

**SOCIALS QUESTIONS OF TO-
DAY. PROBLEMS OF POVERTY,
AN INQUIRY INTO THE
INDUSTRIAL CONDITION OF THE
POOR**

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Social questions of to-day. Problems of poverty, an inquiry into the industrial condition of the poor by John A. Hobson

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JOHN A. HOBSON

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SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY

EDITED BY H. DE B. GIBBINS, LITT.D., M.A.

PROBLEMS OF POVERTY

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PROBLEMS OF POVERTY

AN INQUIRY INTO
THE INDUSTRIAL CONDITION OF THE POOR

BY
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PREFACE

THE object of this volume is to collect, arrange, and examine some of the leading facts and forces in modern industrial life which have a direct bearing upon Poverty, and to set in the light they afford some of the suggested palliatives and remedies. Although much remains to be done in order to establish on a scientific basis the study of "the condition of the people," it is possible that the brief setting forth of carefully ascertained facts and figures in this little book may be of some service in furnishing a stimulus to the fuller systematic study of the important social questions with which it deals.

The treatment is designed to be adapted to the focus of the citizen-student who brings to his task not merely the intellectual interest of the collector of knowledge, but the moral interest which belongs to one who is a part of all he sees, and a sharer in the social responsibility for the present and the future of industrial society.

For the statements of fact contained in these chapters I am largely indebted to the valuable studies presented in the first volume of Mr. Charles Booth's *Labour and Life of the People*, a work which, when completed, will place the study of problems of poverty upon a solid scientific basis which has hitherto been wanting. A large portion of this book is

engaged in relating the facts drawn from this and other sources to the leading industrial forces of the age.

In dealing with suggested remedies for poverty, I have selected certain representative schemes which claim to possess a present practical importance, and endeavoured to set forth briefly some of the economic considerations which bear upon their competency to achieve their aim. In doing this my object has been not to pronounce judgment, but rather to direct enquiry. Certain larger proposals of Land Nationalization and State Socialism, etc., I have left untouched, partly because it was impossible to deal, however briefly, even with the main issues involved in these questions, and partly because it seemed better to confine our enquiry to measures claiming a direct and present applicability.

In setting forth such facts as may give some measurement of the evils of Poverty, no attempt is made to suppress the statement of extreme cases which rest on sufficient evidence, for the nature of industrial poverty and the forces at work are often most clearly discerned and most rightly measured by instances which mark the severest pressure. So likewise there is no endeavour to exclude such human emotions as are "just, measured, and continuous," from the treatment of a subject where true feeling is constantly required for a proper realization of the facts.

In conclusion, I wish to offer my sincere thanks to Mr. Llewellyn Smith, Mr. William Clarke, and other friends who have been kind enough to render me valuable assistance in collecting the material and revising the proof-sheets of portions of this book.

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