

WHAT SHALL WE DO by Leo Tolstoy

[Podcast 7 of 9]

CHAPTER 28 In reality, the position in which men who live by other men's labour are placed, is based not only on a certain belief but on an entire doctrine; and not only on one doctrine but on three, which have grown one upon another during centuries and are now fused together into an awful deceit—or humbug as the English call it—which hides from men their unrighteousness. The oldest of these, which justifies the treason of men against the fundamental duty of labour to earn their own living, was the Church-Christian doctrine, which asserts that men by the will of God differ one from another as the sun differs from the moon and the stars, and as one star differs from another. Some men God has ordained to have dominion over all, others to have power over many, others, still, over a few, and the remainder are ordained by God to obey. This doctrine, though already shaken to its foundations, still continues to influence some men, so that many who do not accept it, who often even ignore the existence of it, are, nevertheless, guided by it. The second is what I cannot help terming the State-philosophical doctrine. According to this, as fully developed by Hegel, everything that exists is reasonable, and the established order of life is constant, and is sustained not merely by men, but as the only possible form of the manifestation of the spirit, or, generally, of the life of mankind. This doctrine, too, is no longer accepted by the men who direct social opinion, and it holds its position only by the power of inertia. The last doctrine, which is now

ruling the minds of men and on which is based the justification of leading statesmen, men of business, and science and art, is a scientific one, not in the evident sense of the word (meaning knowledge generally), but in the sense of a knowledge peculiar in form as well as in matter, termed Science. On this new doctrine, the justification of man's idleness and the hiding from him his treason against his calling, is particularly based. This doctrine appeared in Europe contemporaneously with a large class of rich and idle people who served neither the church nor the state and who were in want of a justification of their position. Not very long ago, before the French revolution in Europe, all non-working people, in order to have a right to utilize other men's labour, were obliged to have some definite occupation—to serve in the church, the state, or the army. The men who served the government, "governed the people"; those who served the church, "taught the people divine truths"; and those who served the army, "protected the people." Only these three classes of men—the clergy, the statesmen, and the military men—claimed for themselves the right of utilizing labour, and they could always point out their services to the people: the remaining rich men who had not this justification, were despised, and, feeling their own want of right, were ashamed of their wealth and their idleness. But as time went on, this class of rich people, who belonged neither to the clergy, to the government, nor to the army, owing to the vices of these other three classes, increased in number and became a powerful party. They were in want of a justification of their position. And one was invented for them. A century had not elapsed before the men who served neither the State nor the Church and took no part whatever in their affairs, received the same right to live on labour as the former classes; and they not only left off being ashamed of their wealth and idleness but began to consider their position quite justified. And the number of such men has increased,

and is still increasing in our days. The most wonderful of all is this, that these men whose claims to be freed from labour were unrecognized not long ago, now consider themselves alone to be fully right and are attacking the former three classes—the servants of the Church, State, and Army—alleging their exemption from labour to be unjust and often even considering their activity directly pernicious. What is still more wonderful is this, that the former servants of Church, State, and Army, do not now lean on the divinity of their calling, nor even on the philosophy which considers the state necessary for individual development, but setting aside these supports which have so long maintained them, they are now seeking the same supports on which the new reigning class of men, who have found a novel justification, stand, and at the head of which are the men of Science and Art. If a statesman now sometimes, appealing to old memories, justifies his position by the fact that he was set in it by God, or by the fact that the state is a form of the development of personality, he does it because he is behind the age, and he feels that nobody believes him. In order to justify himself effectually, he ought to find now neither theological nor philosophical but new and scientific supports. It is necessary to point to the principle of nationalities, or to that of the development of an organism; and to gain over the ruling class, as in the Middle Ages it was necessary to gain over the clergy; and as at the end of the last century, it was necessary to obtain the sanction of philosophers, as seen in the case of Frederick the Great and Catherine of Russia. If now a rich man, after the old fashion, says sometimes that it is God's providence which makes him rich, or if he points to the importance of a nobility for the welfare of a state, he does it because he is behind the times. In order to justify himself completely he must point to the way he furthers progress by improving the modes of production, by lowering the prices of consumption, by establishing intercourse between nations.

A rich man must think and speak in scientific language, and, like the clergy formerly, he must offer sacrifices to the ruling class: he must publish magazines and books, provide himself with a picture-gallery, a musical society, a kindergarten or technical school. The ruling class is the class of learned men and artists of a definite character. They possess the complete justification for having freed themselves from labour; and on this justification (as in former times on the theological justification, and afterwards on the philosophical one) everything is based: and it is these men who now give the diploma of exemption to other classes. The class of men who now feel completely justified in freeing themselves from labour, is that of men of science, and particularly of experimental, positive, critical, evolutionary science, and of artists who develop their ideas according to the same tendency. If a learned man or an artist of the old style speaks nowadays about prophecy, revelation, or the manifestation of the spirit, he does so because he is behind the age, and he will not succeed in justifying himself: to stand firm he must try to associate his activity with experimental, positive, critical science, and he must make this science the fundamental principle of his activity. Only then will the science or the art with which he is occupied appear true, and he will stand on firm ground, and then there will be no doubt as to his usefulness to mankind. The justification of all who have freed themselves from labour is now based upon this experimental, critical, positive science. The theological and philosophical explanations have had their day: now they timidly and bashfully introduce themselves to notice and try to humour their scientific usurper, who, however, boldly knocks down and destroys the remnants of the past, everywhere taking its place, and, assured of its own firmness, lifts aloft its head. The theological justification maintained that men are predestined—some to govern, others to obey; some to live sumptuously, others to labour:

and therefore those who believed in the revelation of God could not doubt the lawfulness of the position of those men, who, by the will of God, are called to govern and to be rich. The state-philosophical justification used to say, "The state with all its institutions and differences of classes according to rights and possessions, is that historical form which is necessary for the right manifestation of the spirit in mankind; and therefore the situation which everyone occupies in state and in society according to his rights and to his possessions must be such as to ensure the sound life of mankind." The scientific theory says, "All this is nonsense and superstition: the one is the fruit of the theological period of thought, and the other of the metaphysical period. To study the laws of the life of human societies, there is only one sure method—that of a positive, experimental, critical science. It is only sociology, based on biology, in its turn based on all the other positive sciences, which is able to give us new laws for the life of mankind. Mankind, or human societies, are organisms either already perfect, or in a state of development subject to the laws of the evolution of organisms. One of the first of these laws is the division of labour among the portions of the organs. If some men govern and others obey, some live in opulence and others in want, then this is so, neither according to the will of God nor because the state is the form of the manifestation of personality, but because in societies as in organisms a division of labour takes place which is necessary for the life of the whole. Some men perform in societies the muscular part of labour, and others, the mental." On this doctrine is built the ruling excuse of the age.

CHAPTER 29 Christ teaches men in a new way, and this teaching is written down in the Gospels. It is first persecuted, and not accepted. Then the fables of the fall of man, and of the first angel, are invented, and these fables

are believed to be the teaching of Christ. The fables are absurd, they have no foundation whatever, but by virtue of them men are led to believe that they may continue to live in an evil way, and none the less consider themselves as saved by Christ. This conclusion is so agreeable to the mass of weak men who have no affection for moral effort, that the system is eagerly accepted, not only as true, but even as the Divine truth as revealed by God himself. And the invention becomes the groundwork on which for centuries theologians build their theories. Then by degrees these learned men diverge by various channels into special systems of their own, and finally endeavour to overthrow each other's theories. They begin to feel there is something amiss, and cease to understand what they themselves are talking about. But the crowd still requires them to expound its favourite instruction; and thus the theologians, pretending both to understand and believe what they are saying, continue to dispense it. In process of time, however, the conclusions drawn from theological conceptions cease to be necessary to the masses, who, then, peeping into the very sanctuaries of their augurs, discover them to be utterly void of those glorious and indubitable truths which the mysteries of theology had seemed to be, and see instead that there is nothing there but crude deception, and they marvel at their own blindness. The same happened to philosophy, not in the sense of the wisdom of men like Confucius or Epictetus, but with professional philosophy which humoured the instincts of the crowd of rich and idle people. Not long ago a moral philosophy was in fashion in the learned world, according to which it appeared that everything that is, is reasonable; that there is neither good nor evil; that man has not to struggle with evil, but has merely to manifest the spirit of the age, some in military service, some in courts of justice, and some on the violin. Many and various were the expressions of human wisdom known to the men of the nineteenth century—of Rousseau,

