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THE PASSING OF MARXISM

ORVILLE B. SWIFT, B.D., PH.D.
NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y.

Moses was not alone in the glory Ingersoll attributed to him. Marx, quite humanly, made mistakes. Depending too much on Ricardo and on Smith, he was led into blunders he might otherwise have avoided. Some of these are so fundamental that we note them.

To Marx, wealth meant immense accumulation of commodities; and commodities, those things which satisfy human needs. While this definition of wealth might have been true at one time, it is patently untrue to-day, when we measure wealth, not in terms of accumulated commodities, but in terms of accumulated securities. Securities are titles to the possession of the means of the production of commodities.

Then Marx distinguished three kinds of value. "Use-value" he defined as the capacity of a commodity to be of use, that is, to meet some human need. This is simply to use new terminology for what economists had long termed "utility." "Exchange-value" he defined as that proportion in which values of one sort are exchanged for values of another sort. This "value" is not absolute, as he assumed, but is accidental and relative, because commodities are of changing value according to demand. Only a common term of measurement by which the values of the commodities to be exchanged are to be gauged, can make possible such equating of commodity-value as the Marxian principle required. Hence he posits "labor" as that *tertium quid* to which each of the commodity-values is equal in order to be equal to each other. But commodity has value not simply because labor has been expended upon it, but because the commodity is useful. It is the product not only of labor, but of other factors as well, which play as necessary a part in its production as labor. Marx's theory completely ignores these other elements.

Marx stated his theory of value in terms of a law: The greater the productiveness of labor the less labor-time is required to produce a given article, so the less the amount of labor-material in the article, and hence the less the value of the article. Interpreted this means: The more unskilled the tool-maker, the more valuable the product of his labor; if he expends twice as much labor producing a chisel as his more skillful fellow-craftsman, his chisel is worth twice as much, even though that made by his more skillful fellow-laborer in half the time, is a better made tool. The absurdity of this is perfectly apparent.

Note that both Nature and Capital make contributions to the value of any commodity. Often the greater part of the value is the contribution of Nature. Consider the use-value of coal. A good deal of hard labor is required to mine the coal. But to what extent does labor give coal its fuel-value? The capital-furnished machinery is indispensable to the miner. Without the Nature-furnished and the Capital-furnished elements, labor could never produce the fuel-value of coal. Consider the production of shoes. Labor is required to make up the leather into shoes, but the chief use-value lies in the Nature-furnished skins. To put this in a slightly different but clearer way, let us phrase it thus: Nature gives labor its opportunity, and the opportunity gives labor its value. The value of the commodity depends upon its utility, so that labor-value as conceived by Marx in terms of his principle of exchange-value is fictitious, since utility determines value of whatever kind or class. The distinction which Marx drew was purely verbal. Exchangeability depends upon utility.

Labor and value cannot be equated as Marx insisted, for they are incommensurable. Labor is something definite and positive while value is relative and varying, demand as well as utility entering as a determining element. Labor no more produces the heating property of coal than it produces the sunshine. But this does not ignore, deny, nor even minimize the contribution, necessary and determining, of labor.

Still another element of value is rendered. Capital through plant and machinery makes its contribution in modern industrial society. Capital furnishes labor the opportunity to use what we have called the "opportunity" furnished by Nature. Capital no more creates the value of commodities than does labor. It simply makes available these two opportunities — either of which is useless without the other, and both of which require the mediation of Capital. Together they give value to the use labor makes of Nature-furnished opportunity. But, even then, the value of the product depends on its utility and upon the demand for it.

Finally, Marx defined "surplus-value" in such terms as to make it identical with our common term "profit." Working forward on his assumption that labor is the creator of all value, he held that whatever value is produced above that required to be paid to the producer in order to keep him and his family in a state of working efficiency, belongs to labor and should be given to it. While Capital pays for the labor-power its exchange-value, it obtains for itself the use-value. The surplus-value is the difference between the exchange-value and the use-value of the product. This is profit. This is the advantage of Capital, enabling it to concentrate ever increasingly in a few hands the bulk of all wealth.

