ATTRACTIVE LABOUR.

In what I wrote last month I tried to make it clear that under the laissez-faire system of competition, the worker is exposed to a手工 intensive occupation, and that to consider what a difference it would make in labour if it were carried out. It is not too much to say that the difference would be immeasurable; labour so set about would not differ in degree from our present system for the better, that the remaining conditions are necessary: leisure and the enjoyment of external surroundings. I need not say much about the first, it may be thought, since among the better-off part of the workers the struggle with the employers about the length of the working day is needful for these workers. On the other hand, as great a gain was made of the old day's labour has really meant a mere raising of wages.

As for real leisure in work I am afraid I must say that working men do not know what it means; their work being generally an anxious, strained hurry of drudgery, varied by what the natural and social need of such slavery is the greater part of men are wasted of it, a listless dawdling through the day, when owing to the due driver not being to the fore they are able to indulge in it. Both of these miseries are apart from the way of working that is the making of a man, and used to be; and they are a standard of the community: the work would be done deliberately and thoughtfully for the good's sake and not for the profit's sake, but cleanly and briskly too, under the influence of hope and the looking, not to now day's drudgery, but this day's further pleasure by men saying, "Let us get through with this job, and then on to the next piece of our life." In work so done there is no slavery; whereas ordinary work now is nothing but slavery. It is only a question whether the slaves shall be idle or industrious, but in kind. To the most part, looking at the effect on the community, they had better be idle.

Work so done, with variety and intelligently, not intensified to the bursting point of the human machine, and yet with real workmanlike, or rather artistic eagerness, would not be a burden, but an interest added to life quite apart from its necessity; with such work to do we might even bear with equanimity as a temporary evil, some of the discomforts of our town life, though surely not the dreadful squall which the hierarchy of compulsory competition condemns us to; and yet there is no reason why we should bear with the discomforts; it is, for instance, only the necessity for making a profit that compels us to the wretched and even ridiculous want of elbow-room, which is the universal rule in factories.

The crowding up of factories into huge towns, or congeries of towns, is a thing which we shall refuse to bear when we work voluntarily and for the purpose of leading happy lives. A great deal of work is still done on the workshop rather than the factory system, and it is probable that the great part of men are wasted in drudgery. On the other hand, where associated labour on the large scale was necessary, and the factory system in its fullest organisation had to be used, each of those factories highly improved as to the workshop, as it would by, should be itself a town. It should be no mere phantasmagoria on a philanthropical basis, arranged for the passing an existence somewhat better indeed than our helpless wage-slaves of the mill now live, but bare of the real joys of life; but those who have all the resources for a refined and well-occupied life—at once, manly, restful and eager. There is no reason why it should not be beautiful itself, and the country about it might well be a garden. When we were working for our own wealth, and not the slave of others, we should surely think it well in our own hands to determine a part of our work on housing ourselves decently, and on taking care that we left behind our work no signs of the haste, bred by the terror of ruin and starvation, in the shape of smoke and ash—

Supplement to "The Commonweal."
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heaps and all the unutterable filth which now disgrace our manufactories. The term "detail" is distinctly brand the work done there for what it is—work done by helpless slaves for helpless masters.

But work done under such conditions as I have been trying to sketch out would, I am sure, be attractive to all except the exceptions, the men to whose advantage it is, who are left over by the excessive work which is the general lot of the workers or by the privileged idleness of the rich, and whose descendants might last through a few generations, but would soon melt into the general body of people living in the hands of others.

By such work and such a life we should be set free from inestimable warfare among ourselves for the nober contest with Nature, and should find that she also, when conquered, would be our friend, and not our enemy.

—William Morris.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANISE!

II.

If you wish the revolution of society to evolve apace, Educate, though this task be even harder than to Agitate, the people.

Educate! Reform and train, enlighten and invigorate yourself of self and fellow-workers in mind and soul and body; for the battle is not to the strong the most able minds but the peculiar intellects of sympathetic social impulse, of strong determination, and enduring frame. Educate! Not in the sense and meaning of the Philistine, but right against and in the teeth of him. Not by brow beat by the argument of their sense and reason, but by grace of an inner life that will not stand the scratch, but by instilling into the very life-blood of those you are dealing with those elements of reason and emotion which will give them strength to proclaim their convictions, to stand forth in protest of this vice against the rule of brute force, fraud and hypocrisy!

Educate! Though your task be gigantic and your labours seem as ill-rewarded as the toil of Sisyphus. Educate! Although you have not only to undo the works of the vulgar, of the idlers, of quacks and cheats, who do those pernicious business with the approval and subsidy of the State, but you have also to counteract the influence of those very circumstances and surroundings, which are the cause of, and continually recreate, the blindness and confusion of this vice, against the rule of brute force, fraud and hypocrisy!

