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Paganism?

G. B. Shaw, undoubtedly a predominant and scintillant Socialist *littérateur* of the Victorian Age, whose genius has spread to the contemporary era where it shines like a beacon in the stagnant morass of "middle-class morality," burst forth in the last of his Fabian Society lectures in a vivid address on *Is Civilization Decaying?*

Said he: "If a man working an eight-hour day making a whole pin is replaced by a man working a ten-hour day making part of a pin and not knowing how the pin is made, that is not civilization, but terrible degradation. By adopting Socialism you can be a Robot two hours a day and have the rest of the time to yourself.

"Suppose everybody began work at eight o'clock in the morning and quit at ten o'clock. They would ask themselves: 'What on earth are we going to do with ourselves the rest of the day?' Some would bore themselves watching football games for twelve hours a day. Others would think they could enjoy themselves listening to classical music the rest of the time, but I can tell them that they would loathe the name of Bach after a fortnight.

"Presently people would have to develop new wants and a new civilization, particularly as mathematicians and physicians working all the time would cut the working day down to half an hour. In this civilization some of the old institutions now thought necessary would collapse. The practice of wearing clothes would be abolished. They are a great nuisance, very unhealthy and adopted only through vanity.

"Marriage would go by the board. Marriage is now an economic necessity. In some cases English peers get a living by marrying American heiresses. Generally women marry nowadays to get means of subsistence. All this would be replaced by a system whereby the state would register a couple desiring to establish a family. The state would insist that the baby come up to a certain weight and would endow motherhood.

"Schools would vanish. They are prisons for children masquerading under the name of places for education. I was locked up in one for many hours, but I never learned anything there. That is how I preserved my brain. If I had learned anything in school I would have become an imbecile like most educated people."

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