TO-DAY.

No. 13.—JANUARY, 1885.

The Meaning of Socialism.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

We come before you as Revolutionists, that is, as men and women who wish to see the basis of society changed.

Why is this?

Because in the society which now exists the majority of the people is miserable and oppressed. Often as it has been done, sickening as the task of doing it again is, we must, in order to make our meaning clear, lay before you a statement of the condition of those who live by labour in the present state of society.

In these Islands, as generally throughout civilized countries, a vast part of the workers, the "labourers," including all those who are engaged in the necessary work of producing food for the community, are scarcely raised above starvation, or are punished for the crime of being born poor, by being compelled to accept the cruel relief of the workhouse.

A step above these come the artisans, the inheritors of the hoarded skill of so many generations, who earn a poor livelihood, a pleasureless existence, by hard and constant toil at dull, mechanical work which is but a burden to them. The surroundings of their life are miserable and squalid; for if they live amidst the excitement of great cities, they have to pay for this by being forced to lodge in mere hovels and hutches in the midst of such sordidness and disorder, that it would almost seem as if it had been the aim of men to make the workmen's quarters of such cities as loathsome as possible: and this livelihood, such as it is, is at the best but precarious, because a shift of the markets, a change in machinery, a hard winter—or a soft one, some accident in short over which the workman neither singly nor collectively has any control, may throw him out of work and, after months of anxiety and wearing

trouble, may land him among the crowd of unskilled labourers, as a competer for their wretched pittance.

Then there is the class of small tradesmen, whose lives are harassed by desperate anxiety and overwork; these are driven into despicable shifts for the earning of their narrow incomes, since the aggregation of capital into great masses makes it harder every day for the small distributor to live, driven as he is to make his prices square with those of the great capitalist with his huge transactions. There is also the army of men and women employed in direct slavery to commerce, wholesale and retail, as clerks and shop assistants, also most miserably paid and living most precariously, many of them shamefully overworked; absolute slaves' although they are compelled to keep up a decent appearance.

In short, we assert without fear of contradiction that the mass of the people have to work hard day by day to earn for themselves a hard life full of anxiety, without leisure, without the bodily pleasure which it is in the nature of all animals to desire, without the mental pleasure which it is the glory of all human beings to desire, and finally without hope of escaping from this slavery.

Think of a person coming to England from some place where all lived in decent equality, and seeing nothing but such people and their homes; would he not think that he had got into an exceedingly poor country, where at the best people lived a dull, careworn life, and at the worst were below the lowest savages? What would be his astonishment when he was told that he was in the richest country in the world?

Strange to say that would be nothing but the truth. Street after street you may go through in London where there are no houses but those of the rich, even of the very rich: here dwell those who do no work at all, or who work excitedly, if not for very long hours, at fleecing their fellow-citizens; while in houses more modest, yet still supplied with every desirable luxury and many undesirable ones, live the professional men, or hangers-on of the rich, who minister to their caprices. Hardly any of these well-housed people, even those of the latter group of this rich class, produce any real wealth for the service of the community.

Why is this then? How does it happen that in *rich* England the majority of the people is poor?

The word *class* we have used above is the key to the riddle. Those poor persons we have been mentioning are not so many accidental individuals scattered amidst the population; they are a *class*, necessary, with all its poverty and misery, to the existence, as a class, of that other *class* of rich men: for all society is based upon labour and could not exist without it; and those of its members who *do not* produce wealth must necessarily live on the labours of those who *do* produce it. Those poor people we have been mentioning do, we repeat, form a class which amidst all its multifarious occupations has one interest common to all its members, the enjoyment of the fruits of its labour, and one enemy in common, namely the *class* of rich men who produce nothing, and if they work, work only at fleecing the poor class.

So then there are two *classes;* one producing and governed, the other non-producing and governing; one the means of wealth, the other the consumers of wealth: one *Rich*, the other *Poor*.

As to the division between these two classes of the wealth produced by one of them, it must be said that the poor class possesses nothing but the power of labour inherent in the bodies of poor men, and the inherited skill in handicraft which former generations of men have acquired; nothing in short but that which cannot be taken away from it. On the other hand the rich class is in possession of the land, on the surface and below it, of the machinery, which is the result of centuries of the toil and invention of the poor class, of the capital, or hoarded labour of past generations of the poor, and consequently of the credit and the means of transit: that is to say *the rich class possesses all the means of using the power of labour which is the sole possession of the poor.*

No member of the poor class can even put a spade into the ground without the leave of the rich class: the smith, the potter, the weaver, though they have at their fingers' ends the gathered skill of thousands of years, must sit idle until some rich man grants them leave to work.

What then are the men of the poor class to do in order to make their possession, the power of labour, useful to them, in order to go on living?

The rich class needs them, since its members' aim is to live without working, which they cannot do without a poor class to work for them, in other words, without slaves: it allows the workers therefore to work and live, on condition that after they have produced as much as they can live on, the balance of their production shall be the property of their masters; which balance of value produced by the workers, the masters, or capitalists, call their profit; and when they can no longer gain this profit out of the workman, they cease to allow him to work: as the working-class has learned by many and bitter experiences.

As to the livelihood earned by the worker before he begins to produce profit for his master, it is, as we have seen, wretchedly poor, and, if the master had his own way fully, would be only just enough to support life in tolerable health, and to allow the worker to beget children, to be in their turn used as machines for the production of profit. But although the workers of modern society have been everywhere and always compelled to compete against each other for subsistence on these hard terms, they have in these latter days felt some sense of their common interest and common antagonism to the rich. This antagonism has given rise to openly expressed discontent, which has driven the rich classes, afraid of rebellion, into granting concessions to the workers. Thus in England the workers have forced the right of combination from the rich, and so gained a legalized position for the Trades' Unions, and by that means and others have gained a standard of life, for the skilled workers at least, somewhat above that mere subsistence which would have been imposed upon them if they had not striven bitterly enough with their masters, the capitalists. This standard of life, however, as long as the present capitalist system lasts, can never rise above a certain point, that namely at which there would be a risk of wages eating up the profit of the master, who will only employ the workman as long as he can fleece him for his own individual profit; and as combination among

the workers, until it has for its aim the abolition of the class of masters, must always be weaker than competition for wages among them, the masters have it in their power to overwhelm this feeble opposition in various ways; as by using new labour-saving machines, by the introduction of workers from countries whose standard of life is lower than ours, or by investing their money in countries where the workers offer no resistance to capitalist fleecing.

Thus do the nobility and middle-class, now combined into one class, use the workers against the workers, as the middle-class formerly used them against the nobility. Thus they have the whole of the poor class in their power, and will have them so long as the latter is contented to try to palliate the evils of that subjection instead of determining to make an end of it.

Therefore it is clear there is no hope of permanently amending the condition of the workers as long as the present system of capital and labour exists. As long as it lasts the majority of the people must always be poor and degraded; sometimes brutally servile, sometimes brutally rebellious, but always slaves, always miserable in the midst of the plenty which they have created. We say *slaves*, for although the persons, the bodies of the workers are no longer obviously owned by the rich, as in times gone by, yet their lives, as we have seen, are utterly in their power; that is to say, that though they are not slaves to certain individuals, they are slaves to a class.

FELLOW WORKERS,

Is it necessary that this miserable state of things should last for ever? Is it doomed to be eternal and irremediable?

There are plenty of people who will say "Yes" to this question. The politicians who rule you, and the professors who are paid to teach your rulers, often spend time and pains in telling you that this state of things is the only one possible, while at the same time they contradict themselves by bidding you note the gradual amelioration of your class which is taking place, and which will, they vaguely hint, finally almost destroy poverty, or at least make it an accident of life avoidable by all but the vicious and incapable.

Do not be deceived by them: the end they aim at is vague and worthless, and the means to the end futile. At the rate at which they would have things move, we and our children and our children's children will be dead and forgotten, while the workers will be still a class of inferior beings living only such lives as their masters allow them to live. These men cannot even conceive of the existence of a Society which is not founded on a miserable class.

But poor as their ideal is, their means for realizing it are useless. They bid you look to the gradual attainment of political rights; to the effects of the spread of education; to your acquiring habits of thrift, sobriety, and industry. But consider this; the poor, whose lives are in the power of the rich, who depend on their assent for leave to work for their livelihood, until they understand that they should be and can be their own masters, will never dare to use their political rights against them lest they should be starved by them.

As to education, that which the anti-Socialists mean to offer to

you is class education: that is, enough education to make you good machines for profit-grinding; nor can you as long as you are the slaves of profit get more than this as a rule, for the long hours of your dull daily work will deprive you of leisure and inclination for the education fit for *men* not for machines.

Again, if the poor classes by means of thrift, sobriety, and industry get to make 3d. go as far in sustenance for their lives as a shilling does now, you may be sure that the capitalists will take care that it goes as far in paying them wages; this they can ensure, because they hold in their hands the land, machinery, and capital by which alone your labour can be made productive. By means of competition among the workers, and competition in the markets of the world, you will be driven into making cheap wares only meant for the use of poor people, so that your labour also may be cheapened for the production of profit for your masters.

Fellow-workers, do not be deceived by these false hopes of a scarcely perceptible gain. We hold out to you another and a brighter one, which you yourselves when you once come to understand it will realise, and with you also it rests whether you will realise it early or late.

We bid you hope and hope confidently for the establishment of a new order of things, the Social Order, in which there will be no poor and, therefore, no rich; in which there will be no *classes*.

Understand that there is enough wealth created in civilised countries for all to live happily if the waste bred of oppression were once at an end; for every man working in a civilised community helped by machinery and the co-operation of his fellows produces more than enough to sustain himself; *of this overplus the greater part is at present confiscated for the gain of individuals by the privileged class, that is to say the landlords and capitalists, who, as we have said before, will only allow the workers to exercise the power of labour which is inherent in their bodies on these terms.*

In a state of social order this robbery would be impossible; work, endurable and even pleasant would be found for all, would lie ready to their hands, and not only would every worker enjoy the whole fruits of his labour, but, as it would be employed collectively, it would be so organised and directed that none of it would be wasted; whatever work a man did would benefit the whole community as well as himself.

Furthermore as there would be no classes, as they would all have melted into one great living society in which no one member would be sacrificed for the benefit of another, everyone would have equal opportunities of education, refinement, and leisure, nor would a people so circumstanced endure over-toil for insufficient reasons; life would be easy among them.

In this Society, the State, which at present is something outside ourselves and our lives, and is mostly, and not without reason looked upon by us as an enemy, or at best as a necessary evil—an interference with the true business of life—would then be ourselves; it would be the whole community in its corporate capacity united and organized to gain for itself, that is for each and all of its members, the greatest amount of good that could be wrung out of material nature by the co-operative efforts of man.

In such a State the means of production, transit and exchange would belong to all alike and be organised for the good of all.

The land would be common property to be cultivated or built on as organised Society should determine; the machinery, the gradual invention of hundreds of generations, carried out by millions of toilers, would be used by all without their being taxed for its use for the benefit of individuals; there would be an end of usury of money which means the forcing of living labour to pay a tax to dead labour for the sake of individual gain. Commerce would lose its gambling nature, and would mean a distribution of products which would not involve the making of profits.

Thus being freed from slavery to profit-grinding, labour could be easily organised so as to put an end to waste; for machinery could really be used for saving labour and not as now for multiplying it for the sake of profit; while in the markets foresight and wise regulation would take the place of recklessness and haphazard, so that the loss and confusion of gluts and stagnation would be avoided. This organization of labour by and for the whole of society is by no means what is often understood by "State Socialism," which would not abolish class rule at all, but intends more or less paternally to force the workers into such an organisation as some class, group, or autocrat, might arbitrarily conceive was for their good.

Furthermore, in such a Society as this which we propose to you, while all men would live untormented by anxiety for their livelihood, while no one could advance himself by pushing back his neighbour, there would still be plenty of room for emulation; for those who had any special capacity would have leisure and opportunity to develope it, instead of being, as they now are, crushed into uniformity and stupidity by the necessity for haste and ceaseless dull work; the scientist, the artist, the man of letters would no longer have to sell himself at Dutch auction for the pleasure of the idle and incapable, but sure of his livelihood, not driven to earn special profits by the exercise of his talents, would be able to devote himself deliberately to science and the arts, and satisfy all the requirements of his genius; nor can we doubt that under these happier conditions the number of people able and willing to exercise special talents for the good of the community would much increase; so that the destruction of the so-called individualist system would result in a prodigious development of individuality.

Fellow Workers,

this is the hope we hold out to you; we bid you put in the place of the present life of mingled poverty, luxury, and confusion, a Social Order under which the wealth created by all should be shared by all, in which all alike should partake in the refinement, ease, and elevation of life which all would work together for heartily and without grudging. This, fellow-workers, is what we mean by Socialism; is it not worth your striving for? And if you but knew it, it lies within your grasp.

What are the means, then, you will say, by which we may attain this happy order of things?

It is necessary for you to understand first, that this hope and effort towards a Social Order is no scheme devised by a few

sanguine men within the last few years, no dream of what might be, born in the brains of philosophers sitting in their studies, but that on the contrary it is a necessary outcome of the changes that have gone on in society for many hundreds of years. Labour has from the first been in subjection to brute force wielded by cunning greed in various forms; it has now known three periods of servitude: the first was the personal slavery of the ancient world, under which the worker had no more rights than a horse or an ox; the second was the serfdom or villeinage of the Middle Ages, wherein the worker was bound to give a certain *definite* amount of labour to his lord; the third is the wage-earning or economical slavery of modern times under which, as we have seen, the worker is forced to give an *indefinite* amount of labour to his master, the dominant class.

