered or crawled or crept about Him. The black glossy raven that croaked among the trees was to Him no creature of ill-omen or suggestion of black despair. It told Him that the Father provided for its needs. The birds of heaven that darted and hovered about His path winged into His mind the assurance: the Heavenly Father feedeth them. The Father provided every living thing with life and food and gladness. Even the tragedy of bird life was not apart from Him. Not a sparrow fell to the ground without the Father.

—in Man

In human nature Jesus came upon much that annoyed and repelled and disgusted Him. Yet through and behind the sinfulness of the free agent, He saw the presence of the Father. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more your Father bending out of Heaven!" In the care of the housewife for her lost coin, the eager quest of the shepherd after the lost sheep, most of all in the love of the father for his prodigal son, Jesus saw the presence of the perfect Parent. All that was best in human effort and aspiration was "much more" in Him. Generosity without stint, love to one's enemies, kindness to the ingrate, were but hints of the all-perfectness of the Father in Heaven.

To Jesus the Ruler of History was Father. The Creator and Sustainer of all things was Father. The Temple, even the Boy Jesus knew, was His Father's house. Guide of every life, Guide supremely of His life, was Father.

—in Jesus'
own Tragedy.

This was no fine-weather faith. It was no glad mental reflection of blue skies and sun-filled air and tranquil mountain peaks. It came out most clearly in the gloom of disaster. It shone in the supreme tragedy. In Gethsemane you hear the

broken cry, "Father, Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me!" Yet a little later, "The cup which My Father has given Me to drink, shall I not drink it?" And when the shock of the raised Cross sent agony leaping through every limb, His words were: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." A few hours earlier He had said, "Ye shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." In the darkest hour on the Cross He felt Himself abandoned: "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But He goes out of mortal life with this cry on His lips, "Father! Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

Throughout His life Jesus was always thinking, **As Father, so Son.** What would My Father wish? What is My Father actually doing? He saw His Father busy everywhere. He could do nothing of Himself. He watched His Father at work, and did as His Father did. He lived a life of boundless activity. But He said, "The Father abiding in Me doeth His works."

The Father was to Jesus more than all the world. **Inseparable.** Much as He loved men, He loved His Father incalculably more. Brotherhood was a great experience to Him. But vastly deeper, higher, broader, was the Fatherhood. And with the Father Jesus was bound up more intimately than the fragrance with the flower, or the light with the lamp. We have glimpses in the Gospels of this unity, intense, innermost, indissoluble. We cannot even historically think of Jesus without the Father, nor of the Father apart from Jesus. Men felt of Him: here is One who habitually dwells within the very bosom of the Father.

To the whole life and thought and spirit of Jesus Fatherhood was fundamental. It was the

One Fact which outweighed and outshone and outsang every other fact. Even earthly parentage seemed external, accidental, negligible, beside it. "Call no man your father upon earth, for One is your Father, even the Heavenly."

The very
Word He used.

A curious and beautiful illustration is given of the complete ascendancy of the idea of Father in the mind of Jesus and of His followers. Paul is writing to the Galatians, the churches which he had founded, that were scattered over what we now call Anatolia, in Asia Minor. He reminds them of the Spirit which they had received; it was the Spirit in which they cried, "Abba, Father!" Later, writing to the church at Rome, which had sprung up quite independently of him, again he speaks of the Spirit wherein ye cry, "Abba, Father!" Abba! What is that? It is the Aramaic word for Father. Jesus spoke Aramaic. And the two Aramaic syllables had rung from the lips of Jesus so often, with such deep feeling and music in them, that they became the distinctive cry of the followers of Jesus; not merely in Palestine, but amid the mountain dialects of Galatia and amid the Greek and Latin of Rome. Jesus' word for Father stamped the Galatian or the Roman Church as His. Not Brother, but Father, was fundamental.

Divine
Paternity
prior to Jesus.

Do not for one moment imagine that Jesus was the first to call God Father. Far from it. Our remote forefathers in Persia or India called the Supreme Being *Dyaushpitr*, Heaven-Father. Yahweh was Father to Israel. Our Teutonic ancestors worshipped the *All-Vater*. But Jesus has made this idea of the Fatherhood so much purer and richer and sweeter and holier that it is, as I have said, for ever associated with Jesus. You remember what Browning says of music:

FATHERHOOD AND BROTHERHOOD 31

“ Each tone of our scale is naught,
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is
said :

Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought :
And there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider and
bow the head.”

So the idea of fatherhood, common in families and faiths—give it to Jesus to use ; and as He mixes it with His character and Spirit you have the utterly adorable.

Fatherhood is fundamental to Jesus. It is also **Fontal.** Because God is Father to all men, therefore all men are brothers. The Brotherhood is based upon the Fatherhood. And there is no other foundation that can compare with this that is laid by Christ Jesus.

Think of it ! Every human being far more precious to the heart of God than the most dearly loved child of the best earthly father ! Infinite preciousness of each human being in the eyes of God and man. There is nothing more destructive of caste and class and all artificial distinctions. All are God's beloved children. Therefore all are brothers and sisters to each other. **Destruction of Caste.**

In the warm genial ray of God's Fatherhood melt and topple over all the icebergs of false ascendancies of man over man, Tsardoms and Kaisertums, exclusive priesthoods, nobilities, gentries ; all exploitations of man by man ; all slaveries, black or white, chattel or wage ; all schooling that forces into one and the same mould ; all coercion of true freedom. The proletariat may rest safely on the Fatherhood of God as the basis and guarantee of its highest freedom and fullest development.

I might conceivably acquiesce—basely acquiesce **The Driving Force.**—in a wrong done to my brother merely as my brother ; but the thought of my father and mother makes me blaze with indignation. Human

brotherhood has nothing like the driving force, the explosive power, of the Divine Fatherhood.

Jesus died to make that Fatherhood real to men, and so to make men truly brothers to each other.

“ Down from Above.”

The other day I was in the country staying at a friend's house. I went out into his garden early in the morning. I strolled under his pergola. At one place I found my path all beautiful, besprinkled with rose leaves. Whence came they? Not from the stony path on which they lay. They had come down from above. A great mammoth rose had burst its heart, and the petals had glorified the path below.

The path of the proletariat is often stony enough. But it is beautified, it is glorified, by the petals of human brotherhood which fall from the burst heart of the Saviour of mankind.

IV

JESUS' LAWS OF DEMAND AND SUPPLY

THE laws of demand and supply have an evil sound in the ears of working men. They are generally put forward as a reason for the lowering of wages or the actual discharge of workers. The demand is small for a commodity of which the supply is plentiful. Therefore down goes its price, and down, too, the employers often argue, must go wages. Or if the demand becomes very small, or ceases, the supply must follow, and work may cease.

Words of Evil Saviour.

I came on a working man once who had long been out of work. Everything in his home had been pawned. His wife was confined, and the only bed for mother and child was an empty orange box lined with straw. What had caused this frightful tragedy? He had worked for a firm which supplied whips for Paris. But the motor car had almost driven the horse-drawn vehicle from the streets of Paris. Where horses were not used, whips were not wanted. And the whip-maker was flung out of work and into utter destitution. And men would once have said it was all a matter of demand and supply. No demand? Then no supply; and no work to provide the supply. Demand and supply equal each other.

A Victim of the "Law."

The so-called law has often been cited as if it were a law of nature. I have heard a religious man—save the mark!—speak of it as being no less inexorable than the laws of planetary motion. So

it was urged as something to which the working man must submit whether he liked it or no.

Only a
Tendency.

But it is no inevitable law. It is only a tendency. When demand fails, or when the supply is unusually abundant, the price of goods tends to fall until it is so low as to tempt the purchaser to buy up the supply. When the demand is great and the supply small, the price tends to rise until the supply goes only to the few who can afford to pay. So when work is scarce and there are plenty of workers, wages tend to be reduced and workers to be discharged. But this tendency is often resisted. The equation of demand and supply is prevented from operating by custom, by Trade Union, or by Act of Parliament.

Inhuman
Arithmetic.

But to decide whether or not a man shall be allowed to work, whether he and his family are to have more or less or nothing to live upon, by the merely arithmetical relation between the number of workers seeking work and the supply of jobs available, rightly offends the human and ethical sense of the working man. So to him the words demand and supply sound ugly; about as far as possible from anything that can be called a Gospel to the Proletariat; and still further from the character of Jesus.

Essence of
"Demand."

But let us ask, What is demand? Is it not an expression of need, real or imagined? There is demand for bread; that expresses a real need. There is a demand for betting news; that expresses a need wholly imaginary. There is demand for shoes of a fancy shape and with a fancy name. The need of a shoe of some kind is real in our climate and in city life, but the fancy shape and the fancy name—and the fancy price—answer to no real need. The need is a fancy need, too.

Source of
"Supply."

And how comes supply? It comes by work. Work brings the things demanded to the place and

time at which the demand is met. It is the work of the ploughman and reaper, of the miller and baker, and of the baker's boy, which brings the supply of bread to the eater. So, too, it is the work of the boot and shoe operative, or the tempter of women's fancy, of the boot shopman, to supply the need, partly real and partly fancied, of the fancy shoe. It is the work of the inventive pressman, of the printer and of the newsboy to supply betting news. Supply, then, is the presence of the commodities and services demanded. But as all commodities at the place where they are wanted are the outcome of work, of service of some kind or other, we may further simplify by saying that supply is the presence of the product of service of some kind or other.

Demand is thus an expression of *need*. Supply is the expression of *service* to meet the need. Demand is met by supply; need is met by service. The law of demand and supply becomes in its truth the *Law of Need and Service*.

The Deeper Law.