Is it reasonable to suppose that Capital will sell the product of this threefold necessary combination of Nature-Capital-Labor for exactly what it costs to produce it — a cost determined by the demands of labor on the one hand and the demand for the product on the other? That the laborer has a moral right to the entire product of his labor, no sane man will question. But because of the contribution of Capital and Nature, the sale-price (representing the value of the commodity) cannot be treated as the exclusive creation of labor, and so as belonging exclusively to it. Why should labor be paid for these? The worker has been furnished with the opportunity to work these up into that which will return to him the wherewithal to

live. That return ought to be large enough to furnish him not only with the necessities but with the comforts of life as well. But the idea that unpaid human labor is the sole source of profit is absurd. Were this the case, then capitalists have been deluded who have thought to increase their profits by introducing more machinery and reducing the number of workers.

Profit is regarded as making possible the exploitation of the workers. Socialism, therefore, proposes to abolish profit, interest, and rent in the hope of giving the laborer the entire product of the industrial order. This we have seen to be the product of the Nature-Capital-Labor combination, and as in no sense the sole creation of labor. Marx held profit to be robbery, and believed that the only equitable adjustment possible would be universal coöperative production forced through by economic conditions. Only in abstract terms can the dream of Marx — who confessed in later years that he was not really a Marxist — ever be realized. The exploitation of which he complained is not so extensive as he thought, and is rapidly passing.

But the assumption Marx made, on the basis of his construction of the facts and his interpretation of the situation, is the largest mistake of all. He was far more of an agitator than an economist, more of a communist than a scientist. Much of his teaching has been seized upon by agitators, and his doctrines have been the stock in trade of many socialists who have disregarded their patent fallaciousness. His teachings were the product of bitterness and his revolutionary disposition. With great confidence he prophesied the future issue. The Communist Manifesto, of which he and Engels were joint-authors, said:—

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open, fight, that each time ended, either in revolutionary reconstruction of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes. In the earlier epochs of history we find almost everywhere a complicated

arrangement of society in various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations. The modern bourgeois society has not done away with class antagonisms. . . . Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes, directly facing each other, Bourgeoisie and Proletariat."

The ultimate issue of this state of things is indicated by Marx in "Das Kapital":—

"With the continually decreasing number of the magnates of capitalism, who usurp and monopolize all the advantages of the changed form of production, there is an accompanying increase in the mass of misery, of oppression, of bondage, of degradation, of exploitation; but there also arises a revolt of an increasing class of laborers, who have been schooled, united, and disciplined by the mechanism of the capitalistic processes of production. The monopoly of capital becomes a shackle to the method of production, under and with which it has grown up. The concentration of the means of production and the association of laborers reach a point where they are incompatible with their capitalistic shell. The shell is broken. The death knell of capitalistic private property sounds. The expropriateurs are expropriated."

Marxism is a philosophy of impending revolution. History is the record of class struggle which will ultimately issue in a decisive clash between the possessing and the non-possessing classes. In the increasing general misery, incident to the concentration of wealth in ever fewer hands, the middle class will decrease and disappear. The increasing anarchy of competitive production and the growing frequency and magnitude of commercial crises were considerations on which he made his prophecy. Every commercial depression since 1850 has been heralded as the beginning of the inevitable social revolution. In 1896 the International Socialists Congress declared that the "crisis may occur within a comparatively short time."

This doctrine is false in its premises and absolutely mis-

leading in its influence. It is responsible for the sharp antagonism between those who do not prosper to the full extent of their ambition and those who have accumulated fortunes. There is no lack in the production of useful and necessary things, but there is an admitted inequality in the present distribution of the products of industry and of wealth, but nothing like what existed fifty or even twenty-five years ago. But for the coming to this country of large numbers of, for the most part, poverty-stricken immigrants, the population of the United States would be in far more comfortable financial conditions than it is.

What are the facts? The rich are growing richer, but many more people are rich than used to be, so there is no concentration of wealth in an ever fewer number of hands. As for the poor, they are entering in ever greater numbers into comfortable and prosperous financial conditions. The contention that the rich are growing richer and the poor poorer, that wealth must be accumulating in the hands of an ever smaller number of people, is based upon the assumption that the sum-total of wealth is stationary. If this were true, then any increase in the wealth of the rich must be the result of exploitation of the poor, and then it would be true that the poor were in poorer circumstances than formerly. But the sum-total of wealth is not stationary. It increases with great rapidity, and while under this increase, the capitalists secure a greater relative advantage than the wage-earners of the profits of production, still labor secures an advantage which means the improvement of its condition.

