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A living wage a religious necessity

Thesis

A LIVING WAGE A RELIGIOUS NECESSITY

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OUTLINING.

A LIVING WAGE A RELIGIOUS NECESSITY.

I- Change in Men's thought at the close of the 19th Century.

A- Old Industrial Ideas passing.
B- Inequalities of wealth challenged.
C- Social Motive surplanting the individual.

II- Birth of a Living Wage Theory. Definition of Religious.

A- Preliminary Considerations.
B- Ryan's definition of "Supreme Earthly Goal of Conduct."

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1- Different Countries.
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1- Ryan.
2- Smart.
3- Professor Munroe.
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6- English Industrial Conference.
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C- The Wage Fund --"The Iron Law of Wages."

I- The Consideration of "Laissez-Faire."

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A- Care of body important.
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C- Body needs to be well cared for to enable him to discharge his obligations.
D- Mental activity is conditioned somewhat by the state of the body.
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1- Prevents early forming of homes.
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IX- Proper development of child life is conditioned on an adequate wage.

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B- Child has an inherent right to be well-born and well-bred.
C- The work of Mothers in Mills to supplement wage results in undevelopment.
D- Children forced to work are denied real development.

1- The number of child workers.
2- Deprived of play life -- the natural heritage.
3- Deprived of education -- the one means of advancement.
4- Bodies are destroyed or development hindered.

E- Result is juvenile criminals and adult enemies of society.

X- Inadequate wages may breed pauperism, degeneracy and crime.

A- Much of the pauperism is the result of low wages.

1- The number of people receiving relief in the United States compared with insufficient wages.
2- Drift to pauperism throws the unfortunate in the worst environment and soon breaks down their moral fiber.

B- An easy transition is made from poverty to degeneracy.

1- Breaking down of the moral fiber carries this people into the degenerate class.

C- The ranks of criminals may be recruited from this class.

1- These are not desperate criminals, but sneak thieves, etc.

XI- Growth of Immorality often due to low wages.

A- Lack of money for legitimate recreation drives many to immorality to offset the high tension of work.

B- Herding in tenements permits too close association of sexes.

C- Some girls are forced to supplement their earnings.

XII- A Living Wage is necessary to promote the development of mind.

A- Civilization depends on the amount of true culture and the means of acquiring it.

B- Woeful inadequacy of recreational life of laboring class today.

1- No real play.
2- Only the cheapest amusements.
3- No uplifting reading.
4- Income will not permit any of these.

C- Need a freedom from worry of existence and a wage sufficient to take care of a moderate amount of recreation.

XIII- Attitude toward the State may be outcome of low wages.

A- Stability of government depends on attitude of its citizens.

B- Increasing ranks of those hostile to State and present status of society.

C- Ruined childhood grown to manhood is not apt to love the State that permitted its exploitation.

XIV- The level of wages affects the church itself.

A- The church too often found on the side of vested interests.

B- Subsistence wages means nothing for religion.

C- Volunteer Workers.

XV- The Economic Standard may condition the Conception of God.

A- Starvation wages while riches are piling up may cause a feeling of injustice of God.
B- Hard lot may drive to Atheism or Agnosticism.
C- God's moral government may be seriously challenged.

XVI- Is there enough income in the country to pay a Living Wage to every one?

A- Cannot be answered definitely.
B- Dr. Spahr's Estimate.
Increased efficiency may increase income.

XVII- Conclusions.

A- The lack of a Living Wage hinders the development of the major activities and institutions of a life.
B- Religion must be made big enough to serve the greatest needs of men.
C- A Living Wage would help greatly in solving many of our most pressing problems.

LIVING WAGE A RELIGIOUS NECESSITY.

The last decade of the 19th Century and the first of the 20th brought a marvelous change in the attitude of men's minds on the great economic and social questions. Undoubtedly men have done more constructive thinking about the Industrial Problem during the last twenty-five years than in any similar previous period. It is certainly beyond question that more has been accomplished in bringing the truth to men's attention and securing an intelligent spirit of unrest both among the class that is industriously exploited and among the constructive thinkers of the day. The doctrine of individualism had been so strong both at home and abroad that men seemed to lose social consciousness. That is particularly true of our own land. And while the conclusions reached in this paper will apply to every land and class of people, we must use material largely from our own country for our working basis. The limitations of this thesis make this procedure necessary.

The United States believed that it had achieved

Democracy, when this Democracy was but a shadow of the real. A Continent had been plundered, and immense fortunes piled into the hands of fortunate individuals, who, through legislative jockeying, or business shrewdness, were enabled to get the best of their fellow men. Then came the awakening. Its resources cornered; its God-given benefits in the hands of a few; the United States awoke to its peril. Men began to ask if it were just that one per cent of the population should own fifty per cent of the wealth, and that eight per cent of the population should control ninety-two per cent of the wealth. For, at the same time men were working for starvation wages; living in dark tenements; sending the children and women into the Mills and Factories to help to eke out a miserable existence. At the same time, too, Pauperism, Vice and Crime were increasing. They began to see that our Industrial System was in a measure at least responsible for the evil conditions, and that there was some connection between low wages and the conditions confronting our country. Out of these conclusions has grown, in the minds of some at least, the con-

viction that fair-minded men must insist that Industry pay a Living Wage. With some of the more spiritually minded this means that this is a religious necessity. The problem of this paper is to prove this contention. "A Living Wage is a Religious Necessity."