Under this form it appears in the life and influence of Jesus. The proper relation between demand and supply—the goal of economic action—is an equation. Demand and supply tend to become equal. Jesus showed that the proper relation between need and service is an equation. The service should equal the need.

Real need was always with Jesus an effective demand. The motive appears early in His career. When He went to dine with the social outcasts, the respectable people made a great hubbub. Jesus answered: "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I am come to meet a need, to supply a defect. The self-satisfied righteous have no use for Me; the outcasts feel their need of Me." So Jesus by His service of them met the need.

Real Need with Jesus—

—and
answering
Service.

It was the real needs of men which set Jesus serving. He felt keenly the need of the sick, the leper, the blind, the crippled, the demented, the hungry—sufferers of any kind. And the need so felt drew from Him the corresponding service. So in the deeper things, the need of repentance, of forgiveness, of direction, of love, brought out the service of the Saviour.

May one say that His life, and still more His death, supplied the precise equation between Need and Service ?

A Universal
Equation.

Jesus Himself taught that this correspondence between need and service was the law of the universe. Food and shelter—be not anxious about these things ; your Father knoweth that ye have need of them. It is implied at once that the Father will supply the need.

I understand the same truth is expressed in modern biology. Wherever there is a permanent and persistent need, there is sure in the economy of Nature to be supply ; something to meet the need. Need and service, according to Jesus, form in the long run the ultimate equation of Life.

Service
binding on
All.

So Jesus laid down the law of service as the true law of life ; binding upon every one ; most binding upon those who could render the most service. He was mightily tickled with the airs and pretensions of those who claimed to be leaders of men. Those who fancy they rule over the nations lord it over them ; and their great ones domineer over them ; ay, and call themselves Benefactors to boot. How Jesus must smile at modern titles : “ The All-Highest ” of Germany ; His Most Excellent Majesty of Great Britain ; the Most Christian King of Spain ; His Serene Highness of Dudelburg or Pudelburg. No such humbug was to be tolerated among the followers of Jesus. The great one must be servant. Who would be first

must be slave of all. For He Himself, the Son of Man, the Regnant Man, came not to be served but to serve; ay, and to meet the greatest need with the greatest service—to give His life a ransom.

From service comes the supply to all need. Therefore, all must serve. But there is no duty without the corresponding right. The duty to serve carries with it the right to serve; for the worker, the right to work. Unemployment is a violation of the law of Christ. Idleness in rich or poor is forbidden by Him. To remain idle yourself is wrong. To keep other men idle is a vastly greater wrong.

Jesus has no place for the parasite, the unhappy being who lives on the labour of others, and makes no proper return. He has no place for the idle rich, for the "fine lady," for the "gentleman" in the economic sense of that term—a man who does not work for his living. The other day I saw a form filled up thus: Name, so-and-so; Address, such-and-such a place; Occupation, none. I half fancy the writer was a little proud to write that word "None." I sincerely hope he had plenty of occupation of an honorary kind. He meant merely to show that he was a gentleman, "a man of independent means." But if one took the words literally, what a dismal plight was his! The man of no occupation has no place in the economy of Jesus. Still less does He allow the exacter of forced service, the "slave-driver," the browbeater, or oppressor, or exploiter. He said, "Whoever exploits one of the least of these exploits Me." What numbers there are who are thus *Exploiters of Jesus*. And you know their doom.

These teachings of Jesus carry with them a total inversion of current social valuation. They com-

Duty Involves Right.

No Place for the Parasite.

Inversion of Social Valuation.

pletely upset the ordinary ways of ranking men and women. They turn our social standards upside down. Yes, the standards of the poorest as well as of the richest. Is there a man amongst the workers who almost as by instinct does not feel that one who need not work is better off, is higher up, than the one who works? Is there a woman but has the feeling that the fine lady is superior to the working woman? Jesus puts His foot down on these conventional instincts and feelings. He smiles them out of court.

**Standards
Upside down.**

In the sight of Jesus the industrious maid-servant stands far above her idle mistress. The work-girl of Walworth ranks far above the proud ladies of the West End. The miner hewing coal is of immensely higher grade than the royalty-owner who exacts so much a ton, does nothing for it, and lives sumptuously. The seaman who risks life and limb to bring our bread belongs to a rank vastly superior to the idle shipowner who stays at home and draws fabulous dividends.

**Which
Highest?—
Serving or
being Served?**

Jesus' standard is the true standard for the proletariat; serving ranks higher than being served. The bourgeois standard is, as we all know, Being served ranks higher than serving. Jesus and the conventional *bourgeoisie* are thus in exact contradiction. And, I am sorry to say, most of the proletariat accept the bourgeois standard. Let us strive to shape our lives by the standard of Jesus. No small effort is needed to clear our minds of the bourgeois mistake.

**A Revolu-
tionary
Purpose—**

This mental valuation lies behind Jesus' revolutionary purpose. In place of a few idle rich levying toll on the toil of the many, He would put a society in which everybody serves everybody; a community of mutual service.

Even in the first generation you see how His Spirit developed the social arrangement. In the Church at Jerusalem there was none that lacked, for distribution was made to every one *according to his need*. The standard of supply was need. And to the Church in Thessalonica Paul laid down the rule, He that will not work, neither let him eat. The duty of service was absolute.

—seen in the
Early Church.

Perhaps the economic application of these laws of Jesus, the law of demand and supply, or need and service, will first appeal most to the proletariat.

Production should be ruled by the law of service. Goods should be produced to serve others, not to make us be served by others. The supposed rule of economic life to-day is *Production for Profit*. That is the endeavour to be served, not to serve; to get rich out of the service of others, not to make many rich. *Production for Service*, on the other hand, is the economic law of Jesus. An American economist has recently said in effect that the system of production for profit has utterly broken down; its failure is shown in its results; extremes of wealth and poverty; envy and fear; suspicion and hatred and social unrest. And he went on to say that the only hope for the future lay in putting in place of Production for Profit nothing less than Production for Service. So after much supercilious and high-prancing economics of the abstract kind, we are now coming down to the gentle and humble Jesus, and saying that only by putting His yoke on the shoulders of industry will industry work. His yoke of universal service would indeed be easy; His burden so equally distributed would be light.

The Law of
Production.

Just as our system of production will find its salvation in Jesus, so will our system of Distribution. On what principle are you going to

The Principle
of Distribu-
tion.

establish the distribution of wealth? There are many principles in operation among men. Let me enumerate some of the chief. They are often mixed up together in daily practice. It needs a keen eye to disentangle them.

Rank ?

I. One principle is that of distribution to every one according to his rank or status. It is perhaps carried out most nearly in the Army. Salary goes by rank. In civil life there still lingers the shadow of the idea that income ought to be according to rank. An impression does prevail in some quarters, never precisely avowed, but which might roughly be put thus: the King should have most. Next should be the income of the Duke; then of the Earl, the Viscount, the Baronet and the Knight; then the gentry; then of the professional classes; then of the tradesmen; and last and lowest of all, of the working classes. The upburst of the new rich has made these distinctions no longer possible. The Scotch working boy becomes in Andrew Carnegie a multi-millionaire, and towers above many kings and dukes. Half a dozen men in Wall Street, New York, handle revenues vaster than that of many kingdoms. But the old idea still haunts our mind. We hear without amazement that for five days' lecturing a man receives £50. But when we hear that a steel-smelter sometimes gets £50 in a single week, it almost shocks us. We seem to think that it is quite right that barrister or literary man should pocket £50 a week; but even to the most advanced of us there is something odd if a workman pockets £100 in a fortnight. Just listen to middle-class people talking about the high wages of the bricklayer or of the scavenger, and you see the relics of the principle of status still infecting modern minds. We need to be on our guard against it.

2. Another principle is—

Force ?

“ The simple rule, the good old plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.”

This is distribution according to Force, brute force, as we so naturally call it, or better, material force ; the most to the strongest, Might is Right. This is one half of Prussianism. It is the principle of War. The world has fought its greatest war to put an end to this principle of distribution. We have resolved, despite the pleadings of militarists at home and abroad, to be rid of it at all costs. It is in point-blank contradiction to the law of Jesus. And we have proved to our infinite misery that it will not work.

3. Both rank and force are discredited as standards of distribution. A third principle is much more popular among middle and upper classes : To every man according to his ability ; the most to the cleverest. Many educated people fondle this idea with great affection. But, after all, it only puts intellectual force in place of physical force ; the strength of brain in place of the strength of brawn. Can it plead any moral justification ? It is the other half of Prussianism. It means the tribute of a conquered world to the scientific savages lately ruling in Berlin. Brain force may be a much more terrible engine of robbery than brute force.

“ Oh, but,” men say, “ surely the man who is clever enough to understand the subtle mechanism of international exchange and of a world’s trade is entitled to more than the simple farm labourer ? ” See how that principle would work in the family. A professor of economics is sitting at the same dinner table with his little boy of ten. A chicken is before him. Suppose the professor were to say,

“ Now, my boy, unless you can explain the whole problem of exchange between Italy and this country which puts this fowl on our table at such a price, well, I shall, because of my superior ability, eat the whole fowl and give you the giblets ! ” You would say, “ What a brute of a man ! ” Yet that is what the theory of Ability comes to as a standard of distribution.

Work ?

4. “ Ah, well,” some say, “ let distribution be made to every man according to his work.” This is the idea behind “ piecework,” “ payment by results.” But, after all, it is only a disguise for the principles of physical or mental force. There is added the moral element of the will to work. But with this exception this principle fails like its predecessors. “ Let him who produces much receive much ; who produces little receive little.” That sounds just ; but it means the most to the strongest, in muscle or in mind. Compare the words of Paul : “ He that gathered much had nothing over ; he that gathered little had no lack.” “ Not on the vulgar mass called work must judgment pass. ”

Merit ?

