

Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918) was the most prominent advocate of the social gospel in the Baptist tradition. His ministry for a time was among the poor and the industrial workers of New York city. He was aware of the sources of conflict between capital and labor first hand, and tried to explain to middle class readers why workers were sometimes attracted to socialism or radicalism. Rauschenbusch lived in Rochester, New York when he wrote this passage.

From his *CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL CRISIS* (New York, The MacMillan Company, 1908): 230-86

In the agricultural stage of society the chief means of enrichment was to gain control of large landed wealth; the chief danger to the people lay in losing control of the great agricultural means of production, the land. Since the industrial revolution the man-made machinery of production has assumed an importance formerly unknown. The factories, the machines, the means of transportation, the money to finance great undertakings, are fully as important in the modern process of production as the land from which the raw material is drawn. Consequently the chief way to enrichment in an industrial community will be the control of these factors of production; the chief danger to the people will be to lose control of the instruments of industry.

That danger, as we saw in our brief sketch of the industrial revolution, was immediately realized in the most sweeping measure. The people lost control of the tools of industry more completely than they ever lost control of the land. Under the old system the workman owned the simple tools of his trade. To-day the working people have no part nor lot in the machines with which they work. In capitalistic production there is a cooperation between two distinct groups: a small group which owns all the material factors of land and machinery; a large group which owns nothing but the personal factor of human labor power. In this process of cooperation the propertyless group is at a fearful disadvantage.

No attempt is made to allot to each workman his share in the profits of the joint work. Instead he is paid a fixed wage. The upward movement of this wage is limited by the productiveness of his work; the downward movement of it is limited only by the willingness of the workman to work at so low a return. His willingness will be determined by his needs. If he is poor or if he has a large family, he can be induced to take less. If he is devoted to his family, and if they are sick, he may take still less. The less he needs, the more he can get; the more he needs, the less he will get. This is the exact opposite of the principle that prevails in family life, Where the child that needs most care gets most. In our family life we have solidarity and happiness; in our business life we have individualism and-well, not exactly happiness.

The statistics of wages come with a shock to any one reading them with an active imagination. In my city of Rochester the average wage for males over sixteen reported by the United States Census of 1900 was \$480.50 a year and for females \$267.10. I do not know how accurate that was. It hardly matters. Fifty dollars one way or the other would mean a great deal to the families affected, but it would not change the total impression of pitiable inadequacy.

But the real wages are not measured by dollars and cents, but by the purchasing power of the money. That the necessities of life have risen in price in recent years is familiar enough to every housekeeper. Wages, too, have risen in some trades. Very earnest efforts have been made by experts to prove that the rise in wages

has kept pace with the rise in prices, but with dubious results. Dun's Review some time ago compared the prices of 350 staple commodities in July 1, 1897, and December 1, 1901, and found that \$1013 in 1901 would buy no more than \$724 in 1897. Hence if wages had remained apparently stationary, they had actually declined.

The purchasing power of the wages determines the health and comfort of the workingman and his family. It does not decide on the justice of his wage. That is determined by comparing the total product of his work with the share paid to him. The effectiveness of labor has increased immensely since the advent of the machine. The wealth of the industrial nations consequently has grown in a degree unparalleled in history. The laborer has doubtless profited by this in common with all others. He enjoys luxuries that were beyond the reach of the richest in former times. But the justice of our system will be proved only if we can show that the wealth, comfort, and security of the average workingman in 1906 is as much greater than that of the average workingman in 1760 as the wealth of civilized humanity is now greater than it was in 1760. No one will be bold enough to assert it. The bulk of the increase in wealth has gone to a limited class who in various ways have been strong enough to take it. Wages have advanced on foot; profits have taken the Limited Express. For instance, the report of the Interstate Commerce Commission of June, 1902, stated that from 1896-1902 the average wages and salaries of the railway employees of our country, 1,200,000 men, had increased from \$550 to \$580, or five per cent. During the same period the net earnings of the owners had increased from \$377,000,000 to \$610,000,000, or sixty-two per cent. Thorold Rogers, in his great work "Six Centuries of Work and Wages," says: "It may well be the case, and there is every reason to fear it is the case, that there is collected a population in our great towns which equals in amount the whole of those who lived in England and Wales six centuries ago; but whose condition is more destitute, whose homes are more squalid, whose means are more uncertain, whose prospects are more hopeless, than those of the peasant serfs of the Middle Ages or the meanest drudges of the mediaeval cities." If the celebrated saying of John Stuart Mill is true, that "it is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being," it means that the achievements of the human mind have been thwarted by human injustice. Our blessings have failed to bless us because they were not based on justice and solidarity.

The existence of a large class of population without property rights in the material they work upon and the tools they work with, and without claim to the profits resulting from their work, must have subtle and far-reaching effects on the character of this class and on the moral tone of the people at large.

A man's work is not only the price he pays for the right to fill his stomach. In his work he expresses himself. It is the output of his creative energy and his main contribution to the common life of mankind. The pride which an artist or professional man takes in his work, the pleasure which a housewife takes in adorning her home, afford a satisfaction that ranks next to human love in delightsomeness.

One of the gravest accusations against our industrial system is that it does not produce in the common man the pride and joy of good work. In many cases the surroundings are ugly, depressing, and coarsening. Much of the stuff manufactured 'is dishonest in quality, made to sell and not to serve, and the making of such cotton or wooden lies must react on the morals of every man that handles them. There is little opportunity for a man to put his personal stamp on his work. The mediaeval craftsman could rise to be an artist by working well at his craft. The modern factory hand is not like to develop artistic gifts as he tends his machine.

It is a common and true complaint of employers that their men take no interest in their work. But why should they? What motive have they for putting love and care into their work? It is not theirs. Christ spoke of the difference between the hiring shepherd who flees and the owner who loves the sheep. Our system has made the immense majority of industrial workers mere hirelings. If they do conscientious work nevertheless, it is a splendid tribute to human rectitude. Slavery was cheap labor; it was also dear labor. In ancient Rome the slaves on the country estates were so wasteful that only the strongest and crudest tools could be given them. The more the wage worker approaches their condition, the more will the employer confront the same problem. The finest work is done only by free minds who put love into their work because it is their own. When a workman becomes a partner, he "hustles" in a new spirit. Even the small bonus distributed in profit-sharing experiments has been found to increase the carefulness and willingness of the men to such an extent that the bonus did not diminish the profits of the employers. The lowest motives for work are the desire for wages and the fear of losing them. Yet these are almost the only motives to which our system appeals. It does not even hold out the hope of promotion, unless a man unites managing ability to his workmanship. The economic loss to the community by this paralysis of the finer springs of human action is beyond computation. But the moral loss is vastly more threatening.

The fear of losing his job is the workman's chief incentive to work. Our entire industrial life, for employer and employee, is a reign of fear. The average workingman's family is only a few weeks removed from destitution. The dread of want is always over them, and that is worse than brief times of actual want. It is often said in defence of the wages system that while the workman does not share in the hope of profit, neither is he troubled by the danger of loss; he gets his wage even if the shop is running at a loss. Not for any length of time. His form of risk is the danger of being out of work when work grows slack, and when his job is gone, all his resources are gone. In times of depression the misery and anxiety among the working people are appalling; yet periodical crises hitherto have been an unavoidable accompaniment of our speculative industry. The introduction of new machinery, the reorganization of an industry by a trust, the speeding of machinery which makes fewer men necessary, the competition of cheap immigrant labor, all combine to make the hold of the working classes on the means of life insecure. That workingmen ever dare to strike work is remarkable testimony to the economic pressure that impels them and to the capacity of sacrifice for common ends among them.

While a workman is in his prime, he is always in danger of losing his job. When he gets older, he is almost certain to lose it. The pace is so rapid that only supple limbs can keep up. Once out of a job, it is hard for an elderly man to get another. Men shave clean to conceal gray hairs. They are no longer a crown of honor, but an industrial handicap. A man may have put years of his life into a business, but he has no claim on it at the end, except the feeble claim of sympathetic pity. President Eliot thinks that he has a just but unrecognized claim because he has helped to build up the goodwill of the business. There is a stronger claim in the fact that the result of his work has never been paid to him in full. If, for instance, a man has produced a net value of \$800 a year and has received \$500 a year, \$300 annually stand to his credit in the sight of God. These dividends with compound interest would amount to a tidy sum at the end of a term of years and ought to suffice to employ him at his old wages even if his productive capacity declines. But at present, unless his employer is able and willing to show him charity, or unless by unusual thrift he has managed to save something, he becomes dependent on the faithfulness of his children or the charity of the public. In England a

very large proportion of the aged working people finally "go on the parish." In Germany they have a socialist system of insurance for old age. The fact that so few Germans have emigrated in recent years is probably due in part to the hope held out by this slight capitalization of their life's labor. We are not even thinking of such an institution in America. Fear and insecurity weigh upon our people increasingly, and break down their nerves, their mental buoyancy, and their character.

