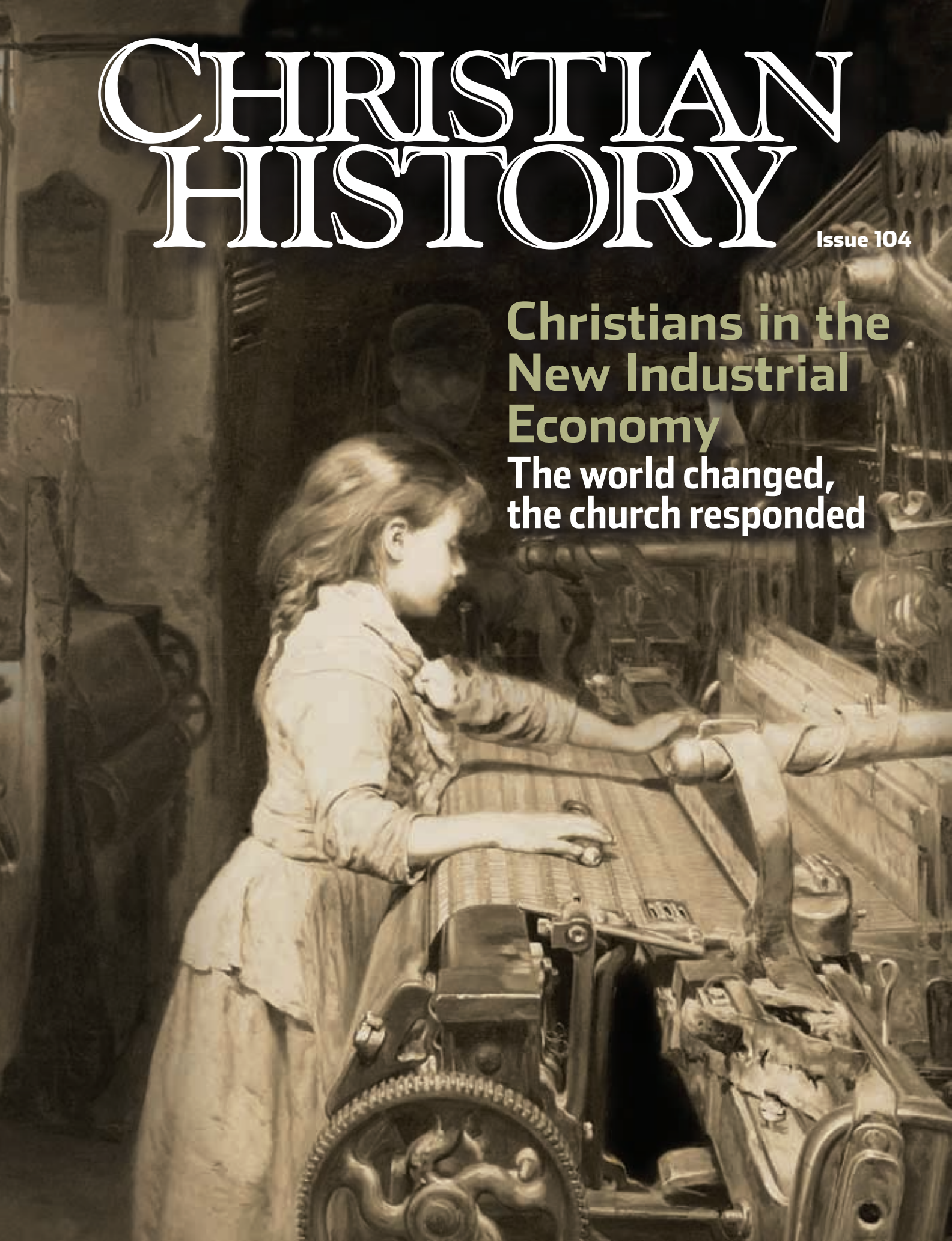


CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Issue 104

Christians in the New Industrial Economy

The world changed,
the church responded



Did you know?

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION REPLACED HUMAN SKILLS
WITH MACHINE SKILLS ALL OVER EUROPE AND AMERICA



RISE OF THE MACHINES

PREVIOUSLY, INDUSTRIES “put out” jobs to workers, giving them raw materials and coming around to collect the results. Industrialization centralized this whole process. According to one history, the number of handloom weavers in Lancashire dropped from 240,000 in 1820 to only 188,000 by 1835. Their wages decreased from more than three shillings to just over two for a piece of calico. By 1861 only 7,000 hand weavers remained. The number of powerlooms increased from 2,400 to 400,000 in the same time period.

CENTRALIZING WORK meant centralizing workers. London grew from housing one-fifth of Britain’s population in 1800 to half the population by 1850. In New York City, population doubled every decade from 1800 to 1880.

TODAY THE WORD “LUDDITE” describes someone who opposes advances in computing technology. Two hundred years ago, it was used for textile workers who smashed machines that were displacing them. The movement began with a series of disturbances in 1811 in northern England. Luddites took their name from the apocryphal figure Ned Ludd, who had supposedly broken a knitting frame after a superior admonished him.

HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVED Workers who moved to the cities often ended up in cheap, crowded, unsanitary tenements such as this on Baxter Street, New York City.

BEER AND BIBLES?

ARTHUR GUINNESS (see “Godless capitalists?” pp. 33–36) not only produced a line of brewers, he also sired a missionary line, the “Guinnesses for God.” Arthur’s grandson Henry Grattan Guinness became a famed evangelical orator (and, ironically, a teetotaler). He evangelized throughout Britain and wrote books on biblical prophecy. Henry’s daughter Geraldine married the son of Hudson Taylor, a famous missionary to China, and wrote Taylor’s biography. Modern apologist Os Guinness, carried out of China in a basket on a pole at the age of two by his missionary parents to escape the approaching Japanese army, is Henry’s great-grandson.

ONE WAY TO GET AWAY

NINETY MEMBERS of the communal society the Christian Brethren boarded the steamboat Megiddo in 1901 and set off to evangelize cities along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. The members lived in family groups and supported themselves by making and selling crocheted goods, taking odd jobs in ports, collecting rent from properties the members owned in cities



AT WORK BEFORE DAYBREAK Children shuck oysters at the Pass Packing Company in Mississippi.

along the route, and charging the curious public admission for tours. After two years, navigational problems drove the group, now called the “Megiddo Mission,” onto land. In early 1904, they settled in Rochester, New York, where the Megiddo Church functions today.

JOURNAL OF Markets & Morality

The *Journal of Markets & Morality* is a peer-reviewed academic journal published twice a year—in the spring and fall.

promoting intellectual exploration of the relationship between economics and morality from both social science and theological perspectives

Articles

The *Journal of Markets & Morality* publishes innovative articles in the fields of economics, theology, and moral philosophy. Our goal is to stimulate and encourage discussion across disciplinary lines.

Symposium

The *Symposium*, appearing serially in the spring issue of the *Journal of Markets & Morality*, was created to be a forum for conference papers, such as those of the Evangelical Theological Society's Theology of Work and Economics symposium. The symposium aims to contribute valuable perspectives that lead to an integrated vision of stewardship, work, and economics for leaders in the seminary, church, and business communities.

Controversy

The *Journal of Markets & Morality* hosts controversies on questions of current significance, offering a challenging engagement on crucial issues from differing viewpoints.

Book Reviews

Each issue features an expansive book review section, designed to monitor the latest interdisciplinary work in the areas of ethics and economics; Christian Social Thought; and the philosophy, history, and methodology of economics.

Scholia

The *Scholia* offers never before translated texts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Featuring texts from Protestant and Catholic moral theologians on topics in economics, political economy, and social ethics, the *Scholia* exists to reintroduce these historical documents to scholars across the globe. These classic texts serve to assist scholars in the revival of the once vibrant natural-law dimension of these disciplines.

marketsandmorality.com

Christian's LIBRARY PRESS

Christian's Library Press has been committed to publishing influential texts on church leadership, the vocation of work, and stewardship for more than 30 years. During this time Christian's Library Press published *The Deacons Handbook*, *The Elders Handbook*, and *God's Yardstick* which still are in demand today.

How will evangelicals respond to contemporary cultural shifts?

What we believe influences how we respond, and this will have significant ramifications for the future of a free society and its business, economic, and public sectors.

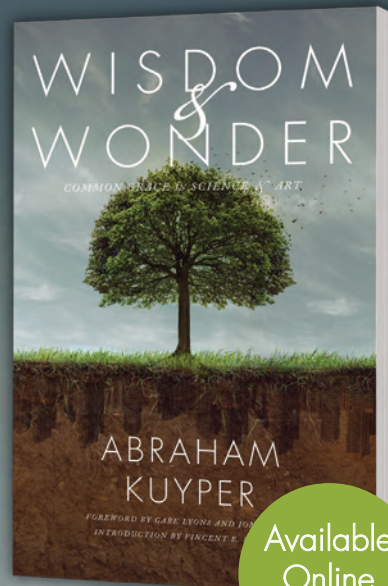
Sometimes the way forward is found by looking back.

Writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Abraham Kuyper elaborates on the doctrine of common grace, a theology of public service and cultural engagement of Christians' shared humanity with the rest of the world.

As Kuyper notes, "If God is sovereign, then his lordship must extend over all of life, and it cannot be restricted to the walls of the church or within the Christian orbit." Kuyper's work shows us that God is not absent from the nonchurch areas of our common life and bestows his gifts and favor to all people.

Abraham Kuyper was a profound theologian, an encyclopedic thinker, and a deeply spiritual man who believed that it is the believer's task "to know God in all his works." In a day when secular science is seeking to establish hegemony over all knowing, and when postmodern art is threatening to bring an end to art, Kuyper's solid, Biblical insights can help add sanity to these two critical areas of human life.

—Chuck Colson, Founder, Prison Fellowship and the Colson Center for Christian Worldview



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Editor's note

Machines taking the jobs of humans. The sudden ability for instantaneous communication across continents. People abandoning the countryside for the big city. New inventions at every turn. A growing gap between rich and poor. The world shrinking daily.

The early twenty-first century? Yes, but those words could just as easily describe the Industrial Revolution that, over 150 years ago, began changing the social and working lives of Americans. Industry after industry developed new tools to do workers' jobs, tools that in some cases supplanted these industries' bedrock skills and methods and the people who had mastered them. Automatic looms—the ability to tunnel underwater—telegraphs that could send messages around the world—and eventually radio, electricity, and phonograph records. The location of work moved from the home to the factory, from the country to the city. Unprepared cities became riddled with squalid, unsafe tenements. Like a great landslide, the revolution swept away centuries of solid economic and social ground, leaving Europe and America battered and bewildered.

And Christians were right there in the middle of these economic realities. Approaches varied, of course—from the Holiness preaching, “blood-washed” singing, and homes for fallen women of the Salvation Army; to the clean, safe, and new model villages built for workers by the Quaker owners of the Cadbury and Rowntree cocoa companies; to the fight for an alcohol-free world of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union; to attempts by University of Wisconsin president John Bascom to implement the Social Gospel and bring in a new society, not only through the church, but through his university. And many who might never have darkened the door of a traditional Christian church—from members of communal societies to labor unionists—sought and claimed the directing example of Jesus as they grappled with how to right a world turned upside down.

Given the centrality of the Christian message to so many efforts to deal with the Industrial Revolution, the partnership between the Acton Institute and CHI that

produced this issue seems both natural and fruitful. The Acton Institute has long argued that the church needs to understand and teach social ethics in a way that values the fundamental nature of enterprise and economics, and that Christians need to be concerned to a greater degree about what conditions must be met to promote widespread human flourishing. Scripture, indeed, teaches economic wisdom, human dignity rooted in the image of God, the value of all legitimate work, the call to love one's neighbor as oneself, and the fundamental importance of social institutions. We here at CHI agree that exploring how the church has addressed these issues in the past can only help this conversation, which has sometimes been an adversarial one.

The articles here are intentionally varied; we may not agree with, or endorse, all those who brought the resources of the Christian faith to bear on economic change. But this range of articles shows how many, many people tried to apply Jesus' teachings to the world they lived in, during strange and confusing times. Obviously, these stories are also relevant to our own day. We also live in a time of tremendous economic and technological dislocation. We also wonder which way to turn. Let the voices in this issue help

remind us that Jesus is Lord; the same yesterday, today, and forever. If we follow him, working together at an organizational level, he will see us through. ☒



Jennifer Woodruff Tait,
Managing Editor

CORRECTION In issue 102, the interview “Crusades and Reformers” (p. 38) referred to the Southern Baptist Convention's resolutions regarding the legalization of abortion in 1971, 1974, and 1976. CHM wishes to clarify that these resolutions allowed for the possibility of abortion in cases of rape and incest but also affirmed the sanctity of human life. They may be read in full at <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/default.asp>.

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Wealth, socialism, and Jesus

CHURCHES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WERE DIVIDED ON HOW TO REACH THOSE AFFECTED BY THE NEW ECONOMY

Janine Giordano Drake

"I believe in God, the Master most mighty, stirrer-up of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth, born of the proletarian Mary, toiled at the work bench, descended into labor's hell, suffered under Roman tyranny at the hands of Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. The power not of ourselves which makes for freedom, he rose again from the dead to be lord of the democratic advance, sworn foe of stagnancy, maker of folk upheavals. I believe in work, the self-respecting toiler, the holiness of beauty, freeborn producers, the communion of comrades, the resurrection of workers, and the industrial commonwealth, the cooperative kingdom eternal."

CONGREGATIONALIST MINISTER Bouck White of New York City proclaimed this creed from the pulpit shortly after the Ludlow Massacre of 1914. A

violent standoff between the United Mine Workers and three Rockefeller-owned coal mining companies in Ludlow, Colorado, led to the National Guard setting fire to a tent city of poor miners. Around 20 protesters and their families died of burning or asphyxiation.

In the eyes of White, the fact that John D. Rockefeller continued to preach Bible classes on Sundays demanded public attention; if Rockefeller was the Christian he claimed to be, his workers would not be starving and freezing in tents while he accumulated astronomical profits. That year, with a group of likeminded parishioners, White decided to visit the oil tycoon's upper-class Baptist church and publicly shed light on Rockefeller's Christianity. He was jailed for disorderly conduct.

For those of means on both sides of the Atlantic, the Victorian era brought unprecedented leisure and civic opportunities. Gentlemen could afford more time to



MARCH OF THE SMOKESTACKS Factories overspread the countryside near Leeds, England, by the early 1840s. Industrialization transformed rural landscapes into urban population centers all over Britain and the United States.

conclusions over Christ's teachings on wealth.

SEEKING THE KINGDOM

Christians questioned how believers ought to approach the fact that some business owners hoarded capitalism's rewards, paying workers as little as possible. Protestant and Catholic clergy varied widely on this question. Industrialization so split the church that different classes arrived at completely different convictions on what the kingdom of God looked like, and how to get there.

From the viewpoint of many Protestant clergy, the professional and managerial classes were the Christians, while the working classes were the mission field. From the viewpoint of workers, however, the fact that most Protestants were in the

professional class was no accident. In the late nineteenth century, enterprising white Protestants took deliberate steps to form exclusive social networks: college alumni associations, college fraternities, and perhaps most importantly, professional associations.

By limiting the entrance of new professionals through licensing, exams, and professional development, groups like the American Medical Association and state bar associations sharply limited the supply of professionals relative to the demand and kept opportunities to rise to professional status out of the reach of the vast majority of upstart immigrants and African Americans. As a result, jobs available to white, middle- and upper-middle-class Protestants rapidly increased in pay and social prestige relative to those of others.

The working classes, meanwhile, had valuable skills: hatmaking, shoemaking, cigarmaking, weaving, dressmaking, welding, smithing, machine-building, and dozens of other crafts. Mastery usually came about after years of apprenticeship. By the early twentieth century, however, engineers and owners of growing factories attempted to replace expensive skilled workers with efficient assembly lines.

University-educated engineers were ultimately very successful at this. They recruited skilled workers into factories and observed them. There, they gleaned trade secrets, subdivided tasks, and automated production. Engineers called this act "scientific management" and claimed it benefited everyone. The centralization of work flow allowed for the efficiency

read, more money to buy books, and more furniture to put in their parlors. They had more resources to build cathedrals, sponsor missionaries, and participate in local government.

Ladies had access to a pool of servants and wardrobes that demanded many social outings. They were well educated in literature, the arts, and scientific problem solving. Some remained single and entered one of the new professions open to women, including nursing, teaching, and social work. Others married men with handsome desk jobs, recruited servants to run their households, and participated in social reform to end poverty.