Pascal, Lessing, and Spinoza; and all the wisdom of antiquity was expounded, but none of its systems laid hold of the crowd. We cannot say that Hegel's success was due to the harmony of his theory. We had no less harmonious theories from Descartes, Leibnitz, Fichte, and Schopenhauer. There was only one reason for the fact that this doctrine became for a short time the belief of the civilized world, the same reason that caused the success of the theory of the fall and redemption of man; to wit, that the deductions of this philosophical theory humoured the weak side of men's nature. It said, "All is reasonable, all is good; nobody is to blame for any thing." As at first with the church upon theological foundations, so also, with the philosophy of Hegel for a base, a Babel's tower was built (some who are behind the age are still sitting upon it); and here again was a confusion of tongues, men feeling that they themselves did not know of what they were talking, but were trying to conceal their ignorance and keep up their prestige before the crowd; and here again the masses found confirmation of their accepted teachings, and believed that whatever might seem to them bewildering and contradictory is as clear as day-light on philosophic altitudes. In the same way, the time came when this doctrine wore out and a new one replaced it. It had become useless, and the crowd peeped into the mysterious temples of the teachers, and saw there was nothing there—nor ever had been, but obscure and unmeaning words. I have seen this in my own day. When I began life, Hegelianism was the order of the day; it was in the very air you breathed; it found its expression in newspapers and magazines, in lectures on history and on law, in novels, in tracts, in art, in sermons, in conversation. A man who did not know Hegel had no right to open his mouth; those who desired to learn the truth were studying Hegel—every thing pointed to him; and lo! forty years have elapsed and nothing is left of him; there is no remembrance of him; all is as though he had

never existed. And the most remarkable of all is, that just as false Christianity, so also Hegelianism has fallen, not because someone refuted or overthrew it; no, it is now as it was before, but both have only become no longer necessary for the learned, educated world. If at the present time we speak to any man of modern culture about the fall of the angel, of Adam, about atonement, he does not argue or deny;—he simply asks, amazed, “What angel? Adam? What for? What atonement? What is all this to me?” So also with Hegelianism. No one of our day will argue its theses. He will only inquire, “What Spirit?” “Where did it come from?” “With what purpose?” “What good will it do me?” Not very long ago the sages of Hegelianism were solemnly teaching the crowd; and the crowd, understanding nothing, blindly believed all, finding the confirmation of what suited them, and thinking that what seemed to them to be not quite clear or even contradictory, was clearer than day on the heights of philosophy: but time went on, the theory was worn out, a new one appeared in its place, the former one was no longer demanded, and again the crowd looked into the mysterious temples of the augurs and saw there was nothing there, and that nothing had ever been there but words, very dark and meaningless. This happened within my memory. These things happened, we are told, because they were ravings of the theological and metaphysical period, but now we have a critical, positive science which will not deceive us, because it is based upon induction and experience; now our knowledge is no longer uncertain as it formerly was, and it is only by following it that one can find the answer to all the questions of life. But this is exactly what was said by the old teachers, and they certainly were no fools, and we know that among them were men of immense intellect; and within my memory the disciples of Hegel said exactly the same thing, with no less assurance and no less acknowledgment on the side of the crowd of so-called educated people. And such men as our Herzen,

Stankievich, Bylinsky, were no fools either. But why, then, has this wonderful thing happened, that clever men preached with the greatest assurance and the crowd accepted with veneration, only groundless and meaningless doctrines? The reason is only that these doctrines justified men in their bad mode of living. A very commonplace English writer, whose books are now almost forgotten and recognized as the emptiest of all empty ones, wrote a tract upon population, in which he invented an imaginary law that the means of living do not increase with the increase of population. This sham law the author dressed out with the formulæ of mathematics which have no foundation whatever, and published it. Judged by the lightness of mind and the want of talent displayed in this treatise we might have supposed that it would have passed unnoticed and been forgotten as all other writings of the same author have been; but it turned out quite differently. The author who wrote it became at once a scientific authority, and has maintained this position for nearly half a century. Malthus! The Malthusian theory—the law of the increase of population in geometrical progression, and the increase of means of living in arithmetical progression, and the natural and prudent means of restraining the increase of population—all these became scientific, undoubted truths which have never been verified, but, accepted as axioms, have served for further deductions. Thus learned and educated men were deceived; whereas in the crowd of idle men there was a blind and religious trust in the great laws discovered by Malthus. How did this happen? These statements seem to be scientific deductions which have nothing in common with the instincts of the crowd. But they are only sacred to those who believe science to be something self-existent and infallible, like the Church, and not merely the thoughts of weak men liable to mistakes, who only for importance' sake call their own thoughts and words by a pompous word, science. It was only necessary

to draw practical conclusions from the Malthusian theory in order to see that it was quite a human one with very determinate aims. The deductions which were directly drawn from this theory were the following: The miserable condition of working-people does not come from the cruelty, egotism, and unreasonableness of rich and powerful men, but it exists according to an unchangeable law which does not depend upon man, and, if anybody is to blame, it is the starving working-people themselves: why do these fools come into the world when they know that they will not have enough to eat? and therefore the wealthy and powerful classes are not at all to blame for any thing, and they may quietly continue to live as they have done. This conclusion, being pleasant to the crowd of idle men, induced the learned dons to overlook the incorrectness and total arbitrariness of the deductions; and the crowd of educated, i.e., idle people, instinctively guessing to what these deductions led, greeted the theory with delight, set upon it the seal of truth, and cherished it during half a century. The reason for all this was, that these doctrines justified men in their bad mode of life. Is not the same cause at the bottom of the self-assurance of men of the new positive, critical, experimental science, and of the reverent regard of the crowd to what they preach? At first it seems strange that the theory of evolution (like the theory of atonement in theology, it serves for the majority of men as a popular expression of the new teaching) should justify men in their false lives, and it would seem that the scientific theory has only to do with facts, and does nothing but observe facts. But it only seems so. It had been so with theological teaching; theology seemed to be occupied only with doctrines and to have nothing to do with the lives of men. It had been so with philosophy, which also seemed to be occupied only with facts. It had been so with the teaching of Hegel on a large scale, and with the theory of Malthus on a small one. Hegelianism seemed to be

occupied merely with its logical constructions and to have nothing to do with the lives of men; and the theory of Malthus seemed to be occupied exclusively with statistics. But it only seemed so. Modern science also claims to be occupied exclusively with facts: it studies facts. But what facts? Why some facts and not others? The disciples of the modern science are very fond of saying with a solemn assurance, "We study facts alone," imagining that these words have some meaning. To study facts alone is quite impossible, because the number of facts which may be objects of our study, are, in the strict sense of the word, countless. Before beginning to study facts, one must have some theory according to which the facts are studied; that is, determining which shall be selected from the countless number of facts. And this theory indeed exists and is even very definitely expressed, though many of the agents of modern science ignore it; that is, do not want to know it, or really do not know it;—sometimes pretend not to know it. Thus matters stood before with all most important beliefs. The basis of each is always given in theory; and so-called learned men seek only further deductions from the various bases given to them, though sometimes they ignore even these. But a fundamental theory must always be present, and so it is also now. Modern science selects its facts on the ground of a determinate theory, which sometimes it knows, sometimes does not wish to know, sometimes really does not know; but which exists. The theory is this: Mankind is an undying organism, having each his special calling for the service of the whole. As the cells, growing into an organism, divide among themselves the labour of the struggle for existence of the whole organism, increase one capacity, and diminish another, and all together form an organ in order better to satisfy the wants of the whole organism; and as among social animals—ants and bees—the individuals divide the labour among themselves (queen-bees lay eggs, drone-bees fecundate, working-bees labour

