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I. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SEMINARY CURRICULUM.¹

I AM disposed to look upon the subject the discussion of which I have been asked to open, as a practical rather than as a purely theoretical one. One result of this mode of looking at it will be that we shall approach it from the point of view of our existing institutions, and ask, not what is the ideal curriculum for theological study, but what is the ideal and what the practicable curriculum for such institutions as our theological seminaries actually are.

The fundamental facts here, I take it, are three.

(1), Our theological seminaries are not the theological departments of universities, but training schools for the Christian ministry. That is to say, the object they set before themselves is fundamentally a practical one. They do not exist primarily in order to advance theological learning, but in order to impart theological instruction; their first object is not investigation, but communication; and they call their students to them, not that these may explore the unknown, but that they may learn the known in the sphere of theological truth. They do not exist primarily, again, in order to place in reach of all who may be interested in theological thought facilities for acquiring information concerning whatever department of theological learning each inquirer may for the moment desire to give his attention to; but in order that they may provide for a select body of young men, who

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II. THE OLD TESTAMENT IN ITS RELATION TO SOCIAL REFORM.

THERE has, probably, never been a time when there was a greater desire among men, and especially among the laboring classes, to improve their condition, than in our own. The question of division and remuneration of labor has created a movement, the like of which the world has never seen. An international party of revolution has been formed, which means to bring about this improvement of the social relations by means of force. The aim of this so-called socialism is an entirely new order of things, in which all inequality is to disappear in universal communism, where there will be neither rich nor poor, neither master nor servant, and where all dissatisfaction, strife, and misery shall cease. Certain voices in this party even demand the abolition of religion and the church, of matrimony, and of private property. The earlier socialists, as *e. g.*, Count St. Simon (died 1825), Charles Fourier *et al.*, did not by any means intend to break with religion, and among the later socialists there are also nobler men, such as the American, Edward Bellamy, who have not yet lost all respect for the things considered sacred by most men. In that communistic era described by Bellamy, even divine worship is held every Sabbath. But the great mass of socialists is undoubtedly inimical to religion.

The views of the socialists, which are proclaimed with all the enthusiasm of a new faith, are all the more dangerous, because, under the present social conditions, there really exists an oppressive inequality among men. An unheard-of development of the mechanical arts, caused by the invention of ever new machinery, and which threatens, before long, to drive the small artisan entirely from the field; a system of unscrupulous spoliation of laborers, who are considered by the employer merely as so many "hands," and whom he uses like machines for his own enrichment; a fabulous amassing of wealth in the hands of a few, and at the same time total impoverishment of thousands; these things impart to socialism a certain degree of vindication.

It cannot be expected, however, that the evils in human society will be removed in the manner proposed by socialism. This can only be accomplished by removing the causes which lie at their roots. And these are to be found, on the one hand, in the materialistic views, according to which the goods of this world are alone considered worth having; on the other hand, in the selfishness of men, in that cold and heartless egotism, that would keep and increase everything it has, no matter what may become of the others. These two go hand in hand; selfishness has assumed such terrible dimensions in our days, because irreligion has become so general. When men lose the living God of revelation, then they also lose the foundation of all "morality and virtue." Then there is no plausible reason why matrimony and property should be considered sacred. If there be no living God who gives to every man what he pleases, then all human order and human rights are also overthrown, and mankind becomes a horde of robbers who know but one right, viz., to take what they can get.

In order to remove the social evils of mankind, a remedy is required which will remove the selfishness of men. This remedy is found solely in religion. In the revealed word of God alone are to be found the ways which lead to a reconciliation of the contending parties, and to the amelioration of the social relations. Not until men return to God will peace be established. To prove all this, with the aid of the Old Testament, is the object of this paper.