It may be well at this point to define just what is meant by religious. The term is used in no narrow, churchly sense. The word connotes something more far-reaching and effective than the ordinary understanding. It means vastly more than going to church on Sunday, attending a prayer meeting, or paying for the support of the church and the benevolent enterprises. All these are religious if done in a proper spirit, but religious cannot be restricted to so confined a limit. Religious may part company with the organized church. We are beginning to see that certain movements are religious on which the church, as yet, would not set the seal of approval. In his book on "The Living Wage" (1) John A. Ryan says "The Supreme Earthly Goal of Conduct is to know in the highest degree the best that is to be known, and to love in the highest degree the best that is to be

1. Ryan in "The Living Wage." Page 49.

loved. These highest objects of knowledge and love are God, and, in proportion to the degree of eccellence which they possess, His creatures." When Jesus was asked by his diciples which was the great commandment he said "To love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and thy mind and all thy soul." This is the first and great commandment; and the other is like unto it "Love thy neighbor as thyself." "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Love to God and love to fellow-man! Anything that helps man to love God or Man better is religious. In that sense anything that aids a man to make his life more efficient in these two directions is religious. The business of life is to make a life; and the more love and service to God, for service goes hand in hand with love, and the more love and service to fellow-man, the more efficient the life and the more religious. What is true of the individual is true of the aggregate of individuals -- Society. Thus whatever helps Society toward that great goal, the Kingdom of God, which must ultimately be a Kingdom of complete lives, is religious. It is necessary now to define the Term "Living Wage."(1)It is a term that cannot be

1. Quoted by Ryan in "A Living Wage" - Page 137.

set with mechanical accuracy. What would constitute a Living Wage in one community might not in another. The Living Wage in the country would be far different from the Living Wage in the city. There is a vast difference between Southern Italy and the United States in the definition of this term. It is still more difficult to reduce it to a monetary standard. Proffessor Small of the University of Chicage says "$1,000 a year is needed to provide a descent living in the United States." He does not prove it. John Mitchell, President of the Amalgamated Mine Workers, declares "Nothing under $600 will constitute a Living Wage." And Mr. Ryan concludes his observation by saying (1) "Anything less than $600 is not a Living Wage in any of the cities of the United States. (2) This sum is probably a Living Wage in those cities of the Southern States in which fuel, clothing, food and some other items of expenditure are cheaper than in the North. (3) It is possibly a Living Wage in moderate sized cities of the West, North and East. (4) In some of the larger cities of the last named regions it certainly is not "A Living Wage."[1] But whatever the sum may be it is not

1. Quoted by Ryan in "A Living Wage" Page - 138.
1."A Living Wage - Page 150

germane to this discussion. These figures are quoted for use in another connection.

We can, however, agree approximately on a definition. The Author of The Living Wage gives this definition.(1)"By a decent livelihood is meant that amount of the necessities of life that is in keeping with the dignity of a human being. It means, in short, that smallest amount of subsistable goods which is reasonable, becoming, and appropriate to the dignity of a person." Professor Smart says (2) "Undoubtedly the first moral charge on the national income is such a sum as is necessary to bring up a family, providing for health, education and efficiency of work, and the conditions generally of a normal life."(3)Professor Munroe defines Living Wage as "A yearly wage sufficient to maintain the worker in the highest state of industrial efficiency, and to afford him adequate leisure to discharge the duties of citizenship."(4)Another Economist goes even further "A Living Wage should guarantee to all workers the means of physical existence, and the practical possibility of marriage; separate homes; assurance against sickness, old age and

1. Ryan in "A Living Wage Page - 72 -- 73
2. Smart in "Studies in Economy - Page 302
3. Professor Munroe in "The Economic Journal 1894 Page - 30.
4. Devas "Political Economy" Page - 3498.

industrial accidents; and some access to the treasures of Literature, Art and Culture."(1)Professor Patten holds "The workingman has a right to a home; to become the head of a family; to self-development; to a share in the social surplus sufficiently large to make him comfortable; to the leisure that is necessary for the revival of physical and mental powers; to recreation for the sake of symmetrical development; to cleanliness in and about the home; and to some development of his sense of the beautiful." "The Conference on the Organization of Industry held at Holborn Hall, London, November 29, 1893 interpreted the Living Wage as a remuneration that would enable workers to maintain health and human homes."(2)And finally Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor says "It is a wage, which, when expended in the most economic way, shall be sufficient to maintain any average size family in a manner consistent with whatever the contemporary local civilization recoginizes as indispensable to physical and mental health, or is required by the rational self-respect of human beings." All these definitions are reasonably fair

