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indeed by a high authority

We have been lately told, that the giving of relief in the form of work "to those who in a time of des- titution come under the Poor Law" is ^{the same as} ~~equivalent~~ to "national work-shops." This opinion was further accentuated by the ~~statement~~ assertion "that any attempt on the part of the State to step into the place of the ordinary employer, & to establish a relation between it and the working classes, similar to that between the employer and the employed, would only result in the long run in producing far more frightful wide-spread and permanent misery than it was de-

signed to remedy. ^{I am, also of that opinion, but I cannot admit that the} ~~I propose to examine whether~~ the giving relief, either by the Poor Law, or ^{by} the action of private efforts, to men able and willing to work, but unemployed in times of severe and protracted distress be one and the same thing with National work shops, or equivalent to asking the State to step into the place of the ordinary employer & to establish a relation between it and the working classes similar to that between the employer & the employed. ~~It is~~

It will not be difficult

~~to be able~~ to shew why the latter proposition can be peremptorily and consistently repudiated, & the former proposition urgently and anxiously recommended.

but I will give the judgment of one

~~Before entering into any~~ ^{I need not use any} argument of my own, ~~I think it well to quote the judgment of one~~ who was certainly not ignorant of the rudiments of Political Economy.

John Stuart Mill, in his "Vindication of the ~~French~~ Provisional Government of the French Revolution in February 1848 writes as follows:- "There remains another measure of the Provisional Government, which opens a still wider field of difficult and important discussion than the preceding: the recognition of the "Droit au travail" of ~~an~~ obligation on society to find work and wages for all persons willing and able to work who cannot

procure employment for themselves. x x x x x To one class of thinkers the acknowledgement of the Droit au travail may very naturally appear a potentous blunder: but it is curious to see who those are that most loudly profess this opinion. It is singular that this act of the Provisional Government should find its bitterest critics in the journalists who dilate on the excellence of the Poor Law of Elizabeth: and that the same thing should be so bad in France, which is perfectly right in the opinion of the same persons in England and Ireland. For the Droit au travail is the Poor Law of Elizabeth and nothing more, aid guaranteed to those who cannot, employment to those who can work. This is the Act of Elizabeth and this is the promise which it is so inexcusable in the Provisional Government to have made in France x x x x x

"On the English parochial system the Law gives to every pauper a right to demand work or support without work, for himself individually. x x x x x It appeared to the Provisional Government, as it must appear to every unselfish and open-minded person that the earth belongs first of all to the inhabitants of it: that every person alive ought to have a subsistence before any one has more; that whoever works at any useful thing ^{ought to be properly fed and clothed} before any one able to work is allowed to receive the bread of idleness. These are moral axioms." Mr. Mill then affirms that the ^{declaration} ~~affirmation~~ of the Droit au travail was followed by the erection of the Ateliers Nationaux, "which indeed was its necessary consequence." He goes on to say, "It was the misfortune not the fault of the Provisional Government that the numbers requiring employment were so much greater at that moment than before. Thence he says, came the outbreak in June and Socialism."

It is obvious that ~~all government~~ the Civil State, and all its legislative and executive action is nothing ^{2,} more than human society administering, protecting, and developing its own welfare. Its whole action upon itself must be social, but between social & socialistic there is an impassable gulf. The public life of a Civil State is the aggregate of the domestic life of its members. Whether the execution of its laws flows from ^{single person} an ~~individual~~ who is accepted as the representative of the whole society, or from more persons than one to whom that trust may be committed, the framing of the laws, which is impossible to the whole political society ^{numerically} ~~at large~~ is, in ~~every~~ ^{the} case of every well-ordered society, entrusted to those who by election of the people at large more or less adequately represent their welfare.

In this sense therefore all legislation is social, even the privileges of railroad Companies are justifiable only on public, that is social, utility. The perfection of legislation, its adequate and intimate provision for the welfare of society at large. All legislation therefore and all government is, and must be, strictly social. If it fails ~~to~~ to be so in any measure, in that measure it is bad. But in all this there is not a tinge of socialism. It describes the elaborate and mature jurisprudence of a well-ordered State, and in this sense the whole written and unwritten law of England is social.

What then is socialism? It is the vision of society governed by the Law of Nature only, under which the State is the ^{supreme, & therefore really the} ~~sole~~ landlord, and the supreme & therefore really the only employer of labour. It is therefore the negation of all progress and of all the social laws which wisdom justice and experience have sanctioned and matured. It is also an attempt to arrest or to reverse the natural inequalities resulting from the intrinsic inequalities intellectual and moral of man and man; an impossible task and a theory replete with every kind of injustice.

to men & to society. It is needless to say that the Poor Law of Elizabeth is profuse with social, without a tinge of spurious socialism, and Mr. Mill, with his large foresight readily perceived the difference between the right of sustenance or work in a parish and the droit au travail in the Ateliers Nationaux; nevertheless he pointed out the identity of the principle & justified the principle, & at the same time repudiated it as supremely inexpedient in the hands of any government, & liable to produce both outbreaks and socialism: outbreaks in the disappointed and demoralized, & socialism in the sharp ^{& perverse} wits of their leaders. It can hardly be necessary to draw out the reasons, and if some, whose intelligence is so high and balanced, had not failed to express, for they must clearly know the distinctions of parish-relief and National Workshops I would not weary my readers, if I have any, by detaining them.

First, and above all, to make the State, beyond its own legitimate duties, of which we will speak hereafter, the public employer of labour is an exaggeration of the worst danger in politics, coupled with the worst form of that danger, namely, exaggerated centralisation. ^{Even} The centralisation, inevitable and necessary, for the ordinary administration of Government, involving large patronage with all its evils, is sufficiently dangerous in any State. The number of persons is always large, but necessarily selected ^(or ought to be) for intelligence and fitness, but to make the State, that is, the Government of the day, the employer of an unlimited number of the populace at large who must necessarily be the least skilled, successful, and to a great extent trustworthy of the people would be a public ~~point~~ danger, fatal sooner or later to any Commonwealth, and in such a Commonwealth as ours of certain & speedy accomplishment. The safety of this country as M. Odilon Barrot wrote ^{the beginning of the Second Empire in France} in 1870, is its great decentralisation. He then prophesied the collapse of the Second Empire, by reason of its extravagant centralisation of power and profit in the hands of a Government ubiquitous in its innumerable salaried servants.

National workshops in this country would destroy the labour market, would become a ~~political~~ ^{political} ~~influence~~ ^{influence} in all the alternate conflicts of ~~our~~ ^{factions} ~~political~~ parties, a source of the widest and lowest patronage, ravenously sought by all kinds and conditions of men, and ~~an~~ ^{an} open close field for every kind of job, in the cloud of officials created by it, and an open waste of demoralization of the people at large.

In what single point has this any resemblance to the relief of the unemployed in a moment of distress official or unofficial within the limits of a parish, & under the eyes of vigilant care?

The administration of the Poor Laws, from the 16th century downwards to our day has been sufficiently ~~various~~ fluctuating in wisdom, prudence, profuseness, and severity, but nevertheless, there has been no shadow of danger of Socialism or National workshops.

But Sir, ~~in consideration~~ I am bound not to trespass at this time more largely upon the space in your Columns, nevertheless I hope you will allow me to send a second letter in ~~the~~ reply to other portions of the argument of your correspondent "G."

I am Sir Yr J. H. S. C. A.

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Item 4. National Workshops.
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