for the life of the whole)—so also in mankind and in human societies there take place the same differentiation and integration of the parts. And therefore, in order to find the law of man's life, we must study the laws of the lives and development of organisms. And in these we find the following laws: That each phenomenon is followed by more than one consequence. The failure of uniformity. The law of uniformity and diversity; and so on. All this seems to be very innocent, but we need only draw deductions from these observations of facts in order to see at once to what they are tending. These facts lead to one thing—the acknowledgement of humanity or human society as an organism, and hence to the acknowledgment of the division of activities in human society as organic, that is necessary; and as there exist in human societies many cruelties and vices, therefore these phenomena must not be considered as cruelties and vices, but must be accepted as inevitable facts confirming a general law—i.e., that of “division of labour.” Moral philosophy used also to justify every cruelty and wickedness; but there it became philosophical, and therefore incorrect. According to science, however, the same thing turns out to be scientific, and therefore unquestionable. How can we help accepting such a fine theory! We need only look at human society merely as something to be observed, and we may quietly devour the labour of perishing men, calming ourselves with the idea that our activity as a dancing-master, a lawyer, a doctor, a philosopher, an actor, an investigator of the theory of mediumism and of forms of atoms, and so on, is a functional activity of the organism of mankind and therefore there can be no question whether it is just that I should continue to live doing only what is pleasant, just as there can be no question whether the division of labour between a mental and a muscular cell is fair or not. How can we help accepting such a nice theory which enables us afterwards to put our consciences into our pockets forever,

and live a completely unbridled, animal life, feeling under our feet a firm, scientific support? And it is upon this new belief that the justification of idleness and the cruelty of men is built.

CHAPTER 30 This doctrine had its commencement about half a century ago. Its chief founder was the French philosopher Comte. Comte, being a lover of systematic theory, and at the same time a man of religious tendency, was impressed by the then new physiological researches of Bichat; and he conceived the old idea, expressed in bygone days by Menenius Agrippa, that human societies, indeed all human-kind, may be regarded as one whole, An Organism, and men—as live particles of separate organs, each having his definite destination to fulfil in the service of the whole organism. Comte was so fascinated by this idea that he founded his philosophical theory on it; and this theory so captivated him that he quite forgot that his point of departure was no more than a pretty comparison, suitable enough in a fable, but in no way justifiable as the foundation of a science. As it often happens, he took his pet hypothesis for an axiom, and so imagined that his whole theory was based upon the most firm and positive foundations. According to his theory it appeared that, as mankind is an organism, therefore the knowledge of what man is and what his relation to the world ought to be, is only possible through the knowledge of the properties of this organism. And to be able to learn these properties man is fitted to make observations upon other lower organisms and to draw deductions from their lives. Therefore, first, the true and exclusive method of science, according to Comte, is the inductive one, and science is only science when it has experiment for its basis. Secondly, the final aim and the summit of science becomes the new science concerning the imaginary organism of Mankind, or the organic being—Mankind. This new hypothetic science is

Sociology. From this view of science it generally turns out that all former knowledge was false, and that the whole history of mankind, in the sense of its self-consciousness, divides itself into three, or rather two, periods. First, the theological and metaphysical period, from the beginning of the world to Comte. And, secondly, the modern period of true science, positive science, beginning with Comte. All this was very well, but there was one mistake in it, which was this: that all this edifice was built on the sand, on an arbitrary (and incorrect) assertion that mankind, collectively considered, was an organism. This assertion is arbitrary because, if we are to acknowledge the existence of mankind as an organism, which is beyond observation, we might as well acknowledge the existence of the triple God and similar theological propositions. It was incorrect, because to the idea of mankind, that is, of men, the definition of an organism was added, whereas man lacks the essential characteristics of an organism—a centre of sensation or consciousness. We call an elephant, as well as a bacterium, organisms, only because we suppose by analogy in these beings that there is unification of sensations, or consciousness. But human societies and mankind lack this essential; and therefore, however many other general character-signs we may find in mankind and in an organism—without this, the assertion that man is an organism is incorrect. But notwithstanding the arbitrariness and incorrectness of the fundamental proposition of Positive Philosophy, it was accepted by the so-called “Educated World” with great sympathy, because of that great fact, important for the crowd, that it afforded a justification of the existing order of things by recognizing the lawfulness of the existing division of labour; that is, of violence in mankind. It is remarkable in this respect that from the writings of Comte, composed of two parts—a Positive Philosophy and a Positive Politics—only the first part was accepted on new experimental principles by the

learned world, that which justified the existing evil in human society. The second part, treating of the moral, altruistic duties, following from this recognition of mankind as an organism, was considered not only unimportant but even unscientific. Here the same thing was repeated which occurred with the two parts of Kant's writings. The "Critique of Pure Reason," was accepted by science; but the "Critique of Practical Reason," that part which contains the essence of moral doctrine, was rejected. In the teaching of Comte, that was recognized to be scientific which humoured the reigning evil. But the Positive Philosophy accepted by the crowd, based on an arbitrary and incorrect supposition, was by itself too ill-grounded, and therefore too unsteady, and could not be sustained by itself. And now, among the idle play of ideas of so-called "Men of Science," there has appeared a similarly arbitrary and incorrect assertion, not at all new, to the effect that all living beings (that is, organisms), proceed one from another; not only one organism from another, but one organism from many; that during a very long period, a million of years, for instance, not only may a fish and a duck have proceeded from one and the same forefather, but also one organism might have proceeded from many separate organisms; so, for instance, out of a swarm of bees a single animal may proceed. This arbitrary and incorrect assertion was accepted by the learned world with still greater sympathy. The assertion was arbitrary, because no one has ever seen how one kind of organism is made from others; and therefore the hypothesis about the Origin of Species will always remain a mere supposition and never become an experimental fact. The hypothesis was incorrect, because the solution of the problem of the Origin of Species by the theory of the laws of inheritance and accommodation during an infinitely long period, is not a solution of the problem at all, but the mere reiteration of the question in another form. According to the solution of this problem by

Moses (to oppose which is the object of Comte's theory), it appeared that the variety of the species of living beings proceeded from the will of God and his infinite omnipotence. According to the Theory of Evolution, it appears that the variety of species of living beings proceeded from themselves in consequence of the infinite variety of conditions of inheritance and environment in an infinite period of time. The Theory of Evolution, speaking plainly, asserts only that (by chance) in an infinite period of time, anything you like may proceed from anything else you choose. This is no answer to the question; it is simply the same question put differently: instead of Will is put Chance, and the co-efficient of the Infinite is transferred from Omnipotence to Time. But this new assertion, enforced by Darwin's followers in an arbitrary and inaccurate spirit, maintained the first assertion of Comte, and therefore it became the Revelation for our time, and the foundation of all sciences, even that of the history of philosophy and religion; and besides, according to the naïve confession of Darwin himself, the idea was awakened in him by the law of Malthus; and therefore he pointed to the "Struggle for Existence" not only of men but of all living beings, as a fundamental law of every living thing, and this was exactly what was wanted by the crowd of idle people for their own justification. Two unstable theories which could not stand on their own feet supported each other, and so received a show of stability. Both the theories bore in them a sense, precious to the crowd, that men are not to be blamed for the existing evil in human societies, that the existing order is what should be; and thus the new theory was accepted by the crowd in the sense wanted by them, with full confidence and unprecedented enthusiasm. Thus the new scientific doctrine was founded upon two arbitrary and incorrect propositions, accepted in the same way that dogmas of faith are accepted. Both in matter and form this new doctrine is remarkably like the Church-Christian one.

