

THE STATE *versus* THE MAN :

A CRITICISM OF MR. HERBERT SPENCER.

"La nature est l'injustice même."—RUSSEAU.

FOUR articles of Mr. Herbert Spencer's, which appeared in the CONTEMPORARY REVIEW, have recently been reprinted together, and form now a work which Mr. Spencer has entitled "The Man *versus* The State." This little volume merits the most attentive study, because in it the great sociological question of our day is treated in the most masterly manner. The individualist theory was, I think, never expounded better or with stronger arguments based on first principles, or supported by so great a number of clearly analyzed and admirably grouped facts. These pages are also full of important truths and of lessons, from whence both nations and governments may derive great benefit. Mr. Spencer's deductions are so concise and forcible that one feels oneself drawn, against one's will, to accept his conclusions; and yet, the more I have thought on the subject, the more convinced have I become that these conclusions are not in the true interest of humanity. Mr. Herbert Spencer's object is to prove the error and danger of State socialism, or, in other words, the error and danger of that system which consists in appropriating State, or communal, revenues to the purpose of establishing greater equality among men.

The eminent philosopher's statement, that in most civilized countries governments are more and more adopting this course, is indisputable. In England Parliament is taking the lead; in Germany Prince Bismarck, in spite of Parliament; and elsewhere either Parliament or town councils are doing the same thing. Mr. Spencer considers that this effort for the improvement of the condition of the working-classes, which is being everywhere made, with greater or less energy, is a violation of natural laws, which will not fail to bring its own punishment on nations, thus misguided by a blind

philanthropy. I believe, on the contrary, that this effort, taken as a whole, and setting aside certain mistaken measures, is not only in strict accordance with the spirit of Christianity, but is also in conformity with the true principles of politics and of political economy.

Let us first consider a preliminary question, on which I accept Mr. Spencer's views, but for different reasons from his: On what are individual rights founded, and what are the limits of State power? Mr. Spencer refutes with pitiless logic the opinions of those who, with Bentham, maintain that individual rights are State concessions, or who, like Matthew Arnold, deny the existence of natural rights. The absurdity of Bentham's system is palpably evident. Who creates the government? The people, says he. So the government, thus created, creates rights, and then, having created rights, it confers them on the separate members of the sovereign people, by which it was itself created. The real truth is, that government defines and sanctions rights, and employs the public strength to enforce their being respected, but the rights themselves existed before.

Referring to the history of all primitive civilization, Mr. Herbert Spencer proves to Mr. Matthew Arnold that in familial and tribal communities there existed certain customs, which conferred recognised and respected rights, before ever any superior authority which could be designated by the name of State had been formed. Only, I think Mr. Herbert Spencer is wrong in making use of the term "natural rights." This expression was an invention of the French philosophers of the eighteenth century, and it is still employed in Germany by a certain school of philosophers as *Naturrecht*. Sir Henry Maine's clever and just criticism of this expression in his book "Ancient Law" should warn us all of the vague and equivocal meaning it conceals. The jurists and philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries attached two very different significations to the term "natural rights." They sometimes applied it to the condition of primitive societies, in which their optimism led them to dream of a reign of justice, liberty, and equality, and at other times they made use of it when speaking of the totality of rights which should be possessed by every individual, by reason of his manhood. These two conceptions are equally erroneous. In primitive societies, in spite of certain customs which are the embryo of rights, might reigns supreme, as among animals, and the best armed annihilate their weaker neighbours. Certainly, one would look in vain there for a model of a political constitution or code suitable to a civilized people. Neither can it be maintained that the "Rights of man," as proclaimed by the American and French Revolutions, belong to each individual, only because he forms part of the human species. The limit of rights which may be claimed by any one individual must depend upon his aptitudes for making good use of them.

The same civil code and the same political institutions will not equally suit a savage tribe and a civilized nation. If the granting of the suffrage to all were likely to lead a people to anarchy or to despotism, it could not be called a natural right, for suicide is not a right.

If one analyze completely the expression "natural rights," one finds that it is really not sense. Xavier de Maistre, annoyed by the constant appeals to nature which are to be found in all the writings of the eighteenth century, said, very wittily: "Nature, who and what is this woman?" Nature is subject to certain laws, which are invariable; as, for instance, the law of gravitation. We may call these "laws of nature," but in human institutions, which are ever varying, nothing of the sort can exist. This superior and ideal right, which is invoked for the purpose of condemning existing laws, and claiming their reform or suppression, should rather be called *rational right*—that is to say, right in conformity with reason.

In every country, and at all times, an order of things may be conceived—civil, political, penal and administrative laws—which would best conform to the general interest, and be the most favourable to the well-being and progress of the nation. This order of things is not the existing one. If it were, one might say, with the optimists, that all is for the best in the best of possible worlds, and a demand for any amelioration would be a rebellion against natural laws, and an absurdity. But this order of things may be caught sight of by reason, and defined with more or less accuracy by science; hence its name of rational order. If I ask for free trade in France, for a better division of property in England, and for greater liberty in Russia, I do so in the name of this rational order, as I believe that these changes would increase men's happiness.

This theory permits of our tracing a limit between individual liberty and State power.

Mr. Herbert Spencer proves very clearly that there are certain things which no man would ever choose to abandon to State power; his religious convictions, for instance. On the other hand, all would agree that the State should accept the charge of protecting frontiers and punishing theft and murder, that is to say, the maintaining of peace and security at home and abroad; only here, like most Englishmen, Mr. Herbert Spencer invokes human will. Find out, he says, on the one hand, what the great majority of mankind would choose to reserve to an individual sphere of action, and, on the other, what they would consent to abandon to State decisions, and you will then be able to fix the limit of the power of public authority.

I cannot myself admit that human will is the source of rights.

Until quite recently, in all lands, slavery was considered a necessary and legitimate institution. But did this unanimous opinion make it any more a right? Certainly not. It is in direct opposition to the order of things which would be best for the general welfare; it cannot, therefore, be a right.

Until the sixteenth century, with the exception of a few Anabaptists who were burnt at the stake, all believed that the State ought to punish heretics and atheists. But this general opinion did not suffice to justify the intolerance then practised. The following line of argument, I think, would be most in keeping with individual interests, and, consequently, with the interests of society in general: A certain portion of men's acts ought not to be in any way subject to sovereign authority, be it republican or monarchical. But what is to be the boundary of this inviolable domain of individual activity? The will of the majority, or even of the entire population, is not competent to trace it, for history has proved but too often how gross have been the errors committed in such instances. This limit can, therefore, only be fixed by science, which, at each fresh progress in civilization, can discover and proclaim aloud where State power should cease to interfere. Sociological science, for instance, announces that liberty of conscience should always be respected as man's most sacred possession, and because religious advancement is only to be achieved at this price; that true property, or, in other words, the fruit of personal labour, must not be tampered with, or labour would be discouraged and production would diminish; that criminals must not go unpunished, but that justice must be strictly impartial, so that the innocent be not punished with the guilty.