This constant insecurity and fear pervading the entire condition of the working people is like a corrosive chemical that disintegrates their self-respect. For an old man to be able to look about him on the farm or business he has built up by the toil of his life, is a profound satisfaction, an antidote to the sense of declining strength and gradual failure. For an old man after a lifetime of honest work to have nothing, to amount to nothing, to be turned off as useless, and to eat the bread of dependence, is a pitiable humiliation. I can conceive of nothing so crushing to all proper pride as for a workingman to be out of work for weeks, offering his work and his body and soul at one place after the other, and to be told again and again that nobody has any use for such a man as he. It is no wonder that men take to drink when they are out of work; for drink, at least for a while, creates illusions of contentment and worth. The Recessional of Alcohol has the refrain, "Let us forget." Every great strike, every industrial crisis, pushes some men over the line of self respect into petty thievery and vagrancy, and over the gate to the long road of hoboism is written, "Leave all hope behind, all ye that enter here." To accept charity is at first one of the most bitter experiences of the self-respecting workingman. Some abandon their families, go insane or commit suicide rather than surrender the virginity of their independence. But when they have once learned to depend on gifts, the parasitic habit of mind grows on them, and it becomes hard to wake them back to self-support. They have eaten the food of the lotus-eaters and henceforth "surely, surely slumber is more sweet than toil." It would be a theme for the psychological analysis of a great novelist to describe the slow degradation of the soul when a poor man becomes a pauper. During the great industrial crisis in the 90's I saw good men go into disreputable lines of employment and respectable widows consent to live with men who would support them and their children. One could hear human virtue cracking and crumbling all around. Whenever work is scarce, petty crime is plentiful. But that is only the tangible expression of the decay in the morale of the working people on which statistics can seize. The corresponding decay in the morality of the possessing classes at such a time is another story. But industrial crises are not inevitable in nature; they are merely inevitable in capitalism.

A similar corrosive influence is the hatred generated by our system. The employees are often hot with smouldering resentment at their treatment by the employers, and the employers are at least warm with annoyance at the organizations of the men, and full of distrust for the honesty and willingness of their helpers. The economic loss to both sides in every strike is great enough, but the loss in human fellowship and kindness is of far greater moment. It would be far better for a community to lose a million dollars by fire than to lose it by a strike or lockout. The acts of violence committed on both sides, by legalized means on the one, by spontaneous brutality on the other, are only the efflorescence of the inflamed feeling created. And the acute inflammation tends to become chronic. Every animal will fight other animals that trench on its feeding grounds. Every social class in history has used whatever weapons it had-sword, law, ostracism, or clerical anathema-to strike at any other class that endangered its income. Railways use lobbies; their employees use clubs; each uses the weapon that is handy and effective. But it is all brutalizing and destructive. Strikes are mild civil war, and "war is hell." If our industrial organization cannot evolve

some saner method of reconciling conflicting interests than twenty-four thousand strikes and lockouts in twenty years, it will be a confession of social impotence and moral bankruptcy.

It used to be a fine thing to mark how the richer food and free life in our country increased the stature and beauty of the immigrant families. America meant a rise in the standard of living, and hence an increase in physical efficiency. The rapid progress of our country has been due to the wealth of natural resources on the one side and the physical vigor and mental buoyancy of the human resources on the other side.

To-day there are large portions of the wage-earning population of which that is no longer true. They are not advancing, but receding in stamina, and bequeathing an enfeebled equipment to the next generation.

The human animal needs space, air, and light, just like any other highly developed organism. But the competitive necessities of industry crowd the people together in the cities. Land speculation and high car-fares hem them in even where the location of our cities permits easy expansion. High rents mean small rooms. Dear coal means lack of ventilation in winter. Coal-smoke means susceptibility to all throat and lung diseases. The tenement districts of our great cities are miasmatic swamps of bad air, and just as swamps teem with fungous growths, so the bacilli of tuberculosis multiply on the rotting lungs of the underfed and densely housed multitudes. The decline in the death-rate with the advance in sanitary science, the sudden drop of the rate after the destruction and rebuilding of slum districts in English cities,² prove clearly how preventable a great proportion of deaths are. The preventable decimation of the people is social murder.

The human animal needs good food to be healthy, just like a horse or cow. The artificial rise in food prices is at the expense of the vital force of the American people. The larger our cities, the wider are the areas from which their perishable food is drawn and the staler and less nourishing will be the food. Canned goods are a sorry substitute for fresh food. The ideal housewife can make a palatable and nourishing meal from almost anything. But the wives of the workingmen have been working girls, and they rarely have a chance to learn good housekeeping before they marry. Scorching a steak diminishes its nutritive value and the appetite of the eater, and both are essential for nutrition.

Poor food and cramped rooms lower the vitality of the people. At the same time the output of vitality demanded from them grows ever greater. Life in a city, with the sights and sounds, the hurry for trains, the contagious rush, is itself a flaring consumer of nervous energy. The work at the machine is worse. That tireless worker of steel, driven by the stored energy of the sun in forgotten ages, sets the pace for the exhausted human organism that feeds it. The speeding of machines is greater in America than anywhere in the world. Unless the food and housing remain proportionately better, the American workman is drained faster. Immigrants who try to continue the kind of food that kept them in vigor at home, collapse under the strain.

Under such a combination of causes the health of the people inevitably breaks down. Improved medical science has counteracted the effects to a large extent, but in spite of all modern progress the physical breakdown is apparent in many directions. Diseases of the nerves, culminating in prostration and insanity; diseases of the heart through overstrain; diseases of the digestion through poor nutrition, haste in mastication, and anxiety; zymotic diseases due to crowding and dirt—all these things multiply and laugh at our curative efforts. Tuberculosis, which might be eradicated in ten years if we had sense, continues to cripple our children, to snuff out the life of our

young men and women in their prime, and to leave the fatherless and motherless to struggle along in their feebleness. Alcoholism is both a cause and an effect of poverty. The poor take to drink because they are tired, discouraged, and flabby of will, and without more wholesome recreation. When the narcotic has once gained control over them, it works more rapidly with them than with the well fed who work in the open. Tuberculosis and alcoholism are social diseases, degenerating the stock of the people, fostered by the commercial interests of landowners and liquor dealers, thriving on the weak and creating the weak.

This condition of exhaustion tends to perpetuate itself. Children are begotten in a state of physical exhaustion. Underfed and overworked women in tenement and factory are nourishing the children in their prenatal life. During the years when a workingman's family is bringing up young children, before their earnings become available, the family is submerged in poverty through these parental burdens, and neither the parents nor the growing children are likely to be well fed and well housed. Very early in life the children are hitched to the machine for life, and the vitality which ought to build their bodies during the crucial period of adolescence is used up to make goods a little cheaper, or, what is more likely, merely to make profits a little larger. Imagine that any breeder of live stock should breed horses or cows under such conditions, what would be the result in a few generations? Our apple orchards are planted in wide squares, so that every tree has the soil, the air, the sunshine, which it needs. If we planted a dense jungle of trees, we should have a dwarfed growth, scraggy and thorny, and only here and there a crabbed apple. What harvest of human kind will we have in the broad field of our republic if we plant men in that way?

The physical drain of which we have spoken is gradual and slow, and therefore escapes observation and sympathy. But it is the lot of the working people in addition to this to suffer frequent mangling and mutilation. A workman who tends one of our great machines is pitted against a monster of blind and crushing strength and has to be ever alert, like one who enters a cage of tigers. Yet human nature is so constituted that it grows careless of danger which is always near, and cheerfully plucks the beard of death. Unless the machines are surrounded with proper safeguards, they take a large toll of life and limb. The state accident insurance system in Germany has revealed a terrible frequency of industrial accidents. We have never yet dared to get the facts for our country, except in mining and railroading; but it is safe to say that no country is so reckless of accidents as our own. It is asserted that one in eight of our people dies a violent death. The Interstate Commerce Commission in October, 1904, stated that 78,152 persons had been killed on the railroads in the previous ten years, and 78,247 had been injured in the single preceding year. Any one who has ever been through a railway accident knows what a horrible total of bloody and groaning suffering these figures imply. Yet few railways voluntarily introduced automatic car-couplers to lessen one of the most frequent causes of accident. They resisted legislation as long as they could; introduced the automatic couplers as slowly as they could; and are now resisting the introduction of the block system in the same way. Yet automatic coupling reduced the number of men killed from 433 in 1893 to 167 in 1902, and the number injured from 11,277 to 2864, in spite of the fact that the total number of employees had greatly increased during these ten years. The same resistance met the efforts to guard the lives of sailors by the Plimsoll mark, and indeed almost every effort to compel owners to provide safety appliances, or to make them liable for accidents to their servants. It is dividends against human lives. All great corporations have agents whose sole business it is to look after accidents and see that the company suffers as little loss as possible through the claims of the injured. Yet many are injured in railway work and elsewhere

because long hours in the service of those same corporations had so worn them down that their mind was numb and they were unable to look out for themselves.