I. THE SOCIAL PROBLEM IN THE PAST.

If the social problem could be solved by legislation, it would have been solved long ago by the Mosaic law. Moses justly exclaims, "What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" (Dent. iv. 8.) These laws, in which mercy and justice are wisely blended, form a veritable mine of social wisdom, which nowadays is heeded far too little. There is, perhaps, no part of the Old Testament of which it is so difficult for ordinary readers to get a clear idea as that which relates to the Mosaic legislation. There is such a mixing-up of narrative with law that the reader is easily bewildered. The laws of Israel may be classified under

four heads: (1), The Ten Commandments, or Words; (2), The Book of the Covenant; (3), The Levitical Code; (4), The Deuteronomic Code. In casting a glance into these laws, we can only notice what is of importance regarding the social relations of men. We begin with a brief review of the ten commandments. These are the fundamental law, the brief sum of the divine will.

"I am Jehovah, thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;" these words form the preface to the ten commandments. Reminding the people of God's mighty miracles, through which he had revealed himself as the almighty God and gracious Saviour and protector of Israel, they were to them a standing exhortation to obey and trust God. Jehovah is the God and King of Israel; this is, therefore, the fundamental article of the Jewish constitution. The relation to God dominated all the views of the Israelites, and formed the basis of their entire social life.

Man's relation to God determines his relation to his fellowmen. Luther justly says of *the first commandment*: "Where the heart is right with God, and where this commandment is kept, there all the other commandments follow." For, while it forbids all idolatry, it also enjoins that fear of God which is mingled with love, such a fear as an affectionate and dutiful child has of offending the parent. This fear of God excludes all fear of men and, therefore, assures the possession of true liberty; while the love of God, as our common Father, assures true equality and fraternity among men. Thus the first commandment furnishes the true foundation for the three supreme demands of socialism: liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The fourth commandment, also, has an important bearing upon the social relations of human society. It is to be noted that it does not merely enjoin the keeping holy of one day. It also says: "Six days shalt thou labor." In requiring every man to labor, it ennobles and exalts labor. It stamps idleness as sin. The industrious wage-earner is exalted far above the distinguished man of leisure, whose sole object of life is idleness and enjoyment, instead of work. In setting apart the seventh day as a day of rest, the fourth commandment meets the want of the human system for

rest. "The Sabbath was made for man." Every creature needs rest. It has been demonstrated that men and animals that rest one day out of seven, accomplish more in six days than others do in seven. The weekly day of rest is a most beneficent gift of God to the laborer, after the fatigue of the week. A really beneficent Sabbath rest is impossible, however, except where the day is indeed kept holy. With only an outward observance of the Sabbath as a day of recreation, its observance becomes frivolous, and such a Sabbath is a social menace, rather than a blessing. The Sabbath must be, above all, a day of private and public worship, without which true piety and religion itself are impossible.

The fifth commandment furnishes the basis of a happy family life, which is, again, the foundation of social welfare. In the socialistic commonwealth, as described by that eminent socialist, August Bebel, there can be no well-regulated family life. The children are turned over to a general training-school. Everybody is fed in immense state restaurants. Thus the hearth and home are destroyed. How, in such a state, a regulated, much more a happy, social condition is possible, is unimaginable. With the Israelites, these tender family bonds were fostered as with no other nation. Even the slaves were considered members of the family. Blessed is the nation, with whom these firm and tender family ties prevail among the high and low classes. Therein lie the strength and marrow of a nation. In this commandment temporal well-being is made dependent on its fulfilment. What socialism demands—temporal prosperity—here it is promised, in a manner, it is true, which is directly the opposite of what they propose. Not by undermining authority, but by upholding it, is the welfare of a nation promoted.

The morality of a man and of a people may be estimated according to the value they place on human life. *The sixth commandment* is, "Thou shalt not kill," or, more properly, "commit murder." Among the Israelites, the principle had prevailed since the days of Noah, that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Gen. ix. 6.) In our days many socialists contend that a political murder is not only at times

justifiable but a heroic act. We need only allude to the laxity of many courts in punishing murderers, to justify the wish that the severity of the Mosaic law on this point would still prevail. That would, doubtless, be the most effective means of restoring the correct view of the value of human life.