From this last slavery labour is as certain to emerge as from the other two; and there are abundant signs that the new revolution is at hand. On the one side society has been compelled, in the teeth of the maxims of its holy books, the works of the middle-class economists, to palliate the disastrous effects of Capitalism by such enactments as the Factory and Employers' Liability Acts, and to give elementary education to the whole people, though the workers are still forced to pay for education which should be as free to them as the air they breathe; on the other, the commercial system, which has created the middle-class, and given all power to them, has also brought the working-class together into great cities, has socalised labour by means of the factory system, and has enabled the workers to claim and obtain a certain amount of political power one day to be used as an instrument for the freeing of labour.

Thus the way has been paved towards the first practical step of the new Social Order, since the organised society of which we have spoken can without making any break in the conduct of life at once step into the place of the capitalists by taking over all the means of production and distribution, and administering them for the public good instead of private gain without destroying the forms which they have taken.

The business, therefore, of such organisations as the Social Democratic Federation is not to create revolution, for that is impossible, but to help to regulate and thereby hasten it; and this has to be accomplished by a three-fold method. First, by showing sympathy with all popular revolutionary movements, by spreading and deepening the vague discontent which is now simmering all through civilised countries. Secondly, by turning that discontent into an assured hope by teaching the people what are the real causes of their misery; what the material facts of the development of society; what they can claim with a certainty of ultimate success; in short, by teaching the people to be wiser than those who have usurped the place of rulers over them. Thirdly, by organising the workers into bodies with the definite single aim of realising SOCIALISM or the freedom of labour, those bodies to form an obvious visible brotherhood instinct with devotion to the cause and the sacrifice of self, and determined to attain their end in spite of any obstacles that may be thrown in their way.

Fellow-workers, thus we have laid before you the aims of the

Social-Democratic Federation and the means it proposes to take towards those ends. We have still a few words of appeal and encouragement to say.

First, we especially address ourselves towards those who in these latter times of the supremacy of so-called Liberalism have been in the fore-front of political progress. We call on the *Radicals* to beware lest by keeping their eyes too much fixed on what at the best can be but an instrument of progress, they lose sight of progress itself. To perfect the political machinery in the democratic sense, and to leave the power of manipulating it in the hands of the only class possessed of executive power, would result either in the forging of fresh fetters for the oppressed workers, or would be the preparation for a terrible period of confusion and violence. The middle-classes have now gained all that they want; they have all political power, they have nothing left to strive for, and are growing conscious of the fact that Democracy is entering into a new phase and is turning into Socialism, the necessary result of this will be that before long the Liberals and Tories must coalesce, and form a determined repressive Toryism, a party of reaction, between which and Socialism all Radicals must decide. This is no prophecy; the coalition is even now taking place, and already the two factions differ only in name.

Working-men Radicals, you have only two choices before you; you must either go backward or forward, become either Tories or Socialists.

A word or two to the men of the middle-class. We well know that this class, as a class, cannot be converted or persuaded; it cannot yield to anything save force, however that may be applied; it would no longer be a class if it did not struggle against its approaching dissolution. But we also know that there are men among it of insight and generous instincts, who see and loathe the misery and injustice of the system on which their position rests, and who are more or less conscious that the only possible way out is in the direction of Socialism. To them we now appeal, urging them to renounce their class, and throw in their lot with the workers, using what influence, wealth, or educated intelligence they may have to bring about the inevitable change as speedily and as peacefully as possible. This is a solemn duty for them, for with them, it may be, it rests to determine the manner of the Revolution which is advancing upon us. Their defection from the class of greed and robbery will inspire doubts in the timid, shake the faith of the bigots of middle-class economy, and strip the veil from the hypocrisy of the sham middle-class morality, so that when the final "must be" has been spoken by the oppressed class, the oppressing class will not dare to light up the flame of war and violence, as it will not fail to do if it is strong and coherent, but will smoulder out in the ignominious end which its dull tyranny so well deserves.

Finally to Socialists of all classes we have one thing, and, a most necessary one, to say: Unite, combine under one common discipline; it is not enough to feel and know together, we must also act together.

We call on you to join the Social-Democratic Federation,

which with its affiliated bodies forms the only Socialist organization in this country.

The consciousness of belonging to a definite brotherhood working for the cause will give you a confidence which will be contagious to those who are inclined to agree with you, and will confound those who differ from you.

If you hold the principles of Socialism, you are bound to do what you can to make those principles active.

Join us, therefore, if you understand those principles; teach what you have learned, or you will be doing nothing when you ought to be doing everything.

Or, if you have but an uninformed instinct that our cause is right, join us still, that you may be educated in various ways, and so turn your just instinct into a certainty, founded on the knowledge of facts.

If you are full of hope for the freedom of the world, join us, and give us that encouragement which those who are working in matters of detail often so sorely need. If you are discouraged and hopeless, join us, that we may encourage you by pointing out to you the signs of the times and the hope which they bear with them.

For these things are not being done in a corner; this Socialism, this Party of the People, is not merely a national movement but an international one. The civilised world is shaken by the advance of the coming Revolution.

If it were otherwise our hope would be small indeed: for remember, that however it may be with labour, capital knows no country, but is international indeed, and with a hideous instinct for disorder uses the national jealousies bred from centuries of misrule to enslave the people in all countries; we therefore must be thoroughly international. To a Socialist the word foreigner means but a friend who lives in another country, and speaks, it maybe, another language, but has no opposing or different interests.

In this universality of our cause then lies our hope, and the hope is no longer doubtful. Look around at the civilized countries of the world. In Germany the rise and spread of Socialism has been extraordinarily speedy and steady. Of all the figures which might be quoted to show this, it may be sufficient to mention that in 1871 only 1135 socialist votes were cast for the Reichstag election in Berlin, whereas in 1884 they amounted to 68,275. The total gain in Germany, on the elections of 1881, has been this year (1884), 200,000. And this in the teeth of the bitterest, and most determined legal repression. In France the whole of the artizan class is touched by Socialism; for instance the socialist vote cast for the Municipal Elections in Paris was in 1881 17,895, in 1884 it was 38,729. Intelligent Holland, intelligent Scandinavia have widely accepted the doctrines of Socialism. The world rings with the fame of Russian men and women who have dared in the face of torture and death to resist the grossest tyranny that ever existed. Across the Atlantic America with her many workmen combining for social purposes and expressing their discontent in no doubtful voice, is proving to demonstration the impossibility of progress resting on mere Radicalism.

English fellow-workmen! consider the encouragement you will give to your foreign brethren by attacking commercialism in this country, its stronghold above all places, and do not hang back from joining us. Decent and happy life for all lies ahead of us, while all around is mere squalor, disorder, discontent, and the failure of all the hopes of civilization. Come out from these dreary ruins of decaying systems, and march with us toward the new Social Order of the World.

(Signed) The Executive Council of the Social-Democratic Federation.

EDWARD AVELING.
ELEANOR AVELING.
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Experiences of a Visit to Skye.

THE agitation which the Crofters of Skye are carrying on in order that they may get their grievances redressed is not an affair of yesterday. It is now some four years since Messrs. McHugh and Murdoch were sent down to Skye and the other Hebridean islands as delegates of the Irish Land League. Up till that time the Crofters had borne without murmuring every insult which the tyranny of the factor had heaped upon them and every deprivation which the greed of absentee landlords had demanded. The good news brought by the delegates of the Land League from Ireland aroused the Highlanders to a sense of their position. The almost divine mystery which had enveloped the person of the laird was dispelled, and landlords and factors were found to be "men of like passions" with the Crofters, whose oppression was no more to be endured then that of any other man. Thus the seed of the present agitation was sown. At first the Crofters were somewhat timid, but they encouraged one another and the first fruits of the agitation was what is now historically know as the Battle of the Braes which was fought on 18th April, 1882. The Crofters on Lord Macdonald's estate refused to pay rent till their grievances were attended to, and when summonses of eviction were served, they were publicly burnt and the civil officers politely told to return at speed from whence they came. On this the island of Skye was invaded by the civil authorities with a force of 50 police, and after a sharp tussle with sticks and stones, in which the Crofter women led the attack on the police, five of the ring-leaders were arrested and taken off to Inverness. After a long trial the prisoners were released on payment of a small fine, and no better evidence could be adduced of the hardships of the Crofters' case than the fact that only a nominal penalty was inflicted for what "our governing classes" would ordinarily consider so serious an offence.

For the last two years the work of agitation and organisation has been actively carried on, but the attention of the authorities has not been required till some three months ago when the London newspapers were full of the "Revolt in Skye." There were the usual reports of outrages and intimidations which the press kindly furnishes for the Government on such occasions, and at length Sir

W. Harcourt, yielding to the pressure of the Inverness County Officials, despatched a force consisting of two gunboats, the *Forester* and *Banterer*, together with the troopship *Assistance* with three hundred marines on board. The steamship *Lochiel* was also chartered at the rate of £200 a week to convey the civil officers and a force of 50 police. Owing to the garbled stories of newspaper correspondents and the system of police espionage which controls our post office, it is difficult in matters like the agitation in Skye to get a true idea of the situation except by a personal visit. It was accordingly determined that a delegate should be sent down by the Social-Democratic Federation to take a message promising support and sympathy, and to express the desire of the Federation to co-operate with the Crofters in working for a complete revolution of the social system which robs alike workers in town and country. Accordingly on Thursday, 13th November, I started off by the night mail from Euston in a double capacity as a correspondent of a London newspaper and a delegate from the Social-Democratic Federation. No idea could be formed of what was to be the issue of things in Skye. All sorts of conflicting rumours were flying about. The Crofters were determined to resist the soldiers; the rest of the Highlanders were prepared to rise at once on the firing of the first shot in Skye was the opinion of some. There was no revolt at all and the whole affair was a "plant" to put down constitutional agitation, said others, but nothing was really known so there was a certain amount of excitement in starting for Skye.

The next day I spent in Glasgow in order that I might interview Messrs. McHugh and Murdoch, who had started the agitation four years ago, and get all particulars of the men and the districts from those who knew the country best. Leaving Glasgow (where terrible tales of distress were told me and where I found 70,000 men out of work) I reached Inverness at eight on Saturday morning. Here fortune smiled on me, for I found that the Sheriff, Procurator Fiscal, and their force of police were leaving by the next train for Strome Ferry, the harbour from whence the steamers start for Portree, the principal town in Skye. The police were all in plain clothes and as they got on board the train they did not present a very imposing spectacle, but after all it was the redcoats on whom the Sheriff depended for striking awe into the hearts of the rebellious Crofters. It was a lovely morning when we started. A sharp white frost had covered the fir trees and grass with rime which was sparkling and dancing in the sun, while the air was so crisp and exhilarating that one was hardly conscious of possessing a body. The train steamed slowly along, and gave me every opportunity of admiring the scenery as there passed in review lochs, glens, and towering hills. It also gave time to remark that hardly anywhere could there be seen signs of human beings, at the stations there were crowds of two or three people who had congregated to see the passing of the police, but the whole Highland question was put in a nutshell by an English lady who was travelling with me and who innocently remarked "But where are the people?"—a question which may be asked some day in somewhat sterner tones of the Dukes of Sutherland and Argyll, the

Macleods and Macdonalds and other noble lords. On arriving at Strome Ferry, I found that there was no steamer sailing for Portree, except the steamship *Lochiel* which had been chartered for the Sheriff and his posse of police. The story of the *Lochiel* is now well known. When she was chartered by the Government Captain Humphreys, and half the crew resigned their positions rather than go on such service against the unfortunate Crofters. It was a noble act on their part for of course they are now marked as rebellious men to be scouted by all true friends of the lairds and the upper classes. Unfortunately there was not much difficulty in finding another crew, and as the train arrived in Strome Ferry we saw the *Lochiel* lying off the little jetty with steam up ready to start for Portree. As no other steamer was going till the following Monday and as the only other alternative was a forty-five mile drive by land, there was nothing to be done but to petition the Sheriff to take us with him, so in conjunction with two other London correspondents I received permission to go on the *Lochiel*. I need hardly say that I obtained leave to go with the Sheriff not as a Socialist delegate, but as a London correspondent. During the three hours sail to Portree, the Sheriff regaled us with accounts of the difficulty which he had in getting the Home Secretary to place a military force at his disposal, and his language was far from being complimentary to Sir W. Harcourt of whose character and abilities he evidently had a very low opinion. It is impossible to move anywhere in the Highlands without seeing the cause of the Crofters' ruin; even in sailing from Strome to Portree, you see all along the sides of the hills crofts, from which the men have been evicted, now given up to sheep, while the first sight you get of Skye is a large deer forest belonging to The Macleod. On reaching Portree we were dismissed with the Sheriff's benediction and promises of early information as to the movements of the expedition. We landed and got accommodation at the Portree Hotel, which is kept by Mr. D. MacInnes a good friend to the Crofters, the hotel in fact being looked upon as the head quarters of the agitation. A meeting we heard had been held that day at Uig about fifteen miles off to deliberate on what course should be adopted by the Crofters in view of the arrival of the expedition. After much talking it had been resolved to offer no resistance; they knew that they could overwhelm the small force which had been sent against them, but it was useless to attempt to withstand the whole force of the British Empire. So a deputation consisting of John Macpherson of Glendale and Duncan Cameron of the *Oban Times* was sent on board the *Lochiel* to inform the Sheriff of the resolution. At the same time they told him that they were still determined to carry on a legal agitation.

