

**POLITICAL SOCIALISM,
WOULD IT
FAIL IN SUCCESS? A
BOOK FOR BUSY MEN**

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Political Socialism, Would It Fail in Success? A Book for Busy Men by J. S. Crawford

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POLITICAL SOCIALISM,—

Would It Fail in Success?

A BOOK FOR BUSY MEN

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POLITICAL SOCIALISM,—WHY IT WOULD FAIL

INDULGENT READER :

If these preliminary pages be read without profit, have done with the book, and let it be cast straightway into the waste of the office-basket.

Doubtless you are aware, Noble Sir, that we are confronted with a *live* question,—a growing, forceful question,—one, all-embracing, attractive, yea fascinating, and not altogether devoid of mystery. Shall we not proceed to consider it as becomes a citizen, patiently, and wisely? Shall we not seek to define, to discuss, to comprehend, to judge, in the spirit of a Christian gentleman? As the question is economic it is thought best to proceed by a method not unfamiliar to the politician: **WHEREAS:**

Certain Finger-Boards,—in a figurative sense,—point toward the certain failure of a Socialist-State; therefore, the purpose herein is to indicate:

1. That, State-Socialism would fail because the business of the country is so widely diversified and the amount of productive industry so great, that the joint-volume of this industry and business, centralized under the control of a proprietary government, would be unwielding and unmanageable. Moreover, some branches of industry are yet formative while others are antagonistic.

2. That, State-Socialism would fail because to vest this prodigious joint-volume of business and industry, in the hands of politicians and theorists would *multiply the opportunities for graft*;—the more Official Departments, Bureaus, Divisions, Commissions, Clerkships, and Executive Machinery; the more supervisors, bosses, sub-bosses, foremen, chiefs, commissioners, directors, detectives, secretaries, and other executive officers;—the

more opportunities for *connivance, conspiracy and corruption*;

3. That, State-Socialism would fail because its aim is to organize politics and business upon the same basis. This union of politics and business would open the door for extravagance and abuse of patronage. Under such a system it would be difficult to defeat a party in power or to dislodge a party-boss. This is not to say that Socialists are more dishonest than other people. It is to say that a majority of workmen would combine to elect a shop-man to be a shop-boss, by the same methods employed now to elect a ward-politician to be a ward-spoilsman.

4. That, State-Socialism would fail because it assumes that all shops, mills, farms, mines, factories, and public utilities, run at a profit,—and that, a great profit. But, truth to be told, the number of men, who fail in business, equals the number who succeed. Many a Captain of Industry walks the floor at night, contriving to meet his pay-roll. In the Socialist-State, Labor would have this loss to bear.

5. That, State-Socialism would fail because, contrary to fact, it assumes that there would be no antagonisms. Instance the shoemaker, granting that the shoe is a "social product."—The man who would do one-sixtieth of the work in producing a shoe, might honestly insist that he would do one-fortieth and demand one-fortieth of the proceeds. Countless disputes and contradictions would thus arise and ramify through the countless channels and complications of a State's industry and business. How tell the fraction of a shoe belonging to the wood-chopper who felled the tree to make the shoe-pegs? to the cattle-farmer? the tanner? clerk? freight-handler? A shoe is not divisible; its labor-values, direct

and forwarding, may not be decomposed.—How reconcile buyer and seller? producer and consumer? importer, &c.? Answer: By Arbitrary Power only—Despotism.

6. That, State-Socialism would fail because in the Socialist-State no man "would own his job." *All jobs would belong to the State.* Liberty would be a myth and freedom a mockery.

7. That, State-Socialism would fail because it assumes that a *general, public* interest is stronger than a *self-regarding, private* interest. *E. g.* take Agriculture; It assumes that the Book-Farmer, theoretical and non-possessing, would be more efficient than the Field-Farmer who, as proprietor and possessor in fee-simple, operates the farm. It assumes that a government-agent would rotate crops; pick out seed-corn; select male-pigs; operate a 4-horse self-binder, and reap a field of grain, down, lodged, or swailed, better than the owner whose first work was doing chores at the barn and whose sole ambition is to succeed, counting success from the farmer's standpoint.

8. That, State-Socialism would fail because it seeks to destroy competition. Now, competition attracts, enlivens, stimulates, and develops. It embellishes and advertises. It urges. If competition be eliminated, shop-windows will go undressed. Store-fronts will not be illuminated. Electric signs will not flash in esthetic rivalry from house-tops, hills and road-ways. Goods will then be stored in long, dull ware-houses and distributed by indifferent state-agents. The State will make the goods, determine the quality, fix the styles, set the fashions, and control distribution. Moreover, it is not necessary to overturn the government in order to do away with competition and its evils if any there be. Voluntary co-operation, the *Industrial Democracy*, of

Dr. Abbott can do that. There is no law to prevent and no custom to estop. If a voluntary, Co-operative Democracy can manufacture goods and put them on the market cheaper and better than Competition, it is at liberty to do so.

9. That, State-Socialism would fail because Materialism cannot satisfy human nature:

My Good Sir, is it not true that the human mind is something more than "a mechanism of meat?"

Is it not true that the sentiment of patriotism is something more than "the refuge of a scoundrel?"

Is it not true that the institution of marriage is something more than a "civil contract?"

Is it not true that there is something more to education than instruction,—"the pouring-in process?" Consider gravely: Would it be well to put the training of children, the printing of books, the publishing of newspapers, solely in the hands of a Socialist-State? In olden time, it was enough to train-up a child in the way he *should go*. But in these times, there is sore need to strengthen the boy's will that he may restrain his feet from the path in which he *should not go*.

Is it not true that the law of inheritance is something more than "a property right?" Does it not promote and protect the integrity of the family?

In this book, it is held that property-rights are axiomatic; that the right to buy land, build a house, raise a crop, rear a family, defend established order, and advance by formative methods, is self-evident and self-executing. This right can no more be proven than $2 + 3 = 5$: attempted proof confuses only.

10. That, State-Socialism would fail because *Society* cannot be regenerated except as the *man* is regenerated. Socialism ignores *the man* and regards *the mass*. It

ignores causes and regards effects. It condemns and criticizes the whole but excuses the parts. It reverses.—Socialism substitutes "Class Consciousness" for class conscience. It substitutes the tyranny of Capital for the tyranny of Truth. It lays blame on Capital and the Mass for crime, misery, weakness, poverty, and stupidity. It releases the individual of responsibility. It blames all, acquits each: indicts everybody, convicts nobody. It would fail for:

It is better to be true than false;

Better to be wise than foolish;

Better to be brave than a coward.

Hath it not been said by that noblest Master of the Human Mind, "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good?" Yea, verily, "the Lord made this world, not the Devil." There is such a thing as moral force.

Note 1. There is misapprehension in the public mind as to just what Political Socialism stands for. Many otherwise well-read men think of it as unfriendly to Capital and that it demands an equal division of property—neither of which is true: Something worse.

Note 2. It has not escaped attention that but few socialist votes are required in the Congress to control the balance of power and thus to force complications, concessions, and compromises. In the 5th Wisconsin district, Victor L. Berger, a Socialist, has already been elected. In a number of legislative districts, notably in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Oregon, and New Jersey, Socialists have been elected. Berks County is one of the strongest agricultural communities in the United States, yet in the Reading district of that county, Mr. Maurer, a Socialist, was elected to a legislative seat, in the conservative old Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;—the reason for this is that self-constituted reformers and so-called Independent Press, with magazine writers and editors, ever alert for the evil and peculiar, have succeeded in un-settling the public mind. These men whose fathers, (perhaps yet living), may have worked