CHAPTER VI

ON JOHN FRANCIS BRAY
VI.1 Bray's Life

VI.1.1 Till as late as 1915, nothing was known about Bray's life. Mrs. E. Lowenthal (1911), for example, said: "of Bray's life nothing is known". (p. 84). Another scholar H.P. Loewack, who wrote the seven volume work, *The Socialists: Persons and Systems*, said: "of his (Bray's) life we know nothing. His name is written in flowing water". (Cited in Carr, 1940, p. 397). However, in 1915, a certain John Edwards discovered a number of letters written by Bray and his brother Charles. Later in 1937, Miss Agnes Inglis of Ann Arbor, Michigan, found in the possession of Bray's daughter-in-law a large number of documents containing more extensive information about Bray. All the information that there is about Bray can be traced back to these two finds.

VI.1.2 Bray was born in Washington in 1809, in a family of artists. His father was a composer and singer engaged by a Washington Company and his mother was an actress and dancer. In 1822, Bray accompanied his sick father to England for treatment where his father died within two days of reaching Leeds. Bray, however, stayed back and was adopted by his aunt - a millionaire who, after Bray finished school, apprenticed him to a printer. He completed his apprenticeship and returned to his aunt's home.
at Leeds, but, not wanting to disturb her, did not stay long there. He became a tramp and was, in fact, tempted to become a highway man. The fact that he did not become one, as he himself confesses was sheerly out of consideration for his sisters. (See, Carr, 1940, p. 399). During this period he made his first attempt to discover the causes and remedies of what he called 'social wrongs'.

VI.1.3 In 1832, he went back to Leeds and got a job. In 1839, he published his only major work: *Labour's Wrong and Labour's Remedy.*¹ A year later he wrote: *A Voyage from Utopia to Several Unknown Regimes of the World*, but never published it. He returned to the United States in 1842 and in 1864, he published from New York a tract of forty-four pages, *American Destiny: What Shall it be. Republic or Cossack?* In 1878, he completed another tract (of ninety six pages) entitled: *God and Man a Unity*, but due to lack of funds he could not get it published. It was rewritten and published in 1879 in Detroit - the funds for the publication coming out of the meagre savings of Bray's son. In between he wrote the *Brief Sketch* (year not known) and the *Coming Age* (1855). While the former was a brief autobiographical account in which he traced the influence of his early years as a 'tramp', on his later socialistic views, the latter was a book on 'spir- ¹. All the page references in this Chapter when the source
tualism', written as a planned 'best seller' (see, Carr, 1940, p. 412), at a time when 'spiritualism' was on the ascendant in the United States. Neither of these books, however reflect substantially any of Bray's life-long concerns, i.e. poverty and misery in society and its remedy. From all accounts, he was a prolific writer till his death in 1897. But much of his later writings were articles written in cooperation with other writers and where Bray's exact contributions are untraceable or they were mostly letters to labour newspapers, which have not been published in the form of a book.

VI.1.4 Unlike Hodgskin and Gray who turned their back on radical socialism later in their lives, Bray remained a staunch socialist till the end. He was known to have been a regular speaker at worker's meetings and rallies in various industrial parts of the United States and was regarded a 'veteran in Labour's army'. (see, Carr, 1940, p. 410). He died of consumption in February 1897. His death was recorded by several labour newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic.

VI.2 Bray's radical approach to Society

VI.2.1 Bray had a clear class-based approach to society. He divided society into
into two groups, namely the 'productive classes' - those who were involved in production by means of labour - and the 'unproductive classes' - those who lived on profits, rents and interest. Bray's writings were addressed mainly to the 'productive classes' as he considered them to be the only classes which would have a direct stake in the solution of the contemporary problem of poverty and misery. The 'unproductive classes' in contrast would naturally have no real interest in the solution of such problems.

VI.2.2 Bray quite clearly declares that "from the nature of things there must be a cause for every effect." (p.7). Poverty he says is only an 'effect'; for its removal one must move back to its 'cause' and eliminate it; "Unless men discover and remove causes, they can never escape from consequences". (p. iv).

VI.2.3 Bray urges the 'productive classes' to understand their bright future and not to take society as it is. He argues that the course of history implies successive changes in human society which take place objectively and happen 'naturally and unavoidably, independent of the control of government or individuals'.(p.11). Those powerful individuals who have all the time, tried to prevent social changes, as history has always shown, have never so far been successful .(p. 12). The 'productive classes must
know that all the social changes are nothing but 'manifestations of the common progress of things' (p. 11), and the duty of man as one who is able to think and reason and as a progressive being is to hasten this progress by means of his 'knowledge' and 'wisdom'. Moreover, the 'productive classes' must never think that misery has always been their fate and society has always been divided into 'rich' and 'poor' and so, it will continue (p. 29). On the contrary, acute discontent among the poor and oppressed classes of society, must make them think of a radical remedy for all their 'social wrongs and evils, great and small' (p. 8). All this must teach them not to think merely of 'reform' as a practical solution to their misery. They must always remember that "what appears to be a remedy in one year, turns out in the next year to be no remedy whatever, for the particular evil which such remedy applied to is found to have shifted its locality or changed to some secondary evil" (p. 8). Thus the 'productive classes' must think of a radical change, a change which will directly be connected with the whole 'social system' and not with that of the government alone. 2 He further argues...