Educate! Learn and teach to combat all prejudice and superstition. Give rational scope to the exercise of your senses so that you may trust and obey them safely and to the exclusion of all and every "authority." Never blindly take for granted anything you hear simply because someone with a name and with a station has asserted it; but doubt and inquire, try and investigate before you judge, so that you may become convinced of the truth before you assert it. The facts must be ascertained to determine the phenomena of nature and those of animal life, so that you may willingly comply with them for your sake and the sake of others; observe and study above all the causes of facts and effects which has brought about that form of human organisation which has for its purpose the production of wealth.

Educate! Society. Is it only when you understand the true nature of this institution, the conditions of its existence and its life, the manner and tendency of its growth and development, that you will be able to gauge the motives of human action, of human passion and desire, of human love and hatred, of human wealth and poverty!

Educate! It is this knowledge, mainly, or the want of it, which will determine whether our race is to fall into barbarism and nakedness, or whether it is to evolve into a higher and nobler form of existence:

Educate! Learn and teach that man is eminently a social being; that community, not of himself, but of society, of its arrangements and opportunities, its liberties and compulsions, its privileges and its constraints. There is no "self-made man." Any more than there is, for the matter of that, a "self-grown" flower or a "self-composed" mineral. All his acquisitions are the result of his own labour and the industry of others. An offspring of the expenditure of the time and the sweat of all his virtues and his vices, and all his luck or misadventures, he owes to his natural inheritance, the circumstances he was born into and the chances he came across in the path of his existence. To rebel against an outward force of gentility, in the animal world results on the whole in the survival of the fittest, has in human society, with its artificial divisions, assumed a modified aspect. What with superstition, authoritative rule and capitalism, the struggle for existence between man and man has become a wide and rockless scramble for an advantageous position, from the pinnacle of which the favours of circumstances may with impunity exploit, coerce and rule their less fortunate fellows creatures. This unequal battle for an advantageous position is not conducive to the evolution of a new species of the human kind. Its pressure crushes, rather than gives scope to, noble gifts and human aspirations, whilst it allows the cunning and unscrupulous to raise themselves to power.

Educate! Learn and explain what are your "liberties," and what is meant by "freedom." We are free of mind when our mental faculties are strong and are acting healthily; we are free in body when we enjoy the full use of all the mechanical appliances of our nature, and we are free of mind and body, that is, of ourselves, there is necessary to us another freedom, that is the possibility of securing the conditions which will keep our mind and body in a state of health, life, namely, freedom.

This economical power, the power of sustaining life and making it worth living, is the Fountainhead of Freedom. It is at present the privilege of a few; to make it attainable to everyone, to spread it to the utmost limits of the human species found itself bound by. To gradually organise such powerlessness it needed the banding together of individuals into social groups, and hence it follows that the aim and purpose of society is to evolve the power given by the degree of freedom which, by their isolated individual efforts they would ever fail to attain—to Social Freedom. A society in which the few are rich and the many poor; in which the rich are idle and the poor overworked; in which the idle are debauched through want and the overworked are overworked is—such a society fulfils not its purpose; it stands condemned and cursed by its results, and its days are numbered.

Educate! Further, what you are doing you will hasten the downfall of the old and the advent of a new form of society—a society in which there is no room for slaves or masters; which knows no private enterprise and risk, no private gain or disadvantage; which, in most of its human toil and pain are lessened, and human joys increased a thousandfold, through the work being shared by all in common; in which, through joint-responsibility of all, a chance to each is given to unfold its natural gifts for good in all forms of use and splendour, whilst its evils seeming even for want of chance to be feared.

Educate! Whilst lifting up your minds and morals in pursuance of our lofty aims, be not neglectful of your bodies; for healthy minds need healthy frames to dwell in, and New Society's birth, perhaps abnormal, may need your help in many ways. 'Tis but too true that most of you have hardly any choice, but let those who have, look not to fashionable food— for that is always dear, like everything the crowd goes after—but here in the one, try to get something better for yourselves. When the time has been found to determine the phenomena of nature and those of animal life, so that you may willingly comply with them for your sake and the sake of others; observe and study above all the causes of facts and effects which has brought about that form of human organisation which has for its purpose the production of wealth:

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Andrew Scheu.

With the "pluck" worthy of junior representatives of this great nation, some half-dozen louts belonging to the English middle classes attacked and did to death a small boy a short while ago. The louts were in the "upper forms" of King's College School, their victim in the form of a poor fellow, who had nothing but the command of the hands of the Public Prosecutor. Had the murder occurred in the course of a row between roughs on the Embankment, the perpetrator or perpetrators would doubtless have been taken; but the youth have met with condign punishment. As it is, the criminals being "the sons of gentlemen," and the honour of the functionaries of a high-class public school being at stake, the evidence will as certainly be found insufficient to convict. But after all, the country can scarcely afford to be the prey of those amiable youths, who turned a verdict of "death from misadventure" in as clear a case of (to say the least) manslaughter as ever came before a jury. But, after all, the country can escape hardly afford to baffle the prospects of these noble youths. They'd be far to make admirable British soldiers—i.e., Arab-shooters.