Wealthy Victorian Christians cared deeply about their responsibilities to participate in government and improve their world. Church-related societies dedicated to limiting alcohol, gambling, and prostitution joined those attempting to improve safety within factories, limit child labor, improve public schools, and build public parks and playgrounds. But many Anglo-Protestant Victorians (those with English and English-American heritage) did not consider at what cost their privileges came. To them, large banks, expanding railroad systems, well-paid desk jobs, and cheap consumer goods were unmistakable symbols of progress.

But for immigrants, African Americans, and white rural migrants, industrialization meant long work hours, dangerous child labor, and a sharp decline in buying power. It created unprecedented distance between classes. And it prompted bitterly competing



SEWING WITHOUT END Children frequently worked long hours for little pay on assembly lines. States began limiting child labor to 10 hours a day in the 1840s, but it would be almost 100 years before federal regulations were passed in 1938.

In his widely read *Our Country* (1885), Josiah Strong (see “Meeting together for the good of the world,” pp. 30–32) described the degree to which factory journeymen were becoming a hereditary underclass from which it was difficult, if not impossible, to rise. But while this concerned him, he did not hesitate to declare that Catholics were a “peril” to the republic.

They needed to be “Americanized,” or taught literacy, democratic government, and Christianity: “God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world’s future.” Strong’s vision was shared broadly among American and British Protestants who engaged in spreading “civilization” and the good news of Christ around the world (see “Conquest or conversion?” pp. 10–12).

WAGES AND UNIONS

Yet another reason for the growing distance between rich and poor was the popularity among Christians of the “iron law of wages.” In the early nineteenth century, many economic philosophers, concerned about over-

population and excessive land use, argued that employers could pay workers as minimally as possible without worry for their well-being. The demand for work would naturally check the size of the labor market. If workers were willing to work for a particular wage, that wage was necessarily just. This philosophy rationalized very low wages paid to young women, journeymen artisans, and “piece workers” who labored at home.

The iron law of wages also rationalized employers’ stubbornness with unions, seen as a barrier to industrial efficiency. Oil and steel magnates John Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie maintained that they were faithful Christians *and* that it was fair to require 10 to 12 hours per day of work, in unsafe conditions, at less than a living wage (i.e., sufficient for the necessities of life). After all, workers were willing to perform the labor. Carnegie reflected in his famous 1889 essay, “Wealth,” that God allows for disproportionate sums of wealth so that the wealthy can more efficiently administer the bounty for all.

According to mainline clergy, the challenge of the moment was not to end capitalism but to redeem it by encouraging business leaders to offer their employees better working conditions. Moreover, many of these

of interchangeable parts and fewer “man hours” required to produce each final object. Machines often made final goods cheaper for consumers.

But profits earned through lowered overhead usually went to factory owners, and new machines required workers to have fewer skills, which meant less pay and negotiating power for them. Worse, de-skilled work—or as it was called, “unskilled work”—meant that workers who sought to bargain collectively were more easily fired and replaced. The more that poor workers purchased cheaper goods mass produced in factories, the more they undid the value of their skills as a class.

By the early twentieth century, the American Federation of Labor grew powerful in its campaign for a bigger piece of the industrial pie. But Protestant membership grew thinner as the “unskilled” working classes grew more Catholic, Jewish, and secular. By the turn of the twentieth century, most Protestant churches in urban centers, in the Old World and the New, had emptied and closed. The Salvation Army, Holiness-Pentecostal congregations, and Socialist churches were exceptions, as were many Catholic parishes (see “Brothers and Sisters of Charity,” pp. 16–20 and “Eating bread with widows and orphans,” pp. 24–28).



A SUNDAY STROLL . . . John D. Rockefeller, Sr. and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. walk down Fifth Avenue in New York to church on Palm Sunday, 1915 (*left*).

. . . OR A SUNDAY PROTEST? Congregationalist minister Bouck White was arrested for disrupting services at Calvary Baptist Church, West 57th Street, where the Rockefellers worshiped (*below*).



ministers argued, Jesus would agree that great sums of riches were not themselves sinful. Pope Leo XIII concurred in his pro-union 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (see "Brothers and Sisters of Charity," pp. 16–20).

LABOR CHURCHES

One of the reasons many found the growing restlessness of labor so troubling was that the labor movement's critique of capitalism provided an alternate Christian morality to that preached in the churches of the upper classes. The most popular nondenominational churches for the poor were those of the Salvation Army and other Holiness groups, Christian Socialist Fellowships, and union-owned meeting places for workers called "labor temples."

Unlike middle-class Protestant churches, these congregations had no dress codes, no pew rents, and no condemnation of the poor for not working hard enough. Working-class congregations in the growing Holiness-Pentecostal movement leveled all differences through the free play of the Holy Spirit.

Thousands of workers adopted labor organizations, instead of churches, as their Christian communities. The Knights of Labor opened meetings in prayer, required high standards of personal morality from all members, and spread the message that mammon plagued all the churches. Jesus, they contended, was the son of a carpenter who had preached that accumulation of riches through the toil of others was wrong.

The preamble of the Knights of Labor constitution cites Genesis 3:19, "By the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread." Earning one's living through work—not extorting it through rent, profit, or interest—was the only requirement for membership. Lodges, located in almost every county in the country, identified

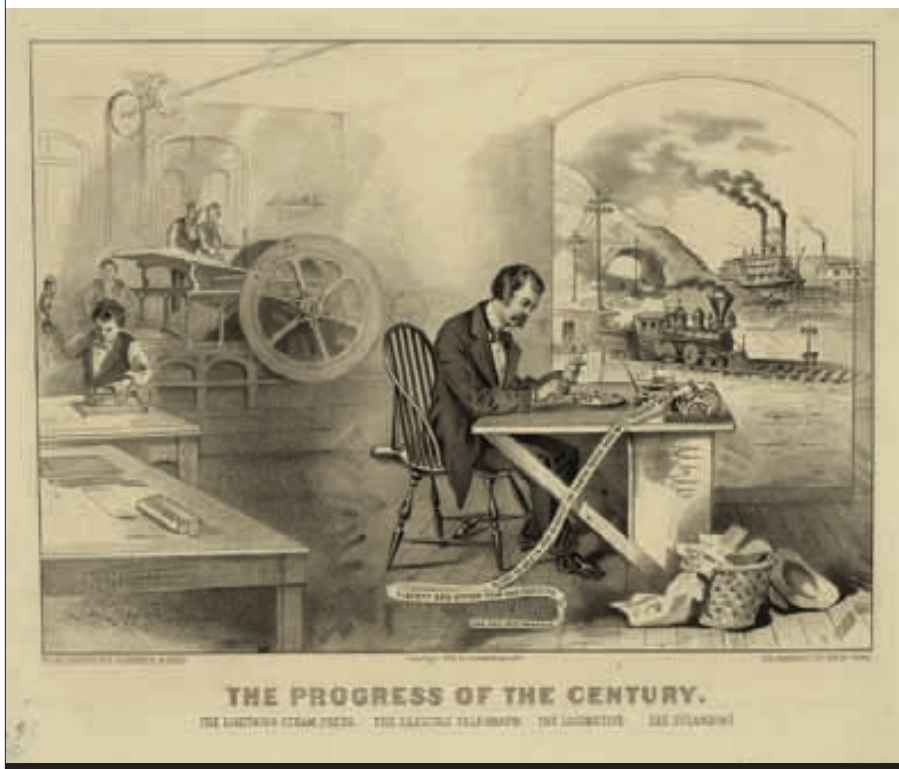
themselves as workingmen's churches and rejected what they called "Churchianity."

Their critique of capitalism lived on through the "Christian Socialist" movement within the Socialist Party. This popular movement emphasized that God made Jesus a poor carpenter for a reason—to show the wealthy the importance of honest labor. In Socialist newspapers, read by believers and unbelievers alike, Christian editors frequently printed the Beatitudes with modern-day references.

Bouck White, pastor at the Church of the Social Revolution in New York City, taught that industrialization was a stage in the evolution of millennial socialism. When Jesus returned, he would establish a reign of perfect peace: all profits of industry would be shared and none would be impoverished. Socialists frequently cited Jesus' statement in Matthew 19:24, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God."

The more Protestant and Catholic clergy in traditional churches emphasized the threat that socialism might replace Christianity, the more Christians in the labor movement emphasized Jesus' good news for the poor. In Britain, Unitarian reverend John Trevor started eight "Labour Churches" along with the British Socialist movement. The British Sunday School Union boasted eight Socialist Sunday schools.

In the United States, George Herron, John Spargo, and W. D. P. Bliss were among many Christian ministers who spread the gospel of the coming kingdom of God as organizers in Eugene Debs's Socialist Party of America. They were each members of the Christian Social Crusade and Christian Socialist Fellowship, coalitions arguing that Socialism perfected the Christian faith.



PROGRESS Published in 1876, this Currier and Ives lithograph features America's new industrial technologies: railroad, steamboat, telegraph, and a steam-engine-powered printing press.

workers' right to a "living wage" and argued that businesses ought to pay "the highest wage that each industry can afford." Moreover, it proclaimed as a universal right "the opportunity for self-maintenance . . . to be wisely and strongly safeguarded against encroachments of every kind."

In 1919 in England, the archbishop of Canterbury's statement "Christianity and Industrial Problems" echoed the FCC. He also demanded that the state support health care and old-age provisions if industries could not. Catholics in the National Catholic War Council issued a similar statement, saying that Christian principles enthusiastically endorsed the rights of all families to enough provisions to support themselves.

Herron claimed that Christians needed the country to elect Socialist leaders and de-privatize all industry to herald the reign of Christ. He argued that a state where individuals compete with one another effectively endorses selfishness, but in a world where all people must cooperate to earn their livings, true Christianity would thrive.

MISSION OF THE CARPENTER

In Episcopalian Bliss's Boston-area labor church, named "Brotherhood and Mission of the Carpenter," believers worked cooperatively for eight hours per day, sharing all costs and responsibilities in common. They met on Sundays for a Communion supper and services. Weekly Bible classes discussed Jesus' teachings, especially the Sermon on the Mount.

The dozens of such congregations and the precipitous rise in Socialist Party popularity in the early 1900s deeply frightened leaders of traditional Protestant denominations. The more different claims proliferated about the truths of Christ's teachings on money, the more each sounded like a personal opinion based on one's social position. Leaders who gathered for the Federal Council of Churches (FCC) in 1908 attempted to end this protracted public debate through the formation of a sustained council of Protestant leaders (see "Meeting together for the good of the world," pp. 30–32).

The FCC adopted the "Social Creed of the Churches," a small booklet distributed in mass to struggling workers. The creed endorsed male

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By the end of the Great War, denominational churches throughout the United States and England hoped to meet Socialist workers with compromise. They agreed that Jesus did care about the poor. They preached openly about the dark undersides of industrialization. Many middle-class, white Protestant churches expanded their charitable ministries and took notice that many fellow believers struggled under the weight of low wages and poor working conditions.

By the 1930s, Social Gospel teachings were used frequently in organizing industrial unions to secure wage workers the standards of living and job protections for which their parents fought (see "The life and times of John Bascom," pp. 12–15). Theology born of these discussions in the 1910s formed the basis of mainline Christian unity in the civil rights and immigration rights struggles of the 1950s and 1960s.

By the mid-twentieth century, many American workers were paid far better than they had been a century previously, and they praised the Industrial Revolution for making the "American standard of living" cheaper for all. But debates remained. The early twentieth century brought to the surface many more questions than have been answered. ■

Janine Giordano Drake is a Widener Fellow at the University of Illinois and is currently writing Between Religion and Politics: The Working Class Religious Left, 1886–1920.



Conquest or conversion?

MISSIONARIES WORKED HAND-IN-HAND WITH ECONOMIC INTERESTS
BUT SOMETIMES FOUND THEIR EFFORTS BEING THWARTED INSTEAD

Jeffrey B. Webb

IN THE HOT, STEAMY AIR of a mid-September day in 1899, William Henry Sheppard walked into the center of a burned and deserted village in the Belgian Congo. He was drawn there by news of atrocities committed by local Congolese against their fellow Africans, urged on by Belgian imperial authorities.

Near the village's stockade, the smell of decaying human flesh nearly knocked him over. Inside he discovered 81 severed human hands. The murderers had left them behind but had intended to deliver them to imperial officials as evidence that the natives had not complied with demands to produce rubber for sale in distant European and American markets.

RUBBER PROFITS

When he entered the Congo region in the 1880s as a missionary for the Presbyterian Church in the United States, Sheppard intended simply to bring the Gospel to those who had not yet heard of Christ's love and saving grace. But he and his fellow missionaries soon grew concerned that European governments and corporations were oppressing and exploiting native populations.

On that September day in 1899, when Sheppard surveyed the ruins of the village of Chinyama with one

of the perpetrators of the massacre, M'lumba N'kusa, the missionary was astonished to hear the murderer say that his instructions had come from white imperial authorities. His superiors had reportedly said, "The state has sent you and you have to go by your instructions." If N'kusa had not complied, he might have been subject to the same fate.

Authorities in the Congo Free State had pledged, in a General Act signed in Berlin in 1885, to promote missionary efforts, suppress slavery, and do everything necessary to "educate the natives, and lead them to understand and appreciate the advantages of civilization."

On the ground, the story was much different. Rubber was the era's most profitable commodity, and King Leopold II of Belgium was a harsh ruler who ran the Congo as his own private source of income. His agents dispossessed native Congolese of their lands and imposed a harsh system of rubber production. When workers failed to meet their quotas, brutal imperial enforcers descended on villages and carried out whippings, mutilations, torture, and mass killings. Missionaries who raised objections were harassed and ultimately restricted or expelled. Sheppard himself became the target of a lawsuit.



THE CONGO “FREE” STATE This *Punch* cartoon exposed how Congolese natives were trapped in Leopold’s system of rubber production (left).

GOSPEL AND PROFITS Charles Grant of the East India Company (above left) brought both to India.

EVILS OF SLAVERY Bartolomé de las Casas (above right) wrote *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1542) to expose the harsh system of labor administered by Spain in American mines and plantations.

Earlier in the 1800s, those who preceded Sheppard thought their calling to preach the Gospel to the nations could work in harmony with Western political, economic, and cultural institutions. They joined industrialists, corporate agents, diplomats, and soldiers in securing open markets for European and North American trade. Once these were established, they built medical clinics, schools, churches, and other modern facilities.

Charles Grant’s career shows how the church made easy allies with powerful political and commercial figures. Grant left Scotland to serve in the British army in India in the 1760s, then became a superintendent with the East India Company. Eventually he was appointed to the board of directors and served intermittently as chairman. Grant experienced an adult conversion and became a chief advocate for the Christianization of India. As a director he encouraged Christian behavior among British military and commercial agents in India, and in his private life he sponsored the building of churches and the translation of Scripture into native languages.

“FINE SERVANTS”

Converting the native population and using them for economic purposes had been long entwined. In 1492, reflecting on the moment of first Spanish contact with the Arawaks (an indigenous tribe), Columbus noted the ease with which native Caribbean people could be converted to Christianity, and in the next breath, observed that “they would make fine servants. . . . With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.” Roman Catholic missionaries joined Spanish officials as Spain built its empire. Roman Catholic

parishes overlaid the administrative districts of New Spain by the turn of the seventeenth century.

Some Christians objected. Dominican priest Bartolomé de las Casas thought Spain had betrayed the Gospel by introducing the evil of slavery to the New World, writing of the native population: “Once they begin to learn of the Christian faith they become so keen to know more, to receive the Sacraments, and to worship God. . . . It was upon these gentle lambs, imbued by the Creator with all the qualities we have mentioned, that from the very first day they clapped eyes on them the Spanish fell like ravening wolves upon the fold.”

Las Casas’s objections aside, church and state worked together to convert the local population while simultaneously securing the obedience of native people to white European rule. Viceroy of New Spain were obligated to protect missionaries and support the work of the church, and Roman Catholic bishops and priests fulfilled state functions in the conquered lands. The church received grants of land and access to power in exchange for providing education and social services.

GOSPEL AND TRADE

All the major European powers followed Portugal and Spain into the business of overseas expansion, especially as the industrial era dawned: Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States. And as governments awakened to the commercial possibilities in foreign lands, so did mission agencies.

In Great Britain this happened quickly. By 1800 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (the Church of England’s mission society) joined

THE BOXER REBELLION This outcry against Westerners in China culminated in a two-month siege of the Western diplomatic quarter of Peking.

ranks with newer evangelically oriented agencies that carried the Gospel to Africa, Southeast Asia, China, and most importantly, India.

