

**QUESTIONS OF  
SOCIALISTS AND  
THEIR ANSWERS**

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Questions of socialists and their answers by William Stephens Kress

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**WILLIAM STEPHENS KRESS**

**QUESTIONS OF  
SOCIALISTS AND  
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Questions of Socialists  
and Their Answers

BY  
WILLIAM STEPHENS KRESS  
Priest of the Ohio Apostolate

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January 17th, 1908.

IMPRIMATUR,  
†IGN. F. HORSTMANN,  
Bishop of Cleveland





*Charles Harkins  
Bussey, Wash.*

**INTRODUCTION TO THE  
FIRST EDITION**

**BY HIS GRACE, THE ARCHBISHOP OF MILWAUKEE**

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The following pages are to a great extent the outcome of the "Question Box," of which the reverend author availed himself when, last January, he gave a course of lectures on "Socialism" in the city of Milwaukee. The lectures attracted a great deal of attention. For weeks after he had left the city, Rev. W. S. Kress kept up a lively controversy in *The Journal* and *The Daily News*, of Milwaukee, with some of the leading Socialists. Both the lectures given in the churches and the articles published in the press created a deep interest in the discussion of Socialism. The Catholic County Federation of Milwaukee, with the kind permission of the lecturer, published his lectures in pamphlet form for practically free distribution. But there was also a great demand for his "Question Box," and I am delighted to see in this book the kind answer to our request. For I believe that these "Socialist Questions and Answers," if carefully read, will do very much good among our people, especially among the laboring men. To the man without a higher education and the man of only few leisure hours, the form of questions and answers, and the simple and straightforward manner of the author's replies, will ap-

peal more quickly than a set treatise. The somewhat loose and unconnected sequence of the "Questions" preserves the natural and popular character of the open discussion and leaves room for many a useful repetition of the same subject under a different form. In the difficult treatment of Socialism a systematic discussion with strictly logical sequence is very profitable for the mind trained in the intellectual arena; the ordinary man will better enjoy and more easily follow the plain, free and somewhat rambling talk.

Another excellent feature of the book is its frequent reference to Socialistic sources for establishing the true nature and purpose of Socialism. In this connection it is important to observe that the true meaning of the Socialistic platforms must be learned thru the common interpretation given them by the Socialists themselves. Just as the Bible, the divine platform; just as our Constitution, the great United States platform; just as the platform of our great political bodies, the Republican and the Democratic parties, reveal their true meaning and real significance thru the authoritative interpretation given especially by the Church, the United States Supreme Court, the party leaders, so must the true understanding of the Socialistic platform be learned from the writings and speeches of the acknowledged leaders and teachers of Socialism, and from the expressions of their recognized press organs. A mere reference to the letter of their platforms will not always suffice to establish their real aim. In the light of Socialist interpretation in word and deed such phrases in their platforms as "Religion is the private affair of the individual," "Marriage must be founded on love," "Woman is equal to man," and others, phrases

quite true in a certain sense, acquire a meaning contrary alike to natural and divine law.

In judging of Socialism it is also important to keep in view that Socialism is a well-planned system of economical, social and political doctrines, which may justly be called Socialistic philosophy. Of these doctrines many touch upon most important religious and moral questions. By their very nature these Socialistic problems affect religion and morality. It will suffice to mention the all-important topics of church and state, religion and society, liberty of worship, marriage and the family, the education of children, the right of private property, the natural and inalienable rights of the individual, civil authority and government, to show how false, dishonest and absurd is the claim of so many Socialists that their system is exclusively concerned with matters of pure economy, or political and social economy. In this pretense that Socialism deals only with purely economic questions and has absolutely nothing to do with principles of religion and morality lies one of the greatest dangers to the great mass of our common people. This danger is so much greater when we are told that the one object of Socialism is to better the economic condition of the laboring classes without any mention of the true nature of the means by which the change is to be brought about or of the new form of society into which the laborer is to be introduced. Our ordinary people have not the necessary intellectual training required in the discussion of these great Socialistic theories to detect the underlying principles and their necessary consequences or results. It is no easy matter to see thru their tactics, tricks and sophistical sleight-of-hand. I believe that in this very regard the