

# **A SHORT STUDY OF STATE SOCIALISM**

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A Short Study of State Socialism by Reuben John Bryce

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**REUBEN JOHN BRYCE**

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BY  
REUBEN JOHN BRYCE.

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1903.



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## AUTHOR'S NOTE.

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**I**N submitting to the public this slight contribution to economic discussion, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of publicly thanking the many friends who have helped me in my endeavour.

I tender my most sincere thanks to Professor Shield Nicholson, and to the Right Honourable James Bryce, M.P., for their goodness in advising me upon many points and in making invaluable suggestions.

Further, my gratitude is due to my friend Mr. D. Nichol Smith, for giving me the advantage of his incomparable knowledge in the revision of this essay, and also to Mrs. T. H. Bryce, and to Mr. Hector Macpherson for their kindness in the same direction.

To my friend Mr. J. D. Beresford I am indebted for the careful revision of the proof sheets.

R. J. BRYCE.

*London, December, 1902.*

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To

A. G. A.

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## PREFACE.

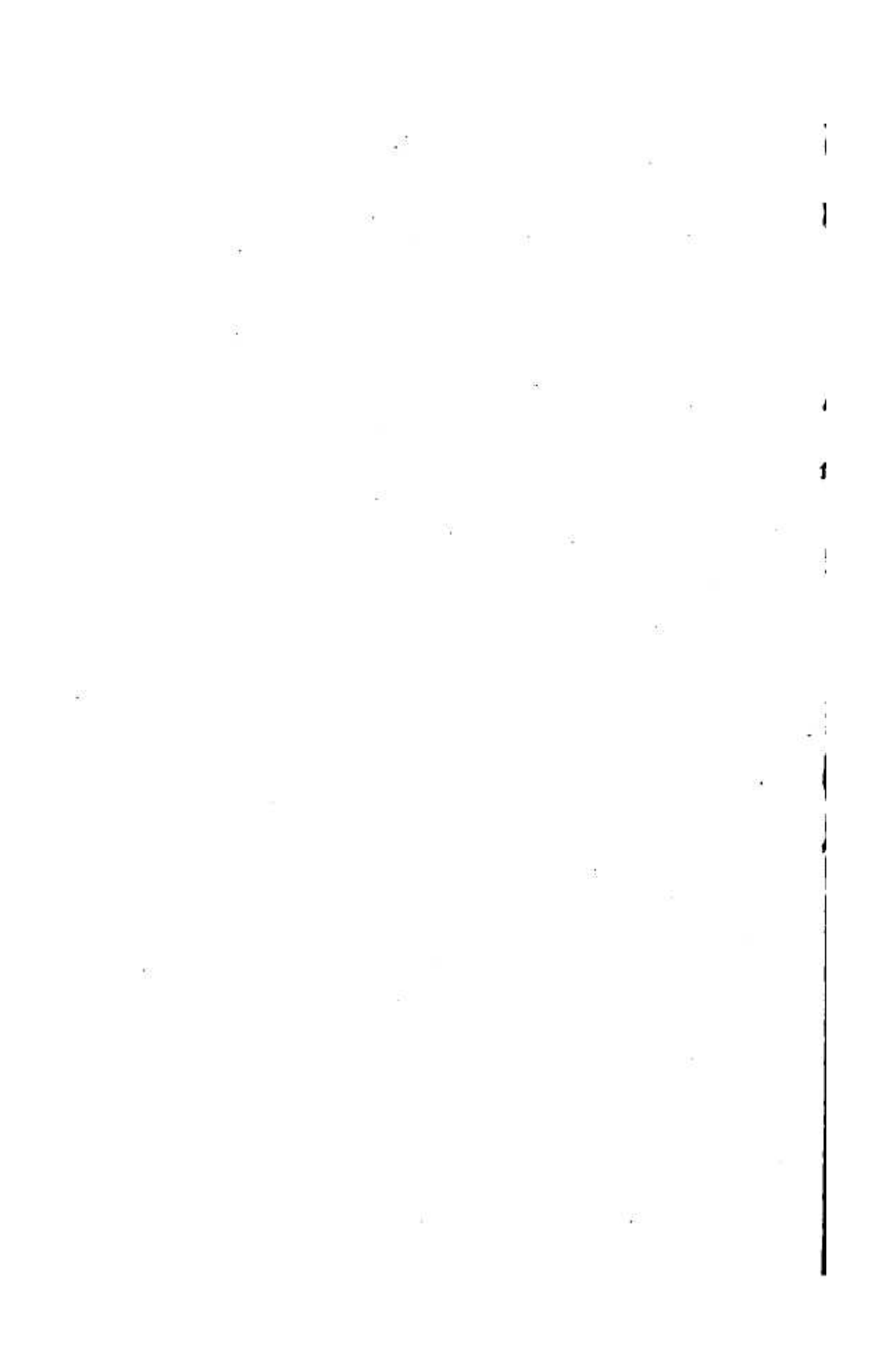
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Extensive as the literature of Socialism already is, there has long been room for a popular account of so comprehensive a subject, and the steady growth of Socialistic principles, in recent years, makes such an account the more desirable.

It is the purpose of this little book to give a simple but adequate and scientific statement of the main features of that form of Socialism known as collectivism, to examine]the principles upon which Socialism is founded, and to submit these to economic tests without burdening the discussion with technical terms and abstruse arguments. Academic treatment, therefore, has been avoided in favour of a concise and practical account.

The subject is dealt with from a purely British point of view, and has reference only to the general principles, for Socialists are constantly changing the details of their proposals.

In endeavouring to accomplish these objects the writer has sought to focus the opinions of the great thinkers upon the subject, and to suggest lines of reflection. He will be well satisfied if, to some readers, this little book should prove an introduction to the study of economic literature.





## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

The limits and purpose of this little book would be exceeded if any attempt were made at a detailed account, either of the origin of Socialism, or of the various forms which it has assumed. To trace the growth of the principles upon which Socialism is founded would involve an examination of historical development and would require a separate volume.\* Our concern here is with the fact of Socialism.

For the purpose of an intelligent understanding of our subject only a brief historical survey is necessary. After that it will be essential to come to some understanding as to what Socialism precisely is, for at present the word is applied most loosely.

The close of the eighteenth century saw the advent of modern Socialism. The unhappy condition of France at that time aroused a keen interest in the discussions on social questions. It must, however, be observed that the French Revolution—the direct outcome of the distressful condition of France—was not in itself a Socialistic movement, because in the "Declaration of Rights" private property was defined as "inviolable and sacred," and when the National Assembly deprived men of rights or property it made compensation for the loss. Pre-revolutionary literature, indeed, was not to any extent socialistic. Even Rousseau held strongly to the doctrine that property was one of "the most sacred of all the rights of citizens."

The French Revolution, however, though not in its essence socialistic, played a very important part in spreading socialistic

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\* See Kirkup's "History of Socialism."  
Pearson's "National Life and Character."