This was when Grant appeared on the scene. His military career and business leadership coincided with growing desires for reform among Anglican ministers and prominent lay leaders. Grant joined with William Wilberforce, Henry Thornton, and others of the so-called Clapham Sect to lobby the British Parliament to abolish the slave trade, aware that British commercial practices often undermined the Gospel message of love, peace, and justice in Christ. In 1807 their efforts were rewarded with an act of Parliament that abolished the market for slaves.

SOUL-SEARCHING

Grant's thoughts on slavery were just the beginning of soul-searching among missionaries about the human costs of empire. In China Dr. William Lockhart, a medical missionary with the London Missionary Society in the 1840s, criticized the opium trade as an impediment to evangelization. Eventually missionaries built popular support at home on the issue; the Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade was founded in 1874. Yet it could only issue ineffectual protests in the face of frenzied profit-taking by the East India Company and the British royal treasury well into the twentieth century.

For missionaries, the state's protection turned out to be a two-edged sword. On one hand, as the World Missionary Conference commissioners reported in 1910, "any tolerable Government, maintaining order and doing something to elevate the people under it, is a help, and a safeguard." In Indonesia the Dutch East India Company introduced missionaries from the Netherlands Missionary Society in 1812, and soon after the Kingdom of the Netherlands created a state church under royal authority, the *Indische Kerk*.

Arrangements like this gave Christianity legal, administrative, and financial support. European governments issued grants to missionary societies and to local churches to build hospitals, schools, and relief stations.

But there was a downside too. Indigenous people made negative associations between decadent European settlers and Christian faith. An American missionary lamented in 1889 that "falsehoods, deceptions, frauds, drunkenness, debauchery, and other great vices perpetrated among the heathen by those from Christian lands, do much to hinder the feeble efforts put forth to bring the world to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ."

Missionaries also grumbled about imperial officials favoring other faiths in an effort to seem neutral to local native leaders. In the Middle East, Church Missionary Society staff in the 1880s remarked that "the British



Government practically prohibits aggressive work from fear of arousing Mohammedan fanaticism" and that "in order to show their impartiality as between Protestants and Roman Catholics, [officials] go to the other extreme and favour Mohammedans." Some missionary societies discovered that breaking away from state support improved their rate of success in converting new believers, recruiting native ministers, and expanding operations.

A GROWING DISTANCE

Missionaries became careful to distance themselves from imperial authorities and agents of corporations. Bishop W. M. Cameron of the Anglican Church of the Province of South Africa observed that his work was hampered by "the idea in the minds of many of the heathen natives that Christianity is a foreign religion, and that the missionaries are in some way or other officers of the British Government."

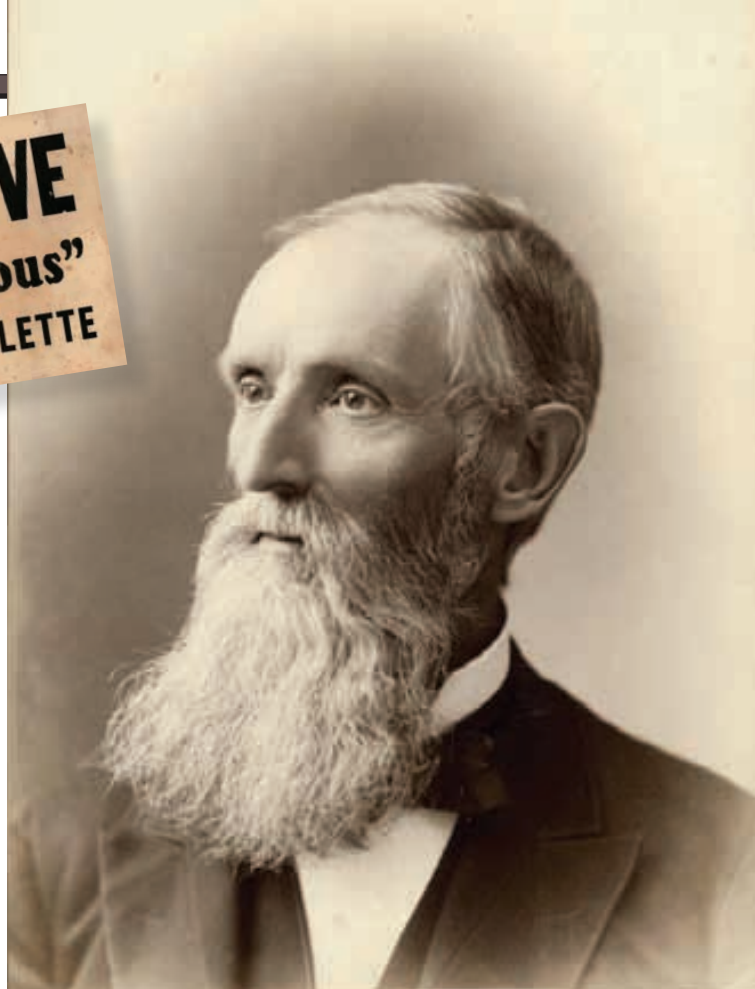
These hostilities boiled over in 1899 in China. Chinese nationalists attacked missionaries and foreign diplomats in an event known as the Boxer Rebellion. In one district alone armed gangs killed 136 Protestant missionaries and 47 Roman Catholic clergy and nuns. Eventually 20,000 foreign troops marched into China, scattering Chinese imperial troops and Boxers.

Such grim news prompted missionaries to rethink their cooperation with economic and political leaders in the developing world. By World War I many missionaries realized that the Gospel was at cross-purposes with European and North American commercial and military activities. They came to lament, with the commissioners of the World Missionary Conference in 1910, that "certain Missions have been in past time stalking-horses for European Powers bent on aggression." ⁴¹

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VOTE PROGRESSIVE
"Keep Wisconsin Famous"
--PHIL LA FOLLETTE

PRESIDENT BASCOM John Bascom (1827–1911, right) used his university presidency to apply Social Gospel teachings statewide and influenced a whole generation of Progressive politicians (above).



The life and times of John Bascom

HOW SOCIAL GOSPELERS APPLIED THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS TO ECONOMIC ISSUES

William Kostlevy

FEW LIBERAL DEMOCRATS of President Obama's first term possessed as much power and political savvy as former congressman David Obey. In the secular political world, he was the principal architect of the federal stimulus package, and he chaired the session of Congress that voted to enact the controversial health-care plan known as "Obamacare."

Perhaps less well known in that secular political world is that Obey believed his actions were rooted not in secular political philosophy but in the religious traditions of his native Wisconsin. He encountered this tradition growing up in a Roman Catholic parish in Wausau and

reaffirmed it in the unlikelyst of places, the seemingly secular University of Wisconsin. For Obey, this tradition was known as the Social Gospel.

WHERE GOSPEL MET SOCIAL

The Social Gospel is the idea that Christian ethics ought to be applied to social and economic problems—that Jesus came to save systems as well as people. As defined by Shailer Mathews, one of its greatest proponents, it is "the application of the teachings of Jesus and the total message of Christian salvation to society, the economic life, and social institutions . . . as well as to the individual."

Nowhere has this idea remained a more visible driving force than in Wisconsin, nurtured by the "Wisconsin Idea." This idea stated that the mission of the University of Wisconsin (UW) was to serve the needs of the state's residents. The builder and shaper of the Wisconsin Idea was John Bascom, president of UW from 1874 to 1887. In his life and presidency, "Gospel" met "social."

Bascom first articulated this vision in informal student gatherings at his house and in his required senior moral philosophy class. Bascom ended up in Wisconsin in part because some of his religious views troubled constituents at his previous position, teaching rhetoric at Massachusetts's Williams College. He and other Social Gospel pioneers were northern evangelicals, largely from New England or the so-called burned-over district



"FIGHTING BOB" SPREADING THE MESSAGE

Robert La Follette, Sr., was Bascom's most famous student. Both he and his son Phil served as governors of Wisconsin; his son Bob, Jr., was a U.S. senator; and his wife, Belle, a lawyer and women's rights activist.

Why work through secular ends? To Bascom the nation's churches seemed to be impediments to reaching a perfect social order. He saw them as tied to rigid and unchanging traditions.

But Bascom did believe in the pervasive spiritual and moral character of life. He even developed an evolution-friendly doctrine of conversion: no longer a sudden single experience of spiritual liberation but a gradual constant improvement. As scientists sought to discover the physical laws of the universe, he thought the new discipline of sociology would uncover the universe's social, moral, and spiritual laws, and

Christians should act accordingly: "A theology which seeks regeneration of society in ignorance of social laws is doomed to failure."

DARWINISM VS. THE GOSPEL

To affirm the Social Gospel, Bascom and his friends rejected two beliefs common among Americans in the late nineteenth century: the "gospel of wealth" and Social Darwinism. As advocated by many popular preachers, including America's greatest "celebrity pastor" Henry Ward Beecher, the gospel of wealth taught that wealth is a sign of divine favor rooted in personal virtue. In a land of plenty like the United States, if one was poor, it was one's own fault.

Social Darwinism applied Darwin's concept of the survival of the fittest to modern life: only those most able to "get ahead" and get along deserved to survive the industrial economy. Social Gospel advocates, on the other hand, believed that human beings evolved not just physically for "getting ahead" but spiritually and morally.

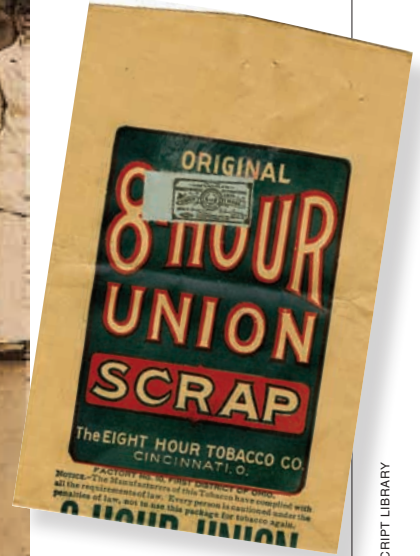
Bascom believed the world was improving. Furthermore, with the availability of proper education and in the restraining hand of virtuous political leaders, he thought it would continue to improve. Still he found contemporary society sadly deficient and far from the ideal of a properly "Christian State" (the title of his last baccalaureate address at Wisconsin). Bascom feared the

of upstate New York and northern Ohio (worn out by repeated revivals). They, or their families, had been active in the abolitionist and temperance movements.

Bascom himself, a later biographer said, was the author of 30 or 40 books that "cost him more money than he ever received. . . . But he also included that he was glad to have written them and is only sorry that he could not have been of more service to his fellow men." They included everything from social theory and theology to "An Appeal to Young Men on the Use of Tobacco." A gifted scholar and committed teacher, he fought as president for better pay for other faculty members, higher academic standards, and coeducational instruction.

TROUBLED BY POWER

As a Christian sociologist, Bascom was deeply troubled by the ruthlessly competitive capitalism that had emerged during and after the Civil War. While captains of industry celebrated the unregulated and often chaotic pursuit of wealth, Bascom denounced this competitiveness. He believed the increased concentration of power in the hands of a few violated democratic—and especially Christian—morality. In response, he thought, the state needed to serve a role once reserved for religious institutions. Only thus could humanity reach the utopian goal of a perfected Christian society. Such a society would protect the weak and regulate human interaction in a manner consistent with Christian moral principles.



growing power of wealth and its ability to “easily over-awe moral and social forces.”

LIQUOR, WOMEN, AND LABOR

Besides his abiding faith in education, Bascom personally supported three political movements that he connected to the Social Gospel: Prohibition, woman suffrage, and labor rights. At the top of his list was Prohibition. Bascom emerged as a leader in the one political party actually committed to the cause, the Prohibition Party. He thought abuse of liquor was a serious social problem that required government action. Rejecting the notion that Prohibition violated personal freedom, Bascom argued that drunkenness harmed its victims and stood in the way of spiritual progress. He insisted that society must “over-rule unreason with reason, unrighteousness with righteousness.”

In a state dominated by the Republican Party (which was divided on the issue), and with the university depending on state funds, Bascom found that political orthodoxy was more restrictive than theological orthodoxy. He was dismissed from UW in 1887. Returning to Williams College as professor of political science, Bascom left the Wisconsin Idea in the capable hands of his students. Protestant Social Gospel adherents and early Progressives universally supported Prohibition. When it died in 1931, its advocates noted that it was odd to say Prohibition had failed when it had never been seriously tried.

Not surprisingly for a champion of Prohibition, Bascom also promoted women’s rights; the two were often linked by those who felt delivering the vote to women would help rid the country of the scourge of

drunkenness. He even insisted that such bastions of male privilege as UW’s law school be made coeducational.

Finally, Bascom defended the right of labor to organize. In a time of mounting labor violence, he believed that workers needed joint action to balance the power of owners. For Bascom and his friends in the Social Gospel movement, these were spiritual, not merely political, matters. Human dignity required a certain standard of living, and arbitrarily low wages oppressed workers and harmed society.

“THE UNION OF ALL WHO LOVE”

It is hardly surprising that Bascom’s most famous student, Robert M. La Follette (1855–1925) championed the power of the state in the hands of educated and righteous leaders. He came to Madison in the 1870s with a conscience sharpened by abolitionists at a small Free Will Baptist academy in Evansville, Wisconsin. As Wisconsin’s pioneering Progressive governor, La Follette virtually made the university’s faculty into a branch of the state government.

Economics professor Richard Ely, sociologist E. A. Ross, political science professor Charles McCarthy (author of the book *The Wisconsin Idea*), and virtually the entire faculty of the School of Agriculture were constantly called upon to address social and practical problems confronting Wisconsin residents. The Wisconsin Idea angered both doctrinaire socialists, who wanted more state intervention, and political conservatives, who wanted less.

But as early as the 1890s, the Social Gospel notion of a cooperative Christian commonwealth governed by the Golden Rule and the ethics of Jesus was circulating widely among Populists and Christian Socialists.

“WHEN I GROW UP, MOMMY, CAN I VOTE?” Women march for suffrage in New York City, 1912 (*far left*).

SHOPPING SUSTAINABLY This packaging certified that the tobacco products it contained were made in a shop that had agreed to an eight-hour workday (*near left*).

PREACHING THE SOCIAL GOSPEL Fashionable churchgoers heard the Social Gospel from their pulpits frequently in the early 20th c. (*right*).

(Populism represented a coalition of farmers and labor unions against elite bankers, businessmen, and railroad tycoons.) It found especially fertile ground in the failed 1896 presidential campaign of William Jennings Bryan.

Many younger Social Gospel advocates, such as Ely, who founded the anti-Social Darwinist American Economic Association, were educated in Europe. In fact, British Christian Socialists, such as F. D. Maurice and editor W. T. Stead, established much of the framework for the American movement. Stead, who later perished on the *Titanic* after giving his life jacket to another, famously published an insightful and graphic expose of Chicago's underbelly, *If Christ Came to Chicago: A Plea for the Union of All Who Love in the Service of All Who Suffer* (1894). The Social Gospel also laid the foundation for the modern Canadian welfare state, especially in the more homogenous environments of Ontario and the Prairie Provinces.

MAKING A LIVING WAGE

In effect the Social Gospel, not just in Wisconsin but throughout North America, evolved spiritually and politically from protecting the victims of the industrial system to putting forth an understanding of the economic basis of a just society. Beginning with the notion of an eight-hour workday, the movement soon proclaimed that workers were entitled to a living wage—probably the most enduring Catholic contribution to the Social Gospel movement in America.


Drawn from the title of a book by Minnesota native and Catholic priest John A. Ryan (see “Brothers and Sisters of Charity,” pp. 16–20), a “living wage” was defined as the income needed for the head of household to provide for a family's health and self-respect: savings, insurance, tithe, union dues, reading, and modest recreation. A critic of what he called the “gospel of consumption,” Ryan advocated “distributive justice”—a fairer distribution of wealth, not an increase in individual consumption of luxury items.

On the right, some saw the Social Gospel as a departure from Christian orthodoxy by idealistic and



naïve do-gooders. On the left, it was seen as perfectionistic, naïve, and focused on the middle class. Both critiques contain elements of truth. But the Social Gospel tradition is still alive and well in America and around the world.

Let one illustration stand for thousands of others: the young Methodist Sunday school teacher and mayor of Minneapolis, Hubert Humphrey insisting at the 1948 party convention that the Democratic Party repudiate its segregationist heritage and embrace a platform that affirmed civil rights for African Americans. Humphrey was a product of the Social Gospel tradition, as were other famous pioneers for racial justice like baseball executive Branch Rickey, his star player Jackie Robinson, and Georgia's Baptist preacher Martin Luther King, Jr. All had learned the Christian vision of a world of social equality and economic justice from parents, pastors, and teachers nurtured by the Social Gospel in mainline Protestantism.