In matter, the similarity lies in the fact that in both doctrines alike a fantastical meaning is attached to really existing things, and this artificial meaning is taken as the object of our research. In the Church-Christian doctrine, to Christ who did really exist, is attributed the fantastic conception of being God Himself, screened. In the Positive doctrine, to the really existing fact of live men is attributed the fantastical attributes of an organism. In form, the similarity of these two doctrines is remarkable, since, in both cases, a theory emanating from one class of men is accepted as the only and infallible truth. In the Church-Christian doctrine, the Church's way of understanding God's revelation to men is regarded as the sacred and only true one. In the doctrine of Positivism, certain men's way of understanding science is regarded as absolutely correct and true. As the Church-Christians regard the foundation of their church as the only origin of true knowledge of God, and only out of a kind of courtesy admit that former believers may also be regarded as having formed a church; so in precisely the same manner does Positive science, according to its own statement, place its origin in Comte: and its representatives, also only out of courtesy, admit the existence of previous science, and that only as regarding certain thinkers, as, for instance, Aristotle. Both the Church and Positive science altogether exclude the ideas of all the rest of mankind, and regard all knowledge outside their own as erroneous. The similarity persists. Just as to the support of the first advental theological dogmas of the Trinity and of the divinity of Christ comes the old—but newly-interpreted—dogmas of man's fall and of his redemption by the death of Christ, and out of these dogmas is developed popular Church teaching: so in our time, the old dogma of Evolution comes in with new importance to help the fundamental dogma of Comte concerning the organism of mankind; and from these two elements the popular scientific doctrine has been formed. As in one

teaching, so in the other: the new dogma is necessary for the support of the old one, and becomes comprehensible only in connection with it. If to a believer in the Divinity of Christ, it is not clearly comprehensible why God should come down to earth, the doctrine of atonement explains it. If it is not quite clear to a believer in the Organism of Mankind why a collection of individuals may be counted as an organism, the dogma of Evolution is charged with the explanation. This dogma is needed to reconcile the contradictions and certainties of the first: mankind is an organism, and we see that it does not contain the chief characteristic of an organism; how must we account for it? Here the dogma of evolution comes in, and explains, Mankind is an organism in a state of development. If you accept this, you may then consider mankind as such. As to any man free from superstitions about the trinity and the Divinity of Christ, it is impossible even to understand the force and the meaning of the teaching of atonement, which meaning comes only through the acknowledgment of Christ as God Himself, so a man who is free from the Positive superstition cannot even understand wherein lies the interest of the theory of the Origin of Species and of Evolution; and this interest is explained only when we learn the fundamental dogma, that "Mankind is an Organism." And as the subtleties of theology are only intelligible to those who believe in its fundamental dogmas, so also the subtleties of sociology, which now occupy the minds of all adherents of this recent and profound science, are intelligible only to believers. The doctrine of atonement is necessary to reconcile the contradiction between the first dogma and facts. God descended on earth to save men. But men are not saved. How then explain this? The dogma of atonement asserts "He saved those, who believed in atonement. If you believe in atonement, you are saved." The similarity between these two doctrines holds good yet further. Being founded on dogmas accepted by faith, these

doctrines neither question nor analyze their own principles, which, on the other hand, are used as starting-points for the most extraordinary theories. The preachers of these call themselves, in Theology, sanctified; in Positive knowledge, scientific; in both cases, infallible. And at the same time, they conceive the most peremptory, incredible, and unfounded assertions, which they give forth with the greatest pomp and seriousness, and which are with equal pomp and seriousness contradicted in all their details by others who do not agree, and yet who equally recognize the fundamental dogmas. The Basil the Great of scientific doctrine, Herbert Spencer, in one of his first writings expresses these doctrines thus: Societies and organisms, says he, are alike in the following points: First, in that, being conceived as small aggregates, they imperceptibly grow in mass, so that some of them become ten thousand times bigger than their originals. Secondly, in that, while in the beginning they have such simple structure that they may almost be considered structureless, in their growth they develop an ever-increasing complexity of structure. Thirdly, in that, though in their early undeveloped period there does not exist among them any dependence of particles upon one another, these particles by and by acquire a mutual dependence, which at last becomes so strong that the activity and the life of each part is possible only with the activity and the lives of all others. Fourthly, in this, that the life and the development of society is more independent and longer than the life and the development of every unit which goes to form it, and which is separately born and growing and acting and multiplying and dying while the political body formed of such continues to live one generation after another, developing in mass, in perfection of structure, and in functional activity. Then follow the points of difference between organisms and societies, and it is demonstrated that these differences are only seeming ones, and that organisms and societies are

quite similar. To an impartial man the question at once arises, What are you speaking about, then? Why is mankind an organism or something similar? You say that societies are similar to organisms according to these four points; but even this comparison is incorrect. You take only a few characteristics of an organism, and you then apply them to human societies. You produce four points of similarity, then you take the points of difference which you say are only seemingly so, and you conclude that human societies may be considered as organisms. But this is nothing else than an idle play of dialectics. On this ground we may consider as an organism everything we choose. I take the first thing which comes to my mind—a forest, as it is planted in a field and grows up: first beginning as a small aggregate and imperceptibly increasing in mass. Secondly, “In the beginning the structure of an organism is simple, then the complexity increases,” and so on. This is the case with the forest: at first there are only birch-trees, then hazel, and so on; first all the trees grow straight, and afterwards they interlace their branches. Thirdly, “The dependence of the parts increases so that the life of each part depends upon the lives and activities of all the others”: it is exactly the same with the forest; the nut-tree keeps the trunks warm (if you hew it down, the other trees will be frozen in winter), the underwood keeps off wind, the seed-trees continue the species, the tall and leafy ones give shadow, and the life of each tree depends upon that of the rest. Fourthly, “Separate parts may die, but the whole organism continues to live.” Separate trees perish, but the forest continues in life and growth. The same holds good with the example so often brought by the defenders of the scientific doctrine. Cut off an arm—the arm will die: we may say remove a tree from the shadow and the ground of a forest, it will die. Another remarkable similarity between this scientific doctrine and the Church-Christian one—and any other theory founded upon propositions which are accepted

through faith—lies in their mutual capacity of being proof against logic. Having demonstrated that by this theory a forest may be considered as an organism, you think you have proved to the followers of the theory the incorrectness of their definition? Not at all. Their definition of an organism is so loose and plastic that they can apply it to everything they like. Yes, they will say, you may consider the forest, too, as an organism. A forest is a mutual co-operation of the individuals who do not destroy each other; an aggregate: its parts can also pass into a closer relationship, and by differentiation and integration it may become an organism. Then you will say, that in that case, the birds too and the insects, and the herbs of this forest, which mutually co-operate and do not destroy each other, may be considered, with the trees, to be an organism. They would agree to this, too. According to their theory, we may consider as an organism every collection of living beings which mutually co-operate, and do not destroy one another. You can establish a connection and co-operation between everything you like, and, according to evolution, you can assert that from anything may proceed anything else you like, if a long enough period is granted. To those who believe in the Trinity, it is impossible to prove that it does not exist. But one can show them that their assertion is not based on knowledge, but is an assertion of faith, and that if they assert that there are three Gods, I have an equal right to assert that there are 17½ Gods. One may say the same thing with yet better ground to the followers of Positive and Evolutional science. On the basis of this science one could undertake to prove anything one liked. And the strangest thing of all is, that this same Positive science regards the scientific method as a condition of true knowledge, and that it has itself defined the elements of the scientific method. It professes that common sense is the scientific method. And yet common sense itself discloses the fallacies of the doctrine at every step. The moment those who occupied the

position of saints felt there was no longer anything sacred in them, that they are cursed like the Pope and our own Synod, they immediately called themselves not merely sacred, but “most sacred.” The moment science felt that it had given up common sense, it called itself The Science of Reason, The Only Really Scientific Science.

CHAPTER 31 “Division of Labour” is the law pervading everything that exists, therefore it must exist in human societies too. That may be so; but the question still remains, whether the existing division of labour in human society is the division which ought to exist. And when men consider a certain division of labour unreasonable and unjust, no science whatever can prove to men that what they consider unreasonable and unjust ought to continue. The theological theory demonstrated that “Power is of God”; and it very well may be so. But the question still remains, To whom is the power given, to Catherine the Empress, or to the rebel Pugatchof? And no theological subtleties whatever can solve this difficulty. Moral philosophy demonstrates that “A State is merely a form of the social development of the individual”; but the question still remains—Can the state of a Nero or that of a Gengis Khan be considered a form of such development? And no transcendentalism whatever can solve that difficulty. It is the same with Scientific Science also. Division of Labour is the condition of the life of organisms and of human societies; but what have we to consider in these human societies as an organic division of labour? However much science studies the division of labour in the molecules of a tape-worm, all the observations cannot compel men to acknowledge as correct a division of labour which is repudiated by their reason and conscience. However convincing the proofs of the division of labour in the cells of investigated organisms may be, a man who has not yet lost his reason will say it is wrong that some should only weave