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2 Bray made this point not only in his books but also in his many speeches to workers. For example, he was called to speak at a worker's 'eight-hours demonstration' in Detroit on 4 July 1879. In his speech at the demonstration, Bray characterized the eight-hours proposal as being merely 'ameliorative', while 'socialism (struck) at the root of the disease'. (See, Carr, 1940, p. 411).
that a 'government' might be changed but the whole 'social system' may still remain as before without any change in the relations of production. (pp. 14-15).

VI.2.4 Bray, thus believing in the inevitability of social transformation as also the conscious role that productive classes can play in bringing about or hastening the change, rules out all kinds of reforms. He believes that the neglect of the four points of his 'first principles' had caused all the contemporary social wrongs and evils; the fulfilment of the 'first principles' however demanded a 'radical change' in the prevalent 'social system'.

VI.3 The First Principles of Bray

VI.3.1 Bray's 'First Principles' contains four points, the bases of which are to be found in the 'nature of things'. These 'principles' are not based on mere thought or wish but have originated from objective reasons extracted from existing nature and Man himself. Nature is not created on the basis of laws wished by man, nor man himself! Thus the laws which are operating within 'nature' as well as man must be discovered and the 'principles' which are based on them ought to be followed - if misery and poverty are to be removed radically. With such ideas in mind, Bray formulated his 'First Principles' as follows:
1. All men are alike, in regard to their substance, their creation, and their preservation; therefore, the nature of all is the same, and the absolute wants of all are the same.

2. The materials requisite for the preservation of life—food, clothing, and shelter—exist everywhere around us, but they are naturally valuable to man, and cannot be obtained by him, except through the medium of labour; therefore, as the life of no human being can be maintained without a due provision of food, clothing and shelter, and as these cannot be produced without labour, it follows that every human being ought to labour.

3. As the nature of wants of all men are alike, the rights of all must be equal; and as human existence dependent on the same contingencies, it follows, that the great field for all exertion and the raw material of all wealth—the earth—is the common property of all its inhabitants.

4. As self-preservation is the end of all labour, and as a general natural equality of powers and wants prevails amongst men, it should follow, that all those who perform equality of labour ought likewise to receive equality of reward. (pp. 28,39 emphasis in the original).

VI.3.2 Although, these principles seem to be based more on Utopian absolution rather than on the objective laws governing nature and man, however, a closer scrutiny will provide some additional insights into what Bray really wished to say in his 'First Principles'. Bray in the first place, tried to show that "all men are alike". In this endeavour, he, however, never tried to give a dogmatic concept of the ' likeness' of men. As he himself says, "absolute equality" does not prevail 'between any two created beings'. (p. 29).
this 'Principle' Bray moves back to the origin of man only to show that basically there is no difference between different human beings. For, the 'substance' of all is the same, "the absolute wants of all are the same" and the "nature of all is the same" as the 'nature' of man is, originally, 'simple' and 'colourless'. (See, p. 114). The main idea, however, behind his saying that 'all men are alike' and there is no difference between different human beings, was to protest against the prevailing concept of the nature of man which was purely based on features of race. Bray tries, by this 'principle' to rule out completely such a race-based concept of the nature of man on which plea the 'unproductive classes' have always tried to justify their oppressive position in relation to the 'productive classes'. Bray tries to argue instead the point that the nature of man depends upon his environment. The difference in 'nature' is, to a great degree, a product of different environments. It is the environment imposed upon man by his social set up that determines the nature of man and not the nature of man which determines the environment. (See, p. 29 and also pp. 114-15). Thus the first point of Bray's 'First Principles' in a general sense, conveys the idea that 'all men are alike' in the sense that any differentiation between men on the basis of their 'nature' ought to be removed, the 'nature' of man depends on his environment into which he is, innocently born and within which he has to live.
VI.3.3 To have next to the Second Point of Bray's First Principles: "all men are alike" will also mean that, all men without any exception are in need of food, clothes, shelters, etc. But the needs of men are not determined a priori by nature. They are available only in their crude and unprepared forms and as such "they are naturally valueless to men". Man ought to labour and it is only through the medium of labour that the means of life can be obtained. Hence, if 'labour and life' are complementary to each other, then there remains no reason for anyone to escape from labour. If he does so, however, Bray concludes, it simply would mean that he would be living off someone else's labour. (p. 31).