The first thing I discovered in Skye was that without exception the reports of outrages and intimidations were false. They had been furnished to the Sheriff by one man, an expelled police officer and now ground factor to the most tyrannical landlord in Skye, of whom I shall have something to say presently. The true facts about outrage had been given in Scotch newspapers before the expedition was sent down and Sir W. Harcourt ought to have seen these, and at any rate set fresh

enquiries on foot. The people said to have been outraged denied it, and tales of destruction of property were without foundation. However the Crofters have gained everything by the expedition so it is not for them to complain. It is for the nation at large to say whether they approve of £20,000 to £30,000 being spent in backing up a tyrannical landlord and pandering to the vanity of an incompetent official.

On Sunday morning, 16th November the troopship *Assistance* arrived in Portree Bay, so the expedition was now complete with the exception of one gunboat the *Banterer* which was to meet them in Uig Bay. Accordingly on Monday morning the expedition set sail and arrived in Uig Bay in the course of the afternoon.

Uig was chosen as the first spot for the display of force, because it is the most disaffected district, and the conduct of the crofters there was watched with great anxiety by their friends because the men are particularly indignant there owing to the great wrongs they have suffered. The landlord of the district, the Kilmuir Estate, which embraces Uig, Stenscholl, Staffin, Valtos, and many other townships, is the tyrannical landlord to whom I referred above. He bought the estate some twenty odd years ago as a commercial speculation. He openly boasts that the more heavily an estate is rackrented the better it will be cultivated. Therefore during his occupation of the estate he has raised the rents three times and is receiving 11 per cent on his purchase money. When it is considered that most agricultural landlords are content with two per cent on their purchase money it will not be wondered at that the men of the Kilmuir estate are the most active in the present agitation. The condition of his Crofters is much more deplorable than that of the other Crofters in the island. Evicted from all the crofts which are in any sense capable of cultivation, deprived of their rights of pasturage and of gathering seaweed for manure, most of the men on the estate have nothing left to enable themselves or their families to endure the severities of the winter season. A few sacks are the most they have in the way of bedding. while they have nothing left to buy even their usual miserable food of thin oatmeal and sour milk. All is gone to the landlord—the fruits of the earth and the fruits of the sea for they have to sell the fish they risk their lives in catching—to pay rent. To enforce the tyranny of a man like this who openly acknowledges his anxiety to get rid of the Crofters and to get the land for sheep farmers, the powers of Government have been invoked! It is no wonder the Crofters despair of getting attention at Westminster and are taking matters into their own hands. Some little time back an incident happened on this estate which the Crofters, who are "in all things too superstitious," attributed to a judgment of God on Major Fraser. After some very heavy rains the burn which runs down Glen Uig was swollen to a mountain torrent carrying everything before it. Never had it been so strong before; swerving from its regular course it swept away the churchyard from the hillside and carrying with it this dreadful freight rushed down towards the bay. Straight in the course it had forced for itself lay the doctor's house, and it seemed as if nothing could save it, but strange to say the trees, stones, and débris. which it had washed

down, formed themselves into an embankment and the doctor's house was safe. Turned to one side, the torrent dashed off to the right, and descended on Major Fraser's house which had lain right out of the course. The house was carried away down to its foundations, the caretaker who alone was in the house was drowned, and when the flood had abated there in the very spot where the house had stood were left stranded the corpses of men who but a few months previously had been evicted by order of Major Fraser. "The dead have risen up in judgment against him" said the Crofters, and the impression made on them by that scene has never been removed.

The house has never been rebuilt; but it was close to this spot, which is also memorable as being within two miles of the tomb of Flora Macdonald, that the first display of military force was made. On Tuesday morning the whole force of 300 marines and 50 police landed. After some delay a charger, in the shape of a shaggy Highland pony of the proportions of a large mastiff, was obtained for Colonel Monroe, and off we started to march to Staffin Bay about 10 miles distant. The bugle band played bravely whenever an old woman came in sight with a view to striking awe into her heart, but so well had the Crofters obeyed the instructions of their leaders that hardly twenty people were seen during the whole ten miles. It was a brilliant day, so as a morning walk our march was splendid, but as a military demonstration it was a most lamentable failure. On arriving at Staffin 50 marines were left as a guard to half a dozen police, the remainder being embarked on the *Forester* which had steamed round to meet them. We sailed back to Uig Bay. The Sheriff, like the Duke of York, had marched his men to the top of the hill and marched them down again.

Our first march was exactly repeated on all subsequent occasions and nothing more ridiculous can be imagined. The marines, officers and men, were disgusted with their work, disgusted with the Sheriff, and never failed to show that their sympathies were with the Crofters. Meanwhile the Sheriff had continued his favours to the London correspondents, myself amongst them, and had gone so far as occasionally to doff his official dignity and shew himself in a more genial humour. He was soon to have a rude awakening.

So quiet had been the attitude of the crofters that it was resolved by the leaders to continue the meetings and agitation as if nothing had happened. Accordingly when it was known that the troops would land in Glendale, on Friday 21st November, it was decided to hold a meeting on the side of a hill at the foot of which the troops would pass. The horns, by which meetings in Skye are summoned, were sounded and some seven hundred Crofters shortly appeared.

> **And every tuft of broom gives life**
> **To plaided warriors arm'd for strife.**

We set to work at once and passed an unanimous vote that the agitation should be continued. I then delivered my message of sympathy from London which was received with loud cheers. These had hardly ceased when the main body of the troops came into sight, and the sheriff was horrified by seeing "his own familiar

friend" inciting the Crofters to adopt a No-Rent Manifesto, and to boycott the landlords and factors. The Crofters, though many of them could never have seen a soldier before, paid not the slightest attention to the troops, and to the chagrin of the officials did not experience any feeling of awe. The sheriff that evening called to him the Scotch reporters and denounced me as a treacherous knave who under the guise of a London correspondent had crept into his confidence and as he pathetically observed "he did not know what he might have told me." The Scotchmen whom he had treated very curtly and rudely hitherto, were delighted to find that his pet correspondent had turned out to be an agitating viper, so he got but scant consolation from them.

He determined however to take the other reporters on board with him to the next station and to leave me behind, but alas! I had already made arrangements to stay behind the expedition to agitate, so he was denied the last pleasure of refusing to take me. I waved my hand as he departed, and he went off with the comforting conviction that he had left behind him a lighted match in a barrel of gunpowder.

Fate was unkind to the Sheriff for when I returned to the inn at Dunvegan with another correspondent who had stayed behind, a waggonette drove up from which alighted two ladies and a gentleman. This arrival in such an out of the way place caused some excitement, and it was reported that this was the English lady who had sent John Macpherson a sword "for Defence and not Defiance." This was not true, however, for it was a lady, Mrs. Gordon Baillie who had come up to collect materials for a novel she was about to write on the Crofter Question. As Dunvegan only possessed one conveyance we were all obliged to go together to the various meetings, and to visit the Crofters and the like, and as at all meetings at which I spoke I made a special point of appealing to the Crofter women to join in the agitation, it was reported that this lady had come from London to assist me in the work of agitating. In one paper it was said that "the Republican *bonnet rouge* was fearlessly laying his mines under the very eye of the military, and was being assisted in his operations by a political *pétroleuse* in the person of a lady."

It is due to Mrs. Baillie to say that, though her sympathies were largely on the side of the Crofters, she by no means approved of the extreme courses which as a Socialist I advised the Crofters to adopt. The Sheriff however knew nothing of all this; he only knew that a lady from London was accompanying me, and for aught he knew the whole Democratic Federation might be about to alight in Skye. He at least was very glad when we left Skye and returned to London. If it were not that the condition of the Crofters is so sad and their necessities so great, the whole expedition would have been the most ridiculous and delightful exposé imaginable of the incompetence of our governing classes. It was an absolute farce. The Crofters are now getting up a petition asking the Home Secretary to allow the troops to remain, as they prefer their presence to that of landlords and factors whose houses they occupy. The troops spend money while the landlords and factors only take it away, says the petition. The only people who have come well out

of the affair are the Crofters. Their attitude has been dignified; they have yielded where it was inevitable, but they have given up no essential of their agitation. Whilst the military force is still in possession of the island they have been carrying out a determined No Rent policy, On many estates the Martinmas rents due in November last have been refused, while it is certain that next Whitsuntide their organisation will be sufficiently complete to ensure non-payment of rent throughout the island. They have thus adopted a course of passive resistance. Active and open resistance they feel would be useless at present, and only in one case will they use force. Some eighty summonses of eviction have been issued from the Sheriff's Court for non-payment of rent. If it is attempted to carry out these evictions the Crofters will resist to the death. "It is better to die fighting than to die evicted" say the Crofters, and as they are men who abide by their word, the Government had better take warning in time. These two determinations, to pay no rent and to resist eviction, are the chief features of the Crofters' policy. Hitherto they have been kept back by politicians who told them that they would lose the support of public sympathy if they were too extreme. But now they have grown tired of waiting for public sympathy. No landlord has a right to take rent and give nothing in exchange for it, is the doctrine which is now being preached, and the social revolution is advancing rapidly in the Highlands. Something more revolutionary than an Irish Land Act will be required before the Crofters are satisfied.

The men in Skye are fully aware that it is not only their own battle they are fighting, but the battle of the workers in towns. It is most important that this feeling of sympathy should be maintained and spread throughout the whole of agricultural Great Britain. Socialists in towns should be sent down to any disaffected district, so that the two sections of the one movement may keep touch with each other. The messages of sympathy from Socialist and Radical organizations have greatly strengthened the hands of the Crofters in the present struggle, and if the expedition to Skye has been a ridiculous failure from the middle-class point of view, Socialists at least owe a debt of gratitude to Sir W. Harcourt and the Sheriff of Inverness-shire for having drawn the workers of town and country into bonds of closer union.

R. P. B. Frost.

The Elections in Germany.

IN correction of a statement in my article of last month I may remark that the number of votes cast for Social-Democratic candidates was not about 550,000 but nearly 700,000. Herren Hasenclever and Blos have each been returned for two districts; Hasenclever for Berlin VI. and Breslau, and Blos for Greiz and Brunswick. The Social-Democrats have nominated as new candidates Herr Pfaunkuch of Cassel, a joiner, for Berlin, and Herr Weimer, a merchant from Nürnberg, for Greiz, who was formerly a member of the Reichstag. Both will no doubt be elected when this article is before the reader, so that the Social-Democratic party will have increased the number of their representatives from twelve to twenty-four.

It may be interesting to the readers of To-Day to know the trades practised by the Social-Democratic members: Auer is by trade a harness-maker; Bebel, a turner; Blos, journalist; Bock, shoemaker; Dietz, compositor; Frohme, mechanist; Geiser, journalist; Grillenberger, locksmith; Harms, silkweaver; Hasenclever, tanner; Heine, hatter; Kayser, merchant; Kräcker, saddler; Liebknecht, journalist; Ueister, cigar-maker; Rödiger, carver and cabinet-maker; Schuhmacher, tanner; Sabor, teacher; Singer, manufacturer; Stolle, gardener; Viereck, editor; Vollmar, journalist, formerly an officer in the Bavarian army.

The Social-Democratic parliamentary party, therefore, numbers, inclusive of Pfaunkuch, who is sure to be elected, fifteen workingmen in the literal sense of the word.

It is a well-known and old-standing complaint of the reactionist parties in Germany, which are under the influence of the large feudal landowners, that agriculture is insufficiently represented in the Reichstag. On looking at the official return of the members (the German "Dod") we find that 133, more than one third of the total number, are landowners and agriculturists, amongst whom there is not a single small farmer, most of them beng country squires of the conservative type, ignorant and narrow-minded. This class of "representatives" of the people Privy Councillor Hermann Wagener described in one sentence:—"Some are

blockheads by nature, others on principle." There are further twenty-five Landräthe (under prefects) who also represent, in the main, agrarian interests, nine half-pay officers, twenty-one Regierungsräthe (prefects), ex-ministers, &c., &c., who are all more or less connected with the landowning classes. Thus almost one half of the new Reichstag directly represents agricultural interests.

"In the name of Heaven" sixteen clergymen and priests, among them the Protestant Jesuit Stöcker, render assistance to this group while seven chamberlains of the Pope give it their blessing.

Thus there is a compact working majority for the landed interest, which in most cases is directly opposed to the interests of the people. This will become evident when the motion for raising the duty on corn is made. If the Government for some reason of their own do not oppose that, we shall soon have the duty trebled or quadrupled, and as a consequence the price of bread will rise. One would be at a loss to understand how the country party can in view of such facts keep on complaining of insufficient representation, if one failed to recognise their extraordinary impudence. The squires indeed try to make people believe that the land interest ought to be paramount. In a petition to the Reichstag the following occurs: "Germany's chief branch of industry is agriculture and cattle-breeding. It is therefore for the inhabitants of Germany a pressing necessity, if they intend to retain their abode in the country, to provide for the highest possible prices for corn and wool." Whether the mass of working men, mostly living in very needy circumstances, can pay "the highest possible" prices without being brought down to utter destitution, does not concern the noble patriots.

Side by side with the agitation for increased duty on corn we have a virulent opposition against any tax on the distilleries, which are monopolized by the squires, and are a source of great revenue to them, especially in Prussia. This shows what power the landed interest really has obtained in the legislature. These very same gentlemen will in the most touching terms deplore the drunken habits of the people, take part in crusades against the "Branntweinteufel," and yet they drive a roaring trade by making and selling abominable stuff to enrich themselves.