cloth all their long life, and that this is not division of labour, but oppression of human beings. Herbert Spencer and others affirm that as there is a whole population of weavers, the weaver's activity is in organic division of labour. In saying this they use a similar line of reasoning to the theologians: There is a power, therefore it is of God, whatever it may be: there are weavers, therefore they exist as a result of the law of division of labour. There might be some sense in this if the power and the position of weavers were created by themselves; but we know that they are not but that it is we who create them. Well, then, we ought to ascertain whether we have established this power according to the will of God or of ourselves, and whether we have called these weavers into being by virtue of some organic law or from some other cause. Here are men earning their living by agriculture, as it is proper for all men to do: one man has set up a smith's forge and mended his plough; his neighbour comes to him and asks him to mend his plough, too, and promises to give labour or money in return. A second comes with a similar request; others follow; and in the society of these men a form of division of labour arises. Thus, one man becomes a smith. Another man has taught his children well; his neighbour brings him his children and asks him to teach them, and thus a teacher is formed: but the smith as well as the teacher become, and continue to be, a smith and a teacher, only because they were asked, and they remain a smith and a teacher only as long as people require their trades. If it happens that too many smiths and teachers appear, or if their labour is no longer wanted, they at once, according to common sense, throw aside their trade and become labourers again, as it everywhere and always happens where there is no cause for the violation of a right division of labour. Men who behave in such a way are directed both by their reason and their conscience; and therefore we who are endowed with reason and conscience, all agree that such a division of

labour is a right one. But if it were to happen that smiths, having the possibility of compelling other men to labour for them, were to continue to make horseshoes when there was no longer a demand for them, and teachers were to wish to continue to teach when there was nobody to be taught, then, to every impartial man endowed with reason and conscience, it would be obvious that this is not real division of labour but a usurpation of other men's labour; because such a division could no longer be tested satisfactorily by the sole standard by which we may know whether it is right or not—the demand of such labour by other men, and a voluntary compensation offered for it by them. But exactly such a surplus, however, is what Scientific Science terms “a division of labour.” Men do what is not required, and they ask to be fed for it, and say it is just, because it is division of labour. The chief social evil of a people—not with us alone—is the countless horde of State officials. The chief cause of the economical misery of our days, is what is called in England “over-production” (that is, the production of an enormous quantity of articles, wanted by nobody, and which no one knows how to get rid of). All this comes simply from the strange idea about the “division of labour?” It would be very strange to see a boot-maker who considered that men were bound to feed him because, forsooth, he continued to produce boots wanted by no one; but what shall we say about those men in government, church, science, and art, who not only do not produce any thing tangibly useful for the people but whose produce is wanted by nobody, yet who as boldly require to be well fed and clothed on account of “The division of labour.” There may be magicians for whose activity there is a demand and to whom men give casks and spirits; but we cannot even imagine the existence of magicians who, while their magic is not wanted by anybody, require to be fed simply because they wish to practice their art. Yet in our world this is the very position of the men in church and state, of the men of

science and art. And it all proceeds from that false conception of the division of labour, defined, not by reason and conscience, but by deductions to which these scientists so unanimously resort. Division of labour, indeed, has always existed; but it is correct only when man decides it by his reason and conscience, and not by his making observations on it. And the conscience and the reason of all men solve this question in the simplest and surest way. They always decide the question by recognizing the division of labour to be right only when the special activity of a man is so necessary to others, that they freely offer to feed him in compensation for what they ask him to do for them. But when a man from his infancy up to his thirtieth year lives on the shoulders of other men, promising to do, when he finishes his studies, something very useful, which nobody has ever asked him for, and then for the rest of his life lives in the same way, promising only to do presently something which nobody asks him to do, this would not be a true division of labour, but, as it really is, only the violation by a strong man of the labour of others; the same appropriation of other men's labour by a strong man, which formerly Theology called Divine predestination; Philosophy, Inevitable Conditions of Life; and now Scientific Science, the Organic Division of Labour. The entire importance of the ruling science consists in this alone. This science is now the dispenser of diplomas for idleness, because in her temples she alone analyzes and determines what activity in the social organism is parasitic and what organic. As if each man could not decide much better and more quickly, too, by consulting his own reason and conscience. As formerly, both for clergy and for statesmen, there could have been no doubt as to who were most necessary to other people, so now for the believers in Positive Science it seems that there can be no doubt about this, that their own activity is undoubtedly an organic one: they, the factors of science and art, are the cells of the brain, the most

precious cells of all the human organism. Let us leave them to reign, eat, drink, and be feasted, as priests and sophists of old have before them, so long as they do not deprave men! Since men are reasonable creatures they have discriminated good from evil, making use of what has been done in this direction before them by others, have struggled with evil, seeking a true and better way, and slowly but unceasingly have advanced in this way. But always across the road different deceptions stood before them, trying to assure them that this struggle was not at all necessary, and that they should submit to the tide of life. First the awful deceptions of the old Church; little by little with dreadful struggle and effort men got rid of them: but scarcely had they done so when in their place arose new ones—state and philosophical deceptions. Men freed themselves from these too, and now a new deceit, a still worse one, has sprung up in their path—the scientific deception. This new deception is exactly what the old ones were: its essence consists in the substitution of an externality for reason and conscience, and this externality is observation, as in theology it was revelation. The snare of this science consists in this, that having exposed some bare-faced perversions of the activity of reason and conscience, it destroys men's confidence in both reason and conscience. Hiding their lie clothed in a scientific theory, scientists assure men that by studying external phenomena they study undeniable facts which will reveal to them the law of man's life. Things which are the property of conscience and reason are now to be discovered by observation alone. These men lose the conception of good and evil and thus become unable to understand those expressions and definitions of good and evil which have been worked out during the entire former existence of mankind. All that reason and conscience say to them, all that they have said to the highest representatives of men since the world has existed, all this, in their slang, is

“conditional and subjective.” All this must be left behind. It is said that by reason one cannot apprehend the truth, because reason is liable to error: there is another way, unmistakable and almost mechanical—one must study facts on the ground of science; that is, on two groundless suppositions, Positivism and Evolution, which are offered as the most undoubted truths. With mock solemnity the ruling science asserts that the solution of all the questions of life is only possible through studying the facts of nature, and especially those of organisms. The credulous crowd of youth, overwhelmed by the novelty of this authority—not only not destroyed, not yet even touched by critics—rush to the study of these facts of natural sciences, to that “only way” which, according to the assertion of the ruling doctrine, alone can lead to the elucidation of all questions of life. But the farther the students proceed in this study, the farther do they remove not only the possibility of solving the questions of life, but even the very thought of this solution. The more they grow accustomed, not so much to observe themselves, as to believe other men’s observations on their word (to believe in cells, in protoplasm, in the fourth dimension of matter, and so on), the more the form hides from them the contents. The more they lose the consciousness of good and evil and the capacity of understanding those expressions and definitions of good and evil which have been worked out in all the former career of mankind, the more they appropriate to themselves that special scientific slang of “conditional” expressions which have no common human meaning in them. The farther and farther they get into the thick forest of observations lighted by anything, the more they lose the capacity, not only of independent thought, but even of understanding other men’s fresh human ideas which are not included in their Talmud. But chiefly they pass their best years in losing the habit of life, that is, of labour, and accustom themselves to consider their own position

justified, and thus become, physically, good-for-nothing parasites, and, mentally, dislocate their brains and lose all power of thought-production. So, their capacities more and more blunted, they acquire by degrees self-assurance which deprives them forever of the possibility of returning to a simple, laborious life, and to any plain, clear, common, human manner of thinking.

CHAPTER 32 The division of labour has always existed in human society, and I daresay always will exist; but the question for us is, not if it has been and will still continue, but, what should guide us in providing that this division may be a right one. If we take the facts of observation for our standard, we refuse to have any standard at all: for every division of labour which we see among men, and which may seem to us to be right, we shall consider right; and this is what the ruling Scientific Science is leading us to. Division of labour! "Some are occupied with mental and spiritual, others with muscular and physical, labour." With what an assurance men express this! They wish to think it, and so that which is transparently the ancient violence, seems to them in reality a fair exchange of services. "Thou," or rather, "you" (because it is always the many who have to feed the one)—"you feed me, dress me, do for me all this rough labour which I require of you, and to which you are accustomed from your infancy, and I will do for you that mental work to which I have already become accustomed. Give me bodily food, and in return I will give you the spiritual." The statement seems fair; and it would really be so if such exchange of services were free; if those who supply the bodily food were not obliged to supply it before they get the spiritual. The producer of the spiritual food says, "In order that I may be able to give you this food, you must feed me, clothe me, and remove all filth from my house." But the producer of bodily food must do his work without making any claims of his own, and he has to give

the bodily food whether he receive spiritual food or not. If the exchange were a free one the conditions on both sides would be equal. We agree that spiritual food is as necessary to man as bodily. But the learned man, the artist, says, "Before we can begin to serve men by giving them spiritual food, we want men to provide us with bodily food." But why should not the producers of this say, "Before we begin to serve you with bodily food, we want spiritual food; and until we receive it, we cannot labour?" You say, "I require the labour of a ploughman, a smith, a book-maker, a carpenter, masons, and others, in order that I may prepare the spiritual food I have to offer." Every workman might say, too, "Before I go to work to prepare bodily food for you, I want the fruits of the spirit. In order to have strength for labouring, I require a religious teaching, the social order of common life, application of knowledge to labour, and the joys and comforts which art gives. I have no time to work out for myself a teaching concerning the meaning of life—give it to me. I have no time to think out statutes of common life which would prevent the violation of justice—give me this too. I have no time to study mechanics, natural philosophy, chemistry, technology; give me books with information as to how I am to improve my tools, my ways of working, my dwelling, its heating and lighting. I have no time to occupy myself with poetry, with plastic art, or music. Give me the excitements and comforts necessary for life; give me the productions of the arts." You say it would be impossible for you to do your important and necessary business if you were deprived of the labour that working-people do for you; and I say, a workman may declare, "It is impossible for me to do my important and necessary business, not less important than yours—to plough, to cart away refuse, and to clean your houses—if I am deprived of a religious guidance corresponding to the wants of my intellect and my conscience, of a reasonable government which will secure my labour, of information for

easing my labour, and the enjoyment of art to ennoble it. All you have hitherto offered me in the shape of spiritual food is not only of no use to me whatever, I cannot even understand to whom it could be of any use. And until I receive this nourishment, proper for me as for every man, I cannot produce bodily food to feed you with." What if the working-people should speak thus? And if they did, it would be no jest but the simplest justice. If a workman said this, he would be far more in the right than a man of intellectual labour; because the labour produced by the workman is more urgent and more necessary than that of the intellectual worker, and because a man of intellect is hindered by nothing from giving that spiritual food which he promised to give, while the workingman is hindered in giving the bodily food by the fact that he himself is short of it. What, then, should we intellectual labourers answer, if such simple and lawful claims were made upon us? How should we satisfy these claims? Should we satisfy the religious wants of the people by the catechism of Philaret, by sacred histories of Sokolof, by the literature sent out by monasteries and cathedrals? Should we satisfy their demand for order by the "Code of Laws," and cassation verdicts of different departments, or by reports of committees and commissions? And should we satisfy their want of knowledge by giving them spectrum analysis, a survey of the Milky Way, speculative geometry, microscopic investigations, controversies concerning spiritualism and mediumism, the activity of academies of science? How should we satisfy their artistic wants? By Pushkin, Dostoyevsky, Turgenief, L. Tolstoy? By pictures of French salons, and of those of our artists who represent naked women, satin, velvet, and landscapes, and pictures of domestic life; by the music of Wagner, and that of our own musicians? All this is of no use and cannot be of use because we, with our right to utilize the labour of the people and absence of all duties in preparation of their

spiritual food, have quite lost from sight the single destination our activity should have. We do not even know what is required by the workman; we have even forgotten his mode of life, his views of things, his language; we have even lost sight of the very working-people themselves, and we study them like some ethnographical rarity or newly-discovered continent. Demanding for ourselves bodily food, we have taken upon ourselves to provide the spiritual; but in consequence of the imaginary division of labour, according to which we may not only first take our dinner and afterwards do our work, but may during many generations dine luxuriously and do no work—we, in the way of compensation for our food, have prepared something which is of use, as it seems to us, for ourselves and for science and art, but of no use whatever for those very people whose labour we consume under the pretext of providing them in return with intellectual food; not only is of no use, but is quite unintelligible and distasteful to them. In our blindness, we have to such a degree left out of sight the duty we took upon us, that we have even forgotten for what our labour is being done; and the very people whom we undertook to serve we have made an object of our scientific and artistic activities. We study them and represent them for our own pleasure and amusement: but we have quite forgotten that it is our duty, not to study and depict, but to serve them. We have to such a degree left out of sight the duty we assumed that we have not even noticed that other people do what we undertook in the departments of science and art, and that our place turns out to be occupied. It appears that while we have been in controversy—now about the immaculate conception, and now about spontaneous generation; now about spiritualism, and now about the forms of atoms; now about pangenesis, now about protoplasts, and so on—all this while the people none the less required spiritual food, and the abortive outcasts of science and art began to provide for the people

this spiritual food to the order of various speculators, who had in view exclusively their own profit and gain. Now, for some forty years in Europe, and ten years in Russia, millions of books and pictures and songs have been circulating; shows have been opened: and the people gaze and sing, and receive intellectual food, though not from those who promised to provide it for them; and we, who justify our idleness by the need for that intellectual food which we pretend to provide for the people, are sitting still, and taking no notice. But we cannot do so, because our final justification has vanished from under our feet. We have taken upon ourselves a peculiar department: we have a peculiar functional activity of our own. We are the brain of the people. They feed us, and we have undertaken to teach them. Only for the sake of this have we freed ourselves from labour. What, then, have we been teaching them? They have waited years, tens of years, hundreds of years. And we are still conversing among ourselves, and teaching each other, and amusing ourselves, and have quite forgotten them; we have so totally forgotten them, that others have taken upon themselves to teach and amuse them, and we have not even become aware of this in our flippant talk about division of labour: and it is very obvious that all our talk about the utility we offer to the people was only a shameful excuse.

CHAPTER 33 There was a time when the Church guided the intellectual life of the men of our world. The Church promised men happiness, and, in compensation for this she freed herself from taking part in mankind's common struggle for life. As soon as she did this she went away from her calling, and men turned from her. It was not the errors of the Church which originally caused her ruin, but the fact that by the help of the secular power, in the time of Constantine, her ministers violated the law of labour; and then their claim to idleness and luxury gave birth to the

errors. As soon as she obtained this power she began to care for herself, and not for humanity, whom she had taken upon herself to serve. The ministers of the Church gave themselves up to idleness and depravity. The State took upon itself to guide men's lives. The State promised men justice, peace, security, order, satisfaction of common intellectual and material wants; and, in compensation, men who served the State freed themselves from taking part in the struggle for life. And the State's servants, as soon as they were able to utilize other men's labour, acted in the same way as the ministers of the Church. They had not in view the people; but, from kings down to the lowest state functionaries, in Rome, as well as in France, England, Russia, and America, they gave themselves over to idleness and depravity. Now men have lost their faith in the state, and anarchy is now seriously advocated as an ideal. The state has lost its prestige among men, only because its ministers have claimed the right of utilizing the people's labour for themselves. Science and art have done the same, assisted by the state power which they took upon themselves to sustain. They also have claimed and obtained for themselves the right of idleness and of utilizing other men's labour, and also have been false to their calling. And their errors, too, proceeded only from the fact that their ministers, pointing to a falsely conceived principle of the division of labour, claimed for themselves the right to utilize the work of the people, and so lost the meaning of their calling, making the aim of their activity, not the utility of the people, but some mysterious activity of science and art; and also, like their forerunners, they have given themselves over to idleness and depravity, though not so much to a fleshly as to an intellectual corruption. It is said that science and art have done much for mankind. That is quite true. Church and State have given much to humanity, not because they abused their power, or because their ministers forsook the common life of men, and the eternal