1. Professor Patten "The Theory of Prosperity" Page - 218 and 27.
2. Gompers "American Federationist."

and agree as to essential. A Living Wage then, reduced to its lowest terms, is such a wage as will permit a man to approximate the most complete realization of his life, the greatest usefulness to Society and the Kingdom of God. There can be no quarrel about this; every fair-minded man must admit it. "Can it be, says the man that has not studied this question, that we in free America with its boundless resources, its millionares and its splendid industries, that a man is forced to work for less than a Living Wage?" Or at least are there very many who are compelled so to do?" It is safe to say that fifty per cent of those employed in Industry are getting less than $600 a year, counting the days they are forced to be idle in the year.(1) Robert Hunter, in his book "Poverty" estimates that the majority of workers in the North receive less than $460 a year, and in the South less than $300. "Anything below these figures would be below the poverty line, to say nothing of a Living Wage, he says."(2) In the Middle States nearly one-third of all the workers are receiving a rate of wages less than $6.00 a week, or less than $300 yearly; and in the Southern States fifty-nine per

1. Robert Hunter in "Poverty" Page 53 --56.
2. " " " " "2 54 --55.

cent are receiving less than that amount. Robert Coit Chapin in 1906 conducted an investigation in New York City. While figures are unsatisfactory, because they cannot comprehend all circumstances, the thoroughness of this investigation will make it a reasonable working basis. This investigation did not comprehend so many cases, 391 being the number, but the intensiveness of the method, and the fact that typical families were taken from all parts of the city, renders it a valuable study.(1) He concludes, "It requires no citation of elaborate statistics to bring convincing proof that $600 to $700 is wholly inadequate to maintain a proper standard of living, and no self-respecting family should be asked or expected to live on such an income." Yet it is safe to say that twenty-five per cent of the industrial employees are living on one-half that amount, and fifty per cent receive less than that amount. Our wage conditions are very far from being on a religious foundation.

The size of the wage that American Industry must pay to measure up to a living standard will be larger than in some other countries. As a Nation we lag

1. Robert C. Chapin in "Standards of Living in New York City." Page - 278.

behind many of the European Countries in such matters as Old Age Pensions, Sick and Accidental Insurance, and Mothers Pensions. Thus our considerations must include cost of insurance, laying up a little for old age and kindred necessities. Still the difference in methods will not influence our main conclusions.

It may be well to consider briefly a few of the wage theories that have been advanced, especially those that must influence industry. For men are by no means unanimous in supporting the doctrine of a Living Wage. This is true of thousands of men conducting Industrial Enterprises. Wages keep pace with the increase of the standard of living is a theory that sounds good, but everyone knows that the rise in the price of the necessities of life in the past twenty years has not been accompanied by an equally increasing rate of wages. A workingman should have wages in proportion to the amount of product produced.is another view. Perhaps they should, but they do not, and we are not sure that such a system would work out for the best interests of everyone. But perhaps the best known is the

Wage Fund, or the Iron Law of Wages Theory, and coupled with this the so-called right of free contract. The Iron Law of Wages was supposed to limit the amount of wages by the amount of capital that could be used for paying wages, then was added the doctrine that in-as-much as men were free to bargain justice would be secured. The Iron Law of Wages was exploited long ago. There is no such thing. The "Laissez-faire" doctrine so dear to Adam Smith and his followers has brought misery to countless thousands of workers. It persists today with great tenacity, and stands squarely in the way of real progress in obtaining justice for wage earners. None of these theories can successfully stand in the way of the doctrine of the Living Wage.(1)John A Ryan says, "The presumption in favor of the existing method of fixing wages and against the principle of a living wage, which are drawn from the teachings of economy and the attitude of the law, disappear when we realize the reasons upon which this teaching and its attitude were based. Economic laws are not inexorable, are not independent of the will of men whose actions they describe, do

1. Ryan in "A Living Wage" Page 21--22

not compel wages to be adjusted by an unlimited use of the economic strength of the bargainers, and do not render existing rates of wages just. The practical recommendations of the economist and the ordinances of the legislators can be traced to false principles, false reasoning, incomplete analysis of facts and the selfishness of the dominant industrial class. Hence, the doctrine of the Living Wage cannot be refuted nor put in peril by any mere appeal to economic or legal authority.", A Living Wage is demanded to meet the proper physical needs. Man is to a certain extent a physical animal. His body is an important part of his equipment. The gospel of the healthy body is just beginning to be actually preached. The ancient Saints and Church Men, many of them, believed in humiliating and abusing the body in order that true spirituality might result. That is why a Saint would spend his life on the top of a column thirty feet high. Some of these Saints never bathed or washed or combed their hair, because the body was to be despised. It is now beginning to be seen that starvation and piety do not necessarily go hand in hand. In fact we aver that it is hard to talk to a man of spiritual things when he is perish-

ing from hunger. Feed him and the way to his heart is made easier. Jesus was no ascetic. "The Son of Man came both eating and drinking, He said, The body is the earthly tenement of the soul."

If the worker is to discharge his obligation faithfully he must have a strong body, Even if he is fortunate to enjoy the eight hour day -- and many are not -- his work is wearying and not done in the most advantageous places. If he is to keep his place in the race he needs a well nourished body. His mental processes too are dependent upon his physical equipment to a certain extent. No man can have the peace necessary for mental development when underfed or worrying to keep the wolf from the door.

Out of the 391 families examined in Chapin's investigation, 91 or 23 2/10 per cent were underfed. A man from one of these families goes home at night to eat his meal of the poorest kind of food. This is done day after day, until the weakened body falls a prey to disease or lessened efficiency that incapacitates him for his work. Then there is no longer any place for him in the strenuous life of modern industry, and he goes out to fill the ranks of the poverty

class, or even worse. He is not to blame. He has done his best. A Living Wage would have saved him for himself, his family and society.