5. There are some who advocate the principle of Merit. To every man according to his deserts, the most to the most meritorious. This sounds very ethical. But it is simply the idea of legal righteousness appearing in the economic sphere. It is hopelessly impracticable. It breaks down once you try to apply it. For (a) who can decide on the merit of the parties concerned ? Even the most hardened official of the Charity Organisation Society could not do that. Only the Judge of all the earth. We cannot anticipate the findings of the Day of Judgment. And (b) even if we could find out the most meritorious, they would simply refuse to receive the most. Fancy a tribunal of distribution making Francis of Assisi a multi-

millionaire! The most deserving would point-blank refuse to be the richest.

All these principles—of Force, of Ability, of Work, of Merit—fall to pieces in presence of the baby! If you distributed wealth to the baby according to his strength, or cleverness, or work, or deserts, there would soon be no baby. The baby is not strong or clever or able to work or meritorious. According to these principles baby should receive nothing—no food or shelter. That is, there should be no baby. But if there be no baby, there would be no human race. Principles that logically lead to the extinction of the human race are plainly indefensible.

The irrefutable—Baby!

Well, what is to be the principle of distribution?

6. The principle given in the old story of Acts: "Distribution was made to every one according to his NEED." This is the law of Jesus in the economic sphere. It is the principle of Grace; not of works but of Grace. By this, baby is fed and the race preserved. By this the unable, the aged and the cripple are provided for. By this, too, provision is made for the supremely able. What does an inventor like Edison need? All the wealth that will help him, in plant, in services, and in income, to make the inventions that are of priceless value to mankind. What does the statesman need? A whole system of appliances and services to enable him rightly to guide the nation. What did Wordsworth need? A modest income such as Calvert gave him, and a home at Rydal Mount, to enable him to render as poet the greatest service to mankind. The Christian principle, "To every one according to his need," is elastic and comprehensive enough to cover the whole apportionment of wealth.

Need.

The Unable and Supremely Able.

It is being increasingly recognised. Modern economics are beginning to accept it. Modern

Increasing Recognition.

administration more and more acts on it. Our educational expenditure is much larger for the cripple than for the whole child, for the mentally defective than for the child of normal mind. Our police system is less and less an embodiment of tit for tat ; more and more an adjustment according to need. The child offender receives the firm and kindly supervision of the probation officer. The youthful criminal is put under the Borstal system. So increasingly in every department of life the standard of need is asserting itself.

Jesus is the Saviour of our distributive system. His is an economic salvation. As you think over His great law of Service according to Need, you will, I trust, be moved more than ever to follow Him and to make Him your Leader, to live and to die.

V

THE GREAT CROSSING

THE glorious picture of society put forward in the original Gospel of Galilee arouses other feelings than those of admiration. What indeed could be more admirable or fascinating than the ideal of the Kingdom of God as portrayed by our Supreme Propagandist? A realm of justice and plenty, of peace and happiness, all nations gathered into the circle of One State: nay, one vast family reposing on the bosom of the All-perfect Father; in short, a social transcript of the personal character of Jesus Himself—what more could you hope for or desire or suggest?

Some one may reply: Only one thing—that it were real!

Ah! Between that ideal picture of society and the state of things actually prevailing, there seems, I grant you, to be a great gulf fixed. As we strain our mental vision across the chasm we see the vast contrast. There, peace; here, war. There, the nations one loving family; here, an international bear-garden. There, an elastic system of mutual service; here, a rigid system of mutual strife. There, all faces upturned and aglow with reverence and devotion to the universal Father; here, men looking downward to the sordid dust of gain, with glances at each other of greed, suspicion and fear. There, organised love; here, disorganising and disintegrating hatred. Sometimes the contrast appears to be complete.

**The Ideal and
the Real.**

Yet Jesus came saying, "This Kingdom is at hand, has approached, has come upon you, is amongst you." He came to make it real and to declare it real.

How did He expect it to become real?

Worse Con-
trast then.

The contrast between the real and the ideal was greater then than now. Jesus came among nations at bitter enmity with each other, Jews hating Romans and loathing the tools of Roman oppression, the profiteering tax-gatherers. He came among men divided by fierce religious differences, sect arrayed against sect, Jews abhorring Samaritans, Pharisees and Sadducees at perpetual variance, Israel despising all Gentile peoples as dogs and swine. The social cleavage was far more marked than now. The rich robbed and despised the poor. The intellectuals looked down superciliously upon the simple-hearted and ignorant. And men and women were bought and sold and abused as slaves.

A Change
plainly
Necessary.

Now it is as clear as noon-day that if the Kingdom of God comes into such a society, there must be, wherever it comes, a change, and a great change. The Kingdom will not come into being by cheers or show of hands or by rosy resolutions.

There must be change of conduct. Men will have to behave very differently to each other. And they will have to behave very differently towards God.

And this change of conduct will need behind it a change of heart. Men will not act differently unless they think differently, feel differently, and purpose differently. To make sure that the outward conduct is changed, an inward change is necessary.

This is plain common sense, is it not? It is not vague, shadowy mysticism, but plain hard truth.

So Jesus in announcing the Kingdom demanded just such a change. He said, "The Kingdom of God is at hand; Repent!" Repentance is not groaning over the past; it is change of purpose. It is change of heart.

Jesus'
Demand.

Repent! means, Break off from the old order that is in such glaring contradiction to the ideal. Give up caring for the things that appeal to the low-minded and narrow-minded around you. Turn your back on the things they most cherish. Reverse your purpose when it is bent on evil; that is, right about face. Enlarge your purpose when it is petty. Elevate it when it is mean and base.

I want you to note that in Jesus' teaching the motive of repentance was not, primarily, fear; not, as with John the Baptist, Flee from the wrath to come. Nor was it the hope of one's own personal deliverance. No; it was the vision of social perfectness. The Kingdom of God is at hand; therefore, repent. Was that not just like Jesus? He shows men the picture of a community all alive and aglow with love, ever active in loving service, ever inspired by loving worship. The prospect of that, He seems to say, will make men want to give up their unloving ways, their lust of pleasure, their lust of power, their lust of gold.

The Motive—
not Fear—

Does not the very thought of the England that is to be, as a land where none are very rich and none are poor, where all have enough and none have too much, whence greed and envy and the desire to get the better of other men have vanished, where all the people are healthy, prosperous, contented, neighbourly, companionable, friends frank and free, none servile to another, a nation of true brothers and sisters, a nation of lovers indeed—make you feel you would like to start such a

—but Hope!

society here and now by leaving off everything that hindered it coming to pass? The vision of such a country might make a millionaire part with even the desire for his millions, and the sordid politician give up his ambitions.

Believe !

But if that vision of social bliss is to influence any man—Jew then or Englishman now—to change of purpose and change of practice, he must regard it not as a mere dream, or as a fancy of impossible perfectness. He must *believe* in it. Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." That is the Good News. And He added not merely Repent, but *believe* in the Good News. Believe that this community of social well-being is close to you, is on the verge of realisation, is amongst you. It is not a dream but a deed. It is not an impossible fancy, but is *practicable*. Our Prime Minister the other day told us that our plan for making the League of Nations an effective reality was "an impracticable ideal." That simply meant that though he may have liked the thought he did not believe in it. He did not believe in it, and therefore would not change his purpose and policy.

**Proletariat
nearer Jesus.**

I am glad to think that the proletariat as a whole is more moved to change of heart and of action by the prospect of a transformed society than by fears or hopes of personal salvation; and they have more faith in the coming salvation of society than they have in their own personal future. So they stand nearer to Jesus than do the self-centred members of the middle classes.

**What blocks
the Way.**

For Jesus saw clearly what you and I have, I expect, come to see, the chief difficulty that lies in the way of social progress. It is that with too many men, "self is at bottom." Men are self-centred, self-seeking, self-indulgent, self-assertive, selfish. That fact blocks almost every advance.

So Jesus said, "Out of the way with it! If any

man would come after Me, let him deny himself." Self must cease to be the centre and pivot and motive of your life. So long as Self is supreme, you cannot behave as children towards the Great Father ; you cannot behave as brothers and sisters to each other. You certainly cannot lead a life of love until Self is dethroned.

Is that not perfectly plain and obvious ? It is no dark or mystical saying. Every one who has had to do with social movements knows that it is the sprag of self in the wheels that time and again hinders advance. So with the plainest of practical wisdom Jesus said, " Out with it ! Down with Self ! "

The Sprag of Self.

Alas ! alas ! how many men there are who eloquently proclaim on platforms and in pulpits social ideals which involve the extinction of selfishness, and who yet are out for No. 1 all the time. They are pushing themselves forward, even while they appear to magnify the cause. That is what Jesus called hypocrisy ; and hence His horror of it. It is Self under the mask of social enthusiasm. And at the crucial moments the votary of Self proves a broken reed.

Masked Selfishness.

So the first step towards the Kingdom of God is the overthrow of Self. One must be as much broken loose from the selfish habit of the world as is the man who is carrying his cross to the spot where he is to be crucified. So Jesus said, " Deny yourself and take up your cross."

But to such complete *detachment*, there must be *attachment* not less complete. Just as Repentance required also Faith, so if Self ceases to be the aim of our life, its place must be taken by a Higher. Faith in the approaching Kingdom of God needs a deeper foundation than hope or conscience or prophecy. It must rest on reality. And the Kingdom of God is only perfectly real

**Self Ousted —
What ?**

in Jesus Himself. So He crowns the demand for self-denial by saying, "Follow Me!" Personal devotion to the real Jesus carries one onward from the demolition of self to the construction of the Kingdom of God.

If the social ideal is the expression in terms of society of the character of Jesus, if it is the very negation of selfishness, then the demands "Deny Self and follow Me" are the plainest of practical common sense.