Next to the landed interest in point of numbers and influence is the legal interest. Not less than 53 lawyers have seats in the present Reichstag, where, in spite of belonging to different parties, they form a regular guild or trades-union. They delight in stretching every Act on the Procrustean bed of worm-eaten jurisprudence. Personal and class-interest keep them in the old grooves, though many of them pride themselves on their economical science, which with them consists in familiarity with the forms of private property and its uses and mis-uses. Altogether the lawyers' trades-union proves once more that knowledge of "law" does not necessarily imply devotion to justice.

Bureaucracy is represented by forty-nine members, who with very few exceptions are to all intents and purposes the tools of the allied governments. Their personal and class-interest is so closely

bound up with that of the Government that they may be said to represent it alone.

The educational interest is represented by sixteen members, a figure which would seem sufficient, were it not for the fact that among the sixteen there are ten university professors and only one elementary school teacher. The teachers ought at all events to have the same number as the professors, to adequately represent the importance of their class.

Manufacture and commerce cannot well be separated, as most manufacturers are also merchants. They are represented by forty-six members. As against agriculture even this class is considerably under-represented.

Twenty-two members are municipal officials, mostly mayors and town councillors, a number quite sufficient to take care of communal interests. There are six medical men, and fifteen gentlemen connected with literature and the press, belonging to different parties and representing different interests.

The working and artisan classes are represented as already mentioned by fifteen members, all Social-Democrats, none of the other parties containing a working man or artisan. This, even with the addition of the other nine Social-Democratic members, who may be taken to specially represent working-class interests, is far below the proportion of this class in the population.

There are nineteen gentlemen of independent means, and eleven pensioned officials to represent the idle classes. These gentlemen bear their responsibilities with the greatest ease, and in many cases with an indifference bordering on stupidity. More than one hundred and forty-three members, one-third of the total number, belong to the nobility, chiefly to the Prussian nobility. This reveals the ugly fact that to a great many of the German people a man with a handle to his name is still a person who claims and obtains special respect and privileges. Though these 143 noblemen belong to different parties, yet with a few exceptions, they come together when class-interests and class-privileges are at stake, and combine against the interests of the people.

To return to the group of clergymen in the Reichstag. It would be a mistake to suppose that this group is concerned with the representation of church interests alone. It presumes to take the lead in general social reforms, to indicate to the powers of the State how to act. Whether Catholic or Protestant they pretend to be the representatives of "true social reform." With the greatest effrontery they demand that the State should assist the Church with its power in order to win over the minds of the people to favour reforms in the "spirit of Christianity." *After this is done* the State may put forward all its forces to effect these reforms! The old arrogance, the old presumption, the old conceit! This would be less serious were it not that the clerical group is supported in the Reichstag with fanatical zeal by 180 lay members. To effect social reforms in the spirit of Christianity means with these men to persuade the destitute masses of the people to look upon their miserable condition as "divinely ordained." For "spirit of Christianity" read "supreme power of nobility and clergy" to whom freedom, equality, human rights are abominable heresies.

Fortunately however the authorities of the Church have long since given ample evidence that they are entirely unfit to have anything to do with social reforms. What was Christianity originally but a religion of equality? Priestly influence has disfigured and degraded the gospel and made it nothing but a bulwark for the privileges of the wealthy classes. Human liberty, the true love of mankind have never found a place within Christian churches. For centuries simpletons and hypocrites have been preaching at all seasons "love," when they were approving of the oppression of millions of men or even being themselves actually engaged in that work. Up to now so-called "Christian charity" has been nothing but the secret enemy of the rights of men, when it should have been their open friend.

Under the rule of Christian dogma, the great majority of men have been deprived of their rights and of the means of working out their own happiness, oppressed, exploited, cheated of their own and prevented from taking part in intellectual progress. The authorities of the church have invested some individuals with more than earthly honours and in doing so have deprived the majority of all human dignity. They strenuously opposed all endeavours to make human happiness the object of human endeavour. Of their own accord they have never consented to social reforms; they retained to the very last the system of serfdom; they protected, encouraged and defended slavery; they have ruled the masses and deprived them of self-respect; they have endeavoured to command men's life and freedom, blood and treasure. On every page of history we find these facts recorded. But, alas, to the great mass of mankind history does not yet teach the truth. Priestcraft can still rely upon the ignorance of the people and at this hour is supported in Germany by nearly 200 so-called representatives of the people.

In spite of the influence of the clerical party in the new Reichstag, it will not be able to make political capital by any pretence of instituting social reform. It will have to meet the spirit of independent thought now so powerful an influence among the people, teaching them that political freedom is not the final duty of the State, and that economical equality must also be brought about. This brings up the social question, that terrible problem which modern society has to solve, if it is not to perish like ancient civilizations. The antagonism between the interests of the rich and the poor must be ended by the abolition of all privilege and the transformation of the capitalist system of production.

This great act of social justice is the end for which the twenty-four social-democratic members of the new Reichstag have to strive. In their struggle they have the most powerful of all allies —the stern logic of events—and against this the parties of reaction and corruption, the military, priestly, and capitalist influence will be powerless in the long run. Social-Democracy in the German Reichstag is one more warning of the downfall of the existing system of society.

KARL FROHME.

The Jevonian Criticism of Marx.

(A Comment on the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed's Article).

THE October number of To-Day is memorable for containing an attack by a Socialist on the theory of value held by the late Carl Marx. A Roman Catholic impugning the infallibility of the Pope could have created no greater scandal. Sentence of excommunication was pronounced by *Justice*: the *Inquirer* and other papers well affected to the cause demanded impatiently, as the months passed, why the heretic remained unanswered. That he can easily be answered, refuted, exposed, smashed, pulverized, and economically annihilated, appears to be patent to many able Socialists. Without adding such an atrocious comment as that I am glad to hear it, I do not mind admitting that a certain weight will be removed from my mind when the attack is repulsed, and the formerly pellucid stream of the Ricardian labour value theory has deposited the mud which the late Stanley Jevons stirred up in quantities which, though expressed by differentials, were anything but infinitely small. Mr. P. H. Wicksteed, the assailant of Marx, has adopted the Jevonian theory. He is known as an accomplished Scriptural critic, and was perhaps in search of fresh Bibles to criticise when "Das Kapital," the Bible of Socialism, came under his notice and struck him as being vulnerable to Jevonian equations of utility. Socialists often dogmatize intolerably on the subject of what Marx taught, or what they suppose him to have taught, on the subject of value; and Mr. Wicksteed, being a sworn enemy of dogma, has in my opinion acted wisely as well as written ably in leading the assault which must have been made sooner or later upon the economic citadel of Collectivism. An odd effect of this assault is the appearance of Marx, for the first time since he defended Ricardo against Proudhon nearly forty years ago, in the ranks of the orthodox economists. As against Cournot, Jevons, Walras, Professor Marshall, and Mr. J. Y. Edgeworth, Marx is undoubtedly on the side of the standard English school of Adam Smith, Ricardo, Mill, and Cairnes. His disciples are still a little bewildered at being no longer scouted as the dupes of a revolutionist and incendiary, but patronized as the old-fashioned followers of an excellent writer of the past generation, whose ideas, all very well in their day, are now quite obsolete.

I have not the slightest intention here of defending Carl Marx against Mr. Wicksteed. It is impossible, in the face of the "Misère de la Philosophie," and several passages in "Capital," to suspect Marx of having lost sight of the supply-and-demand phenomena which make the actual world so different from the sphere of "catallactic atoms" with which he deals in the opening chapters of his great work. On the other hand it is equally impossible without access to the unpublished volumes of that work to answer for the way in which so subtle a reasoner may have reconciled these contradictions, or even to feel sure that Mr. Jevons might not, had he lived, have found himself anticipated in the very quarter from which he expected the most determined opposition. I write partly to draw further attention to a controversy which seems to me of great interest because it is one on which Socialists, without at all ceasing to be Socialists, are sure to divide very soon; and partly because I wish to have a word with Mr. Wicksteed as to my own perplexities concerning "final utility" before some more competent hand deals him the *coup de grâce* to which I have already alluded. Even were I economist enough to do that myself, I am not mathematician enough to confute Mr. Wicksteed by the Jevonian method. I somewhat mistrust mathematical symbols. I remember at school a plausible boy who used to prove to me by algebra that one equals two. He always began by saying, "Let x equal a." I saw no great harm in admitting that; and the proof followed with rigorous exactness. The effect was not to make me proceed habitually on the assumption that one equals two, but to impress upon me that there was a screw loose somewhere in the algebraic art, and a chance for me to set it right someday when I had time to look into the subject. And I feel bound to make the perhaps puerile confession that when I read Mr. Jevons's Theory of Political Economy, I no sooner glanced at the words "let x signify the quantity of commodity," than I thought of the plausible boy, and prepared myself for a theory of value based on algebraic proof that two and two make five. But as it turned out, Mr. Jevons, less ingenious or more ingenous than my schoolfellow, arrived at no more remarkable conclusion than that if x equalled y, y equalled x, which I should have granted freely without any formulæ at all. And I was much relieved subsequently to find that the late Professor Cairnes regarded these formulæ as identical propositions.

Says Mr. Wicksteed: "The clue to the investigation we are now to enter on is furnished by the combined effects of the 'law of indifference' and 'the law of the variation of utility.'" Let us take an example of the law of the variation of utility. To a hungry man the utility of beef is high. The first few mouthfuls, which save him from actual starvation, are of very great utility to him indeed. But as he gets his fill, every successive mouthful has less and less utility, until finally he can eat no more, and the remainder of the beef is useless to him. Here the utility has varied constantly. Now by the law of indifference, which is that there cannot be two prices for like commodities at one time in one market, the last mouthful of beef costs just as much as the first. Consequently the man has not to

pay more for the first mouthful than for the twentieth, though it is infinitely more useful to him, nor, when he has eaten so much that he can eat no more, could he buy another mouthful more cheaply than the first, useless as the beef has become to him. The value has not varied at all, whilst the direct utility has varied from infinity to zero. But the beef which is thus bereft of its direct utility may possess acquired utility; that is, its satiated possessor may have a hungry neighbour willing to pay him for it. Suppose, however, the man to be a member of a wholly improvident community, every member of which has just, like himself, had a sufficient dinner. The utility of his beef will then be at zero; the choicest undercut will be as valueless as it is in heaven, no matter how much labour its production may have cost. Utility, then, is evidently a condition of value. But let six hours elapse. In that space Nature produces "negative utilities" in the form of appetite —the universal discommodity. The utility of beef, useless and valueless six hours before, will rise to the utility of human life itself—from nothing to everything, Will the exchange value rise equally? By no means: it will rise to the cost of catching, killing, and cooking a cow: not a farthing higher. If a man demand a greater price from another, obviously that other will, in the last resort, catch, kill, and cook for himself, and so save the excess demanded from him. If the labour necessary to produce the beef be halved or doubled, neither the mass nor the final degree of utility in the beef will be altered one jot; and yet the value will be halved or doubled. Evidently then, the utility does not determine the value. The utility of water to a thirsty man is exactly the same at Aldgate Pump as in the middle of the Sahara, yet he will give nothing at Aldgate for a gallon, whereas in the Sahara he may give all he possesses for a thimbleful. Even in the latter extreme instance of a monopolist demanding an outrageous bribe for a share of the means of subsistence, the price of the water would vary without the least regard to the utility. To half-a-dozen travellers dying of thirst, but having unequal possessions, half-a-dozen draughts of water would possess equal utility; yet a Jevonian sheikh with command of the water would receive different quantities of commodity for each draught. And if the parties were in the same position a few hours later, the desperate necessity of the travellers would recur; the sheikh would still have command of the water, the final utility of which would again be infinite; yet the price of the water would be a mortgage on their future labour as slaves; the travellers having nothing else to give. I use this illustration because it shows that even a monopoly value is not determined by the final utility any more than a market value (such as that of beef), and because it directly illustrates the ordinary economist's habit of regarding the value of a thing as the maximum of black mail which its possessor can extort from the person who desires to consume it. To the end of time a monopolist who cannot be expropriated by force will be able to force other men to do more labour for him than he does for them in return. If he be at once base and acute enough to extort the utmost his victims will give, then, in a community of infinitely rich men, the prices obtained by him might be said to be determined

by the final utility of his commodity to the purchasers; but each of them would pay a different price, and would therefore have to be presupposed incapable of exchanging the commodity one with another after purchasing. Otherwise they would defeat the operation of final utility, precisely as rich people defeat it now when they borrow their servants' clothes and obtain gratuitous medical advice at hospitals.

"If I am willing," says Mr. Wicksteed, "to give the same sum of money for a family Bible and for a dozen of brandy, it is because I have reduced the respective satisfactions their possession will afford me to a common measure, and have found them equivalent.' This may be so; but it does not at all follow that Mr. Wicksteed will find Bibles and brandy exchanging in that ratio. The price of neither would be raised or lowered by one farthing if Mr. Wicksteed suddenly got tired of the Bible and became a dipsomaniac. Apart from that, his nearest teetotal neighbour would probably give more money for a Bible than for a dozen hogsheads of brandy; whilst the nearest drunkard would eagerly offer a dozen Bibles for a single bottle of brandy, if the ratio of exchange were determined by the utility of the commodities. But as the rain falls alike on the just and the unjust, so is the price of Bibles and brandy the same to Mr. Wicksteed and his neighbours, though the utility differs in each of their cases. And even were it possible to determine an average ratio of utility between brandy and Bibles, the fact that this would remain the same although the ratio of the labour necessary to produce them should vary, and that the ratio of exchange would nevertheless immediately alter, shows that the ratio of exchange does not depend on utility. Mr. Wicksteed insists on "abstract" utility; but what he has really abstracted is not utility but value, He has accused Marx of having leaped from one category to another because, as it seems to me, he has mistaken the category to which his own abstraction belongs.

