

# **THE CASE FOR CAPITALISM**

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The case for capitalism by Hartley Withers

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**HARTLEY WITHERS**

**THE CASE  
FOR CAPITALISM**



# THE CASE FOR CAPITALISM

BY

HARTLEY WITHERS

AUTHOR OF

"THE MEANING OF MONEY," "POVERTY AND WASTE," ETC.

"For men, and not walls, make a city."  
THUCYDIDES.

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## PREFACE

To make a better world we want better men and women. No reform of laws and institutions and economic systems will bring it unless it produces them. Institutions and systems that turn men and women into machines working under the control of officials or of monopolies will not make them better even if, as is very far from likely, they make them better off. It is only through facing life's problems for ourselves, making our own mistakes and scoring our own hits, that we can train and hammer ourselves into something better. Individual freedom, initiative and enterprise, have been the life-blood of the Anglo-Saxon race and have made it what it is, pre-eminent among the races of the world because its men and women can think and act for themselves. If we throw away this heritage because we think that regulation and regimentation will serve us better, we shall do a bad day's work for ourselves and for human progress. And yet this seems to be the object

to which many earnest and sincere reformers are now trying to lead us, when they ask us to accept nationalization of industry or its organization under Guild monopolies, as a remedy for the evils which are evident in our economic system. If they succeed life will cease to be an adventure and become a drill; the tendency to variation which, as science teaches us, is the secret of development, will be killed or checked, and we shall be standardized, like Government boots.

This book is written to show that the greater output of goods and services on which material progress depends cannot be expected with certainty under any form of Socialism that has yet been proposed; that Capitalism, though a certain amount of robbery goes on in its back-yard, does not itself rob anybody, but has wrought great benefits for all classes; and that, if improved and expanded as it may be without any sudden change in human nature such as other systems demand, it may earn for us the great material advance that is needed to provide us with a better, nobler, and more beautiful world.

HARTLEY WITHERS.

*London, January 1920.*

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