The Uniting Arch.

I said at the outset, there is a wide chasm between the world as we know it and the Kingdom of God. But the chasm has been bridged and the twin sides of the arch that spans the gulf are: Repentance and Faith, Denial of Self and following Jesus.

Who Bridged the Abyss?

But we are driven on to ask, Who first bridged the abyss? Who brought the community of organised love, the Kingdom of God, within reach of men and made it accessible?

The One Straight Life.

It was One Who lived it in His own life; Who sought first the Kingdom of God in everything; Who broke loose from the old order in home and temple, in nation and in law; Who was unflinchingly and unswervingly true to the Father in trust and love; true also to the brothers in love and service; Who was always entirely obedient to the law of love. In Jesus the Kingdom became real; an actual fact in flesh and blood. It is no longer dream or hope or prophecy; it has entered into history; it is historical reality.

His was a short life. He was little over thirty years of age when He died. Except for the glimpse of His visit to Jerusalem when He was twelve years old, we have only records of Him during His public career; and that is supposed to have lasted only three years, or eighteen months, or even one year. But whether three years or one

year, it was enough to show His absolute constancy of devotion to the universal Fatherhood, to the universal Brotherhood, and to the law of love. He was entirely *straight*. He swerved neither to the right hand nor to the left. He lived in a generation which He described as crooked and twisted. But He was straight. He made no compromises. He resorted to no subterfuges. He indulged in no diplomacies.

This all meant a complete break with the past. It meant a continuous rupture with the sinful habit of mankind. It meant an utter disregard of the world's standards and conventions and expectations. But this the world could not tolerate, so it rose up and slew Him. His Death was the inevitable outcome of His Life.

A Complete Break.

His life was one single-eyed offering to the Will of the Father. It was one single-eyed service of men. His death made both complete. All the way through He had fought and conquered the onset of the world's hardened habit of sin. He had snapped the chains of custom which waited to fetter Him. With a tremendous exertion of moral energy, of which His sufferings are but the index, He bore and broke the shock of a hitherto unbroken tradition of sin. The forces of evil turned on Him in fierce resentment. In Gethsemane and on Calvary they broke His body, they broke His heart, but they could not break His Will. That was unchangeably fixed on the Kingdom of God. The avalanche of generations of wrong-doing fell upon Him, but could not shake Him. The torrent of ages of sin poured down upon Him to sweep Him from His purpose. It was all in vain. Though done to death, He was the Victor.

"Obedient unto Death."

For, in carrying through unbroken and unsoiled the purpose of the Kingdom of God, He not merely achieved the purpose of His life and obeyed the

What He Did and Bore for Us.

Will of the Father. He had made it possible for all men to enter the Kingdom. He had done the deed for men which they could not do for themselves. He had borne the burden for men which they could not bear. They could follow where He led, but where without His lead they could not have gone. They could advance over a conquered world which He for their sakes had fought and flung. So His life and death were all for men. He had achieved the Kingdom in human life, in history ; it was there in Him.

**The Crucial
Change.**

And by attaching ourselves to Him, we are in the Kingdom. The Kingdom begins to operate in our lives. The Fatherhood is ours. The Brotherhood is ours. Ours is the Law of Love ; and the power to live by it. For once we put our wills under the Will of Jesus, a power enters our wills which makes us not utterly unworthy citizens of the Kingdom. We are born from above. Then we begin to see the Kingdom at work in our own sin-stained lives, and in the bleeding, struggling world around us. Once we could not see it. The world was all one welter of greed and lust and hatred and misery. The Master said "Except ye be born from above, ye cannot see the Kingdom of God." But we can see it now.

And now we see the tremendous change wrought in human life and history by Jesus' great Deed in life and death.

**The Great
Divide—**

You know what the Great Divide is, the ridge of the great watershed. You toil up the Alpine slopes, you ascend a wall of mountains. As you rise, the streams are all running down to the valley you have left behind. As you rise, they shrink in volume, they grow narrower and narrower. As you rise, the air is colder ; the path is more and more rugged. You ascend the treeless bare range of rock ; and, after much stooping and toiling

upward, you at last attain the summit. You look along the ridge that like a knife cuts the continent in twain. And before you sink the slopes downward to a vast plain, and beyond that is the sea. You have reached the Great Divide. The streams behind you flowed down to the Atlantic Ocean. The streams before you run into the Pacific. Henceforth your journey is easy. The brooks, the rivulets, the rivers all run your way now.

Calvary is the Great Divide of human history. Up to it the Kingdom was only an ascending hope and aspiration and expectation. From Calvary onward it has become an increasing reality. Vast may be the tracts of time before the Kingdom reaches the Ocean of complete and world-wide fulfilment. But it is in process. It is the ruling stream of tendency. It is advancing—now with a cataract's leap, now with the gurgling music of the brook, now with the soft inland murmur of the quiet stream, now with the placid motion of the broad river; but amid all the changes of expansion and contraction, of reformation and revolution, it is sweeping on towards the goal—"Thy Kingdom come on earth, as it is in Heaven."

Up and follow! The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent! Change your purpose! And believe in the Good News. In your own life, down with self and up with Jesus! Deny self and follow Him, and in His train make the Kingdom ever more widely, ever more deeply, real.

—in **Human History.**

VI

MAMMON THE RIVAL GOD

GLAD news it was that Jesus brought. He called it the Message of Delight. For He told of the arrival of the long-expected Reign of Social Justice and Social Bliss. This was indeed good news. But it was not, as many have insisted, "too good news to be true." It was true. And its truth was embodied in the life and death of Jesus.

**Faulty
Diagnosis.**

But He did not stop there. As we have seen, He did not merely proclaim the ideal and declare it to be on the edge of coming to pass. He also boldly faced the facts. He pointed out the chief difficulties, the central hindrances in the way of realisation. Many teachers fixed on lesser obstacles. They recommended superficial remedies. Jesus X-rayed the cancerous cause of all the trouble. He put His finger on the most deadly spot.

So many guides there were who fixed on the wrong spot as the root of all the evil. They said : "Matter is evil ; the flesh is evil ; the senses are evil. Live away from the senses, from the flesh and from matter ; ignore or deny them if you cannot abolish them ; and so you will come to the ideal life."

**The Root
laid Bare.**

But Jesus said, "No. The material universe is not evil. It is full of the Father. The flesh is not evil. Its highest expression is the creative act of the Father's love. When man and woman become one flesh it is what God has joined to-

gether. The senses are avenues through which the beauty of the Divine Artist and the loving care of the Divine Provider flow into the soul. No. The root of the evil lies much deeper. It lies in Self. Self-centredness, self-absorption, self-worship, self-indulgence, self-seeking and selfishness—Self in all its forms, gross and sensual or refined and spiritual, is the enemy. Down with it! Self is the cancer. Out with it!”

This is one of the things for which we can never sufficiently thank Jesus. You know how grateful you feel to a medical man who has discovered what is the matter with a friend of yours who seemed slowly fading away into death. He has found out what is the matter and so knows how to cure it. Jesus found out what is the matter with all of us. It is Self; and He gives us the remedy. The whole world is grateful to the physician who discovers the microbe that has caused a hitherto incurable disease; as, when a Japanese expert found out the bacillus of the bubonic plague, all mankind applauded. It was glad news.

**The Microbe
Discovered.**

So it was one of the Great Glad Truths which Jesus brought in His Gospel that the secret of the plague which kept men out of the realm of social health was Self. We know now the microbe of our misery. And the anti-toxin is—Jesus Himself. “Deny self and follow Me.” Those who have been tortured with the anguish of self-scrutiny, or the disgust of self-worship, or the nausea of self-indulgence, hear as the very proclamation of emancipation to their enslaved souls the joyous news that Self must be dethroned and Christ enthroned. Raging passions, clamorous desires, supercilious intellect, must all be brought under the will which has put itself under the Will of Jesus.

**Toxin and
Anti-toxin.**

Glad news indeed. That was the message of victory for the battle of the inward life. For that we thank Jesus with all our hearts.

But we have an outward life as well as an inward. There are outward foes and hindrances as well as those within. There are great and formidable rivals out in the world to the quest of the Kingdom.

**The Chief
Outward Foe.**

And again we have to thank Jesus for having singled out our chief adversary, for having focussed our attention upon the principal rival. He not merely said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice," but pointed out the one thing which above all others challenges our loyalty to God, to His Kingdom and His justice.

What was that one thing ?

It was not sensual pleasure ; not exuberant indulgence in wine and women ; though that has barred countless multitudes from entrance into the kingdom of bliss.

It was not the mad passion to be much talked about, the lust of fame and glory, or at least notoriety. That has shut out thousands.

It was not the fierce greed of power, the ambition to dominate and domineer. That has strewed the earth with corpses and filled the skies with wails of agony.

It was not the soul-shrivelling, heart-desiccating pursuits of the mere intellect.

It was not the mystical absorption of the religious voluptuary who would let the whole world perish so long as he were left to dream himself into union with some abstract Being.

Not one of these things alone was the most deadly rival to God. No. It was something which could procure them all—pleasure, fame, power, leisure for intellect or opportunity for

devout self-centred meditation. It therefore offered Self almost everything it wanted to meet its claims. It was the means to almost everything which would gratify Self.

It was, to put it into one abstract phrase, **Material Wealth**. Almost every form of material wealth can be exchanged into some other form. This exchange is mostly effected in civilised lands by money. So we may describe material wealth more concretely as the things that we can buy with money. It covers food, clothes, house-room, the necessaries of life : land, treasure, silver, gold, gems, and all the luxuries of life. It supplies every material requisite, from the poorest diet that ever kept soul and body together, to the vast possessions of a Solomon or a Cræsus. So **Pelf** without corresponds to **Self** within.

