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Fabian Tract No. 78.

SOCIALISM AND THE TEACHING OF
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THE TEACHING OF CHRIST.

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WITH A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM AND PARTICULARS
OF EXISTING CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST SOCIETIES.

PUBLISHED BY

THE FABIAN SOCIETY.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

LONDON :

TO BE OBTAINED OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY, 276 STRAND, W.C.

AUGUST 1897.

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SOCIALISM AND THE TEACHING OF CHRIST.

An Address delivered by DR. JOHN CLIFFORD at the Annual Meeting of the Christian Socialist League, at Westbourne Park Chapel, February, 1895.

ONE of the objections frequently brought against the application of the principles of Socialism to our industrial life is that such a process is opposed to the teaching and spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christianity, it is said, moves in a higher realm than that of humdrum toil, and operates for far higher purposes than those of settling the disputes of capital and labor, adjusting profit and loss, organizing production and distribution, fighting a dangerous plutocracy, and mediating peace between the masses of wage-earners and a narrowing number of wage-payers. It does not "preach a gospel of material blessedness." It ministers to a mind diseased by sin, banishes remorse, and prepares for death and eternity. It is not concerned with this fleeting life; so brief that "it is like a dewdrop on its perilous way from a tree's summit"; but with the infinite development of the human spirit through the eternity, and in the home, of God. In support of this eclipse of the life of the present by the stupendous and transcendent greatness of the life of the future revealed in Christianity, the saying of Jesus is quoted. "Work not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him the Father, even God, hath sealed."

Hence, many Christians look with misgiving on Churches that venture to study the politico-economical conditions of the life of the people around them, touch with the tips of their fingers the problems for the abolition of poverty, and seek the up-lifting of the wage-earning classes by juster and healthier modes than those of spasmodic charity and unlimited soup. They denounce ministers who hold and teach that the laws of God run everywhere, even into wages and prices, into houses of toil and the sanitary conditions of factories and drapery establishments; and generally reason that the capacity of the mind for the hospitable entertainment of ideas is so sadly limited that no preacher can be faithful to Christ's message concerning sin and redemption, and at the same time agitate for a "fair living wage," or toil for the reorganization of the industrial life of the country on bases of justice and brotherhood.

Christian socialism.

Is Socialism Christian?

Professor Flint, a man of vast learning and great ability, has said in one of the largest and least discriminating and most unsatisfactory books I have read on Socialism: "What is called Christian Socialism will always be found either to be unchristian in so far as it is socialistic or unsocialistic in so far as it is truly and fully Christian"*; and again, "so far as Socialism confines itself to proposals of an exclusively economic and political character, Christianity has no direct concern with it. A Christian may, of course, criticise and disapprove of them; but it cannot be on Christian grounds; it must be merely on economic and political grounds. Whether land is to be owned by few or many, by every one or only by the State; whether industry is to be entirely under the direction of government, or conducted by co-operative associations, or left to private enterprise; whether labor is to be remunerated by wages or out of profits; whether wealth is to be equally or unequally distributed, are not in themselves questions of moment to the Christian life, or indeed questions to which Christianity has any answer to give."† To me that is flat Paganism, and as anti-Christian as it is misleading and delusive.

A still more potent voice speaking from the pontifical chair, Leo. XIII., on what are called "socialistic aberrations," asserts their essential antagonism to the Christian Church; and the Right Rev. Abbot Snow, O.S.B., goes as far to say: "Socialists are led to abolish religion in order to get rid of its ministers. They (the ministers) are of the governing class, and let them disappear with the rest. Thus the process of general levelling and the abolition of independent authority leads to the negation of religion and formal worship of God, and makes Socialism tend to Atheism."‡

It cannot be doubted that these citations tend to the widespread feeling on the part of many leisured and comfortably placed Christians, who have had not only the "promise of the life that now is," but, what is much more, the splendid fulfilment of the promise: that a League like our Christian Socialist League has amongst its first duties to give an account of itself before the tribunal of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Social Question.