VI.3.4 Thirdly, from the 'principle' that 'all men are alike', it further follows that 'the rights of all must be equal'. Anything which is available in Nature belongs to all. So the Earth and its natural sources turns out to be common property. Thus no one can claim to have a right over any portion of the Earth. A person may only labour freely on any portion of the earth and claim full right over the whole produce of his labour. And finally as 'men are alike', an equal labour ought to be equally rewarded. In other words, for an equal labour time, there ought to be likewise an equal wage; in other words, Bray puts forward the concept of 'uniform wages'.
VI.3.5 Thus the 'first principles' of Bray (because 'all men are alike'), firstly rules out all class-based and racial ideas about the nature of man which justify exploitation and oppression of the majority by a 'ruling class minority'. Secondly 'labour' becomes a necessary condition for the continuation of anyone's life and thus everyone ought to labour. Thirdly, the rights of man over all those things which are not the produce of human labour become equal, and thus everyone gets an equal share in the raw materials provided by Nature which includes the Earth as well. Finally it lays down the principle of an equal distribution of wealth. The labour ought to get a reward which will be equivalent to his labour-time; or in other words, not only the share of the capitalists and landlords in the name of profits and rents ought to be totally denied, but also all the labourers will equally be rewarded if their labour-time is equal. For, "under a rational system of communion and cooperation" based on the 'First Principles' society at large will take upon itself the responsibility of employing every member of society as well as being all expenses connected with the education, scientific researches and all kinds of the social welfare expenditure. (See p.46). In such a society labour will become a 'blessing' rather than to be a 'curse' and thus the equal remuneration for equal

3 In a sense, Bray anticipates Marx here: "In a higher phase of communist society ... labour ... become(s) not merely a means to live but is in itself the first necessity of living..." (Marx, 1933, p. 31 ff).
labour will be as 'just towards the inventor of a steam-engine, as towards the maker of the engine, or the man who sets it in motion'. (p. 46).

VI.4

The First Principles: Bray's Analysis of the Existing 'Social Wrongs and Evils'

VI.4(a) Universality of Labour

VI.4(a).1 The "First Principles" are in fact the essence of what Bray had to say about the causes of 'all social wrongs' in his society. The 'First Point' which purely deals with the philosophy of Bray regarding equality of man, he contends, is totally neglected in the society of his time. The simplest evidence of it is the existence of such a vast disparity amongst men. Although, "all men cannot be rich, in the common acceptation of the term; but there is no necessity for one human being to be poor". (p. 56). In fact it is the ignorance of this 'very first point' which prepares the ground for the neglect of the other 'Principles' as well. The division of society at large into 'two parts' of 'those who work and those who do nothing' (p. 58), is a clear example of the neglect of the 'second point'. In such a class-divided social setup, not only does everyone not labour but rather those who labour ought to labour much more for "those who do
nothing. The productive classes in addition, have to meet the government expenditure. Bray refuted the claims of the landlords and capitalists that it was not only the 'productive classes' but the whole nation which bore the brunt of such expenditures by paying taxes, etc. The rich capitalist may even say that he "pays a much higher amount than the working man". (p. 74). Rebutting this, Bray argues that what they say is apparently right but they forget that they do not labour. So, whatever they pay, they pay in fact out of other's pockets - the pockets of the working class. Hence, even if they pay the greatest amount of taxes "they in reality pay nothing whatever." (p. 74). Thus, "the productive classes and the productive classes only, pay the whole amount." (p. 74). This empirical discussion, although limiting the labouring man only to manual labourers and thus including implicitly (as

4 In order to substantiate this point Bray puts forward an empirical illustration. In this, he shows that out of a population of 25000000 in UK and Ireland (in A.D. 1838), only a little less than 5000000 men along with a few thousands of women and children were to be found labouring. The rest of the population just depended on them. In other words, this means that to maintain even an average life style for 25000000 on the basis of an annual per capita consumption expenditure of £15, nearly five million men, women and children of the working class ought to create £375000000 yearly out of which they receive only one-fourth and in some cases even less. (pp. 69-70)  

5 In Bray's illustration, it was about £50000000 for the year 1838.
Bray himself is not explicit on this point) all those who labour mentally in the 'unproductive class' along with the capitalists and the landlords, nevertheless, does clearly show how the disregard of the 'principle' of 'universal labour' is the 'secret enemy' of the working classes and causes all great 'social wrongs' and 'evils for which the working classes want a remedy'. (p. 85).

'4.(b) Attack on 'Private Property'

VI.4(b).1 Bray finds the source of the neglect of the principle of 'universal labour' itself to lie in the ignorance of the third point of his 'First Principles' - that "...the great field for all exertion, and the raw material of all wealth - the earth - is the common property of all its inhabitants". (p. 28). Here the point which needs to be underlined is that Bray's reference to the 'Earth' is simultaneously a reference to all sorts of 'capital' for when he explains this 'point' of his First Principles, he talks not only of 'rent' but more of 'profit'.

VI.4(b).2 The individual possession of the soil as well as 'capital' is the main cause of inequality in wealth which necessarily leads to inequality of labour out of which all 'social wrongs' emerge. For; it is only this kind
of ownership which prepares the ground for the landlords and capitalists to carry on their lives on 'rent' and 'profit' without working. So the prevailing misery and poverty of the working class should not be sought in misleading ideas such as the one regarding the supersession of labour by machinery, but the individual possession of capital on the basis of which "nearly the whole wealth created by the machinery is swallowed up by the rapacious aristocracy of the hall parlour and the mill counting-house." (p.83).