The Universal Means.

Pelf for Self.

Wealth so regarded was, as it has been called, a material infinite. To the extent of your wealth you could command anything. As Carlyle said : " If you have sixpence in your pocket, you are king so far as sixpence will go "—a rather limited kingdom in these days of high prices !

This material infinite Jesus singled out as the great rival to the spiritual infinite. He was thinking most and always of the Father. But men were mostly thinking about wealth. In the Aramaic tongue which Jesus and the Jews of His day spoke, the word for material wealth was **Mamon**. It is properly spelled with a single and not a double " m " in the middle. Jesus evidently took the word to come from the same word which we know as **Amen**. **Amen** means verily, truly, certainly. The root meant to be firm, sure, reliable, trustworthy. So **Mamon** was taken to mean the trusty, sure, certain thing.

**Material
versus
Spiritual
Infinite.**

Jesus made fun of the word. Just as **Ruskin** has denounced the use of the word **wealth** to

**Mamon
misnamed.**

denote mere commodities, so Jesus laughed at the idea of material wealth being called Mammon or the Trusty thing or Security. The term was such a mockery of reality. Mammon was not, as it called itself, true security ; not true wealth ; not really trusty or trustworthy. It was, as His followers called it, uncertain riches. The true riches was something quite other.

**All Wealth
Tainted.**

Material wealth was not merely falsely called ; not merely was it marked by the "deceitfulness of riches." It was also tainted. In almost every case it was the product of injustice. It was stained with the suffering or disappointment or even blood of some one or more. Even when Jesus was using timber in His work as a carpenter, He knew that probably the woodcutter had been underpaid by the timber merchant, that the merchant had been overcharged by the custom house officer, and so on. He knew that almost every commodity was largely the result of exploitation of the weak by the strong. So with His unerring moral judgment He called it the Mammon of unrighteousness, the wealth of injustice, the security that was unjust as well as spurious. The product of a morally polluted society, it was itself necessarily defiled. How can a community largely composed of self-seekers, of exploiters and exploited, do other than bring forth material results that are saturated with iniquity ?

And does not our conscience to-day approve His estimate of the moral character of wealth ? Is it not still "filthy lucre" ?

The Remedy.

If we have to thank Jesus for His moral appraisal of material wealth, still more have we to thank Him for telling us how to disinfect it and turn it to good account. It is the product of evil ; use it for good. Use it not for the folly of accumulation, whether of hoarding or investment for

self-gratification. Use it for those who need help. Out of the Mammon of unrighteousness make to yourselves friends. The wealth of injustice is not really your own ; it properly belongs to others—to many others. It can only be in your hands for a short while. Invest it in friendship. When wealth fails, the friends you have made with it will receive you into the eternal tabernacles. The true riches of eternal friendship will then be entrusted to you.

But—and now Jesus leads up to the supreme alternative—you must make your choice. God or Mammon ! You must give your life to one or the other. You cannot be keen on getting money or the things that money can buy, and at the same time be keen on God. You cannot make Mammon your master and God at the same time. You cannot serve God and Mammon.

**The Supreme
Alternative.**

Mammon, remember, was no idol, no god of heathen mythology. Mammon was just material wealth. But those who are slaves to material wealth have made of that wealth their god.

Jesus put this searching dilemma to the Pharisees. They were supposed to be very holy servants of God. But Luke tells us they were lovers of money. So they scoffed back at Him. They tried to pour ridicule on Him. Then He sternly reminded them that what is highly exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God. Accumulations of wealth, coined out of human blood and shame, out of slavery and sweating and exploitation of the weak, these are indeed highly exalted among men, but they are an abomination to God.

**“ Pious ”
Lovers of
Money.**

Yet it was not the rich whom Jesus had mostly in mind in His warnings against Mammon. It was the poor. In modern phrase, it was not the *bourgeoisie* so much as the proletariat that Jesus

**The Poor
specially
Warned.**

warned against Mammon-worship. Perhaps that comes as a surprise to you, but it is the fact.

You may not have thought how very poor the people were who flocked about Jesus. One proof will suffice. They followed Him for days together, ran round the lake to overtake Him, on the off-chance of getting a simple meal of bread and fish. It was no banquet or feast they were after, only plain bread and fish.

Now you might suppose that Jesus would find excuse for those who were so miserably poor. You might expect Him to say, "We cannot blame these poor hungry things for being so keen about stuff to fill their empty stomachs. Quest after material wealth that takes the shape of food and clothing is excusable, if not legitimate." So many a benevolent man speaks to-day. But so Jesus did not speak. He rebuked them. He told them to work not for the food that perisheth, but for the food which abides unto eternal life.

And it was to the proletariat that surrounded Him upon the Mount that He said, "You cannot serve God and Mammon." And to them He went on: "Therefore I say unto you, be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." Because you poor men and women cannot serve God and Mammon, therefore be not anxious. If you are anxious about food and shelter, you are serving Mammon, you are not serving God. If you are not anxious, but full of cheerful trust, you are serving God. Let us not fling these strong words of Jesus at opulent villadom alone. Let us remember they were spoken to the very poor.

Now, as then, the very poor are tempted to think always about food and shelter, that is, about material wealth. They are sorely tempted

Poor
Mammon-
seekers
Rebuked.

Anxiety
Worship of
Mammon.

All Men
Tempted.

to forget God. They are not exempt from the temptation which besets the whole human race.

For we are all of us tempted to put the wrong Infinite in the place of the right Infinite; to put our trust in uncertain and deceitful riches rather than in the living God. No doubt the rich are tempted to think too much upon growing richer, how to increase their dividends, and find more lucrative investments. The well-to-do are tempted to think of becoming rich. The lower middle class are too often crass believers in the gospel of getting on! But the allurements of Mammon does not stop with them.

Last autumn I was in the city of millionaires, in Pittsburg, where colossal fortunes sprang up like mushrooms. But the millionaires were by no means the only Mammon-worshippers. I spoke during the dinner hour at an engineering works in Pittsburg. I hold in my hands a letter from one of the working men there. In his own emphatic words he says of his fellow-workmen, "The men think of nothing but money." He wishes "we could have a speaker like you who would give us something else to think about instead of just money." According to this man, the workers of Pittsburg are as much Mammonites as any Pittsburg capitalist.

The temptation to rely on Mammon more than on God besets us all. It assails the purest philanthropist. It too often overcomes the public servants of religion. There is the gross sin of suppressing truth, or selling justice out of regard to wealthy supporters. An American business magazine which I read some years ago spoke of the things to be taken into account by a capitalist in starting a new business, and gave this significant advice, "Subsidise strategic charities." That is a naked suggestion that Mammon should capture

Not
Millionaires
merely.

"Subsidise
Strategic
Charities."

what ought to belong to God. Against that we can be on our guard. But we have to meet the temptation in a much subtler guise. We say, "If only we had the money, our Church, our Missionary Society, our Settlement, or our Party could do so much more for the advance of the Kingdom of God. If we had some big monied man behind us! But we have only God."

"If we only had the Money!"

The Absolute Security.

Take our own Settlement for example. We have had most wonderful confirmations of our faith that behind the Settlement has been the creative mandate of the Christ. In most of the movements which have gone forth from this Settlement we have had plain and unmistakable proofs of "the Lord working with us." Yet if the sum of £10,000 were placed at the bank to the credit of the Settlement, would we not all be tempted to feel we had much more security behind us than when we had only God? Only God! The very phrase, with all its irreverence, speaks out the mammonism that is in all of us.

Jesus rouses our conscience with His challenge, God or Mamon. No compromise. Either be out-and-out self-seekers, or for the future make friends out of such wealth as you possess. And trust. Be not anxious.

So Jesus saves us from Self within and Mamon without.

VII

JESUS' STRESS ON THE SOCIAL CONTRAST

JESUS grew up from childhood as in the very bosom of the Father. He looked on Nature and on man as with the eyes of the Father. He felt and shared the Divine wonder and awe and delight of the sunrise. The mountains were to Him high places of the soul in communion with the calm serenity of God. The common field flower and the fluttering bird were messengers of the all-provident Love. And the little child, so trustful and open-eyed, warm-hearted and playful, was to Him a type and promise of the time when all men would be just as confiding and truthful, as affectionate and full of kindly humour. For His soul was steeped from the earliest in the Great Hope of His people, that a community would appear in which justice and love, plenty and peace, and deep intimacy with God, would be everywhere present. His heart was full of it, of its fascination, its authority, its nearness.

But as He looked out on life He found a vast contradiction to what He knew ought to be and would yet come to pass. He saw a great line of cleavage which ran right through society. On the one side were the people who dominated and despised ; on the other were the many who were "bossed" and scorned.

**The Social
Cleavage.**

I. There was the cleavage of rank and power. A few had the whip in their hands. The rest were lashed and driven. There was the judge, secure

**Rank and
Power.**

in the might of his legal authority, regardless of man, defiant of God; and there was the poor widow, who pleaded, often in vain, for the justice due to her. Here was no relation of helper and helped, of chivalrous shield stretched out over menaced weakness. It was the relation of bully and bullied.

There were the Roman legions thundering through the land. Even as a boy Jesus may have seen them and noticed the arrogant airs of the commanding officers, and the abject servility of the men. He knew how the kings of the nations lorded it over them; how their great ones domineered. And He saw their subjects crouch and cringe to them as if in the presence of a God.

Why this
Difference?

Can we not imagine how all this would grate on the sensitive spirit of Jesus? What, after all, was the difference between unjust judge and importunate widow? between their most elevated majesties and their abject lieges? Were they not all children of One Father? Were they not all dependent for every breath they drew on the Unseen Providence? What right had the few to bully and boss and trample down the many?

