

HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL

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History of the International by Susan M. Day & Edmond Villetard

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SUSAN M. DAY & EDMOND VILLETARD

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OF THE

INTERNATIONAL.

Translated from the French of EUGÈNE VAILLANT, Editor of the
Journal des Débats, by

SUSAN M. DAY.

With an Introduction by HENRY N. DAY, Author of "Aesthetics," "Logic,"
"Rhetoric," etc.



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INTRODUCTION.

The conflict between labor and capital is, perhaps, an unavoidable condition of the advance of civilization. At the present stage of its progress from a state of barbarism, in which property and power belong to the few, towards a state of equality, liberty, and universal brotherhood, certainly this conflict shows itself as an invariable attendant and sign. Only under the reign of perfect virtue and good-will can the elevation of a part fail to provoke the envy, the distrust, and the ill-will of the rest. On the one side there will be instances of oppression and cruelty, which will naturally provoke resistance and revenge and lasting hate ; on the other side, there will be instances of speculation and eye-service, which will as naturally provoke increasing rigor and harder exaction, and wrongs from individuals will be resented against the class. But the perfect reign of virtue and good-will is the reign of peace and contentment ; only where the former is established can the latter be realized. Resistance to oppression and injustice is itself characterized by the same imperfection

out of which issues the wrong it would correct or remove. The inequalities in condition, which men naturally and rightly desire to correct, exist side by side with envy and hate, which will inevitably enter into the work of reform and improvement.

It is a most worthy ambition on the part of the inferior to rise to the condition of his superior. The advance of society to a higher and better stage of civilization is impossible where this ambition does not exist ; it is rapid just in proportion as this principle prevails in the community. The condition of the workman is in itself inferior to that of the employer ; labor is lower than capital. It is a true and worthy manhood that seeks to rise from the one to the other. The conflict of labor and capital is not to be ended by suppressing this noble aspiration. Unless civilization recedes, the effort to rise will continue. It is rationally to be expected, also, that, by reason of human imperfection, the effort will be characterized by mistake and ill feeling ; that the conflict will continue. We assume, therefore, the certainty of a continuance of the conflict ; and the duty of the philanthropist is simply to seek to prevent, so far as possible, the recurrence of mistakes and the outbreak of ill-will.

No one can doubt that the interests of the capi-

talist and the laborer are one ; that in the relation itself there is no ground of hostility, but only reason for reciprocal good-will and harmonious coöperation. Conflict arises only from ignorance, or from selfishness and malice. The two leading duties of society in respect to the prevention or diminution of the threatened evils from this conflict are obviously, first, general enlightenment ; secondly, protection against wrong, and positive repression of it, so far as specific evils exist or threaten to manifest themselves.

Experience is man's best teacher. The "History of the International" is a most instructive lesson from experience. The enlightenment which we in this country, as well as the European nations, need as to the true relationship of labor and capital, and the best means of correcting and preventing the evils which are so liable to spring out of it among imperfect men, is in a rich manner given us in this instructive history. It is brief ; it is lucid ; it is carefully prepared ; it is faithful to fact ; it deals with the most stirring scenes and incidents ; it traces the progress from its origin to its end of an organization of a most stupendous character, whether its principles, its advocacy, its magnitude, or its proceedings be regarded ; it sets forth the strength and weaknesses of this great organization,

its wisdom and its mistakes, its successes and its failure, in circumstances and conditions, too, that give it a peculiar extrinsic interest, and in the clear light of faithful narrative,—a most wonderful revelation of the workings of the human mind in regard to the most agitating social problem of modern times. It offers matter for study to the historian, the philosopher, the philanthropist; it especially brings counsel to the capitalist and the laborer alike, in regard to their duties at this present time, when society is so profoundly agitated by the practical questions which their relations involve.

In the conviction that this little history will help to solve this great problem of the age, as its solution is demanded for our own country at the present time, the translation has been undertaken, and is now commended to the favor of the public.

HENRY N. DAY.

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