Every appreciative reader of Mr. Wicksteed's article will at once conclude that these considerations are as obvious to him as they are to me, and that his theory must in some way explain them. "For example," he says, "a watch of a certain quality is *worth* £15 to me, *i.e.*, it would have as great a utility to me as anything else which I have not got, and which I could obtain for £15." But again it does not follow that the watch will therefore cost Mr. Wicksteed £15. It may only cost him £5. All that does follow from the conditions laid down is that, if necessary, he will go as high as £15 for the watch, but that if the price rises to fifteen guineas he will go without a watch. That does not mean that the utility of the watch to him will fall to zero the moment the odd shillings are added to the price. It simply means that though the utility remains the same, he will not be able to afford the price, or will think that he might spend fifteen guineas to better advantage on a writing-table than on a watch. The comparison of utility which he has made between them does not change the value of either. The order in which desires arise does not effect the cost of satisfying them, which is always ultimately a cost of labour. On the contrary, the labour cost of satisfying our desires generally determines the order of them. A child sometimes

quarrels with its bread-and-milk and cries for the moon; but eventually it succumbs to economic conditions and puts off thinking about the moon until its bread-and-butter is secured.

Mr. Wicksteed maintains that if 25 per cent. of the labour necessary to make a watch be saved by an improvement in manufacture, the value of watches will fall "not because they contain less labour, but because the recent increments have been less useful." By this he appears to mean, not that a watch is less useful to a workman with a pound a-week than to a lord with a hundred pounds a-day, which is obviously not the case; but that the workman can now afford to buy a watch whereas he could not do so before. Now as the determination of the ratio of exchange (or the measure of exchange value) by duration of labour is founded on the fact that if two "catallactic atoms," A and B produce and exchange commodities, A cannot afford to give more than the product of an hour of his labour to B in exchange for the product of an hour of B's labour, and that B cannot afford to take less, it is not clear to me that Mr. Wicksteed advances the matter by calling exchange value "utility at the margin of supply." He certainly does not simplify it to the Socialist proletary who, face to face with the monopolist, does not achieve quite so fair a bargain as a couple of "catallactic atoms" might strike on Marx's principles.

I regret that the utility of space at the margin of supply; the obscurity of the Jevonese language; and the extreme unpopularity of our subject, have compelled me to put forward a counterblast to Mr. Wicksteed rather than a thorough analysis and discussion of his interesting contribution. Some considerations which arise from his paper are important from a domestic point of view. At present a middle-class man, when his immediate needs are satisfied, furnishes himself with commodities in a certain order, as, for instance, wife, house, furniture, pianoforte, horse and trap. The satisfaction of each desire leaves the mind free to entertain the next, so that you actually make a man feel the want of a horse by giving him a pianoforte. Let the cost of a pianoforte suddenly rise to a figure exceeding that of a horse and trap; and the conventional order of furnishing will be altered: the horse and trap will be bought before the family venture on the extravagance of a pianoforte. A collectivist administration, bound to preserve the catallactic atomicity of the markets by adjusting supply to demand, may yet find themselves compelled by the operation of purely subjective notions of utility to admit that Jevons was on the right track when he broke away from economics into psychology, and that the comparative utilities of things are of far greater moment to the community than their ratio of exchange, to which our social system has given a factitious importance. Marx saw this when, many years ago, he compared the utility of the the capitalist commodities, potatoes and cotton stuffs, with that of the pre-capitalist commodities, wheat and woollens. My own hopes centre in a Socialist state in which Mr. Wicksteed and I, as perfect and regenerate catallactic atoms, shall dispute about utilities alone, forgetful of the very existence of a ratio of exchange.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.—Some persons do not feel at liberty to enjoy this powerful drama because they consider that enjoyment implies approval of its philosophy, and this they deem pessimistic, and too sad to do anyone any good. The more comfortable view for such readers would seem to be that they are not expected to consider that any one of the characters is intended to be the voice of final truth. Each mind utters what that mind has already arrived at under certain conditions of education, daily life, and the current opinions of the time. For brief sketch of Ibsen's literary career see preface to his *Nora*, translated by Frances Lord.

GHOSTS:

(Gengangere, 1881)

A DRAMA by HENRIK IBSEN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORWEGIAN BY FRANCES LORD.

PERSONS.

MRS. ALVING (HELEN) - Widow of Captain Alving, late Chamberlain of the Royal Household.

OSWALD ALVING - - - their son, a painter.

MR. MANDERS - - - - the Rector of the parish.

JACOB ENGSTRAND - - a Carpenter.

REGINA ENGSTRAND - - Mrs. Alving's maid (Jacob's daughter).

The action takes place on Mrs. Alving's estate, situated on a large bay (fjord) in Western Norway.

Ghosts.

ACT I.

A spacious room looking on to a garden, with a door on the left side wall, and two doors on the right side wall. In the middle of the room a round table, with chairs around it. On the table lie books, periodicals, and newspapers. In the foreground to the left a window, and by it a small sofa, with a work-table in front of it. In the background, the room is continued into a conservatory for flowers, rather smaller, which is closed to the outer air by glass walls and large panes. In the right side wall of the conservatory is a door leading down into the garden. Through the glass walls shines a gloomy view of the sea, veiled by steady rain.

ENGSTRAND, *the carpenter, stands by the garden door. His left leg is rather crooked; he has a clump of wood under the sole of his boot.*

REGINA, *with an empty flower basket in her hand, hinders him from coming nearer.*

REGINA (*in a suppressed voice*). What is it you want? Stand still where you are. You are positively dripping.

ENGSTRAND. The Almighty sends us the rain, my dear child.

REGINA. The Devil sends it, I should say.

ENGSTRAND. Lord! how you do chatter, Regina. (*Limps a few steps forward into the room.*) But what I wanted to say was this——

REGINA. Don't stump about with your foot, you stupid thing! The young gentleman is upstairs asleep in bed.

ENGSTRAND. Asleep in bed now? At noon-day?

REGINA. It's no concern of yours.

ENGSTRAND. I got into a drinking bout last night.

REGINA. I can quite believe it.

ENGSTRAND. Yes, for we human beings are weak creatures, my dear child——

REGINA. Yes; no doubt about that.

ENGSTRAND. —— and temptations are manifold in this world, you see; but nevertheless, there I was, the Lord knows, at my work this morning, by half-past five.

REGINA. Very well; only be off now; I won't stop here having *rendez-vous* with you.

ENGSTRAND. What is it you won't have?

REGINA. I won't have anyone find you here. Just understand that, and go about your business.

ENGSTRAND (*a few steps nearer*). Blest if I go before I've had a

bit of talk with you. This afternoon I shall have finished the work down there in the school-house, and then I shall take the steamer to-night and go home to the town.

REGINA (*mutters*). A pleasant journey to you.

ENGSTRAND. Thank you, my dear child. To-morrow the Asylum is to be opened, and then I've no doubt we shall have fine goings on and plenty of intoxicating drink, you know. And then nobody shall say of Jacob Engstrand that he can't control himself when temptation comes.

REGINA. Oh!

ENGSTRAND. Yes; for so many of the gentry are to meet here to-morrow. The Reverend Mr. Manders is certainly expected from the town, too.

REGINA. He is coming here to-day, too.

ENGSTRAND. There! you see. And damn it if I let him find anything about me to remark on, you may be sure.

REGINA. Oh! is that your little game?

ENGSTRAND. Is what my little game?

REGINA (*looking hard at him*). What sort of a thing is it you want to take Mr. Manders in again about, now?

ENGSTRAND. Hush! hush! Are you mad? Do *I* want to take Mr. Manders in about anything? Oh! no. He is far too nice a gentleman towards me for that. But it's the very matter I wanted to talk to you about, you know; I mean that to-night I am going back home again.

REGINA. The sooner the better for my part.

ENGSTRAND. Yes. But I want to take you with me, Regina.

REGINA (*open-mouthed*). You want me? What are you talking about?

ENGSTRAND. I want to take you home, I say.

REGINA (*scornfully*). You will never, never have me home.

ENGSTRAND. Well, we shall see about that.

REGINA. Yes, you may be sure we shall see about it. I, who have grown up in the house of a lady like Mrs. Alving? I, who am treated almost like a child here? Could I be expected to go back to your home? A house like that! For shame!

ENGSTRAND. What the Devil do you mean? Do you set yourself against your father, girl?

REGINA (*mutters without looking at him*). You have said times enough I was not to come with you.

ENGSTRAND. Stuff! Why do you trouble about that?

REGINA. Haven't you many and many a time scolded me and called me a ——? *Fi donc!*

ENGSTRAND. No. Blest if I ever used such an ugly word, anyhow.

REGINA. Oh! I am quite clear what word you used.

ENGSTRAND. Well, but that was only when I was driven into a corner——H'm! The temptations of this world are many, Regina.

REGINA. Eugh!

ENGSTRAND. And that was when your mother rode her high horse; I was obliged to hit upon something to twit her with. She was always setting up for a fine lady on the strength of it. (*Mimics.*) "Let me go, Engstrand; let me be. I have been in service three

years in Chamberlain Alving's family at Rosedene, I have." (*Laughs*) Mercy on us! She never could forget that the Captain became Chamberlain while she was in service here.

REGINA. Poor mother! you led her a wretched life often enough.

ENGSTRAND (*turns on his heel*). Oh! of course. I am to be blamed for everything.

REGINA (*turns away; half aloud*). Eugh! and that leg too!

ENGSTRAND. What do you say, my dear child?

REGINA. *Pied de mouton*!

ENGSTRAND. Is that English, eh?

REGINA. Yes.

ENGSTRAND. Oh, ah; learning you *have* got out here; and that may come in useful now, Regina.

REGINA (*after a short silence*). And what were you wanting with me down in the town?

ENGSTRAND. Can you ask what a father wants with his only child? Ain't I a lonely and forsaken widower?

REGINA. Oh! don't come to me with nonsense like that! What do you want me down there for?

ENGSTRAND. Well, I'll tell you. I have been thinking I would start on a new line of business.

REGINA (*whistles*). You've tried that often, and you've never done any good with it.

ENGSTRAND. Yes, but this time you shall just see, Regina! The devil take me——

REGINA (*stamps*). Don't swear!

ENGSTRAND. Gently, gently; you are always so right about that, darling child. This was the only thing I wanted to say. I have laid by a very tidy little sum of money from the work I've done for the Orphanage here.

REGINA. Have you? That is a very good thing for you.

ENGSTRAND. What can a man spend his shillings on out here in the country?

REGINA. Nothing. Well, and so?

ENGSTRAND. Well, look you, then. I'd thought of putting the money out in something that would pay me. It should be a sort of tavern for the sea-faring people.

REGINA. Horrid!

ENGSTRAND. A thoroughly genteel eating-house, of course; not anything of a mere pigstye for common sailors. No! damn it! it would be for ships' captains and pilots, and—and—quite gentlefolks, you know.

REGINA. And I should——?

ENGSTRAND. You should help in it, to be sure. Only for the appearance sake, you may trust me. You shan't have a stroke of damned hard work to do, darling child. You can do exactly what you like about it.

REGINA. Well, and then?

ENGSTRAND. But there must be some women folk in the house. That's as clear as daylight. For I want it to be a little merry in the evenings, with singing and dancing and the like. You may be certain there are plenty of fine men at sea, all the world over. (*nearer*). Now don't be stupid and stand in your own light, Regina.

What is likely to become of you out here? Can it be any use to you if your lady has given you a lot of learning? You're to attend to the children at the new Orphanage, I hear. Is that to your advantage, eh? Are you so very hot upon going and wearing yourself out for the sake of the dirty brats?

REGINA. No; if all went as I could wish, then——. Well, it may, after all,—after all.

ENGSTRAND. What is it that may happen after all?

REGINA. Never you mind. Is it a great deal of money that you've saved up here?

ENGSTRAND. What with one thing and another, it may be a matter of forty—fifty pounds.

REGINA. That's not so bad.

ENGSTRAND. It's enough to make a start with, darling child.

REGINA. Weren't you thinking of giving me any of that money?

ENGSTRAND. No, damn it if I was! No.

REGINA. Weren't you thinking of sending me so much as one miserable piece of stuff for a new dress, once in a way?

ENGSTRAND. If you'll come down to the town with me, you shall have dress enough.

REGINA. Oh! Rubbish! I can get all that for myself if I want to.

ENGSTRAND. No, but under a father's guiding hand it is far better, Regina. Now I can have a neat house in Little Harbour Street. It won't need much ready money, and it could be a sort of seaman's home, you know.

REGINA. But I will not come and live you. I have nothing whatever to do with you. Be off!

ENGSTRAND. You wouldn't be long in my house, darling child. I couldn't look to be so happy as all that. If you knew how to manage—a fine girl like you've grown in the last couple of years,—

REGINA. Well?

ENGSTRAND. It wouldn't be long before some mate came along, or it might even be a captain.

REGINA. I will not marry any man of that sort. Men in the seafaring line have no *savoir vivre*.

ENGSTRAND. What is it they have not got?

REGINA. I know what sailors are, I tell you. They are not the style of men for one to marry.

ENGSTRAND. Then never mind about marrying them. You can do just as well for yourself without (*more confidentially*). He—the Englishman, the one with the yacht—he gave £100, he did, and she was not a bit handsomer than you are.

REGINA (*going towards him*) Get away with you.