II.—In doing this let me first of all fully recognize that these objecting Christians and Churches allow that the Christianity of Christ Jesus is not averse to the denunciation of the wrongs of modern society and the exposure of the miseries of our present condition. Indeed, it is eagerly maintained that Christ condemns every manifestation of *individual* selfishness, backs every earnest crusader against *personal* covetousness and greed, and justifies the strongest language we can use against the abuses of *individual*

* *Socialism*. By Professor Robert Flint; p. 441.

† *Socialism*. By Professor Robert Flint; p. 452-3.

‡ *The Catholic Times*, August 10, 1893.

competition. All Christians agree in these outbursts of righteous indignation, and rather enjoy seeing the vials of oratorical wrath poured out on the heads of their neighbors; and some of them are beginning to think that after all the "accumulation of gold" is not the highest virtue, and that there is something wrong in that mediæval interpretation of the words of the Master, "The poor ye have with you always," which regards the continuance of poverty as a necessary condition to the exercise of the spasmodic charity of the rich. Many Christians, if not all, at last admit that there is a social question and that they must do something for it, if it is only to talk about it and to denounce somebody or something. They see the poor separated by a great social gulf from the rich, though geographically not far from one another. They lament overcrowding and ask what is the chance for chastity and health, for decency and comfort, to say nothing of happiness under such inhuman conditions. Here in West London—in *West London*—is a house of eight rooms and a small ante-room containing not less than forty-two persons; and it is a sample of the way in which we are violating God's idea of society, and destroying the very germ of social well-being in the extinction of the decencies and wholesomeness of the home.† The awful facts borne in upon us by the gathering masses of unskilled, decrepit, and hopeless laborers, the appalling armies of the unemployed, are forcing Christian men to think and to say "Something must be done." It is not wholly a question of "plenty of room at the top" for the men of tough fibre, clear brain and iron will; but of the "strong bearing the infirmities of the weak," and of brother caring for brother. The bitter separation of class from class, the tyranny of drink, the vice of gambling, the debasement and misery of early marriages, the degradation of women, "the huddling together of thousands of workers, the prey of the sweater"—all these increasing wrongs are, it is confessed, inextricably involved in our vast egoistic industrialism; men, women, and children are caught and crushed in the revolving wheels of this competitive machinery and then flung aside to perish in the workhouse, or to overweight the earlier efforts of their offspring. So that not a few observant souls are ready to accept the strong words of Ruskin and say, "to call the confused wreck of social order and life brought about by malicious collision and competition an arrangement of Providence, is quite one of the most insolent and wicked ways in which it is possible to take the name of God in vain."*

The Sense of Spiritual Brotherhood.

III.—Some of the disciples of Christ will go further and give personal service. A real hearty, loving sympathy carries them to the homes of the poor and suffering, to feed patience, to brighten life, to uphold the afflicted, to sustain the workers in the fierce struggle with toil and want. They believe Christianity bids them

* *Time and Tide*. By John Ruskin; p. 9.

† See Fabian Tract No. 5, *Facts for Socialists*; id.

preach justice, love, and brotherhood. They even plan for co-operative production. They inculcate stewardship and bid men remember that they have to give account of all they have and use to their Father in heaven. To them the social organism is a reality; and the spiritual brotherhood of men more than a phrase. They have seen God in Christ Jesus, and to them the Incarnation is the revelation of their obligations to their brother man, the widening of the definition of sin so as to include transgressions of the parish and city, of the nation and of humanity. No man lives to himself. Cain is anti-Christ. There is a solidarity of man. The kingdoms of this world are to become *the* kingdom of our God and of His Christ. Law and government are not beyond His policy; and even our industrial civilization may be shaped according to His will. It is a great change; and those who have experienced that regeneration of the social consciousness in the Churches of Christ are shaping the future of labor and of the life of the world.

Where Christians Part.