If, furthermore, the conception of matrimony is a gauge of the morality of a nation, then Israel need not feel ashamed alongside the other ancient nations. In the Old Testament, marriage is regarded as a divine institution. (Gen. ii. 18.) While polygamy prevailed with all the ancient nations, the Mosaic law, though not expressly forbidding it, placed so many barriers around it as to gradually suppress it. At the time of Christ, polygamy had almost entirely disappeared from among the Jews, a proof that the spirit of the law was inimical to it. No law is more ruthlessly set aside by socialistic writers than *the seventh*. Bebel, in his book, *Woman and Socialism*, advocates free love. One cannot but shudder at the thought of the moral conditions which would ensue, should the state of affairs advocated by this writer ever be realized.

The eighth commandment protects man's property, and touches one of the most burning social questions. The Israelites possessed no absolute right of possession, for Jehovah said: "The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." (Lev. xxv. 23.) What is here said of the right to the soil is true of all earthly possessions. "For what hast thou, that thou hast not received?" Christians are to regard all their possessions as a trust, for which they are responsible to God. Unfortunately, most men have no idea that they are God's stewards and accountable to him for the use of their temporal goods. Socialism demands the abolition of all private property, on the ground of the notorious principle of Proudhon: "*La propriété c'est le vol.*" (Property is theft.) This principle is not more reprehensible before God than the other: "My property is mine; with it I may do as I please." Both are in conflict with the biblical principle, that all property is a trust. But there is a human right to property. This is threefold. It is (1), either the right of acquisition, or (2), that of inheritance, or (3), that of donation. Any encroachment upon these rights is a transgres-

sion of God's law, whether it is through force (by robbery, theft, or extortion), or through fraud and deceit, or with an appearance of right (by twisting the law, or taking advantage of its letter, while its spirit is violated). Thus it is also a sin to make too great demands upon the laborer, as it is a sin for the latter if he does not guard the interests of his employer with all diligence. This commandment, therefore, forms the basis of all honesty, faithfulness, and conscientiousness, which are the very pillars of social life.

The ninth commandment resists all injury inflicted upon the neighbor through the tongue, whether by unjust accusations or slighting contempt. The non-observance of this commandment is adding much to heighten class hostility. While many of the upper classes look with contempt upon the laborer and servant, it cannot be denied that in laboring circles, too, abuse and slander largely prevail, and have become favorite weapons and shameful means of agitation, especially with a large part of the press.

Finally, *the tenth commandment* wards off, summarily and emphatically, all the demands of socialism. For what is socialism, essentially, but coveting the neighbor's property? To create this covetousness in those who are without means, is the real object of socialism. To incite laborers to strike, what is this but alienating servants from their masters?

Thus we have seen that the decalogue guards the most sacred and cherished goods of man, those very goods which are assailed by socialism. No wonder the latter rejects religion; the divine commandment everywhere obstructs the execution of its plans!

We must now cast a brief glance upon the other Mosaic laws. They are really only an enlargement of the decalogue.

The Book of the Covenant follows directly after the decalogue. (Exodus xx. 23 to xxiii. 33.) For the name "Book of the Covenant," see Exodus xxiv. 7. Here, too, we find many ordinances which relate to social life, and require a conduct characterized by fairness, honesty and kindness, even towards enemies, as well as towards strangers, the poor, and the slaves.

The fact that the Mosaic law permitted slavery has often been the cause of unjustified attacks on the part of many scoffers. We

must not forget that slavery, like polygamy, was prevalent with all the ancient nations. With the Israelites it was generally self-incurred, sometimes even voluntary, and always but temporary, for after six years the slaves were to be liberated (Exod. xxi. 2), unless a slave, as it not infrequently happened, so loved his master that he preferred life-long bondage in his master's house to liberty. (Exod. xxi. 2-6.) The Hebrew slave was by no means without rights. The law protected him everywhere, and assured him a mild and just treatment. As already mentioned, he was considered a member of the family, and he, too, enjoyed the rest of the Sabbath-day. Whenever a slave died as a result of maltreatment on the part of his master, the latter was punished (Exodus xxi. 20); or, if the slave was maimed he was liberated. (Exodus xxi. 26.) Kidnapping of slaves was a capital offence. (Exodus xxi. 16.) The lot of the Hebrew slave was, in many respects, easier than that of thousands of laborers in factories to-day. Slavery, as it existed with the Israelites, is, therefore, not to be compared with heathen slavery, or even with modern wage-slavery.