But the question remains. Did the movement come to believe that what really counted in life was not the church as an institution but the social and economic justice for which the church advocated? Did this secular trend take away the Gospel basis of the social and economic reforms advocated by Social Gospel pioneers? Where, today, does “Gospel” meet “social”? 

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MERCIFUL SISTERS This 1859 oil painting by French artist Henriette Browne shows Catholic Sisters of Mercy tending to the ill. Several 19th-c. religious orders wore the *Flying Nun*-style headgear.

Brothers and Sisters of Charity

THE CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO A TRANSFORMED WORLD

Kevin Schmiesing

"At the time being, the condition of the working classes is the pressing question of the hour."

IT WAS NOT CHARLES DICKENS, Victor Hugo, or even Karl Marx who penned that sentence. It was Pope Leo XIII in "On Capital and Labor" (*Rerum Novarum*, 1891), an encyclical (papal letter) inaugurating a series of documents we now refer to as "modern Catholic social teaching." As industrialization and urbanization came to the Christian West, the churches of Europe and the Americas felt compelled to respond to the new problems of an industrial world.

It was natural that Roman Catholicism, the West's largest body of believers, was on the front-lines of this response. The Catholic Church

possessed a highly developed system of social institutions (hospitals, schools, orphanages, and the religious orders that served them). It also had an extensive system of intellectual institutions (seminaries, universities, and publications). Its response was therefore both practical and theoretical. The challenges presented by capitalism and socialism absorbed the attention of some of Catholicism's best and brightest minds in this new era.

REKINDLING THE FLAME

In France Blessed Frederic Ozanam (1813–1853) put Christian ideals into action by founding one of the world's largest charitable organizations, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. When Ozanam moved to Paris at the age of 18, he was shocked at the sight of "dilapidated tall tenements" and "grimy and cluttered" narrow streets hidden behind aristocratic neighborhoods. "The earth has become a chilly place," he wrote. "It is up to us Catholics to rekindle the flame of human warmth going out."

Ozanam urged charity motivated by genuine Christian love rather than guilt or paternalism. He saw service of the poor as a profoundly spiritual encounter with Christ himself.

Confronted by the poor, he said, "We should fall at their feet and say to them with the apostle: 'My Lord and my God. . . . You are for us the sacred image of the God that we cannot see. Since we know not how to love him otherwise, we will love him in your people.'" Ozanam's vision inspired millions of followers and provided renewed vigor to Catholicism's ancient, but sometimes neglected, spirituality of social action.

In Germany Wilhelm von Ketteler (1811–1877), bishop of Mainz, advocated cooperation among capital, labor, church, and government to ensure that the needs of the poor and laboring classes were adequately addressed.

He also anticipated the rationale by which Pope Leo would justify what some criticized as "religious meddling" in secular affairs: "Our divine Savior bound the Christian religion, forever and indissolubly, to everything relating to the alleviation of people's spiritual and physical poverty. The Church has acted according to this precept everywhere and at all times."

England—the land of Adam Smith and laissez-faire "Manchester economics"—was also the home of Cardinal Edward Manning (1808–1892). Like



Ketteler, Manning was an early champion among the Catholic hierarchy for the social obligations of the Catholic faith. Also like Ketteler, Manning believed that the abolition of medieval guilds—where men of different trades banded together—had left workers vulnerable. Thus, he wrote, “It has come to pass that working men have been given over, isolated and defenseless, to the callousness of employers, and to the greed of unrestrained competition.”

A convert from Anglicanism, Manning used his position as archbishop of Westminster to promote the rights of workers; his most famous intervention brought about the settlement of the Dock Strike of 1889. Manning communicated with his friend Pope Leo on the labor question, and Leo asked Manning to translate *Rerum Novarum* into English. Following this, labor organization as an expression of the right to freedom of association became an important theme in the Catholic Church’s social teaching.

TOO FEW CAPITALISTS?

Manning’s vigorous assertions of solidarity between the church and the working classes initiated a tradition of intense Catholic skepticism about the benefits of capitalism. In the early twentieth century, some of the most popular English Catholic intellectuals of the day—Vincent McNabb (1868–1943), G. K. Chesterton (1874–1936), and Hilaire Belloc (1870–1953)—advocated an approach to economic life they called “distributism.” (See CHM #75, *G. K. Chesterton*).

Distributists argued that widespread ownership was the key to social equity. When as many people as possible possess land, exploitation is impossible, for to own land is to hold the means of production and to be self-sufficient. The result of laissez-faire economics is not the spread of wealth, but the excessive concentration of wealth; as Chesterton put it, “Too much capitalism does not mean too many capitalists, but too few capitalists.”

DOING HIS PART Leo XIII, author of *Rerum Novarum*, feeding the poor as archbishop of Perugia where he served from 1846 to 1877 (above left).

LABOR AND CHRISTIANITY In his 1864 book, *The Labor Question and Christianity*, Bishop Wilhelm von Ketteler (above) steered clear of both a liberalism that neglected the role of the state and a socialism that gave the state too much power.

Distributism had a small following in the United States, where American Catholic social thinkers displayed nearly as much variety as their European counterparts—although they avoided the most radical approaches such as socialism, fascism, and monarchism. (Catholics, whose national loyalty was sometimes suspected, wanted to be “good Americans,” after all.) Distributism remains an important strain within Catholic social thought, though its proponents struggle to show how a path toward universal ownership would work in practice, distinct from both existing market systems and state socialism.

Cardinal James Gibbons (1834–1921) of Baltimore proved that the church in the United States would be fundamentally sympathetic to working-class concerns when he intervened in Rome in 1887 to ensure that the Knights of Labor—an early American union led at the time by a Catholic, Terence Powderly (1849–1924)—would not be condemned by the pope.

Owing to the historical conflict between free-masonry and Catholicism, the church did not tolerate Catholic participation in “secret societies.” Gibbons’s task was to assure the pope that the Knights of Labor was not such a society.

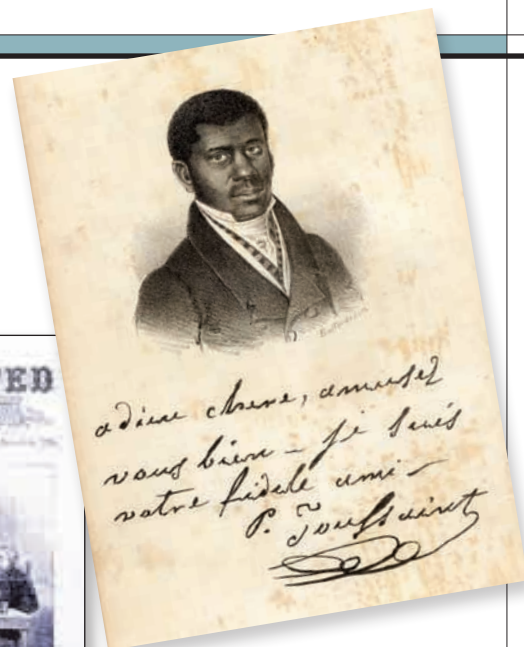
Gibbons’s memorandum to Rome was the decisive blow in the Vatican’s internal squabble over what should be done about the Knights. He later wrote privately to Manning, “I cannot sufficiently express to you how much I have felt strengthened in my position by being able to refer in the document



FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES Above: Theodore Roosevelt embraces Cardinal James Gibbons.

KNIGHTS OF LABOR Right: Catholic head of the union Terence Powderly (center) addresses delegates gathered in Virginia in 1886.

"I AM YOUR FAITHFUL FRIEND" Far right: Pierre Toussaint founded several businesses to help fellow Catholic immigrants.



much to itself." When it did so, it hardly left "to the worker enough to restore and renew his strength."

Monsignor Ryan saw the pope's message as vindication of his own. Yet Pius sounded

to your utterances on the claims of the working man to our sympathy and support."

The most prominent American advocate of Catholic social teaching in the first half of the twentieth century was Monsignor John A. Ryan (1869–1945). Ryan, a longtime professor of morality at Catholic University of America (Washington, DC), was also the inaugural director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Ryan was in large part on board with the New Deal policies of Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s, and he reminisced in 1941 that "practically all the reform measures enacted during the Roosevelt administration have met with my hearty approval." But what sometimes set Ryan apart from his Progressive allies—and what united him with fellow Catholic thinkers across the political spectrum—was the central place he gave the family in his social thought.

Ryan viewed the church's teachings against birth control and for a just wage as complementary pieces of a consistent social ethic. His ideal: a household composed of a mother and multiple children, supported by a breadwinning father.

PROPER USE OF PROPERTY

Meanwhile, in 1931—the fortieth anniversary of *Re-rum Novarum*—Pope Pius XI issued his own social encyclical, *On Social Reconstruction* (*Quadragesimo Anno*). "Property, that is, 'capital,'" he wrote, "has undoubtedly long been able to appropriate too

other themes as well, including the principle that would come to be called *subsidiarity*. This warned against the government performing functions proper to families and other smaller institutions. It was, Pope Pius declared, "an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do."

Many figures within the American Catholic community paid heed to such warnings. Scorched by the policies of the Kulturkampf—the 1870s campaign by Prussian prime minister Otto von Bismarck to suppress Catholic influence in public affairs—socially minded German Americans were wary of the abuses of government power.

Frederick Kenkel (1863–1952), head of the chief German American institution of Catholic thought, the Catholic Central Verein (CCV) in St. Louis, wrote as early as 1933 that he detected in Roosevelt's New Deal agenda a drift toward "the bitter end of State Socialism." The CCV criticized the American economic system for its failure to reflect Catholic principles of justice, but it also believed that government expansion in the 1930s represented a serious threat to personal freedom, as well as to families, churches, and other groups that stood between the individual and the state.

GOOD FOR BUSINESS

By the 1940s there were hints, too, of a more market-friendly approach in Catholic thought—soon seen in

SEE HIM THROUGH



HELP US TO
HELP THE BOYS

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WAR COUNCIL
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

United War Work Campaign - Week of November 11-1918

"HELP THE BOYS" The National Catholic War Council (founded 1917) was in part a response to American Protestants coming together in the Federal Council of Churches in 1908.

rather frequently, and legitimately so, that with equal sincerity some of the faithful will disagree with others on a given matter. . . . Hence it is necessary for people to remember that no one is allowed in the aforementioned situations to appropriate the Church's authority for his opinion. They should always try to enlighten one another through honest discussion, preserving mutual charity and caring above all for the common good."

ROLLING UP THEIR SLEEVES

All this attention devoted to social and economic problems by popes and intellectuals may leave the impression that the bulk of the church's efforts were theoretical. In fact, the opposite is true. The practical Catholic response to industrialization was forceful, especially in the United States.

European immigrants dominated American Catholicism after 1840 until at least the 1920s. Irish- and German-born bishops were in charge, and they focused the church's resources—meager as those were—on providing for the spiritual and material needs of

their immigrant brothers and sisters.

For millions of Catholic newcomers, the church was the first step up on the ladder of American success. This role was crucial in an era when government safety nets were as yet largely unconstructed. Often enough, newer immigrants benefited from the generosity of other immigrants who had just a few years earlier achieved the American dream.

In New York Haitian-born Pierre Toussaint (1766–1853), hairdresser to the wealthy, funded an orphanage, an employment agency, and a shelter for travelers. Beneficiary of a rich inheritance and operator of a successful bakery business, Irish-born widow Margaret Haughery (ca. 1814–1882) spent her wealth aiding the sick and poor of New Orleans.

In St. Louis another Irish immigrant, merchant John Mullanphy (1758–1833), was sitting on a large fortune by the time the tidal wave of Irish immigration provoked by Ireland's 1845–1852 potato famine arrived. Besides direct assistance to struggling immigrants, he built a convent for the Sisters of Loretto, a novitiate for the Society of Jesus, and a hospital for the Sisters of Charity. These and other congregations (groups) of male and female consecrated *religious* (members of orders of monks and nuns) became sources of workers for

the rise of William F. Buckley (1925–2008), Michael Novak (b. 1933), and Richard John Neuhaus (1936–2009). A professor of economics at the University of Notre Dame, Fr. Edward Keller (1903–1989), argued in a popular Catholic magazine in 1947 that "the [papal] encyclicals do not condemn our economic system of free enterprise, but instead give a strong moral foundation for such a system."

Keller's appreciation of business found papal support. In a 1950 address, "Vocation of Businessmen," Pope Pius XII reiterated the traditional view that business cannot be concerned solely with profit. But he also upheld the value of a businessperson's technical expertise, "the individual exercise of commerce for the service of society's material well-being."

In the end, identifying a "party line" within Catholic social teaching is impossible. Catholic intellectuals agreed that Christians needed to confront the implications of industrial society. Still, the matter of interpreting and applying the church's teaching remained in many cases far from simple.

The Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Church in the Modern World declared that on political and economic questions, "it happens



“SISTER SAYS” Many Catholic religious orders were active in hospital work and teaching, exemplified by this nun instructing a classroom in the 1940s.

the charitable institutions springing up in America's cities.

MUTUAL AID AND COMFORT

But assistance from conventional charities was only one way in which poor Catholic immigrants coped with financial hardship. Mutual aid societies, by which neighbors of modest means would pool resources to provide for each other in times of need, became vitally important to immigrant communities. Some grew into large and sophisticated organizations that survive in modified form today—the Knights of Columbus, for example.

Others were spontaneous efforts organized locally by individuals whose names have been lost to history. Their social concern gave rise to groups aiding members who experienced illness, unemployment, or death in their families. In 1891, for instance, the women of Holy Family parish in Chicago took up a collection to pay for the funeral of a mother of six children, and thereby brought into being the Women's Catholic Order of Foresters.

The overwhelming needs of fellow Catholics provided plenty of demand for the available services. But they were not limited to helping Catholics. During a cholera outbreak in Louisville in 1832, city fathers recruited the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth to care for the diseased, since no one else would do it. The Nazareth sisters and many other congregations opened the doors of their orphanages, schools, and hospitals to all comers, regardless of religion. Many Protestants first encountered Catholic sisters through this charitable work.

During the Civil War, nursing sisters' solicitude toward the diseased and wounded of all

backgrounds impressed combatants on both sides. At Gettysburg, one survivor observed the care given to a deceased comrade and assumed that such devotion could only come from a family member. Told that the attending nurse was a nun, he remarked, “I have often heard of the Sisters of Charity, and I can now testify that they have been properly named.”

These humble, diverse initiatives gradually grew. In 1910 many of them united in the National Conference of Catholic Charities (later Catholic Charities USA). By that time heavy Catholic immigration and the large Catholic families that soon

resulted had helped to make the church a powerful political player. This was especially true in the big cities of the East and Midwest, where Catholics dominated urban politics.

As government became a more active provider of charitable funds and assistance, Catholic organizations entered into cooperative arrangements with friendly local governments. And, as Catholic institutions grew into some of the largest and most respected providers of social assistance in the country, those arrangements extended to the state and national levels.

This was a natural progression, but it came with a tradeoff. More centralized organization potentially compromised local initiative and flexibility. More government funding potentially restricted religious motivation and identity. Longstanding uneasiness with this situation reached a crescendo in the early twenty-first century, when charges of soft-pedaling church teaching and neglecting their spiritual mission forced some agencies to reform their policies and practices.

Differences of opinion aside, Catholics are justifiably proud of this record of social action. Like any human endeavor, it is tinged with failure and imperfection, but it also stands as one of the great concrete expressions of Christian charity—that “extraordinary force,” Pope Benedict XVI wrote in his own recent social encyclical, that “leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace” and that “gives real substance to the personal relationship with God and with neighbor.” ☒

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Houses of hospitality

Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin worked alongside the poor, inspired by their Christian faith and their economic ideals *Edwin Woodruff Tait*

By the age of 25, journalist Dorothy Day (1897–1980) had survived the San Francisco Earthquake, imprisonment on a trumped-up charge of prostitution connected with socialist activism, an abortion, a failed marriage, and drinking bouts in Greenwich Village with Eugene O'Neill. Yet the decisive factor that converted her to Catholicism in 1922 was none of these—it was an immense surge of joy at the birth of her child.

Day wrote later that there was nothing to do with such gratitude but to offer it to God. Her common-law husband not only refused to follow her into the Catholic Church but also refused to regularize their marriage. Day left him and lived as a celibate single mother for the rest of her life.

DYNAMITE UNDER WRAPS

Five years after her conversion, she met French intellectual Peter Maurin (1877–1949). Maurin had spent decades wandering around America doing unskilled labor, his pockets containing “easy essays” full of his ideas. Maurin, a Distributist, believed that Catholic social teaching provided an alternative to capitalism and state socialism, but that this “dynamite” had been kept under wraps. He wanted a radical new society focused on private ownership of property by everyone, ideally in a rural setting. One of his slogans was, “Feed the poor; starve the bankers.”