One need only recall the families he knew twenty years ago who were in really very poor circumstances. Where there has been thrift, and no wanton waste of income, nor prolonged and impoverishing sickness, these families are to-day in circumstances far better than those of families who twenty years ago were accounted comfortable. Poverty does not mean to-day what it meant twenty years ago. That the general condition of the people is steadily improving is clearly evident to all who look into the facts.

The worker's share in national income is relatively greater than under previous conditions, and we know that the proportion of skilled workers and of those engaging in the higher classes of employment is constantly increasing. This means that people once classed as the very poor are rising to the class of the poor, while those once classed as poor are rising into the middle class, and the people once of the middle class are now in the wealthy class. In fact, the middle class, instead of decreasing, has so greatly increased that it is now divided into the upper middle and the lower middle class.

Directly the opposite of what Marx prophesied and what the earlier Socialists expected, has actually taken place: the small farmer has multiplied; the middle class has steadily increased, and the very poor have decreased in numbers, so that the middle class is greater than ever; capital has not been concentrated at the rate or to the extent expected, but movements looking to distribution have been inaugurated; the condition of the working classes has greatly improved; the class struggles are less acute, and the commercial crises are far less destructive, than formerly.

Consider the changing fortunes of the classes. Two centuries ago the farmers were the best-recompensed class. Just a century ago the shipowners were the best-recompensed class. To-day it is the manufacturers. But to-morrow the laborers will be the best-recompensed. But this will not be the result of mere advancement of wages. Very naturally men have asserted that the industrial system offers opportunities for the exploitation of one class for the benefit of another. The idea that the rich were growing richer at the expense of the poor once took serious hold of the popular mind. Still an agitator can catch the ear of a certain crowd if he begins with denunciation of the rich and follows with commiseration of the poor growing ever poorer because the rich wax richer.

In nine cases out of ten, thrift is the secret of financial well-being, and there always are — and perhaps will be —

thriftless people. Any one who has had experience in city missions or settlements has long since realized that the very most equitable distribution of wealth could never, on any conceivable basis of social adjustment, be a permanent thing, and that no amount of legislation will change human nature. As God is necessary to every theory of evolution, so a changed human nature is absolutely necessary to make a socialistic reorganization either practicable or permanent.

The purpose of industry is to make better goods at a lower price, to supply more wants and to secure for men greater comforts and conveniences, not with regard to any class, but having in view the whole human race. Does industry have its own interests primarily at heart as so many suppose? This is perhaps the case in some instances. Nevertheless, industry ultimately secures the good of all; and, while very naturally requiring service for itself, it serves others by virtue of its resources and its developing power. No institution can benefit itself without giving other people an opportunity to benefit themselves. The sewing-machine added to the resources of every purchaser of a machine and every buyer of clothing, at the same time it made fortunes for the manufacturers.

Consider further, that people generally are much harder-headed than the reformers give them credit for being. This is due to the fact that ever larger numbers of them are becoming property owners and, through the corporate organization of business financed by small shareholders, are becoming members of the capitalist class. The New York *Times* recently decided to investigate the report that small investors were cashing in their Liberty Bonds. Confining itself to its own city, the *Times* found that just the contrary is true: Small investors are increasing their Liberty Bond holdings. The eight banks investigated are holding seventeen million dollars' worth of bonds — the amount is increasing weekly — for small investors who have no other securities, making necessary the rental of safety-deposit boxes. The increased distribution of

corporation stocks among the middle class is one of the greatest safeguards of modern industrial society. Socialism as a social faith is one thing: Marxism as a doctrine of social revolution is quite another thing.