IV.—But it is when we come to a *social policy*, to a *method* or industrial re-arrangement, that the question arises whether we are moving along the lines of Christ's ideas, and are providing *the best industrial body for the incarnation of His spirit*. It is at this third stage we part. Christian men are agreeing more and more—(a) In their antagonism to individual greed and injustice; (b) in personal and sympathetic devotion to the welfare of the people; the parting of the ways is (c) as to the real basis on which modern industry shall organize itself. It is when scientific Socialism or Collectivism says—(a) Our industrial life should be based not on individual but on a collective ownership of the chief elements and material instruments of production, (b) that production should be managed not according to the will or caprice or might of private individuals, but collectively, and (c) that the results of toil should be distributed to all who have a share in the toil on the principles of absolute justice, *i.e.*, on the principles of equality in value;* it is then we are charged with opposing the teaching of the Master.

Now, let there be no mistake as to what this Collectivism is. It does not advocate the absorption of the individual by the State; or the suppression of the family; or the total extinction of private property; or the direction of literature, and art, and religion by the collective wisdom of the community; it does not involve the sudden overthrow of the machinery of industrial life; but in the light of the historical development of industry it seeks to accelerate the evolution of the industrial life, so that it shall free itself from the defects and evils that now belong to it, and shall fulfil its Divine mission in the enrichment of the whole life of mankind.† It seeks to build a far better body for the soul of Christ's teaching, and the spirit of His life and death, than this fiercely competitive system, through which He

* *Socialism: its Nature, Strength and Weakness*. By Professor R. T. Ely; p. 9, *et seq.*

† See Fabian Tract No. 51, *Socialism: True and False*; *id.*

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now struggles almost in vain to make His voice heard and His power felt.

The Possibility of Collectivism.

V.—I may take it for granted that our present industrial *régime* is not final. Collectivism is at least *possible*. It is often forgotten that the present commercial system is not far advanced. It has scarcely travelled through its earlier and more crude years. There is no fixed necessity for regarding the present conditions of production and distribution of wealth as their final form. The era of Individualism, of syndicates and companies, of capitalists sitting round a green table and directing the movements of hundreds of laborers with no connection with each other except that created by what Carlyle calls the "cash-nexus," may give place to one in which State-industrialism, as seen in our police arrangements, post-office, the civic ownership and control of gas, water, electric lighting, and tramways, Government employment of labor in Woolwich and Portsmouth Dockyards and Enfield factories, enforcement of education, and the payment of teachers for the children of the nation, the provision by the rates of public baths, wash-houses, parks, gardens, art galleries, museums, hospitals, and asylums, will issue in a completely equipped co-operative commonwealth. All these may be. Human nature is confessedly very intractable; but British society may pass by certain stages from the limited Collectivism which now exists to one which covers the whole machinery of the lower part of life, and provides for that physical basis of human existence on which the spiritual structure is being slowly reared.

Mr. Robert Wallace, M.P., tells us in a recent article, "The Collectivist scheme can never be set up." He does not think "the private capitalist will allow himself to be destroyed." No doubt the said capitalist will strenuously resist his extinction, and he may be successful; though that is not very likely, considering the massive strength and tremendous energy of the social forces now at work. But the *practicability* of Collectivism is not our question. We assume that what Mr. Hayes, in his account of the "Great Revolution of 1905" calls "the ideal of common sense," may be "applied to the business transactions of the nation," and that the "very simple organization" of Collectivism may be substituted for the existing chaos of complexity, stupidity, and inefficiency, and utterly hopeless failure to meet even the most elementary requirements of a civilized community.

What Collectivism Would Do.

Asserting, then, that there is nothing in Christianity against the change, and assuming that it is not impracticable, I now seek to prove that the Collectivist arrangement has at least four distinguishing merits, demonstrating its closer and stronger affinities with the teaching of Jesus Christ than the present method of administering the physical life of man—(1) It destroys the occasions of many of the evils of modern society; (2) it advances, elevates, and ennobles the struggle of life; (3) it offers a better environment for

the development of Christ's teaching concerning wealth and brotherhood, and (4) it fosters a higher ideal of human and social worth and well-being. I do not deny all ethical advantage to the individualistic system. I am aware it has developed that prodigious business capacity in a limited and distinguished few of our workers, which secured to Britain thirty years ago the commercial primacy of the globe. It has created the race of merchant princes, traders, and paragons in developing and supplying new material wants. It has found the opportunity for builders of enormous industries in coal and iron, in the production of food and clothing, of machines and news, thereby bringing the produce of the world to our doors and the news of the world to our tables. It has fed legitimate ambitions and saved men from indolence, quickened the sense of responsibility, educated, drilled, and enriched inventive and business faculty.