Can we wonder that Jesus abhorred this social contrast, derided it, and bade His followers do away with it? "They that are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, but it shall not be so among you. Among you the relation shall be not of ruler and ruled, but of servant and served."

Rich and
Poor.

II. Quite outside the circle of pretentious government, Jesus found everywhere evident another wide gap. There was the great mansion of the Jewish grandee. He owned houses and lands and cattle and gold and silver. He dressed gorgeously and fared sumptuously every day. He drove about where he would, and everywhere the

utmost deference was paid to him. And there in his household were quite a number of men and women who were absolutely at his beck and call, to gratify his whims and caprices and lusts. They were his slaves, to be used or tortured at his will.

What made all this difference? Mostly the mere accident of wealth. The grandee was but a man, no more; a son of the same Father as his slaves. His slaves were men and women as much as he; brothers and sisters of his in the Divine family. Why, then, because of having acres of land and stones and mortar and precious metals and fine clothes and jewellery should he be accounted so much better than they? Surely here was a glaring contradiction to the very idea of the Kingdom of God which was the realm of justice and love and service!

There, too, Jesus saw the wealthy farmer. His fields had yielded plentifully. His crops had been faithfully gathered into his barns by patient labourers. Yet his only thought was to extend his premises and store up his goods—not for the help of others or for the relief of the poor, but solely that he might eat and drink and be merry! What self-indulgence, what selfishness, what folly in the face of swift impending death! Here again was the negation of the Kingdom of God.

The sight of the leprous beggar at the doors of the wealthy man, sick, untended and unfed except by the broken meats which were shovelled out to him by the pampered menials of extravagance, his only nurse the friendly dogs which licked his sores—how it struck home to the heart of Jesus! Then when the gates were flung open, what a spectacle rolled forth, in gorgeous equipage heaped up with cushions and shaded by umbrella-bearers, robed in splendid clothing, the Mighty Wealthy One who had just risen from his daily

**The Wealthy
Farmer.**

**The Leprous
Beggar.**

gorging of all manner of delectable dainties, self-centred and the object of general admiration and adulation. In Jesus' eyes the very dogs shamed him. They had more pity on the poor man than this over-fed, over-dressed piece of self-importance.

**An Unjust
Distinction.**

It was riches that made all the difference between these two human brothers. And Jesus knew what riches were. They were mostly the product of injustice. They were the mammon of unrighteousness. And yet because some, by means fair or foul, had obtained more of these ill-gotten gains, they were honoured by others and they looked down upon others. While the most of men, because they had little or none of this mammon of unrighteousness, had to suffer in repute and often in person. This was the inversion and denial of the Will of the Father.

It was this social contrast which most painfully impressed Jesus. Here the surfeited; there the starved. Here the bored with too much; there the hungry with too little. Here the arrogant and overbearing; there the despised and down-trodden. Those who did most for others—the ever-serving poor—had least; and those who did nothing for others had most and squandered it upon their own worthless selves.

**A Song of
Revolution.**

But—and Jesus thrilled with joy at the thought—the Kingdom would put an end to this injustice and infamy. There was a song which it is said His mother sang before He was born. The thought of it, if not the words of it, sang deep in His heart: "The hungry He hath filled with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away." That time would come.

**"Good News
to the Poor!"**

We cannot wonder that when Jesus came out into public life He delighted in the thought that His good news was first and foremost good news

to the poor. He told His fellow-villagers in the meeting-house of Nazareth He knew Himself to be anointed to bring good tidings to the poor.

So, too, when challenged by John the Baptist, Jesus sent back as crowning proof that He was the Coming One—"The poor have good tidings brought to them." When He founded His Church and gave it its plan of campaign, the first words in His charter were, "Blessed are ye poor; for yours is the Kingdom of God." Justice at last! Vindication at last! The poor no longer the victims and playthings and slaves of the rich, but citizens in the Kingdom of God. "But woe unto you that are rich; for ye have received your consolation. You are bored with life. Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled. But woe unto you that are surfeited now, for you shall suffer hunger."

We cannot be surprised that Jesus glorified the widow's mite as far surpassing the profuse gifts of the wealthy, or that He bade His followers when they made a feast to invite not the rich but the poor and the halt and the maimed and the blind; or that the well-to-do, who when bidden to the Royal Supper with one consent began to make excuse, were left in wrath, and in their places were sought the poor that littered the highways and byways.

You remember that startling utterance of His when the young man who had great possessions made the great refusal. He refused to sell all that he had and give to the poor, and accompany Jesus: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." We are told that "His disciples were amazed exceedingly at that saying." Most of them have been exceed-

**The Camel
and the
Needle's Eye.**

ingly amazed ever since. But you will not be amazed if you have kept close to the idea of the Kingdom which filled the mind of Jesus, to His thought of the universal Fatherhood and Brotherhood, to His laws of need and of service. Nothing short of the Almighty Grace of God can help a rich man into the Kingdom. The difficulties before him are tremendous ; the way his wealth comes to him, the easy habit of his life, the continual service and adulation paid to him ; these things make it very hard for him to feel that Self and Pelf are of no account, that he is but a man as a beggar or a pauper is a man, that he is, in the words of Edmund Burke, but a pauper on the bounty of the poor. With God all things are possible, even the passing of a camel through a needle's eye, and the pulling of a rich man through the portals of the Kingdom. You and I know rich men whose beautiful character and generous life make evident the miraculous power of the Divine Grace.

Dives and Lazarus.

But Jesus showed His sense of the social contrast more luridly in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. The rich man may have been eminently respectable ; not a word is said against his moral character as morality is ordinarily understood. But after death he is plunged into the tormenting flame, while Lazarus is carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Why? Because the rich man was rich and left poverty unrelieved and sickness untended. Because Lazarus was poor, and having received evil things on earth was being comforted in Heaven. If that parable were literally fulfilled in the case of every rich man and rich woman in London who left poverty unrelieved and uncared-for, what a fearful outlook for the West End ! In all the rantings and ravings which have been spouted forth under the Red

flag, there has been nothing said which is so terrible as this parable of the rich man in Hades. There, indeed, the social contrast was turned right round.

Even more terrible is the parable of the sheep and the goats at the Day of Judgment. There Jesus declared with the utmost solemnity that to neglect the poor—the hungry, the thirsty, the ill-clad, the sick, the homeless, the prisoner—was to incur eternal punishment. It was a damnable offence. Jesus so absolutely identified Himself with the poor and hungry and naked and sick and outcast as to say: “Inasmuch as ye did it or did it not to these, ye did it or did it not to Me.”

**The Damnable
Offence.**

There can be no doubt on which side of the social contrast Jesus took His stand.

Frank-eyed historical research cannot deny that in the later literature of Israel the rich were regarded as offensive to God and the poor as pleasing to Him. And from this prepossession of the Psalmists and prophets, says a great German scholar, Jesus never emancipated Himself. That is to say, Jesus saw the Father stand on the side of the poor with His face against the rich.

III. There was another line of severance which Jesus noted. It was the division between what we would now call the highly educated and the comparatively uneducated. True, by education we mean now training in a great many branches of knowledge and action. In Jesus' time among the Jews education was solely concerned with the Torah—the Law. Those who were well versed in the law were the highly educated, the learned. Those who were not versed in the law were despised as ignoramuses. So on the one side stood the “wise and understanding”; and on the other the simpletons, the common folk, who did not understand. You recall the contempt of the cultured priests when their police returned with-

**The Cleavage
of Education.**

out arresting Jesus. The priests said: "Hath any of the rulers believed on Him, or of the Pharisees? But this multitude which knoweth not the law are accursed."

We cannot then be surprised when we find Jesus saying: "Woe unto you that are versed in the law; for ye took away the key of knowledge. You know all the prophets and the Psalms and the Law, with their wonderful portrayal of the coming Kingdom of God. Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

The Caste of
Culture Con-
demned.

So Jesus condemned for all time the Caste of Culture.

He rejoiced in spirit when He said, "I thank Thee, O Father, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes." He was glad that the highest truth was withheld from the supercilious intellectuals and was bestowed upon the unsophisticated common folk.

Bourgeoisie
versus
Proletariat.

IV. No one who confronts the facts which I have cited can deny that Jesus recognised and laid heavy stress upon the social contrast—the cleavage between the Haves and the Have-nots, between the possessors of power, of wealth and of culture, and those who had not those so-called advantages. If we use the popular parlance of to-day, we should say that Jesus enforced the contrast between *bourgeoisie* and proletariat. Nor can any one doubt that He stood for the elimination of the *bourgeoisie* as a social caste, or that He stood for the sway of the proletariat. In other words, Jesus would, with the advent of the Kingdom of God, abolish the social contrast. He would give the Kingdom to the poor, the satisfaction of their needs to the hungry. He would bind all men into a unity of class.

"The Dicta-
torship of the
Proletariat?"

But it would be a unity realised amid endless variety of function. He knew and loved the Creator too well, He loved and knew His brothermen too well, ever to ask for a society which was in all its members a repetition of identity—every man “another of the same” as his neighbour. He called for a Brotherhood in which each brother was unique ; each had his own distinct nature and function.

V. Did Jesus then proclaim the Class War? Far from it ; He set out to extinguish the Class War. No doubt He was accused of “setting class against class.” His stress on the social contrast was sure to be so interpreted. But He deliberately set Himself against class-hatred. He did not blaze away against the domineering rulers : He smiled at them. He made fun of their pretentious airs and high-sounding titles. They “are *supposed* to rule” ; they call themselves “benefactors.” He quenched their ambitious ardours with a stream of humour, not of hatred. He preached no crusade of hatred against the rich. He went of set purpose to stay with a rich profiteering tax-gatherer called Zaccheus ; and by doing so caused high dudgeon among the people. He was no flatterer of the rich. He spoke home-truths to His wealthy hosts. I heard the other day from a French friend that when Parisian workmen board a tramcar with all seats filled, they say quite openly, “We can’t get a seat because of these middle-class vermin.” Jesus would never have spoken like that. What He said was, “Woe unto you rich”—that is, “You are to be pitied. You are living for self and pelf. You shut yourselves out of the Kingdom of bliss. You are bored and soured.” He never said, “Cursed be ye rich.”