It would not be at all impossible to draw up a formula of these essential rights, which M. Thiers called necessary liberties, and which are already inscribed in the constitutions of America, England, France, Belgium, Holland, and all other free nations. It is sometimes very difficult to know where to set bounds to individual liberty, in the interests of public order and of the well-being of others; and it is true, of course, that either the king, the assembly, or the people enacts the requisite laws, but if science has clearly demonstrated a given fact it imposes itself. When certain truths have been frequently and clearly explained, they come to be respected. The evidence of them forms the general opinion, and this engenders laws.

To be brief, I agree with Mr. Herbert Spencer that, contrary to Rousseau's doctrine, State power ought to be limited, and that a domain should be reserved to individual liberty which should be always respected; but the limits of this domain should be fixed, not by the people, but by reason and science, keeping in view what is best for the public welfare.

This brings me to the principal question I desire to treat. I am of opinion that the State should make use of its legitimate powers of action for the establishment of greater equality among men, in proportion to their personal merits, and I believe that this would be in conformity, not only with its mission properly speaking, but also with rational rights, with the progress of humanity; in a word, with all the rights and all the interests invoked by Mr. Herbert Spencer.

I will briefly resume the motives given by Mr. Herbert Spencer to show that any wish to improve the condition of the working-classes by law, or by the action of public power, so as to bring about a greater degree of equality among men, would be to run against the stream of history, and a violation of natural laws. There are, he says, two types of social organization, broadly distinguishable as the "militant" and the "industrial" type. The first of these is characterized by the *régime* of status, the second by the *régime* of contract. The latter has become general among modern nations, especially in England and America, whereas the militant type was almost universal formerly. These two types may be defined as the system of compulsory co-operation and the system of voluntary co-operation. The typical structure of the one may be seen in an army formed of conscripts, in which each unit must fulfil commands under pain of death, and receives, in exchange for his services, food and clothing; while the typical structure of the other may be seen in a body of workers who agree freely to exchange specified services at a given price, and who are at liberty to separate at will. So long as States are in constant war against each other, governments must perforce be on a military footing, as in antiquity. Personal defence, then, being society's great object, it must necessarily give absolute obedience to a chief, as in an army. It is absolutely impossible to unite the blessings of freedom and justice at home with the habitual commission of acts of violence and brutality abroad.

Thanks to the almost insensible progress of civilization and to gradual liberal reforms, the ancient militant State was little by little despoiled of its arbitrary powers, the circle of its interventions grew narrower and narrower, and men became free economically, as well as politically. We were advancing rapidly towards an industrial *régime* of free contract. But, recently, the Liberals in all countries have adopted an entirely opposite course. Instead of restricting the powers of the State, they are extending them, and this leads to socialism, the ideal of which is to give to government the direction of all social activity. Men imagine that, by thus acting, they are consulting the interests of the working-classes. They believe that a remedy may be found for the sufferings which result from the present order of things, and that it is the State's mission to discover and apply that remedy. By thus acting they simply increase the evils

they would fain cure, and prepare the way for a universal bondage, which awaits us all—the *Coming Slavery*. Be the authority exercised by king, assembly, or people, I am none the less a slave if I am forced to obey in all things, and to give up to others the net produce of my labour. Contemporary progressism not only runs against the stream of history, by carrying us back to despotic organizations of the militant system, but it also violates natural laws, and thus prepares the degeneration of humanity. In family life the gratuitous parental aid must be great in proportion as the young one is of little worth either to itself or to others, and benefits received must be inversely as the power or ability of the receiver.

“Throughout the rest of its life each adult gets benefit in proportion to merit, reward in proportion to desert, merit and desert being understood as ability to fulfil all the requirements of life. Placed in competition with members of its own species, and in antagonism with members of other species, it dwindles and gets killed off, or thrives and propagates, according as it is ill-endowed or well-endowed. If the benefits received by each individual were proportionate to its inferiority, if, as a consequence, multiplication of the inferior was furthered and multiplication of the superior hindered, progressive degradation would result, and eventually the degenerated species would fail to hold its ground in presence of antagonistic species and competing species.” (Page 65.)

“The poverty of the incapable, the distress that comes upon the imprudent, the starvation of the idle, and the shouldering aside of the weak by the strong, which leave so many ‘in shallows and in miseries,’ are the decrees of a large, far-seeing benevolence.” (Page 67.)

When the State, guided by a wrongly inspired philanthropy, prevents the application of this wise law, instead of diminishing suffering it increases it. “It tends to fill the world with those to whom life will bring most pain, and tends to keep out of it those to whom life will bring most pleasure. It inflicts positive misery, and prevents positive happiness.” (“*Social Statics*,” p. 381, edit. 1851.)

The law that Mr. Herbert Spencer desires society to adopt is simply Darwin’s law—“the survival of the fittest.” Mr. Spencer expresses his astonishment that at the present day, more than at any other period of the world’s history, everything is done to favour the survival of the unfittest, when, at the same time, the truth as revealed by Darwin, is admitted and accepted by an ever-growing number of educated and influential people!

I have endeavoured to give a brief sketch of the line of argument followed by Mr. Herbert Spencer. We will now see what reply can be made to it. I think one chief point ought not to have escaped the eminent writer. It is this: If the application of the Darwinian law to the government of societies be really justifiable, is it not strange that public opinion, not only in England, but in all other countries, is so strenuously opposed to it, at an epoch which is becoming more and more enlightened, and when sociological studies

are pursued with so much interest? If the intervention of public power for the improvement of the condition of the working-classes be a contradiction of history, and a return to ancient militant society, how is it that the country in which the new industrial organization is the most developed—that is to say, England—is also the country where State intervention is the most rapidly increasing, and where opinion is at the same time pressing for these powers of interference to be still further extended? There is no other land in which the effort to succour outcasts and the needy poor occupies so large a portion of the time and means of the well-to-do and of the public exchequer; there is nowhere else to be found a poor-law which grants assistance to even able-bodied men; nowhere else would it ever have been even suggested to attack free contract, and consequently the very first principles of proprietorship, as the Irish Land Bill has done; and nowhere else would a Minister have dared to draw up a programme of reforms such as those announced by Mr. Chamberlain at the Liberal Reform Club at Ipswich (Jan. 14, 1885). On the Continent all this would be looked upon as rank socialism. If, then, as a country becomes more civilized and enlightened it shows more inclination to return to what Mr. Herbert Spencer calls militant organization, and to violate the Darwinian law applied to human society, may we not be led to conclude that this so-called retrogression is really progress? This conclusion would very easily explain what Mr. Herbert Spencer designates as the “wheeling round” of the Liberal party with which he so eloquently reproaches them.