The Book of the Covenant has much to say on the subject of justice between man and man, and the statutes bearing upon this topic commend themselves as essentially just and reasonable. "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth," etc. (Exodus xxi. 24, 25), is a barbarous law, literally carried out; nevertheless these phrases embody the fundamental principle of jurisprudence, that for all wrong there must be adequate compensation. Just one other commandment may be noticed in this book: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him." (Exodus xxiii. 4, 5.) This is indeed an anticipation of the great law of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Love your enemies."

By the term "Levitical Code" is meant all those laws which are found in the second-half of Exodus (beginning with the twenty-fifth chapter), and Leviticus and Numbers. They relate chiefly to the duties and position of the priests, yet also contain

many statutes of social importance, especially those which regulate family property. The Hebrew constitution was so arranged that all poverty should be impossible. A plot of ground was assigned by lot to each family for their possession. If, by reason of indebtedness, this property was alienated from the family, it was restored to them in the "year of jubilee," every fiftieth year. (Lev. xxv. 24.) Besides, they could redeem it, or any part of it, at any time. (Lev. xxv. 25.) Such laws as these rendered it impossible for a few owners to control immense tracts of land, and, at the same time, furnished an effectual means against general impoverishment.

In the Deuteronomic Code the law of kindness has grown to still larger proportions, and now embraces a variety of particulars. Thus it is forbidden to withhold the hire from the poor and needy; it must be paid before the sun goes down. (Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.) The rights of the fatherless and the widow, and of the stranger, are again specially protected. (Vs. 17.) The gleanings must be left for the poor in the orchard and harvest field. (Vs. 21.) Even the beasts of burden are remembered. (Deut. xxv. 4; xxii. 10.)

This brief review of the Mosaic law suffices to demonstrate how wisely the social affairs of the Hebrews were regulated. One would think that, with such laws, the people would have enjoyed continued prosperity, that poverty, want, and other social evils would have remained unknown to them. Yes, had the laws been observed, all social evils would have been impossible. That the public welfare of the people would depend upon their true and willing obedience to God's law, is clearly stated in Deut. v. 29: "Oh that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever." But, alas! there was but seldom such an heart in them. Again and again they rebelled against God. (Isaiah i. 2; Jer. ii. 13.) But they never rebelled without incurring his punishment. Drought, locusts, poor crops, and famine were often the direct penalties for their disobedience (Amos iv. 9-11; Haggai ii. 17, 18); and these, naturally, resulted in hard times. Besides this, their infidelity, even then, begat that heart-

less selfishness with which the strong oppressed the weak, notwithstanding God's commandments and the constant reproofs of the prophets. (Amos iv. 1; Isaiah v. 7, 8, 18, 20-23.) Thus the people of Israel already had their "social problem" in spite of the excellent laws which were intended to prevent it. And here, too, its causes were infidelity and selfishness. The law was not able to eradicate selfishness from the hearts of men, nor is it able to do so now. Love to God and love to the neighbor cannot be inculcated by command. But without these we must forever despair in solving the social problem. Thanks be to God, that there is a way to plant this love into man's heart. This is, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. THE SOCIAL PROBLEM AT THE PRESENT TIME.