Not for a moment would we forget these advantages; but we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that, as a system, it has not stirred the most unselfish desires nor fostered the most generous sympathies on any large scale. It has been egoistic, not altruistic. It is more in keeping with the gladiatorial than the Christian theory of existence. It provides for ruthless self-assertion rather than self-restraint. It does not inspire brotherly helpfulness, but the crushing of competitors and thrusting aside of rivals. Instead of co-operating in the struggle to save and enrich the lives of others, it tends to make its administrators forgetful of their claims, and renders it necessary to bring the power of legislation to the support of children in coal-mines and factories, to the protection and defence of weak women, to the limitation of hours of labor, and the imposition of sanitary conditions of toil. Could any confession be a stronger indictment of individualistic views of labor questions than John Morley's, in his *Life of Richard Cobden*: "Modern statesmanship has definitely decided that unfettered individual competition is not a principle to which the regulation of industry may be entrusted." It is a fact that pure individualism gives every advantage to the strong and renders no aid whatever in bearing the infirmities of the weak. If that is in the least bit in accordance with the mind of Christ, then I must confess that I have failed to read aright its wonderful contents.

On the other hand Collectivism, although it does not change human nature, yet it takes away *the occasion for many of the evils which now afflict society*. It reduces the temptations of life in number and in strength. It means work for every one and the elimination of the idle, and if the work should not be so exacting, responsible, and, therefore, not so educative for a few individuals, yet it will go far to answer Browning's prayer:

O God, make no more giants,
Elevate the race.

Hesiod teaches that "Work is the one road to excellence." "There is no shame in labor; idleness is shame." An effortless existence is intolerable, and leads to incalculable mischief. Individualism adds to the number of the indolent year by year; Collectivism sets everybody alike to his share of work, and gives to him his share of reward.

As it is necessary to work, so it is useless to steal. Misrepresentation is not a gain. Grasping avarice is "out of work." Equivocation lacks opportunity. Crimes against property are diminished, and become more and more rare. The degradation of woman ceases in so far as it is due to want. The problem of the "unemployed" is solved. And the possibilities of realizing a nobler type of manly life are increased a thousandfold. Surely all this is in perfect harmony with the teaching and spirit of "Him who came to seek and save that which was lost."

The Elevation of the Struggle for Life.

VI.—Another sign of the closer kinship of Collectivism to the mind of Christ is *in the elevation and nobility it gives to the struggle for life*. Collectivism does not extinguish combat, but it lifts the struggle into the worthiest spheres, reduces it to a minimum in the lower and animal departments, and so leaves man free for the finer toils of intellect and heart; free "to seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice." Benjamin Kidd says, "True Socialism has always one definite object in view, up to which all its proposals directly or indirectly lead. This is the final suspension of that personal struggle for existence which has been waged, not only from the beginning of society, but in one form or another from the beginning of life." But I think that Professor Drummond puts the matter more completely, and therefore more fairly, when he says, "War is simply the modern form of the struggle for life. As the higher qualities become more pronounced and their exercise gives more satisfaction, the struggle passes into more refined forms. One of these is the industrial struggle. Another is the moral struggle. The former of these must give place to the latter. The animal struggle for life must pass away. And under the stimulus of ideals man will continually press upwards, and find his further evolution in forms of moral, social, and spiritual antagonism."