VI.4(b).3 The neglect of the Third point leading to wealth inequalities then leads to the neglect of the last point "... that all those perform equality of labour ought likewise to receive equality of reward". The existence of income shares like profits, rent, etc., causes transfer to the wealth owners who do not labour, of incomes produced by the labourers and as such leads to unequal exchange of labour as between the 'productive' and 'unproductive' classes.

VI.4(c) Conclusion

VI.4(c).1 Thus it is the neglect of the First Principles which have to be taken as the only true sources of all kinds of misery and poverty in society. Also for the same reason the only true remedy for them lies in acting along the lines of the 'First Principles' in society.
VI.4(c.2) Bray's scheme, therefore, rules out the very existence of landlords and capitalists, as those classes are mainly responsible for the ignorance of the 'First Principles' in society. This analysis along with his empirical discussion leads him to the source of exploitation, i.e. 'private property' and to the conclusion that only living labour creates value. However, his explanation of the 'First Principles' is such that they appear to be absolute, eternal and independent of historical forces.

VI.5 The Inefficacy of the Remedies

VI.5.1 In order to emphasize the need for a 'radical change' and the inefficacy of the reforms that are aimed at removing poverty, Bray develops a critique of such remedies that had been attempted in his time. He criticizes the economists who saw the cause of the prevailing 'poverty and misery' in what they called 'glut of labour' in the market: that, "there are more working men than can be employed by the capitalists" (p. 103), and instead emphasizes the limited quantity of capital which is in the possession of the capitalists for the purposes of production. Posing the problem of 'poverty and misery' from this angle, says Bray, leads them to argue that if for a certain number of employees, the capitalists can pay, say 20$ per week, then they will be able to pay only half of this amount (i.e. 10$ per week)
in case the number of the employees would double and still less if the number goes up. Bray argues that if this is supposed to be the cause of the 'social wrong', then what can they suggest except to ask some of the labourers to "go out of the market" which will mean nothing but to ask them either "to emigrate or die off by disease and starvation, until they... [can be] again within the range of capital". (p. 103). He further argues, that this kind of a purely superficial 'economic' approach to the problems of poverty and misery of the working class not only does not provide any kind of remedy, but also contains within itself a positive contradiction. For having a 'glut of labour' in the market, one of the following two conditions is necessary. Either, "we all have a sufficiency of every necessary and luxury for consumption", or we want "some or all of these things", but "the raw material of which they are composed is not in sufficient quantity to employ all our labour - and thus there is a glut, from the circumstance of our having nothing to work upon". (pp. 104-105). Certainly the case cannot be the first condition; and the state of the second condition is not, however, reached yet. There is enough place to live in and enough material to work upon, not only for the present population but also for the coming thousands of hundred year. In providing the doctrine of the 'glut of labour', what these economists do is that they "methodically place" the capital and the
capitalists on the one side, and the work and the working class on the other" (p. 103; emphasis added), without seeing their inner relationship - that the former pursue production only for the purpose of profit or rather a higher profit and the latter have to fulfil this purpose. In other words, as the 'economists' ignore the nature of the capitalist organization which holds down production and employment, they fail to see the source of poverty and hence, fail to produce any 'remedy' whatsoever.

VI.5.2 Bray next considers others who saw the causes of the 'social wrongs' in 'governmental inefficiency' and tried to remove it by organizing various social and political societies and associations like 'Benefit Societies', 'Trade's Unions', the different political parties and so on. To this kind of approach and remedy too, Bray adopts a critical stand. He believes that the Trade Unions and the Political Parties are just fighting for small issues like the reduction of the working hours of the workers, higher wages, and so on. But they forget that "under the present arrangements, Labour is at the mercy of capital" (p. 101), and so long as it is so, if such remedies can at all be given weightage they cannot be considered as 'true remedies' for the elimination of the poverty and misery of the working class. (See also above, VI.243 p. 164, fn.). The Capitalists are very strong and the
fight between the 'Trade Unions' and 'Capital' is an unequal contest and its result has always been the defeat of the Trade Unions to the extent that Bray thinks that the Trade Unions became "amongst the enemies of the working class, a byword of caution or contempt - a record of the weakness of labour when opposed to Capital". (p. 100).

Bray, here looks at the Trade Unions with great scepticism in fact, because of the onesidedness of his radical ideas. He totally misunderstands the function of the Trade Unions in general, and their role in labour movement in particular. The 'Trade Unions' had no where said that their fight for the reduction of working hours or for higher wages would be the true remedy for the poverty of the working class; yet the historical significance of such demands cannot be denied at all. A sudden move and a sudden subversion of the 'system' happens only in the minds of utopian radicals but never in actual reality. Although Bray quite rightly points out that only a change of the existing system will provide a 'true remedy' for all the 'social wrongs', he argues that the 'trade unions' and 'political parties' deal only with the 'effects' and so they leave the causes aside as "sacred and untouched". (p. 98). This kind of approach reveals Bray's ignorance of the historical nature of the conflict between 'labour' and 'capital' and their manifestations as well as the questions of working class struggle.
VI.6 The Change of 'Social System' as the only Remedy for all 'Social Wrong'

VI.6.1 Bray, after arguing that all kinds of associations and political parties deal only with 'effects' and not the 'causes' of 'social evils' and thus they deal only with the 'governmental changes' and not a total change in the system, puts forward a method through which the prevalent arrangements of his society could be totally changed into a new social system based on the 'First Principles'.

