

ARTICLE VI.

BASIC FACTS FOR SOCIOLOGISTS.

1st. TRUTH does not permit us to overlook the fact that Nature's gifts are neither prodigal nor evenly distributed. Civilization is the product only of constant toil and self-denial. It is difficult both to acquire and to retain the capital necessary to attain the ends of civilized society. At no time is there on hand eighteen months' supply of provisions for the world. Starvation is never far from the door of society as a whole. Even the solid structures forming the most permanent investments of capital become worthless if neglected for only a few years.

2d. Population tends to increase faster than attainable means of sustenance. The population of the United States has increased from 5,000,000 in 1800 to 100,000,000 in 1915, that is, twentyfold. The population in England has increased from 8,000,000 in 1800 to 34,000,000 in 1910, more than fourfold. The population of the British Isles increased from 15,000,000 in 1800 to 45,000,000 in 1900, or threefold. The population of Japan has increased from 33,000,000 in 1874 to 56,000,000 in 1916, or nearly twofold. The population of Germany has increased from 33,000,000 in 1866 to 65,000,000 in 1910, thus doubling in a little of over forty years.

The abundant supply of raw material in the United States has been made possible by the exploitation of its superabundant reserve stores of nature; but the fertility of the land has already been uniformly depleted, and to continue the increasing needed supply of agricultural products there must

be an enormous investment of capital and a revolution in agricultural methods. It will be impossible to supply the populations of Great Britain, Germany, and Japan with the necessities of life if the populations continue to increase at their present rate. Previous to 1874, the population of Japan had been kept down by infanticide, and periodical outbreaks of pestilence and famine. The abolition of infanticide and the introduction of compulsory vaccination and general hygienic improvements have secured the rate of increase noted. Not only the Japanese statesmen, but the German, the British, are, and the American statesmen will be in the near future, at their wits' end to adjust their laws to the changing conditions connected with this increase of population. Destructive as is the present war, population will soon recover its rate of increase and bring to the surface the problems involved in these facts.

3d. An equal distribution of the world's goods among its population would in the end scarcely raise at all the general level of comfort. If the profits of our agricultural and manufacturing interests were wholly distributed among the whole population, it would not add more than could be easily consumed as we go along. If all fortunes should be brought down to a common level, instead of its making all rich, it would make all poor, and the condition of things would tend to greater and greater depths of poverty. Effective increase in production of the world's supply will depend more and more upon large accumulations of capital controlled by agents who are not only honest but skillful and competent.

4th. The safety and productiveness of capital essential to the progress of society depend upon utilizing the sagacity in investment, and the ability in organization and execution, which only a few possess. If a capitalist builds his factory

where rents are too high, or transportation too difficult, or the market too limited, or the cost of labor too great, or the adjustment of laborers defective, the expenses will soon eat up the capital, and there will be profit to nobody, and ultimate loss to all. The great problem is to secure managers of business possessing such knowledge of details, and such executive ability, that they can reduce the waste both of labor and material to a minimum. It is difficult to see how this management is to be secured, except through the free play of competition, which permits the wage-earner to rise according to his approved ability. The workmen of the present must furnish the managers of the future.

5th. The true philanthropist keeps in view the welfare of the entire population. His sympathies are not expended chiefly upon the most clamorous; that would indicate great narrowness of view. Sympathy is due to the most needy and the most numerous according to their wants, and should be broad enough to comprehend the whole circle of human interests. It is not true philanthropy to give a man bread *without* work when his whole welfare demands that he should have bread *with* work. Moderate wages and stability of business are better than high wages and instability.

6th. Organized capitalists and organized wage-earners constitute but a small fraction of the people. The farming population (constituting in itself more than half the nation), together with those who are rendering personal service, and the great company of small manufacturers, small tradesmen, and common laborers, form the great bulk of the people, outnumbering the others ten to one. These classes are supremely interested in the maintenance of stable government, free competition, and the conditions favorable to the orderly conduct of business. They must insist upon freedom of commerce

and transportation, and upon the freedom of the individual in securing employment. If there are quarrels between organized capitalists and organized wage-earners, they must be settled without infringing upon the rights of the great mass of the people.

7th. It is these unorganized masses of the people that most need defense and protection. It is by no means an unlikely contingency that, for example, the railroad managers and the managers of the labor organizations may so combine as to destroy the profits of railroad investments, and raise the price of railroad transportation, by giving extravagant salaries to the officers and more than market wages to the men employed, and thus burden the whole country beyond endurance, and produce a monopoly of the most dangerous kind.