Maurin saw in Day a gifted journalist who could publicize his ideas. Day found in Maurin a “rule of life” that would combine her social activism with her Catholic faith. Together, they founded the periodical the *Catholic Worker*, as well as a “house of hospitality” where the poor were welcomed and fed.

A central principle of the Catholic Worker (CW) movement was the workers’ deliberate, voluntary choice to live simply alongside the poor. Today there are over 120 CW communities in the United States, and the *Catholic Worker* has been continuously published since 1933.

ARRESTED FOR JESUS

Day brought to the *Catholic Worker* her experience with labor activism and muckraking journalism. While she renounced socialism, she used her magazine to report on labor conditions throughout the country, traveling to Appalachia to cover miners’ strikes and, at the end of her life, getting herself arrested in the company of Cesar Chavez.

Getting arrested was in fact a regular part of Day’s ministry. She and other members of the Catholic



DOROTHY DAY The activist pickets prior to her arrest at City Hall Park, New York City, April 17, 1959.

Worker house in New York protested Cold-War-era nuclear drills by sitting on park benches when everyone else was hurrying for bomb shelters.

Convinced that no form of violence was compatible with following Jesus or building a society based on human dignity and compassion, Day even refused to expel residents of the Catholic Worker houses whose presence was disruptive. When discontented members of the community took over one of their farms, Day and Maurin simply let them have the property.

SLOGANS FROM THE POPES

Day inspired a generation of Catholic social and economic radicals, although they did not always share her traditional faith or her commitment to obey the church hierarchy. Members of the Catholic Worker movement might march in picket lines alongside Communists, but they did so holding posters with the words of the popes written on them.

Having once rejected Christianity because it seemed to have nothing to do with material needs, Day spent her life proving her youthful self wrong by example. “Men wanted work more than they wanted bread,” she wrote, “and they wanted to be responsible for their work.”

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What happened when the world transformed

1700s

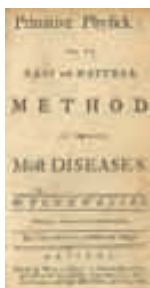
1800s

1800s

1800s

The world changes & the church responds

- 1708 Jethro Tull invents mechanical sower for large-scale planting in rows
- 1709 Abraham Darby improves iron ore smelting by using coke for fuel
- 1712 Thomas Newcomen invents the first practical steam engine
- 1746 John Wesley publishes *Primitive Physic*
- 1765 Spinning jenny invented, initiating the automation of weaving
- 1760s Arthur Guinness inspired to begin charity to the poor of Dublin
- 1772 Extension of Bridgewater Canal in NW England kicks off “canal mania”
- 1784 Andrew Meikle develops a threshing machine
- 1779 First steam-powered mills established
- 1789 Archibald Cochrane lights his estate with gas
- 1793 Eli Whitney develops cotton gin
- Early 1800s Many new mission societies founded
- 1801 Steam locomotive demonstrated
- 1807 First successful steamboat launched
- 1807 Slave trade outlawed in Great Britain after decades of political effort led by Christians
- 1807 Primitive Methodism founded in Great Britain, combining American-style worship with outreach to the poor
- 1811–15 Luddite riots: laborers attack factories and break up machines they fear will replace them
- 1830 Liverpool and Manchester Railway begins first regular commercial rail service
- 1831 Michael Faraday discovers electromagnetic induction, making electric engines possible
- 1834 Charles Babbage develops analytic engine, forerunner of the computer
- 1833 Society of St. Vincent de Paul founded to serve poor slum dwellers



- 1837 Telegraph and Morse code developed; first ocean-going steamship launches
- 1840s Dr. William Lockhart criticizes opium trade as impediment to missions
- 1840s Benjamin Lee and Arthur Lee Guinness give generously to help victims of Irish potato famine
- 1842 Amana Colony moves to America, decides to hold property in common
- 1844 Morse's telegraph first used commercially
- 1846 Evangelical Alliance inaugurated
- 1850 Petrol (gasoline) first refined
- 1851 Isaac Singer invents practical sewing machine
- 1852 Elisha Otis invents elevator safety brake, making skyscrapers practical
- 1858 First trans-Atlantic cable completed
- 1859 First successful gasoline engine used
- 1860 Free Methodist Church founded in the United States: antislavery, pro-holiness, free pews for the poor
- 1860s William and Catherine Booth begin Christian Mission in London, later renamed The Salvation Army
- 1863 Slavery ends in the United States
- 1867 Alfred Nobel produces dynamite
- 1870s–1914 Supporters of the Nonconformist Conscience in Britain work for alcohol prohibition, sexual purity, other causes
- 1873 Remington typewriter invented
- 1874 Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade founded
- 1874 Women's Christian Temperance Union founded
- 1874 John Bascom becomes president of the University of Wisconsin, where the Social Gospel influences his “Wisconsin Idea”



Christians responded to the issues caused by a newly mechanized, industrialized world in a host of ways, beginning in the late eighteenth century and continuing even today.

1800s

1800s

1900s

1900s



WORKMAN'S
8-HOUR
WATCH

—1876 Alexander Bell invents the telephone

—1877 Thomas Edison invents the phonograph

—1879 Thomas Edison invents a practical incandescent lamp

—1879 Salvation Army work begins in America

—1883 First modern skyscraper (10 stories) built in Chicago; Brooklyn Bridge opens

—1884 Hiram Maxim invents machine gun, facilitating mass slaughter and advancing mechanized warfare

—1885 Karl Benz introduces automobile with internal-combustion engine

—1885 Methodists begin deaconess work, based on a German Lutheran model



—1885 John Wilson becomes a member of Parliament, works for social reform

—1885 Josiah Strong publishes *Our Country*

—1886 Edward Cecil Guinness establishes the Guinness Trust to help the "laboring poor"

—1880s–1890s Guinness company follows John Lumsden's recommendations for worker treatment

—1888 Heinrich Hertz puts the study of radio waves on a scientific basis

—1890 William Booth publishes *In Darkest England and the Way Out*

—1891 Pope Leo XIII issues "On Capital and Labor"

—1891 Abraham Kuyper helps organize the first Christian Social Congress in the Netherlands

—1893 Cadbury begins to build the model village of Bournville

—1894 W. T. Stead publishes *If Christ Came to Chicago*



—1896 William Jennings Bryan, Social Gospel proponent, runs unsuccessfully for president

—1896 Guglielmo Marconi patents wireless telegraph

—1899 Aspirin invented

—1899 William Sheppard discovers Congo massacre

—1899 Joseph Rowntree publishes *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*

—1899–1901 Boxer uprising rages in China

—Early 1900s Charles Welch active philanthropically in Westfield, New Jersey

—1902–1904 Rowntree Cocoa builds its model village, New Earswick

—1903 Asa Candler assists in building Wesley MECS and associated hospital facilities

—1903 Wright brothers first achieve manned, powered, heavier than air flight

—1908 Henry Ford mass-produces the Model T

—1908 Federal Council of Churches formed

—1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference convenes

—1914 Bouck White issues "Socialist Creed"

—1925 First "Life and Work" Congress convenes

—1931 Pope Pius XI issues "On Reconstruction of the Social Order"

—1933 Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin begin to publish the *Catholic Worker* and found CW communities

—1935 E. Stanley Jones publishes *Christ's Alternative to Communism*

—1940s Koinonia Farms founded as interracial farming community in rural Georgia

—1948 World Council of Churches formed





JOHN WESLEY PREACHING FROM HIS FATHER'S TOMBSTONE

Wesley told his followers to do good to the bodies and souls of others "by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison" and by "instructing, reproofing, or exhorting" anyone they came in contact with.

become a member of Parliament, where he worked steadily on behalf of those he had left in the coalfields.

Wilson's story was only one among thou-

sands as Methodism and its Holiness offshoots blazed their way through the nineteenth century, bringing many evangelical believers in their wake and seeking to respond to industrialization, drunkenness, displacement, and poverty.

WESLEYANS TO THE RESCUE

This all began with John Wesley (1703–1791) himself. While Wesley claimed that Christians ought to preach repentance often and politics rarely, except when necessary to defend the king, he was actually not shy about expressing his political and economic opinions. Those opinions were typical of an upper-middle-class, Oxford-educated clergyman, but that did not mean he was not concerned about the problems of English society.

One of his responses was to issue scathing indictments of those who profited off of others. His tract "Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions," for instance, claimed that the poor were hungry because of the influence of "distilling, taxes, and luxury."

He also tried to help. His book *Primitive Physic* (1746) was an inexpensive compilation of home remedies for those too poor to pay doctor's bills. Wesley recorded whether or not he had attempted the remedies himself. ("A cancer in the breast. A Poultice of wild Parsnips or scraped Carrots, Flowers, Leaves and Stalks, changing it Morning and evening. . . . To cure the Tooth-Ache. Be electrified through the teeth. *Tried.*")

Wesley's system of organizing his followers into classes and bands within the Methodist "societies" not only disciplined them in spiritual growth but distributed relief funds collected from society members. He

Eating bread with widows and orphans

WESLEYANS IN BRITAIN AND AMERICA
HELPED BOTH THE BODIES AND SOULS
OF THOSE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
LEFT BEHIND

Jennifer Woodruff Tait

JOHN WILSON (1837–1915) was nothing but a coal miner in Durham, England, with a hangover—until the day the Primitive Methodists came to his home. Two elderly fellow miners from this conservative branch of Methodism knocked on his door as they went to work. Years later, historian Stephen Hatcher wrote of that fateful day, "They did not reproach him for his hangover, but saw the potential within him, and engaged him in work at the chapel. From that day on he was a changed man."

Following his conversion, Wilson began to teach Sunday school and became a local Methodist preacher. He also rose steadily in local politics. In 1885 he became one of the first leaders of the Durham coal miners to



established a medical clinic and maintained the dispensary himself, although it eventually had to close for lack of funds. He founded tuition-free schools for poor children, one in his own home. Under his direction the Foundry Chapel in London administered a revolving loan fund that served over 200 people a year. And he also founded a house for widows and orphans and regularly ate his meals with them: "For I myself, as well as the other preachers who are in town, diet with the poor on the same food and at the same table. And we rejoice herein as a comfortable earnest of our eating bread together in our Father's Kingdom."

SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL

When Methodism spread to America, it brought with it both a strict code of personal morality and a concern for those on the fringes of industrial society. Early American Methodists fought against slavery and witnessed to the simplicity of Gospel life in the face of extravagance—drinking, elegant balls, and fancy dress clothing. Extravagant dress impeded spiritual growth and used money better spent on aiding those in need. So did excessive drinking. Temperance soon became a signature Methodist cause.

But many Old and New World Methodists in the generations after Wesley's death became more respectably middle class in their orientation, at least in the "mainline"—the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Britain and the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. Almost immediately, groups began to depart from them, complaining that the fire of devotion and the fire of social action had gone out.

In Britain the influence of eccentric American evangelist "Mad Lorenzo" Dow led working-class Wesleyan Methodists Hugh Bourne (1772–1852) and William Clowes (1780–1851) to hold the first English camp meeting at Mow Cop in 1807. Out of this meeting came Primitive Methodism.

Primitives, as they were commonly called, were committed to American-style noisy personal devotion.



"AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER?" *Left:* The slogan of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Wesleyans were among those fighting to abolish slavery.

"YOU LOAD SIXTEEN TONS, WHAT DO YOU GET?" *Above:* The arduous task of English coalminers toiling underground in the 1870s.

JOHN WILSON *Below:* Methodism inspired his fight for economic justice.

Contemporaries claimed they "bawled" hymns at their chapels, and even Bourne said when listening to a group all praying simultaneously and extemporaneously (a common Primitive practice): "Anyone who could make out his own voice in that lot must have had a pretty good ear." But they were committed equally to outreach to the working poor: miners, fishermen, laborers in factories and on farms. Bourne himself was a millwright and joiner.



Primitive Methodists preached temperance as a road to both personal and social holiness at a time when the Wesleyan Methodists, though disapproving of drunkenness, would not allow teetotalers to speak at their chapels. Bourne once commented when asked if he had joined a total abstinence society, "No, they have joined me." In fact, some political advocates of teetotalism modeled their efforts on Primitive revivals.

The Primitive system of home-based prayer meetings also readily welcomed those who had been victimized by the new practice of "enclosure." In



“WOMAN’S HOLY WAR” Left: This cartoon showing women triumphing over the liquor industry was published the year the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union was founded in the United States.

PLANNING HER NEXT MOVE Above: WCTU president Frances Willard at her desk.

enclosure, landlords turned small tenant farms over to the large-scale raising of livestock to meet new industrial needs and evicted the tenants.

Primitives also reached out to people whose small-scale, home-based jobs had been taken away by large factories, or whose families had left them for factory work. They taught reading, writing, and arithmetic in Sunday school to the children of the poor. They also campaigned for Sunday as a day of rest for the working poor and preached against buying and selling on that day, as well as the opening of pubs.

Finally, Primitives supported—and in some cases became—radical politicians in the trade union movement and the Labour Party. When they were arrested for sympathizing with strikers, they kept preaching right through the prison bars to anyone who cared to listen.

REBELS WITH A CONSCIENCE

But the radicals did not corner all the action. The mainline branch of Methodists in Britain, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, remained concerned about social issues. Prominent Wesleyan Methodist Hugh Price Hughes was one of the best-known spokesmen for what was called the “Nonconformist Conscience.” (Nonconformists did not belong to the Church of England, but participated instead in Dissenting denominations—Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, and Quakers.) A twentieth-century historian later defined the “conscience” as “a conviction that there is no strict boundary between religion and politics; an insistence

that politicians should be men of the highest character; and a belief that the state should promote the moral welfare of its citizens.”

Hughes thought Christians needed to work against the “great evils” of slavery, drunkenness, ignorance, poverty, war, and the “social evils” (prostitution and venereal disease). He later added gambling and greed to the list for good measure. In England, the “Nonconformist Conscience,” with Wesleyan Methodists in the lead, became part of campaigns for disestablishment, sexual purity, alcohol prohibition, and Irish Home Rule—and part of protests against gambling, imperialism, and the favored position of the Church of England in public education.

HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE

In America, too, mainline and Holiness Methodists worked, in different ways, to combat social disruption. In many ways Holiness groups took the lead and felt their mainline compatriots were neither preaching holiness nor living it out in a commitment to the “least of these.” Acceptance of slavery bothered many Holiness groups, but so did extravagant dress, as well as preaching and worship that catered to the upwardly mobile.

For example, the “Free” in the Free Methodist denomination’s name protested the mainline Methodist practice of pew rentals, which left the poor nowhere to sit. In an editorial on “Free Churches,” denomination founder B. T. Roberts wrote: “The ills of life fall with crushing weight on the poor. Extortion wrings from



“NO STRICT BOUNDARY BETWEEN RELIGION AND POLITICS” *Left:* Hugh Price Hughes, leader of many British Methodist social crusades.

CARING FOR ORPHANS *Below:* At its peak, this Methodist deaconess home in Normal, Illinois, served 88 children.



them their scanty pittance. The law may endeavor to protect them, but they have no means to go to court. If famine visits, it comes to their table by surprise and may stay until they die. We must have free churches to reach the masses. . . . the greatest trophies of grace will center in the poverty-stricken.”

“DO EVERYTHING”

Mainline Methodists were working in their own way for social and economic causes. Temperance was in the lead—not just for Methodists but for many nineteenth-century evangelicals—and closely connected to women’s right to vote. With women in the voting booth, many reasoned, alcoholic prohibition would soon follow, as women would surely vote to close saloons to protect themselves and their families from drunken husbands.

The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union was founded in 1874 and open to all denominations, but in practice the Methodists ran it. Frances Willard (1839–1898), its most famous president, was an active Methodist Episcopal Church laywoman—she also campaigned within the denomination for women to serve as lay delegates to the ruling General Conference. Her “Do Everything” policy encouraged her followers to work for suffrage, labor rights, and better health care, and against prostitution, venereal disease, and alcohol.

When women had the vote, she argued, “The nation shall no longer miss as now the influence of half its wisdom, more than half its purity, and nearly all its gentleness, in courts of justice and halls of legislation. Then shall one code of morals—and that the highest—govern both men and women; then shall the Sabbath be respected, the rights of the poor be recognized, the liquor traffic banished, and the home protected from all its foes.”

Methodist women also took up work in the inner cities through the growing deaconess movement. Lucy

Rider Meyer (1849–1922) founded a training school for women in Chicago in 1885 to prepare them for ministry as missionaries on home and foreign fields. She soon encouraged her trainees to visit the homes of Chicago’s immigrant poor with physical and spiritual solace. The movement quickly spread to other cities as women graduated from Meyer’s Chicago Training School.