Class War ?

“Woes” not Curses.

It was of the supercilious votaries of religious culture that He was least tolerant. He scorched

Voltaire’s Scorn for the Workers.

with His satire the Pharisees and the men well versed in the law. But again He said, "Woe unto you," not "cursed be ye," "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" French toilers, I hear, speak quite openly in public places of "those accursed intellectuals." With fine French clearness of distinction they discern the contrast between the educated and the uneducated, and they know how the educated despise the uneducated. They may remember what Voltaire wrote to a friend about education: "It is not the labourer we must educate, but the good bourgeois, the inhabitant of our cities; that enterprise is sufficiently lofty and great. With regard to the labouring classes, they are always besotted and barbarous—they are oxen who require a yoke, a goad and a measure of hay." There you have the quintessence of French culture and of that contempt for the "little ones" which so roused Jesus' wrath. But Jesus would never, like the Parisian artisan, speak of the "accursed intellectuals."

"Ye Cursed"
only Once.

Jesus only once used the word "accursed"; and He used it in a way entirely characteristic of Himself. He did not use it of those who spoke against Him or His Good News; nor of the overbearing oppressor; nor of the Pharisee; but only of those who neglected the poor. It was to the nations who left uncared-for the hungry, the thirsty, the ill-clad, and homeless, and sick, and the prisoner that He said, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into eternal fire!"

Weaving
Classes
Together.

Jesus was as far as possible removed from the frenzied advocate of the class war. He dined with the Pharisee; He would be on friendly terms with every class, high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned. With the ties of personal friendship He would weave the classes into one. He

would bring men together so that they might fall in love with one another. And where love comes in, the class contrast will sooner or later go out.

VI. Things being as they are, a like stern stress on the social contrast is heard in the most earnest voices of modern times. It is not the theme of the Socialist alone, or of the wild Radical. It has received grave emphasis from some of the sagest counsellors of the public.

**Some Modern
Voices.**

You find it in Thomas Carlyle, the father of much modern Toryism. He drew a picture of the Dandy and the Drudge, whom he took as representing the two great classes of society. He portrayed the pampered luxury of the Dandiical class and the grinding poverty of the Drudgical class. He even thought it probable that these "two sects will one day part England between them; each recruiting itself from the intermediate ranks till there be none left to enlist on either side." Then would come the shattering explosion: "the earth shivered into impalpable smoke."

Carlyle.

Lord Beaconsfield was the idol of British Conservatism, but he had too much genius to overlook this terrible social contrast. He wrote a novel about it, entitled "Sybil, or The Two Nations." He makes one of his characters exclaim that Queen Victoria reigned over two nations; "two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws—the Rich and the Poor."

Beaconsfield.

Gladstone.

Nor was the hero of the Liberals, Lord Beaconsfield's great antagonist, blind to this frightful contrast. Mr. Gladstone roused no small wrath by launching the phrase that divided the population of these islands into "the classes and the masses"; with the suggestion, which many people found so exasperating, that the classes were generally in the wrong and the masses generally in the right. Similar testimonies might be drawn from countless other sources in modern literature. But these samples may for the time suffice.

**How to
Overcome.**

So let Liberal and Conservative, Individualist and Socialist, ponder afresh the stress that Jesus laid upon the social contrast. And let us all try to resolve to annul this social contrast, not alone or chiefly by political nostrums or economic panaceas, but by the deep religious faith and moral purpose of the Kingdom of God. Let us overcome not by class-conflict, but by class-co-operation; not by deepening antagonisms until social explosion and social wreck result, but by strengthening amongst all men the spirit of Brotherhood based on the common Fatherhood; not by hatred but by love; not by more Mammon but by more God; not by Self but by Christ.

VIII

THE LOAF AND THE CUP

I. JESUS was the most intensely *social* person known to history. He loved His fellow men and women. He longed to be with them. He was utterly unlike the religious solitary, the hermit or the recluse. He sought solitude, it is true, but only that He might enjoy the Unseen Fellowship, and might return again to human intercourse with quickened outflow of sympathy.

The people He chose to have about Him were no men of genius or distinction. They were commonplace members of the common people. Yet how amazingly fond of them He was! "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Indoors or out of doors, in deep joy or in the very tragedy of grief, He craved for their company. His greatest followers have found Him to be the very soul of social cohesion.

**His Craving
for Company.**

II. This social sympathy of Jesus was no mere sentiment; no delicious emotion cherished for its own sake. It was a social passion that must become practical. It flowed out in all kinds of social service, in healing, feeding, teaching the people.

**His Social
Service.**

III. But His social disposition found its chief expression in *table-fellowship*. Jesus loved the social board. He had a genuine human delight in the pleasures of the table. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking." He found pleasure

**His Table-
Fellowship.**

in no mere "feast of reason and flow of soul." He found it in the enjoyment of real food. But it was no solitary self-gratification. He did not feed alone. He loved the meal-together. Whether He was in His own home, or in the house of a friend or stranger, He delighted in eating and drinking with others. The food, of course, was not all the feast. But it was an essential part.

**His Table
Talk.**

With it there went some of the most charming table talk ever uttered, and also some of the most serious. He used to rebuke the pride and fussy self-assertiveness of His fellow-guests. Sometimes He made His host very angry. But He got the outcasts to feel quite at home with Him at table. He welcomed those who "had no character to lose."

**His Favourite
Parable.**

This table-fellowship, with its physical and social joys, was not merely His practice. He used to talk about it, much and often. He saw in it a hint and parable of the best of all good things. The feast was His chosen likeness for the Kingdom of God.

**The Father
Present.**

For it is not by mere chance that His biographers tell us how on beginning a meal Jesus lifted up His eyes to Heaven and blessed the food before He served it. Everything on the table was a love-gift from His Father. The Father was in the feast and in the fellowship. Else Jesus could not have found it such a joy. Altogether the picture of Jesus at the social board was one of the most characteristic.

**His Chosen
Memorial.**

So is it any wonder that Jesus chose as the thing specially to remember Him by a *meal-together*? In remembrance of Him they were: NOT to meet in solemn service in the Temple where He had so often resorted; NOR to tell each other in the synagogue of His great story; but to

eat and drink together. That fact alone might show how eminently proletarian Jesus was ; and how little ecclesiastical. The many, many times His companions had lain with Him around the meal-table would gather up in His memory and in theirs to deepen the joy and the awe of the last meal together. He did not keep back from them the longing with which He had longed to share this repast. "With desire I have desired," were His words, "to eat this meal with you before I suffer."

On that last evening His emotion was intense. Everything was eloquent of fellowship. And His love must out ! It must express itself in outward act. The passion of the lover, like the passion of the poet and the painter, must take shape in visible deed. The supper had not long begun when He glanced at His followers' hot and travel-worn feet. The glance was enough. He sprang up from table and set to work to wash their feet. How His hands caressed their tired limbs with cool flow of water and with His own magnetic touch !

But that lover-act was not enough.

There was the Bread. There was the Cup. "Ah," it was as though He said, "eating and drinking are more inward than washing. They enter into the very life of the eater. See, My loved ones, this loaf is My Body : it is for you. I break it and pass it round. Eat ye all of it !" So love mints itself into deed and speech. Shakespeare could say of the Beloved : "See how she leans her head upon her hand. O, would I were the glove upon that hand that I might touch that cheek !" But the poetic passion of Jesus went far deeper : "I shall be your very food. My body is for you. I shall come into you as the Bread comes into you. And this Cup filled with the

**A Lover's
Act.**

**The Poetry
of Deep
Passion.**

red wine—ah ! it is My life-blood poured out for you—and poured out into you. It is the Blood-bond which unites us. . . . When the first Covenant came in, your forefathers were sprinkled with the blood of cattle offered in sacrifice. But you are entering into a far closer relation to the Father than they ever knew ; and you shall not be sprinkled—that is too outward ; you shall *drink* ; My very blood shall enter into you from this cup. . . . Jeremiah said that there would come a New Covenant. That has come. In place of the Law without shall be the Law within. And in place of the blood without, I say unto you, shall be the Blood within. This is My Blood of the Covenant, which is shed for many. Drink ye all of it. And as partakers of Me you are partakers of My relation to the Father. You come to be to Him as I am to Him. It means that you are forgiven and are united with Him in Me. I am the Bread. I am the Wine. Whenever ye eat and drink together, do it in remembrance of Me ! ”

Blood of the
Covenant.

The act and the word are the very poetry and passion of Love. No elaborate ceremonial or setting was needed. The meal was wholly one of the diet and appliances of the common people.

Common
Things made
Glorious.

Jesus washed His disciples' feet not with rare ointments, precious, brought from far. He washed them with water, plain ordinary water. He used no golden salver ; only a commonplace basin. He took no exquisite drapery of costly texture ; He wiped their feet with a common towel. His love transfigured and glorified the commonest things.

So with the farewell meal. There was no pile of dainties. That the Passover forbade. There was only the loaf of unleavened bread ; which was to the ordinary diet of the people as our plain bread is to our buttered bread ; purposely simple

fare. So it was easy for the common people to mind His charge: "Whenever you meet in My Name and have a meal together, do it in remembrance of Me."

The most inward recollection of Jesus, the picture most deeply stamped upon the memory, was to be received at a meal together, a simple meal of common food and drink.