That the covenant of the law made with Israel would not be final, was clearly prophesied to them. Thus God spake through Jeremiah, that he would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: "I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jer. xxxi. 31-34.) Other passages in the prophets declare that this new covenant with Israel and Judah would, at the same time, embrace all other nations. Through Isaiah God says: "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isa. xlix. 6.) The "servant" of God here spoken of can be none other than Christ. In the whole wide realm of history there is no one besides him of whom could be said, or who could accomplish, what is here said of this servant of God, viz., to be a Saviour of all mankind. Through Ezekiel God promised that he would save his flock, and they shall no more be a prey. He would set one shepherd over them, who shall not only deliver them from their oppressors, but make them happy in every respect. (Ezek. xxxiv. 22-24.) It requires no proof that this shepherd and prince, who is to be a second David, can again be none other but Christ. Besides him, there is no one in the

whole history of mankind, who, like him, has brought, or could bring, to poor, suffering humanity relief from all anxiety and oppression. The words of Old Testament prophecy, everywhere, describe Christ as a mighty Saviour, sent from God, who is to mitigate all human misery, and spread true happiness upon the earth. All the relief, the liberty, and prosperity which men hope for shall be bestowed upon them through him.

The gospel of Christ is the new covenant made with all men. It offers the only solution of the social problem, because it is the only means to eradicate selfishness from the hearts of men and supplant it with a new disposition, viz., love. It differs from the old covenant, in that it approaches man not primarily with a demand, but with the glad tidings that, for Christ's sake, God is willing to pardon our sins. It does not tell us, primarily, what we are to do, but what God has done, and is willing to do, for us. And in revealing to us the whole immeasurable love of God, it creates a new love in us, so that we say: "We love him, because he first loved us," and likewise: "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Thus the gospel plants into our hearts the love for God, and the love for our neighbor. The gospel does not make void the law. The law remains the rule of obedience for all time. But what is commanded in the law becomes, through the Holy Spirit, man's own desire, an inward constraint, so that now man's will corresponds with God's will. (Jer. xxxi. 33; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) Now it is no longer "thou shalt," but "I will; the love of Christ constraineth me." Love is the only source of true obedience. Love is the fulfilment of the law. Therefore the gospel is indeed the "balm of Gilead" (Jer. viii. 22), the true panacea for all the ills of human society.

But some may retort: "How is it, then, that the social problem still exists?" To which we reply: "The best remedy will not avail for him who will not apply it, or applies it only partially." No one will deny that, if the spirit of true Christianity would prevail generally among men, then they would not injure or offend one another, nor oppress one another, or do anything to embitter the life of one another; they would rather be kindly affectioned and brotherly in their intercourse, and gladly assist one another;

it would be their pleasure and their joy to help and to comfort one another. Then the earth would become an abode of peace and gladness, a pattern of heaven. What a benignant influence the gospel of Christ has actually exerted upon mankind is apparent to any one at all acquainted with the history of the nations, and especially with the history of modern missions. Without it, most of the laborers would still be slaves this very day. That with the true spirit of Christianity even communism, so eagerly desired by the socialists, is possible, is proven by the example of the apostolic church. For a time there actually existed among the first Christians a perfect community of goods, viz.: so long as they were all led entirely by the divine Spirit which had descended on the day of Pentecost. But as soon as selfishness resumed its control, communism was no longer feasible; and if the present polluted state of the church precludes communism, even among Christians, the fault lies not with the gospel, but in the sinfulness of man. When we compare the present state of the church with that of the first Christian church in Jerusalem, we must cast down our eyes in shame. Where is that meek and self-denying spirit that looketh not on his own things, but also on the things of others?

It is the supreme duty of the church of Christ to pray without ceasing, that the Spirit of Christ resume his control in all her members and spread more and more upon earth. This she must strive to achieve with the appointed means. Chief among these is the preached word. That the Christian pulpit cannot and must not ignore the social question, might be proved by hundreds of examples from the Old and New Testaments. It must assert the rights of the employee as well as those of the employer, and enforce the duties of the employer as well as those of the employee. This may give offence in certain quarters, but hardly greater offence than that caused by the sermons of John the Baptist, and of the Saviour himself. That it must be done in a spirit of wisdom and of love, in that spirit in which Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, preached to Philemon, his "dearly beloved and fellow-laborer," is self-evident. But, above all, Christians must furnish the actual proof that the gospel is really the cure for the

evils of the times, by practicing that mercy which Christ enjoined. They must really use their temporal means for the amelioration of the woes of humanity, as God's stewards, and not for selfish purposes. They must not forget to do good and communicate; for with such sacrifices God is well-pleased.

