

**INDUSTRIAL DAY-
DREAMS: STUDIES
IN INDUSTRIAL
ETHICS AND ECONOMICS**

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Industrial day-dreams: studies in industrial ethics and economics by Samuel E. Keeble

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SAMUEL E. KEEBLE

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*STUDIES IN INDUSTRIAL ETHICS
AND ECONOMICS.*

BY
SAMUEL E. ^{Edward} KEEBLE.



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DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO THE MEMORY

OF MY

TWO DECEASED BROTHERS,

ROBERT KEEBLE

AND THE

REV. GEORGE T. KEEBLE,

BOTH WORKMEN THAT NEEDED NOT TO BE ASHAMED.

P R E F A C E.

NO one has a deeper sense of the inadequacy of the present book as even a slight contribution to the direct solution of vexed social problems, than has the author. His only hope is that it may have some little indirect influence in stirring up those who have more ability and knowledge than he has, but who perhaps have not devoted much time to the consideration of social questions. The appeal here made is to those whose interests are mainly religious. In many religious circles there seems to be hardly any idea of the intimate connection existing between religion and the industrial life of society. Much of the prevailing apathy and indifference would vanish at once if it were realized that their circles intersect. Earnest workers in the religious sphere are often so fully occupied that they lack the most elementary knowledge of the true nature of the problems involved, or of the remedies suggested. It is hoped that some such workers will find here an introduction—for this is all it can offer—to the general subject of industrial ethics and economics.

It is urgently necessary that the Christian Church as a whole should address itself to the social problem. It will never be rightly solved apart from Christianity. Very much of the solution depends, not merely upon the possession of the Christian temper—though that is of vital importance—

but upon the direct application of the ethical standards of Christianity as tests, and of Christian principles as guides, to these problems as such. It ill becomes the Christian Church to be dragged unwillingly at the heels of new ethical movements, which arise without the Church because Christ has been unable to inspire new ideals from within. The Christian Church ought to be in the van, and not in the rear, of all such movements.

A laggard attitude reacts upon the Church herself, creating revulsion and alienation amongst some of the noblest men and women of the land. The Christian Church will never prosper as she ought until she emulates the Hebrew prophets in their attitude towards the social evils of their time. Those prophets held a position in Jewish society analogous to that held to-day by the Christian Church in Christendom—the position, namely, of organized and recognised teacher and conscience; and right nobly and fearlessly did they discharge their functions. But if the voice of the Christian Church is stifled or muffled, if her words are vacillating or vague, or if they are irrelevant to the present crisis and need, then that Church will betray both her trust and her Lord, and this civilization will disappear as others have done.

The author writes to at least clear his own conscience; but if in that process he is able to win any ear hitherto heedless, he will be more than repaid for his trouble. Especially would he be thankful to influence the young. It is a rather ominous sign that sometimes the young, even when religiously earnest, are found to be more indifferent to social questions than their seniors—more wrapped up in a narrow Christian individualism. This is sad, for the young men, at least, should see visions, when the old men dream dreams. One reason for this is a defective conception of Christianity—of its ethics and its scope; and this argues a fault, not only in the young themselves, but also in all the teachers of Christianity—parents, pastors, and masters.

The title, 'Industrial Day-dreams,' is meant to indicate the idealistic nature of the contents. Socialistic programmes are mostly ideal, never likely to be realized as they stand, but nevertheless profoundly important in that they originate feelings and forces which will finally bring about a more satisfactory condition of things—a nearer approximation to that ever-elusive social perfection after which social idealists aspire.

The critical part of the book does not profess to cover all the ground, and is not likely, in what it does cover, to win everyone's approval. To some it will seem too general and mild, and to others too indiscriminating and censorious. To those who may think it too severe towards Individualism, and too lenient towards Socialism, it may suffice to reply that there is no need to be over-careful in either matter. Socialistic schemes are being continually subjected to searching and unsympathetic criticism, in the interest frequently of *laissez-faire*—of a policy of masterly inactivity. It is a much more necessary thing to be tender towards social ideals and idealists, and critical of this not best-of-all-possible industrial worlds. The present system, with its huge and horrid defects, is strongly entrenched in the habits, customs, and prejudices of Englishmen—proverbially slow to change. The evils in it are not only hoary, but tough, and not likely soon to yield to a better order or to a better time. It is expedient, therefore, to be blind to weak points in Socialistic paper-constitutions (especially as there is no danger of their escaping exposure), and to devote energy to criticising that which is hostile to the ultimate well-being of human society in the system which is in possession; and the more so as these evils are wellnigh invulnerable from the power of vested interests, hereditary prejudices, and hereditary ignorance.

As to the method adopted, the first two chapters indicate the writer's point of view. The historical part consists of three chapters upon German Socialism, four upon English

Socialism, two upon French Socialism, and one upon that international possession, State Socialism. The critical part is threefold, a criticism of Socialism, a criticism of Political Economy, and a criticism of the Modern Industrial System, all from the Christian and ethical point of view.

A few repetitions may be found in these pages. If so, they will be due either to the necessity for looking at the same facts from a different angle, or from the fact that some of the pages have been delivered, as the foot-notes indicate, as addresses to different audiences, and the repetitions were necessary to lucidity.

Finally, the author returns thanks to the editors of the *Methodist Times*, *Great Thoughts*, and the *Preachers' Magazine*, for permission to reprint those pages which have already appeared in their several periodicals.