Why did the Liberals formerly do their utmost to restrict State power? Because this power was then exercised in the interests of the upper classes and to the detriment of the lower. To mention but one example: When, in former times, it was desired to fix a scale of prices and wages, it was with a view to preventing their being raised, while, to-day, there is a clamour for a lessening of hours of labour with increased remuneration. Why do Liberals now wish to add to the power and authority of the State? To be able to ameliorate the intellectual, moral, and material condition of a greater number of citizens. There is no inconsistency in their programme; the object in view, which is the great aim of all civilization, has been always the same—to assure to each individual liberty and well-being in proportion to his merit and activity!

I think that the great fundamental error of Mr. Herbert Spencer's system, which is so generally accepted at the present day, consists in the belief that if State power were but sufficiently reduced to narrow it to the circle traced by orthodox economists, the Darwinian law and the survival of the fittest would naturally follow without difficulty. Mr. Spencer has simply borrowed from old-fashioned political economy, without submitting to the fire of his inexorable criticism, the

superficial and false notion that, if the *laissez-faire* and free contract régime were proclaimed, the so-called natural laws would govern the social order. He forgets that all individual activity is accomplished under the empire of laws, which enact as to ownership, hereditary succession, mutual obligations, trade and industry, political institutions and administrations, besides a multitude of laws referring to material interests, banking organizations, money, credit, colonies, army, navy, railways, &c.

For natural laws, and especially the law of the survival of the fittest, to become established, it would be necessary to annihilate the immense existing edifice of legislation, and to return to the wild state of society when primitive men lived, in all probability, much as do animals, with no possessions, no successions, no protection of the weak by the State.

Those who, with Mr. Spencer and Haeckel and other Conservative evolutionists, are anxious to see the law of the survival of the fittest and of natural selection adopted in human society, do not realize that the animal kingdom and social organization are two such totally different domains that the same law, applied to each, would produce wholly opposite effects. Mr. Herbert Spencer gives an admirable description of the manner in which natural selection is accomplished among animals:—

“Their carnivorous enemies not only remove from herbivorous herds individuals past their prime, but also weed out the sickly, the malformed, and the least fleet and powerful. By the aid of which purifying process, as well as by the fighting so universal in the pairing season, all vitiation of the race through the multiplication of its inferior samples is prevented, and the maintenance of a constitution completely adapted to surrounding conditions, and therefore most productive of happiness, is ensured.”

This is the ideal order of things which, we are told, ought to prevail in human societies, but everything in our present organization (which economists, and even Mr. Spencer himself, admit, however, to be natural) is wholly opposed to any such conditions. An old and sickly lion captured a gazelle; his younger and stronger brother arrives, snatches away his prize, and lives to perpetuate the species; the old one dies in the struggle, or is starved to death. Such is the beneficent law of the “survival of the fittest.” It was thus among barbarian tribes. But could such a law exist in our present social order? Certainly not! The rich man, feebly constituted and sickly, protected by the law, enjoys his wealth, marries and has offspring, and if an Apollo of herculean strength attempted to take from him his possessions, or his wife, he would be thrown into prison, and were he to attempt to practise the Darwinian law of selection, he would certainly run a fair risk of the gallows, for this law may be briefly expressed as follows: Room for the mighty, for might is right. It will be objected that in industrial societies the quality the most

deserving of recompense, and which indeed receives the most frequent reward, is not the talent of killing one's fellow-man, but an aptitude for labour and producing. But at the present time is this really so? Stuart Mill says that from the top to the bottom of the social ladder remuneration lessens as the work accomplished increases. I admit that this statement may be somewhat exaggerated, but, I think, no one will deny that it contains a large amount of truth. Let us but cast our eyes around us, and we see everywhere those who do nothing living in ease and even opulence, while the workers who have the hardest labour to perform, who toil from night to morning in mines, or unhealthy workshops, or on the sea in tempests, in constant danger of death, are paid, in exchange for all these hardships, a salary hardly sufficient for their means of subsistence, and which, just now, has become smaller and smaller, in consequence of the ever-recurring strikes, and the necessary closing of so many factories, mines, &c., owing to the long-continued depression of trade. What rapid fortunes have been made by stock-broking manœuvres, by trickeries in supplying goods, by sending unseaworthy vessels to sea to become the coffins of their crews! Do not such sights as these urge the partisans of progress to demand the State's interference in favour of the classes who receive so inadequate a payment for their labours?

The economists of the old school promised that, if the *laissez-faire* and free contract régime were proclaimed, justice would reign universally; but when people saw that these fine promises were not realized, they had recourse to public power for the obtaining of those results which the much-boasted "liberty" had not secured.

The system of accumulating wealth and hereditary succession alone would suffice to prevent the Darwinian law ever gaining a footing in civilized communities. Among animals, the survival of the fittest takes place quite naturally, because, as generations succeed each other, each one must create his own position according to his strength and abilities; and in this way the purifying process, which Mr. Herbert Spencer so extols, is effected. A similar system was generally prevalent among barbarians; but, at the present day, traces of it may be seen only in instances of "self-made men;" it disappears in their children, who, even if they inherit their parents' talents and capacities, are brought up, as a rule, in so much ease and luxury that the germs of such talents are destroyed. Their lot in life is assured to them, so why need they exert themselves? Thus they fail to cultivate the qualities and tastes they may have inherited from their parents, and they and their descendants become in all points inferior to their ancestors who secured to them, by labour and industry, the privileged position they hold. Hence the proverb, *A père économe fils prodigue* (To a thrifty father, a spendthrift son).

It follows, therefore, that those who wish to see the law of natural selection, by the transmission of hereditary aptitudes, established amongst us should begin by demanding the abolition of hereditary succession.