ENGSTRAND (*falling back*). Nay, nay; you won't really strike me, I know.

REGINA. Yes, if you begin to talk about mother I shall strike. Get away with you, I say (*drives him up against the garden door*). And don't make the door bang. Young Mr. Alving—

ENGSTRAND. He's asleep. Yes, I know. It's curious how you do trouble yourself about young Mr. Alving (*more softly*). Oh! oh! it never could be that he——

REGINA. Be off, and that quickly; you're losing your head, you

wretched creature. No, don't go that way. Mr. Manders is coming. Go down the kitchen stairs with you.

ENGSTRAND (*towards the right*). Yes, yes, I shall go that way. But just you talk to him who is coming up yonder. He is the man to tell you what a child owes to its father. For I am your father, anyhow, you know. I can prove it from the church register. (*He goes out through the other door, which* REGINA *has opened, and fastens again after him*).

REGINA (*glances hastily at herself in the mirror, dusts herself with her pocket handkerchief, and settles her collar; then she busies herself attending to the flowers.*)

MR. MANDERS (*in an overcoat, with an umbrella, and a small travelling bag on a strap over his shoulder, comes through the garden door into the conservatory.* Good morning Regina.

REGINA (*turning round, pleased and surprised*). No, really! Good morning, Mr. Manders. Is the steamer in?

MR. MANDERS. She is just in (*goes into the sitting-room*). We've really been having dismal rainy weather lately.

REGINA (*follows him*). It is such fortunate weather for the farmers, Sir.

MR. MANDERS. Well you're right there. We townspeople think so little about that. (*He begins to take his overcoat off*).

REGINA. Oh! mayn't I help you? There, that's right. Why! how wet it is! Now I shall just hang it up in the hall. And your umbrella, too. I will open it so that it can dry. *She goes out with the things through the second door on the right.* MR. MANDERS *takes his travelling bag off and lays it and his hat on a chair. Meanwhile* REGINA *comes in again.*)

MR. MANDERS. Ah! it was a comfort to get safe into the house. Well, and is all going on well here?

REGINA. Yes, thank you, Sir.

MR. MANDERS. But you're all excessively busy, I expect, in preparation for to-morrow?

REGINA. Yes, there's plenty to do, of course.

MR. MANDERS. And Mrs. Alving is at home, I trust?

REGINA, Oh, dear, yes. She's only upstairs taking chocolate to the young gentleman.

MR. MANDERS. Yes, just tell me. I heard down at the pier that Oswald was come.

REGINA. Yes, he came the day before yesterday. We did not expect him before to-day.

MR. MANDERS. Quite strong and well, I hope.

REGINA. Yes, thank you, he is; but dreadfully tired with the journey. He has come in one go all the way from Paris. I mean he came the whole route in one and the same train. I believe he is sleeping a little now; so perhaps we had better be just a little bit quiet in talking.

MR. MANDERS. Hush! We will be ever so quiet.

REGINA (*as she moves an arm chair straight beside the table*). Now do be so kind as to sit down, dear Mr. Manders; and makes yourself comfortable. (*He sits down; she puts a footstool under his feet.* There! are you comfortable now, Sir?

MR. MANDERS. Thank you, thank you, I am most comfortable

ooks at her). I say, Regina, do you know, I positively think you have grown since I last saw you.

REGINA. Do you really, Sir. Mrs. Alving thinks I've grown stouter, too.

MR. MANDERS. Grown stouter? No,—well, perhaps a little; just enough (*short pause*).

REGINA. Shall I tell Mrs. Alving you are here?

MR. MANDERS. Thanks, thanks, there's no hurry, my dear child. But, by-the-bye, Regina, my dear, just tell me, how is your father getting on out here?

REGINA. Oh, thank you, he is getting on well enough.

MR. MANDERS. He looked in at my house last time he came to the town.

REGINA. No; did he really? He is always so glad when he gets a chance of talking to you.

MR. MANDERS. And you look after him very carefully every day I daresay?

REGINA. I? Oh! to be sure I do when I get a moment ——

MR. MANDERS. Your father is by no means a strong-minded person, Regina. He yearns so intensely for a guiding hand.

REGINA. Oh, yes; that is very likely,—very.

MR. MANDERS. He longs to have some one near him whom he can care for, and on whose judgment he can lay weight. He recognised that so frankly when he last came up to see me.

REGINA. Yes, he has talked to me something like that. But I don't know whether Mrs. Alving will spare me; especially now, just as we have got the Orphanage to manage. And then I should be so terribly grieved to go away from Mrs. Alving; for she has always been so kind to me.

MR. MANDERS. But a daughter's duty, my dear girl—. Naturally we must first secure the consent of Mrs. Alving.

REGINA. But I don't know whether it would be a suitable thing for me, at my age, to keep house for a single man.

MR. MANDERS. What! my dear Regina! It is your own father who is the man in question.

REGINA. Yes, that may be, but all the same—. Well, if it were in a good house and with a gentleman who was really well off ——.

MR. MANDERS. But, my dear Regina ——.

REGINA. —— one towards whom I could feel devotion, and whom I could look up to, and stand to in a daughter's place. . .

MR. MANDERS. Yes, but, my dear, good child ——.

REGINA. —I should be glad enough to go into the town. Out here it is dreadfully lonely; and you know very well, Sir, what it means to be alone in the world. And this I ought to say for myself, that I am both quick and obliging. Don't you know any place likely to suit me, Sir?

MR. MANDERS. I? No. You may rely upon me if I did know.

REGINA. But, dear, dear Sir, do just think of me, when I ——

MR. MANDERS (*rising*). Yes, I certainly will, Regina.

REGINA. Yes, for if I. . .

MR. MANDERS. Will you be so good as to fetch your mistress?

REGINA. She will come at once, Sir, now. (*She goes to the left*).

MR. MANDERS (*goes a few steps up and down the room, stands a moment in the background with his hands behind his back, and looks out over the garden. Then he returns close to the table, takes a book and looks at the title page; starts and looks at several*). Hm— indeed!

MRS. ALVING (*comes in through the door on the left; she is followed by Regina who immediately goes out through the first door on the right. Offering her hand*). I am glad to see you, Mr. Manders.

MR. MANDERS. How do you do, Mrs. Alving? Here I am as I promised.

MRS. ALVING. Always punctual to the minute.

MR. MANDERS. But you may imagine it was a tight fit for me to get away. All the innumerable Boards and Committees I sit on ——

MRS. ALVING. That makes it all the kinder of you to come so early. Now we can get all our arrangements made before dinner. But where is your luggage?

MR. MANDERS (*quickly*). I left it down at the general shop. I stay there to-night.

MRS. ALVING (*suppressing a smile*). Are you really not to be persuaded this time, either, to spend the night under my roof?

MR. MANDERS. No, no, thank you, Mrs. Alving; you are always so kind. I shall stay down there as usual. It is so convenient for getting on board the steamer again.

MRS. ALVING. Well, you must have your own way. But otherwise, I really should have thought that we two old people ——

MR. MANDERS. Oh, dear Mrs. Alving, you're joking I see. Ah! to be sure! you are exceedingly happy to-day: first, to have the Festival to-morrow and then to have got Oswald home again.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, thank you; what a delight it is to me! It is now more than two years since he was last home. And now he has promised to stay with me all through the winter.

MR. MANDERS. No, has he really? That was indeed right of him, and what a good son should do. For I can well believe there is far more attraction in living at Rome and Paris.

MRS. ALVING. True. But here at home he has his mother, you see. Oh! my dear, darling boy, he has still some heart left for his mother; bless him!

MR. MANDERS. It would indeed be too grievous if absence and being busy with such things as Art were to blunt his natural feeling.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, you may well say so. But there is nothing of that sort to fear in him. Oh! I shall really be quite amused to see if you can recognise him again. He will come down presently. Just now he is lying down upstairs, resting a little on the sofa. But, do sit down, dear Mr. Manders.

MR. MANDERS. Thank you. Then it really suits you? . . .

MRS. ALVING. Most certainly it does. (*She sits by the table*).

MR. MANDERS. Very well. Then you shall see. . . (*he goes to the chair where the travelling bag lies, takes out a packet of papers, sits down on the opposite side of the table and tries to find a clear space for the papers*). Now, to begin with, here is . . (*breaking off*)—Tell me, Mrs. Alving, how do these books come here?

MRS. ALVING. The books? They are books I read.

MR. MANDERS. Do you read writings of that sort?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, certainly I do.

MR. MANDERS. Do you feel that you are better or happier for reading of that kind?

MRS. ALVING. I think I seem to get surer for it.

MR. MANDERS. That is strange. How is it?

MRS. ALVING. Well, I seem to get clearness and strength about many and many a thing I myself have been thinking. Yes, for that is the wonderful part of it, Mr. Manders; there is really nothing new in these books. There is nothing in them but what most people think and believe. The only point is that most people do not account for it in themselves, or will not keep to it.

MR. MANDERS. You do surprise me! Do you seriously believe that most people . . .

MRS. ALVING. Yes, I do indeed.

MR. MANDERS. Yes, but not actually here in this country? Not here, in our part?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, to be sure! In our part, too.

MR. MANDERS. Well, then, I really must say ——

MRS. ALVING. But what besides have you really got to bring against the books?

MR. MANDERS. Bring against them? You really don't suppose that I occupy myself with examining such productions?

MRS. ALVING. That is to say you know nothing of what you are condemning.

MR. MANDERS. I have read enough *about* these writings to disapprove of them.

MRS. ALVING. Yes; but your own opinion . . .

MR. MANDERS. Dear Mrs. Alving, there are many occasions in life where one must rely upon others. Once for all, it is so, in this world; and it is a good thing. How could societies of men get on otherwise?

MRS. ALVING. No, no; I daresay you are right there.

MR. MANDERS. On the other hand, I do not of course deny that there may be something attractive in such writings. Nor can I think ill of you for wishing to make yourself acquainted with the spiritual currents that, by what I hear, are to be found out there in the great world, where you have let your son travel for so long, you know. But ——

MRS. ALVING. But?

MR. MANDERS (*lowering his voice*). But one doesn't talk about that, Mrs. Alving. One is certainly not bound to account to everybody for what one reads and thinks within one's own four walls.

MRS. ALVING. No, naturally; I quite think so.

MR. MANDERS. Only think, now, what consideration you owe to that Orphanage which you decided on founding at a time when your opinions on spiritual matters were strikingly different from what they are now—so far as I can guess.

MRS. ALVING. Oh, yes; I quite admit that. But it was about the Orphanage. . . . .

MR. MANDERS. It was about the Orphanage we were to speak; yes. Then—prudence, dear Madam. And now we will pass on to our business. (*Opens the case and takes out a number of papers*). Do you see these?

MRS. ALVING. The documents?

MR. MANDERS. All. And all complete. You can understand it was hard work to get them in time. I had to put a good deal of pressure on. The authorities really are almost painfully conscientious when they are asked for a final settlement. But now we've got them all at last (*looks through the pile*). See! here is the legal gift of the parcel of ground known as Sunnyside on the Manor of Rosedene, with all the newly constructed domestic buildings, school-rooms, master's house and chapel. And here is the legal authority for your gift and for the Regulations of the Institution. Will you just see? (*reads*) "Regulations for the Children's Home to be known as 'Captain Alving's foundation.'"

MRS. ALVING (*looks long at the paper*). So there it is.

MR. MANDERS. I have chosen the name "Captain" and not "Chamberlain." "Captain" looks less pretentious.

MRS. ALVING. Oh, yes; just as you think best.

MR. MANDERS. And here you have the Banking Account of the capital lying at interest which is set aside to cover the current expenses of the Orphanage.

MRS. ALVING. Thank you. But please be so kind as to keep it for convenience sake.

MR. MANDERS. Very gladly. I think we will leave the money in the Bank just at first. The interest on it is certainly not very enticing—four per cent. and six months notice of withdrawal. If a good mortgage could be found later on—of course it must be a first mortgage and offer undoubted security—then we could talk it over together.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, to be sure, dear Mr. Manders. But you will judge best about all that.

MR. MANDERS. I will keep my eyes open, at any rate. But now there is one thing more which I have been intending to ask you about several times.

MRS. ALVING. And what is that?

MR. MANDERS. Shall the Orphanage buildings be insured or not?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, of course they must be insured.

MR. MANDERS. Well, stop a minute, Mrs. Alving. Let us look into the matter a little more closely.

MRS. ALVING. I have everything insured; buildings and moveables and stock and crops.

MR. MANDERS. Of course you have—on your own estate. And so have I—of course. But here, you see, it is quite another matter. The Orphanage is to be consecrated, as it were, for the purpose of a higher life.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, but even if—

MR. MANDERS. For my own part, I really should not see the smallest impropriety in making secure against all contingencies.

MRS. ALVING. No. That is precisely what I think, too.

MR. MANDERS. But how will that suit the general feeling of the people just out round here? You know it better than I.

MRS. ALVING. H'm—the general feeling of the people?

MR. MANDERS. Have you any sufficient number of people whose

opinions deserve consideration—really deserve it—who might be scandalised at that?

Mrs. Alving. Well, what do you actually mean by "really deserving consideration?"

Mr. Manders. Well, I am thinking chiefly of men in positions so independent and influential that one cannot help giving some weight to their opinions.

Mrs. Alving. There are some such here, who would very likely be shocked, in case ——

Mr. Manders. There now! you see! In the town we have many of that kind. Think only of all the adherents of my brothers in office. It would be so terribly easy for them to conclude that neither you nor I had the right trust in a Higher Guidance.

