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EDITORIAL

## HUMAN NATURE.

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**I**N the opinion of the Boston *Sunday Herald* of the 13th instant, “the fundamental error of Socialism consists in thinking that human nature can be revolutionized.” The “fundamental error” in the premises lies, not with Socialism for “thinking that human nature can be revolutionized,” but with the *Sunday Herald* for thinking that Socialism has any such thought, and that such revolution is requisite for Socialism. Neither supposition is true. The truth lies precisely in the opposite direction. Socialism does not think that human nature can be revolutionized; Socialism does not aim at revolutionizing human nature; Socialism builds upon human nature.

Only a few years ago a Charity Fair was held in Paris. The affair was gotten up upon a large scale, so large a scale that a new building had to be hastily improvised for the bazaar and ball. In the midst of the festivities the flimsy structure took fire. The pitch, with which the joists of the roof had been fastened, melted and rained down a scalding shower upon the heads of the celebrants; what with that and the flames that leaped up and across from all directions, a panic broke out; men trampled upon women, women upon children, all upon each, each upon all. A large crowd, comporting itself a minute before in civilized and considerate manner, were turned into hyenas. Which was an exhibition of human nature? When each individual in that crowd vied with each other individual in politeness and considerateness? or when all became like wild beasts? The Boston *Sunday Herald* and the lay and clerical elements, whose opinion it utters, answer: “The latter.” Socialism answers: “Both.”

The posture of those who declare that human nature would have to be revolutionized before Socialism is established, and, consequently, Socialism is impossible, amounts to holding that buildings in which large crowds are congregated should be built of most inflammable material, because human beings

will anyhow act as wild beasts; and that being “human nature,” can not be revolutionized. The posture of Socialism amounts to holding that buildings in which large crowds are congregated should be constructed of fireproof material only, and should be designed according to all the inventions and discoveries of science, because, human nature being good or bad, angelic or fiendish, kind or brutish, according to the material exigencies of its surroundings, it is the duty of the civilized architect to provide for surroundings that will not promote the bad, the fiendish, the brutish, but will promote the good, the angelic, the kind manifestations of human nature.

The illustration taken by the *Sunday Herald*, as to the failure of Religion to revolutionize human nature, defeats itself and proves the Socialist contention. It is true that “after all the centuries” during which Religion has had full sway “greed and covetousness have not been abandoned.” The posture of Religion during all these centuries has been the posture of the man, who, standing by that Paris bazaar on fire, would have tried to preach benevolence to the panic-stricken crowd. His words would have fallen upon deaf ears—so and for the same reason, the voice of Religion has fallen upon deaf ears during all these centuries, during which it has been and continues to be preached to a panic-stricken humanity. The material conditions for the nobler part of mankind have been absent. It is Socialism, and Socialism alone, that demands and will enforce the demand, that the social structure be not of the haphazard and deadly nature of that Paris bazaar, but that it shall be constructed according to all the revelations of science.

It is not HUMAN NATURE that Socialism seeks to revolutionize, it seeks to revolutionize the HUMAN INTELLECT. That that can be revolutionized even the *Sunday Herald* will not deny. Knowledge steadily supplants Ignorance. Building squarely upon human nature, Socialism knows that the moment the intellect of man has been rid of the ignorance which capitalism stuffs it full with, the moment the intellect of man has been revolutionized to the point of realizing that the vermin of the capitalist class, crawling over mankind, is not inevitable and can be gotten rid of by the “Rough on the Capitalist Roaches”—Socialism—, that moment, human nature will assert itself as it always does, and wipe the thing off the face of the earth.

There is nothing the matter with “human nature.” Revolutionize it? Not a bit! Human nature is the trusty infantry, cavalry and artillery, which, commanded by

the Field Marshall of Socialist Intellect, will tear down the death-trap of Capitalist Society, and in its stead rear the palace of the Socialist Republic, where he who works shall live, and he who can but won't shall perish.

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