Clothing is not such a necessity, yet a glance at Professor Chapin's figures will convince anyone that these needs are illy met by the family whose wage falls below the line of decency.. Men of families have pride enough, even though working men's families, to be hurt by shabbiness. Anything that robs a man of any part of his manhood is a detriment, and a religious necessity exists to do away with it.

But what of the effect of the Living Wage on the home? Or rather what of the effect of the lack of such a wage? The foundation of society is the home. In proportion as the home is elevating and descent, so will society and the State be. If there is a lack of clean God-fearing homes society will decay. If there is an abundance of homes where virtue and love and peace reign society is secure. Nations have perished because the home decayed. Jesus, that Master of men, reverenced the home. Without a home himself for the three years of his Ministry, he was fond of visiting the home of Lazarus and his sisters.

He recognized the foundation of the home -- Marriage. When he wished to tell us of the joys of heaven he spoke of the mansions in his Father's house. Christian society has rightly regarded the home as fundamental to civilization.

An inadequate wage prevents the formation of homes by young people. The rising tide of prices has outstripped wages, and the young man and woman wait till thirty, instead of marrying at twenty. Young women have been forced to work to supplement the earnings of the parents. They hate to leave a steady income for the insecure wage of the young man. Hence the day is postponed until too often some other influence has come in, as it often does, to annihilate character and put in jeopardy the chance of making a home.

And so many of the homes are scarcely worthy to be called homes.(1)Robert Hunter tells of a family on the East Side of New York; a man and wife and two children slept in a dark room six by seven feet, while in the other room ten feet square slept six men. This room was used for a sleeping room by night and a living room by day. Can such a place be a

1. Robert Hunter in "Poverty" Page - 178.

home? Yet there are thousands of such homes in our larger cities.(1)Professor Chapin found fifty-five per cent of the 391 homes investigated in New York City had one or more dark rooms.(2)This too, when 171, or fourty-four per cent had less than three rooms. What a condition for a family of five!(3)Moreover only twenty-one per cent had bath rooms, and thirty per cent toilet facilities.(4)Thirty of these families only had two rooms. It is hard to think that a family can long maintain self-respect under such conditions, yet the wages paid would not permit anything better.

And the women, mothers of men, forced to leave home to work in the factories to add their miserable pittance to the income of the family. There are thousands of these women in the United States alone. Of the 13,810,057 married women, 769,477, or 5 6/10 per cent were engaged in some form of gainful occupation in 1900. They hold their jobs, working every day until near the time when the baby is born. They drop out for a few days, then leaving the baby in the hands of an older girl, perhaps who ought to be in school, they go back to the Mill again. No wonder the children are puny and ill-fed and grow up weaklings or degenerates. There can be no pride in such a home.

1.R. C. Chapin -- Page 78
2." " " " 79
3." " " " 79
4." " " " 81

Home becomes merely a place to stay. In many cases the wives and mothers do not go to the Mills, but supplement the income by taking lodgers.(1) Ninety-three families or 29 2/10 per cent of the families investigated by Chapin took lodgers. In tenements of two, three, or four rooms this cannot be done without over-crowding and taking away the fine edge of the nicer things of life. Again the home becomes no longer a home but a place to stay.

(2) The New York investigation revealed another interesting fact; 119 of the 391 families gathered wood from the city streets. Boys and girls were sent out to pick up and beg wood in the streets. Fifty-one per cent of the $600 income class supplemented their wage in this way. "There must be a loss of self-respect when one is forced to pick wood in the streets." The preservation of the home is a religious duty. The lack of the Living Wage tends to debase and disintegrate the home. A Living Wage would provide a decent home for all.

The proper development of child life is conditioned on an adequate wage for the wage earner. Present day civilization has just begun to accentuate the value of the child. We are just beginning to realize

1. R. C. Chapin -- Page 78.
2. " " " " 115.

his value to society. Jesus first put the proper emphasis on child life when he set a child in the midst of the wise men and said "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." The Kingdom of Heaven will never come until the child is recognized in his proper relation to society.

Every child has an inherent right to be well born and well-bred. God never intended children should come into the world incapacitated for usefulness because economic conditions had prevented the mothers from giving them the proper pre-natal care. God never made under-developed, distorted, crippled bodies; humanity has accomplished that. Yet there are thousands of children born into the world with such handicaps. No woman can work through a long day in the Mill while she is carrying a little life next to her heart, without endangering the future of her child. Modern industry is too exacting, too enervating to leave sufficient strength to nourish the little life. Work taken home to be done will make for weakened motherhood also. Society cannot expect healthy normal children when mothers' strength is taxed to keep famine from the home.

