Socialism and Individualism

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Since the latter part of the eighteenth century the words socialism, communism, nihilism, and anarchism have become familiar to the people of Europe and America. To the young thinking these mean one and the same thing: yet how greatly they differ in theory if not always in practice! For nihilism little can be said. It is the doctrine that all existing institutions of society are worthless and offensive and that our first duty is to surfe them from the face of the earth; they build anew on the right place. The theory of the anarchist is closely allied to this. He would overturn all your
erminent, and cast aside the right of property. The great principle of the anarchists and nihilists is this, that they seem to forget that after the world had been subdued mankind would still be as wise and as far as ever from the ideal which their doctrines would tend to be successful. If anarchism and nihilism did not ever carry out their principles of destruction, how quickly would feudalism and imperialism like that of former times be substituted for the democracy of today.

Socialism and Communism do not represent more sensible phases of social reform, yet they are often somewhat to the latter criticism. Their origin may be placed at the time of the French revolution, though ideal socialists lived before that time, and small communities
had existed before that. Yet there was no practical socialism of importance
previous to that date. The events of the
latter part of the eighteenth century
broke down feudalism, and individualized society. In fact society
was split in a surgically di-
agnostic state and went with
the extremes of fine competition.
The third estate advanced rapidly un-
der the new regime, but soon a fourth
estate appeared in the person of the dry
laborer, whose position in society was
often hard and always insecure.
When men perceived that the new dis-
ensation brought us permanent re-
ief to the great mass of humanity,
reactions set in against individualism
and the doctrines of socialism and
communism were brought forward.
Though the world has proceeded greatly
under the rule of psychoanalysts, all
that was hoped for by the originators
of the plan is still far from being
accomplished. So it is well for us to examine the opposite systems and try if any truth can be derived from them.

Communism asks for economic equality. This is the central idea of the doctrine. Communists would take away all differences of rank or station in society, but each would try to do as good as another and the popular 크게 would try to do as good as another. The state would hold all property, and all would work for the common good. There is however little in Communism to interest us. Some few communities have been successful in a small way like the Icarian community in Iowa, yet it is a cold, formal, materialistic place tended to level men down rather than lift. I do not believe that Communism could ever be successful to a great extent for it is founded on the fallacy that man is or should be equal, which they
never have been nor ever can be. As well cut a straight channel for a river and hope to keep it so as to form a society of men on a fixed line of equality, and expect to hold them to it. Socialism is a good word as both a general and specific term. It is in fact of elastic meaning, including all grades of social reformers from progressive conservatives to revolutionary anarchists and nihilists. Communists are certainly socialists, and a great deal more. But they appear to us to be a certain measure of contradiction in calling anarchism a socialist movement for the complete development of individualism would be anarchy. These two are certainly antagonistic. The individualist regards the state as a necessary evil; the socialist regards it a necessary good. The first says the state shall know the laws and do nothing more; the second demands that the state shall
not only preserve the peace but shall also manage the business affairs of citizens. The individualist says the state shall not interfere with the private affairs of citizens; if any man starve for lack of occupation whereby to earn his bread, he is to be pitied but it is for the good of the greatest number that socialism does the state must restrain the strong and help the weak. As Dr. Elgin puts it, a socialist is one who looks to society organized in the state for aid. He disagrees about a sure perfect distribution of economic goods and an elevation of humanity while the individualist expects every man to work out his own salvation material and spiritual. The one says "every man is his brother's keeper, the other says "every man for himself." Individualism has self-love for its creed, and depends on self-love to
Carry it out. Socialism is founded on the Christian idea of equality, and appeals for its support to the love of duty for man. The theory of socialism seems by far the more noble of the two, yet there are great and serious objections to such an organization of society. In the first place the demands of the socialists are exorbitant. They would change at a blow not only the whole organization of society, but even the character of moral habits taught by long training to blend yet unworldliness. They would take away all chance for progress, and yet green up a dead level of mediocrity. Though socialism has had an ugly run in trial, we may look to the communistic state for which it is not so very different as the long run
for examples of the kind of way in which the communities have yet to show a sort of social organization with the use of their labor, which would be no more than the state and from their ordinary facilities there would be no chance for the citizen to rise. Socialists claim that their system is the only just one, and their formula for the proposed plan is generally given, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." Under such a rule, it is obvious that the most efficient laborer will receive no more than the idle and unwilling one, and if fact, laissez-faire would be crueler, if the land favors defending
one line than the other. Is there justice in this? Absolutely not.

This is shown, says a recent writer by the life of nations. Why
are the most civilized nations
the most prosperous than less civ-
ilized ones? Certainly because of
the more intelligence, skill and life-
v or moral qualities of the higher order.

So it is true of both nations and
individuals, that when working
in their own behalf they are re-
warded according to their abilities
and not according to their needs.
Any other method is certainly
unjust. But since socialists
would reward men according
to their merit, will not gold,
but how shall the state decide any
better than society decides now with
each man decides? And even
if it does decide, will not the
inequalities by just as great and
as grinding in those who are
cein the least munificent as they are now. Then arises the
most grave one, making a very
very low according to his abilities
and rewarding him according to
his needs in the communist state.
In it there is no room for genius
or talent or for ought but idleness.
Socialism would take away free
competition, which, though sometimes
erected to such an extent as to
be harmful, is nevertheless the
great incentive to industry and efficiency.