But there are certain forces which make for the concentration of wealth. One is the unearned increment of the land, especially in cities. But this, as Spahr has shown, may be easily exaggerated; for the cost of improvement and particularly special assessments, frequently offset what seems to be unearned increment. The organization of Trusts tends to concentration. This was truer of the movement in its earlier years, before attempts were made to correct the evil, than it is to-day. But up to the present time the Trust movement has made for the concentration of great resources in a few hands. War has always had this tendency; and the late war in particular has brought about this result, but not to the extent one might have supposed. War creates a demand for capital more than for labor, and introduces into business the element of speculation, which is disastrous to the economically weak. Various trust devices to guarantee the ends of primogeniture and entail, more often finding expression in the form of "trust estates," tend to concentrate wealth. Then, too, what Ely has called "economic inertia," the tendency of forces to operate until checked by other forces. But even "economic inertia" is being more and more robbed of its power. Constantly arising new forces tend to check and offset this force. Nevertheless, the entire strength of this force has not yet been negatived by new forces.

On the other hand, there are great forces making for a more equitable distribution of wealth. Not the least among these is modern education. This includes not only our public school system — graded and high — but our state university system and our public library movement. The great mass of the people have passed from the newspaper and the magazine stage to the book stage. Not long since the newspaper was one of the most powerful forces

of our civilization, but it has been superseded by the magazine. But while the magazine is still a great factor, the public library has put the more substantial treatment of all great political, social, and economic questions within reach of the multitude. The great middle class is the reading class, and is far better informed on these great questions than is the wealthy class. Public regulation of corporations is a definite check upon concentration, but needs to be more stringent. Taxation, while not comprehensive enough, is definite and effective. Then, again, the idea of property as a trust is actually entering into the situation, and determining the use and checking the abuse of wealth. Social and ethical ideas of wealth are growing factors in the situation. Profit-sharing, stock-bonuses, and coöperation, public ownership of public service utilities, and organization of labor, all tend to promote the diffusion of wealth. Saving and insurance organizations are helping to this end, and are gaining in effectiveness as people realize the value of thrift and protection.

Consider that we are actually guiding the course of economic development, by conscious and intelligent effort, into conditions making for increasing economic and social well-being and justice. Not without very great significance is the observation that despotically governed Russia, from which has come so many dangerous movements, was the seat of the Red Revolution; while in Switzerland, which in very many ways leads the world in equitable social adjustments, Socialism is a comparatively weak political force. Had we left things alone, we should probably have had a revolution much like that which Marx anticipated. But the fact is there is no present prospect of our ever settling down to let things alone. Rich, middle class, and poor — society in general — are awake to the demands of the situation, and conscious of the power and capacity to control and bring about ultimately, though by degrees much smaller than could be wished, that social and economic adjustment that will mean peace, power, and plenty in terms of money, ease, and comforts, and not of

imagined good only. That the wage-earners of the United States could, by rising and violence, overthrow the existing order as the agitators affirm, no one doubts. That they will do this one may seriously doubt. The socialists themselves are well aware of the facts and of the conditions of the mind of the majority of the wageworkers which make such a possibility an improbability. They are realizing to what extent the older forms of Socialism demanded what the race had neither the capacity nor the disposition to give. They are face to face with surprising conservatisms within their own ranks, especially on questions of private property and political management. One seems justified in thinking that Socialism has a far wider intellectual following than it has an actual following. The departure from the ranks of the socialists of such leaders as John Spargo, A. L. Benson, and A. M. Simmons is an event of great suggestiveness. People are ever more clearly discovering that they are members of a social order first, and of a class afterwards; that they are consumers as well as producers.

The course of economic history, then, since the days of Marx has failed to justify his position, but has taken a direction quite undreamed by him. Great wealth has been accumulated, but in a growing number of hands. The number of pre-war millionaires was fourteen thousand, and the war millionaires is estimated at twenty thousand. Millionaires have more than doubled in numbers. Great numbers of wage-earners still find themselves without a margin of income. But the concentration of wealth in the hands of these thirty-four thousand has been accompanied by an extraordinary distribution of comfort among many millions, so that conveniences and resources which two generations ago were luxuries of a few, have come to be within easy reach of the humblest. Use of the Pullman car is one of these.

Twenty years ago about eighteen per cent of the families of the United States owned their homes. Ten years ago twenty-five per cent owned them. The last census figures

are not available; but, judging on the basis of real estate developments, we may be sure that number has risen by at least ten points during the last decade — to about thirty-five per cent. The Treasury Department estimates that thirty million different people subscribed to the five Liberty Loans. Approximately two thirds of the Third Loan was subscribed in amounts from fifty to ten thousand dollars. In 1913 there was one automobile to every ninety-five people, or one to every nineteen families, but in 1919 there was one car to every fourteen people or one to every three families. These figures are for pleasure cars actually in use in these years. That, in spite of high prices, people are better off generally is too apparent to need extended argument.