I venture to give concreteness to these matters by telling a single case which I followed from beginning to end.

An elderly workingman, a good Christian man, was run down by a street car in New York City. His leg was badly bruised. He was taken to an excellent hospital near by. His wife and daughter visited him immediately. After that they had to wait to the regular visiting day. On that day they came to me in great distress and said that he had been sent forward to Bellevue Hospital. I went with them and we found that he had been there only one night, and had again been sent on to the Charity Hospital on Blackwell's Island. At both hospitals they said the case was not serious and they had shifted him to make room for graver cases. The steamer connecting Bellevue and the Island had left on its last trip that day. If the two women had been alone, they would have been helpless in their anxiety till the next day. I got them across. After hours of fear, which almost prostrated them, we found the old man. He was fairly comfortable and reported that his night at Bellevue had been spent on the floor. A few days later gangrene set in the leg was twice amputated, and he died. I am not competent to say if this result was due to neglect or not. I know of other cases in which that first hospital shipped charity patients elsewhere without giving any notice whatever to the relatives.

The agent of the street-car company promptly called on the family and offered \$100 in settlement of all damages. I saw the manager on their behalf. He explained courteously that since the case resulted in death, \$5000 would be the maximum allowed by New York laws, and since the man's earnings had been small and he had but few years of earning capacity before him, the amount of damage allowed by the courts in his case would be slight. The suffering to the affections of the family did not enter into the legal aspect of the matter. The company paid its counsel by the year. If the family sued and was successful in the lower court, the manager frankly said they would carry it to the higher courts and could wear out the resources of the family at slight expense to the corporation. The president, a benevolent and venerable-looking gentleman, explained to me that the combined distance traveled by their cars daily would reach from New York to the Rocky Mountains. People were constantly being run over, and the company could not afford to be more generous. The widow concluded to submit to the terms offered. The \$100 was brought to her in the usual form of single dollar bills to make it look like vast wealth to a poor person. The daughter suffered very serious organic injury through the shock received when her father had disappeared from the hospital, and this was probably one cause for her death in child-birth several years later.

The officers of the hospitals and the officers of the street railway company were not bad men. Their point of view and their habits of mind are entirely comprehensible. I feel no certainty that I should not act in the same way if I had been in their place long enough. But the impression remained that our social machinery is almost as blindly cruel as its steel machinery, and that it runs over the life of a poor man with scarcely a quiver.

There is certainly a great and increasing body of chronic wretchedness in our wonderful country. It is greatest where our industrial system has worked out its conclusions most completely. Our national optimism and conceit ought not to blind us longer to the fact. Single cases of unhappiness are inevitable in our frail human life; but when there are millions of them, all running along well-defined grooves, reducible to certain laws, then this misery is not an individual, but a social matter, due to causes in the structure of our society and curable only by social reconstruction. We point with

pride to the multitude of our charitable organizations. Our great cities have annual directories of their charitable organizations, which state the barest abstract of facts and yet make portly volumes. These institutions are the pride and the shame of Christian civilization; the pride because we so respond to the cry of suffering; the shame, because so much need exists. They are a heavy financial drag. The more humane our feeling is, the better we shall have to house our dependents and delinquents. But those who have had personal contact with the work, feel that they are beating back a swelling tide with feeble hands. With their best intentions they may be harming men more than helping them. And the misery grows. The incapables increase faster than the population. Moreover, beyond the charity cases lies the mass of wretchedness that spawns them. For every halfwitted pauper in the almshouse there may be ten misbegotten and muddle-headed individuals bungling their work and their life outside. For every person who is officially declared insane, there are a dozen whose nervous organization is impaired and who are centres of further trouble. For every thief in prison there are others outside, pilfering and defrauding, and rendering social life insecure and anxious. Mr. Hunter estimates that about four million persons are dependent on public relief in the United States that an equal number are destitute, but bear their misery in silence; and that ten million have an income insufficient to maintain them even in a state of physical efficiency to do their work. The methods by which he arrives at these results seem careful and fair. But suppose that he were a million or two out of the way, does that affect the moral challenge of the figures much?

Sir Wilfred Lawson told of a test applied by the head of an insane asylum to distinguish the sane from the insane. He took them to a basin of water under a running faucet and asked them to dip out the water. The insane merely dipped and dipped. The sane turned off the faucet and dipped out the rest. Is our social order sane?

Approximate equality is the only enduring foundation of political democracy. The sense of equality is the only basis for Christian morality. Healthful human relations seem to run only on horizontal lines. Consequently true love always seeks to create a level. If a rich man loves a poor girl, he lifts her to financial and social equality with himself. If his love has not that equalizing power, it is flawed and becomes prostitution. Wherever husbands by social custom regard their wives as inferior, there is a deep-seated defect in married life. If a teacher talks down at his pupils, not as a maturer friend, but with an "I say so," he confines their minds in a spiritual straight-jacket instead of liberating them. Equality is the only basis for true educational influences. Even our instinct of pity, which is love going out to the weak, works with spontaneous strength only toward those of our own class and circle who have dropped into misfortune. Business men feel very differently toward the widow of a business man left in poverty than they do toward a widow of the poorer classes. People of a lower class who demand our help are "cases"; people of our own class are folks.

The demand for equality is often ridiculed as if it implied that all men were to be of identical wealth, wisdom, and authority. But social equality can coexist with the greatest natural differences. There is no more fundamental difference than that of sex, nor a greater intellectual chasm than that between an educated man and his little child, yet in the family all are equal. In a college community there are various gradations of rank and authority within the faculty, and there is a clearly marked distinction between the students and the faculty, but there is social equality. On the other hand, the janitor and the peanut vender are outside of the circle, however important they may be to it.

The social equality existing in our country in the past has been one of the chief charms of life here and of far more practical importance to our democracy than the universal ballot. After a long period of study abroad in my youth I realized on my return

to America that life here was far poorer in music, art, and many forms of enjoyment than life on the continent of Europe; but that life tasted better here, nevertheless, because men met one another more simply, frankly, and wholesomely. In Europe a man is always considering just how much deference he must show to those in ranks above him, and in turn noting jealously if those below him are strewing the right quantity of incense due to his own social position.

That fundamental democracy of social intercourse, which is one of the richest endowments of our American life, is slipping from us. Actual inequality endangers the sense of equality. The rich man and the poor man can meet on a level if they are old friends, or if they are men of exceptional moral qualities, or if they meet under unusual circumstances that reduce all things to their primitive human elements. But as a general thing they will live different lives, and the sense of unlikeness will affect all their dealings. With women the spirit of social caste seems to be even more fatally easy than with men. It may be denied that the poor in our country are getting poorer, but it cannot well be denied that the rich are getting richer. The extremes of wealth and poverty are much farther apart than formerly, and thus the poor are at least relatively poorer. There is a rich class and a poor class, whose manner of life is wedged farther and farther apart, and whose boundary lines are becoming ever more distinct. The difference in housing, eating, dressing, and speaking would be a sufficient barrier. The dominant position of the one class in industry and the dependence of the other is even more decisive. The owners or managers of industry are rich or highly paid; they have technical knowledge, the will to command, the habits of mind bred by the exercise of authority; they say "Go," and men go; they say "Do this," and an army of men obeys. On the other side is the mass who take orders, who are employed or dismissed at a word, who use their muscles almost automatically, and who have no voice in the conduct of their own shop. These are two distinct classes, and no rhetoric can make them equal. Moreover, such a condition is inseparable from the capitalistic organization of industry. As capitalism grows, it must create a proletariat to correspond. Just as militarism is based on military obedience, so capitalism is based on economic dependence.

We hear passionate protests against the use of the hateful word "class" in America. There are no classes in our country, we are told. But the hateful part is not the word, but the thing. If class distinctions are growing up here, he serves his country ill who would hush up the fact or blind the people to it by fine phrases. A class is a body of men who are so similar in their work, their duties and privileges, their manner of life and enjoyment, that a common interest, common conception of life, and common moral ideals are developed and cement the individuals. The business men constitute such a class. The industrial workers also constitute such a class. In old countries the upper class gradually adorned itself with titles, won special privileges in court and army and law, and created an atmosphere of awe and apartness. But the solid basis on which this was done was the feudal control of the land, which was then the great source of wealth. The rest was merely the decorative moss that grows up on the rocks of permanent wealth. With the industrial revolution a new source of wealth opened up; a new set of men gained control of it and ousted the old feudal nobility more or less thoroughly. The new aristocracy, which is based on mobile capital, has not yet had time to festoon itself with decorations, but likes to hasten the process by intermarriage with the remnants of the old feudal nobility. Whether it will ever duplicate the old forms in this country is immaterial, as long as it has the fact of power. In some way the social inequality will find increasing outward expression and will tend to make itself

permanent. Where there are actual class differences, there will be a dawning class consciousness, a clear class interest, and there may be a class struggle.