It is a fact "as soon as the first wants are satisfied, the higher wants become imperative." Engrossed in the "things that are on the earth," man cannot seek the things that are above. Chained sixteen hours a day to the car of labor, his life is one of toil and sleep; an animal life almost of necessity. But Collectivism secures leisure for the cultivation of character; man is not so fretted and worn by the exhausting use of his bodily faculties that there is not strength as there is not opportunity for the higher labor of spirit on behalf of the life that is life indeed; but he is as fresh as he is free, and so the displacing of the animal from the throne of existence is at least rendered possible, where now it can only be accomplished, if accomplished at all, in the face of tremendous odds. Labor is thus brought into accord with the Greek idea of the state; and, like it, exists "not for the sake of life, but of a good life." Are not these results in keeping with "the mind of Christ"?

The Ideals of Labor and Brotherhood.

VII.—Again, Collectivism affords a better environment for the teachings of Jesus concerning wealth and the ideals of labor and

brotherhood. If man is, according to Drummond, only "the expression of his environment," if, indeed, he is that in any degree, then it is an unspeakable gain to bring that environment into line with the teaching of Jesus Christ.

In the Gospels, accumulated wealth appears as a grave peril to the spiritual life, a menace to the purest aims and the noblest deeds. Christ is entirely undazzled by its fascinations, and sees in it a threat against the integrity and progress of his kingdom. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." "Man's life consists not in the abundance of the things he possesses," but in the *use* he makes of what he has—if for himself—still for himself not as an end, but as a means for promoting the well-being of the world. Jesus frowns on the hoarding of wealth. Collectivism renders that accumulation unnecessary and inconvenient. Still, Collectivism does not mean confiscation. It is not robbery. The Bishop of Derry is reported to have said that the spirit of Socialism says: "Here is a man who possesses more than we do; let it be taken from him." Whereas that of Christianity says: "Here is a man who has less than I have; let me give him something." "Socialism" is a vague term, I admit, and probably there is somewhere a "socialism" that speaks the language attributed to it by the Bishop of Derry; but that is not the speech of scientific Socialism or Collectivism. It says, "Here is the great business of industrial life; let us manage it so that all may share in the responsibility and share in the gains, and share fairly and justly as nearly as possible; not one doing all the work and another taking all the gains." It is allowed that individualism in commerce affords abundant opportunity for the use of wealth. It creates means for splendid charities. The millionaire can feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and heal the sick. He can build cathedrals, endow universities, give libraries for study and parks for recreation. And he has done it. Abundant are the witnesses to his wisdom and goodness in distributing his wealth for the welfare of the people, and large is the contribution to the progress of the world due to his thoughtful generosity. But it is some drawback to this consideration that the means for philanthropic work are placed exclusively in the hands of a few; and that the *occasions* for it are due, not only to the vices of men—drunkenness, gambling and the like, but also in a large measure to the political, industrial and social injustices of the reign of individualism. For we must ask: How are these fortunes made? Have any neighbors' landmarks been removed? Is there any grinding of the faces of the poor? Are the workers doomed to harsh and hard conditions of toil? It is notorious that our individualistic commerce is often a tyrant where it should be a servant, and an injustice where it ought to be a help. Here is a picture drawn by Frederic Harrison:—

Ninety per cent. of the actual producers of wealth have no home that they can call their own beyond the end of the week; have no bit of soil, or so much as a room that belongs to them; have nothing of value of any kind, except as much old furniture as will go in a cart; have the precarious chance of weekly wages, which barely suffice to keep them in health; are housed for the most part in places which no man thinks fit for his horse; are separated by so narrow a margin from destitution that a month of

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bad trade, sickness or unexpected loss brings them face to face with hunger and pauperism. And below this normal state of the average workman in town and country there is found the great band of destitute outcasts—the camp followers of the army of industry—at least one-tenth of the whole proletarian population, whose normal condition is one of sickening wretchedness. If this is to be the permanent arrangement of modern society civilization must be held to bring a curse on the great majority of mankind.—(Report of Industrial Remuneration Conference, 1886, p. 429.)