But how about the children themselves? Do they have a fair chance in childhood? The old theology condemed children to Hell, the old industry condemed them to a living Hell. As late as the beginning of the 19th Century England was selling the lives and souls of her children to greedy manufacturers. Little lives were blasted by the thousands, and England today is paying the penalty. We Americans are accustomed to look at ourselves with pride, and boast a high order of civilization. Yet we allow children of a tender age to work long hours in the Breakers and Cotton Mills crushing out their young lives without a chance to be real men and women. Let us look at conditions. According to the census of 1900 there were 1,752,187 children under sixteen years of age gainfully employed in the United States. True more than half of them were employed in Agricultural pursuits. That leaves nevertheless a great number employed in other ways.(1)Robert Hunter says "Not less than 80,000 children, most of whom are little girls, are at present employed in the Textile Mills of this country."(2)"There are six times as many children at work in the South today as twenty years ago." "Children -- the tiniest and frailest -- of five and six

1. Robert Hunter in "Poverty" Page - 231
2. " " " " " 231

years of age rise in the morning, and like old men and women, go to the Mills to their day's labor; and when they return home, they fling themselves on their beds, too tired to take off their clothes."(1) "In the Mines, Mills and before the Furnaces and in the Workshops of Pennsylvania, that State of colossal industrial crimes, 120,000 little ones were, in the year 1900, sacrificing a part of their right to live, most of their right to liberty, and all of them their right to happiness, except perhaps of a beastial kind."(2) "There are 17,000 little girls under sixteen years of age who are toiling in the great Silk Mills and Lace Factories of the mining districts of Pennsylvania."(3) "Eleven year old children go to the factories at 6:30 P. M. and work until 6:30 A. M." "There are in the United States 24,000 children employed in and about the Mines and Quarries."(4) "5000 children are employed as glass workers in the United States."(5) "In 1900 there were 90,000 childrworkers employed in New York State alone. 7,000 children are working in Laundries, 2,000 in Bake Shops, 42,000 as Messenger Boys, working long hours and going into haunts of vice and crime, and about 11,000 are em-

1. Robert Hunter in "Poverty" Page - 232.
2. " " " " " - 235.
3. " " " " " - 235.
4. " " " " " - 237.
5. " " " " " - 239.

ployed in the tobacco industry.(1)This is by no means an exhaustive survey, but it shows the appalling condition.

What are the results? In the first place these children are robbed of their play life. No boy or girl can become a normal man or woman who has been robbed of play life. Take away play time from the child and you have done him an irreparable injury. Real play is too fast disappearing from our American life, anyway. Certainly when you take boys and girls of six to fourteen years of age and put them in ill-ventilated noisy factories and breakers you are crushing out all chance for development. No wonder they are prematurely old and soon fall victims of disease. The saddest of all sad sights is to see these old men and women of sixteen and eighteen years who never had any childhood.

Their chance for education also is lost. A nation cannot rise very high which limits education to a few. Ignorance is the weapon of oppression, whether it be of the church, state or industry. When children leave the school before fourteen years of age, and education is only of the most elementary kind. Education is the door to achievment in the 20th Century.

1. Robert Hunter in "Poverty" Page - 243.

We are proud of our educational systems and colleges, but why limit the opportunity by forcing children into industry at a tender age to fill the pockets of men already rolling in wealth? It is a crime comparable to the Massacre of the Innocents by Herod twenty Centuries ago.

There is still a darker side. These children soon fall a prey to disease and early give up their little lives. The factories are unsanitary, and the labors exacting.(1) "Hunter mentions a man who from eleven to sixteen years old had worked at a machine making two movements of the hand every second, or 23,760,000 a year." The Breaker boys swallow the dust of the coal, and die like rats of tuberculosis, or become weary with the monotony of picking slate and fall into the machine to come out mangled or dead. They work in hot factories from which they are forced to go out into the cold air with insufficient clothing, and easily fall victims of lung diseases. And all this is done to rob men of a decent wage and swell dividends. Done too, in the 20th Century, in a land calling itself Christian.

If the system does not actually crush out these

1. Robert Hunter in "Poverty" Page - 237.

young lives, it is liable to send them out juvenile delinquents and criminals. A Living Wage for their fathers would save many a life from death or crime, and increase mightily the sum total of our efficiency in child life and our happiness. Surely such an end would be religious in the highest sense.

There is also a close connection between low wages and pauperism, degeneracy and crime. The Underfeeding and attendant evils connected with low wages throws the unfortunate many times into the pauper class. When a man's will is broken and his self-respect gone he is on the brink of Pauperism or Crime. By Pauperism is not meant simple poverty; there is a vast difference. A man may be very poor and still be a long way from being a Pauper. It takes much to drive a man to the extreme. Everything in the house -- even the wedding ring will be sold or pawned before the final step comes. When the time comes that a self respecting family has to ask for public relief they are near the danger line. Many men then desert their families. Soon they fall into the Pauper Class.

The extent of poverty is appalling, and when one considers poverty to be the basis of pauperism, as

it undoubtedly is, we see how many people are in danger of being carried over the brink.(1)One in every ten persons who die in New York City is buried in Potters Field.(2)"Hunter estimates that in 1903 21 9/10% of the people of Boston were in distress; in 1899 19 per cent of the people in New York were in distress."(3)"He concludes that one-fifth of the population of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan are in poverty."(4)For the United States undoubtedly 10,000,000 people are in poverty. These figures are based largely on statistics of relief and unemployment. They are significant. Over one-half of our working population receive less than a Living Wage. More than one-tenth of our population is in poverty, and of course the rich, the professional man and the business man are not in this class. It seems more than likely that one-half of our working population falls in the poverty class.

