

**RECIPROCITY  
OR  
THE GOLDEN RULE  
THE ONLY MEANS**

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## The Only Means

“All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.”—Matt. vii. 12.

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### I.

There are more than a milliard or a thousand millions of working men in the world. All the bread, all the goods of the whole world, all wherewith people live and are rich, **all this is produced by the working man.** But it is not he who profits by the things he produces, but the **Government and the rich**,—whereas the working population lives in continual need, ignorance, and in the contempt of those very people whom they clothe, feed, house, and serve.

The land is taken from the labourer and regarded as the property of those who do not work it, so that **in order to be fed by the land the man who works it must do everything the owners demand.** If the labourer leaves the land, enters ser-



vice, or mills or factories, he falls into bondage to other wealthy people, for whom during the whole of his life he has to work ten, twelve, fourteen or more hours a day, at alien, monotonous, tedious work, often pernicious to health and life. If he is able to settle on the land or to procure work so as to feed himself without want, then he is not left alone, but taxes are demanded of him, and in addition he himself is taken for three, four, five years into military service, or is forced to pay taxes for military purposes. If he desires to use the land without payment, or to arrange strikes, or to hinder other workmen from occupying his place, or if he refuses to pay his taxes, then troops are sent against him, he is wounded, killed, compelled by force to work and pay just as before.

SO THAT THE WORKING MEN ALL OVER THE WORLD LIVE NOT LIKE MEN BUT LIKE BEASTS OF BURDEN, WHO ARE COMPELLED ALL THEIR LIFE TO DO NOT WHAT IS NECESSARY TO THEM, BUT TO THEIR OPPRESSORS, RECEIVING IN RETURN ONLY

JUST SO MUCH FOOD, CLOTHING AND REST AS ENABLES THEM TO GO ON WORKING UNCEASINGLY. Whereas that small group of people who dominate the labourers, profiting by all they produce, live in idleness and insane luxury, uselessly and immorally squandering the labour of millions.

And thus the majority of the population of the whole world lives, not in Russia only, but also in France, and in Germany, and in England, and in China, and in India, and in Africa: everywhere. Whose fault is this? And how shall this be put right? Some say that it is the fault of those who possess the land without working it, and that it is necessary to give the land to the workers; others say that it is the fault of the rich who own the instruments of labour, that is, factories and mills, and that it is necessary that the factories and mills shall become the property of the workmen. Others again say that **the whole organisation of life is to blame**, and that it is necessary to change this organisation altogether.

Is this true?

## II.

About five years ago, during the coronation of Nicholas II. at Moscow, the people were offered a free supply of beer, brandy, and buns. When the crowd proceeded to the place where these things were being distributed, a crush ensued. Those in front were knocked off their feet by those behind, and these were crushed by those yet further back; and no one seeing what was happening in front, they all kept pushing and pressing each other on. The weak were overthrown by the strong, and then the strong ones themselves, suffocated by the crush and want of air, also fell to the ground and were trampled by those who were pushed from behind and could not halt. And thus several thousand people, old and young, men and women, were crushed to death.

When it was all over, people began to argue as to who was to blame for it. Some said it was the police; others the organisers; others that the fault was the Czar's who had initiated the silly device of such an entertainment. **People accused everyone except them-**



selves. And yet it would appear clear that only those were to blame who, in order to obtain a handful of cake and a pot of beer before their neighbours, rushed forward without paying attention to the others, and hustled and trampled them.

Is not the same thing taking place with the working people? They are exhausted, crushed, enslaved, only because for some miserable advantage they themselves ruin their own lives, and those of their brothers.

The labourers complain of the landlords, of the Governments, of the factory owners, of the military. But the landlords exploit land, the Governments collect taxes, factory owners dispose of the workmen, and the troops suppress strikes, only because the labourers themselves not only help the landlords, the government, the factory owners, the troops, but they themselves do all those things of which they complain. Why, if a landlord can profit by thousands of acres of land without cultivating it himself, it is only because the workmen, **for their own profit**, go to work for him, and

serve him as watchmen, keepers, foremen. So also the Government collects taxes from the workmen only because they themselves, attracted by the wages collected from themselves, become village and district elders,\* tax collectors, policemen, excise and custom officials; that is, help the Government to do those things of which they complain. The workmen also complain that the factory owners reduce their pay and compel them to work more and more hours; but this also is done only because the **workmen themselves lower the wages by competition**, and also hire themselves to the factory owners as warehousemen, overseers, watchmen and foremen; and search, fine, and in every way oppress their comrades in the interests of their masters.

Lastly, the workmen complain that troops are sent against them if they wish to appropriate the land which they regard as their own, or if they refrain from paying taxes, or organise strikes; but the troops are

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\* Russian official functions performed by peasants elected for the purpose by the peasants themselves.—Trans.



composed of soldiers, and soldiers are those same workmen, who for personal advantage or from fear of punishment have entered the military service, and, contrary both to their conscience and to the law of God they acknowledge, have taken an oath that they will kill all whom the authorities order them to kill.

**So that all the calamities of the workmen are produced by themselves.**

**They need only cease to help the rich and the Governments, and all their sufferings would cease of themselves.**

**Why then do they continue doing that which ruins them?**

### III.

Two thousand years ago a law of God became known to men, the law of reciprocity, that one should act unto others as one wishes others to act to oneself, or, as it is expressed by the Chinese teacher Confucius, "Do not do unto others that which you do not wish others to do unto you."

This law is simple, comprehensible to every one, and obviously gives the greatest welfare possible to man. And therefore it would

seem that as soon as men had learned this law they ought immediately, as far as possible, to fulfil it themselves, and to use all their powers to teach this law and its fulfilment to the rising generations.

It would seem that long ago all men ought to have acted thus, as this law was expressed almost simultaneously by Confucius and Buddha and the Jewish teacher Hillel and by Jesus.

Especially it would seem that the men of our Christian world ought to act thus, recognizing as they do, as the chief divine revelation, that Gospel in which it is explicitly taught that in this law "is all the law and the prophets": that is, all the teaching necessary to man.

And yet almost two thousand years have elapsed and men not only refrain from fulfilling this law and from teaching it to their children, but in most cases they do not themselves even know it, or if they do they regard it either as unnecessary or as impractical.

At first this seems strange, but when one thinks of how people lived before the discovery of this law, and how long they lived so, and of

how the law disagrees with the life of humanity as it has developed, then one begins to understand why it happened that the law was not fulfilled.

It happened because while men did not know the law that for the welfare of all each should do unto others that which he would have others do unto him (the law of reciprocity), **every man endeavoured, for his own profit,** to appropriate as much power as possible over other men.

And having appropriated such power, he had in his turn, in order to profit by it unhindered, to subordinate himself to those who were stronger than he, and to help them. These stronger ones in turn had to submit to those who were stronger than they, and to help them.

So that in societies which did not know the law of reciprocity, of acting with others as one wishes others to act with oneself, always a small number of men dominated all the rest.

And therefore it is comprehensible that when this law was revealed to men, the small number of those who dominated the rest not only



were averse to accepting it for themselves, but also could not desire that those dominated by them should learn and accept it.

The small number of dominating people knew and know very well that their power was and is founded only on the fact that those they dominate are continually fighting among themselves, endeavouring to subjugate each other. And therefore they have used and are always using all the means in their power to conceal this law from their subordinates.

They conceal the law, not by denying it, which is impossible as it is clear and simple—but by putting forward hundreds, thousands of other laws which they assert are more important and obligatory than the law of reciprocity.

Some of these men, **priests**, teach hundreds of ecclesiastical dogmas, rites, offerings, liturgies, which have nothing in common with the **law of reciprocity**, and announce them as the most important laws of God, the neglect of which involves eternal ruin.

Others, the **rulers**, having appropriated the teaching invented by

the priests, institute, on the strength of this, **State regulations** which are directly contrary to the law of reciprocity, and under threat of punishment demand from all their fulfillment.

Others again, learned and rich men, acknowledging neither God nor any obligatory divine law, teach that there is only science and its laws, which they, the learned, discover, and the rich know, and that in order that it should be well for all, it is necessary that people should cultivate the same idle life led by the learned and the rich, through the medium of schools, lectures, theatres, concerts, picture galleries, meetings, and then, they affirm, all the evil from which the workmen suffer will destroy itself.

None of these classes repudiate the law itself, but they put forward side by side with it such a number of all kinds of theological, state and scientific laws, that amidst them all that simple, clear, and universally accessible law of God, the fulfilment of which undoubtedly delivers the majority of men from their sufferings, not only becomes imperceptible but completely disap-



pears.

It is from this cause the wonderful fact has arisen and still arises, that working men, crushed by the Government and the wealthy, continue, generation after generation, to ruin their lives and the lives of their brothers; to resort for the alleviation of their position to the most complicated, cunning, or difficult means, such as prayers, offerings, meek fulfilment of State demands, meetings, associations, trade unions, strikes, revolutions; **but do not resort to the only means: the fulfilment of the law of God, which most certainly would liberate them from their calamities.**

#### IV.

“But is it possible that in so simple and short an utterance, that people should act with others as they desire others to act with them, the whole law of God and the entire guidance of man’s life consists?” those will say who are accustomed to the complication and intricacy of theological, state, and scientific arguments.

Such people imagine that the law of God and the guidance of man’s life must be expressed in diffuse,



complicated theories, and therefore cannot be expressed in so short and simple a statement.

It is true that this law of reciprocity is very short and simple, but it is precisely this shortness and simplicity which demonstrates that it is a true, indubitable, eternal and righteous law; a law of God elaborated by thousands of years of the life of all humanity, and not the production of one man or of one group of men calling themselves the Church, the State, or Science. Theological discussions about the fall of a first man, his redemption, and the second advent; or State and scientific discussions about parliaments, supreme authority, the theory of punishments, property, value, classification of science, natural selection, and so forth,—may be very witty and profound, but are always accessible only to a small number of men. WHEREAS THE LAW OF ACTING WITH OTHERS AS ONE WISHES THEY WOULD ACT WITH ONE'S SELF IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL MEN, WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RACE, RELIGION, EDUCATION, OR EVEN AGE.

Besides this, theological, State or scientific arguments, which are accepted as true at one place and at one time, are regarded as untrue at another time; whereas this law of reciprocity, wherever known, is universally regarded as true; and cannot cease to be true for those who have once comprehended it.

BUT THE CHIEF DISTINCTION BETWEEN THIS LAW AND ALL OTHERS, AND ITS PRINCIPAL ADVANTAGE, IS THAT ALL THEOLOGICAL, STATE, SCIENTIFIC LAWS, NOT ONLY FAIL TO PACIFY MEN AND TO GIVE THEM WELFARE, BUT OFTEN IT IS PRECISELY THESE LAWS WHICH PRODUCE THE GREATEST ENMITY AND SUFFERING.

The law of doing unto others as thou wishest others to do to thee, or of not doing to others as thou dost not wish to be treated, if only it were recognized by thee, **could not produce anything but concord and welfare.** And therefore the consequences of this law are infinitely beneficial and diverse, determining all possible mutual relations of men, and everywhere sub-



stituting concord and service for discord and strife. WERE MEN ONLY TO LIBERATE THEMSELVES FROM THE FRAUDS WHICH CONCEAL THIS LAW FROM THEM, TO RECOGNISE ITS IMPERATIVENESS, AND TO CULTIVATE ITS ADAPTATION TO LIFE, **A SCIENCE, NON-EXISTENT AT PRESENT, WOULD APPEAR, COMMON TO ALL MEN AND THE MOST IMPORTANT IN THE WORLD, A SCIENCE TEACHING HOW, ON THE BASIS OF THIS LAW, ALL COLLISIONS COULD BE AVOIDED, BOTH BETWEEN SEPARATE INDIVIDUALS AND BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY. AND IF THIS AS YET NON-EXISTENT SCIENCE WERE ESTABLISHED AND CULTIVATED, AND TAUGHT TO ALL ADULTS AND CHILDREN AS PERNICIOUS SUPERSTITIONS AND OFTEN USELESS OR HARMFUL SCIENCES ARE NOW TAUGHT, THEN THE WHOLE LIFE OF MAN WOULD CHANGE, AND WITH IT THOSE OPPRESSIVE CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE ENORMOUS MA-**



## JORITY OF MANKIND NOW LIVE.

### V.

The Biblical tradition affirms that long before this law of reciprocity was revealed God gave man "**His law.**"

In this law was included the Commandment "**Thou shalt not kill.**" THIS COMMANDMENT, FOR ITS TIME, WAS AS IMPORTANT AND FRUITFUL AS THE LATER LAW OF RECIPROCITY, BUT THE SAME THING HAPPENED WITH THE FORMER AS WITH THE LATTER. It was not directly repudiated by men, but like the later law it became lost amidst other rules and regulations, which were recognised as equally or even more important than the law of the inviolability of human life. If this injunction had existed alone, and if Moses (according to tradition) had brought down on his tablets as the sole Commandment of God merely these words "**Thou shalt not kill,**" men would have had to recognise the unalterable imperativeness of this law, admitting of no substitute. And were men to recognise this com-

mand as the sole law of God, and to observe it strictly as some observe the keeping of the Sabbath, worshipping icons, the sacrament, abstinence from pork, and so forth, then the whole life of mankind would change, and neither wars nor slavery would any longer be possible, nor the expropriation of the land by the wealthy from the poor, nor the possession by the few of the product of the labour of the many;—because all this is founded only on the possibility or the threat of killing.

So would it be if the command “Thou shalt not kill,” were recognised as the only law of God. But when the commandments about the Sabbath day, about not taking God’s name, and others, were accepted as equally important and on a par with this law, then naturally yet more new priestly ordinances arose, also recognized as equally binding,—and **God’s greatest commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,”** which altered man’s whole life, was drowned among them, and not only ceased to be always obligatory,—cases were even found when one could act in complete con-



tradiction to it; so that to this day this law has not received its proper significance.

The same thing happened also with the law of reciprocity.

So that the chief evil from which men suffer ceased long ago to consist in their ignorance of the true law of God, but in people to whom the knowledge and observance of the true law is disadvantageous, but who are unable to destroy or refute it, inventing "precept upon precept" and "line upon line," as Isaiah says, and giving them out as equally binding or yet more obligatory than the true laws of God. **AND THEREFORE ALL THAT IS NOW NECESSARY FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF MEN FROM THEIR SUFFERINGS IS THAT THEY SHOULD EMANCIPATE THEMSELVES FROM ALL THEOLOGICAL, STATE AND SCIENTIFIC SUPERSTITIONS, PROPOUNDED AS OBLIGATORY LAWS OF LIFE, AND HAVING THUS LIBERATED THEMSELVES, SHOULD NATURALLY RECOGNISE AS MORE BINDING FOR THEMSELVES THAN ALL OTHER REGULATIONS AND**



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## VI.

“But,” some will say, “however just this law of ‘not doing to others’ may be, it cannot be adapted by itself to every circumstance of life. **IF MEN WERE TO RECOGNISE THIS LAW AS ALWAYS OBLIGATORY, WITHOUT EXCEPTION,** THEY WOULD HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE USE OF ANY KIND OF VIOLENCE BETWEEN MEN AS UNLAWFUL, FOR NO MAN DESIRES TO UNDERGO VIOLENCE HIMSELF. And without the exercise of violence on some people the safety of the individual cannot be assured, property cannot be protected, one’s country cannot be defended, the existing order cannot be maintained.”

GOD SAYS TO MEN: “IN ORDER THAT IT SHOULD BE WELL FOR ALL OF YOU, EVERYWHERE AND ALWAYS,

OBSERVE MY LAW OF NOT DOING TO OTHERS WHAT YOU DO NOT WISH THEM TO DO TO YOU."

But men, who have organised a certain system, in the year 1901, in England, Germany, France, Russia, say:—"Perhaps things may become worse if we fulfil this law of God given us for our welfare."

**WE ACCEPT A LAW INVENTED BY A GROUP OF MEN, HOWEVER STRANGE IT MAY BE AND HOWEVER BAD MAY BE THE MEN WHO INVENTED IT, AND WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF FULFILLING IT. BUT A LAW IN ACCORDANCE NOT ONLY WITH REASON AND CONSCIENCE BUT EXPLICITLY EXPRESSED IN A BOOK WHICH WE REGARD AS THE REVELATION OF GOD, WE ARE AFRAID OF FULFILLING, FOR FEAR EVIL MAY COME OF IT OR DISORDER ENSUE.**

**IS IT NOT EVIDENT THAT PEOPLE WHO SPEAK AND THINKS THUS, SPEAK NOT OF ORDER BUT OF DISORDER, IN WHICH THEY LIVE AND FIND PROFITABLE TO THEM?**

**ORDER, ACCORDING TO THEIR IDEA, IS A POSITION WHICH ENABLES THEM TO DEVOUR THE LIVES OF OTHER MEN,—WHILE DISORDER OCCURS WHEN THOSE DEVoured DESIRE THAT THEIR DESTROYERS SHALL CEASE TO DEVOUR THEM.**

Such arguments only demonstrate that the dominating minority feel, in most cases unconsciously, that the recognition of the law of reciprocity not only destroys their advantageous social position but reveals all their immorality and cruelty.

These men cannot argue otherwise.

But for the workmen turned off the land, crushed by taxes, forced into the penal labour of factories, transformed into slaves, into soldiers who torment themselves and their brothers,—for them it is time they understood that **only faith in the law of God and its observance will deliver them from their sufferings.**

The non-observance of this law, and consequently their continually increasing calamities, propel them



towards this. IT IS TIME THE LABOURERS SHOULD FEEL THAT THEIR SALVATION IS IN THIS ALONE; THAT THEY NEED ONLY BEGIN TO OBSERVE THIS LAW OF RECIPROCITY FOR THEIR POSITION TO IMPROVE IMMEDIATELY—TO IMPROVE JUST IN THE DEGREE IN WHICH THE NUMBER OF MEN INCREASE WHO ACT WITH OTHERS AS THEY DESIRE OTHERS TO ACT WITH THEM.

And these are not mere words, not an abstraction like the Church, State, Socialistic, Scientific theories, but an effective means of deliverance.

Theological, State and Scientific theories and promises offer welfare to the workmen, some in the next world, some in this, but always in a distant future, when the bones of those who live and suffer now are rotten;—whereas the law of reciprocity improves the position of the workers at the present moment and without doubt.

If even all workers did not clearly see that by working on the lands and in the factories of capi-

talists they afford them the possibility of profiting by the product of the labour of their own brothers, and that **therefore by thus working they break the law of reciprocity**;—or if, seeing this, they, owing to their wants, had not the power of refusing such work, still the abstinence from such work even of only a few would, by rendering the position of the capitalists more difficult, immediately ameliorate the position of the rest. And the abstinence from direct participation in the activities of capital and government in the capacities of overseers, clerks, tax collectors, custom officials, &c., (obviously contrary to the law of reciprocity), would still more ameliorate the position of the workmen, even if not all were capable of refraining from such activities. And further still, the refusal of the workmen to participate in the army, (which has murder for its object, the act most contrary to the law of reciprocity,)—which latterly is oftener and oftener directed against the workmen—would altogether alter for the better the position of the workers.



## VII.

The Law of God is the Law of God not because, as the priests always affirm about their laws, it has been communicated in a miraculous way by God himself, but because it unmistakably and obviously directs men to that way advancing along which they unquestionably are delivered from their sufferings, and unquestionably obtain the greatest inner (spiritual) and external (physical) welfare,—and that not some particular chosen men, but all men without exception.

Such is the law of God about acting towards others as one wishes that others should act towards oneself. It shows that men fulfilling it unquestionably obtain inner spiritual welfare, in the consciousness of their harmony with the will of God, and of the increase of love in themselves and in others; and that at the same time they obtain in social life the greatest possible welfare accessible to them. Whereas divergence from this law entails aggravation of their position.

And, as a matter of fact, to anyone who does not participate in the mutual struggle between men but



observes life from without, it is evident that the struggling parties act exactly in the same way as gamblers, who surrender a certain though meagre property for the very doubtful possibility of increasing it.

Whether a workman who has lowered the price of his comrades' labour or has accepted the service of the wealthy or has entered the army will better his position, is as doubtful as the success of the gambler. There may be a thousand events owing to which his position will remain the same or become even worse than before. **THIS FACT, HOWEVER, IS CERTAIN, THAT HIS CONSENT TO WORK CHEAPER OR TO SERVE THE CAPITALISTS AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL AGGRAVATE, TO SOME EXTENT AT ALL EVENTS, THE POSITION OF ALL THE WORKERS, AND HIS OWN TOGETHER WITH THEIRS; AS CERTAIN AS THE FACT THAT THE GAMBLER LOSES CONTROL OVER THE SUM HE STAKES.**

To him who does not participate in the struggle but observes life, it

is evident that as in games of hazard, lotteries, Stock Exchange operations, only the owners of the gambling houses, lotteries, stock-broker's offices, make their fortunes, whereas all those who gamble are ruined. So also in life: it is only the Governments, the wealthy, in general the oppressors, who stand to win; whereas those workers who in hope of improving their position diverge from the law of reciprocity, only to aggravate the position of all workers, and therefore also their own.

THE LAW OF GOD IS THE LAW OF GOD FOR THIS REASON, THAT IT DEFINES THE POSITION OF MAN IN THE WORLD, SHOWING HIM THE "BEST" WHICH HE CAN DO FOR HIS SPIRITUAL AS WELL AS FOR HIS PHYSICAL LIFE WHILE IN THIS POSITION.

"Be not anxious" it is said in the Gospel, in explanation of this law; "Be not anxious, saying What shall we eat or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed?

. . . Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first His

kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”

And these are not mere words but the explanation of the true position of man in the world.

IF ONLY MAN FULFILLS WHAT GOD REQUIRES OF HIM; IF HE OBSERVES HIS LAW, THEN GOD ALSO WILL DO FOR HIM THAT WHICH HE REQUIRES. SO THAT THE LAW OF DOING TO OTHERS AS ONE WOULD WISH TO BE DONE TO ONESELF RELATES TO GOD ALSO.

IN ORDER THAT HE SHOULD DO FOR US WHAT WE DESIRE, WE MUST DO FOR HIM WHAT HE DESIRES OF US. AND HE DESIRES OF US THAT WE SHOULD ACT WITH OTHERS AS WE WOULD WISH OTHERS TO ACT WITH US. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS THAT WHAT HE DESIRES OF US IS NEEDFUL NOT FOR HIM BUT FOR OURSELVES, YIELDING THE HIGHEST WELFARE ACCESSIBLE TO US.

#### VIII.

The workmen must cleanse them-



selves in order that the Governments and wealthy shall cease to devour their lives. Impurity breeds only in dirt, and it feeds on strange bodies only while they are unclean. **AND THEREFORE FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF THE WORKERS FROM THEIR CALAMITIES THERE IS ONLY ONE MEANS—THAT OF PURIFYING THEMSELVES. AND TO PURIFY THEMSELVES LIBERATION FROM THEOLOGICAL, STATE, AND SCIENTIFIC SUPERSTITIONS IS NECESSARY, AND NECESSARY ALSO IS FAITH IN GOD AND HIS LAW.**

In this lies the only means of deliverance.

One meets at the present time either an educated or an ordinary almost illiterate workman. Both are filled with indignation against the existing order of things. The educated workman believes neither in God nor His law, but he knows Marxs, Lassalle, and follows the activities of Bebel, Jaures in Parliaments, and delivers stirring orations about the injustice of the seizure of the land, of the implements of labour, of tranference of proper-

ty by inheritance, etc.; whereas the uneducated workman, although he does not know these theories and believes in the Trinity, the Redemption, etc., is, however, equally indignant with the landlords and capitalists, and regards the whole existing organisation as wrong. And yet, give this workman, either the educated or uneducated one, the possibility of bettering his position by producing certain articles cheaper than others, although it may ruin scores, hundreds, thousands, of his comrades,—or the possibility of entering the service of the capitalists in a position which gives him a greater salary, or of buying land, or organising a business himself with hired labour,—and nine hundred and ninety nine out of a thousand will do it without scruple, and defend their possession of the land or their privileges as employers often even more sternously than born landlords and capitalists.

As to their participation in murder (that is, in military service, or in taxes destined to the support of troops), an act not only morally wrong but most pernicious to their comrades and themselves, the very



act which forms the basis of their slavery—about this none of them trouble, and all either consent to pay the taxes for the army or become soldiers themselves, regarding such actions as quite normal.

Is it possible that out of such men any society can be formed other than the one which now exists?

**THE WORKMEN LAY THE BLAME OF THEIR POSITION ON THE AVARICE AND CRUELTY OF THE LAND OWNERS, CAPITALISTS, COERCIONISTS, BUT ALL OR ALMOST ALL THE WORKMEN, WITHOUT FAITH IN GOD AND HIS LAW, ARE SIMILARLY, ONLY ON A SMALLER AND UNSUCCESSFUL SCALE, LAND OWNERS, CAPITALISTS, AND COERCIONISTS.**

A country lad in need of a livelihood comes up to town to a friend who has a place as a coachman in the house of a wealthy merchant, and begs him to find him a berth at wages lower than those current. The country lad is ready to accept such a situation, but coming next morning, he casually overhears in the servants' room the complaint



of an old man who has lost his situation and is at a loss to know how to live. The lad is sorry for the old man and he relinquishes his berth, not wishing to act to another man as he does not wish to be done to. Or else a peasant with a large family accepts the well paid position of steward to a rich and exacting landowner. The new steward feeling his family now provided for, is glad of the situation, but on entering his duties he has immediately to enforce fines on the peasants for horses which have strayed in the gentlemen's fields; he has to catch women collecting dead branches for their fires in the landowner's woods; he has to reduce the wages of the workmen and to compel them to labour to the utmost verge of their strength. And the steward feels that his conscience does not allow him to do these things. He refuses, and notwithstanding the complaints and reproaches of his family, he gives up his situation and occupies himself with something else which yields him much less. Or else again a soldier has been brought with his company against workmen in re-

volt and told to fire at them. He refuses to obey and for this endures cruel suffering. All these act thus because the evil which they are doing to others is evident to them, and their heart clearly tells them that this which they are doing is contrary to the law of God, that one should not do to others as one does not wish others to act to one-self. But if a workman beating down the price of certain work does not see those whom he thereby injures, the evil he thus causes to his comrades does not therefore diminish. And if a workman pass over to the side of the employers and neither sees nor feels the injury he is causing his comrades, the injury still remains. It is the same with a man who enters the military service and prepares to kill his brothers if necessary. If he does not yet see, when entering the service, whom and where he will kill when he learns to shoot and to stab, he can at any rate understand that shooting and stabbing will be his work.

AND THEREFORE IN ORDER  
THAT THE WORKMEN SHOULD  
FREE THEMSELVES FROM

THEIR OPPRESSION AND BONDAGE, THEY MUST EDUCATE IN THEMSELVES THE RELIGIOUS FEELING WHICH PROHIBITS ALL THAT AGGRAVATES THE GENERAL CONDITION OF THEIR BROTHERS EVEN WHEN THIS AGGRAVATION IS NOT APPARENT. They must **religiously** refrain (as people now refrain from eating pork, eating meat during fasts, from work on Sundays, and so forth), firstly, from working for capitalists if they can possibly get on without; secondly from offering their work at a lower rate than that current; thirdly, from improving their position by passing over to the side of the capitalists and serving their interests; and fourthly and chiefly, from participating in Government coercion, be it police, custom-house or military service.