As Mr. de Laveleye says, the
socialist overlooks the fact that
individual interest is the indispensable
incentive of the great mass of
unskilled labor and economy.
It is true that high-minded men
may act on sentiments of charity
devotion and love, but for the higher
production of wealth is needed
the stimulus of personal wishes
and responsibility. Hence a
Communistic regimes will always be an exception. The impracticability of socialism is well pointed out by John Stuart Mill, where he says it presupposes a higher degree of mental and moral culture among workmen than they now possess and which they can only regain by degrees. But by far the most deplorable error of the socialists is the attempt to establish this regime by violent and revolutionary means. It may be easy enough to destroy and slay, but it is much more difficult to establish a new system.

No plan of government the personal liberty which we have enjoyed only after fighting for centuries for it can be lost, succed our free government today. Men are alarmed at the spread of socialism and justly too for its tendency an dangerous in the extreme. Yet as Dr. Gridley so well says, is not
This attempt to restrain liberty the reaction against too much liberty. Rousseau and Locke went too far when they tried to prove in their philosophy that the individual was all and society nothing. Society they said is the creation of the individual, and of course it was if nothing beyond what he freely contracts to pay it. Society was a convenience, but not a necessity; he could withdraw from it if he chose. He had entered it freely. This was a great exaggeration of the rights and powers of the individual. Extremes individualism was a good thing, by which to break away from the old system of eighteenth century, but how sure is it not well for the foundation principle of the social of guile of the eighteenth. They forget that rights and obligations are correlative among equals. While a man claims a right he asserts that
It is the duty of others to respect it. And likewise whatever rights they have, he is bound to respect. Individualism goes too far when it asserts for the doctrine of the economic world, "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." Such a rule cannot endure in society, for it leads to nothing else than anarchy. It is useless for men to maintain that society can be run smoothly on the principle of self-love alone, that each individual should seek the greatest gratification. It never has been nor ever can be. True, the world has profited in a material way under the regime of individualism, but what is that to spiritual and moral welfare? Even of America, the leader of the offense, it is said it has produced more paupers and more millionaires in a shorter length of time than any
than other nations in history. Indeed it is
true that there is no social
governmental question. The frequent interruptions
in the economic world disprove such
a statement, for it cannot be in a
normal condition as long as we
have strikes, boycotts, and like dis-
turbances. Though political economy
may build up a science by noting
the laws that govern the economic
world of today, it is the science of
an abnormal society. In like man-
er a physician may frame his
theory of the action of some organ
of the body by observing it in a
diseased condition, but this induction
will not be the laws of the healthy
human body.
When individualistic rules are uncontrolled
it tends to destroy society. "Society
is the achievement of the co-operative
man; the competition man is the
architect of [deadlock]." It is
in vain for political economists
to claim that civil unrest guarantees to each man the use of all his power exclusively for his sole welfare.

No society has ever existed or can exist under such conditions. For as a recent writer says, the solidarity and interdependence of the modern economic world makes the old individualism an absurdity.

If neither socialism nor individualism will serve as the doctrine of a harmonious society, what ground are we to take to lead us to better social relations? The best we may hope to attain is to combine the beneficial features of both systems. "There is no need," says Professor Foxwell, "of substituting socialism for individualism as long as the individual remains unchanged. That would make matters worse than before. What is wanted is to sociology the individual." That is it exactly. Already in the light of advancing civilization the state has adapted
numerous socialistic functions as state Charities, state educational institutions, and matrimonial monopolies. But though the state may do much it cannot do all. In the minds and morals of men must come the reforms. Socialism did much for the cause of progress, when it forced political economy to recognize, as Schomberg and Tawney and the natural science of political economy, that it is not merely the natural science of political economy, but that it should formulate a system of moral administration for the interests of society. Economists are rapidly accepting the fact that political economy is an ethical science, but the philosophy of the state and the market is still rife with individualism. Every man is born into complex social relations, as Dr. Gladwin says, and the strain of these natural relations has disturbed society. The social classes
have been told that they over
each other nothing. This they must
unlearn. Individualism we must
have, but men must be taught
that their part in the economic
world is only well performed
where done with a cordial re-
gard for the welfare of the whole
society. Instead of assuming
Economic apologists that they urge
of society tell us we are righted in
stead of singing for the sorrow of
it. Let the helpless die, let us
practice that spirit of socialism which
would break the strong bow trampling
down the weak, and create a public
opinion which will not countenance
the demoralizing selfishness and
arid of the world of trade today.
We can have this much of soci-
what without society dominating
over the individual. After all it
is, as Dr. Ely says, when a Christian
idea of the Brotherhood of man
because a living reality, the sick and the poor will live together in peace. Of course such a reform can be but gradual, but we can tend toward it at any rate, and hope at some time to attain it, if the progress of humanity is real and like that of Dr. Toegheville safe of the progress of democracy, the fact the church continues the eldest and the most permanent in history. Among the whatever permanent advances we have made is social reform done line rather through evolution than revolution.