In the past the sympathy between the richer and the poorer members of American society has still run strong. Many rich men and women were once poor and have not forgotten their early struggles and the simple homes of their childhood. As wealth becomes hereditary, there will be more who have never known any life except that of luxury, and have never had any associates except the children of the rich or their servants. Formerly the wealthiest man in a village or town still lived in the sight of all as a member of the community. As the chasm widens, the rich withdraw to their own section of the city; they naturally use means to screen themselves from the intrusive stare of the public which concentrates its gaze on them; they live in a world apart, and the mass of the people have distorted ideas about them and little human sympathy for them. There are indications enough how far apart we already are. We have a new literature of exploration. Darkest Africa and the polar regions are becoming familiar; but we now have intrepid men and women who plunge for a time into the life of the lower classes and return to write books about this unknown race that lives in the next block. It is amazing to note how intelligent men and women of the upper classes bungle in their judgment on the virtues and the vices of the working people, and vice versa. Socialism is coming to be the very life-breath of the intelligent working-class, but if all the members of all the social and literary clubs of a city were examined on socialism, probably two-thirds would fail to pass. Many are still content to treat one of the great elemental movements of human history as the artificial and transitory misbehavior of a few agitators and their dupes. The inability of both capital and labor to understand the point of view of the other side has been one chief cause of trouble, and almost every honest effort to get both sides together on a basis of equality has acted like a revelation. But that proves how far they have been apart.

Individual sympathy and understanding has been our chief reliance in the past for overcoming the differences between the social classes. The feelings and principles implanted by Christianity have been a powerful aid in that direction. But if this sympathy diminishes by the widening of the social chasm, what hope have we? It is true that we have an increasing number who, by study and by personal contact in settlement work and otherwise, are trying to increase that sympathetic intelligence. But it is a question if this conscious effort of individuals is enough to offset the unconscious alienation created by the dominant facts of life which are wedging entire classes apart.

Facts and institutions are inevitably followed by theories to explain and justify the existing institutions. In a political democracy we have democratic theories of politics. In a monarchy they have monarchical theories. Wherever inequality has been a permanent situation, theoretical thought has defended it. Aristotle living in a slave holding society said: "There are in the human species individuals as inferior to others as the body is to the soul, or as animals are to men. Adapted to corporeal labor only, they are incapable of a higher occupation. Destined by nature to slavery, there is nothing better for them to do than to obey." Similarly in feudal society the lord regarded the serf as by nature little different from a beast of burden, and even the serf regarded oppression as a fixed fact in life, like cold and rain. If we allow deep and permanent inequality to grow up in our country, it is as sure as gravitation that not only the old democracy and frankness of manners will go, but even the theory of human equality, which has been part of our spiritual atmosphere through Christianity, will be denied. It is already widely challenged.

Any shifting of the economic equilibrium from one class to another is sure to be followed by a shifting of the political equilibrium. If a class arrives at economic wealth, it will gain political influence and some form of representation. For instance, when the cities grew powerful at the close of the Middle Ages, and the lesser nobles declined in power, that fact was registered in the political constitution of the nations. The French Revolution was the demand of the business class to have a share in political power proportionate to its growing economic importance. A class which is economically strong will have the necessary influence to secure and enforce laws which protect its economic interests. In turn, a class which controls legislation will shape it for its own enrichment. Politics is embroidered with patriotic sentiment and phrases, but at bottom, consciously or unconsciously, the economic interests dominate it always. If therefore we have a class which owns a large part of the national wealth and controls nearly all the mobile part of it, it is idle to suppose that this class will not see to it that the vast power exerted by the machinery of government serves its interests. And if we have another class which is economically dependent and helpless, it is idle to suppose that it will be allowed an equal voice in swaying political power. In short, we cannot join economic inequality and political equality. As Oliver Cromwell wrote to Parliament, "If there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth." The words of Lincoln find a new application here, that the republic cannot be half slave and half free.

The power of capitalism over the machinery of our government, and its corroding influence on the morality of our public servants, has been revealed within recent years to such an extent that it is almost superfluous to speak of it. If any one had foretold ten years ago the facts which are now understood by all, he would have been denounced as an incurable pessimist. Our cities have surrendered nearly all the functions that bring an income, keeping only those that demand expenditure, and they are now so dominated by the public service corporations that it takes a furious spasm of public anger, as in Philadelphia, or a long-drawn battle, as in Chicago, to drive the robbers from their intrenchments in the very citadel of government and after the victory is won there is absolutely no guarantee that it will be permanent. There is probably not one of our states which is not more or less controlled by its chief railways. How far our national government is constantly warped in its action, the man at a distance can hardly tell, but the public confidence in Congress is deeply undermined. Even the successful action against the meat-packers and against railway rebates only demonstrated what overwhelming popular pressure is necessary to compel the government to act against these great interests.

The interference of President Roosevelt in the great coal strike was hailed as a demonstration that the people are still supreme. In fact, it rather demonstrated that the supremacy of the people is almost gone. The country was on the verge of a vast public calamity. A sudden cold snap would have sent Death through our Eastern cities, not with his old fashioned scythe, but with a modern reaper. The President merely undertook to advise and persuade, and was met with an almost insolent rejoinder. Mr. Jacob A. Riis, in his book "Theodore Roosevelt, the Citizen," says that the President, when he concluded to interfere, set his face grimly and said: "Yes, I will do it. I suppose that ends me; but it is right, and I will do it." The Governor of Massachusetts afterward sent him "the thanks of every man, woman, and child in the country." The President replied: "Yes, we have put it through. But heavens and earth ! It has been a struggle." Mr. Riis says, "It was the nearest I ever knew him to come to showing the strain he had been under." Now what sinister and ghostly power was this with which the President of our nation had wrestled on behalf of the people, and which was able to loosen even his

joints with fear? Whose interests were so inviolable that they took precedence of the safety of the people, so that a common-sense action by the most August officer of the nation was likely to bring political destruction upon him? To what extent is a power so threatening able to turn the government aside from its functions by silent pressure, so that its fundamental purpose of public service is constantly frustrated? Have we a dual sovereignty, so that our public officers are in doubt whom to obey?

Here is another instance showing how political power is simply a tool for the interests of the dominant class. In 1891 the Working Women's Society of New York began to agitate for proper sanitary accommodations and seats for the female clerks in the department stores. This sensible bill was annually met and defeated at Albany by a lobby of the retail merchants. In 1896 it was at last enacted and the right of inspection and enforcement was given to the local boards of health. For eighteen months it was enforced in New York in the most tyrannical manner to make the law odious. The Tammany mayor then appointed one of the owners of a great department store as president of the Board of Health. This man said that he desired the position partly to quash an indictment against a certain philanthropic enterprise of his and partly to paralyze the Mercantile Inspection Law. The mayor suggested that the necessary appropriation be withheld, and so the law became a dead letter.

To secure special concessions and privileges and to evade public burdens have always been the objects for which dominant classes used their political power. For instance, the feudal nobility of France originally held their lands as franchises from the crown, in return for a tax of service, chiefly military, to be rendered to the nation. When the old feudal levies proved inefficient in the Hundred Years' War with England, a standing army was organized and supported by a money tax. The nobility were thereby relieved from their old obligation of levying and supporting soldiers, yet they successfully evaded their share of the tax. This is merely a sample case. It can safely be asserted that throughout history the strongest have been taxed least, and the weakest most. The same condition prevails in our country. The average homes in the cities are usually taxed to the limit the most opulent homes, and especially their contents, are taxed lightly. Vacant lots, held for speculation, are often flagrantly favored, though they are a public nuisance. In 1856 taxes were paid in New York State on \$148,473,154 worth of personal property over and above the capital of banks and trust companies. During the following forty years the increase in personal property in the State was immense, yet in 1896 the amount found for taxation had increased by only \$66,000,000. In that year a study was made of 107 estates, taken at random in the State of New York and ranging from \$54,559 to \$3,319,500. After the death of the owners these estates disclosed personalty aggregating \$215,132,366; but the year before their deaths the owners had been assessed only \$3,819,412 on their personal property. Thirty four of them had escaped taxation altogether. An investigation by Professor E. W. Bemis in Ohio in 1901 showed that while farms and homes were assessed at about sixty per cent of their value, railways were assessed at from thirty-five per cent down to thirteen per cent of the market value of their stocks and bonds.² The interests which thus evade taxation have usually been enriched by public gifts, by franchises, mining rights, water rights, the unearned increment of the land, etc., and yet they allow the public burdens to settle on the backs of those classes who are already fearfully handicapped.