8th. It is for the interest of the wage-earners themselves that they be held to the same high standard of character and honor which is set for men in general. The Ten Commandments are for all. A wage-earner cannot afford to have his contract held as less sacred than that of any other man. Otherwise he is demoralized and dishonored at the very outset, and cannot have the blessings which come to the man who when he swears to his own hurt changes not. One of the most alarming things in connection with the strikes which from time to time paralyze the business of the country, is the readiness with which the wage-earners are led to disregard their contracts and to violate their word. Since, as the laws are now enacted, it is impossible to enforce a contract against a poor man, there is all the greater need that the sentiment of honor be strengthened in his mind. For a wage-earner solemnly to engage to do a piece of work and then, without due notice, to break his contract at the beck of a labor organ-

ization, is as injurious to him as it is unjust to the employer and cruel to the public.

9th. It is impossible to secure any successful social conditions in the world except on the basis of noble character. Any theory of human society which does not provide against the all-prevalent perversions of conduct connected with human sinfulness must be disappointing and disastrous. At every point we have to guard against the temptation to negligence of opportunities and perversions of trusts to which both ourselves and others are constantly subjected.

10th. While it is a hopeful view which we entertain of the future, the hopefulness mainly rests upon our confidence in the capacity of man's higher nature to lift him above his environment and make him the master of circumstances, rather than their creature. It is true that we are bound to do all we can to secure a perfect environment for each individual. But a perfect environment will be one which throws great responsibility upon the individual. Nobody can be made happy against his will, or be made noble without his own exertions. On the contrary, men of high aspirations can rise superior to almost any environment. The world is full of successful men who have by conquering difficulties made themselves strong, and thereby acquired the power of achieving success.

11th. Practically it is extremely difficult to persuade young people to see the advantage of certain essential forms of self-denial in the beginning of life. To abstain from the use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages, and from attendance on cheap and demoralizing shows, and devote the time and money thus spent, in improving the mind, or in perfecting one's trade, would make the fortune of many a boy who has no encouragement in these directions either among his com-

panions or at his home. To provide motives which shall secure such a high standard of personal character in the units of society is the most important service which can be rendered to it.

12th. If the time which is now spent in embittering the children of the wage-earners by exaggerated representations of the hardness of their lot, and in filling their minds with perverted notions of the way to success, were spent in persuading them to appreciate the advantages they already have, untold results would be witnessed in the improvement of society and in the enrichment of individual and family life.

When free libraries are inviting all to revel in their inexhaustible stores of varied entertainment and useful knowledge; when, for the price of two cigars, one can purchase a copy of "Robinson Crusoe" or two plays of Shakespeare; and when, for the price of admittance to a cheap variety show, one can become the owner of Macaulay's Essays, or of a standard history of England; and, for a week's wages, can purchase a well-selected library, it is idle to say that the road to true success is closed to the masses. There is far more need of a revival of high aspiration on the part of the young than there is of a revival of business. Indeed, this would be a revival of business. To learn to appreciate and improve such advantages as are now within the reach of all is of more worth to the individual than the acquisition of a fortune.

13th. But when all has been done that is possible to increase the production of wealth and equalize its distribution, and to stimulate the highest ideals of conduct and character, there will still be many disappointments, great sorrow, and much suffering in the world. No one can certainly forecast the future. In our turn we shall all need the sympathy of friends and the consolations of religion. The riches of the

capitalist will often take wings and fly away, the efforts of the husbandman will occasionally fail, and the labor market will be subject to fluctuations which cannot be wholly provided against. But amid the natural relationships of free society these shocks will be so relieved by the sympathy of friends and thoughtfulness of the followers of Christ that the force of our disappointments will be greatly broken. To the virtuous, wherever noble ideas are honored and maintained, life will be full of gain. In such a society even the selfish instincts of men will be made useful.

14th. In the near future the demand upon our legislators, judiciary, and executive officers will be greatly increased. It will require something more than good intentions to constitute a man a statesman. He must be broader-minded than ever, and better equipped than ever before in the knowledge of history of human nature and of the ways in which it responds to the strains which are put upon it. A pure democracy is out of reach of any large collection of communities. How to secure faithful and competent representatives who are to make and execute the laws adapted to promote the general good in the changing conditions which are upon us is one of the great problems of democracy. An inveterate majority is in danger of being the most remorseless oppressor of the minority. Witness the condition of Christian people in Mohammedan countries. Hence the importance of constitutional provisions made in sober moments, to which an appeal can be made for protection from a majority drunk with a sense of its power.

For the management of great enterprises, there is little to choose between a knave and a fool. "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child"; "When the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn."