

PRICE 5 CENTS

Confessions of a Drone

Marshall Field's Will

AND

The Socialist Machine

BY

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Pocket Library of Socialism, No. 45



Published by

CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY

(CO-OPERATIVE)

118 KINZIE ST., CHICAGO.

Confessions of a Drone.

Reprinted from the Independent.

The Independent has asked me for a short economic autobiography. I comply in the understanding that I am talking about myself, the type of the idle, rich young man, not myself the individual.

There are thousands of others who produce no wealth and consume a great deal of it. There are thousands who produce no more than I, and who consume ten or twenty times as much. Be it remembered that wherever the first personal pronoun is used it is used to represent the type and not the individual.

I have an income of between ten and twenty thousand dollars a year. I spend all of it. I produce nothing—am doing no work. I (the type) can keep on doing this all my life unless the present social system is changed.

My income doesn't descend upon me like manna from heaven. It can be traced. Some of it comes from the profits of a daily newspaper; some of it comes from Chicago real estate; some from the profits made by the Pennsylvania and other railroads; some from the profits of the United States Steel Corporation; some from the profits of the American Tobacco Company.

He Didn't Make the Land.

As to Chicago real estate, I didn't put it there. Some of it I have never seen. It came into possession of my family some years ago, when it was cheaper. People came to Chicago

to work, and in proportion as their numbers increased, the value of this real estate rose automatically. The people who came to Chicago to work caused the increase in value—but I get the benefit of it. There are people who are willing to work on this land. I am not willing to do so. Thus we arrange that they shall work there and pay me an annual tribute for my permission.

As to Pennsylvania, Tobacco and Steel stocks and bonds. I know nothing whatever about railroads, have never railroaded at all, and probably never will. Yet I get an annual income from railroads. It isn't the capitalists who supply me with my income from railroads. I am one of them myself—and we couldn't all be so comfortable together by merely handing each other money back and forth. No, it must be the men who work the railroads, or the travelers and shippers who contribute our incomes. Probably it is both. The men who run the trains are underpaid for the work they do, and those who ship or travel overpay for the service they get. We capitalists get the margin in between.

I have never been inside a steel mill; and I know about tobacco only as a consumer. Yet the makers and users of steel and tobacco send me on their little checks twice a year. I never have to dun them.

Morgan Would Laugh.

The big capitalist may wonder at my audacity in claiming fellowship with him when I confess to an income of well under twenty thousand dollars a year. Yet, after all, while among exclusively capitalist circles I am nothing much, still as compared with the average American I am pretty well off.

For instance, it takes to support me just about twenty times as much as it takes to support an average workingman or farmer. And the funny thing about it is that these workingmen and farmers work hard all year round, while I don't work at all. Not so funny for the workingmen and farmers as for me, to be sure.

I have better food, better clothes and a better house than the workers who supply me with money to spend. I can travel oftener, to more interesting places, on faster trains and in more comfortable steamship cabins. I have horses to ride and drive, domestic servants to minister to my wants, the best physicians in case of sickness. If I am fond of books I can without much self-sacrifice create a respectable little library for myself. I do not live all year round in the smoky, nervous crowded city. My child will never go to work in a cotton mill or a sweatshop.

The Two Civilizations.

In short, I lead a far more highly civilized life than the working people. I have offered me the choice of all the best things that man in his stay upon this earth has discovered, evolved and created. The working-people do not have this choice offered them. There is left for them the shoddy things of life—hard work and small reward. I have little or no work and the earth's best for reward.

The work of the working people and nothing else, produces the wealth, which by some hocus-pocus arrangement is transferred to me, leaving them bare. While they support me in splendid style, what do I do for them? Let the candid upholder of the present order

answer, for I am not aware of doing anything for them.

It is said that I supply a wage fund out of which their wages are paid? Nonsense. If every bond and stock certificate and every real estate abstract were burned today in a huge bonfire, the vacated titles to ownership falling naturally to the community, trains would pull out on schedule time tomorrow. The train men, despatchers, superintendents, locomotives, cars and tracks would be there. The *ci-devant* owners of bonds and stocks would find themselves nothing but nuisances if they went down to the freight-yards and began to meddle.

A Pate-de-Fois-Gras Education.

That my life is so much completer than the lives of the workers who support me has been excused on the ground that they are less "cultivated" and therefore less fitted to enjoy things which please me. But that seems a little like begging the question. Many of them are not as well educated, because they had to go to work as boys in the fields, the glass factories, the mines, the mills, while I was pursuing my leisurely, gentlemanly way through boarding-school and university. I don't think it was entirely natural aptitude that marked me out for a university education, since I remember that frequently I had to pay money to tutors to drill into my head information of a remarkably simple character. I was fond of a good time—and that I had. Of course it took money, which was obligingly supplied, via my family, by the pressmen, the switchmen, the cigaret girls, the rolling-mill men, etc.

Having in this pleasant fashion achieved my education, I went to work in my father's business. I "started in at the bottom," as the saying goes. I became a reporter at \$15 a week. If my father had been a broker I would have started in to sweep out the office at \$3 a week. Most of my college friends who went into Wall Street seem to have done that. But I knew it was play-acting all the time, just as they did.

His Job Was Safe.

I was not living on a \$15 a week basis and they were not living on a \$3 a week basis. I wasn't afraid of losing my job just because it was a dull season and I was the greenest cub on the staff. I got my "allowance" in addition to the fifteen—and the allowance was by considerable the more substantial figure. The allowance came from the pressmen, switchmen, cigaret girls, the other reporters, the city editor, etc., via my family.

It is just this "allowance" that makes all the difference. Suppose, instead of being an absolute idler, as at present, I go to work and earn from \$2,000 to \$4,000 a year. My allowance continues and brings me in just five times as much as I earn. At first blush I would not be called an idler, because my daily physical or mental activity would be manifest. Yet the allowance for which I do not work brings me in five times as much as the salary for which I do work. As regards the people who contribute that allowance I am an economic idler, even though as regards some other business I am a worker. Indeed I might fill a dual capacity as worker and idler in the same business. As a reporter on a newspaper I was

a worker, as a member of a stockholding family I was an idler.

Interest, Rent, Profit.

So it is with all capitalists. Insofar as they receive interest, profit and rent they are economic idlers, taking toll of the labor of others and returning nothing; insofar as they actively further business, by superintendence or otherwise, they are laborers, worthy in many cases of their hire.

The wealth appropriated by capital through the agencies of rent, profit and interest is obviously appropriated from the working people, the creators of all wealth. Therefore it is to the working people that socialism addresses itself, urging them to veto their own further exploitation.

Since the foregoing appeared in the "Independent" many criticisms of it have appeared in the capitalist press. The burden of practically every one of these criticisms has been, "If young Patterson feels that way why doesn't he give away his money to the poor?"

From which it is fair to surmise that the capitalist press cannot explain what useful economic functions young Patterson *and the rest of his class perform.*

The article was written about the whole capitalist class, as explicitly mentioned in the first paragraph. The reason the whole capitalistic class doesn't give away its money and go to work is *because it doesn't want to.* It is quite satisfied with its present arrangement of luxury, **dominion and idleness.**

And as long as the working class is satisfied with its present arrangement of poverty, obedience and laboriousness, the present arrangement will continue.

But whenever the working class wants to discontinue the present arrangement it can do so. It has the great majority.

J. M. P.

Marshall Field's Will.

Reprinted from Collier's Weekly.

"Political economy confuses on principle two very different kinds of private property, of which one rests on the producer's own labor, the other on the employment of the labor of others. It forgets that the latter not only is the direct antithesis of the former, but absolutely grows on its tombs only."—
KARL MARX.

Marshall Field of Chicago was, perhaps, the greatest merchant that ever lived. It is justly believed of him that he abode by the laws of his community. He paid taxes in Chicago OR \$40,000,000. And he made this \$40,000,000, together with \$100,000,000 more, honestly—in accordance with the rules of the game as the game is now played.

It is very important to remember this, that of all the great capitalists Marshall Field best obeyed the laws. Because if it shall appear that his accumulation of one hundred and forty million dollars, or his disposal of that sum of money, has been a detriment to society, then it is plain that the fundamental defect lies in the laws of society and that the only way to prevent the recurrence of such detriment is to change the fundamental laws of society.

When, in the first month of 1906, Mr. Field died, two grandsons, Marshall Field III, aged twelve, and Henry Field, aged ten, survived him.

Marshall Field the elder directed that out of his estate \$72,000,000 should be set aside in trust until 1954, when it, with its accumula-

tions, should be turned over to Marshall Field, the grandchild.

The Conditions of the Legacy.

This \$72,000,000 brings in an income of about \$3,000,000 yearly. But young Marshall shall not be allowed to dissipate that income. He will receive outright \$450,000 when he is twenty-five, again when he is thirty, thirty-five, and forty. Aside from these quinquennial gifts the trustee is directed "to invest and reinvest one-half of the aforesaid net income for accumulation until the said grandchild shall attain the age of forty-five (45) years, if he shall live so long." Then the grandson is to obtain the compounded interest only, the principal not for five years longer.

If he dies meanwhile, the money is to be rolled up until Marshall Field III would have been forty-five, and then divided among his heirs-at-law, most of whom are probably not born yet.

So much for one-half of this income from the \$72,000,000. How about the other half? "The trustee is directed to retain and invest and reinvest for accumulation, adding the accumulation of income to the capital, of his said above share, until my said grandson shall attain the age of thirty (30) years."

After thirty, Marshall III is to get one-third of this one-half of his net income, after he is thirty-five he is to get two-thirds of this one-half, after forty he is to get all of this one-half. When fifty he is to have all the accumulation upon the \$72,000,000 together with the original \$72,000,000. If the trustees are half-way intelligent and honest the resultant sum should be over \$300,000,000.

It is difficult to estimate just what this accumulation will be, since special inside information will be continually at the disposal of the trustees. But Marshall Field, the merchant, knew the process of accumulation thoroughly, for he said: "I direct said trustees to take and hold all my said residuary estate in trust, to collect and receive all rents, profits and other income, and after paying the necessary expenses of the trust to apply net income and the capital as hereinafter directed for the use and benefit of my two grandsons, Marshall Field and Henry Field, now living, and their respective issue."

Splendid for Trustee.

"Said trustee" is the Merchants Loan & Trust Company. The shares of the bank went up six points when the will was read.

The younger grandson is left, under a similar trust deed, \$48,000,000, of which the trustee is to "invest and reinvest for accumulation" the income in precisely the same way outlined for his brother.

Henry's name is Henry instead of Marshall, so he now has twenty thousand people working for him instead of thirty thousand who are working for the older lad.

Marshall Field III's \$72,000,000 is not in the sterile form of gold eagles stored in a vault. His money breeds and multiplies, for it is in the form of real estate, bonds and stocks, which are like interest-bearing mortgages; which are interest-bearing mortgages—mortgages against the labor of thousands of men. They are perpetual mortgages too; for, let the thousands of men work their hardest until they close their eyes in final sleep, still the children of these thousands must go on working just as hard

in the endless and hopeless task of paying off the mortgages.

"Endless and hopeless task"—unless Socialism comes. Socialism is seeking to arouse the thousands to denounce the perpetual mortgages held by the one, to pay not another dollar of interest on them, to refuse to transfer the hopeless debt to their children and their children's children.

An Industrial Crown Prince.

Marshall Field III was born into possession of his mortgages on the labor of thousands of men because his sagacious grandfather had managed, fairly and in full accordance with the rules of the game, to get possession of certain of the tools of modern production, such as rolling-mills, railroad shops, locomotives, cars, land, both in the suburban and down town districts of Chicago, New York, and London, miles and miles of railroad rights of way, iron ore mines, steamships, coal mines, forests, etc.

Marshall Field, Sr., also obtained from his community certain special and valuable privileges. He was one of the few who could supply Chicagoans with electric light, telephones, and gas, with the attendant right to charge for these commodities three times their cost to produce. The laws of Illinois forbid the people of Chicago to supply themselves with these commodities co-operatively, though they allow Marshall Field to produce them by the co-operation of the laborers upon whose labor he held his mortgages.

When he died, Marshall Field, Sr., in full accordance with the present laws, transmitted to his grandsons, in fee simple, these tools of production and these special privileges.

So from now on, rolling-mill men must pay the two little boys something for the right to go into steel mills and produce steel; all switchmen must pay them something for the right to pull a switch on certain of the great American trunk lines; all engineers for the right to open a throttle; hundreds of business men, and therefore indirectly thousands of their employes, pay them for the right to do business in the downtown districts of London, New York, and Chicago; every Chicagoan who uses gas, electricity, or telephones pays them a tax.

A Big Contrast.

How much do the people, who now produce \$3,000,000 for Marshall Field III, get for themselves for the work which nets him so much? The boy is a heavy stockholder in the Pullman Company, where labor is paid as follows: Blacksmiths, \$16.43 per week; boilermakers, \$17; carpenters, \$12.38; laborers, \$9.90; machinists, \$16.65, painters, \$13.60.

There are in the great wholesale and retail stores now belonging to the Field children, over ten thousand employes, ninety-five per cent of whom get \$12 per week or less.

The female sewing-machine operators, who make the clothes which are sold in the Field establishment, get \$6.75 per week.

The female custom pants makers of the North Central States receive \$7.84 per week.

In the North Atlantic States, female custom pants makers work twelve hours a day, seven days a week, and receive for this labor \$6.51. Perhaps the firm imports some of its pants from the East.

The makers of socks and stocking are paid: Finishers, \$4.57 per week of fifty-nine work-

ing hours; knitters, \$4.75 per week of fifty-nine and one-half working hours.

Marshall Field & Co. sell furniture as well as clothes. Furniture workers are paid as follows: Machine workers, \$11.02 per week; upholsterers, \$12.47.

The working people are paid by the hour instead of the week, so if a lay-off for sickness or slackness of work occurs the weekly wage is proportionately reduced.

No Wolf at This Door.

Marshall Field III receives \$60,000 per week, the sum gradually increasing as the interest compounds. His brother Henry Field receives \$40,000 per week, the sum gradually increasing as the interest compounds. In neither case is there a reduction for sickness or slackness of work. Neither of the boys work any hours per week.

In view of this situation, America is evidently not "a land of equal opportunity." Marshall Field III and Henry Field have enormously more than an equal opportunity, and in consequence thousands have considerably less than an equal opportunity.

But the most fundamental spirit of our laws upholds, maintains, and preserves this exact situation. So if such situations are to be prevented, our laws must be changed from their very fundamentals.

It is particularly galling to these thousands of working people to feel themselves bound to pay their annual tribute to the two little Field boys. But from the dollar and cent standpoint, why was it better for the rolling-mill man to be mortgaged to Marshall Field, Sr., whom he never saw, than to Marshall Field II, whom he never saw? Why was it pleas-

anter for the consumer of gas to pay taxes to Marshall Field, Sr., whom he never saw, than to Marshall Field III, whom he never saw? Does the suburban resident live any worse now that he is paying rent to Marshall Field III than he did six months ago when he paid the same rent to Marshall Field, Sr.?

Socialism says not; says it is no better to pay taxes to the old king in his vigor than to the young king during the regency; says that there should be economic kings no more than political kings; maintains that the industrial democracy must succeed the industrial despotism just as the political democracy succeeded the political despotism.

The Socialist Machine.

Reprinted from the Saturday
Evening Post.

The Socialists of America have a well-organized political machine. Unlike the old party machines, it runs all year round at top speed instead of merely during campaigns. The day after one election it begins work for the next election. As is the case with the old parties, there is an inner ring which runs things. For instance, in the 1904 election there were 400,000 Socialist voters, but all nominating power was definitely and unmistakably fixed in the hands of this inner ring of 22,000, or five and one-half per cent. of the whole.

It is a well-known axiom in politics that the men who put up the campaign funds run the party. These 28,000 inner ringers (the number has increased since 1904) who run Socialist politics put up the campaign funds and therefore run the party. In fact, they are the party.

There are two kinds of Socialists—those who are “members of the party” and those who are not. The latter are considered Laodicean and are consequently neither consulted nor regarded by the former. Although the old party inner rings are continually striving to decrease its size, in order that the power may be more intensely concentrated among the remaining members, the Socialist inner ring is continually striving to increase its numbers and to diffuse its power.

How to Join the Party.

Any resident of the United States eighteen years or over of either sex or any color, who understands what Socialism means, who renounces all connection whatsoever with other political parties, and who will pay three dollars a year to the Socialist organization, is eligible for membership in the party. But his written application must be passed upon and accepted by the local organization (ward, county, etc.) with which he wishes to affiliate before he can "join the party." Keepers of disreputable saloons and other bad characters are almost invariably rejected by the local to which they apply.

Members of the party are called on to do a great deal of political work all the year round. They distribute literature from house to house, man the polls, hustle at the primaries, drum up crowds for meetings. They do this without hope of any immediate reward, for there are no offices to be distributed among them. The fact that they believe themselves to be bringing the revolution nearer seems to satisfy them.

But the most potent work which the party members do is undoubtedly in their private talks with their families and friends. In this proselyting work extraordinary cleverness is sometimes shown. I have seen men who, when off guard, were bad tempered, blunt, overbearing, almost insulting in argument, become suave, subtle, dexterous, flattering, and the most courteous of listeners when seeking to interest a possible convert.

There is a continuous exchange of ideas between party members as to the most effective manner of enlisting recruits, so that each one

has the benefit of the experience of all. And the constant injunction given, not only from each to each by word of mouth, but also officially in the printed pamphlets of the national committee is: "Don't lose your temper; take it easy."

The collectivist missionaries have a saying: "If we can get a man to reading, we have him." If you, Mr. Reader, have ever been subjected to attack by a Socialist, you will have noticed that he tried to make you read something. What that something was depended on your temperament.

Lots of "Literature."

There is a big library of Socialist "literature," made up of all kinds and degrees of printed stuff, from the classics of the movement to its primers, from philosophical dialectics to passionate maunderings.

The profoundest single work is indubitably *Capital*, by Karl Marx. But this book is so heavy, dry, deep and closely argued that it is never furnished to beginners. Its first ninety pages, unfortunately, are the most intricate and condensed of all—and they have cast many a promising novice into such despair that he pursued his studies no further. Marx managed not only to impress himself permanently on all proletarian thought, but also to put his name to the greatest of all its propaganda documents, the *Communist Manifesto*. If *Capital* is the Bible of Socialism, then the *Manifesto* is certainly its Ten Commandments and Sermon on the Mount rolled into one.

After Marx, Frederick Engels is the greatest author of the movement. Engels assisted in the preparation of *Capital*, was co-author of the *Communist Manifesto* and sole author of

two other collectivist classics: *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, and *Origin of the Family*.

The modern European political leaders, Bebel, Vandervelde and Jaures, though careful, painstaking and often brilliant authors, cannot be ranked with Marx, Engels, Kautsky or Liebknecht.

Bellamy, Blatchford and H. G. Wells are the best-known popular Socialist writers, their stories being well suited to interest beginners. Scientific Socialism has been rather weak in its handling of the farming question until a recent thoroughly scientific, albeit short and undetailed, book was published by Simons, an American.

There is rather an extensive library of anti-Socialist writings—the pamphlets and published sermons of the Jesuits being among the most effective. Dr. A. Schäffle, formerly Austrian Minister of Finance, is author of the two strongest anti-Socialist works: *Quintessence of Socialism* and *Impossibility of Social Democracy*. In his definitions of the collectivist position this author is so exceedingly fair and lucid that both these books are widely circulated by the Socialists themselves, regardless of the fact that in the latter part of each work the author uses all his unquestioned talent to discredit Socialism.

There are about twenty English Socialist periodicals in the country, of which at least two have circulations of over 300,000 each. It is the distribution of literature which strikes the dominant chord of the propaganda work. Without this vast library of collectivist writings to keep the Socialists of all parts of the world on the same track and pointed at the same goal, the difficulty of bringing about a social revolu-

tion and of making it nearly simultaneous, as is now the purpose, in all parts of the civilized world, would be enormously greater.

Socialist Color is Red.

The propaganda makes considerable use of mottoes, songs, colors, and emblems. The international color is red, the international Socialist holiday is May 1, the battle-hymn is, of course, the Marseillaise. The motto of Socialism, taken from the Manifesto, is: "Workers of the World Unite. You have nothing to Lose but your Chains, and a World to Gain."

Socialist missionaries almost invariably find their easiest work among young people. I personally know of four cases where a boy, compelled to leave home because of his Socialism, has thereafter managed, by secret meetings or by letter, to convert some or all of his brothers and sisters. But in none of these cases could he make any impression on his parents or older relatives.

Organized activity on the part of the National, State and local bodies has been found necessary in order to reap and bind the fruits of the individual labor of the party members.

The national headquarters are at Chicago, in charge of J. Mahlon Barnes, a former cigar-maker, now secretary of the national committee. (There is no permanent chairman to Socialist committees.) The secretary, who is the executive head, is chosen by referendum vote of all party members.

A capable executive is needed to run the office on account of the immense amount of detailed work. There are about twenty national organizers in the field all the time, who go from State to State making speeches, selling literature and endeavoring to form

cal branches of the party. Barnes directs the movements of all these men, and sees that they overlap neither each other nor the speakers who are under control of the State committees.

Keeping Tab on Speaker.

There is a wide and lofty cabinet in the national office with fifty shallow drawers in it. Each drawer contains a large scale map of the State or Territory, which is found to be more or less thickly studded with parti-colored pins. A red pin shows that there is a local branch in that town. A white pin shows a complete county organization. A black pin shows a speaker has been assigned; a green, that one has been asked for. The course of the speaker is daily traced on the map in ink. A gray pin shows there is a sympathizer in the town. "Sympathizers" are usually first located by requests to the national office for literature. Their names and addresses are tabulated, and particular attention is thereafter paid to them, both by sending of literature and by the personal visits of organizers who pass through the town.

The organizers make detailed daily reports of their movements on prescribed blanks. These reports are carefully tabulated and cross-indexed. Thereafter, when a second visit is made to a town, the visiting organizer is informed in advance by the national office as to the character of the population, its attitude toward Socialism, which arguments seemed most effective, what kind of literature was easiest to sell, the addresses of local party members, or, failing them, of sympathizers, and the most suitable hotel or boarding-house.

Receipts on the road are derived from the collection and from the sale of literature. At every Socialist meeting the speaker makes an appeal to the audience for financial help for the propaganda. Considering that the audience is composed almost exclusively of working-people, the results of these collections are sometimes truly astonishing. Old party politicians invariably laugh when they hear that collections or admission fees are asked at political meetings, and cannot easily believe that such procedure does not drive away the crowds. The fact remains that it doesn't.

Where Money Comes From.

Owing to these collections and sales of literature, it cost the national office only about \$3,000 to keep nineteen organizers on the road during the year of 1905. The organizers receive three dollars per day and expenses.

The main source of revenue for the national office is the sale of books of stamps. Each party member must buy one stamp per month. For these stamps the national office receives five cents apiece from the State committees, which sell them for ten cents apiece to the county committees, which sell them for fifteen cents apiece to the local branches, which in turn dispense of them to their members for twenty-five cents apiece.

The dues-paying on the part of all the members is insisted upon as an essential feature of the movement. It is believed to make for democracy and against one-man power, making it difficult, if not impossible, for a rich demagogue, by financing the party, to control it.

Not long ago a rich man was chosen treasurer for one of the State committees. It was

found that, when members were delinquent in dues, he was in the habit of making up the difference out of his own pocket. He was promptly ousted from his position.

The Socialist organization is not a centralized body, as might be inferred from a description solely of the national committee. In all, except a few Southern States and Nevada (which is at present being organized), there are State organizations which, according to section four, article twelve of the party constitution, "shall have the sole jurisdiction of the members residing within their respective territories, and the sole control of all matters pertaining to the propaganda, organization and financial affairs within such State or Territory. The national committee and sub-committees or officers thereof shall have no right to interfere in such matters without the consent of the respective State and Territorial organizations."

Don't Talk Socialism

without first studying it, otherwise you may do the movement more harm than good. There are three ten-cent books that will put you on the right track if you give the proper study to each. They are **Shop Talks on Economics**, by Marcy, **Industrial Socialism**, by Haywood and Bohn, and **Socialism Made Easy**, by Connolly. Send thirty cents in stamps and we will also mail you three late numbers of the **International Socialist Review**. This literature will start you right.

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this slip.

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Evolution and Revolution

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