Nurse deaconesses received nursing training, and missionary deaconesses focused on evangelism. They wore uniforms, lived together in deaconess homes, and did not take salaries. The call of both, as described by the Methodist Episcopal Church when it officially sanctioned the work, was “to minister to the poor, visit the sick, pray with the dying, care for the orphan, seek the wandering, comfort the sorrowing, save the sinning, and relinquishing all other pursuits, devote themselves in a general way to such forms of Christian labor as may be suited to their abilities.”

ROAD TO THE RED KETTLES

Perhaps the most famous instance of Wesleyan involvement with industrialization’s victims, in the Old World or the New, is familiar to anyone who has ever dropped money in a red kettle while shopping at Christmastime. In the 1860s, former Methodists William and Catherine Booth (see CH 26, *William and Catherine Booth*) moved to the East End of London and began something called simply “The Christian Mission.” Both Booths preached salvation and sanctification and administered a program of poor relief.

Booth urged that the group should meet in rented halls. Owning a building meant fund-raising activities and “a heap of other worldliness and foolery,” making congregations “deader than ever, besides having a debt to grapple with.” Salvationist worship services involved hearty singing and revival preaching; in a lecture on “Good Singing,” Booth said that

ADDRESSING THE TROOPS Below: William Booth, founder and first general of the Salvation Army, rides through the streets of London. Booth and his wife, Catherine, saw the Army grow out of what was at first a haphazard program of poor relief and salvation preaching in London's East End.



WAGING THE WAR Right: A campaign to raise money for the Army's work in the United States shows the uniform of "Hallelujah Lassies" who ventured into slums, bars, and brothels.



any tune would do, even if it had been sung in a bar or brothel: "I rather enjoy robbing the devil of tunes."

In 1878 the Christian Mission renamed itself the Salvation Army. Salvationist historian Edward McKinley later wrote, "Within a year, the now-familiar accoutrements of the 'Great Salvation War' began to be added piecemeal: church halls became corps, [and] flags, ceremonials, military badges, ranks, brass bands, and the rudiments of uniform were added with wildly encouraging results." McKinley added, "Everybody loves a parade, especially if he's in it. . . . To take up the poor and forgotten, dress them in handsome blue uniforms—often the first suit of clothes they had ever owned that gave them pride—promote them to a colorful variety of different kinds of sergeant, in a crusade in which victory is divinely assured, is not only compassionate: it reveals a remarkable knowledge of human nature."

But the poor were not only provided uniforms. They were also given food and opportunities to work; "slum sisters" visited them in their homes; and "fallen women" were provided space in rescue missions.


In 1890 Booth, with assistance from Salvationist officer Frank Smith, published *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, which laid out a comprehensive, three-part social program: (1) city colonies where those in society's "submerged tenth" (the poorest 10 percent of the population) could find shelter and work; (2) farm colonies to train people in agriculture; and (3) overseas colonies, large self-sufficient farms on other continents.

While the latter two parts never really got off the ground, the city work led to the opening of

"Cheap Food and Shelter Depots"—providing food and beds at low prices, and work for those who had none—as well as "Salvage Brigades," the ancestor of today's Salvation Army stores. In December of 1893, Captain Joseph McFee of San Francisco borrowed a crab pot, set it up outside his Food and Shelter Depot for donations, and put up a sign saying "Keep the Pot Boiling!"—precursor to the familiar Salvation Army kettle.

The Army had come to the United States in 1879 when British immigrants Amos and Annie Shirley and their daughter Eliza began to evangelize downtown Philadelphia. The first meeting's poster advertised that "Two Hallelujah Females . . . would speak and sing in behalf of God and Precious Souls. . . . Rich and Poor, Come in Crowds." A year later, the Booths officially sent over George Railton (1849–1913) to take charge of the American work.

And the United States was not the Army's only area of expansion. By 1890 it had "invaded" thirty-four countries and five continents. Famed Salvationist Samuel Logan Brengle (1860–1936) urged his compatriots, "The soul-winner, then, must once and for all, abandon himself to the Lord and to the Lord's work, and, having put his hand to the plow, must not look back, if he would succeed in this mighty business . . . for there is no discharge in this war."

Today, Wesleyan and Holiness churches all over the world are still waging that war against industrializations dark side, displacement, poverty, and sin. 

Jennifer Woodruff Tait is managing editor of *Christian History Magazine*. Portions of this article are adapted from "The Methodist Conscience: Slavery, Temperance, and Pacifism" from the forthcoming Ashgate Research Companion to World Methodism.

“Amid the wreck of things”

E. Stanley Jones, Carl F. H. Henry, and Billy Graham called for the church to respond to social and economic realities *Stephen W. Rankin*

E. Stanley Jones (1884–1973), Methodist missionary to India and friend of Gandhi.



E. STANLEY JONES

Jones, aware of the growing impact of the Soviet Union, published *Christ's Alternative to Communism* (1935). He saw the Marxist vision as a materialist attempt at realizing Christ's kingdom, but without the need for “religion.” In response he wrote, “The gospel is not a philosophy about life . . . but it is a Fact working itself out through the material.”

Thus, Christian discipleship necessarily engaged social problems. In firm, gracious tones, Jones challenged Christians to outdo Communists in loving their neighbors: “If religion has nothing to do with the physical hunger of man, it has nothing to do with Christ.” What was the basis for this love? “‘We have a Kingdom which cannot be shaken,’ and ‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever’—an unshakeable Kingdom and an unaltering Person. I am persuaded that amid the wreck of things of the old order these two things will survive.”

Carl F. H. Henry (1913–2003), editor of *Christianity Today*. Henry's 1947 book, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, aptly illustrated his lover's quarrel with fellow believers who claimed divine power to transform life but were reticent to address this-worldly social problems. He was prompted by stories like this:

In a company of more than one hundred representative evangelical pastors, the writer [Henry] proposed the following question: “How many of you, during the past six months, have preached a sermon devoted in large part to a condemnation of such social evils as aggressive warfare, racial hatred and intolerance, the liquor traffic, exploitation of labor or management, or the like?” Not a single hand was raised in response.

Billy Graham (1918–), son of the South and a world-famous evangelist. Graham exercised significant social

influence on race relations—an issue rooted in both culture and economics. In a 1952 revival in Jackson, Mississippi, Graham proclaimed from the pulpit that God's love knows no racial barriers. In Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1953, he personally took down the ropes separating blacks from whites at his event, saying to the ushers responsible for monitoring the segregation, “Either these ropes stay down, or you can go on and have this revival without me.”



CARL F. H. HENRY, 1973



BILLY GRAHAM AND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., 1957

Each leader in his particular way represents engagement with modern social challenges. They are good reminders of a significant part of Christian history and a goad to faithful discipleship.

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THE DREAM BECOMES REALITY The first session of the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, 1948, sought to witness to the power of the Gospel in the modern world.

the words of the text. "Now," he said, "if you mean [the words] with all your heart, sing them as loud as you can. If you don't mean them at all, keep silent. If you mean them even a little and want to mean them more, sing them very softly."



WILLIAM TEMPLE

And 2,000 voices sang, very softly: "Were the whole realm of nature mine/ That were an offering far too small;/ Love so amazing, so divine,/ Demands my soul, my life, my all."

Temple had been on the move for Jesus ever since the World Missionary Conference of 1910 in Edinburgh, Scotland, where missionary and ecumenical leader John R. Mott tapped his shoulder and sent him off to help the Australian

Christian student movement. But it was increasingly clear to him and many others that Christians from differing backgrounds needed to come together to respond to social problems.

A few years after he led that hymn, Archbishop Temple stood in front of a small group of committed Christian leaders in the living room of the president of Princeton Theological Seminary. They agreed with him: all of those presenting a contemporary Christian witness—students, missionaries, lay and clergy leaders—needed to work together. Would the dream become reality?

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

Earlier evangelical revivals had spurred cooperation across denominational lines through Bible and tract societies, mission societies, Sunday schools, and movements for social reform. But as the nineteenth century progressed, the growth of the new industrial society meant more people living in more cities, working in more mechanized industries, and suffering more problems. Many Christian churches found themselves largely unable to minister to the first truly industrial generation, being better prepared to address personal sins of private and family life than social sins of large-scale economic institutions.

This began to change as Christians came in greater contact with the poverty and social issues of the great cities. In 1833 the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was

Meeting together for the good of the world

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CONGRESSES TRIED TO TRANSFORM THE ECONOMIC ORDER

*Clifford B. Anderson and
Kenneth Woodrow Henke*

IT WAS THE END of the 1931 Oxford Mission, a week of revival preaching. The bespectacled archbishop of York, William Temple (1881–1944), a champion of social and economic causes, stepped to the front of the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin to lead the hymn, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

Years later, people still told how he stopped before the last stanza and asked the congregation to look at

founded in Paris to serve the needs of impoverished slum dwellers. Around the same time in Germany, the ancient Christian office of deaconess sprang up anew as devoted women sought out new roles in the field of Christian social service.

Theologian Johann Hinrich Wichern turned the attention of the German churches to what he called “Inner Mission,” bringing the spirit of foreign missions to the needs of the home country. He encouraged churches to minister to the physical and social needs of the poor along with their spiritual needs: “Love, no less than faith, is the church’s indispensable work.”

Wichern and his colleagues established homes for troubled youth, strengthened the work of schools and hospitals, and gave renewed attention to the needs of prisoners and ex-offenders. A few years later, William and Catherine Booth founded the Salvation Army in Britain (see “Breaking bread with widows and orphans,” pp. 24–28). Yet it was clear to many leaders that more was needed.

WORKS OF CHARITY OF ALL NATIONS

In 1846, even as a Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations was held in London, several hundred leaders from over 50 different Protestant Christian groups—from the British Isles, North America, and continental Europe—also gathered there. They took the name “The Evangelical Alliance” and set to work uniting Christians in a bond of mutual love and religious liberty.

At subsequent sessions in Paris, Berlin, Geneva, and Amsterdam, representatives shared their efforts with one another. They had provided educational opportunities for the poor and laboring classes, established inner-city missions near “the foulest haunts of crime,” served the needs of seamen in their ports, and protected and helped young, single women who came to cities to work in the factories, offices, and shops.

The United States founded its own Alliance branch in 1867 and sponsored an 1873 international gathering in New York. In 1886 writer and preacher Josiah Strong (1847–1916) became general secretary of that branch. He called for churches to turn their attention to America’s cities, sinking under the twin floods of young workers from the countryside and new Americans from abroad. These new urban dwellers often found themselves living in slums, cyclically unemployed, caught up in labor unrest, or battered by racial conflict. The need was urgent.

To address that need, Strong helped found the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America in 1908. It brought together many Protestant groups and sought to secure “a larger combined influence for the churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social conditions of the people”—equal rights, protection of the family, abolition of child labor, limited working hours, living wages, and provision



LISTEN UP! The speech Abraham Kuyper delivered at the opening session of the Christian Social Congress in the Netherlands in 1891 (translated into English as *The Problem of Poverty*) became a classic statement of Christian social philosophy.

for pensions for those incapacitated by injury. It also argued that laws might be needed to achieve many of these ends.

THE SOCIAL QUESTION

Similar discussions were also underway in Holland. During the seventeenth century, the Netherlands had flourished, but its agriculture-based economy was now largely stagnant. It was also rapidly undergoing industrialization.

Dutch Christians formed various social organizations to address the problems of industry during the 1870s; most significant was the *Nederlandsch Werkliedenverbond Patrimonium* (Dutch Labor Union Inheritance) in 1876. While the *Patrimonium* provided a range of services to its members in troubled times, what set it apart was that both laborers and employers could become members. It thus provided an alternative model for settling disputes, emphasizing communication and dialogue rather than class struggle and strikes.

At this point Dutch Christian journalist and politician Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920), who had begun his career as a pastor, stepped forward. Stimulated by Pope Leo XIII’s 1891 social encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (see “Brothers and Sisters of Charity,” pp. 16–20) and pushed by working-class members of the *Patrimonium* to take a more active stance, he helped organize the first Christian Social Congress in the Netherlands in 1891.

Kuyper confessed to not taking the “Social Question” seriously enough, allowing socialists to gain momentum. “We find ourselves fighting a rearguard action,” he



"IN UNITY IS OUR STRENGTH" The center sign at this 20th-c. rally in New York's Union Square proclaims its message in English, Yiddish, and Italian.

lamented. He called forcefully for justice for the working class: "To mistreat the workman as a 'piece of machinery' is and remains a violation of his human dignity." His words resonated internationally, as more Christians responded to the call to bring their many voices together in response to the pressing problems of the era.

STANDARDS OF THE GOSPEL

Other European Christians also met to help. The Evangelical Social Congress in Germany, begun in 1890, set up conferences on social policy and social ethics and measured current conditions against Gospel standards. British churches held a Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship at Birmingham in 1924. But above all loomed the Life and Work Movement, shepherded into being by Archbishop Nathan Söderblom (1866–1931) of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, the first clergyman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

As a young man in 1890, Söderblom attended a Bible conference organized in the United States by Dwight Moody, where he met tireless young John Mott and was amazed at the international student movement under Mott's leadership. Working and studying in Paris strengthened his international contacts, and when he returned to teach in Sweden, he helped spark a theological revival in the Swedish Lutheran Church.

Seeking to bring churches together after the devastation of World War I, Söderblom proposed a Universal Conference of the Church on Life and Work to be held in Stockholm in 1925. Six hundred delegates from 37 countries represented Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox churches. The Orthodox had been making ecumenical overtures for some time; in 1920 the office of the Orthodox Ecumenical patriarchate addressed an

encyclical (primarily drafted by Archbishop Germanos, later one of the first presidents of the World Council of Churches) "to all the Churches of Christ, wheresoever they be" endorsing ecumenical Christian conferences to discuss practical Christian service.

Among the topics addressed at Stockholm were urban ones: over-crowding, unemployment, and crime, which were "so grave that they cannot be solved by individual effort alone." Economic issues provided the liveliest debate, and the conference concluded that "industry should not be based solely on the desire for individual profit, but . . . conducted for the service of the community."


A second Life and Work Conference was held in Oxford in 1937. Stormclouds gathered, war threatened, and Hitler's Germany posed new challenges. The writings of Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Reinhold Niebuhr for Protestants, and Nicolas Berdyaev and Georges Florovsky for the Orthodox, provoked deeper reflection from attendees on how the church had witnessed—and failed to witness—in response to the contemporary world.

The conference's final statement confessed that Christian blindness to economic evils had been partly responsible for the rise of godless movements for social reform: "The forces of evil against which Christians have to contend are found not only in the hearts of men as individuals, but have entered into and infected the structure of society, and there also must be combatted."



THE DREAM HE DID NOT SEE

The 1937 Oxford conference and a conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh the same year both recommended merging their efforts. Archbishop Temple was selected to chair a provisional steering committee. The dream that had motivated him for so many years was almost a reality, but Temple would not live to see it. He died in 1944.

The World Council of Churches was launched in Amsterdam in 1948, a new phase of Christian churches listening together to the Word of God and joining in common witness to the world's needs. Like their visionary predecessors, they sought to face emerging social questions in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, convinced that love so amazing, so divine, demanded all they had to give, and more. 

Clifford B. Anderson is director of Scholarly Communications in the Jean and Alexander Heard Library at Vanderbilt University. Kenneth Woodrow Henke is curator of Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Library.



GOOD, AND GOOD FOR YOU Arthur Guinness (*below*) founded a long line of industrialists, bankers, and missionaries who worked to help the Irish poor and spread the Gospel.



Godless capitalists?

HOW CHRISTIAN INDUSTRIALISTS RAN THEIR BUSINESSES AND USED THEIR WEALTH

Jennifer Woodruff Tait

YOUNG ARTHUR GUINNESS (1725–1803) was an up-and-coming businessman in 1760s Dublin. He had come to the big city from Celbridge, a small town about 14 miles away, with £100 in his pocket. Already brewing beer from a secret recipe which he took to his grave, he seized the opportunity in 1759 to buy (in the words of one of his biographers) a “poky little brewery” at St. James’s Gate on the banks of the River Liffey. Within five years he acquired a wealthy wife, an impressive country home, the first two of his ten children, and a great deal of public respect and profit.

The older and more famous John Wesley, on the other hand, thought little of Ireland on his visits there, noting the dilapidated buildings and general coldness of its wealthier inhabitants to religious subjects. “Oh, who has the courage to speak plain to these rich and honorable sinners?” Wesley remarked after preaching at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Dublin.