Among animals, the vitiation of the race through the multiplication of its inferior samples is prevented "by the fighting so universal in the pairing season." In the social order the accumulation and hereditary transmission of wealth effectually impede the process of perfecting the race. In Greece after the athletic sports, or in those fortunate and chimerical days of which the Troubadours sang, "the most beautiful was sometimes given as a prize to the most valiant;" but, in our prosaic age, rank and fortune too often triumph over beauty, strength, and health. In the animal world, the destiny of each one is decided by its personal qualities. In society, a man attains a high position, or marries a beautiful woman, because he is of high birth, or wealthy, although he may be ugly, lazy, and extravagant. The permanent army and the navy would also have to be destroyed, before the Darwinian law could triumph. Conscription on the Continent and enlistment in England (to a less degree) condemn many of the strongest and most warlike men to enforced celibacy; and, as they are subjected to exceptional dangers in the way of hazardous expeditions and wars, the death-rate is far higher amongst them than it would be under ordinary circumstances. In pre-historic times, or in a general way, such men would certainly have begotten offspring, as being the strongest and most apt to survive; in our societies, they are decimated or condemned to celibacy.

Having borrowed from orthodox political economy the notion that it would suffice to put a check on inopportune State intervention for the reign of justice to become established, Mr. Herbert Spencer proceeds to demonstrate that the legislators who enacted the poor-law, and all recent and present law-makers "who have made regulations which have brought into being a permanent body of tramps, who ramble from union to union, and which maintain a constant supply of felons by sending back convicts into society under such conditions that they are almost compelled again to commit crimes," are alone responsible for the sufferings of the working-classes. But may we not blame law-makers, or, rather, our own social order, for measures more fatal in their results than either of these—for instance, the law which concentrates all property into the hands of a few owners? Some years ago, Mr. Herbert Spencer wrote some lines on this subject which are the most severe indictment against the present social order that has ever fallen from the pen of a really competent writer:—

"Given a race of beings having like claims to pursue the objects of their desires—given a world adapted to the gratification of those desires—a world

into which such beings are similarly born, and it unavoidably follows that they have equal rights to the use of this world. For if each of them 'has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other,' then each of them is free to use the earth for the satisfaction of his wants, provided he allows all others the same liberty. And, conversely, it is manifest that no one or part of them may use the earth in such a way as to prevent the rest from similarly using it, seeing that to do this is to assume greater freedom than the rest, and, consequently, to break the law. Equity, therefore, does not permit property in land. On examination, all existing titles to such property turn out to be invalid; those founded on reclamation inclusive. It appears that not even an equal apportionment of the earth amongst its inhabitants could generate a legitimate proprietorship. We find that, if pushed to its ultimate consequences, a claim to exclusive possession of the soil involves a land-owning despotism. We further find that such a claim is constantly denied by the enactments of our legislature. And we find, lastly, that the theory of the co-heirship of all men to the soil is consistent with the highest civilization; and that, however difficult it may be to embody that theory in fact, equity sternly commands it to be done." "By-and-by, men may learn that to deprive others of their rights to the use of the earth is to commit a crime inferior only in wickedness to the crime of taking away their lives or personal liberties." ("Social Statics," chap. ix.)

Has Mr. Herbert Spencer changed his opinions as to the proprietorship of the soil since these lines were written? Not at all, for, in the chapter entitled "The Coming Slavery," he writes that "the movement for land-nationalization is aiming at a system of land-tenure equitable in the abstract." But if society, in depriving numbers of persons of their right of co-heirship of the soil, has "committed a crime inferior only in wickedness to the crime of taking away their lives or personal liberties," ought it not, in common justice, to endeavour to repair the injury done? The help given by public assistance compensates very feebly for the advantages they are deprived of. In his important book, "La Propriété Sociale," M. Alfred Fouillée, examining the question from another standpoint, very accurately calls this assistance "la justice réparative." The numerous and admirable charitable organizations which exist in England, the keen emotion and deep commiseration manifested when the little pamphlet, "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London," was first published, the growing pre-occupation of Government with the condition of the working-classes, must be attributed, in the first instance certainly to Christian feeling, but also, in a great measure, to a clearer perception of certain ill-defined rights possessed by those who have been kept deprived of national or rather communal co-heirship. Mr. Herbert Spencer has expressed this idea so clearly and eloquently that I hope I may be allowed to quote the passage:—

"We must not overlook the fact that, erroneous as are these poor-law and communist theories, these assertions of a man's right to maintenance and of his right to have work provided for him, they are nevertheless nearly related to a truth. They are unsuccessful efforts to express the fact that whoso is born on this planet of ours thereby obtains some interest in it—may not be

summarily dismissed again—may not have his existence ignored by those in possession. In other words, they are attempts to embody that thought which finds its legitimate utterance in the law: All men have equal rights to the use of the earth. . . . After getting from under the grosser injustices of slavery, men could not help beginning in course of time to feel what a monstrous thing it was that nine people out of ten should live in the world on sufferance, not having even standing room save by allowance of those who claim the earth's surface." ("Social Statics," p. 345.)

When one reads through that substantial essay, "The Man *versus* The State," it appears as if the principal or, indeed, the sole aim of State socialism were the extension of public assistance and increased succour for the unworthy, whereas the reality is quite the reverse of this! Scientific socialism seeks, first of all, the means of so raising the working-classes that they may be better able to maintain themselves and, consequently, to dispense with the help of others; and, secondly, it seeks to find what laws are the most in conformity with absolute justice, and with that admirable precept, "Benefit in proportion to merit, reward in proportion to desert." In the speech delivered by Mr. Shaw Lefevre, last year (1884), as President of the Congress of Social Science, at its opening meeting at Birmingham, he traced, in most striking language, all the good that State intervention had effected in England of late years: Greater justice enforced in the relations between man and man, children better educated and better prepared to become useful and self-supporting members of the community, the farmer better guaranteed against the exaggerated or unjust demands of the proprietor, greater facilities for saving offered, health ensured to future generations by the hours of labour being limited, the lives of miners further safeguarded, so that there are less frequent appeals to public assistance, and, as a practical result of this last measure, the mortality in mines fallen in the last three years to 22.1 per thousand, as compared to 27.2 per thousand during the ten previous years—a decrease of 20 per cent. ! One fact is sufficient to show the great progress due to this State legislation: in an ever-increasing population, crime is rapidly and greatly diminishing.

Suppose that, through making better laws, men arrive gradually at the condition of the Norwegian peasantry, or at an organization similar to that existing in the agricultural cantons of Switzerland; that is to say, that each family living in the country has a plot of ground to cultivate and a house to live in: in this case every one is allowed to enjoy the full fruit of his labour, and receives reward in proportion to his activity and industry, which is certainly the very ideal of justice—*cuique suum*.