Mrs. Alving. But so far as concerns yourself, dear Mr. Manders; you know, in any case, that you, yourself ——

Mr. Manders. Yes, I know,—I know; I have the fullest conviction; that is true enough. But nevertheless we should not be able to prevent a distorted, disadvantageous construction being put upon the Insurance. And such a construction might, in its turn, act as a hindrance to the Orphanage itself.

Mrs. Alving. Well, if that were to be case, then——

Mr. Manders. Nor can I quite lose sight of the difficult, and I may frankly say, painful position I might perhaps get into. In the chief circles of the town there is a good deal of talk going on about this Orphanage affair. The Orphanage is certainly founded to some extent as a gain to the town, too; and it is to be hoped it will, in no inconsiderable degree, result in lightening our Poor Rates. But as I have been your adviser and have managed the business connected with it, I may well dread lest I should be the first person for the jealous to fasten upon——

Mrs. Alving. Oh! you ought not to expose yourself to that.

Mr. Manders. To say nothing of the attacks that would be sure to be made upon me in certain papers and periodicals, which——

Mrs. Alving. It is quite enough, dear Mr. Manders. That consideration is quite decisive.

Mr. Manders. Then you do not wish the Orphanage insured?

Mrs. Alving. No. We will let it be.

Mr. Manders (*leaning back in his chair*). But if misfortune were to befall it, now—one can never tell. Would you be able to make good the damage?

Mrs. Alving. No; I tell you plainly I never would do anything of the kind.

Mr. Manders. Well, but I tell you what, Mrs. Alving, it is after all a considerable responsibility we are taking upon ourselves.

Mrs. Alving. But does it seem to you we can do anything else?

Mr. Manders. No, that is just the thing; we really cannot do anything else. We must not expose ourselves to an absurd prejudice; and we have no kind of right to arouse scandal in public opinion.

Mrs. Alving. You, as a clergyman, in no case should.

Mr. Manders. And I really think, too, we may rely upon an

Institution of the kind having good fortune on its side; in fact, that it stands under Special Protection.

MRS. ALVING. Let us hope so, Mr. Manders.

MR. MANDERS. Then we will let the matter alone for the present?

MRS. ALVING. Yes, certainly.

MR. MANDERS. Very well. Just as you think best. (*Makes notes.*) Then—no Insurance.

MRS. ALVING. It was really rather curious that you should come to speak about it to-day, of all days——

MR. MANDERS. I have often thought of asking you about it——

MRS. ALVING. —— for we nearly had a fire down there yesterday.

MR. MANDERS. You don't say so!

MRS. ALVING. Oh! after all there was nothing in it. A heap of shavings had caught fire in the carpenter's workshop.

MR. MANDERS. Where Engstrand works?

MRS. ALVING. Yes. They say he is often very careless with matches.

MR. MANDERS. He has so many things in his head, that man. His mind seems so beset. Thank God, he is now preparing himself to lead a decent life, I hear.

MRS. ALVING. Indeed? who says so?

MR. MANDERS. He himself assures me that he means to. And he certainly is a capital workman.

MRS. ALVING. Ah! yes; so long as he is not intox—

MR. MANDERS. Yes, that painful weakness. But he often needs that for the sake of his suffering leg, he says. Last time he was in the town I was really touched by him. He came up to me and thanked me so warmly for having got him work here, so that he might be where Regina was.

MRS. ALVING. He doesn't look after her much.

MR. MANDERS. Oh! yes. He has some talk with her every day. He said so himself and told me about it.

MRS. ALVING. Ah! well; it may be so.

MR. MANDERS. He feels so strongly that he is yearning for something that can hold him back when temptation comes. That is the loveable part of Jacob Engstrand: his coming completely helpless to you, and complaining of himself and acknowledging his own weakness. Lately he was up in the town talking to me—look here, Mrs. Alving, supposing it were a heartfelt need with him to have Regina home with him once more—

MRS. ALVING (*rising hastily*) Regina!

MR. MANDERS—you should not set yourself against it.

MRS. ALVING. Indeed I certainly shall set myself against it. And besides, Regina is to have a position at the Orphanage.

MR. MANDERS. But, consider, he really is her father—

MRS. ALVING. Oh! I know best what sort of a father he has been to her. No! to him she shall never go with my good will.

MR. MANDERS (*rising*). My dear lady, don't take the matter so impetuously. It is quite grievous to see how you do misjudge poor Engstrand. It really is as though you were downright terrified—

MRS. ALVING (*more quietly*). It doesn't matter. I have taken

Regina into my house and there she shall stay (*listens*). Hush, dear Mr. Manders; don't talk any more about it (*happiness lights up her face*). Listen! there is Oswald on the stairs. Now we will think of no one but him.

OSWALD ALVING (*in a light overcoat, hat in hand and smoking a large meerschaum, comes in through the left door; standing in the door way*) Oh! I beg your pardon; I thought you were sitting in the office (*comes nearer*). Good morning, Sir.

MR. MANDERS (*staring*). Ah! it was remarkable—

MRS. ALVING. Well, now what do you say to this young man, Mr. Manders?

MR. MANDERS. I say—I say—why! is that really?—

OSWALD. Yes, it is really the Prodigal Son, Sir.

MR. MANDERS. But, my dear young friend—

OSWALD. Well, then, the Son come home.

MRS. ALVING. Oswald is thinking of the time when you were so much opposed to his being a painter.

MR. MANDERS. To our human gaze many a step looks inadviseable that later on nevertheless—(*wrings his hand*). Anyhow, welcome home. Why, my dear Oswald—By-the-bye I suppose I may call you by your Christian name, still?

OSWALD. Yes; what else should you call me?

MR. MANDERS. Very good. This is what I wanted to say to you, my dear Oswald—you must not believe it of me that I unreservedly condemn an artist's profession. There are many persons who can, I admit, preserve their inner life uninjured in that profession, as in any other.

OSWALD. Let us hope so.

MRS. ALVING (*beaming with delight*). I know one who has preserved both his inner and his outer life uninjured. Only look at him, Mr. Manders.

OSWALD (*Walking about the room*). Yes, yes, Mother dear; let's say no more about it.

MR. MANDERS. No; most assuredly—it cannot be denied. And you have begun to make a name for yourself already. The newspapers have often spoken of you, and most favourably. Well, that is to say—just lately they have not said so much about it, I fancy.

OSWALD. (*up among the flowers*). I have not been able to paint so much just lately.

MRS. ALVING. A painter, too, needs a little rest between whiles.

MR. MANDERS. I can quite believe it. And by that means he gathers up his forces and prepares himself for some great work.

OSWALD. Yes.—Mother, are we going to dine soon?

MRS. ALVING. In less than half an hour. He has plenty of appetite, thank God.

MR. MANDERS. And a taste for tobacco, too.

OSWALD. I found my father's pipe in my room, and so—

MR. MANDERS. Ah! ha! then that accounts for it.

MRS. ALVING. For what?

MR. MANDERS. When Oswald came in at the door with the pipe in his mouth, it seemed as though it were his father, large as life.

OSWALD. No, really?

MRS. ALVING. Oh! how can you say so? Oswald takes after my family.

MR. MANDERS. Yes, but there is an expression about the corners of the mouth—something in the lips, which reminds me so exactly of Alving;—now he is smoking, any how.

MRS. ALVING. Not in the least. Oswald has far more something about his mouth that is like a clergyman's, I think.

MR. MANDERS. Oh, ah! Oh, ah! Some of my brethren in office have a look very like it.

MRS. ALVING. But put your pipe away, my dear lad; I will not have smoking in here.

OSWALD. (*does so*). Gladly. I only wanted to try it; for I once smoked it when I was a child.

MRS. ALVING. You?

OSWALD. Yes. I was quite small at the time. And I recollect, too, I came up into the room to Father one evening, and he was so happy and merry.

MRS. ALVING. Oh! you don't recollect anything of those years.

OSWALD. Yes. I recollect distinctly. He took me up on his knee, and let me smoke from the pipe. "Smoke, boy" he said; "Smoke away, boy." And I smoked as much as I wanted to, until I felt I was growing quite pale, and the perspiration stood in great drops on my forehead. Then he burst out laughing so heartily—

MR. MANDERS. That was most extraordinary.

MRS. ALVING. My dear friend, it is only something Oswald has dreamt.

OSWALD. No, Mother, I have not dreamt it, most positively. For—can't you recollect that?—then you came in and carried me out into the nursery. Then I was sick and I saw that you were crying;—did Father often play such tricks?

MR. MANDERS. In his youth he was a remarkably gay, merry man—

OSWALD. And nevertheless he got so much done in this world; so much that was good and useful; and he died so young, too.

MR. MANDERS. Yes, you have indeed an active and worthy man's name as an inheritance, my dear Oswald Alving. Well, it will act as a spur to you, let us hope.

OSWALD. It ought to be so, indeed.

MR. MANDERS. Your coming home for the day that is to commemorate him certainly shewed very proper feeling.

OSWALD. Less than that I could not do for my father.

MRS. ALVING. And that I am to keep him so long! that shews the most proper feeling of all in him.

MR. MANDERS. Yes; you are to stay at home through the winter, I hear.

OSWALD. My stay at home is for an indefinite period, Sir.—Oh! but it really is very charming to be at home again.

MRS. ALVING (*beaming*). Yes, now isn't it, dear?

MR. MANDERS. (*looking sympathetically at him*). You have gone out into the world early, my dear Oswald.

OSWALD. I have. At times I wonder whether it was not too early.

MRS. ALVING. Oh! not at all. A sharp boy is all the better for it; and especially when he is an only child. A child like that ought not to stay at home with Mother and Father and get spoilt.

MR. MANDERS. It is a very vexed question, Mrs. Alving. A child's proper place is, and must be, in his father s home.

OSWALD. I can't help agreeing with Mr. Manders in that.

MR. MANDERS. Only look at your own son;—yes, we can speak just as freely in his presence—what has the consequence been for him? He is six or seven and twenty and has never once had the opportunity of learning to know what a real home is.

OSWALD. I beg your pardon, Sir; you are quite mistaken there.

MR. MANDERS. Indeed? I thought you had been roaming about almost exclusively among artistic people.

OSWALD. And so I have.

MR. MANDERS. And chiefly among the younger artists.

OSWALD. Oh! certainly.

MR. MANDERS. But I thought that most people of that sort could not afford to found a family and build up a home.

OSWALD. There are some among them who cannot afford to marry, Sir.

Mr. MANDERS. Yes, that's just what I'm saying.

OSWALD. But in spite of that they can have a home. And that is just what they have, one and another of them; and a very nice, orderly home, too.

MRS. ALVING. (*follows with breathless interest; nods, but says nothing*).

MR. MANDERS. But I am not talking of a bachelor's home. By a "home" I understand a family home, where a man lives with his wife and children.

OSWALD. Yes; or with his children and his children's mother.

MR. MANDERS. (*Starts; claps his hands together*). But merciful—

OSWALD. Well?

MR. MANDERS. Lives with—his children's mother!

OSWALD. Yes. Would you prefer his turning his children's mother out of doors?

MR. MANDERS. Then it is about illicit relations you are talking! About these irregular marriages, as people call them!

OSWALD. I have never noticed anything especially irregular about the life these people lead together.

MR. MANDERS. But how is it possible that a—a young man who has been properly brought up, no matter where, or a young woman either, can accomodate themselves to living in that way?—before everybody's eyes!

OSWALD. But what are they to do? A poor young artist—a poor young girl. It costs a good deal of money to get married. What are they to do?

MR. MANDERS. What are they to do? Ah! Mr. Alving, I wil tell you what they ought to do. They should avoid one another from the very beginning; that's what they should do.

OSWALD. If you talked in that style you wouldn't make much way among young, warm-hearted people, desperately in love with each other.

MRS. ALVING. No. You wouldn't make any way at all with them.

MR. MANDERS (*continuing*). And that the authorities should put up with such things! That they can be allowed to go on in the light of day! (*to* MRS. ALVING). Had I not good cause to be intensely concerned about your son? In circles where unconcealed immorality prevails, and has even some prestige—!

OSWALD. I will tell you something, Sir; I have been a constant Sunday visitor in a few such irregular homes—

MR. MANDERS. And on Sunday, too!

OSWALD. Yes, that is just when people want to amuse themselves. But never have I heard an offensive word there, and still less have I ever witnessed anything which could be called immoral. No. Do you know when and where I have found immorality in artistic circles?

MR. MANDERS. No! God be praised!

OSWALD. Well, then, allow me to inform you. I have found immorality when one or other of your pattern husbands and fathers came down amongst us to look about a little for himself; and so did the artists the honour of visiting them in their poor little clubs. Then we were able to obtain accurate information. Those gentlemen knew how to tell us about places and things we had never dreamt of.

MR. MANDERS. What! Do you intend to say that honourable men from this country, here, would—?

OSWALD. Have you never heard these honourable men talking when they got home again? Have you never heard them express themselves about the way in which immorality was getting the upper hand abroad?

MR. MANDERS. Yes, to be sure.

MRS. ALVING. I have heard that, too.

OSWALD. Yes, you may well believe what they say. There are men among them who know all about it (*grasps his head with both hands*). Oh! that the beautiful, glorious life of liberty abroad—that it should be soiled in that way!

MRS. ALVING. You must not get angry, Oswald. It does you no good.

OSWALD. No: you are quite right, mother. It is by no means good for me. It is that wretched over-fatigue, you see. Well, now I think I'll go for a little turn before dinner. Excuse me, Sir, you can scarcely realise it yourself, but it came over me so powerfully. (*He goes through the second door to the right*).