Marx was a propagandist interested in the establishment of an order of society better than that of his day. Marxists have always been revolutionists at heart, for the Marxian socialism gets its peculiar stamp from its strict adherence to revolutionary principles, its insistence upon the capture of political power, its proclamation of the coming and necessary dictatorship of the proletariat, and its desire for the overthrow of the present economic organization of society. The idea of revolution is so integral a part of Marxism that it cannot be struck out without destroying Marxism itself. Revolution is breathed through the Communist Manifesto, and is the point of convergence of all the theories of "Das Kapital." While it is true that Marx used the word occasionally in a sense somewhat different from that of a sudden and violent disruption of the social order, yet this is the primary idea for which the word stands in all he wrote.

But recall Marx's theory of inevitable economic development. How, in view of this theory, could he think of a revolution creating a new social order? On his own assumption, the new state would have to be prepared for by the progress of men, according to the law of economic necessity. This is a doctrine of determinism quite comparable to that of Calvin. At best the socialist, as prophet

of the new order, could only announce its arrival when it should have come. On Marx's theory of history, only the inevitable economic tendency could bring about the socialistic state; and, if such a tendency begun to indicate something other than socialism, then socialism could not be reached at all. To-day, Marx's argument is the best possible argument against the possibility of the establishment of the socialistic state, just because the tendency has been away from conditions suitable to the establishment of communism. We have noted that just the opposite of what Marx prophesied has taken place. Just how much chance does Marxism have in our present-day social order? So there are interpreters and rejectionists within the ranks of that large class of thinkers, speakers, and writers called Socialists. Hence the disillusionment of many of them, and the departure from their ranks of men who have long been recognized leaders of the movement. Benson left "as a protest against the foreignborn leadership that blindly believed a non-American policy can be made to appeal to many Americans."

Perhaps it is becoming apparent to these people that government and the established order in a democracy express the will of the majority. With the rapid growth of the middle class and the shrinking of the poorer class, a social revolution would have to be the result of minority action. It would have to be the result of a revolt of the minority against the will of the majority — a sort of minority report. Revolutionary progaganda is falling upon deaf ears, for the intelligent part of the people will not listen to it. Their stake, ever growing, is now too great to be trusted to methods which issue in wreck and ruin, though they promise adjustment and a certain indefinite equality. The tendency that was to lead to a breakdown of the economic order not only broke down itself, but has actually developed a countermovement in right the opposite direction from that prophesied. Census reports, bulletins of the Department of Labor, and statistical abstracts bear abundant witness to this fact.

A generation ago wages represented the worker's cost of living. To-day they represent not only his cost of living, but his home, his automobile, and his insurance premium, his installments on bond purchases. The growth of pauperism, degradation, and degeneration of the wage-workers during the first half of the nineteenth century was real and appalling. It was not imagined by bitter antagonists of the social order. It was the subject of discussion by even the conservative economists of the time, and called forth definite and emphatic condemnation. But what existed at the time Marx wrote was no guarantee of like conditions for all time, nor even the promise that such conditions would go from bad to worse, until they produced revolution, as he held.

The corner stone of Marxism is his principle of the economic interpretation of history, that production and the mode of exchange determine the social order, and alone explain the past and decide the future. But his labor-theory of value is very closely allied with it. Considered by itself, the economic interpretation of history has no real connection with Socialism. We can interpret the past in terms of economic cause and effect without indulging in speculations about the future. But this interpretation as used by Marx is related to Socialism and raises some questions. In the face of the economic determinism of this interpretation, is not the socialist denunciation of inevitable circumstances and situations which are the result of the economic order and tendency, rather beside the mark? Is it not amusing, and indicative of the hysteria that has recently been shown to be glandular in its origin? Perhaps the ethical passion of the Marxists which leads them to inveigh against the injustice of this economically determined system is also the product of this inevitable economic determinism. From a philosophical point of view it is a matter of no great moment whether we are determined by something Divine or by a purely economic situation. Does not the theory ignore the fact of control and creative activity which men actually exercise even in

an economically determined situation? Or must we hold creative freedom to be an illusion? Our fundamental experience is of action as well as reaction in our environment. Nor is our ethical passion merely the result of the world acting upon us, though it may be in part. So far as it is the creation of this action of the world upon us, it is largely the outcome of our own reaction in creative activity. If Marx's economic determinism were absolute, then his indignation and moral reaction are silly. He ought just to have bided his time, taken things as they came, nor tried to incite the multitude of "God's patient poor" to revolution and the "expropriation of the expropriateurs."