Repentance, an actual turning-back to the spirit of Christianity, this is the only way to cure the thousand ills of mankind. (Isa. i. 16, 17; viii. 20.) And may the prospects for a true and general conversion of the world to Christ and his gospel be ever so discouraging; may the number of true Christians be ever so small; and may the spirit of anti-Christ assume ever so threatening an attitude, yet we believe that the final victory belongs to him whom God promised, as a deliverer, to the fathers of old, by the mouth of his prophets, and who "came in the fulness of time to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. iv. 4, 5.)

III. THE SOCIAL PROBLEM IN THE FUTURE AND ITS FINAL SOLUTION.

There is a firm conviction among the socialists that, when the future socialistic state shall have been established, humanity will enjoy a prosperity, a felicity and universal peace, as never before. Thus Bebel writes in the afore-mentioned book, *Woman and Socialism*, as follows:

"Then when the final social conflict has been determined the new society will be reared upon an international basis. The nations will fraternize and shake hands with one another, and strive to extend the new order of things, gradually, over all the nations of the world. One nation approaches the other no longer as an enemy who seeks to despoil and to suppress, nor as representatives of a strange faith which it would inflict upon it, but as a friend who would educate his fellowmen to become men of culture. . . . Neither powder, nor lead, nor fire-water, nor the Bible will be used in this mission of culture, but it will be undertaken by peaceable means, which make the civilizators appear to the savages not as their enemies, but as their benefactors. . . . When once the civilized nations are united into a great federation, then

the time will also have come when the storms of war shall cease. Eternal peace is no dream."

Bebel evidently loves to play the role of prophet, only that he is not divinely inspired, and cannot say: "Thus saith the Lord!"

In this connection we must also allude to Edward Bellamy's book, *Looking Backward, 2000 to 1887*. No one can read this book but with the ardent desire: Would that such a state of happiness prevailed among men, as is here described! In order to transpose the reader into the year 2000, the author makes a certain well-to-do man fall into a mesmeric sleep, or trance, in the year 1887, out of which he does not awake until 2000. This man then describes the new world as he finds it. All private property has been abolished; all people labor for the common weal. Competition in commerce and all intermediate commerce, which at present enhances the price of all things, have ceased. The national property is so great that at its expense all may lead a life pleasant and free from care. And now, when all enjoy the same well-being, hatred, envy, and strife have disappeared from earth, and love rules mankind. That men should doubt God now seems "a pitiable insanity." "It is very easy to believe in the fatherhood of God, in the twentieth century," so we are told in a sermon preached in the year 2000. But this very sermon is a mockery of the gospel. As mankind has redeemed itself, men need no longer a Saviour and Redeemer. It is also contended in this sermon, that now it is fully revealed "that human nature in its essential qualities is good, not bad; that men by their natural intention and structure are generous, not selfish; pitiful, not cruel; godlike in aspirations; images of God indeed, not the travesties upon him they had seemed." But this we must beg to doubt, because the experience of all ages has shown that infidelity with all its fruits, such as selfishness, hatred, haughtiness, arrogance, sensuality, cruelty, and falsehood still carry the day, even where the external relations are the most favorable, and the question of "mine and thine" is not at all involved.

Christians entertain no doubt whatever, that without God, and contrary to God, men will never achieve a state of peace and true happiness. But any one somewhat acquainted with Old Testa-

ment prophecy will recognize, at the first glance, a remarkable similarity between the latter and the expectations of the socialists. The Old Testament prophets, too, predict an era of righteousness and peace, in which the "storms of war" shall cease. What wonderful visions have they beheld! They see how men throw away their idols of silver, and their idols of gold, and how the idols shall be utterly abolished. (Isa. ii. 18 and 20.) The King shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth (Psa. lxxii. 8); all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him (Vs. 11); his name shall endure forever, and the whole earth be filled with his glory. (Vs. 17 and 19.) The Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, receives dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages shall serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not be destroyed. (Dan. vii. 13, 14.) Then shall be fulfilled what was promised to the Son of God: "I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psa. ii. 7, 8.)