We can see the steps in the Process. A low wage forces the self-respecting laborer to take a cheaper tenement in the less desirable part of the city. His pride is injured. He is thrown into more or

1. Robert Hunter in "Poverty" Page - 25.
2. " " " " " - 25.
3. " " " " " - 60
4. " " " " " - 61.

less vicious surroundings. Soon he becomes accustomed to them, because a part of them. His old friends no longer find him. His new friends are the lower class. Lessened interest in himself lowers him still further in the social scale. He no longer feels a shock at his condition, and easily falls into the ways of his associates. His moral fiber gone he degenerates more and more, until finally he and his family go over into the Pauper Class.

From this class comes many of the degenerates and criminals. The roving Paupers become Vagrants. You may find them any time. They walk the streets of the city begging when not seen. The cheap lodging -house, the five and ten cent ones, are filled night after night with these disgusting creatures. Dirty, ill clothed, swearing, vile, the soul sickens even to view them. They easily slide over into the criminal class. No banks are plundered by them, but a poor old drunk in the gutter is robbed of his few coppers, or a ladies bag is snatched. They are petty criminals, still they are a menace to society. It would be foolish to say that all of this was chargeable to our industrial system and low wages, but as the man who had worked for five years from eleven to

sixteen years of age making two motions every second put it when talking to Mr. Hunter, "He had paid up for all the sins he ever committed by those five years in Hell." Low wages and attendant evil are responsible for a large share of these conditions.

Much has been said in the last few years about the growth of immorality. Many and diverse are the causes that have been advanced. Many have been constrained to put the whole burden of immorality on the lack of an adequate wage. Others, especially those financially interested in maintaining low wages, have endeavored to show there was no connection whatever. Both undoubtedly have overstated the matter. No one with his eyes open can deny that the failure to receive a Living Wage has contributed to the spread of immorality.

Our present day industry requires a man or woman to work at high tension. Work is specialized and the specialization becomes monotonous. The nervous system is keyed up to a high pitch. This pent-up nervous energy requires an outlet. Nothing but the poorest form of recreation are possible.to the under-paid workers. These are all operated under

the worst moral conditions. The result is immorality. Cheap dance halls, low class salons, and dives of the lowest kind furnish the occasion. Increased cost of living while wages remain below the subsistence line prevent young men and women from marrying, or at least compel the postponment of marriage till a later date. This is fatal to morality.

Then too, low wages compels herding in tenements. This herding inevitably throws the sexes into too close contact to preserve morality. In many of the families of the poor there can be no privacy. The girl working for six or even seven or eight dollars a week in a big city has to hire a poor room in the crowded lodging-house section. Many of these houses are hives of vice. Shut up in one small seven by nine room with no chance for legitimate recreation, what wonder many of them go over the border line! They are heart hungry for companionship. There is too often no other place to entertain a gentleman friend but the little room used for a bedroom. Owners are too greedy for rent to provide a parlor so that the lodgers may entertain. Moreover, the opportunities for meeting desirable young men and wo-

men are few for the under-paid workers. It is hard for the man or woman with plenty of friends to realize the heart hunger of a young man or woman alone in a big city. No wonder many go down in the struggle!

It is not a matter of sentiment either that has made thinking men and women protest against the low wages paid to women workers. Often the pitiful wage will not keep body and soul together. Statistics, of course, are not completely satisfactory because they are not complete, but Scott Nearing estimates that(1)"In the United States one-fifth of the women earn less than $200 a year; three-fifths less than $325; nine-tenths less than $500; while only one-twentieth are paid more than $600." An investigation was made in 1908 by the Illinois State Labor Committee: fourty-eight stores were investigated; twenty-six of these in Chicago.(2)The results show one-fifth of the women employed received less than $7.00 a week; one-half less than $10.00 a week.(3) Of the 588,599 women sixteen years of age and over, reported on by the Federal Census of Manufacturers in 1905, seven and one-half per cent received less than $3.00 a week;

1. Scott Nearing "Wages in the United States." P. 214
2. " " " " " " " " 95
3. " " " " " " " " 109

thirty-three and one half per cent received less than $5.00; sixty-six and three-tenths per cent less than $7.00; Ninety-one and seven-tenths per cent less than $10.00. In the State of California in the year of 1911, 37, 304 women were employed in the five largest cities.(1)Fourty per cent received less than $250 a year; eighty-two per cent less than $500; ninety-seven per cent less than $750." Of course wages of women are not uniform, Some trades pay a very low wage, while others pay a decent wage. Still it is safe to say that thousands of girls and women are not paid a subsistence wage. If she is living at home $6.00 or $7.00 a week may suffice, but where board, room, clothing and recreation must come out of even $7.00 a week, the amount is not sufficient. Life under such conditions is only a mockery of life, and the opportunity comes to enjoy a few of life's pleasures by the sale of her body -- the one commodity man is willing to buy -- and for which he is willing to pay. Hungry for pleasure, and desperate on account of her hard lot, the step is easy, and then the ranks are filled. A paragraph from Walter Rauschenbusch's "Christianity and the Social Crisis" may be illuminat-

1. Scott Nearing in "Income" Page - 208.

ing; Professor Rauschenbusch is one of the best informed men in America on the Social Question.(1)He says "A large proportion of working women are not paid wages sufficient to support themselves in comfort and to dress as the requirements of their position and modern taste demand. In that case they must either suffer want or supplement their earnings." Again he says "The most serious danger is not the increase of professional prostitutes, but the frequency with which women supplement their wages and secure pleasures by occasional immorality." There is a close connection between low wages and immorality.