VI.6.2 In the first place, Bray tries to show that the accomplishment of a fundamental change in the extant society is definitely possible. His main argument is that "the simple nature of man is colourless" (p.114), and "men are made into tyrants and slaves by the present system - by the division of society into rich and poor" (p.115). So men, cannot be by nature the enemy of man, and all the existing differences between men should be considered as artificial differences which can easily be obliterated. Although man is surrounded by nature and circumstances in which he lives, his interaction with them is not, however, one sided. If man is being operated upon, it is precisely because he is operating upon nature and whatever surrounds him. Thus the relationship between man and his environment, as Bray sees it, is two-sided. One reflection of
this twosidedness is that man is simultaneously passive and active in regard to the environment. He is passive in the sense that certain things like hunger, thirst, etc., are inescapably given to him. These are "feelings or sensations" which are "the effects of particular circumstances upon sentiment organization - they cannot be destroyed by any mere effort of thinking or willing" (p. 113). Therefore, they also "become the causes of motives and the inciters to action" (p. 113); and man may "acquire a power of determining whether or not he will expose himself to the influence of such circumstance" (p. 114). He does this by battling his environment to the extent he can get his food if he is hungry or stockpile it to safeguard future hunger, etc. "Thus, while the hunger is master of the man, the man himself, by having food in his possession, is master of the hunger and therefore, master of his own life, or of this one circumstance which affects his life" (p. 114).

VI.6.3 From such a dialectical understanding of the interrelationship between man and nature, however, Bray deviates to draw the wrong conclusions. For Bray, then, man "is passive in reference to the present, but active as regards the future" (p. 114). While this may generously be taken to mean that in the short term certain circumstances are given to man and that over the long term man may modify them, Bray however, from the latter part of the above quotation - that man is 'active as regards the future' -
draws the wholly unjustified conclusion that if this is so, man's destiny lies, and only lies in his power of decision and his own hands, and this holds also in regard to his plans for transition from competitive capitalism to a socialistic system. He consequently becomes very optimistic about the success of his plan, for, if everything is placed in the hands of man, there remains no reason why in practising it, man should fail.

VI.7 Means to Achieve the 'Ideal' Society

VI.7.1 Bray's plan for the subversion of the prevalent system of society rests on perfect idealism on a possibility of a class reconciliation. Though he very clearly notices the existing "experience proves, in thousands of instances, that the ties of blood cannot unite those whom interest separates" (p. 122), yet it is this observation itself which inspires him to think of finding a method by which this class conflict can gradually be forced down and therefrom the aim of the plan can peacefully be achieved. His methods of accomplishing the plan are naturally based on his philosophy of "reason and not force," and are such as that the working class must purchase the capital from the capitalists out of their money. For Bray, therefore, the whole problem is one of discovering how the 'working class' will be able to arrange money of the order of five thousand million pounds
in order to purchase the whole capital of the capitalists. For him, however, the solution of this problem does not seem to be difficult if one knows the nature and uses of money. Money either in the form of Gold and Silver coins or bank notes is only the representative of real wealth such as buildings, ships, machinery, etc. So, money is valuable only by conventional usage and on the basis of the same principle money enables its holder to receive an amount of real wealth equivalent to the value that it represents. Thus, "If a working man pay gold to a capitalist, or one capitalist pay gold to another, he merely gives a representative of the things which labour has produced - if he give(s) a bond to pay at a future time, he merely promises to pay what labour will produce". (p.173, emphasis in the original). Now on the basis of this principle, the working classes are able to purchase the entire accumulated capital of the capitalists within a period of seventeen years. The value of the wealth annually produced by the working classes is estimated to be around £500000000 out of which they receive about £200000000. If the working classes maintain themselves at this rate of income and continue to produce £ 500000000 annually, then a span of some seventeen years are needed to create wealth that is sufficient in order to purchase the whole capital of the United Kingdom.
VI.7.2 There is however, one snag. The working classes cannot be the accumulators under the present system. To overcome this problem, Bray, thinks of an easy solution - transaction on credit. If the working classes universally unite, "provisional delegates" from each industry can be appointed and convened. These "delegates" can simply sit with those of the capitalists and then "a bargain takes place between the producers thus united and the capitalists, and the fixed capital is transferred from the one to the other". (P. 172). Bray is quite confident about the practicability of this transaction. He argues that "the past, the present, and the future transactions of Capital all depend on Labour for their fulfilment". (p. 173, capitals in the original). That is, whatever is sold and bought by means of money, is in fact sold and bought by means of labour as money is, in any form, the representative of a certain quantity of labour. Now in this transaction between the working class and capitalists, the workers themselves make the purchase. So far it was the 'bond of capital' upon which the transaction used to take place, now it is the 'bond of labour'. What capital (money) has so far been promised and had to be fulfilled with labour, now the labour itself promises and fulfills. The only difficulty now appears to be the problem of 'security' which, in fact, cannot be the problem at all. For, if a capitalist relies on the promise of a single individual with whom he deals on 'credit'
there is no reason as to why he should not rely on the promise of the vast working classes. Therefore, the capitalists will readily sell their capital as they are quite convinced they can "in the most perfect security" (p.172) enjoy as they please the vast sum which they will be getting in return to what they have sold.

VI.7.3 Thus, Bray, reaches the conclusion that there are no difficulties in the way of a transaction like this except having 'union and industry' of the working classes on the one hand and on the other, the 'confidence' of the capitalists in the promises of the working classes. (p.172).

VI.7.4 Bray thinks that both these requirements - the 'unity' of the working classes and the 'confidence' of the capitalists - for a radical social change can easily be met. 'Confidence' can not be a problem for the purchase of the real capital is in as much as what the workers purchase would be as legal and proper a purchase as any transaction which now takes place between a seller and a buyer? (p.172). Also, the condition of the working classes is such that all of them have united together. There are, nearly two million united workers in various kinds of societies. These workers in turn have dependents of eight or nine million women and children which altogether forms almost one-third of the population of the country. Hence the basis of
the unity of the workers is strongly laid down. Thus what the 'working classes' have to do now is "only to move on with confidence, for Truth is with them - Justice is with them - all the elements of success are with them!" (1976, capitals in the original).

VI.8  **BRAY'S IDEAL SOCIETY**

VI.8.1 Being a socialist, Bray's plan was for the total transformation of his contemporary class-based social system and reorganizing it as a society of only "one-class, labourers mental and manual", (p. 178). His 'ideal' society is composed of a vast number of "communities or joint-stock companies" in each of which, on the basis of the First Principles, labour is universal, the possession of land and capital is in common and exchange is according to the 'principle of equality'. The national bank creates the 'circulating medium' and will issue it to the managers of these joint-stock companies in proportion to the number of members in their community as well as the character of their occupation. The total amount of money to be issued, must be equivalent to the money-value of the existing real wealth in the country which he estimated for his time to be about two thousand million pounds. The issue of money will always have to be within the limits of the existing real capital so that the balance between the money
issued and what it represents - real capital - can always be kept. All kinds of transactions and purchase of commodities will be by means of money and by imposition of a direct tax on individuals as well as a per-cent age on commodities. Accumulation of capital is to be ensured and the whole government expenditure met in this way. Wages will be regulated on the basis of the 'true value of labour' measured by the 'hour's labour' (p. 181), and by these wages every individual will be able to purchase commodities of his needs at the price equivalent to the 'cost of production in gross'. (see, p. 180). In other words, in the ideal economy production, and accumulation, and distribution, and consumption would be naturally adjusted to each other, and would harmoniously work out their common results" (p. 180). Prices would not be affected by demand and supply. Savings are allowed and every individual can save as much as he pleases and can enjoy it anywhere and at any time he likes. However, savings cannot definitely lead individuals to become socially powerful and overlook the others' rights for the simple reason that "equal exchanges, and individual independence of individual, render wealth an almost powerless instrument of mischief." (p. 168). Education will be free for all and society will undertake the physical, intellectual and moral education of children. Every child will be regarded as the child of society and the parents as individuals will
give to their children only "the caressings of parental love"-(p. 166). Moreover, every child contains in himself a certain amount of labour and mental ability and under the joint-stock system labour is universal. Further, there is also sufficient accumulated capital to be set in motion by labour; then, "every child, instead of being a loss, will be a profit to society". (p. 167). Women will also be free and independent of man and will enjoy the most perfect equality of rights in every respect. The old and retired members of the communities will come under the protection of the whole society in such a manner that what they will be provided will be their's as right and not charity.

VI.8.2 Thus, the 'ideal' society of Bray, the "social system of community of possessions" or the "joint-stock system", not only eradicates the roots of profits and interest and the connected social classes and makes possible a full employment economy but also ensures perfect equality of rights amongst its members in the political as well as other spherers.
VI.9 SUMMARY AND CRITICISM

VI.9(a) The Sources of Social Evils and Their Remedy

VI.9(a).1 Bray considers economics to be the basis of society and upon which rests all social relationships. Society, is divided into two classes - the capitalists and workers. The former, because they own property, live on the labour of the latter. It is as a result of his understanding of this point that Bray argues that only a radical change in the system can lead to the annihilation of "the institution of property" and the existing class-relations between individuals. This would, in turn, result in the removal of poverty and misery. Thus his First Principles are put forth as the theoretical basis for his arguments, and rest mainly, on his philosophy of nature of man, universality of labour, common possession of capital and equality of exchange.

VI.9(a).2 The Nature of Man: Bray begins by thinking that the nature of man is originally 'simple and colourless'. It is the idea that enables Bray to substantiate the other three points of his First Principles. For, once all men are 'simple and colourless' it follows that quality is the natural state of men and also consequently universality of labour which requires the annihilation of private ownership of capital as well as the existing unequal exchange of labour.
VI.9(a).3 Bray is, no doubt like the other "Ricardian Socialists", a perfectionist. His perfectionism is not however, to be seen in his ideas on the original nature of man which might even be considered one of his strong points. But it arises in the relationship he postulates between man and society. For, every ruling-class ideology would always try to deny that men could be equal. They would argue that human beings are different by their very nature. Some are clever, intelligent and born to rule, while others are dull, dim witted, lethargic and destined to be ruled upon. He becomes an idealist when he tries to show that a total change of the system was possible through a process of discussion and negotiations between capitalists and workers. In other words, he becomes a perfectionist when he replaces 'reason' for revolution in the belief that capitalists are after all human beings and they are not tyrants by nature. If they are so, it is only due to the system and in consequence, the enemy is the system itself and not the capitalists. So, the workers will change the system hand in hand with the capitalists.

VI.9(a).4 Universality of Labour: Bray next says that if "all men are alike" as far as their primary needs are concerned then it follows that every member of society ought to labour. Here, what he really wants to say is that every
member of society in order to survive has principally to labour. By 'labour' he means 'manual' as well as 'mental' labour. But the way he puts forth this idea along with his data conveys the impression that every member of the society ought to indulge himself in only 'manual labour' - as if the production process as well as society as a whole runs by itself and does not need any managers. Bray mixes his abstract ideas on individuals living as such (e.g. Robinson Crusoe living in a society as community in which new forms of labour such as services, etc., would objectively be involved. It is precisely for this reason that when he makes an empirical study of society and tries to give an empirical example he takes into account only the labourers who produce material wealth and rules out totally the services offered by mental labourers. One of the main factors responsible for this confusion lies in his division of labour on the basis of the division of society into two classes - the workers as a "productive class" and the capitalists as an "unproductive class". On the basis of this classification, the position of the "mental labourers" turn out to be, generally, uncertain to the extent that if he had not talked about the selected 'community boards' that run his 'ideal' society and had not confessed that labour can be manual as well as mental, one would quite rightly think that by labour he means only manual labour (see p.178).
VI.9(a).5 Thus, by universality of labour, although Bray tries to prove that every individual ought to labour either manually or mentally, his presentation of this idea implies that every member of society ought to labour in order to produce material wealth.

VI.9(a).6 **Common Possession of Capital.** Adopting the right approach to the origin of capital Bray declares that capital cannot belong to the capitalists; instead it belongs to the 'productive classes' - the workers. The vast accumulated capital of the capitalists is no more than 'legalised robbery' based on an unfair exchange of labour between 'producers' and 'capitalists' (p. 50). The unfairness of this exchange is to the extent that capitalists receive whatever is produced by the workers and give them in return, a part of what they have received from the workers in the form of wages. For, although labour and capital together produce material wealth, nevertheless, as capital does not belong to the capitalists they have no claims over it. Capital has been either obtained and accumulated or inherited by the capitalist from his predecessors. In both cases, capital cannot principally be their own. In the former case as they have never laboured they cannot be the true possessors of capital which by means of labour is 'created wealth'. Even if they have laboured and have
saved some part of it, that saving cannot grow into a vast amount of capital without their indulging in an unequal exchange of labour. In the latter case, the capitalists of the past for the same reasons did not possess anything of their own. Whatever capital they possessed belonged in fact to the 'nation' and so after them the true heir to their capital was the 'nation' as a whole (p. 50). Also land, as it is not created by labour, will be considered common property and will, therefore, belong to all. Thus the profit and interest of the capitalists and the rent of the landlords can not be justified at all. They are, in fact, only legal names under which through an unequal exchange they rob the productive classes. However, emphasizing the point that the capitalists having nothing of their own to exchange with the workers and this unequal exchange between producers and capitalists is the source of the accumulation of capital as well as the source of profit, Bray believes that an analytical explanation for the source of profit in a capitalist system is unnecessary. It is precisely for the same reason that he believed in the labourer's right to the whole produce of their labour. He did not believe this because he took capital to be sterile, but because he considered the labourers to be in reality the owners of capital too. Hence, instead of trying to set up a theory of capital or profit, Bray from his ethical point of view tried to only expose the fraudulent
character of the legal based relationship of labour and capital in the capitalist society of his time.