duty of labour for life—but in spite of this. The Roman Republic was powerful, not because its citizens were able to lead a life of depravity, but because it could number among them men who were virtuous. This is the case with science and art. Science and art have effected much for mankind, not because their ministers had sometimes formerly, and have always at present, the possibility of freeing themselves from labour, but because men of genius, not utilizing these rights, have forwarded the progress of mankind. The class of learned men and artists who claim, on account of a false division of labour, the right of utilizing other men's labour, cannot contribute to the progress of true science and true art, because a lie can never produce a truth. We are so accustomed to our pampered or debilitated representatives of intellectual labour, that it would seem very strange if a learned man or an artist were to plough, or cart manure. We think that, were he to do so, all would go to ruin; that all his wisdom would be shaken out of him, and that the great artistic images he carries in his breast would be soiled by the manure: but we are so accustomed to our present conditions that we do not wonder at our ministers of science, that is, ministers and teachers of truth, compelling other people to do for them that which they could very well do themselves, passing half their time eating, smoking, chattering in "liberal" gossip, reading newspapers, novels, visiting theatres; we are not surprised to see our philosopher in an inn, in a theatre, at a ball; we do not wonder when we learn that those artists who delight and ennoble our souls, pass their lives in drunkenness, in playing cards, in company with loose women, or do things still worse. Science and art are fine things: but just because they are fine things men ought not to spoil them by associating them with depravity;—by freeing themselves from man's duty to serve by labour his own life and the lives of other men. Science and art have forwarded the progress of mankind. Yes; but not because

men of science and art, under the pretext of a division of labour, taught men by word, and chiefly by deed, to utilize by violence the misery and sufferings of the people in order to free themselves from the very first and unquestionable human duty of labouring with their hands in the common struggle of mankind with nature.

CHAPTER 34 “But,” you say, “it is this very division of labour, the freeing men of science and of art from the necessity of earning their bread, that has rendered possible the extraordinary success in science which we see to-day. “If everybody were to plough, these enormous results would not be attained; you would not have those astonishing successes which have so enlarged man’s power over nature; you would not have those discoveries in astronomy which so strike the minds of men and promote navigation; there would be no steamers, railways, wonderful bridges, tunnels, steam-engines, telegraphs, photographs, telephones, sewing-machines, phonographs, electricity, telescopes, spectrosopes, microscopes, chloroform, Lister bandages, carbolic acid.” I will not attempt to enumerate all the things of which our century is proud. This enumeration, and the ecstasy of the contemplation of ourselves and of our great deeds you can find in almost every newspaper and popular book. And these raptures are so often repeated, and we are so seldom tired of praising ourselves, that we really have come to believe, with Jules Verne, that science and art never made such progress as in our time. And as all this is rendered possible only by division of labour, how can we avoid countenancing it? Let us suppose that the progress of our century is really striking, astonishing, extraordinary; let us suppose, too, that we are particularly lucky in living at such an extraordinary time: but let us try to ascertain the value of these successes, not by our own self-contentment, but by the very principle of the division of labour; that is, by the

intellectual labour of scientists for the advantage of the people which has to compensate for the freedom of its servants from manual toil. This progress is very striking indeed; but owing to some bad luck, recognized, too, by the men of science, this progress has not yet ameliorated, but has rather deteriorated, the condition of working men. Though a working man, instead of walking, can use the railway, it is this very railway which has caused his forest to be burned and has carried away his bread from under his very nose, and put him into a condition which is next door to slavery to the railway proprietor. If, thanks to steam-engines and machines, a workman can buy cheap and bad calico, it is these very engines and machines which have deprived him of his livelihood and brought him to a state of entire slavery to the manufacturer. If there are telegraphs, which he is not forbidden to use but which he does not use because he cannot afford it, still each of his productions, the value of which rises, is bought up at low prices before his very eyes by capitalists, thanks to that telegraph, before he has even become aware that the article is in demand. If there are telephones and telescopes, novels, operas, picture-galleries, and so on, the life of the workman is not at all improved by any of them, because all, owing to the same unlucky chance, are beyond his reach. So that, after all, these wonderful discoveries and productions of art, if they have not made the life of working-people worse, have by no means improved it: and on this the men of science are agreed. So that, if we apply, not our self-contemplating rapture, but the very standard on which the ground of the division of labour is defended—utility to the working-world—to the question as to the reality of the successes attained by the sciences and arts, we shall see that we have not yet any sound reason for the self-contentment to which we consign ourselves so willingly. A peasant uses the railway; a peasant's wife buys calico; in the cottage a lamp, and not a pine-knot, burns;

and the peasant lights his pipe with a match—all this is comfortable; but what right have I from this to say that railways and factories have done good to the people? If a peasant uses the railway, and buys a lamp, calico, and matches, he does it only because we cannot forbid his doing so: but we all know very well that railways and factories were not built for the use of the people; and why, then, should the casual comfort a workman obtains by chance be brought forward as a proof of the usefulness of these institutions to the people? We all know very well that if the engineers and capitalists who build a railway or a factory thought about the working-people, they thought only how to make the most possible use of them. And we see they have fully succeeded in doing so in Europe and America, as well as in Russia. In every hurtful thing there is something useful. After a house has been burned down we can sit and warm ourselves, and light our pipes from one of the fire-brands; but should we therefore say that a conflagration is beneficial? Whatever we do, do not let us deceive ourselves. We all know very well the motives for building railways and factories, and for producing kerosene and matches. An engineer builds a railway for the government, to facilitate wars, or for the capitalists for their financial purposes. He makes machines for manufacturers for his own advantage and for the profit of capitalists. All that he makes or plans he does for the purpose of the government, the capitalists, and other rich people. His most skilful inventions are either directly harmful to the people, such as guns, torpedoes, solitary prisons, and so on; or they are not only useless but quite inaccessible to them, such as electric light, telephones, and the innumerable improvements of comfort; or lastly, they deprave the people and rob them of their last kopek, that is, their last labour, for spirits, wine, beer, opium, tobacco, finery, and all sorts of trifles. But if it happens sometimes that the inventions of men of science and the works of

engineers, are of use to the people, as, for instance, railways, calicoes, steel, scythes, it only proves that in this world of ours everything is mutually connected, and that out of every hurtful activity there may arise an accidental good for those to whom the activity was hurtful. Men of science and of art could say that their activity was useful for the people, only if in their activity they have aimed at serving the people, as they now aim to serve the government and capitalists. We could have said that, only if the men of science and art made the wants of the people their object; but such is not the case. All learned men are occupied with their sacred businesses, which lead to the investigation of protoplasm, the spectrum analysis of stars, and so on: but concerning investigations as to how to set an axe, or with what kind it is more advantageous to hew; which saw is the most handy; with what flour bread shall be made, how it may best be kneaded, how to set it to rise; how to heat and to build stoves; what food, drink or crockery-ware it is best to use; what mushrooms may be eaten, and how they may be prepared more conveniently—science never troubles itself, or does so very slightly. Yet all this is the business of science. I know that, according to its own definition, science must be useless; but this is only an excuse, and a very impudent one. The business of science is to serve people. We have invented telegraphs, telephones, phonographs, but what improvements have we made in the life of the people? We have catalogued two millions of insects! but have we domesticated a single animal since biblical times, when all our animals had long been domesticated, and still the elk and the deer, and the partridge and the grouse and the wood-hen, are wild? Botanists have discovered the cells, and in the cells protoplasm and in protoplasm something else, and in this something else again. These occupations will go on for a long time and evidently never end, and therefore learned men have no time to do anything useful. Hence from the

times of the ancient Egyptians and Hebrews, when wheat and lentils were already cultivated, down to the present time, not a single plant has been added for the nourishment of the people except potatoes, and these were not discovered by science. We have invented torpedoes and house-drains; but the spinning-wheel, weaving-looms, ploughs and axe-handles, flails and rakes, buckets and well-sweeps, are still the same as in the time of Rurik. If some things have been improved, it is not the learned who have improved them, but the unlearned. The same is the case with art. Many people are acclaimed as great writers. We have carefully analyzed their works, have written mountains of critiques and criticisms upon criticisms, and still more criticisms on criticisms; we have collected pictures in galleries, and thoroughly studied in detail different schools of art; and we possess symphonies and operas that it is with great difficulty we ourselves can listen to; but what have we added to the folk-lore, legends, tales, songs for the people? what pictures, what music, have we created for the people? Books and pictures are published, and harmoniums are made for the people, but we did not participate in either. What is most striking and obvious is the false tendency of our science and art, which manifests itself in those departments which, according to their own propositions, would seem to be useful to people, but which, owing to this tendency, appear rather pernicious than useful. An engineer, a surgeon, a teacher, an artist, an author, seem by their very professions to be obliged to serve the people, but what do we see? With the present tendency, they can bring to the people nothing but harm. An engineer and a mechanic must work with capital: without capital they are good for nothing. All their training is of such a nature that, in order to make use of it, they need capital and the employment of work-people on a large scale, to say nothing of the fact that they themselves are accustomed to spend from fifteen hundred to a thousand