Now, though Collectivism does not profess to extinguish vice and manufacture saints, it will abolish poverty, reduce the hungry to an imperceptible quantity, and systematically care for the aged poor and for the sick. It will carry forward much of the charitable work left to the individual initiative, and, like the London County Council, provide recreation grounds, adding the charms of music for adults and gymnasia for the children.† Again, I ask, is not all that in harmony with the spirit and teaching of Him who bids us see Himself in the hungry and sick, the poor and the criminal?

VIII.—Possibly the greatest gain of Collectivism is in its stronger affinity with the high ideals of individual and social life given by Christ Jesus. Collectivism fosters a more Christian conception of industry; one in which every man is a worker, and each worker does not toil for himself exclusively, but for the necessities, comforts, and privileges he shares equally with all the members of the community. He works for what we call “the State,” *i.e.*, for the whole of the people of the city and nation in whose prosperity he has a direct interest and whose business is carried on for the welfare of all his fellows, and thereby for himself; succoring the weaker members, aiding the aged and infirm and reclaiming those who are vicious and criminal, as part of the duty of a collectivist citizen.

It is to the pliant genius of Greece we owe the first effort to reconcile the claims of the State and of the individual. The Greeks were gifted with the power of delicate judgment, of combining principles apparently opposite, of harmonizing conflicting claims; they possessed a sense of measure, a flexibility, a faculty of compromise opposed to the fatal simplicity with which the Eastern politics had been stricken. Not tyranny nor anarchy satisfied the Greek, but “ordered liberty.”* It is that ordered liberty which obtains in and through the collectivist arrangement of human industry, ruling out fierce competitions and methodizing the struggle for the life of others; making the work for bodily living automatic and regular and unexhausting to the last degree; and so securing leisure for the larger life of the mind and heart, of the imagination and of the spirit.

It is notorious that the ideals of individualistic labor are narrow, low-roofed, and self-centred, and men neither have time nor chance to win “their soul,” the Divine portion of their life and of the life of society, the life of noble aims, tender humanities, strong faith and glowing love of God and of men.

It is a new ideal of life and labor that is most urgently needed. England's present ideal is a creation of hard individualism; and therefore is partial, hollow, unreal and disastrous. But ideals are

* Cf. Professor Butcher, *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*. (52, *et seq.*)

† See Fabian Tracts Nos. 60, 61, 62, etc.

the main factors in the progress of the home, the parish, and the State. They are the forces that move individuals. Individualism fosters the caste feelings and the caste divisions of society, creates the serfdom of one class and the indolence of another ; makes a large body of submissive, silent, unmanly slaves undergoing grinding toil and continuous anxiety, and a smaller company suffering from debasing indolence and continual weariness ; begets hatred and ill-will on one hand, and scorn and contempt of man on the other. No ! the ideal we need and must have is in the unity of English life, in the recognition that man is complete in the State, at once a member of society and of the Government—" a ruler and yet ruled " ; an ideal that is the *soul* at once of Collectivism and of the revelation of the brotherhood of man in Jesus Christ our Lord, Son of God and Son of man.

Finally, I am sure that as we seek to build up our industries more and more on this basis we shall discover that we need a deep and wide-spread revival of the Spirit of Christ, a clearer insight into His ideas, so that we may suppress the passions that feed our individualistic system and sweep away the accumulated evils which have gathered round it, and at the same time to advance to perfection the Collectivist methods already operative in profit-sharing, in co-operative labor, and in Municipal and State industries. Collectivism will become an argument for a deepened spiritual life. Were we more Christian we should, as did the first Christians, seek with passionate ardor to incarnate a collective rather than an individualistic idea in society. Nothing more forcibly witnesses to the need of Christ than the failure of the Churches to cope with the evils of nineteenth-century life. It is Christ we need. Light both leads and kills. Science has just told us the swiftest and surest foe of the disease-spreading germs is the light. Christ is the light of the world. He shows us the way we should take ; and He also will yet destroy the microbes of physical and moral pestilence and death in our modern industrial life, and render the animal the obedient servant instead of the tyrannical master of the human spirit.

