



SOCIAL ILLUSIONS.

For the Appeal by Ernest Unterman.

"Give me a fulcrum, and I will move the world!" cried Archimedes. "Give me the key to the minds of men, and I will redeem the world!" exclaims the Socialist today.

They have taught us what to worship, what to learn, how to reason, and especially how not to reason. They have set the fashions in dressing, eating, building, furnishing, in feasting, mourning, and sporting.

The ruling classes have made written codes for the masses, and unwritten codes for their sovereign selves. Even the most ancient documents to which we may turn for historical research are but preserving the traditions of ages when private property had already begun to create class distinctions.

Much has been said about the power of material conditions to shape the ideas of men, but the power of illusion is no less strong. This power is wielded against the minds of the exploited by the influence of those who hold the economic and political power.

We read in ancient fables and legends how gods and fairies transformed human beings into hogs, donkeys, beasts of prey, and turned their reason so completely that the unfortunate victims became willing slaves.

"What is the most wonderful thing about those regiments?" Frederick the Great once asked the "Old Dessauer," one of his best generals, during a parade. "Why, Your Majesty, the drill and discipline of these fine troops," replied the general.

What drill and discipline did for Frederick's soldiers, is done by pulpit and press for the wage workers, little tradesmen, and farmers of today.

A congregation of half starved miners will sit for hours listening to the harangue of a well-fed priest on abstinence, frugality, and satisfaction. It will never occur to them to draw comparisons between their own condition and that of the man who talks to them.

Of course, a few individuals do see this connection now and then and ask the priest a few silly questions. And what does he answer them? "The more you suffer here, the happier will be your lot in heaven!"

The priest knows his business. He will never preach abstinence to the operators and railroad magnates. That would mean sudden abstinence for himself, and he does not believe in practicing what he preaches.

Occasionally some especially bright or hard hit fellow may leave the fold and "go astray" into the freedom of his own manly self-reliance, but as a class the miners will never get on to the game, unless those socialist agitators open their eyes.

And yet the question seems to suggest itself: "If good food, clean clothing, and pleasant homes do not prevent the priests and the capitalists from going to heaven, how can they endanger the souls of the miners?"

Listen to that well-groomed, refined, professor of political economy! "We are a wonderfully prosperous nation," he lectures. "We have outdistanced all other nations in productivity. Every man has a chance to become rich and independent, if he will only be thrifty, work hard, and be a good citizen."

The daughters of the working class, if they are very fortunate, they grow to maturity, retaining their health and good looks, which qualify them for a position as shop girls at three dollars a week.

Come with me through the slums of Chicago. Never mind the reeking stench of the so-called streets, that would shame a village in darkest Russia. You will presently get used to the stench of the gutters, garbage boxes, dead rats and excrements.

Strange as these cases may be, yet they explain themselves through the influence of long hypnotic suggestion and reduced reasoning powers, the result of poor nutrition and excessive waste.

The men who are responsible for such illusions are not all liars and hypocrites. So much more dangerous are they. There is no better liar than he who believes in his own

lies. Not all stifle their consciences with the Jesuitical consolation: "The purpose halloweth the means!"

lies. Not all stifle their consciences with the Jesuitical consolation: "The purpose halloweth the means!" Many are convinced that these illusions must be preserved in the interest of the whole society.

There is no escape for the capitalist teachers from these contradictions. They dare not accept the truth and proclaim it from the house tops.

And so conditions and men gradually grow away from them. Every new generation means a greater loss of their influence. A few years of public school training are not sufficient to chain the active young minds to the old clerics.

The Socialist occupies a position of vantage, which in combination with economic forces makes him invincible. He has looked through the cunning disguise of capitalist morality and law, and knows their vulnerable parts.

The minds of the American working class are waiting for the new light. The blight of thousand year old habit, tradition, and superstition is resting also on their intellect.

The numerous agencies for enslaving the minds of the exploited in the ideas of the exploiters are, of course, strenuously active, the more the disappearance of the economic foundation threatens the ruling class.

We will, therefore, devote a special article to each of them and wind them into a wreath which we will, in the near future, deposit on the grave of old capitalism.

The fetters that still hold America's proletariat in subjection to the few are but the figments of their own brain. Nothing else is holding them now.

Is Your Friend a Socialist? A comrade of the Appeal Army has well said: "It is good to make all Socialists our friends, but better to make all our friends Socialists."

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ECONOMICS IN POLITICS.

For the Appeal by Isador Ladoff.

There is a constant war going on between labor and capital. The cause of this perpetual struggle between the producers of all material wealth on one and the owners of all the means of production on the other side is generally known. The economic interests of these two classes of contemporary society are directly opposed to each other.

The conclusions suggested by these general considerations may be applied profitably to the relations between capital and labor in the United States. Who actually controls our national, state and municipal administrations?

Every clear sighted Socialist must rejoice in it as a healthy, normal development of the proletariat. But TRADE UNIONISM alone, trade unionism WITHOUT INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION CANNOT SOLVE THE LABOR PROBLEM.

As long as the capitalists control our national, state and municipal administration it will be managed in direct violation of the rights of labor. As long as the capitalists will spend millions in order to influence the voting

As long as the capitalists will make and execute laws, the laboring class will be compelled to break laws and be punished for it. As long as the capitalists will remain the actual commanders of our army and navy, the tremendous physical forces will be used for the extermination of riotous strikers and for the conquest of new markets for capitalists.

In order to have at least the ghost of a show of success in their struggle against capitalism laboring men must fight with weapons just as efficient as those of their adversaries.

Let us now examine the arguments just briefly stated: If political power proves to be the mightiest weapon in the hands of the capitalists, would it not prove suicidal on the part of the laboring class organizations to keep out of politics?

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the fact, that a weapon is misused by some miscreants, an argument against its rational and beneficial use? Should we refuse to use a sharp knife for cutting bread because some criminal uses a knife for cutting his victim's throat? Are not the exploited laborers committing an offense of omission in refusing to become a factor in politics, because the capitalists and their retainers, the professional politicians, are guilty of the crime of commission in using politics as a means of perpetuating and intensifying their dominion of slave holders over labor?

The Hindoo's Idea.

An American, traveling in India, saw a troop of immense elephants, each in charge of a white turbaned attendant, at work. Mild-eyed and obedient, the big fellows were shoving great carts of earth, were balancing and carrying heavy burdens, each one straining, striving and toiling, subservient to the call of his master, knowing well that a blow from the sharp elephant hook would smite him if he hesitated.

The traveler marveled that such a ponderous beast could be so completely ruled by a simple man and his tiny pointed horn, but it was so, for the animal knew not its power.

A cultured Hindoo was in an American manufacturing town. He saw a long line of men, women and children enter the immense factory at morn and leave it weary at night. All day had they toiled at the loom, spindle or lathe, straining, toiling and obedient to their master's nod, call, or muttered oath.

Never Wait For The Crowd. The man who does things, who brings about results, who feels within himself the power of achievement, and is determined to make himself known in the world, never waits to see what the crowd is going to do.

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