He had equally dismissive words for a meeting at the house of Arthur Guinness’s cousin by marriage, Nonconformist minister William Smyth: “Mr. Smyth read prayers, and gave out the hymns, which were sung by fifteen or twenty fine singers; the rest of the congregation listening with as much attention and devotion as they would have done to an opera. But is this Christian worship?” Arthur Guinness was almost

certainly present at the sermon and the meetings. He took Wesley’s message to heart.

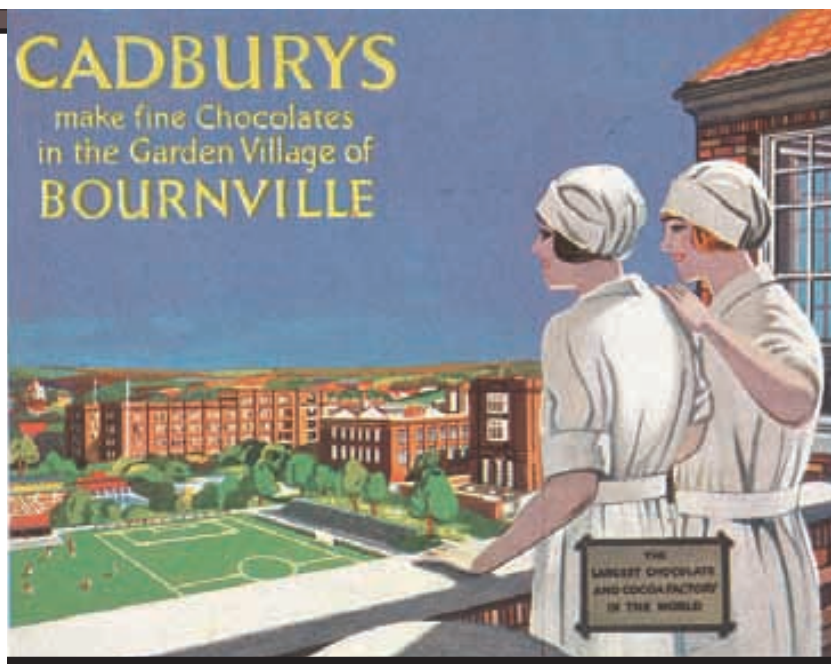
From that influence sprang generations of Guinnesses who brewed beer and tried to reform Dublin, never perceiving a conflict of interest in the two endeavors. Arthur began the latter work by founding the first Sunday school in Dublin and working for an organization that tried to prevent dueling.

“HIS NAME IS ARTHUR GUINNESS”

One descendant of the family, Henry Grattan (1835–1910), left off brewing entirely for reforming (see “Did you know?” p. 2). But the brewing Guinnesses did not leave all the religious fervor to their cousins. Under Arthur’s second son, Second Arthur (1768–1855), and his descendants, the Guinness brewing empire expanded along with Guinness involvement in social issues.

Second Arthur was a defender of Irish Catholic civil rights, an unpopular position for a Protestant businessman. He wrote: “I never could look my Catholic neighbor in the face. I felt I was placed in an unjust, unnatural elevation above him.” Someone who resented this stance forged the signatures of Guinness family members on an anti-Catholic petition in 1812. A Catholic satirical journal, refusing to believe the Guinnesses had not really signed the petition, published a bit of

PEACE AND CHOCOLATE Many Quakers, such as John Cadbury (*below*), went into business because they could not pursue the military. Cadburys became famous for its care of workers, including building them a model village (*right*).



doggerel in response: "To be sure did you hear/ Of the heresy beer/ Which was made for to poison the Pope?/ To hide the man a sin is/ His name is Arthur Guinness/ For salvation he never can hope."

"FOR THE LABORING POOR"

Arthur's sons Benjamin Lee and Arthur Lee (Third Arthur) gave generously to assist those made destitute by the potato blight that struck Ireland in the late 1840s. Arthur Lee (1797–1863) retired to a country home to indulge his tastes for Oriental art, aesthetic poetry, and dressing like a Greek god; but he so aided his workers that they erected a monument of Connemara marble in his honor. Benjamin Lee also financed a major renovation to St. Patrick's Cathedral, a spiritual and historical Dublin landmark.

Arthur's grandson Edward Cecil presided over a far-reaching attempt to improve working-class conditions. After Guinness stock went public in 1886, he became the richest man in Ireland and used £250,000 to establish the Guinness Trust for "the creation of dwellings for the laboring poor" of Dublin and London.

Edward also encouraged the radical idealism of his company doctor, John Lumsden (1869–1944). With company approval, Lumsden tried to visit the home of every Guinness worker (nearly 3,000 people) as well as all the homes surrounding the brewery. He did this in the space of 60 days, visiting over 1,700 homes.

Only one worker refused to let him in, stating that he was a socialist and "it was no business of an employer how or where his servant lived." Lumsden evaluated nearly 35 percent of the homes as inadequate. "Sickening stench, the inadequacy of water supply, alcoholism, and rooms so vile he could hardly enter," journalist Stephen Mansfield later described them.

Lumsden was unable to convince Guinness to build a model housing development as other companies were doing. But the company supported his other recommendations. Guinness workers became the highest-paid per hour in Ireland. They had access to company-provided educational and recreational opportunities: lectures, concerts, socials, exercise, cooking, and financial management classes.

The company built playing fields, swimming pools, reading rooms, day-care centers, and parks, and allowed Lumsden to make his medical staff and equipment the best that money could buy. He advocated breastfeeding (at the time an unpopular cause), and he taught first aid to brewery workers who later became the first Irish division of the famed St. John Ambulance Brigade.

HELP FOR COCOA WORKERS

Guinness was not the only company in the British Isles that responded to social problems with a "cradle-to-grave" approach. Cocoa dealer John Cadbury (1801–1889), a Quaker, took from his faith a commitment to equality as well as objections to slavery, alcohol, war, and the frivolity of high society. John and his son George were shrewd businessmen and committed social reformers. In the early 1880s, George moved the Cadbury factory out of the slums of Birmingham to the rural countryside and named his new site Bournville.

Like Guinness, Cadbury provided an educational and social program for its workers—the natural springs at Bournville even led to the development of a spa. In addition, it built nearly 8,000 homes surrounding the factory, designed by a leading architect to be beautiful, clean, and efficient.

A company history later noted, "Quakers' respect of the worth of every individual made them, as managers,



CLEAN ALL OVER Soap manufacturer William Lever (*near left*) also built a model village for his workers (*far left*) and reinvested profits into maintaining it.

HOW MUCH TIME HAS THEE GOT? Workers clock in (*below right*) at the factory of another Quaker cocoa manufacturer, Joseph Rowntree (*below left*).



open to suggestions from the workforce, but none implemented a scheme to facilitate the process on such a scale as did Cadbury. Many Quaker businesses provided recreational facilities for their workers, but none were as directed to improving work efficiency as were those of Cadbury. Quaker firms could always be counted on to provide humane working conditions, but none advertised and promoted theirs as diligently as did Cadbury. The Bournville factory, Bournville Village and the 'Bournville Experiment' . . . became almost as famous as the chocolate itself."

NO FAT GEESE AT CHRISTMAS?

Cadbury's example directly influenced soap manufacturer William Lever (1851–1925), who built a model village called Port Sunlight on the Bournville model. His profit-sharing system reinvested profits into the village—he told employees, "It would not do you much good if you send [profits] down your throats in the form of bottles of whiskey, bags of sweets, or fat geese at Christmas. On the other hand, if you leave the money with me, I shall use it to provide for you everything that makes life pleasant—nice houses, comfortable homes, and healthy recreation."

Joseph Rowntree (1836–1925), another Quaker cocoa merchant, competed with Cadbury both for the cocoa market and in his concern for his employees. In 1869 Rowntree took over a small cocoa works from his brother Henry. From a small company where the foreman would go around at the end of the week with a hat full of money and ask each worker, "How much time

has thee got?" it expanded by the early 1900s to employ over 4,000 people.

For his growing firm Joseph provided a library and, unusually, pensions. He also started a "suggestions scheme" by which any member of the workforce could make suggestions for improvement, and he gave out prizes for the best ones.

The Rowntrees too built a model village, New Earswick, near York where their factory stood. They tried to provide houses "artistic in appearance, sanitary, well-built, and yet within the means of men earning about 25 shillings a week." In time nearly 500 houses were built as well as schools, playing fields, and a Folk Hall, although the vision that the poorest workers could afford to live there remained unfulfilled without government subsidy.

Joseph and a friend, Arthur Sherwell, also published a best-selling encyclopedia about the evils of alcohol, *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*. It advised the establishment of "company houses," clean and pleasant places to drink that would encourage the consumption of tea, coffee, and "soft drinks" (lemonade). Their profits would then finance the construction of "People's Palaces" providing music, educational lectures, and safe, alcohol-free courting facilities.

In 1901 Joseph's son Seebohm published an indictment of industrial conditions, *Poverty: A Study of Town Life* (which prompted Seebohm's older brother John Wilhelm, when asked, "Which Rowntree are you," to quip, "Oh, the brother of Poverty and the son of Drink").

“THERE SITS OUR DOCTOR NOW” Four generations of the Welch’s Grape Juice dynasty: founder Thomas, seated, first pasteurized juice and son Charles, at left, promoted it (*below left*).

ABANDONING THE DREAM The first class graduates from Wesley Memorial Hospital’s nursing school in 1907 (*right*). Founder Asa Candler (*below center*) hoped in vain that the hospital would remain part of Wesley Memorial Methodist Church.



GOLD WATCHES AND PENCILS

Across the Atlantic the “cradle-to-grave” approach was less common. Charles Welch (1852–1926), the former dentist who turned the “unfermented wine” invented by his father, Thomas, into the Welch’s Grape Juice empire, recruited employees, according to a company history, by “the following criteria in descending order: religion, tobacco practices, sobriety, experience, and ambition.”

Welch preferred to hire Methodists, as he thought this would create a wholesome environment at his Westfield, New York, factory. He built allegiance through annual picnics at the company camp on Chautauqua Lake, where employees gathered for, a newspaper noted, “baseball, motor boating, tennis, quoits, rowing, and swimming parties.”

Salesmen were invited to annual conventions featuring lectures, picnics, prizes of “gold watches, \$20 gold pieces and eversharp pencils,” as well as to services at the Westfield Methodist Episcopal Church, and to musical evenings. In 1913 the salesmen produced a minstrel show, singing to Welch, “There Sits Our Doctor Now” as he beamed paternally.

Welch was also generous to the town of Westfield—where he served as mayor and donated to the local YMCA and to all the Protestant churches—and to worldwide Methodism, giving over \$25,000 to the Foochow Union Christian Hospital in China and \$10,000 to the Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals. He signed all his checks “Charles E. Welch, Trustee.” His daughter-in-law explained, “He said he was Trustee for the Lord.”


Asa Candler (1851–1929), founder of Coca-Cola in Atlanta, Georgia, and brother of Methodist bishop Warren Candler (1857–1941), took seriously biblical injunctions to use his own wealth for others’ benefit, writing, “What shall it profit us if we gain fortunes and lose the whole world. . . . What can so arouse the wrath

of The Lamb as the inhuman indifference which allows souls to perish for whom He died?” Candler mainly used the church, not his business, to accomplish this aim.

He worked toward ecumenical cooperation: “All the saloon-keepers stand together and with them stand the gamblers, the harlots, and the Sabbath breakers. Why should there not be a solidarity of the good to withstand the combined forces of evil?” He donated extensively to Methodist missions and social causes, and was a trustee of the Methodist Children’s Home in Decatur, Georgia, where he would occasionally eat breakfast to see if the orphans were being properly fed.

One of his projects was the replacing of First MEC South, which had left for the suburbs, with a new church to serve the inner city, Wesley Memorial. Candler and his brother the bishop envisioned it as a community center, with not only facilities for worship and offices for denominational bureaucrats but an auditorium for night classes for office workers and boarding-house residents, a hospital, and a medical dispensary for the poor.

The church was built in 1903, and temporary hospital facilities followed, but when it came time to expand the hospital in 1919, a series of events led to its being transferred to the campus of the newly established Emory University. Candler continued to support it generously, but the dream of a full-service church was dead.

All these men saw themselves, in some sense, as trustees for the Lord. Their responses were heartfelt, their faith real, and their concern for improving the lives of their workers genuine—but in the end, could they have been more helped by a church that would have guided and not merely received their beneficence? Asa Candler’s question still echoes: “Why should there not be a solidarity of the good to withstand the combined forces of evil?” 

Jennifer Woodruff Tait is managing editor of Christian History.



DOWN ON THE FARM Hutterites gather cabbages intended for sauerkraut. Hutterites often have large families, but limit community size by planting daughter communities.

Common wealth?

COMMUNAL SOCIETIES INFLUENCED BY CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS FOUND THEY COULD NOT LEAVE THE ECONOMIC WORLD BEHIND

Gari-Anne Patzwald

IN 1899 members of the Woman's Commonwealth of Belton, Texas, took their considerable fortune (approximately \$200,000) and retired to the Washington, DC, area to pursue cultural interests. But it had been far different at the start.

In the 1860s, the commonwealth's founders had left their comfortable middle-class lives, and often their husbands, to form a self-sufficient, celibate community of members who received direct revelations from God under the leadership of Holiness Methodist visionary Martha McWhirter. Eventually, though, they became focused as much on economic as on spiritual matters. In this they were not unique, but merely reflective of the climate of self-indulgence characteristic of the Gilded Age.

LIVING IN HARMONY OR ECONOMY?

The main reasons communal societies, Christian or otherwise, moved to or developed in the United States were twofold: a belief that the United States was a blank slate on which new ways of organizing society could be tried, and the availability in the United States of relatively inexpensive land.

Almost all of these societies were founded by people who could afford to buy land. In spite of the efforts of many to promote simple living, members tended to

gravitate toward middle-class lifestyles. The need to support the community by producing goods to sell often exacerbated this problem. Some groups moved toward using the goods they produced and became more like their middle-class customers.

For example, the followers of German Pietist George Rapp formed the Harmonist Society in Pennsylvania in 1805 after moving from Germany. Possibly due to the poverty of many early members whose property had been confiscated by the German government, Harmonists enthusiastically established a strong economic base, pooling their resources to buy supplies, equipment, and seed.

In 1814 the group relocated to the banks of the Wabash River in Indiana and Illinois. They soon became prominent merchants, operating a granary and stores in several locations. To increase financial stability, Rapp gradually changed membership rules to make it more difficult, and eventually impossible, for members to recover their property if they left.

Between 1814 and 1824, Harmonists traded with 22 states and 10 foreign countries, producing whiskey, leather goods, rope, pottery, and agricultural commodities. They were a major economic and political power in Indiana. In 1824 they returned to Pennsylvania,



LAST OF THE HARMONISTS Franz Gillman (*at the right, above*) was among the last members of the Harmony Society. After the last members died, the society's assets fell into the hands of capitalists who depleted its resources, and it was dissolved in 1916.

LIFE TOGETHER Amana Village bustles on a Sunday during the early 20th c. (*right*).



ostensibly for religious reasons, but primarily to be closer to their more profitable eastern markets. Their new community was named "Economy," and it flourished until the last original members of the society died in 1890.

CALENDARS AND REFRIGERATORS

To retain economically productive members, communal societies often struggled to provide personally meaningful work, even if it did not actually meet community needs. For instance, the Wesleyan-Holiness Burning Bush community of Waukesha, Wisconsin, decided to scale back production of its popular Scripture Text Calendar because the leadership thought that the production and sale of the calendar, while profitable, drained too many resources from the community.

Frank Messenger left the community and formed his own company to produce the calendar, taking several of the colony's skilled printers with him. Messenger again became a successful businessman, and the calendar, known to many as the "funeral home calendar" because it has been widely distributed by funeral homes for generations, is still produced.

A similar problem faced the Amana (Iowa) Colony, a communal German Pietist group that began in Germany in 1714. The members decided to hold property in common when they moved to America in 1842, and the colony flourished for nearly 90 years, producing everything it needed.

But as time passed, members found the requirements of communal living burdensome. In 1932 members voted to separate the communal and economic aspects

of the community. In 1934 two members of the colony formed the corporation that today says "Amana" to most Americans—Amana Refrigeration.

When communal groups practiced celibacy, they did not increase in number through children being born to members. Thus economic needs often required inclusion of new members whose values conflicted with those of the community.

Following their founder Mother Ann Lee's belief that perfection would be achieved by separation from the corrupt world, the Shakers established celibate colonies in remote parts of several states including Kentucky, Maine, and New York. But the necessary reliance on converts often had negative effects on the Shakers. Young converts usually joined with little property, some even seeking the economic security the Shakers offered. Thus, the need for an economic base required ties to the outside world, with the community selling products ranging from seeds to a wheel-driven washing machine.