VI.9(a) 7 Equal Reward for Equal Labour: By this Principle, Bray on the one hand explains the method of wage determination in the society of his time and on the other hand puts forth his doctrine of uniform wage rate. In this explanation Bray however, never evaluates the mechanism of the prevailing wage system. In other words just as he was not able to give a theory of value he fails also to provide a theory of wages. He, therefore, deals only with the causes of the low-wage rates and critically rejects the reasons which the 'political economists' had given. Without referring to any particular economist, Bray says that "political economists" determine the wage rate on the basis of the demand and supply of labour. They also say that because of the existence of an oversupply of labour there is a 'glut of labour' and so the wages are low and the remedy for it is that some must 'go out of the market'. (p. 103). Bray totally goes against this wage fund kind of doctrine, 6 and argues that the main reason

6 The 'wage fund theory' was later developed by J.S. Mill. This theory which emerged in opposition to the Ricardian customary wage theory argued that there was a fixed fund out of which wages were advanced. It followed from this that an increase in population would result in a fall in wages, and a struggle to raise wages would lead to unemployment.
for the low rate of wages as well as persisting unemployment lies in the 'arrangements' of the 'present system' which allows capital to be accumulated in the hands of one class and 'labour' in the hands of another. He satirically adds that in such a society there will always be a 'glut of labour.' He then concludes that the only solution to it is the subversion of the system itself.

VI.9(a).8 In his ideal society, Bray's wage doctrine is based on a uniform wage rate. He clearly says that "labour is neither more nor less than labour; and one kind of employment is not more honourable or dishonourable than another, although all descriptions of labour may not appear of equal value to society at large. Such inequality of value, however, is no argument for inequality of rewards..." (p. 44).

The only factor which he takes into account for the discussion of the wage-rate is time and thus in his "communion system" there shall be equal rewards for equal labour time. Bray's uniform wage doctrine leaves no doubt that by "equality" he means an equal distribution of wealth in society irrespective of the productivity of any particular labourer. Bray did not go deeper into the complex analytical and theoretical issues of economics of his time like theories of value, profit, wages, etc. In his opinion the solution for the 'individual system' which was responsible
for all kinds of 'social evils' was simply its replacement - through 'reason' - by a 'common system' under which every member of society would labour and would equally be rewarded? Further discussions on contemporary economic issues were, therefore, unnecessary.

VI.9 (b) The ideal society and Means of reaching it

VI.9(b). The ideal society of Bray composed of numbers of 'communities' or 'joint-stock companies' is a plan for a full-fledged socialist society - a society in which every one has to labour either manually or mentally and is rewarded equally on the basis of their labour time. In such a society there is perfect equality between men and women, and children are fully protected by the society itself. There is no individual accumulation of capital, but national accumulation of capital or wealth is so high that it can meet all the expenses of society. The old and retired population is protected by society by virtue of their own 'right' and not an account of 'charity'. As a socialist, Bray can-not be criticised for his conception of the 'ideal'

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7 This was possible because to Bray, 'Labour is Labour' and thus to him, 'Labour time' was the main criteria of determining wages regardless of skill, etc.
society. However, what is fully exposed to criticism is his approach to achieving such a society and his neglect of the problems that would arise in its functioning. For, if the socialistic ideas of Bray led him to see the roots of 'poverty and misery' in the existence of a class-based society and class interest, his utopianism never allowed him to think of its remedy in terms of the class struggle.

VI.9(b).2 Bray was convinced that the labour-movements would only bring partial reform and not even that as in most cases they would lead to anarchism. Although he quite rightly argued that to bring about a total radical change in society, capital should be placed in the hands of the 'working classes' the methods he suggested to achieve this were based on his idealistic optimism regarding the nature of man on the one hand, and his limited understanding of the mechanism of the capitalist system as a particular mode of production on the other. He asks both the 'working classes' and the capitalists to select their delegates and to sit down together in order to enable the former to purchase legally the capital of the latter. For Bray, the only problem holding up such a 'purchase' appears to be the availability to the workers of such large amounts of money. However, he solves this problem quite easily by simplifying the whole process of this 'purchase'; capital
can be acquired on credit - there being no reason why the capitalists would not rely on the promise of millions of British workers. His limited emphasis on the historical character of class-relations leads him to a strong belief in the practicability of this 'purchase theory' as its materialisation would only require (i) 'unity' on the side of 'labour' which is already formed due to the existence of Trade Unions; and (ii) 'conviction' on the side of capital which can easily be created as the capitalists are not tyrants by nature and the 'reasons' given by the delegates of the millions of workers would be strong enough to convince them to enter into this transaction. Here, Bray totally ignores the fact that he has proved (at least to his own satisfaction) the origin of the accumulation of capital in 'direct robbery' and that the capitalists can not have any claim over their present accumulated capital which is the real of such 'legalised robbery'. The basis of such self-contradiction is to be found in his philosophy of 'peace' which makes him avoid 'violence' or what he calls 'anarchism'. Otherwise there remains no reason that he should think of coming to terms with such 'robbery' and allowing compensation for it. Hence, in order to keep peace and not destroy the happiness of any single individual (see, p. 178), he prescribes that 'the proper instruments' for destruction of the existing system are """" reason.""""
and not force - conviction, and not compulsion - purchase, and not plunder...? (p.215).

VI.9(b).3 Thus, it is evident that Bray is a radical utopian socialist: radical for his belief in radical change and his opposition to all kinds of reforms, an utopian for his idealist approach to man and society of his time as also his prescription to achieve the new system and finally, a socialist for his belief in labour and in the social ownership of capital.