Just why is it that Socialists, professed adherents of Marx and advocates of his "scientific socialism," are toning down the Marxian doctrines? Because they are in daily living contact with movements which are disproving and discrediting his "science," and forcing them to liberalize their policies. They have found that their claims must be submitted step by step to economic possibilities and to human acquiescence. They have discovered that humankind, and socialists no less than others, will cling with tenacity to the right and value of personal property. During the last two decades it has become plain that any man who wanted to keep his Marxian doctrines uncontaminated by contact with the newer world-movements, would have to betake himself to some desert island and there live alone with them. Marxism has suffered the inevitable corruption of contact. The Marxism of to-day is not pure; it is an interpretation made with the purpose of escaping absurdities.

The Marxian doctrine which helped the development of socialism throughout the world as no other doctrine, has steadily turned into a bog from which his disciples have difficulty in finding a way of escape. There is a strange irony in the fact that, in the same compelling manner in which Marxism once assured society of the inevitable cataclysm, does its legitimate successor indicate the im-

possibility of that particular issue. The idea of social revolution, while still used with much red language and bitter denunciation, is but part of the rhetorical method of agitators. The contrast between the socialists' actual theories and policies, between their words and deeds, indicates how fully they realize that society as a whole is with the progressive movements for ultimate adjustment and against violence. Too many of our people have become property owners to permit so extensive support of a revolutionary program as the Marxists contemplated. The road of social reform is on the ground and by no means royal. The journey along its length will be difficult and wearying, and many leaders will fall therein. The attainment of the social ideal will prove to be no swift adventure, suddenly undertaken and speedily accomplished. This fact has been clearly realized by many intellectual socialists, and is the reason so many are arduously revising and reinterpreting their traditional doctrine while others are groping for a new philosophy.

The unprecedented increase of the middle class above poverty, but just below wealth, is the most inconvenient fact of the situation. These poor will not stay put or sink down into poverty to please the theory. In fact they might better be described as elements of a movement rather than as members of a class. They are part of a tide which is on the flow. And it is just this ever-growing, ever-upward-moving middle class that is at once the despair of socialism and the hope and promise of modern society.

Neither vast wealth on the one hand nor hopeless poverty on the other is the normal state of American society. The life of the farmer, the clerk, the professional man, and the great majority of people in small business, begins with modest self-support and ends with a comfortable competency. For their children they expect more, and plan definitely for that. While a man may be born into the lower or middle class, his birth in that class is no reason nor guarantee that he will always remain there. The appeal to class-consciousness is losing its strength

the more people realize the possibilities of American society. Few of them, especially the younger men who have faced the issue squarely, have resigned themselves to be forever numbered with "God's patient poor." The way is open to every last man who has the will to win, sound health, frugal habits, an honest mind, and a single purpose.

That conditions are ideal, that even-handed justice has been done the laboring classes — laboring with brawn or brain — that great social problems will not be solved, we do not assert. That revolutionary class-conflict will solve these problems is not likely. That there is accumulation of wealth at the expense and impoverishment of the masses in the Marxian sense we deny. Wiser socialists who are seeking a real solution of our present problems are not preaching revolution, but have passed from the economics of Marx, given up the idea of the social revolution as a solution, and are seeking the real solution in a progressive adjustment based on education and improved opportunity.

We have no purpose to minimize Socialism as a social faith. It is a definite political movement, and as such has its place in modern life; but the very conditions of modern life obviate the possibility of Socialism becoming either the inclusive or the exclusive political movement. The social faith will have to be expressed, as other faiths, by coöperation with all other movements, parties, and agencies and with the State, in the adjustment of economic conditions and the reconstruction of modern life.