Intellectual development is conditioned on an adequate wage. Civilization depends on the amount of true culture and the means of acquiring it. Education alone will never save a people, but an ignorant people will never advance for the highest good. Where the Mass of people are ignorant, they easily become the prey of a few, and are continually exploited by these parasite few. Intellectual development will increase the efficiency of any man or woman. By efficiency we mean the power to achieve a well balanced life. Americans boast of their splen-

1. Walter Rauschenbusch in"Christianity and the Social Crisis." Page 789.

did school system, but a large percentage of the children of the laboring men leave school before taking advantage of its higher aspects. The pull on the family income is so great that the young men and women leave school and go to work to supplement the family income. The benefits of higher education are thus denied them. Professor Chapin reports (1)"That the average expenditure for education and reading in families invested in New York City was $5.56 for the $600 income group; ninety-seven of three hundred and eighteen families, or thirty and one half per cent, had books in the home; sixty-eight, or twenty-one and four-tenths per cent, used the library." Pitiful indeed, and worthy of calm consideration.

Economic leisure is another necessity for the development of mind. The level of civilization can be quite generally obtained by noting how the people spend their leisure.(2)Henderson, in his book "Pay Day" says "It takes no great penetration to discover that all ceaseless toil is a social crime, and that in economic leisure we have the possibilities of all that make a nation happy and prosperous and great."

1. Professor Chapin in Standards of Living in N. Y. City." Page - 2115
2. Henderson in "Pay-Day" Page - 16.

How does the laboring man and his family spend their leisure, what little they have? One only needs to walk the streets of our cities, visit the Movies, or the dance halls to see how the younger element spends its leisure. A greater bulk, however, never have any recreation or make any use of their spare time. Turn again to Professor Chapin's investigation in New York City.(1) "In the $600 income group $3.79 was the average for the year; in the $800 group $8.44; thirty-two families reported no expenditure for amusement or recreation. Two hundred and thirty-seven of the three hundred and ninety-one, or seventy-four and one half per cent families reported sole expenditure was for car fare spent for visits to friends or the Park. We can see that only the cheapest amusements are patronized, and that there is no genuinely uplifting reading. The poor working man either has not enough money to permit any real intellectual development, or the strain from industry and the worry of the support of his family incapacitates him for such enjoyment.(2) Henderson asserts, "We must not conserve only in every way the health and vigor of labor, but also provide that it may work

1. Chapin in "The Standards of Living in N. Y. City." Page - 210 -- 11
2. Henderson in "Pay-Day" Page - 187.

out its own happiness with wages that will enable it to live so as to maintain its self-respect, and with sufficient leisure to enjoy and profit by mental and moral recreation." It takes no elaborate thesis to prove to an open minded individual that with over ~~five hundred and nine~~ 503 of our workers earning $600 or under, and working eight to ten hours a day, there is precious little chance for intellectual development.

It may be well to consider that the attitude of its citizens toward the State may be the result of the level of wages. The stability of any government depends on the attitude of its citizens. This may not be true of countries like Russia or Germany where the power of the government depends on the strength of the standing army. But surely in a free republic like the United States everything depends on the attitude of the vast majority of citizens. A Nation of prosperous, well-fed, well-clothed, well-housed people will love the government whose protection permits them to realize this prosperity. However, if they see special privilege in high place, if they see the Mass toiling mightily that a few may become im-

mensely rich while the many remain poor, the foundation of the government are built on a rope of sand. Inequality and oppression bred the bloody French Revolution. Its counterpart was only avoided in England by the rise of the great Weslyan Movement that stirred the Island to its remotest bounds.

There are rumblings in the life of our government today. The ranks of the Anarchists increase from day to day. The I. W. W. is here and makes itself felt more intensely every day. Woe to any government if either of these gains any measure of power. Their ranks are being recruited every day by those that have felt the tyranny of modern industry, and are only waiting for an opportunity to overthrow it. The Socialists are with us in great numbers (1) "At the Presidential election of 1912 their candidate and the candidate of the Socialist Labor Party polled 1,0311,32 votes. In 1908 the vote was 434,018. Their vote more than doubled in four years."

The increase in the number of the disaffected is due to present conditions. It would be strange if a boy who had worn out his little life in the Coal Breakers of Pennsylvania toiling long hours

1. "World Almanac" Page - 725 -- 827

when he should be playing would love the government that permitted his exploitation. The boy who has worked fourteen hours a day in a Cotton Mill in the South when he was eleven years old, and at the age of twenty-five is a physical wreck, will most certainly be hostile to such a government; men who have had to send their sons and daughters into the Mills at a tender age to keep the wolf from the door, while millionaires rode in limousines and dwelt in palaces, are quick to espouse the cause of any party that promises relief from such oppression. The United States may well consider the effect of low wages on the attitude of working men toward the republic.