The true instinct of humanity has ever so understood social organization that property is the indispensable basis of the family, and a necessary condition of freedom. To prevent any one individual from being deprived of a share in the soil, which was in primitive ages

considered to be the collective property of the tribe, it was subjected to periodical divisions; these, indeed, still take place in the Swiss Allmend, in some Scottish townships, in the greater part of Java, and in the Russian Mir.

If such a *régime* as this were established, there would be no more "tramps wandering from union to union." In such a state of society as this, not in such as ours, the supreme law which ought to govern all economic relations might be realized. Mr. Herbert Spencer admirably defines this law in the following passage:—

"I suppose a dictum on which the current creed and the creed of science are at one may be considered to have as high an authority as can be found. Well, the command, *If any would not work, neither should he eat*, is simply a Christian enunciation of that universal law of nature under which life has reached its present height, the law that a creature not energetic enough to maintain itself must die; the sole difference being, that the law which in one case is to be artificially enforced is in the other case a natural necessity."

This passage ought to be transcribed at the commencement of every treatise on social science as the supreme aim of all sociological research; only the delusion, borrowed from the old political economy, which consists in the belief that this dictum of science and Christianity is in practice in our midst, ought to be suppressed.

Is it not a fact that, everywhere, those who can prove by authentic documents that, for centuries past, their ancestors have thriven in idleness are the richest, the most powerful, the most sought after? Only at some future date will this dictum of science and Christianity be brought to bear on our social organization, and our descendants will then establish an order of things which will create economic responsibility, and ensure to each the integral enjoyment of the produce of his labour. The difficult but necessary work of sociology is to endeavour to discover what this organization should be, and to prepare its advent. Mr. Shaw Lefevre's speech shows very clearly the road that ought to be taken.

Mr. Herbert Spencer thinks, however, that this road would lead us directly to a condition of universal slavery. The State would gradually monopolize all industrial enterprises, beginning with the railways and telegraphs as it has already done in Germany and Belgium, then some other industries as in France, then mines, and finally, after the nationalization of land, it would also take up agricultural enterprise. The freedom enjoyed by a citizen must be measured, he says, not by the nature of the government under which he lives, but by the small number of laws to which he is subject. The essential characteristic of the slave is that he is forced to work for another's benefit. The degree of his slavery varies according to the greater or smaller extent to which effort is compulsorily expended for the benefit of another, instead of for self-benefit; in the *régime* which is approaching, man will have to work for the State, and to

give up to it the largest portion of his produce. What matters it that the master under whose command he labours is not an individual, but society? Thus argues Mr. Herbert Spencer.

In my opinion, the State will never arrive at a monopoly of all industries, for the very simple reason that such a system would never answer. It is possible that some day a social organization such as M. Albert Schäffle, formerly Finance Minister in Austria, has explained, may grow up, in which all branches of production are placed in the hands of co-operative societies. But, be that as it may, men would be no more slaves in workshops belonging to the State than in those of merchants or manufacturers of the present day. Mr. Herbert Spencer can very easily assure himself of this fact. Let him visit the State collieries at Saarbruck, or inspect the Belgian railways, and interrogate all the officials and workmen employed; he will find that, from the highest to the lowest, they are quite as free, quite as contented with their lot, as those engaged in any private industry. There is even far more guarantee against arbitrary measures, so that their real freedom is greater than elsewhere. The proof of this is the fact that posts in any industries belonging to the State are always sought for by the best workmen. If the degree of man's slavery varies according to the ratio between that which he is forced to yield up and that which he is allowed to retain, then it must be admitted that the majority of workmen and small farmers are certainly slaves now, for they have very little or no property, and, as their condition almost entirely depends on the hard law of competition, they can only retain for themselves the mere necessaries of life! Are the Italian *contadini*, whose sad lot I depicted in my "Lettres d'Italie," free? They are reduced to live entirely on bad maize, which subjects them to that terrible scourge, the *pellagra*. What sad truth is contained in their reply to the Minister who advised them not to emigrate!—

"What do you mean by the nation? Do you refer to the most miserable of the inhabitants of the land? If so, we are indeed the nation. Look at our pale and emaciated faces, our bodies worn out with over-fatigue and insufficient food. We sow and reap corn, but never taste white bread; we cultivate the vine, but a drop of wine never touches our lips. We raise cattle, but never eat meat; we are covered with rags, we live in wretched hovels; in winter we suffer from the cold, and both winter and summer from the pangs of hunger. Can a land which does not provide its inhabitants, who are willing to work, with sufficient to live upon, be considered by them as a father-land?"

The Flemish agricultural labourer, who earns less than a shilling a-day, and the small farmer, whose rack-rent absorbs the entire net profits; the Highland crofters, who have been deprived of the communal land, the sacred inheritance of primitive times, where they could at least raise a few head of cattle; the Egyptian fellahs, whose very life-blood is drained by European creditors—in a word, all the

wretched beings all over the world where the soil is owned by non-workers, and who labour for insufficient remuneration; can they, any of them, be called free? It is just possible that, if the State were to become the universal industry director (which, in my opinion, is an impossible hypothesis), their condition would not be improved; but at all events it could not be worse than it is now.

I do not believe that "liberty must be surrendered in proportion as the material welfare is cared for." On the contrary, a certain degree of well-being is a necessary condition of liberty. It is a mockery to call a man free who, by labour, cannot secure to himself the necessaries of existence, or to whom labour is impossible because he possesses nothing of his own, and no one will employ him!

Compare the life of the soldier with that of the hired workman either in a mine or a factory. The first is the type of the serf in "The Coming Slavery," and the second the type of the independent man in an industrial organization under the free contract *régime*. Which of the two possesses the most real liberty? The soldier, when his daily duties are accomplished, may read, walk, or enjoy himself in accordance with his tastes; the workman, when he returns home worn out with fatigue after eleven or twelve hours' hard labour, too often finds no other recreation than the gin-palace. The labourer at his task must always, and all day long, obey the foreman or overseer, whether he be employed by a private individual, by the State, or by a co-operative society.