rubles a year on themselves, and therefore cannot go to live in a village, since no one there can give them any such remuneration: from their very occupations they are not fit for the service of the people. They understand how to calculate the arch of a bridge by means of the higher mathematics, how to calculate power and the transfer of power in an engine, and so on: but they are at a loss to meet the plain requirements of common labour; they do not know how to improve the plough or the cart; or how to make a brook passable, taking into consideration the conditions of a workman's life. They know and understand nothing of all this, less even than the poorest peasant does. Give them workshops, and plenty of people, order engines from abroad, and then they will arrange these matters. But to find out how to ease the labour of the millions of the people in their present conditions, they do not know, and cannot do it; and therefore, by their knowledge and habits and wants, they are not at all fit for this business. A surgeon is in a still worse condition. His imaginary science is of such a nature that he understands how to cure those only who have nothing to do and who can utilize other men's labour. He requires a countless number of expensive accessories, instruments, medicines, sanitary dwellings, food, and drains, in order that he may act scientifically: besides his fee he demands such expenses that, in order to cure one patient, he must kill with starvation hundreds of those who bear this expense. He has studied under eminent persons in the capital cities, who attended only to those patients whom they may take into hospitals, or who can afford to buy all the necessary medicines and machines, and even go at once from north to south, to these or those mineral waters, as the case may be. Their science is of such a kind that every country surgeon complains that there is no possibility of attending to the work-people who are so poor that they cannot afford sanitary accommodations, and that there are no hospitals, and that he cannot attend to the

business alone, that he requires help and assistant-surgeons. What does this really mean? It means this—that the want of the necessaries of life is the chief cause of people's misfortunes, and the source of diseases as well as of their spreading and incurability. Now science, under the banner of "the division of labour," calls its champions to help the people. Science has settled satisfactorily about the rich classes, and seeks how to cure those who can get everything necessary for the purpose; and it sends persons to cure in the same way those who have nothing to spare. But there are no means; and therefore they must be raised from the people, who become ill and catch diseases, and cannot be cured for want of means. The advocates of the healing art for the people say, that, up to the present time, this business has not been sufficiently developed. Evidently it is not yet developed, because if (which God forbid!) it were developed among our people, and, instead of two doctors and mid-wives and two assistant-surgeons in the district, there should be twenty sent, as they want, then there would soon be no one left to attend to. The scientific co-operation for the benefit of the people must be of quite a different kind. And this, which ought to exist, has not yet begun. It will begin when a man of science, an engineer, or a surgeon, ceases to consider lawful that division of labour, or rather that taking away other men's labour, which now exists, and when he no longer considers that he has the right to take—I do not say hundreds of thousands—but even a moderate sum of one thousand or five hundred rubles as compensation for his services; but when such a man comes to live among labouring-people in the same condition and in the same way as they, and applies his information in mechanics, technics or hygiene, to cure them. But at present, scientific men, who are fed at the expense of the workman, have quite forgotten the conditions of the life of these men: they ignore (as they say) these conditions, and are quite seriously offended that their imaginary

knowledge does not find application among the people. The departments of the healing art as well as of the mechanical have not yet been touched: the questions how best to divide the period of labour, how and upon what it is best to feed, how best to dress, how to counteract dampness and cold, how best to wash, to suckle, and swaddle children, and so on, and all these applied to the conditions in which the workers now exist—all these questions have not yet been faced. The same applies to the activity of scientific teachers—the pedagogues. Science has arranged this business, too, in such a way, that teaching according to science is possible only for those who are rich; and the teachers, like the engineers and surgeons, are involuntarily drawn towards money, and among us in Russia especially towards the government. And this cannot be otherwise, because a school properly arranged (and the general rule is that the more scientifically a school is arranged the more expensive it is), with convertible benches, globes, maps, libraries, and manuals for teachers and pupils, is just such a school to maintain which it is necessary to double the taxes of the people. So science wants to have it. The children are necessary for work, and the more so with the poorer people. The advocates of science say, “Pedagogy is even now of use for the people; but let it develop, then it will be still better.” But if it will develop till instead of 20 schools in a district there will be 100—all of them scientific—and the parents forced to keep up these schools? Then they will be still poorer, and will want the labour of their children still more urgently. What is to be done then? To this they will reply, “The government will establish schools, and will make education obligatory as it is in the rest of Europe.” But the money will still have to be raised from the people, and labour will be still harder for them, and they will have less time to spare from their labour, and there will then be no obligatory education at all. There is, again, only one escape—for a teacher to live in the conditions of a

workman, and to teach for that compensation which will be freely offered him. Such is the false tendency of science which deprives it of the possibility to fulfil its duty in serving the people. But this false tendency of our educated class is still more obvious in art-activity, which, for the sake of its very meaning ought to be accessible to the people. Science may point to its stupid excuse that "science is acting for science," and that, when fully developed it will become accessible to the people; but art, if it is art indeed, ought to be accessible to all, especially to those for whose sake it is created. But our art strikingly denounces its factors in that they do not wish, and do not understand, and are not able to be of use to the people. A painter, in order to produce his great works, must have a large studio, in which at least forty joiners or boot-makers might work, who are now freezing or suffocating in wretched lodgings. But this is not all: he requires models, costumes, journeys from place to place. The Academy of Art has spent millions of rubles, collected from the people, for the encouragement of art; and the productions of this art are hung in palaces, and are neither intelligible to the people nor wanted by them. Musicians, in order to express their great ideas, must gather about two hundred men with white neckties or in special costumes, and spend hundreds of thousands of rubles arranging operas. But this art-production would never appear to the people (even if they could afford to use it) as anything but perplexing or dull. The authors, writers, would seem not to need any particular accommodations, studios, models, orchestras, or actors; but here also it turns out that an author, a writer, in order to prepare his great works, wants travelling, palaces, cabinets, enjoyments of art, theatres, concerts, mineral waters, and so on; to say nothing of all the comforts of his dwelling and all the comforts of his life. If he himself has not saved up enough money for this purpose he is given a pension in order that he may compose better. And, again, these writings, which

we value so highly, remain for the people, rubbish, and are not at all necessary to them. What if, according to the wish of men of science and art, such producers of mental food should so multiply, that, in every village it would be necessary to build a studio, provide an orchestra, and keep an author in the conditions which men of art consider indispensable to them? I dare say working-people would make a vow never to look at a picture, or listen to a symphony, or read poetry and novels, in order only not to be compelled to feed all these good-for-nothing parasites. And why should not men of art serve the people? In every cottage there are holy images and pictures; each peasant, each woman of the people, sings; many have instruments of music; and all can relate stories, repeat poetry; and many of them read. How came it to pass that these two things, which were as much made for one another as a key for a lock, were separated, and why are they so separated that we cannot imagine how to re-unite them? Tell a painter to paint without a studio, models, costumes, and to draw penny pictures, and he will say that this would be a denial of art as he understands it. Tell a musician to play on a harmonium and to teach country-women to sing songs; tell a poet to throw aside writing poems and novels and satires, and to compose song-books for the people, and stories and tales which might be intelligible to illiterate persons—they will say you are cracked. But is it not being worse than cracked when the men who have freed themselves from labour because they promised to provide mental food for those who have brought them up, and are feeding and clothing them, have afterwards so forgotten their promise that they have ceased to understand how to make food fit for the people? Yet this very forsaking of their promises they consider dignifies them. Such is the case everywhere, they say. Then everywhere the case is very unreasonable. And it will be so while men, under the pretext of division of labour, promise to provide mental food for the people, but

only swallow up the labour of the people. Men will serve the people with science and art only when living among them and in the same way as the people do, putting forth no claims whatever, they offer to the people their scientific and artistic services, leaving it to the free will of the people to accept or refuse them.