The courts are the instrument by which the organized community exercises its supremacy over the affairs of the individual, and the control of the courts is therefore of vital concern to the privileged classes of any nation. Exemption from the jurisdiction of certain courts which would be troublesome, was a desirable privilege, and both the

feudal aristocracy and the clergy had that privilege. To a wide extent the feudal nobles down to our own time had the right of jurisdiction within their own domains, and when they sat as judges, they were not likely to hurt their own interests. The English landowners long made the law in Parliament and interpreted it in their courts. The terrible punishments visited, for instance, on poaching are a demonstration how they dealt with offences against their cherished class rights. In our own country all are equal before the law-in theory. In practice there is the most serious inequality. The right of appeal as handled in our country gives tremendous odds to those who have financial staying power. The police court, which is the poor man's court, deals with him very summarily. If a rich man and a poor man were alike fined \$10 for being drunk and disorderly, the equal punishment would be exceedingly unequal. If the poor man is unable to pay the fine, he gets ten days; nothing likely to be inflicted on the rich man for a similar offence would hit him equally hard.

To what extent the judges are actually corrupt it is probably impossible to say. We have been trying to keep up our courage amid the general official corruption by asserting that the integrity of the judiciary at least is above reproach. But the only thing that would make them immune to the general disease is the spirit and the tradition of their profession. But class spirit and professional honor are a rather fragile barrier against the terrible temptations which can be offered by the great interests, and when that barrier is once undermined by evil example, it will wash away with increasing speed. Recent revelations have not been calculated to cheer us. The judge is frequently a successful politician before he sits on the bench. Is the sanctifying power of official responsibility so great that it will purge out the habits of mind acquired by a successful political career, as politics now goes? At any rate, it is safe to say that the study and practice of the law create an ingrained respect for things as they have been, and that the social sympathies of judges are altogether likely to be with the educated and possessing classes. This inward trend of sympathy is a powerful element in determining a man's judgment in single cases. That a man should be tried by a jury of his peers was so important an historical conquest, because it recognized the bias of class differences and turned it in favor of the accused. Unless a judge is affected by the new social spirit, he is likely to be at least unconsciously on the side of those who have, and this is equivalent to a special privilege granted them by the courts. Connecticut alone, among English-speaking countries, has hitherto permitted the defendant in damage suits to transfer such suits from a jury to a bench of judges. When the constitution of Connecticut was revised in 1902, it was proposed to make jury trials mandatory in damage suits. The active "corporation group" in the convention bent its chief interest toward the defeat of this proposition. In the experience of corporations, judges must then be more favorably disposed to them than juries.

The ultimate power on which we stake our hope in our present political decay is the power of public opinion. Whenever some temporary victory has been scored by the people, the newspapers triumphantly announce that the people are really still sovereign, and that nothing can resist public opinion when once aroused. In reality this sheet anchor of our hope is as dependable as the wind that blows. It takes strenuous efforts to arouse the public. Only spectacular evils are likely to impress it. When it is aroused, it is easily turned against some side issue or some harmless scapegoat. And, like all passions, it is very short-lived and sinks back to slumber quickly. Despotism has always trusted in dilatory tactics, knowing well the somnolence of public opinion. The same policy is adroitly used by those who exploit the people in our country. To this must be added the fact that the predatory interests are tampering with the organs which create public opinion. If public opinion is indeed so great a power, it is

not likely that it will be overlooked by those who are so alert against all other sources of danger. It will not be denied that some newspapers are directly in the pay of certain interests and are their active champions. It will not be denied that the counting-room standpoint is profoundly influential in the editorial policy of all newspapers, and that large advertisers can muzzle most papers if they are determined on a policy. Not only the editorials are affected, but the news matter. After the first great election in Chicago in 1902, in which the people by referendum decided for municipal ownership of street railways and of the gas and electric lighting plants by an astonishing majority, the Associated Press despatches and the great New York dailies were almost or wholly silent on this significant demonstration of public ownership sentiment. After the presidential election of 1892, in which the Populist Party played so important a part, I was unable to find any figures on their vote in the New York dailies. The day after the presidential election of 1904, in which the Socialist vote took its first large leap forward, I traveled through several States, but no paper which I saw contained the statistics of the Socialist vote. The only fact mentioned was that their vote had declined in one or two cities. When the Mercantile Inspection Bill, to which reference was made above, was before the New York legislature, one of the most respectable metropolitan newspapers contained frequent articles and interviews opposing the bill from the point of view of the department stores. One of my friends, who championed the bill, spoke to one of his friends on the staff of this paper and asked him in fairness to print an interview on the other side. The man replied, "Certainly, that is only fair, I will go and arrange for it." He returned and said that absolute orders had come from the counting-room that nothing in favor of the bill was to be printed. Now the justice and efficiency of democratic government depend on the intelligence and information of the citizens. If they are purposely misled by distorted information or by the suppression of important information, the larger jury before which all public causes have to be pleaded is tampered with, and the innermost life of our republic is in danger.

In an address before the Nineteenth Century Club in 1904, Professor Franklin H. Giddings, one of the most eminent sociologists of our country, said: "We are witnessing to-day, beyond question, the decay-perhaps not permanent, but at any rate the decay-of republican institutions. No man in his right mind can deny it." We have, in fact, one kind of constitution on paper, and another system of government in fact. That is usually the way when a slow revolution is taking place in the distribution of political and economic power. The old structure apparently remains intact, but actually the seat of power has changed. The Merovingian kings remained kings long after all real power had passed to the Major Domo and they had become attenuated relics. The Senate of Rome and the consuls continued to transact business in the time-hallowed way, though they merely registered the will of the real sovereign. The president of great university has predicted that we shall have an emperor within twenty years. We shall probably never have an emperor, but we may have a chairman of some committee or other, some person not even mentioned in any constitution or law, who will be the de facto emperor of our republic. Names are trifles. An emperor by any other name will smell as sweet. The chief of the Roman Empire was called Caesar or Augustus, which happened to be the names of the men who first concentrated power in that form. When the tottering Empire rested on military force alone, the prefect of the praetorian guard came to be the virtual prime minister, uniting the chief judicial and executive functions in his hands. The boss in American political life is the extra-constitutional ruler simply because he stands for the really dominant powers.

The political life of a nation represents the manner in which that nation manages its common affairs. It is not a thing apart from the rest of the national life. It is

the direct outgrowth of present forces and realities, somewhat modified by past traditions, and in turn it intensifies the conditions which shape it. The ideal of our government was to distribute political rights and powers equally among the citizens. But a state of such actual inequality has grown up among the citizens that this ideal becomes unworkable. According to the careful calculations of Mr. Charles B. Spahr, one per cent of the families in our country held more than half of the aggregate wealth of the country's more than all the rest of the nation put together. And that was in 1890. Is it likely that this small minority, which is so powerful in possessions, will be content with one per cent of the political power wherewith to protect these possessions? Seven-eighths of the families held only one-eighth of the national wealth. Has it ever happened in history that such a seven-eighths would permanently be permitted to wield seven-eighths of all political power? If we want approximate political equality, we must have approximate economic equality. If we attempt it otherwise, we shall be bucking against the law of gravitation. But when we consider what a long and sore struggle it cost to achieve political liberty; what a splendid destiny a true republic planted on this glorious territorial base of ours might have what a mission of liberty our country might have for all the nations-it may well fill the heart of every patriot with the most poignant grief to think that this liberty may perish once more; that our birthright among the nations may be lost to us by our greed; and that already our country, instead of being the great incentive to political democracy in other nations, is a heavy handicap on the democratic movement, an example to which the opponents of democracy abroad point with pleasure and which the lovers of popular liberty pass with averted face.

Our moral character is wrought out by choosing the right of when we are offered the wrong. It is neither possible nor desirable to create a condition in which the human soul will not have to struggle with temptation. But there are conditions in which evil is so dominant and its attraction so deadly and irresistible, that no wise man will want to expose himself or his children to such odds. Living in a tainted atmosphere does not increase the future capacity of the body to resist disease. Swimming is hard work and therefore good exercise, but not swimming where the undertow locks the swimmer's limbs in leaden embrace and drags him down.

We cannot conceal from ourselves that in some directions the temptations of modern life are so virulent that characters and reputations are collapsing all about us with sickening frequency. The prevalence of fraud and the subtler kinds of dishonesty for which we have invented the new term "graft," is a sinister fact of the gravest import. It is not merely the weak who fall, but the strong. Clean, kindly, religious men stoop to methods so tricky, hard, and rapacious, that we stand aghast whenever the curtain is drawn aside and we are shown the inside facts. Every business man who has any finer moral discernment will realize that he himself is constantly driven by the pressure of business necessity into actions of which he is ashamed. Men do not want to do these things but in a given situation they have to, if they want to survive or prosper, and the sum of these crooked actions gives an evil turn to their life.

