

**A LEAGUE OF JUSTICE:  
OR, IS IT RIGHT TO ROB  
ROBBERS?**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649418923

A League of Justice: or, Is it Right to Rob Robbers? by Morrison I. Swift

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**MORRISON I. SWIFT**

**A LEAGUE OF JUSTICE:  
OR, IS IT RIGHT TO ROB  
ROBBERS?**



584h  
5977  
L

## CONTENTS.

I.	The League Gardening at the Roots of the Social System . . . . .	1
II.	Brains and Capitalists Fall Out . . . . .	6
III.	The Good Deeds of Some Curtailed . . . . .	14
IV.	Organizing . . . . .	17
V.	A Free Newspaper . . . . .	19
VI.	Lawyers No More . . . . .	22
VII.	Education, For the First Time . . . . .	28
VIII.	The Invasion of Knowledge . . . . .	33
IX.	Transfiguration of the Churches . . . . .	40
X.	The Waterloo of "Society" . . . . .	42
XI.	Political Parties Also . . . . .	46
XII.	Discovery on a Sufficient Scale . . . . .	53
XIII.	The Trial . . . . .	60
XIV.	The Founder's Story . . . . .	67
XV.	Sentence . . . . .	79
XVI.	The People, at Last . . . . .	82

364782

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA



## A LEAGUE OF JUSTICE.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE LEAGUE GARDENING THE ROOTS OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM.

Four men met together in the garret where one of them lived. They were the trusted clerks of great commercial houses. Through the hands of each passed daily sums equal to fortunes. They were men of devoted honesty; not one but would have died rather than take for himself a penny of his employers' funds. The salary of two of these men was nine hundred dollars a year. The others received one thousand each. They were also allowed a vacation of two weeks in the summer. With families or friends to support, their salaries did not take them far from the town during this resting time. They were not old men, but a look of age was upon each of their faces, and all were prematurely gray.

They spoke with grave faces. Evidently they had come too far in life to act from ill-balanced enthusiasm. They took no oath of fidelity to one another, nor to the cause they were undertaking. An oath would not have deepened their loyalty.

One of them said: "If we are skillful and do not take amounts too large, we may hope to escape detection five or even ten years. Soon or late each will be

# THE NEW AMERICAN

discovered, imprisoned and his family disgraced. Is the cause worthy of this sacrifice?"

"It is," they responded in firm tones.

They remained in conference two hours arranging the plans of their work.

A month later ten men assembled in the same garret. The society had grown through the admission of six comrades. The four founders reported their progress.

"I have taken one thousand dollars," "I eight hundred," "I thirteen hundred," "I two thousand dollars," they said in turns.

The first speaker continued: "My most difficult part has been to distribute what I took. I helped several destitute families, but with inadequate sums, for fear of the suspicious question, where I came by the money. But through a friend who does not ask questions, I saved a hard working market gardener from losing his little plot of ground through mortgage. I have five hundred dollars left."

The others made similar reports.

"This difficulty is already disposed of," the president said. "One has joined us who is not a clerk, and who can be our distributing agent, judiciously applying what sums are needed without drawing suspicion to himself or us. He may pass as the representative of philanthropic but modest persons who do not wish their names known, dispersing his assistance over the city to avoid suggestive comparisons."

New names were considered, and several were rejected, lacking the high reliability of character necessary to sustain an arduous mission. Against the

emergency of general exposure from a member proving untrustworthy, it was resolved to develop the society in separate and wholly independent groups of ten, the four original organizers, only, being authorized to initiate groups, and they alone knowing the entire membership. For the rest, each one's knowledge was to be limited to his own group. Should a member be false, his testimony could at worst convict his nine associates only, and the progress of the society would not be impaired. Each section was to have its own distributor.

"If a group and its processes are discovered," said one, "other groups are endangered, for detectives will scent out recipients of aid and snare those who furnish it."

"And if an agent was discovered, what then? We may be sure he would never betray his comrades. But we can trust them to baffle detection: they can disguise themselves, or invent a visit and leave money unnoticed; a child met outside the door will never refuse to carry a package to its parents; and there is the mail, too, which would hardly suspect a common brown parcel of containing crisp bills; and if these strategies wear threadbare, think of the hundreds of stores anxious to sell a yard of cloth and deliver it, and quite obliging enough to wrap in another thing or two if you please. That part is easy enough. A shrewd distributor is quite out of reach of discovery."