Ay, and it was soon found that there was something much more than recollection. Jesus so impressed Himself in His Last Supper on the minds of His followers that when after His Death they, remembering Him, ate and drank together, lo! He was amongst them!

**Much More
than Memory.**

So was it at Emmaus. So was it in Browning Hall this month. So has it been right down the generations. When those who follow Him meet in faith and hope and love of Him and share in a common meal, they are given more than a memory of Him. Memory of Him past grows into direct perception of Him present. There is not merely His remembered Gift; there is His Real Presence. What was, is once again. He gives Himself. He gives Himself in Bread and Wine. He enters there and then as nowhere else into the body and blood, into the soul and spirit of His loved ones.

That is the simple fact. It is attested by millions of believers in all the ages since and in all kinds of different Churches.

But some may cry out in protest: "The Loaf and Cup are no longer proletarian. They may have been; but are so no longer. They may now have meaning perhaps to the mystic, to the theologian and to the esoteric few. But they are walled around with barrier after barrier of exclusive privilege.

**"No longer
Proletarian!"**

The Mass.

“ Think of High Mass in a Roman cathedral ; it is not in the language of the common people but in a dead language ; the cup is withheld from the laity. The vast dramatic ceremony, the gorgeous vestments, the elaborate programme, the posturings and genuflexions, the expensive music, the highly-trained choir—all seems about as far removed as possible from the life of the common people.”

I would say no word against the gorgeous celebration of the Roman Mass. I have myself enjoyed it intensely. It has been to me a rich spiritual blessing. The Catholic Eucharist has, moreover, brought inspiration and life to a larger number of the very poorest communicants than the same sacrament in other churches of this realm. But amid all its grandeur we do miss the early proletarian Loaf and Cup.

How did the change come about ?

Causes of Change.

The great fact was there in Christian experience ; the Bread and the Wine was a veritable self-bestowal of our Lord. The trouble was that men set about explaining that Fact and explaining it in the wrong way. They did not see that the faith and hope and love of Jesus was all that was necessary to make the simplest meal a sacrament. They brought in heathen ways of thinking. It was a Mystery like the pagan Mysteries ; a secret and awful and gradually an imposing and pompous rite. The wonder of the felt presence of Jesus was so great that instead of attributing it to His Grace moving in response to the simplicity of faith, men referred it to the magical effect of the correct incantation of the formula of institution. Therefore they felt everything depended on the person who utters the incantation. So the *priest* grew more and more important and the common people were less and less considered. The wonder

A—Pagan—Mystery.

was no longer operated by the Unseen Master through the faith of His lowly followers; it became the special business of a line of men distinct from the people and exalted above them. Its proletarian character began rapidly to fade.

Heathen philosophy came in and said, Matter and Spirit are opposed, alien, independent. They are of entirely different substance. This heathen principle was applied to the Lord's Supper. Men said, Bread is one substance, gross and material. The Body of Jesus is of quite another substance, pure and spiritual. Nevertheless, so intense was the Christian's experience of the presence and self-bestowal of his Lord in the Bread and Wine, that he could only say, Well, then, the substance of the Bread is entirely changed into the substance of our Lord's Body. There is Transubstantiation. Even the hard pressure of heathen ways of thinking could not abash or defeat the Christian experience. "If these two substances are by nature alien and opposed, then a miracle must happen to change one substance into the other; for verily the Lord is present in the Sacrament."

**Pagan
Metaphysics.**

**Transub-
stantiation.**

But not any one of the common people who believed could be expected or trusted to perform this stupendous miracle. Only the miraculously endowed *priest* could do it. The gulf between the Loaf and Cup on the one side and the Proletariat on the other had grown wider than ever.

But we to-day are not bound to think in the terms of heathen philosophy, ancient or modern. It is heathenism in the Greek mysteries, it is heathenism in the Greek metaphysics which has taken away the Proletarian simplicity of the Sacrament.

A true Christian philosophy will not allow Matter and Spirit to be entirely alien in substance. It cannot see in the Bread and Wine anything alien by nature to the Real Presence of our Lord.

**No Alien
Substance.**

Our Poets might teach us the Christian kinship of flesh and spirit, of body and of soul. You remember Longfellow—

“ The poet, alike faithful and farseeing
Sees in stars and flowers a part
Of that selfsame Universal Being
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.”

Tennyson sang of the “ flower in the crannied wall,” and told us that if he knew what that flower was, root and all and all in all, he could tell what God and man is. And Browning says :

“ God is seen God
In the star and the stone, in the flesh, in the soul, and
the clod.”

Much more can Christ be felt Christ in the Bread and the Wine. The “ selfsame Universal Being ” —the Word which became flesh—is surely much more present in the Bread and the Wine than even in flowers and stars.

**Matter an
Appearance
of Spirit.**

Matter visible and tangible is after all but an appearance of Spirit. Things are essentially thoughts. In the Sacrament there is no alien substance that needs to be changed. Only the faith of the humblest believer is necessary to *discern* the Lord's Body ; no metaphysical change, only a discernment of the underlying indwelling Presence of our Lord. To Christian faith, Word becomes Flesh ; spirit becomes matter. Christ is discerned in Bread and Wine.

**Official
Celebrant
Unnecessary.**

Drop out pagan ways of thinking, and the Supper becomes proletarian again. There is no need of mystagogue, magician, priest, minister or other official celebrant. The common people who believe, men or women, lay or learned, can be celebrants as well as participants ; for it is the collective faith of the gathered followers in response to which Jesus bestows Himself in Bread and Wine.

People have been afraid of accepting the testimony of Christian hearts in all ages that our Lord gives Himself to us in the Holy Supper as nowhere else. They say, "That is the doctrine of the Real Presence; that demands the priest. That means the tearing of the One Church into two orders, lay and cleric. That sets up all the separative exclusive privileges of the clergy as distinct from the Common People of Christ. If you are Sacramentarian, you must be Sacerdotalist. You cannot have the Mass without the Priest, and all that the Priest stands for."

**Fear of
"Conse-
quences."**

But, as I have endeavoured to show, you *can* have the inmost truth of the Mass *without* the Priest. To the realisation of the Self-Bestowal of our Lord in the Bread and the Wine no official celebrant is necessary. Where two or three meet in His Name and eat the Bread and drink of the Cup in remembrance of Him, there is He in the midst: there is He, giving Himself in the elements to His followers.

**The Mass
without the
Priest.**

The Holy Supper is a Proletarian Meal. The Proletariat can receive it; the Proletariat can administer it—without respect of persons, but with whole-hearted reverence and faith and hope and love for the living Lord.

And let me hope that the Proletariat will find in the Holy Supper its sure shield and rock of defence against two of its greatest enemies. One of these is Materialism, which sees nothing deeper or truer than matter in the things the workers strive for. There is no moral purpose before it in the quest for higher wages, shorter hours, better housing, swifter transit, ampler sport and richer amusement. All is but, in the last resort, stuff for the stomach to absorb and to exercise. Such blindness to the ideal aims of life

**Materialism
Vanquished.**

is the worst enemy of the working classes. "It needs a soul to move a body. It needs a high-souled man to move the masses even to a cleaner sty." And against this sordid doctrine the Bread and the Wine of the Holy Supper offer a perennial and victorious witness. The commonest things of life, even the food we consume, have in them a Divine meaning. They may be made to live with the Divine Life. The humblest believer receiving his Lord in the elements experiences the spiritual nature of the material universe. He discerns the Body of the Lord in the commonest articles of food. And, firmly rooted in experience, he can defy and overthrow the forces and assaults of materialism. The other foe perhaps has been almost as deadly. It is the "purely spiritual" version of Christianity which laid all its stress on the salvation of the soul and utterly ignored the claims of the body. Questions of wage, hours, ventilation, housing; of production, distribution, exchange; of political action, were all "worldly," and with them the "purely spiritual" religion had nothing whatever to do. So it came to pass that the Evangelical Revival that had magnificently asserted its diviner elements in the emancipation of the slave, synchronised in English history with the horrors of child-slavery in factory and in mine which Lord Shaftesbury, himself an eminent evangelical, forced on the shuddering gaze of mankind. So professors of "purely spiritual" religion could with clear conscience sweat their workers, crowd them in slums, refuse them political franchise and Trade Union, could even slowly do them to death, while professing and feeling a genuine desire for their eternal spiritual salvation. Against this "purely spiritual" religion the Holy Supper lifts its unconquerable testimony. The Bread is not purely spiritual; the Wine is not

"Purely
Spiritual"
Religion here
Impossible.

purely spiritual. They are concrete material facts. Yet they are the vehicles of the direct communication of the Living Lord to His loving followers. The Sacrament is the consecration of all the economic and political processes that affect the food of the people. The Holy Supper sheds the halo of its benediction over all true commerce and industry, over everything seemingly outward that contributes to the inward life.

I grieve to hear a working man disparage the sacred elements as being "mere bread that is chewed" and "wine that is sipped," while at the same time arguing that they cannot affect the spirit or touch the soul. So speaking, he gives away the very palladium of his best hopes of progress. He capitulates to that "purely spiritual" religion which has been the curse of industrial England and America. I would urge upon him in humble faith and hope and love of his Great Leader to accept the incontestable fact that the Bread and Wine convey to him the Lord Himself, and in the strength of that experience let him go out to claim the whole world of life with all its activities as a veritable sacrament of grace. Let us all strive with utter reverence and lowliness to think ourselves as far as we may into the soul of Jesus when in the deep passion of His love He declared the very bread He was giving to His loved ones to be His Body, and the wine that He poured out for them to be the Blood of His Covenant. The words were no cold theological definition, no calculated ecclesiastical dogma. They were aglow and athrill with the intensest passion of the Supreme Lover.

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