The church ought to be the center of all that is religious. It has not always been even interested in some things that today we see are decidedly religious. The church has too often served the vested interest and alienated the working men. The Socialists today may cheer the name of Jesus and hiss the church. Wealth has squeezed the working man and used the profits for the support of the church, and Preachers have apologized for it and defended it in its cause. The church has thus lost a great power.

The church suffers when any great Mass of people are forced to live on a subsistence wage. It is easy to realize that when all the income is needed to provide bread and butter and homes, there is nothing left for lodge or church. Professor Chapin discovered that(1)"Out of the three hundred and ninety-one families investigated in New York City, sixty-two paid nothing to lodge or church; one hundred and seventy-five, or fifty-three per cent made a small contribution to church. He found that the bulk of the contribution came from the higher income groups." The financial stability of a church is best served by the people with moderate incomes. The rich easily become tired and withdraw their support, and the church is continually in suspense for fear the heavy contributor may become displeased and withdraw. Rauschenbusch says(2)"If the people become poor they cannot afford to share in a self-supporting church. The unequal distribution of wealth thus tends to strip the church of its poorer clientage. The preference of wealthy men and their wives may select a Pastor who is more of a Courtier than a Saint."

There is still another side to the question.

1. Chapin in "Standards of Living in N. Y. City." Page - 206.
2. Rauschenbusch in "Christianity and The Social Crisis." Page - 294 -- 295.

Much of the work of the church is done by volunteer workers. When all the energy is expended in getting a living, or the wage is so low as to be barely enough for existence, the worker has not time or strength to give to the church. The church would have more workers, more members, more money if it insisted on industry doing its religious duty -- paying a Living Wage.

There is a final consideration greater than all the rest. The conception of God may be the outcome of the economic standard. Conciously or unconciously we limit God by the human equation. If injustice, oppression and wrong are rife in a civilization claiming to be Christian, men are apt to impute injustice to God. If wealthy men and women, their hands stained with the life blood of men and women who have been crushed by low wages, can go to the altar and claim the blessing of God in communion, God is unjust. The poor man will not have an unjust, cruel God. He will have none instead. If men cannot carry the Golden Rule into business, there is no Golden Rule, the law of the jungle is the only law. This world is ruled by chance, and

the strong will consume the weak. It is every man for himself, and the weak will curse God. Starvation wages, men out of work, women and children dying, while the land abounds in wealth and men pile up large fortunes and build $4,000,000 homes and own magnificent yachts, are incompatible with the goodness of God. God is ruled out of the universe. So reasons our under-paid workman. All the I. W. W. are Atheists; so are the Anarchists. A large proportion of the Socialists are agnostic to some degree. Many of those who belong to neither of these classes are atheistic or agnostic. They politely bow God out, and model their conduct as if there were no God.

The result is, God's moral Government is seriously challenged. When faith in His moral government is gone, chaos will inevitably result. If blind chance rules the world, and the strength of the strong makes right, then woe to anything that stands in the way. We shall have a universe without law; a system where every man's might is his right, and real right will perish.

The question naturally arises, is there enough income in the country to pay a Living Wage to every

one? This is a question that cannot be answered definitely.(1)Dr. Spahr estimated that "In 1890 the total income received by all classes was $10,800,000,000. Divided among the 12,500,000 families in the United States -- five to a family -- it would give each family $864 -- a very liberal Living Wage".

Neither are we sure that production has reached its limit of efficiency. If the owners of industry should resolve to pay a Living Wage and take a real interest in their men's welfare it would work out for the good of both. Again the greater demand for goods would call for increased production and there would be less men working part time, and thus more income.(2)Mr. Redfield suggests "That better management would save millions of dollars to the manufacturer.(3)He says too "A steadily decreasing cost per unit of product is not inconsistent with, but on the contrary is normal to, a coincident advance in the rate of pay for the work, when accompanied by careful study of method and equipment." It is not too much to say that in a country like ours every man might be paid a Living Wage and no one be made to suffer.

1. Spahr "Present Dis. of Wealth in U. S. P. 104- 5
2. Redfield in "The New Industrial Day" Page - 121.
3. " " " " " " " "

The conclusion is self-evident. Religion was defined in terms of life. Anything that goes to make a completed life has been called religious. The major activities and institutions of life have been canvassed and we have seen that the lack of a Living Wage has hindered the development of all. It has not been contended that all the evils attendant on our complex American life can be traced to low wages, but that the lack of a Living Wage hinders the development of the best in the working-man and his family. There is an insistent call that religion be made big enough to serve the greatest needs of men. The time has come to stop thinking of religion as only good for Sunday and churches, and to put it in the center of all life. It can and must be carried into industrial life. If eyes are not blinded by prejudice and greed, men will see that insistence on a Living Wage for every wage earner will help greatly in solving many of our most difficult problems.(1)Mr. Redfield asks this question, "Can we translate the laws of Industrial Production into true human happiness? No less than this is what some day must be done, and is what we seek to begin

1. Redfield in "The New Industrial Day." Page - 141.

to do." That is our religious duty. This thesis has been written to prove that contention. Human happiness, human welfare, human progress demands the payment of a Living Wage to every wage earner. The payment of such a wage is a religious necessity.

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