"Hitherto," says Mr. Herbert Spencer, "you have been free to spend your earnings in any way which pleases you; hereafter you shall not be free to spend it, but it will be spent for the general benefit." The important point, he adds, is the amount taken from me, not the hand that takes it. But if what is taken from my revenue is employed to make a public park which I am free to enter whenever I feel inclined, to build public baths where I may bathe in summer or winter, to open libraries for my recreation and instruction, clubs where I may spend my evenings, and schools where my children may receive an education which will enable them to make their own way in the world; to build healthy houses, let at a low rent, which save me the cruel necessity of living in slums, where the soul and the body are alike degraded; if all this be done, would the result be the same as if this sum were taken by some private Croesus to spend on his personal pleasures and caprices? In the course of last summer, while in Switzerland and Baden, I visited several villages where each family is supplied, from forests belonging to the commune, with wood for building purposes and for fuel; also with pasturage for their cattle, and with a small plot of ground on which to grow potatoes, fruit, and vegetables. In addition to this, the wages of all public servants are paid for from

the communal revenue, so that there is no local taxation whatever.* Suppose that these woods and meadows, and this land, all belonged to a landed proprietor, instead of to the commune; he would go and lavish the revenue in large capitals or in travelling. What an immense difference this would make to the inhabitants! To appreciate this, it suffices merely to compare the condition of the Highland crofters, the free citizens of one of the richest countries in the world, and whose race has ever been laborious, with that of the population of these villages, hidden away in the Alpine cantons of Switzerland or in the gorges of the Black Forest. If, in the Highland villages of Scotland, rentals had been, as in these happy communes of Switzerland and Baden, partly reserved for the inhabitants, and partly employed in objects of general utility, how very different would have been the lot of these poor people! Had they but been allowed to keep for themselves the sea-weed and the kelp which the sea brings them, how far better off would they have been than they now are, as is admirably proved in Mr. Blackie's interesting book, "The Scottish Highlanders."

A similar remark may also be applied to politics. What matters it, says Mr. Herbert Spencer, that I myself contribute to make laws if these laws deprive me of my liberty? He mentions ancient Greece as an example to startle us at the notion of our coming state of slavery. He writes: "In ancient Greece the accepted principle was, that the citizen belonged neither to himself nor to his family, but to his city—the city being, with the Greek, equivalent to the community. And this doctrine, proper to a state of constant warfare, is one which socialism unawares re-introduces into a state intended to be purely industrial." It is perfectly certain that the *régime* of ancient Greek cities, which was founded on slavery, cannot be suitable to modern society, which is based on a system of labour. But we must not allow ourselves to forget what Greece was, nor all we owe to that Greek civilization, which, Mr. Herbert Spencer says, the "coming slavery" threatens to re-introduce amongst us. Not only philosophy, literature, and arts flourished as they have never done in any other age, but the political system so stamped characters

* I may mention as an example, the township of Freudenstadt, at the foot of the Kniesbis, in Baden. Not a single farthing of taxation has been paid since its foundation in 1537. The commune possesses about 5,000 acres of pine forest and meadow land, worth about £10,000 sterling. The 1,420 inhabitants have each as much wood for their building purposes and firing as they wish for, and each one can send out to pasture, during the summer, his cattle, which he feeds during the winter months. The schools, church, thoroughfares, and fountains are all well cared for, and every year considerable improvements are made. 100,000 marks were employed in 1863 for the establishment in the village, of a distribution of water, with iron pipes. A hospital has been built, and a pavilion in the market-place, where a band plays on fête-days. Each year a distribution of the surplus revenue is made amongst the families, and they each obtain from 50 to 60 marks, or shillings, and more still when an extraordinary quantity of timber has been sold. In 1832, 80,000 marks were distributed amongst the 1,420 villagers. What a favoured country, is it not?

with individuality that the illustrious men of Greece are types of human greatness, whose deeds and sayings will be engraven on the memory of men so long as the world lasts. If the "coming slavery" gives us such men as Pisistratus, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Lycurgus, Sophocles, Thucydides, Epaminondas, Aristides, or Pericles, we shall, I think, have no cause to complain! But how is it that Greece produced such a bevy of great men? By her democratic institutions, combined with a marvellous system of education, which developed simultaneously the faculties of the mind and the body.

The German army, in spite of its iron discipline, arrives at results somewhat similar, though in a less degree. A rough peasant joins a regiment; he is taught to walk properly, to swim, and to shift for himself; his education is made more complete, and he becomes a man of independent character, better fitted to survive in the struggle for life. If the authorities in towns levy heavy taxes, and employ the money in improving the condition of the inhabitants and in forming those who need forming, even more than in the German army, and after the fashion of the ancient Greeks, will not the generations yet to come be better able to earn their own livelihood, and to maintain an honourable position, than if they had been allowed to pass their childhood in the gutters? Mr. Herbert Spencer reasons falsely when he says, "What matters it that I make the laws if these laws deprive me of my liberty?" Laws which tax me to degrade and rob me are odious, but laws which deprive me of what I have for my own good and for the further development of my faculties are well-meaning, as is the constraint imposed on his children by a wise father for their instruction or correction. Besides, to contribute to make laws elevates a man's character. As Stuart Mill has proved, this is indeed one of the great advantages of an extension of the suffrage. A man called upon to vote is naturally raised from the sphere of personal to that of general interests. He will read, discuss, and endeavour to obtain information. Others will argue with him, try to change his opinions, and he will himself realize that he has a certain importance of his own, that he has a word to say in the direction of public affairs. The elevating influence of this sentiment over French, and still more over Swiss, citizens is remarkable.

It is perfectly true that, for political and social reforms to be productive of fruits, the society into which they are introduced must be in a sufficiently advanced condition to be able to understand and apply them, but it must not be forgotten that improved institutions make better men.

Go to Norway; crimes are hardly known there. In the country people never close their doors at night, locks and bolts are scarcely known, and there are no robberies; probably, first, because the people are moral and religious, but certainly, also, because property

is very equally divided. None live in opulence and none in absolute beggary, and certainly misery and degradation, which often results from misery, are the causes of the great majority of crimes.

The rich financier, Helvetius, wrote, very truly, that, if every citizen were an owner of property, the general tone of the nation would be conservative, but if the majority have nothing, robbery then becomes the general aim. ("De l'Homme," sect. vi. chap. vii.)

