

**SOCIALISM AND LABOR,  
AND OTHER ARGUMENTS,  
SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND  
PATRIOTIC**

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Socialism and Labor, and Other Arguments, Social, Political, and Patriotic by J. L. Spalding

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**J. L. SPALDING**

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## SOCIALISM AND LABOR

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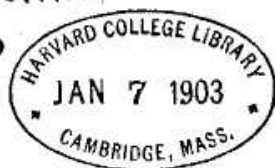
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# SOCIALISM AND LABOR

## *AND OTHER ARGUMENTS.*

### I.

#### SOCIALISM AND LABOR.

**T**HE interest which all who think take in the laboring classes, whether it spring from sympathy or fear, is a characteristic feature of the age.

Their condition seems to be the great anomaly in our otherwise progressive and brilliant civilization. Whether when compared with the lot of the slaves and serfs of former times that of the modern laborer is fortunate, is not the question. He is not placed in the midst of the poverty and wretchedness of a rude and barbarous society, but in the midst of boundless wealth and great refinement. He lives, too, in a democratic age, in which all men profess to believe in equality and liberty; in an age in which the brotherhood of the race is proclaimed by all the organs of opinion. He has a voice in public affairs, and since laborers are the majority, he is, in theory at least, the sovereign.

They who govern profess to do everything by the authority of the people, in their name and for their welfare; and yet, if we are to accept the opinions of the Socialists, the wage-takers, who in the modern world are the vast multitude, are practically shut out from participation in our intellectual and material inheritance. They contend that the poor are, under the present economic system, the victims of the rich, just as in the ancient societies the weak were the victims of the strong; so that wage-labor, as actually constituted, differs in form rather than in its essential results from the labor of slaves and serfs. And even dispassionate observers think that the tendency of the present system is to intensify rather than to diminish the evils which do exist; and that we are moving towards a state of things in which the few will own everything, and the many be hardly more than their hired servants. In America, they admit that sparse population and vast natural resources that as yet have hardly been touched helped to conceal this fatal tendency, which is best seen in the manufacturing and commercial centres of Europe, where the capitalistic method of production has reduced wage-earners to a condition of pauperism and degradation which is the scandal of Christendom and a menace to society.