If it were proposed to invent some social system in which covetousness would be deliberately fostered and intensified in human nature, what system could be devised which would excel our own for this purpose? Competitive commerce exalts selfishness to the dignity of a moral principle. It pits men against one another in a gladiatorial game in which there is no mercy and in which ninety per cent of the combatants finally strew the arena. It makes Ishmaels of our best men and teaches them that their hand must be against every man, since every man's hand is against them. It makes men who are the gentlest and kindest friends and neighbors, relentless taskmasters in their shops and stores, who will drain the strength of their men and pay

their female employees wages on which no girl can live without supplementing them in some way. It spreads things before us and beseeches and persuades us to buy what we do not want. The show windows and bargain-counters are institutions for the promotion of covetousness among women. Men offer us goods on credit and dangle the smallness of the first installment before our eyes as an incentive to go into debt heedlessly. They try to break down the foresight and self restraint which are the slow product of moral education, and reduce us to the moral habits of savages who gorge to-day and fast to-morrow. Kleptomania multiplies. It is the inevitable product of a social life in which covetousness is stimulated by all the ingenuity of highly paid specialists. The large stores have to take the most elaborate precautions against fraud by their employees and pilfering by their respectable customers. The finest hotels are plundered by their wealthy patrons of anything from silver spoons down to marked towels. After the annual Ladies' Day at a prominent club in Chicago over two hundred spoons and two hundred thirty-seven sprigs of artificial decoration, besides miniature vases and bric-a-brac, were missing, and that is always the case after Ladies' Day, and never at other times. At a reform school for boys two lads were pointed out to me as the sons of two men of great wealth. They had been placed there by their parents to cure them of their inveterate habit of stealing. Their fathers were in the United States Senate. Our business life borders so closely on dishonesty that men are hardly aware when they cross the line. It is a penal offence for a government officer to profit by a contract which he awards or mediates in business life that is an everyday occurrence. No wonder that our officials are corrupt when their corruption is the respectability of business life.

Gambling is the vice of the savage. True civilization ought to outgrow it, as it has outgrown tattooing and cannibalism. Instead of that our commercial life stimulates the gambling instinct. Our commerce is speculative in its very nature. Of course risk is inseparable from human life. It is the virtue of the pioneer to take risks boldly. Every field sown by the farmer represents a certain risk. But the element of labor is the main thing in the farmer's work and that makes the process wholesome. In the measure in which productive labor is eliminated and the risk taken becomes the sole title to the profit gained, the transaction approximates gambling. Above the entrance of an Eastern penal institution the motto has been inscribed, "The worst day in the life of a young man is when he gets the idea that he can make a dollar without doing a dollar's worth of work for it." That is good sense, but how would that motto look on the walls of the New York Stock Exchange or the Chicago Produce Exchange? If a man buys stock or wheat on a margin and clears a hundred dollars, what labor or service has he given for which this is the reward? In what respect does it differ from crap-shooting in which a boy risks his pennies and uses his skill just like the speculator? In Europe, lotteries are state institutions and prized privileges of churches and benevolent undertakings. We have fortunately outlawed them in our country, but gambling is one of our national vices because our entire commerce is saturated with the spirit of it.

The social nature of man makes him an imitative creature. The instinct of imitation and emulation may be a powerful lever for good if individuals and classes set the example of real culture and refinement of manners and taste. But the processes of competitive industry have poured vast wealth into the lap of a limited number and have created an unparalleled lavishness of expenditure which has nothing ennobling about it. Those who have to work hard for their money will, as a rule, be careful how they spend it. Those who get it without effort, will spend it without thought. Thus parasitic wealth is sure to create a vicious luxury, which then acts as a centre of infection for all other classes. Fashions operate downward. Each class tries to imitate the one higher

up, and to escape from the imitation of those lower down. Thus the ostentation of the overfull purses of the predatory rich lures all society into the worship of false gods. It intensifies "the lust of the eye and the pride of life" unnaturally, and to that extent expels "the love of the Father," which includes the love of all true values. Any one can test the matter in his own case by asking himself how much of his money, his time, and his worry is consumed in merely "keeping up with the procession," and is diverted from real culture to mere display by the compulsion of social requirements about him. The man who lives only on his labor is brought into social competition with people who have additional income through rents and profits, and must break his back merely to keep his wife and children on a level with others. The very spirit of democracy which has wiped out the old class lines in modern life, makes the rivalry keener. In Europe a peasant girl or a servant formerly was quite content with the dress of her class and had no ambition to rival the very different dress of the gentry. With us the instinct of imitation works without a barrier from the top of the social pyramid to the bottom, and the whole process of consumption throughout society is feverishly affected by the aggregation of unearned money at the top. The embezzlements of business men, the nervous breakdown of women, the ruin of girls, the neglect of home and children, are largely caused by the unnatural pace of expenditures. If the rich had only what they earned, and the poor had all that they earned, all wheels would revolve more slowly and life would be more sane.

Industry and commerce are in their nature productive and therefore good. But in our industry a strong element of rapacity vitiates the moral qualities of business life. A railway president in New York said to me-half in joke, of course: "The men who go down town on the Elevated at seven and eight o'clock really make things. We who go down at nine and ten, only try to take things away from one another." Supplying goods to the people is, of course, the main thing; but crowding out the other man, who also wants to supply them, takes a large part of the time and energy of business. Our competitive life has so deeply warped our moral judgment that not one man in a thousand will realize anything immoral in attracting another man's customers. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's trade" is not in our decalogue.

The same instinct of rapacity cheats the consumer. They sell us fruit-jam made without fruit butter that never saw the milk-pail; potted chicken that grunted in the barnyard; all-wool goods that never said "baah," but leave it to the buyer to say it. If a son asks for bread, his father will not offer him a stone but ground soapstone is freely advertised as an adulterant for flour. Several years ago the Secretary of Agriculture, on the basis of an extensive inquiry, estimated that thirty per cent of the money paid for food products in the United States is paid for adulterated or misbranded goods. We are fortunate if the title of the food is false, but the food is wholesome. But when fruit flavors are made with coal-tar and benzoic acid, and when the milk for our children is preserved with formaldehyde, the rapacity becomes murderous. The life of a mother or a child may depend on the purity of a medicine administered at the critical stage of a disease; but we have very little guarantee that our medicines are not adulterated. In 1904 the Board of Health in New York City had a list of about three hundred druggists and dealers who had attempted to sell spurious mixtures to the very officers of the Board. Most of the patent medicines to which our people trust are cheap and worthless concoctions. Others are insidious conveyers of narcotic poisons which are intended to set up a morbid appetite in the consumers for the profit of the dealers. And if patent medicines were as health giving as they claim to be, the very principle of patenting and withholding from general use a beneficent invention for the saving of human life would be a shameful confession of selfish greed. The liquor traffic presents a striking case of

a huge industry inducing people to buy what harms them. It is militant capitalism rotting human lives and characters to distil dividends. In the atrocities on the Congo we have the same capitalism doing its pitiless work in a safe and distant corner of the world, on an inferior race, and under the full support of the government. The rapacity of commerce has been the secret spring of most recent wars. Speculative finance is the axis on which international politics revolve.

The counts in the indictment against our marvellous civilization could be multiplied at pleasure. It is a splendid sinner, "magnificent in sin." The words which Bret Harte addressed to San Francisco in its earlier days, characterize the whole of modern society:- "I know thy cunning and thy greed, Thy hard, high lust and wilful deed, And all thy glory loves to tell Of specious gifts material." It defrauds the customer who buys its goods. It drains and brutalizes the workman who does its work. It hunts the business man with fear of failure, or makes him hard with merciless success. It plays with the loaded dice of false prospectuses and watered stock, and the vaster its operations become, the more do they love the darkness rather than the light. It corrupts all that it touches, -politics, education, the Church. For a profession to be "commercialized" means to be demoralized. The only realms of life in which we are still glad and happy are those in which the laws of commerce are not practised. If they entered the home, even that would be hell.

Industry and commerce are good. They serve the needs of men. The men eminent in industry and commerce are good men, with the fine qualities of human nature. But the organization of industry and commerce is such that along with its useful service it carries death, physical and moral. Frederick Denison Maurice, one of the finest minds of England in the Victorian Age, said, "I do not see my way farther than this, Competition is put forth as- the law of the universe that is a lie." And his friend Charles Kingsley added, "Competition means death; cooperation means life." Every joint-stock company, trust, or labor union organized, every extension of government interference or government ownership, is a surrender of the competitive principle and a halting step toward cooperation. Practical men take these steps because competition has proved itself suicidal to economic welfare. Christian men have a stouter reason for turning against it-; because it slays human character and denies human brotherhood. If money dominates, the ideal cannot dominate. If we serve mammon, we cannot serve the Christ.

We have purposely left to the last what properly comes first in any consideration of social life. The family is the structural cell of the social organism. In it lives the power of propagation and renewal of life. It is the foundation of morality, the chief educational institution, and the source of nearly all the real contentment among men. To create a maximum number of happy families might well be considered the end of all statesmanship. As President Roosevelt recently said, all other questions sink into insignificance when the stability of the family is at stake. The most significant part of that utterance was that such a thing had to be uttered at all.

