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EDITORIAL

FATHER GASSONIANA.

By DANIEL DE LEON

XIX.

THE two correspondents—the gentlemen who furnished us with clippings from the *Boston Post* of February 6, containing the report of the Jesuit Father Thomas I. Gasson's Anti-Socialist address, delivered in that city on the previous day, and who, while considering Father Gasson's words the word of God that "nailed the un-Godly teachings of Socialism," yet, with tell-tale inconsistency, challenged refutation—the two gentlemen have been accommodated in the preceding XVIII articles. For the greater edification of the challengers, who, we hope, have "learned something," the series may now be completed with a succinct presentation of Socialism.

Socialism is the synthesis of two sets of laws, one economic; the other sociologic.

The leading economic law that carries Socialism in its folds is the Law of Value—Value in Exchange.

The Law of Value establishes that the standard by which goods are exchanged is the amount of labor-power crystallized in them, and socially necessary for their production.

From the Law of Value flow two others, corollary to it, under the system of the private ownership of the necessaries for wealth production, that is, the Capitalist System.

The first corollary is that the articles of merchandise turned out by the operator of superior capital, being more numerous and turned out with less expenditure of labor-power than the articles of merchandise that are turned out by the operator of inferior capital, drive the latter out of the market. To illustrate:

If at a given time the machinery (capital) for producing calico enables each operator to produce 10 yards in 12 hours, and the same amount of labor-power produces 4 bushels of potatoes, then the calico and the potatoes will exchange in the market at—

10 yards for 4 bushels.

If the machinery, operated by one of the operators, has improved and it turns out 20 yards in 12 hours, then the exchange in the market will be—

20 yards for 4 bushels,

consequently, the operators operating the same machinery as before will have to exchange in the market at—

10 yards for 2 bushels.

If the machinery, operated by that one of the operators, improves so much more that it turns out 100 yards, then the exchange in the market will be—

100 yards for 4 bushels,

with the consequence that the operators who have none but the old style machinery to produce with are compelled to exchange in the market at—

10 yards for only $\frac{4}{10}$ of a bushel.

In this progression is read, on the one hand, the finish of the small producer, and, on the other, the concentration of capital, in short, the Trust, that contrivance of production that turns out the largest number of useful articles with the least possible expenditure of human labor. Against this progression all “Sherman Anti-Trust Laws”; all “Interstate Commerce Laws”; all Supreme Court decisions, with or without the application of the “Rule of Reason,” are as effective as the noise of tin kettles to affect sun and moon eclipses.

The second corollary to the economic Law of Value is that the workingman, the proletarian, the man wholly without the necessaries for production, is lowered to the status of merchandise, to be bought and sold in the Labor Market under laws identical with those under which all other merchandise is bought and sold. In that economic law is read the inevitable decline of the human factor in production. In view of that fact no “Labor Law” enacted by the Capitalist Class can bring redress, on the contrary. The main effect of such laws, unless quickly followed up with revolutionary moves, is to perform the part of social parachutes—they render the decline slow, unperceived, gradual, yet nevertheless steady, and, therefore, all the surer.

The sociologic laws, which merge with the economic laws just outlined are:—

1. The trend of society is to produce with ever increasing abundance and decreasing human exertion, so as to insure to all the material necessaries of life to the end that the race be raised above the level of the brute, and of the brutifying compulsion of toil for bare existence.

2. The material means toward that consummation is the ever more perfect tool

of production. In the measure that the tool is perfected the goal is reached. The Trust is, mechanically, the most perfect stage yet reached by the tool.

3. The process of the perfection of the tool compels co-operative labor to an ever widening extent.

4. The tool of production is the weapon of Man against Slavery. Without the tool Man is Nature's slave. In the measure that the tool improves, the intensity of the slavery declines.

5. The mere existence of the tool does not bring about Man's emancipation from the bondage of material necessities. The perfected tool only brings about the potentiality of Man's emancipation.

6. Toolless Man being the slave of Nature, it follows that the tool having come into existence, the toolless individual becomes the slave of the tool-holding individual. That is Capitalist Society.

7. The nature of the tool dictates the system of its ownership. The collectively operated tool must be owned collectively.

8. The social system pivoted upon the private ownership of the collectively wielded weapon of production is reflected in the "political system" of government.

9. The "political system" of government is a system of oppression—the oppression of the slave by the slave-holder.

10. So long as the tool is not perfect enough to be able to accomplish its emancipatory function, the slave-holder and slave, or the Classes, are inevitable. All efforts—whether sentimental, or blindly rebellious,—to remove or even mitigate the evils of such a social system are vain. In the measure that the emancipatory possibilities of the tool ripen, the strain of the Class Struggle is intensified and social discontent increases and takes organized shape.

11. Social Discontent is the badge of a subject Class. When the subjection is no longer a social necessity, that Class is ripened into a Revolutionary Class.

12. The economic laws which decree the fated bankruptcy of the small holders and their fated conversion into proletarians, fated under capitalism to the status of merchandise, together with the sociologic laws that cluster around and flow from the tool of production, determine at once the structure of the revolutionary organization and its goal.

From the synthesis of these laws, or be it their convergence, arises Socialism—a revolutionary social movement, which, taking evolution by the hand, eliminates the economic and political ills that to-day afflict society.

In other words, Socialism is the logical sequence of economic and sociologic development. It is the movement which overthrows the Political State; rears the Industrial State in its place; harmonizes the system of ownership with the collective system of operating the plants of production; and abolishes economic, the foundation of all slavery.

Such being the material basis of Socialism, the Socialist Movement is the sole one that furnishes the foundation and shelter for the loftiest aspirations of the loftiest minds of all Ages—the Brotherhood of Man.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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