In conclusion, let us try to go to the root of the matter. Two systems are suggested as cures for the evils under which society is suffering. On the one hand, it may be said, in accordance with the doctrines of Christianity and socialism, that these evils are the consequences of men's perversity and selfishness, and that it behoves charity and fraternity to remedy them. We must do our best to assist our unfortunate brethren. But how? By trying, Christ tells us, to imitate God's Kingdom, where "the last shall be first and the first last;"—or by "having all things in common," say the Apostles in all the ardour of primitive Christianity, and later on certain religious communities;—or by the giving of alms and other charitable acts, says the Christianity of the middle ages;—while socialism maintains that this may be effected by reforms in the laws regulating the division of property. On the other hand, political economy and evolutionary sociology teach us that these miseries are the inevitable and beneficent consequences of natural laws; that these laws, being necessary conditions of progress, any endeavour to do away with them would be to disturb the order of nature and delay the dawn of better things. By "the weeding out of the sickly and infirm," and the survival of the fittest, the process of amelioration of species in the animal kingdom is accomplished. This law of natural selection should be allowed free and ample scope in human society. "Society is not a manufacture, but a growth." Might is really right, for it is to the general interest that the mighty should triumph and perpetuate the race. Thus argues what is now called *Science*.

In a book entitled "The True History of Joshua Davidson," the author places ideal Christianity and contemporary society face to face, and shows very clearly the opposition which exists between the doctrines of would-be science and those of the Gospel:—

"If the dogmas of political economy are really exact, if the laws of the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest must really be applied to human society, as well as to plants and animals, then let us at once admit that Christianity, which gives assistance to the poor and needy, and which stretches out a hand to the sinner, is a mere folly; and let us at once abandon a belief which influences neither our political institutions nor our social arrangements; and which ought not to influence them. If Christ was right, then our present Christianity is wrong, and if sociology really contains scientific truth, then Jesus of Nazareth spoke and acted in vain, or rather He rebelled against the immutable laws of nature." (Tauchnitz edition, p. 252.)

Mr. William Graham, in his "Creed of Science" (p. 278), writes as follows:—

"This great and far-reaching controversy, the most important in the history of our species, which is probably as old as human society itself, and certainly as old as the 'Republic' of Plato, in which it is discussed, or as Christianity, which began with a communistic form of society, had yet only within the past half-century come to be felt as a controversy involving real and living issues of a momentous character, and not utopias only remotely bordering upon the possible."

I think it may be proved that this so-called "doctrine of science" is contrary to facts, and is, consequently, not scientific; whereas the creed of Christianity is in keeping with both present facts and ideal humanity.

Darwin borrowed his idea of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest from Malthus, from whom he also drew his theories of evolution and of transformism; but no naturalist ever dreamt of applying either of these laws to human society. It has been reserved to sociology to attempt this, because it has accepted, blindfolded, from the hands of economists, this most erroneous principle: that society is governed by natural laws, and that it suffices to give them free scope for the greatest possible happiness and prosperity to reign. It is manifestly true that, as human society is comprehended in what we call Nature, it must obey her laws; but the laws and institutions, in all their different forms, which decree as to the acquisition and transmission of property or possessions, and hereditary succession, in a word, all civil and penal laws, emanate from men's will, and from the decisions of legislators; and if experience, or a higher conception of justice, shows us that these laws are bad, or in any way lacking, we are free to change them. As far as the Darwinian laws are concerned, it would be perfectly impossible to apply them to existing society without more radically destroying all established institutions than the most avowed Nihilist would wish to do.

If it be really advisable that the law of the "survival of the fittest" should be established amongst us, the first step to be taken would be the abolition of all laws which punish theft and murder. Animals provide themselves with food by physical activity and the use of their muscles. Among men, in consequence of successive institutions, such as slavery, servitude, and revenue, numbers of people now live in plenty on their income, and do nothing at all. If Mr. Herbert Spencer is really desirous to see the supreme principle, "reward in proportion to desert," in force amongst us, he must obtain, first of all, the suppression of the existing regulations as to property. In the animal world, the destiny of each is decided by its aptitudes. Among ourselves, the destiny of each is determined by the advantages obtained or inherited

from parents, and the heir to, or owner of, a large estate is sure to be well received everywhere. We see then, that before Darwinian laws can become established, family succession must be abolished. Animals, like plants, obey the instincts of nature, and reproduce themselves rapidly; but incessant carnage prevents their too excessive multiplication! As men become more civilized, peace becomes more general; they talk of their fellow-men as their brothers, and some philosophers even dream—the madmen!—of arbitration supplanting war! The equilibrium between the births and the deaths is thus upset! To balance it again, let us glorify battles, and exclaim, with General Moltke, that the idea of suppressing them is a mischievous utopia; let us impose silence on those dangerous fanatics who repeat incessantly, "Peace on earth, good-will towards men."

In the very heart of nature reigns seeming injustice; or, as M. Renan puts it more strongly, nature is the embodiment of injustice. A falling stone crushes both the honest man and the scamp! A bird goes out to find food for its young, and after long search is returning to its nest with its well-earned gains, when an eagle, the despot of the air, swoops down and steals the food; we think this iniquitous and odious, and would not tolerate such an instance amongst us. Vigorous Cain kills gentle Abel. Right and justice protest. They should not do so, for it is the mere putting in practice "of the purifying process by which nature weeds out the least powerful and prevents the vitiation of the race by the multiplication of its inferior samples." Helvetius admirably defines, for its condemnation, this Darwinian law which Herbert Spencer would have society accept:—

"The savage says to those who are weaker than himself: Look up to the skies and you see the eagle swooping down on the dove; cast your eyes on the earth and you see the lion tearing to pieces the stag or the antelope; while in the depths of the ocean small fishes are destroyed by sharks. The whole of nature announces that the weak must be the prey of the strong. Strength is a gift of the gods. Through it I become possessor of all it is in my power to capture." ("De l'Homme," iv. 8).

The constant effort of moralists and legislators has been to replace the reign of might by a reign of justice. As Bacon says, *In societate aut, vis aut lex viget*. The object is to subject men's actions more and more to the empire of the law, and that the law should be more and more in conformity with equity. Society has ever been, and still is, to a great extent, too much a reflection of nature. Violations of justice are numerous, and, if these are to be put a stop to, we must oppose ourselves still more to the laws of nature, instead of contemplating their re-establishment.

This is why Christianity, which is an ardent aspiration after justice, is in real accord with true science. In the book of Job the problem is tragically proposed. The unjust are equally happy with the just, and, as in nature, the strong live at the cost of the weak.

Right protests against this, and the voice of the poor is raised against their oppressors. Listen. What deep thought is contained in the following passage!—"Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them" (Job xxi. 7-9). "Some remove land-marks; they violently take away flocks and feed thereof. They cause him to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf from the hungry; which make oil within their walls, and tread their wine-presses, and suffer thirst" (Job xxiv. 2, 10, 11).