Hard times are always marked by a downward curve in the percentage of marriages. In our country the decline has become chronic for some years past. Men marry late, and when the mating season of youth is once past, many never marry at all. In my city of Rochester, N.Y., with a population of 162,608, the census of 1900 showed 25,219 men between the age of 25 and 44, the years during which a man ought to be enjoying a home and rearing children, and; 7355 of them were still unmarried. There were 28,218 women of the same years, relatively further along in marriageable age than the men, and 8109 were still unmarried.

Now the attraction between men and women is just as fundamental a fact in social life as the attraction of the earth is in physics, and the only way in which that tremendous force of desire can be prevented from wrecking lives is to make it build lives by home contentment. The existence of a large class of involuntary celibates in society is a more threatening fact even than the increase of divorces. The slums are aggregations of single men and women. If the monastic celibates of the Middle Ages, who had the powerful incentive of religious enthusiasm and all the preventives of isolation and supervision, could not keep chaste, is it likely that the unmarried thousands in the freedom of modern life will maintain their own purity and respect the purity of others. They are thrust into the lonely life through no wise resolve of their own, but mainly through the fear that they will not be able to maintain a family in the standard of comfort which they deem necessary for their life.

If a man and woman do marry, they do not yet constitute a true family. The little hand of a child, more than the blessing of a priest, consecrates the family. France has long been held up as furnishing the terrible example of a declining birth-rate, but the older portions of our country are saved from the same situation only by the fertility of the immigrants. The native population of New England would not reproduce.

The chief cause for this profoundly important fact is economic fear. Whenever the economic condition of a class is hopeful and improving, there is an increase in the birth-rate. Whenever there is economic disaster or increasing pressure, there is a decline. In the West, where land is still abundant, families are large. The immigrants, who feel the relative easement of pressure, multiply. The natives, who suffer by the competition of the immigrants and who feel the tightening grip of our industrial development, refuse to bring children into a world which threatens them with poverty.

Our cheerful newspaper optimists assure us that the American child makes up by quality what it lacks in numbers. They quote the reply of the lioness in the fable, "One, but a lion." But that is merely an effort to make an ugly fact look sweet. People hunting for apartments in a large city soon discover one cause. "As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth," said the Psalmist. "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be put to shame when they speak with their enemies in the gate." But they shall talk very humbly and beseechingly when they speak with their prospective landlords nowadays. The concentration of population in the cities through competitive necessities, the consequent increase in rents, the enforced proximity to undesirable neighbors, the rise in the standard of luxury together with the decreased purchasing power of the average income—these account in the main for the declining birth-rate. When men are hardly able to keep their head above water, they fear to carry a child on their back. Fear stands where the spring of life should bubble and freezes it into subsidence. That situation raises the most serious questions in the most intimate morality of human life. Moreover, the absence of children decreases the cohesive power of the married relation, the blitheness and youthfulness of life, the unselfishness of character, the insight into human nature; in short, it blights much of what is really fine and high in the souls and relations of men. The luxury and culture made possible by the absence of children is a glittering varnish to cover decaying wood.

The menace to the future of our nation is still greater through the fact that sterility is most marked among the able and educated families. The shiftless, and all those with whom natural passion is least restrained, will breed most freely. The prudent consider and shrink. The poor have little to lose. Children are their form of old-age pensions. The well-to-do see the possible depth to which they or their children may descend, and are afraid. Thus the reproduction of the race is left to the poor and

ignorant. Unusual ability is not transmitted. The benefits of intellectual environment fail to be prolonged by heredity. The vital statistics of Harvard and Columbia graduates show a rapidly declining birth-rate and complete failure to reproduce their own number, I sat at a table with seven of the best and ablest men I know. We talked of children and found that only two had a child—one of the two was a Swede, the other the son of German immigrants. In a previous chapter we referred to the loss suffered by mankind through the sterility of its most ideal individuals while monasticism and priestly celibacy prevailed.² Here we have a fact of equal historical significance, but unrelieved by the idealism of the monastic vow. Education can only train the gifts with which a child is endowed at birth. The intellectual standard of humanity can be raised only by the propagation of the capable. Our social system causes an unnatural selection of the weak for breeding, and the result is the survival of the unfittest.

When the family is small, the influence of brothers and sisters on the formation of character is lacking. When the father has to work long hours and then spend additional time in travelling between his home and his work, the element of fatherhood in the home is reduced to a minimum. If the mother, too, goes out to work, the children are left to "the street," which is an educator of rather doubtful value. If boarders and roomers are taken in to help in paying the rent, an alien and often a demoralizing element enters the family. Thus the economic situation everywhere saps family life.

One family to one house is the only normal condition. When twenty families live in one tenement, twenty souls inhabit one body. That was the condition of the demoniac of Gadara, in whom dwelt a legion. He was crazy.

To be a home in the fullest sense, it must be loved with the sense of proprietorship. As cities grow, home ownership declines. A semi-vagrancy from one flat to the next grows up. In the borough of Manhattan only six per cent of the homes are owned by those who live in them; in Philadelphia, a city of small houses, only twenty-two per cent own their homes. Rochester is an almost ideal city for the development of homes, and the popular assumption is that nearly everybody owns his home. Yet the census of 1900 showed that of the 33,964 homes in the city only 12,290 were owned by the tenants, and half of these were mortgaged.

The condition of the home determines the condition of woman. If girls are eagerly sought in marriage, they can choose the best. If few men can afford a good home, girls must take what offers or go without. If a man can easily make a living for a family, he can afford to be indifferent to anything but the person of the woman he loves. As the economic pressure tightens and social classes grow more clearly defined, American men, too, will begin to inquire what property comes to them with their bride. We shall have love modified by the "dot."

Our optimists treat it as a sign of progress that "so many professions are now open to women." But it is not choice, but grim necessity, that drives woman into new ways of getting bread and clothing. The great majority of girls heartily prefer the independence and the satisfaction of the heart which are offered to a woman only in a comfortable and happy home. Some educated girls think they prefer the practice of a profession because the dream of unusual success lures them; but when they have had a taste of the wearing routine that prevails in most professions, they turn with longing to the thought of a home of their own. Our industrial machine has absorbed the functions which women formerly fulfilled in the home, and has drawn them into its hopper because female labor is unorganized and cheap labor. They are made to compete with the very men who ought to marry them, and thus they further diminish their own chance of marriage. If any one has a sound reason for taking the competitive system by the throat in righteous wrath, it is the unmarried woman and the mother with girls.

Girls go to work at the very age when their developing body ought to be shielded from physical and mental strain. Many are kept standing for long hours at a time. During rush seasons they are pushed to exhaustion. In few cases can they permit themselves that periodical easement which is essential to the continued health of most women. Many of them enter marriage with organic troubles that develop their full import only in later years. Girls pass from school to shop or store and never learn housekeeping well. If they marry, they assume charge of a manufacturing establishment in which all the varied functions are performed by one woman. They have to learn the work at an age when the body no longer acquires new habits readily. If the burden of maternity is added at the same time, the strain is immense, and is likely to affect the temper and the happiness of the home. It is thus our civilization prepares its women for the all important function of motherhood, for on the women of the working class rests the function of bearing and rearing the future citizens of the republic. Individually Americans are more tender of women than any other nation. Collectively we treat them with cruelty and folly.

A large proportion of working women are not paid wages sufficient to support themselves in comfort and to dress as the requirements of their position and of modern taste demand. In that case they must either suffer want or supplement their earnings. They are fortunate if fathers and brothers support the home. In that case they are able to underbid those who are dependent on their own labor alone. If the home does not thus shield them, what are they to do? There are numbers of unmarried and married men about them looking for transient love. The girls themselves have the womanly desire for the company and love of men. Satisfaction by marriage may not be in sight. They crave for the clothing, the trinkets, the pleasures that glitter about them. It is so easy to get a share. When I reflect on the unstained virtue and nobility of the great majority of working girls whom I have known, I feel the deepest respect for them. But some are always on the edge of danger. As the crocodile takes toll of the Hindu women at the river ford, so every now and then one of the girls throws up her hands and goes under. Those who are strong by personal vigor, or by religious training, can escape, and blessed is he who strengthens their hands. But that does not satisfy the situation. If a ship were wrecked and the passengers clinging to the tilted deck, the strongest would hold on best. If some one cheered their failing strength and showed them how best to cling, it would be a great service. But if the deck kept on tilting at a steeper angle, more still would go. There are employers in European cities who expect as a matter of course that their female clerks will give them more than the working capacity of their bodies. There are stores in New York and elsewhere where some girls get the easy positions and some are made uncomfortable for reasons well understood. That sort of oppression will be successful in the measure in which the girls fear to lose their positions. Woe to the weak! They are like birds fluttering in the hot hand of the pursuer. The most serious danger is not the increase of professional prostitutes, but the frequency with which women supplement their wages and secure their pleasures by occasional immorality. Prostitutes are ostracized by their class. It is worse if girls are tainted, but retain their standing and spread the contagion. The freedom of movement in American life and the growing knowledge of preventives makes sin easy and safe. To any one who realizes the value of womanly purity, it is appalling to think that the standard of purity for their whole sex may drop and approximate the standard prevailing among men.