Soon social welfare reforms of Victorian England and the Progressive Era in the United States resulted in fewer needy converts. And many Shakers who had joined as children left when old enough to support themselves. Unable to maintain themselves economically, the Shakers began closing colonies in 1875. The last colony at Sabbathday Lake, Maine, had three members as of 2012. The Shakers are now remembered for their songs, their recipes, and the seed crates, boxes, and furniture so prized by antique collectors.

Some groups sought creative ways to retain spiritual and economic stability. The St. Nazianz Association,



PICKING APPLES, PLANTING SEEDS (left and above) The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, or Shakers, grew from nine members in New York in 1774 to nearly 4,000 members by the mid-19th c.

KOINONIA FARM Right: Baptist theologian Clarence Jordan founded the farm in the 1940s in Georgia to promote social, racial, and economic justice.

a dissident Roman Catholic community founded in Germany in 1854, attempted to combine a monastic-style community with a village of families. But when its founder, Father Ambrose Oswald, died in 1873, the new leadership transferred ownership of property to individual families, and within five years St. Nazianz lost its communal character.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, charismatic African American preacher Father Divine, who regarded himself as Christ reborn, founded the collective Peace Mission. His controversial movement drew followers into over a hundred communities nationwide before declining in the prosperity following World War II. The mission's emphasis on racial justice and integration also had a strong economic component, as members formed numerous cooperative businesses.

The interracial Christian community Koinonia Farm succeeded where others had failed. Founded in the 1940s, by the 1960s it became known for its efforts to provide adequate housing for rural Georgians, while providing jobs for its members making and distributing pecan and peanut products. Koinonia eventually spawned the highly successful independent charity Habitat for Humanity; it also still makes and sells pecans and peanuts and welcomes outside visitors to experience communal life.

FARMERS WITH CELL PHONES

The need to adopt technological innovations—rail transportation, the telegraph, and later the telephone—to produce and market goods forced many communal societies to become increasingly part of the cash economy. For some this brought unwelcome influences from the secular world; for others this proved to be an advantage.


Founded in sixteenth-century Europe and relocating to North America in the nineteenth century, the Hutterian Brotherhood, or Hutterites, one of many



Anabaptist communal groups, is probably the world's most successful communal society.

Hutterite communities are economically successful and self-sufficient. They have enthusiastically adopted modern technology and are major purchasers of sophisticated agricultural equipment. Cell phones and the Internet are even making their way into individual Hutterite homes.

Overall, economic necessity has forced communal groups to develop means of financial support that require them to interact with the wider society. For most it has contributed to the weakening of the spiritual and cultural ties on which the communities were initially based.

Does this mean that these groups are necessarily failures? As Dolores Hayden suggests in her book *Seven American Utopias*, a group may be counted a success if its "practices remain provocative even after the group itself has disbanded." This is certainly true of many communal societies that still excite interest and even imitation in the twenty-first century. 

Gari-Anne Patzwald is technical services librarian at Tabor College and the author of Waiting for Elijah: A History of the Megiddo Mission.

DINNER'S ON Hundreds of volunteers serve Thanksgiving dinner to thousands of homeless men, women, and children at the Los Angeles Mission.



The economy of God

DOES CHRISTIANITY IMPACT HOW WE EARN OUR LIVING TODAY?

Greg Forster

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, when factories drew workers away from the countryside and the moral boundaries of ancient agricultural traditions, many lived in squalid conditions and drank horrendously. Most employers didn't take much care of them.

One inventor of the modern factory, though, was a Christian entrepreneur. His pottery works succeeded because he treated workers with dignity, providing them with clean houses, medical care, and better wages—and firmly cracking down on alcohol use, absenteeism, and laziness. His endeavor was more productive because it was more humane; it was also more humane because it was more productive.

Here's the twist: that pioneering entrepreneur was Josiah Wedgwood. If you've heard of him, it's likely because of abolitionism. But where did he get the money and cultural prestige to fight slavery? He put his Christianity to work in a better way to do business. He knew slavery was wrong for the same reason he knew how to invent a better factory: he had the vision to see what God wants economics to look like.

Most of human life is taken up by economic work. If we don't integrate our faith with that part of our lives, we end up with what Mark Greene, a theologian of workplace ministry, calls "leisure time Christianity."

When dramatic changes in economic structures disrupt the moral signals we are used to from the "old order," Christians need a fresh vision of how God's providential care of the world takes place through our work, and how the Gospel can be manifested in our moral

witness to the economy at large. "Economy," after all, was originally *oikonomia*—a Greek word, often translated as "stewardship" in the New Testament, used for both the church's Gospel life and the management of the city treasury. Later Christian writers used the term to mean how God divinely orders the universe and how the church orders itself in response.

Today we're living through an era of economic dislocation. We have to rediscover the perennial truth that the economy is a moral system, a web of human relationships in which each person's work benefits others through a vast system of exchange.

We need a new generation of entrepreneurially minded business leaders who use their Christian perspectives to identify better ways to operate. We need pastors and church structures to form, train, and prepare us to live out Christianity in the earthly *oikonomia*. And we have slaveries to fight: debt, cronyism, greed, fraud, dependency, materialism, and a host of injustices that deny people the opportunity to earn their own success in the economy through their work.

This task will be neither fast nor easy. But inventing the modern factory and abolishing slavery were no walks in the park, either. There are promising signs that more and more Christians today hear this call and are ready to answer it. And "the Spirit and the gifts are ours through him who with us sideth." [✠](#)

Greg Forster, PhD, is the author of five books and a program director at the Kern Family Foundation.

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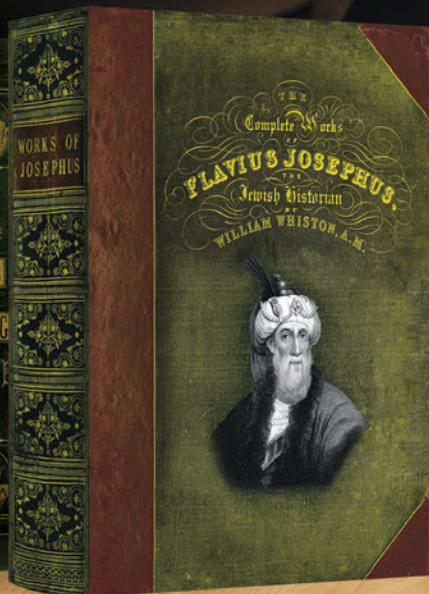
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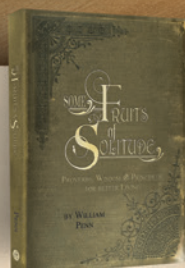
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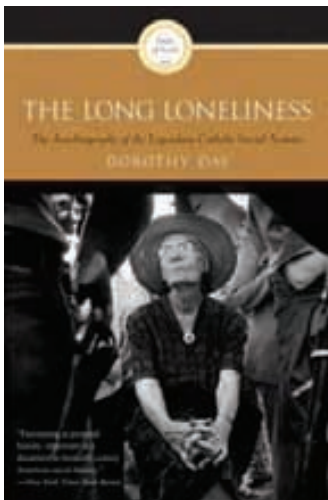
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THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF RESOURCES THAT RECOUNT HOW INDUSTRIALIZATION CHANGED THE WORLD AND HOW THE CHURCH RESPONDED. HERE ARE A FEW RECOMMENDED BY CHRISTIAN HISTORY INSTITUTE'S STAFF AND THIS ISSUE'S AUTHORS TO HELP YOU NAVIGATE THE LANDSCAPE.

BOOKS, ESSAYS, DVDS

- G. K. Chesterton preached Distributism throughout his works. In particular, see his *Collected Works*, vols. 5–6, devoted to his political and economic writings, as well as *What's Wrong with the World* (available on its own or in volume 4 of the *Collected Works*).



- Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*. Dorothy Day's autobiography explains how she and Peter Maurin founded the Catholic Worker movement.

- Donald Demaray, ed., *The Daily Roberts*. Readings for every day of the year from B. T. Roberts, one of the founders of the Free Methodist Church. Many readings focus on how Free Methodists responded to economic and social need.

- Donald Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*. Holiness and evangelical Christians were deeply involved in many economic reform movements of the nineteenth century. Dayton tells their stories.

- *Entertaining Angels: The Dorothy Day Story*. This film shows how Day served New York's poor and became a voice for the voiceless.

- Michele Guinness, *The Guinness Spirit: Brewers, Bankers, Ministers and Missionaries*. Guinness, married to a member of the "missionary line" of Guinnesses, describes the benevolent activities of the brewing line as well.

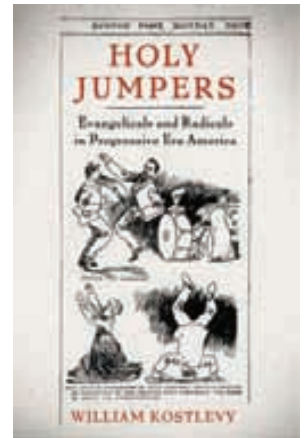
- Kathryn Kemp, *God's Capitalist: Asa Candler of Coca-Cola*. Discusses Candler's faith, business success, and philanthropy.

- Robert Kennedy, ed., *Religion and Public Life: The Legacy of Monsignor*

John A. Ryan. Describes Ryan's life, thought, and importance to the Catholic social tradition.

- Abraham Kuyper, *The Problem of Poverty*. Kuyper's landmark book, taken from his speech inaugurating the first Christian Social Congress in the Netherlands, explores what causes poverty and how to deal with it biblically and effectively. Also see his essay "Christ and the Needy."

- William Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers: Evangelicals and Radicals in Progressive Era America*. Examines the passion for holiness and economic communalism of the Burning Bush, a Christian society that "objected to the concept of private property, rejected 'elite' denominations, and professed an alternative, radical vision of Christianity."

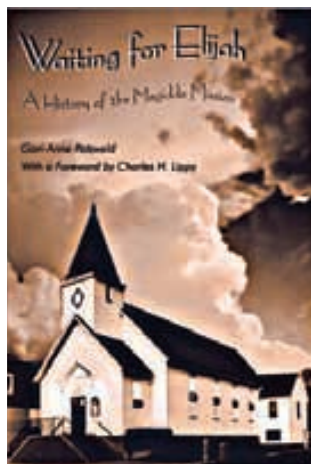


- Stephen Mansfield, *The Search for God and Guinness*. Recounts how several generations of brewing Guinnesses aided the poor of Ireland.

- Edward McKinley, *Marching to Glory: The Story of the Salvation Army*. This official history of the Army in the United States is both entertaining and enlightening.

- Gari-Anne Patzwald, *Waiting for Elijah: A History of the Megiddo Mission*. This unique Christian communal society rejected community of goods in favor of emphasizing private property.

- Dorothy Sayers, "Why Work?" Sayers's famous essay focuses on the theological importance of vocation: "I asked that it [work] should be looked upon, not as a necessary drudgery to be undergone for the purpose of making money, but as a

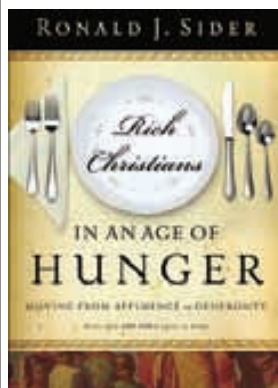


way of life in which the nature of [humanity] should find its proper exercise and delight and so fulfill itself to the glory of God."



- Herbert Schlossberg, *The Silent Revolution and the Making of Victorian England*. Tells of the state of English church and society at the end of the eighteenth century and takes the reader on a tour of multiple efforts—Methodist, evangelical, Anglo-Catholic—to bring economic and social reform.

• Jean Miller Schmidt, *Grace Sufficient: A History of Women in American Methodism*. Many Methodist women were involved in efforts to help the victims of industrialization, especially in the deaconess and missions movements.



- Ron Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity*. One approach to the "call to action" Greg Forster puts forth on p. 40. Sider is president of Evangelicals for Social Action. Other titles by Sider include *I Am Not a Social Activist: Making Jesus the Agenda* and *Cry Justice: The Bible on Hunger and Poverty*.

• Howard Snyder, *Populist Saints: B. T. and Ellen Roberts and the First Free Methodists*. Studies the "radical discipleship" of the Roberts couple, who shared a "passion for holiness, for speaking good news to the poor, and for urban ministry."

• William Temple, *Christianity and the Social Order*. Temple's famous book argues that the church ought to respond to economic questions and that it has something important to say when it does. He emphasizes, as a reviewer noted, "the need to determine the proper balance between the profit motive and service to the community, and between the power of the state and the freedom of the individual."

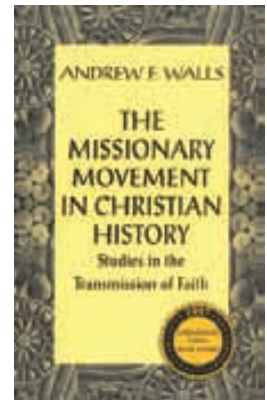
• Scott Todd, *Fast Living: How the Church Will End Extreme Poverty*. Presents another approach to the

"call to action"; Todd is on the staff of Compassion International.

- Rosalie Troester, *Voices from the Catholic Worker*. Oral interviews with over 200 members of the CW movement show how they wrestle with faith and economics today.

- Anne Vernon, *A Quaker Businessman: The Life of Joseph Rowntree, 1836–1925*. Recounts the story of Rowntree and his sons, and their efforts to help their workers and fight drunkenness and poverty in Britain.

- Andrew Finley Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*. Provides a good introduction to the missionary movement from a sympathetic Christian perspective.



- Pamela Walker, *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain*. Includes stories and history of how the Booths combined "early feminism, street preaching, holiness theology, and intentionally outrageous singing" to combat sin and poverty.

- Ronald White, *Liberty and Justice for All: Racial Reform and the Social Gospel*. Describes how the Social Gospel influenced America's struggles with this important issue.

PAPAL ENCYCLICALS

- Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* ("On Capital and Labor").
- Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* ("On Reconstruction of the Social Order").

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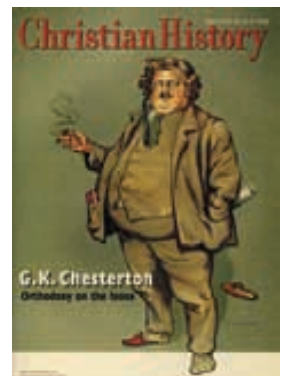
- CH 14 and 19 *Money in Christian History, Part I and Part II* (Issue 19 is out of print).

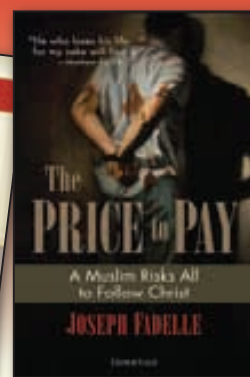
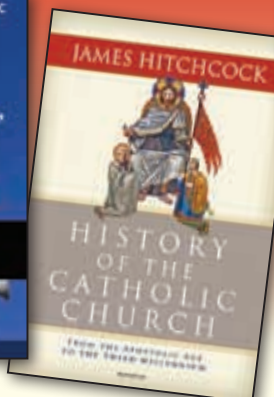
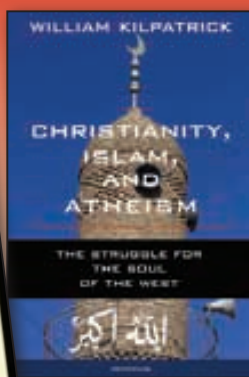
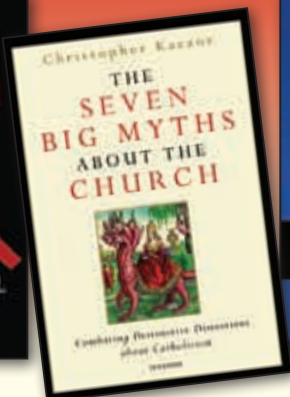
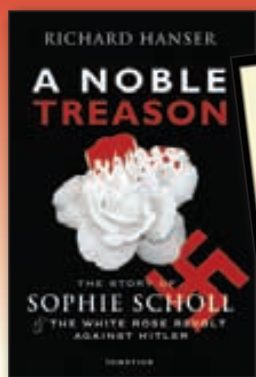
- CH 26 *William and Catherine Booth: Salvation Army Founders* (out of print).

- CH 53 *William Wilberforce: Fighting the Slave Trade*.

- CH 75 *G. K. Chesterton: Prolific Writer and Apologist* (out of print).

- CH 84 *Pilgrims and Exiles: Amish, Mennonites, and Brethren*.





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