**Only by such a religious attitude** toward the form of their activity can the workmen liberate themselves from their oppression.

**If** the workman for gain or from fear is ready to enter the ranks of organized murderers—soldiers,—without his conscience rebuking



him, if for the increase of his welfare he is ready deliberately to deprive his more needy comrade of his earnings, or for the sake of salary to pass over to the side of the oppressors helping them in their activity,—he has nothing to complain of.

**Whatever his position, he makes it himself; and he himself cannot be other than one of the oppressed or one of the oppressors.**

And this cannot be otherwise. Without belief in God and His law man **cannot** but desire to procure for himself in his short life the greatest amount of welfare, whatever consequences this may entail for others. **AND AS SOON AS PEOPLE DESIRE, EACH ONE FOR HIMSELF, THE GREATEST POSSIBLE WELFARE, INDEPENDENTLY OF THE CONSEQUENCES TO OTHERS, THEN INEVITABLY, WHATEVER THE ORGANISATION INTRODUCED, SUCH MEN WILL FORM A HEAP WITH A POINTED TOP, A CONE,—AT THE APEX THE RULERS AND UNDERNEATH THEM THE OPPRESSED.**

## IX.

It is stated in the Gospel that Jesus pitied men for their exhaustion and dispersion "like sheep without a shepherd."

What would he have felt and said to-day, seeing men not only exhausted and dispersed like sheep without a shepherd, but millions of men all over the world, generation after generation, ruining themselves in brutish labour, stultified, unenlightened, in the power of vice, killing, torturing each other, notwithstanding that the means of deliverance from all these calamities was given them two thousand years ago?

The key to the lock of the chain forged around the working people has been placed by their side, and they need only take this key and unlock the chain to become free. But the working men as yet do not do this, but either undertake nothing and yield themselves to despair, or else struggle and break their bones in the hope of forcibly sundering the unbreakable chain; or else, which is even worse, acting like a captive animal when it rushes at the one who tries to free it,



they attack those who indicate the key which would open the lock on their chain.

**This key is faith in God and his law.**

Only when men throw off those superstitions in which they are deliberately trained, when they believe that the law of doing to others what one desires others to do is the most important Divine law of our time, believe this as firmly as some now believe in keeping the Sabbath, others in fasting, liturgies, sacraments, and others in the repetition of prayers, or the observance of oaths, and so forth, and when, having thus believed, **they fulfil this law in preference to all other laws and ordinances**,—only then will the slavery and distressed condition of the workmen be abolished.

And therefore it is necessary that the workmen themselves should first of all, without sparing old habits and traditions, and without fearing external persecution from church and state, or internal strife with one's relatives,—boldly and deliberately free themselves from the false faiths in which they have been educated, shall more and more



make clear to themselves and others, and especially to the young generations and to children, the essence of faith in God and of the consequent law of reciprocity, and shall follow this law to their utmost strength although it involve temporary disadvantages. Thus should the workmen themselves act.

As to the ruling minority who, profiting by the labour of the workmen, have acquired all the advantages of education, and therefore can clearly discern the deceits in which the labourers are kept—as to these, if they do indeed desire to serve the working people, they should first of all both by example and by word endeavour to free them from those religious and state deceits in which they are entangled, and not act as they now do: that is, while sparing, supporting and even strengthening by their example these deceits, especially the chief religious ones, offer ineffective and even pernicious remedies which not only fail to liberate the workmen from their calamities but even more and more aggravate their position.

WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW

THIS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED NO ONE CAN SAY. ONE THING ONLY IS CERTAIN—THAT THIS MEANS ALONE CAN FREE THE ENORMOUS MAJORITY OF MANKIND—ALL THE LABOURERS — FROM THEIR HUMILIATIONS AND SUFFERINGS.

THERE ARE NO OTHER MEANS, NOR CAN THERE BE.

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