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CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST SOCIETIES.

THE GUILD OF ST. MATTHEW.

THE Guild of St. Matthew, the oldest among the existing English Socialist Societies, was founded on June 29th, 1877.

Its objects are—

- I.—To get rid, by every possible means, of the existing prejudices, especially on the part of "Secularists," against the Church, her Sacraments and Doctrines ; and to endeavor "to justify God to the People."
- II.—To promote frequent and reverent worship in the Holy Communion, and a better observance of the teaching of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.
- III.—To promote the study of Social and Political Questions in the light of the Incarnation.

One of the earliest pamphlets of the Guild was entitled "Christian Socialism : by a Radical Parson." Courses of lectures, by members of the Guild, were carried on in many places ; and several, who afterwards became well known as Socialist lecturers,

owed their first introduction to public speaking to these debates. The Guild in its early days also took an active part in the protest against the denial of constitutional rights to Northampton. A manifesto on "The Church and Socialism" was appended to its Annual Report in 1884, and an address on the same subject and on similar lines was presented to the Lambeth Conference in 1888. More recent manifestoes of the Guild have dealt with such subjects as the Democratization of Church Government; the Duty of the Clergy towards Education, and especially towards Board Schools; and so on. There are now branches of the Guild in Oxford University and in Bristol, and local groups in several parts of London. The last Report (Sept., 1896) showed 343 members, of whom 92 were in Holy Orders. The Guild organizes each year a "Quiet Day for Social Reformers" and a "Mass for the Labor Cause" on May Day. Courses of sermons are arranged for Advent and Lent, and many services are held in all parts of England in connection with its Annual Festival (St. Matthew's Day, Sept. 21st.). The Annual Meeting is held about the same time, usually in the Large Hall of Sion College. The Warden's "Annual Addresses" for the past dozen years have been published, and afford the best guide to the Guild's history and principles.

Besides the publications included in the Bibliography, there is a terse summary of Christian Socialist principles in a leaflet called "The G. S. M. : What it is and Who should join it."

Hon. Sec. : FREDK. VERINDER, 376 & 377 Strand, W.C.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL UNION.

THIS Society was founded in 1889, by Canon Scott Holland and others. It now consists of 31 branches, the largest being at London, Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, and Bristol. There is also a large sister society in America and some Colonial branches. The total membership is now about 3,320. The President of the Union is the Bishop of Durham, and among its leading members are the Bishop of Rochester, the Dean of Ely, Canons Gore, Barnett, and Eyton, Professors Sanday, Stanton and Shuttleworth, Archdeacon Wilson, J. M. Ludlow, Dr. Fry. Its work is mainly educational, by means of lectures and sermons and a considerable output of pamphlets and books; but other forms of work have been undertaken, e.g., fair lists, at Oxford (where the number of fair-dealing shops has been increased from 23 in 1891 to 89 in 1896), Glasgow, London and Birkenhead; investigations into dangerous trades and laundries, with reports thereon and petitions to the Home Secretary. Besides printing 23 leaflets summarizing various social questions, the Oxford Branch issues the quarterly *Economic Review*. The London Branch has for some years organized daily sermons on social subjects in the City during Lent, which have resulted in four volumes of social sermons, the first, "Lombard Street in Lent," having reached a sixth edition; the example has now been followed in Bristol and Manchester. Most of the work has been done by the various branches, which have considerable freedom, but the Central Executive also arranges annual meetings, or rather, demonstrations, on a large scale in the principal provincial towns. The official objects of the Union are as follows:—

- I.—To claim for the Christian Law the ultimate authority to rule social practice.
 - II.—To study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time.
 - III.—To present Christ in practical life as the living Master and King, the Enemy of wrong and selfishness, the Power of righteousness and love.
- The Annual Report and List of Publications of the Union and explanatory leaflet by Dr. Fry, can be got at the C. S. U. office, 118 Fleet Street, E.C.
- Secretary : Rev. PERCY DEARMER, 9 Devonport Street, London, W.

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