The prophets of Israel raised an eloquent protest against the evils then reigning in society, and announced that a time should come when justice would be established upon the earth. These hopes of a Messiah were expressed in such precise terms that they may serve as a programme of the reforms which yet remain to be accomplished. "He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains" (Psalm lxxii. 4, 13, 16). "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever" (Isaiah xxxii. 17). "Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies, and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured; but they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of My holiness" (Isaiah lxii. 8, 9). In the New Jerusalem "there shall be no more sorrow nor crying." "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (Isaiah lxxv. 21, 22).

The prophet thus raises his voice in favour of the poor, in the name of justice, not of charity and mercy. "The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of His people and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat My people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts" (Isaiah iii. 14, 15). "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth" (Isaiah v. 8). In the future society property will be ensured to all, and every one will "sit under his vine and under his fig-tree" (Micah iv. 4).

The ideal of the prophets comprehends, then, in the first place, the triumph of justice, which will bring liberty to the oppressed,

consolation to the outcast, and the produce of their labours to the workers; and secondly, and chiefly, it will bring the glorification and domination of the elect people—Israel.

The ideal of the Gospel makes less of this second consideration of national grandeur and pre-eminence, and places in the foreground the radical transformation of the social order. The Gospel is the "good tidings of great joy," the *Εὐαγγέλιον*, carried to the poor, the approach of the Kingdom of God—that is to say, of the reign of justice. "The last shall be first;" therefore the pretended "natural order" will be reversed!

Who will possess the earth? Not the mightiest, as in the animal creation, and as Darwinian laws decree; not the rich, "for it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." Lazarus is received into Abraham's bosom, while Dives is cast into the place of torment, "where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." The first of biological precepts, the one respecting the survival of the fittest, as it immolates others for personal benefit, is essentially selfish, which is a vice incessantly reprobated in the New Testament. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Philippians ii. 4). The chief of all Christian virtues is charity; it is the very essence of the Gospel. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (St. Matthew vi. 33).

How very true is the economic doctrine that, with equitable laws, each should enjoy the integral produce of his labour, and that, were this the case, personal activity would attain its highest degree. Nothing is more adverse to the prosperity of a nation than unjust laws; and this is precisely what the prophets and Christ teach us.

If Darwinian laws were applied to human society, the utility of history, considered as a moral lesson for both kings and people, would be destroyed. The history of man might then be looked upon as a mere zoological strife between nations, and a simple lengthening out of natural history. What moral instruction can possibly be drawn from the study of the animal world, where the strong devour or destroy the weak? No spectacle could be more odious or more demoralizing! The incomparable sublimity of the Gospel, which is, alas! only too often misinterpreted, consists in an ardent longing for perfection, in that aspiration for an ideal of justice which urged Jesus and His earliest disciples to condemn the world as it then was. Thence sprang the hatred of evil in its many various forms, the desire for better things, for reforms and progress! Why do Mahometans stand still in the march of civilization, while Christian countries advance ever more and more rapidly? Because the first are resigned to evil, whereas the second combat and endeavour to extirpate it.

The stoicism—the elevated character of which can hardly be sufficiently admired—the austerity, and purity of such ancients as Marcus Aurelius, nevertheless, bowed before absolute facts, looking upon them as the inevitable results of the actual and natural order of things. Like modern evolutionists, they glorified the laws of nature, considering them perfect. Their optimism led them so far as to adore the cosmos as a divinity. "All that thou wilt, O Cosmos," says Marcus Aurelius, "is my will; nothing is too early or too late for me, if it be at the hour thou decidest upon. My fruit is such as thy seasons bring, O Nature! From thee comes all. Thou art all. All go towards thee. If the gods be essentially good and just, they must have permitted nothing; in the arrangement of the world, contrary to right and justice." What a contrast between this serene satisfaction and the complaints of Job, of the prophets, and of Christ Himself! The true Christian, in direct opposition to stoics and to Mr. Herbert Spencer, holds that the world is completely infected with evil; he avoids it carefully, and lives in the hope of a general cataclysm, which will reduce our globe to ashes, and make place for a new and purified heaven and earth! The belief of stoics and of evolutionary sociologists logically advocates inaction, for it respects the present order of things as attributable to natural laws. The Christian's belief leads him to ardently desire reform and progress, but also, when he is deceived and reduced to despair, it occasionally culminates in revolutionary violence and in Nihilism.

Not only Jesus, but all great religious reformers, such as Buddha, Mahomet, Luther, and the great philosophers, especially Socrates and Plato, and the great law-givers, from Solon and Lycurgus to the legislators of the French Revolution—all the elect of humanity, in fact—are struck with the evils under which our race is forced to suffer, and have imagined and revealed an ideal social order more in conformity with the ideal of justice; and in their writings they place this Utopia in contrast with the existing order. The more Christianity becomes despoiled of dogmas, and the more the ideas of moral and social reform, contained in Christ's teachings, are brought forward as the chief aim, the more Mr. Herbert Spencer's principles will be shunned and avoided. In the splendid development of Roman law, which lasted fifteen hundred years, a similar evolution took place. In the beginning, in the laws of the twelve tables, many traces of the hard law in favour of the mighty may be found. This is symbolized by the lance (*quir*), which gave its name to the quiritarian right. The father was allowed to sell or destroy his children, as they were his possession. He had absolute power over his slaves, who were his "things." The creditor might throw his debtor in prison, or even cause him to be cut in pieces—in *partes secanto*. The wife was

entirely in her husband's power—*in manu*. Little by little, as centuries rolled on, eminent lawgivers succeeded each other, and gradual changes were made, so that, finally, just and humanitarian principles penetrated the entire Roman code, and the Darwinian law, which glorifies might, gave place to the Christian law, which extols justice.

This movement will most assuredly continue, in spite of all the abuse it may receive from Mr. Herbert Spencer, and from others who think as he does. It is a result of the advance of civilization from the commencement of Christianity, and even from the time of the prophets of Israel. It will manifest itself, not as it did in the middle ages, by works of mercy, but, under the control of economic science, by the intervention of the State in favour of the disinherited, and by measures such as Mr. Shaw Lefevre approves of, so that each and all should be placed in a position to be able to command reward in proportion to the amount of useful labour accomplished.

Darwinian laws, generally admitted in the domain of natural history and in the animal kingdom, will never be applied to human societies, until the sentiments of charity and justice, which Christianity engraves on our hearts, are completely eradicated.

EMILE DE LAVELEYE.