The health of society rests on the welfare of the home. What, then, will be the outcome if the unmarried multiply; if homes remain childless; if families are homeless; if girls do not know housework; and if men come to distrust the purity of women?

The continents are strewn with the ruins of dead nations and civilizations. History laughs at the optimistic illusion that "nothing can stand in the way of human progress." It would be safer to assert that progress is always for a time only, and then succumbs to the inevitable decay. One by one the ancient peoples rose to wealth and civilization, extended their sway as far as geographical conditions would permit, and then began to decay within and to crumble away without, until the mausoleums of their kings were the haunt of jackals, and the descendants of their conquering warriors were abject peasants slaving for some alien lord. What guarantee have we, then, that our modern civilization with its pomp will not be "one with Nineveh and Tyre"?

The most important question which humanity ought to address to its historical scholars is this: "Why did these others die, and what can we do to escape their fate?" For death is not an inevitable and welcome necessity for a nation, as it is for the individual. Its strength and bloom could be indefinitely prolonged if the people were wise and just enough to avert the causes of decay. There is no inherent cause why a great group of nations, such as that which is now united in Western civilization, should not live on in perpetual youth, overcoming by a series of rejuvenations every social evil as it arises, and using every attainment as a stepping-stone to a still higher culture of individual and social life. It has never yet been done. Can it be done in a civilization in which Christianity is the salt of the earth, the social preservative?

Of all the other dead civilizations we have only scattered relics and fragmentary information, as of some fossil creature of a past geological era. We can only guess at their fate. But the rise and fall of one happened in the full light of day, and we have historical material enough to watch every step of the process. That was the Grace-Roman civilization which clustered about the Mediterranean Sea.

Its golden age, which immediately preceded its rapid decline, had a striking resemblance to our own time. In both cases there was a swift increase in wealth. The Empire policed the seas and built roads. The safety of commerce and the ease of travel and transportation did for the Empire what steam transportation did for the nineteenth century. The mass of slaves secured by the wars of conquest, and organized for production in the factories and on the great estates, furnished that increase in cheap productive force which the invention of steam machinery and the division and organization of labor furnished to the modern world. No new civilization was created by these improved conditions but the forces latent in existing civilization were stimulated and set free, and their application resulted in a rapid efflorescence of the economic and intellectual life. Just as the nations about the Seven Seas are drawing together to-day and are sharing their spiritual possessions in a common civilization, so the Empire broke down the barriers of the nations about the Mediterranean, gathered them in a certain unity of life, and poured their capacities and thoughts into a common fund. The result was a breakdown of the old faiths and a wonderful fertilization of intellectual life.

Wealth--to use a homely illustration--is to a nation what manure is to a farm. If the farmer spreads it evenly over the soil, it will enrich the whole. If he should leave it in heaps, the land would be impoverished and under the rich heaps the vegetation would be killed.

The new wealth created in the Roman Empire was not justly distributed, but fell a prey to a minority who were in a position to seize it. A new money aristocracy arose which financed the commercial undertakings and shouldered the old aristocratic families aside, just as the feudal aristocracies were superseded in consequence of the modern industrial revolution. A few gained immense wealth, while below them was a mass of slaves and free proletarians. The independent middle class disappeared. The

cities grew abnormally at the expense of the country and its sturdy population. Great fortunes were made and yet there was constant distress and frequent hard times. The poor had no rights in the means of production, so they used the political power still remaining to them to secure state grants of land, money, grain, and pleasures. There was widespread reluctance to marry and to rear children. Education became common, and yet culture declined. There were plenty of universities, great libraries, well-paid professors, and yet a growing coarseness of taste and a decline in creative artistic and literary ability. If the yellow newspaper could have been printed, it would have "filled a long-felt want." The social conditions involved a readjustment of political power. A strong centralized government was necessary to keep the provinces quiet while Rome taxed them and the bureaucracy grew rich on them. Government was not based broadly on the just consent of the governed, but on the swords of the legions, and especially of the praetorian guard. The old republican forms were long maintained, but Rome verged more and more toward despotic autocracy.

In a hundred ways the second century of our era seemed to be the splendid culmination of all the past. The Empire seemed imperishable in the glory of almost a thousand years of power. To prophesy its fall would have seemed like predicting the failure of civilization and humanity. The reverses which began with the death of Marcus Aurelius in A.D. 180 seemed mere temporary misfortunes. Yet they were the beginning of the end.

The German and Celtic tribes had long swirled and eddied about the northern boundary of the Empire, like the ocean about the dikes of Holland. The little Rome of Marius a hundred years before Christ had successfully beaten back the Cimbrians and Teutons. For two centuries the strong arm of the legions had dammed the flood behind the Rhine and Danube. Rome was so much superior in numbers, in wealth, in the science of war and all the resources of civilization, that it might have continued to hold them in check and to turn their forward movements in other directions. But the decay at the centre now weakened the capacity for resistance at the borders. The farmers who had made the legions of the Republic invincible had been ruined by the competition of slave labor, crowded out by land monopoly, and sucked into the ragged proletariat of the cities. The armies had to be recruited from the conquered provinces and finally from barbarian mercenaries. The moral enthusiasm of a citizen soldiery fighting for their homes was gone. The impoverished and overtaxed provinces were unable to respond to additional financial needs. Slowly the barbarians filtered into the Northern provinces by mass immigration. The civilized population did not have vitality enough to assimilate the foreign immigrants. Slowly, by gradual stages, hardly fast enough for men to realize what was going on, the ancient civilization retreated, and the flood of barbarism covered the provinces, with only some islands of culture rising above the yellow flood.

And how will it be with us ? Will that vaster civilization which began in Europe and is now spreading along the shores of all the oceans, as Rome grew from Italy outward around the great inland sea, run through the same stages? If the time of our weakness comes, the barbarians will not be wanting to take possession. Where the carcass is, the vultures will gather.

Nations do not die by wealth, but by injustice. The forward impetus comes through some great historical opportunity which stimulates the production of wealth, breaks up the caked and rigid order of the past, sets free the energies of new classes, calls creative leaders to the front, quickens the intellectual life, intensifies the sense of duty and the ideal devotion to the common weal, and awakens in the strong individuals the large ambition of patriotic service. Progress slackens when a single class appropriates the social results of the common labor, fortifies its evil rights by unfair

laws, throttles the masses by political centralization and suppression, and consumes in luxury what it has taken in covetousness. Then there is a gradual loss of productive energy, an increasing bitterness and distrust, a waning sense of duty and devotion to country, a paralysis of the moral springs of noble action. Men no longer love the Commonwealth, because it does not stand for the common wealth. Force has to supply the cohesive power which love fails to furnish. Exploitation creates poverty, and poverty is followed by physical degeneration. Education, art, wealth, and culture may continue to advance and may even ripen to their mellowest perfection when the worm of death is already at the heart of the nation. Internal convulsions or external catastrophes will finally reveal the state of decay.

It is always a process extending through generations or even centuries. It is possible that with the closely knit nations of the present era the resistive vitality is greater than in former ages, and it will take much longer for them to break up. The mobility of modern intellectual life will make it harder for the stagnation of mind and the crystallization of institutions to make headway. But unless the causes of social wrong are removed, it will be a slow process of strangulation and asphyxiation.

In the last resort the only hope is in the moral forces which can be summoned to the rescue. If there are statesmen, prophets, and apostles who set truth and justice above selfish advancement; if their call finds a response in the great body of the people; if a new tide of religious faith and moral enthusiasm creates new standards of duty and a new capacity for self-sacrifice; if the strong learn to direct their love of power to the uplifting of the people and see the highest self-assertion in self-sacrifice-then the intrenchments of vested wrong will melt away; the stifled energy of the people will leap forward; the atrophied members of the social body will be filled with a fresh flow of blood; and a regenerate nation will look with the eyes of youth across the fields of the future.

The cry of "Crisis! crisis!" has become a weariness. Every age and every year are critical and fraught with destiny. Yet in the widest survey of history Western civilization is now at a decisive point in its development.

Will some Gibbon of Mongol race sit by the shore of the Pacific in the year A.D. 3000 and write on the "Decline and Fall of the Christian Empire"? If so, he will probably describe the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the golden age when outwardly life flourished as never before, but when that decay, which resulted in the gradual collapse of the twenty-first and twenty-second centuries, was already far advanced.

Or will the twentieth century mark for the future historian the real adolescence of humanity, the great emancipation from barbarism and from the paralysis of injustice, and the beginning of a progress in the intellectual, social, and moral life of mankind to which all past history has no parallel?

It will depend almost wholly on the moral forces which the Christian nations can bring to the fighting line against wrong, and the fighting energy of those moral forces will again depend on the degree to which they are inspired by religious faith and enthusiasm. It is either a revival of social religion or the deluge.