MRS. ALVING. My poor boy!

MR. MANDERS. Ah! you may well say so. Then it has gone so far as all that with him!

MRS. ALVING (*looks at him and is silent*).

MR. MANDERS (*walking up and down*). He called himself the Prodigal Son. Yes! alas! alas!

MRS. ALVING (*continues looking at him*).

MR. MANDERS. And what do you say to all that?

MRS. ALVING. I say that Oswald was right in every word he spoke.

MR. MANDERS (*stands still*). Right? Right in such principles!

MRS. ALVING. Here, in my loneliness, I have come to think the same things, Mr. Manders. But I have never dared to stir up the matter. Well! now my boy shall speak for me.

MR. MANDERS. You are a pitiable woman, Mrs. Alving. But now I will speak a few serious words to you. And now it is no longer your business manager and adviser, the early friend of yourself and your late husband, who is standing before you. It is the clergyman, just as he stood before you in the wildest moment of your life.

MRS. ALVING. And what is it that the clergyman has to say to me?

MR. MANDERS. I will first revive your recollections a little. The time is well-chosen. To-morrow it will be ten years since your husband died. To-morrow the monument will be opened that is to commemorate him who is gone. To-morrow I shall be addressing the whole assembled congregation. But to-day I will speak to you alone.

MRS. ALVING. Very well, Mr. Manders. Speak.

MR. MANDERS. Do you remember that after scarcely a year of married life you stood on the very verge of the precipice? That you forsook your house and home? That you fled from your husband? Yes, Mrs. Alving—fled, fled, and refused to return to him, however much he begged and prayed of you?

MRS. ALVING. Have you forgotten how boundlessly wretched I I felt in that first year?

MR. MANDERS. That craving for happiness in this life is just due to the spirit of rebellion. What right have we human beings to happiness? No, we are to do our duty. And your duty was to hold firmly to the man you had once chosen and to whom you were bound by a holy tie.

MRS. ALVING. You know very well what sort of a life Mr. Alving led at that time; what excesses he was guilty of.

MR. MANDERS. I know sadly well what reports there were about him, and I am one who least of all approves the life he led in his young days, if rumour described them truly. But a wife is not to be her husband's judge. It would have been your duty to bear with humility the cross which a Higher Power had thought suitable for you. But instead of that you cast away the cross in rebellion, left the stumbling man whom you should have supported, went and risked your good name and reputation and—were nearly ruining other people's reputation into the bargain.

MRS. ALVING. Other people's? One other person's, you mean.

MR. MANDERS. It was to the last degree inconsiderate of you to seek refuge with me.

MRS. ALVING. At our clergyman's? At our intimate friend's?

MR. MANDERS. Most of all on that account. Yes, you may thank your God that I possessed the necessary firmness; that I dissuaded you from carrying out your extraordinary intention, and that it was granted me to lead you back on the path of duty and home to your lawful husband.

MRS. ALVING. Yes, Mr. Manders, it was certainly your work.

MR. MANDERS. I was but a poor instrument in a Higher Hand. And what a blessing has it not been for you all the days of your

life that I did get you to submit to duty and loyalty! Did it not all happen as I foretold you? Did not Alving turn his back on his wild ways, as a man should? Did he not live, from that time, lovingly and blamelessly with you all his days? Did he not become a benefactor to the whole district? And did he not raise you up to him so that you afterwards became a partner in all his undertakings —and a first-rate partner, too. Ah! I know it, Mrs. Alving; that praise I must give you. But this brings me to the next great false step in your life.

MRS. ALVING. What do you mean?

MR. MANDERS. Just as you once disowned a wife's duty, so you have since disowned a mother's.

MRS. ALVING. Ah!

MR. MANDERS. You have been all your life under the dominion of a spirit of Self-will that was fraught with unhappiness. All your efforts have been bent towards what was unconstrained and lawless. You have never been willing to endure any bond. Everything that has burdened you in life you have cast away madly, and unconscientiously, like a burden you had control over. You were not pleased to be a wife any longer and you went away from your husband. You found ittroublesome to be a mother and you place your child out among strangers.

MRS. ALVING. Yes. That is true. I did so.

MR. MANDERS. And thus you have become a stranger to him.

MRS. ALVING. No! no! I am not.

MR. MANDERS. Yes, you are; you may well be. And how have you got him back again? Think it well over, Mrs. Alving. You have sinned greatly against your husband;—that you recognise by raising that Foundation yonder to his memory. Recognise now, also, in what you have sinned against your son. There may yet be time to lead him back from the paths of error. Turn back yourself, and raise up what may yet be in him that can be raised up. For (*with a fore-finger raised*) verily, Mrs. Alving, you are a mother whose guilt is heavy. This much I have considered it my duty to say to you. (*Silence*).

MRS. ALVING. (*Slowly and with self-control*). And now you have spoken, Mr. Manders; and to-morrow you will speak publicly in memory of my husband. I shall not speak to-morrow. But now I will speak to you a little, just as you have spoken to me.

MR. MANDERS. To be sure. You want to bring forward excuses for your conduct.

MRS. ALVING. No. I will only tell you the story.

MR. MANDERS. Now?

MRS. ALVING. All that you have just said here, about me and my husband and our life together after you had brought me back to the path of duty—as you called it—, all that is a matter about which you know nothing from your own observation. From that moment, you who had been our intimate friend, day after day, never set foot in our house again.

MR. MANDERS. Why! You and your husband left the town soon after.

MRS. ALVING. Yes. And in my husband's life-time you never

came out to us here. It was business that obliged you to visit me when you had to do with the affairs of the Orphanage.

MR. MANDERS. (*Gently and uncertainly*). Helen, if that is meant as a reproach, I would beg you to bear in mind—

MRS. ALVING.—the regard you owed to your position; yes. And that I was a runaway wife. One can never hold aloof too carefully from such reckless women.

MR. MANDERS. Dear—Mrs. Alving, that is such a dreadful exaggeration—

MRS. ALVING. There, there, there, never mind! The only thing I wanted to say was that when you judge about my married life, you simply rely upon current public opinion, without any further evidence.

MR. MANDERS. Well; certainly. And what then?

MRS. ALVING. Now, Mr. Manders—I will tell you the truth. I have sworn to myself that some day you should know it, you alone!

MR. MANDERS. And what is the truth, then?

MRS. ALVING. The truth is that my husband died as profligate as he had lived all his days.

MR. MANDERS. (*Feeling after a chair*). What did you say?

MRS. ALVING. After nineteen years of marriage as profligate in his pleasures at any rate—as he was before you married us.

MR. MANDERS. And those—those wild oats, those irregularities, those excesses if you like, you call "a profligate life"?

MRS. ALVING. Our doctor used the expression.

MR. MANDERS, I don't understand you.

MRS. ALVING. Nor need you.

MR. MANDERS. It almost makes me giddy, All your marriage, all that life with your husband for so many years was nothing more than a hidden abyss.

MRS. ALVING. Not a particle of difference between the two things. Now you know.

MR. MANDERS. That . . . It takes me a long while to master that. I can't grasp it. I can't get hold of it. But how, then, was it possible . . . How could such a state of things be kept concealed?

MRS. ALVING. That is precisely what my ceaseless struggle consisted in, day after day. After Oswald's birth, I thought Mr. Alving seemed to go on a little better. But it did not last long. And then I had to struggle twice as hard, fight as for life and death, so that nobody should get to know what sort of a man my child's father was. And you know what power Mr. Alving had of winning people's hearts. Nobody seemed able to believe anything but good of him. He was one of those people whose life does not pick holes in their reputation. But at last, Mr. Manders—and you must know this too—the most horrible thing of all happened.

MR. MANDERS. More horrible than those?

MRS. ALVING. I had gone on bearing with him, although I knew so well what went on out of doors in secret. But when the insult came within our own four walls . . .

MR. MANDERS. You don't say so! Here!

MRS. ALVING. Yes; here in our own home. It was in there,

(*pointing towards the first door to the right*) in the dining room, that I first got to know of it. I had something I was busy about in there, and the door stood a-jar. Then I heard our housemaid come up from the garden, with water for the flowers in the conservatory yonder.

MR. MANDERS. Well, and then?

MRS. ALVING. A little while after I heard that Mr Alving had come also. I could hear that he was saying something softly to her. And then I heard—(*with a short laugh*) oh! it still sounds in my ears as though it was tearing me to pieces and yet so laughable—I heard my own servant maid whisper "Let me go, Sir. Let me be."

MR. MANDERS. What unbecoming levity on his part! Oh! but more than levity it never was, Mrs. Alving; you may believe me there.

MRS. ALVING. I soon got to know what it was I had to believe. Mr. Alving got his way with the girl; and that connection had consequences, Mr. Manders.

MR. MANDERS. (*As though petrified*). And all that happened in this house! in this house!

MRS. ALVING. I had suffered a great deal in this house. To keep him at home in the evenings and at night, I had to make myself his companion in his secret orgies up in his room. There I have had to sit and hob-a-nob with him, to chink glasses and drink with him, and listen to his ribald, silly talk. I have had to fight hand to hand with him to get him to tumble into bed——

MR. MANDERS (*distressed*). And you were able to bear all that!

MRS. ALVING. I had my little son to bear it for. But when the last insult was added; when my own servant maid. . . then I said to myself: this shall come to an end. And so I took the upper hand in the house,—the whole power both over him and over all the rest. For now I had a weapon against him, you see; he dared not grumble. That was the time when I placed Oswald out among strangers. He was entering his seventh year, and was beginning to observe and ask questions as children do. All that I could not bear. It seemed to me the child might get poisoned by merely breathing the air in that dishonoured home. That was why I placed him out. And now you can see, also, why he never was allowed to set his foot inside his home, here, as long as his father lived. There is no one who knows what that has cost me.

MR. MANDERS. You have indeed had a life of trial.

MRS. ALVING. I could never have held out so long unless I had had my work. Yes; for I may well say that I have worked. All these additions to the estate; all the improvements; all the useful machinery that won Mr. Alving praise and celebrity—do you suppose *he* ever carried out such things?—He who lay all day on the sofa and read an old almanack and "Who's who?" No; indeed. Now I will tell you that as well. It was I who urged him onwards when he had his lucid intervals; it was I who had to drag the whole team when he began his bad ways again or relapsed into querulous wretchedness.

MR. MANDERS. And it is over that man you raise a monument?

MRS. ALVING. There! you see what power a bad conscience has.

MR. MANDERS. A bad . . ? What do you mean?

MRS ALVING. It was always before my eyes that it was impossible but that the truth must come out and be believed. So the Asylum was to destroy all evil rumours and banish all doubts for ever.

MR. MANDERS. In that you have certainly not missed your mark, Mrs. Alving.

MRS. ALVING. And besides, I had one more reason. I did not wish that Oswald, my own boy, should inherit anything whatever from his father.

MR. MANDERS. Then it is Alving's fortune that . . ?

MRS. ALVING. Yes. The sums which I have laid by for the Orphanage, year by year, make up the sum—I have reckoned it up precisely—the sum which made Lieutenant Alving a good match in his day.

MR. MANDERS. I don't quite understand . . .

MRS. ALVING. It was the purchase-money. I do not choose that money to pass into Oswald's hands. My son shall have everything from me;—everything. (*Oswald Alving comes through the second door to the right; he has taken off his hat and overcoat in the hall. Mrs. Alving goes towards him*). Is it you come back again? my dear, dear boy!

OSWALD. Yes. What can a fellow do out of doors in this eternal rain? But I hear we are to have dinner. That's capital!

REGINA (*with a parcel from the dining room*). A parcel has come for you, Mrs. Alving (*hands it to her*).

MRS. ALVING (*with a glance at Mr. Manders.*) Probably from the printer's; the poem that has been written for to-morrow's festivity.

MR. MANDERS. Hm. . . .

REGINA. And now dinner is ready.

MRS. ALVING. Very well. We will come presently. I will just . . . (*begins to open the parcel*).

REGINA (*to Oswald*). Would Mr. Alving like red or white wine?

OSWALD. Both, if you please.

REGINA. *Bien.* Very well, Sir. (*She goes into the dining room*).

OSWALD. I may as well help uncork it. (*He goes into the dining room whose door swings half to behind him*).

MRS. ALVING (*who has opened the parcel*). Yes. I am quite right. Here are the songs for to morrow's festivity, Mr. Manders.

MR. MANDERS (*with folded hands*). How can I possibly deliver my discourse to-morrow with a free mind, that ——.

MRS. ALVING. Oh! you will find plenty to say.

MR. MANDERS (*softly, so as not to be heard in the dining room*). Yes; it would not do to provoke scandal.

MRS. ALVING (*under her breath but firmly*). No. But then this long, hateful comedy will be at an end for ever. From the day after to-morrow it shall be for me as though the dead man had never lived in this house. No one else shall be here but my boy and his mother. (*From within the diving room comes the noise of a chair overturned, and at the same moment is heard*)

REGINA (*choked but whispering*). Oswald! I say! are you mad? Let me go!

MRS. ALVING (*starts in terror*). AH! (*She stares wildly towards the half opened door. Oswald is heard coughing and humming inside. A bottle is uncorked*).

MR. MANDERS (*excited*). But what in the world is happening? What is it, Mrs. Alving?

MRS. ALVING (*hoarsely*). *GHOSTS!* The couple from the conservatory is walking about again.

MR. MANDERS. What! Is it possible? Regina? Is she —?

MRS. ALVING. Yes. Come. Not another word! (*She seizes Mr. Manders by the arm and walks unsteadily towards the dining room.*)

END OF ACT I.