

tried to get rid of poverty by gifts.
It in other words took to supporting the
idle and dissolute without work
on the earnings of the workers and
thrift. They pauperised the world
in consequence. There of course
followed the great wreck, where
human nature rose against this
intolerable tyranny of well meant
defiance of God's law of work, and
shattered the whole fabric; but
put nothing in its stead. For
evil passions let loose only destroy,
and do not build. Had the men
of the Reformation, and afterwards
who were in power been good
men, they would have at once
set about constructing some
scheme to fill the space they
had so mercifully cleared.
They were not good men. They

68.169R.2

Rev D/ 86

The School House,
Uppingham,
Rutland.

My dear Sir, I received your two
papers of Christian Socialism, but
have been much too busy to weigh
them, much less write about them.
Naturally as a student of life I have
thought long and much on the subject
and my main conclusions can be
packed in small space.
There is of course Christian Socialism,
which, according to the famous definition,
says, "All mine is thine" in opposition
to the falsehood, "All thine is mine."
As regards the wise application of
the great truth, it is limited by
common sense. If I have a dozen
bottles of brandy I do not forthwith
give them to the nearest drunkard
on the strength of the great truth
that "all mine is thine." I do not

See that helping men to commit suicide (which is modern socialism) is
Christian. Neither again do I rob myself of the power of doing honest
and effective work by running counter to those economic laws of
nature which prescribe the conditions under which trade can be.
That is only a more elaborate suicide.

As a positive creed. Man is created to work, ay, to work severely.
The attempt to abrogate or evade this law accordingly is always evil.
The main effort of fallen man, rich or poor. I do not see that the
poor man in power wishing to live at the cost of another's life
is better than the rich man in power doing the same. The
balance of power changes but not the sin.

Work is the law of healthy life; idleness and ^{in the process} ^{between} ^{work} ^{and} ^{rest}
of unhealthy life; with a middle stratum of imprudences
temporarily in the crisis of others.

Christianity in the first fifty years thoroughly acknowledged
the law of work both in word and deed; all gave; ^{the}
rich their wealth and their hearts; the poor their work and their
hearts. Then, as was natural, gradually the rich only gave
wealth, and the poor left off giving altogether. But all
was voluntary, and from a religious motive. In this way for
1400 years by degrees the rich from mistaken application of religion

apostate, infant Christianity, will begin
with much communitiy of goods.
But this does not prove that they will
go on with it.

This does not prove that they will run
their heads against God's great Law
which gives to those who have, and
takes away from those who have
not, or, in other words, rewards the
worker, and punishes the non-worker.
This does not prove that they will
bring a compulsory Law whether
shrewd or disguised, into the Kingdom
of love.

Submit also that the term
Socialism was nothing Christian
in it, that it has been stated
and "preoccupied by a Devil's
heresy of Christian brotherly love,
and that it had better be left in
the hands of those who started it.

Only supplied the yallows and the
stocks, and the prison which do
not restore <sup>The School House,
Appingham,
Barland</sup> that give life.

Hence the reaction now.
And Government has already
begun, without religion, and
without liberty, to compel by
Law the thrifty and hard working
to maintain the idle, dissolute
non-workers, and hand in hand
with the prominent in principle
with Trades' Unions, Land
Leagues, and dynamite
powers, bent on getting
maintenance without work.
Thus the 1400 years of experiment
and failure of benevolence
in will, and religion,
is being acted over again

without benevolence, free will, or religion, by force of Law, force
of coercive rules, force of dynamite, without religion.
And we are getting back at last to the heathen empires, and
their sole principle of conquering by force, making slaves, and
compelling slaves to support them in idleness. Their force was the sword,
ours is the Law. I don't think it signifies. They all perished. So will
every community that makes the workers support the non-workers perish.
Whether the non-workers are the rich or the poor does not signify.
God's kingdom is founded on work, every devil's parody of God's kingdom
is founded on force controlling work, and laying claim to the fruits
of work. It matters not whether the force is sword, Law, or dynamite,
Government, Trade Unions, Land Leagues. They are only
white friars of the Monasteries. The Monasteries were power
with benevolence and religion pauperizing non-workers;
these are power with robbery and without religion pauperizing
the non-workers. God helps us all. What a breakage there
will be if they succeed.
I submit that Christianity never intended to produce a legal
distribution of goods. Law is not Christianity.
I submit that every infant society surrounded by bitter enemies,

3/ There are a few heads on an almost
infinite subject which I have
thought over ^{The School House,} ^{Birmingham} ^{England.} during a
writing life of much trial.
If any one knows that it is
to be trodden under foot,
overworked, overmatched, and
to have external power against
them, I do. I do know the
poor man's trials in the poor
man's work; whether you
believe this or not, I care little
if it is true. I feel therefore that
whatever my conclusions may
be they have the merit of being
real conclusions based on very

Edward Thring
1821-1897
Schoolmaster
Wimpington
Antiquary and book

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Dear and bitter experience, bitter, yet full of comfort now.
I have not had time to examine, or even to read the single
all you have sent me. Life is very exacting and hard
in its demands on time, as much now, as in drearier days.
Neither have I time to write at length, but the subject is
so absorbing, and your efforts so praiseworthy that I felt
compelled, whether I displease you or not, to say what I
have said. If I displease you, accept the apology that
unless I had cared very much for your communications,
I should certainly have shrouded myself by silence.

Believe me
Yours very truly
Edward Thorndike

E. D. Girdlestone Esq.

Edward Thring

1821-1887

Master of Uppingham

Author

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