This universal dominion of the kingdom of God upon earth, and the subjection of all nations to the King, is to be brought about by an universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When God promises by his prophet Joel (ii. 28): "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," this promise could not have been wholly fulfilled in the outpouring of the Spirit at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This, to be sure, was the beginning of the fulfilment, as also Peter, in explaining that miracle, describes it as a fulfilment of this prophecy. (Acts ii. 16, 17.) But it was not yet an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. Even at Jerusalem, there were comparatively few who opened their hearts for the divine Spirit. Thus, also, was the perpetual fulfilment of this prophecy through all centuries and down to our present time, always and everywhere, only local and partial. But the prophet speaks of a time when this outpouring shall be quite general, so that no man is excluded; and he adds, that every age (the old men and the young men), every sex (the sons as well as the daughters), and every class (even the servants and handmaids) shall participate in it. (Vs. 29.)

At this time it will dawn upon earth as it has never dawned before. Then the nations shall flow unto the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob, to learn his ways and to walk in his paths. (Micah iv. 1, 2.) The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (Isa. xi. 9.) Then God will also gather his people of Israel from among the nations and out of all countries, whither they were scattered, and at that time put his Spirit into their hearts and cause them to walk in his statutes. Then they will be his people and he their God; then in truth will Jehovah be Israel's King and Lord. Thus it is thrice prophesied by Ezekiel (xi. 16-20; xxxvi. 24-28; xxxvii. 1-14); also by Hosea (iii. 5) and Jeremiah (l. 4, 5).

Now, when this time comes, when God will send from heaven a new Pentecostal storm; when he will cause his breath to enter into the dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii. 5), and take away the veil from the eyes of men; when at last "all flesh" is converted to God; when the Spirit of God shall control the hearts of all men, and their selfishness is turned into true love; then, yes, then, a new era must dawn upon earth; then the relations between individuals and between nations must become radically different from what they are now.

Correspondingly, the prophetic view sees a reign of righteousness and peace upon earth, as never before. The oppression of the poor and needy has ceased (Isa. xi. 4); the nations live in peace (Hosea ii. 18); nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; the weapons are turned into implements of peace. (Isa. ii. 4.)

Along with the regeneration of the nations, the prophets also predict a renovation of nature. Nor can this surprise. For the sake of man's sin nature shared the curse. Now, if the power of sin be broken, this bane must also be removed from her. Therefore the prophecy of the Old Testament has much to say concerning a rejuvenescence of nature. The wilderness and the solitary place shall blossom (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 6, 7), the earth yield her fruit abundantly, the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed, and the mountains shall drop sweet wine. (Amos ix. 13; Joel iii. 18.) Such

a fertility would necessarily influence the whole life of man. When the wilderness becomes a "garden of God," and earth a paradise, what consequences must this have upon the entire national prosperity!

Therefore the prophets describe this era as a season of general prosperity, wealth, and abundance. Every man shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree (Micah iv. 4); and every man shall call his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree. (Zech. iii. 10.) They shall enjoy the work of their hands and shall not build and another inhabit, nor plant and another eat. (Isa. lxxv. 22.) Even the long life of men shall be restored. (Vs. 20.) Finally, this will be a time of answers to prayer, as it has never been. (Isa. lxxv. 24; Hosea ii. 21-23.)

Thus, in the Old Testament a life of consummate bliss is promised—a life of earthly pleasures, as well as of perfect sonship. What is now called the social problem no longer exists in that blissful era. It has been solved forever! The dreams of the socialists have become reality—not, it is true, in the manner proposed by them—the Lord has done it! "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." (Zech. iv. 6.)

Then the voice of rejoicing and salvation shall be in the tabernacles of the righteous:

"The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly,
The right hand of the Lord is exalted :
The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly."

—PSALM cxviii. 15, 16.

New Orleans.

LOUIS VOSS.