So answered another to this seeming obstacle.

To comprehend the beneficent successes of these self-abegnating men, we must follow their agent in his novel excursions. In many disguises he learned the



true condition of scores of poor families. He adopted a special character for each district. Being a physician, he appeared in one quarter of the city in this guise; in another he was an authorized sanitary inspector; to a third he went as a student investigating; to another as an advising clergyman; and one locality knew him as a statistician for the labor union to which he belonged. The sums that he disposed of in a section were not large enough to arouse comment. He found many families falling behind in rent, through the sickness of their breadwinners, with the gray prospect near of being forced to surrender bad quarters for worse ones, and he banished that evil phantom. There were widows in almost every tenement, who left their colorless children daily to wear out their fragile strength in factories for the comfort of their landlords, and to buy off death from the immediate execution of their infants by the sufferings of miserable maturity. They were conveyed to country towns, housed there and clothed, and a year's rent paid for them. The number of half-clad children for whom he provided warm flannels would not be credited by the fabulously righteous slummers and charity supervisors; and where there were persons whose miniature wages declined to pay for a nourishing dinner once a week, he contrived to astonish them with immaculate sections of beef on days that were not holidays.

Let not the generous reader imagine that this rising and energetic providence fed all the needy people; a galaxy of unretired providences, giving their attention to business, was requisite for that, and it came in good time.

For it was not many years before there were branches of this beneficent institution in every prominent city of the North, West, East and South, Chicago leading, as in all good things, with a full hundred; and the groups began to specialize their undertakings, some of them being fond of presenting the tenement artisans with snug farms in the west and seeing their proteges safely settled there, protected from the pirating land-speculators of that fringe of paradise, and their intriguing colleagues in the banks.

But nothing told so powerfully and swiftly for the amelioration of the laboring millions as the gold which certain far-sighted groups knew how to pour into the treasuries of strikers; and from that date an astonishing success began to crown the participators in labor wars. This invention in the mechanics of social progress rose to its legitimate importance through the signal victory it enabled workingmen to win over one Carnegie, now forgotten, but at that period of his life a famous exploiter of labor and legislation. This ambitious person, who sought distinction as a patron simultaneously of statesmen, starvelings and an envious rout of middle-minded people, cut from the Anglo-Saxon pattern, whose genius lay in unsuccessfully wishing to exploit contemporary mankind of millions and loyally supporting those who successfully exploited them. This individual, blessed with an environment of propitious clay and the courage of his instinct that thousands were born to minister to his gayety and aggrandizement, determined, as Napoleon once determined to shatter Russia, to crush the labor organizations out of his pathway to democratic fraternity and

sovereignty; for he knew that if these thorny impediments in the mills which he was fond of considering his own were brushed aside, he could manage the vulgar rabble of wage-earners to his heart's desire, and gaining ever more wealth from their unwilling contributions, and buying ever more honor and grandeur from the world's grocery where these nourishing articles are sold, and disbursing his eminent talents and profits so far as business allowed, he would at length grow to the size of the gods and live in men's memories with Jesus and Plato and Gould. To enjoy the virtuous consciousness of well-earned wealth and philosophic freedom from the physical evils besetting the course of one who heroically destroys the aspirations of hamlets of human beings, whose poetry is the blast furnace and whose philosophic excursions are the peripatetic synthesis of broiling iron, he betook himself to a fair castle in distant Scotland—a house not made with his own hands, but bought with the labor of his hands at Homestead, whom now, teeming with thankful devices, he was pondering keen-edged thoughts to degrade.

It was just at this moment that certain ethical groups, pursuing rectitude, became awake to their opportunity and began to contribute to the strikers' support. All non-union men who, being out of work, came to fill the places of the old hands, were enrolled upon the pay list of the others and refused to go to work. The aid which was given sufficed to keep the strikers from want, and perceiving that some powerful popular sentiment was back of them, they continued firm in their formerly unequal struggle with