

"I can promise to be candid, but not impartial"

GOETHE

THE
"Plebs" Magazine

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The "Plebs" League

Object

To further the interests of the Central Labour College, for working men and women, at London, and to assist in the formation of similar institutions elsewhere, all of these institutions to be controlled by the organized Labour bodies.

Methods

The holding of an Annual Meet: the issuing of a monthly Magazine, the pages of which shall be open to any proposed application of reason to human problems: and the formation of Local Branches to promote the object of the League, and for the study of Social Questions, History, and Economics—from the working-class standpoint.

Membership

All Students (R. C. and C. L. C.), past and present (Resident and Corresponding) and Sympathizers are eligible for membership

Each Member shall pay 1/- a year towards the Central Fund for general expenses in connexion with the Annual Meet, &c.

Management

An Executive of five members elected annually, and the Editor of Magazine, who shall be responsible as to publication and meets, &c.

The Magazine shall be 2d. per copy, 2½d. post free.

Subscriptions payable in advance: Quarterly 7½d., Half Yearly 1/3, Yearly 2/6

✉ The Sixth Annual Meet will be held in London (Bank Holiday), August, 1914

G. SIMS, Secretary-Treasurer

To whom all P.O's should be made payable

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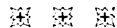
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EDITORIAL

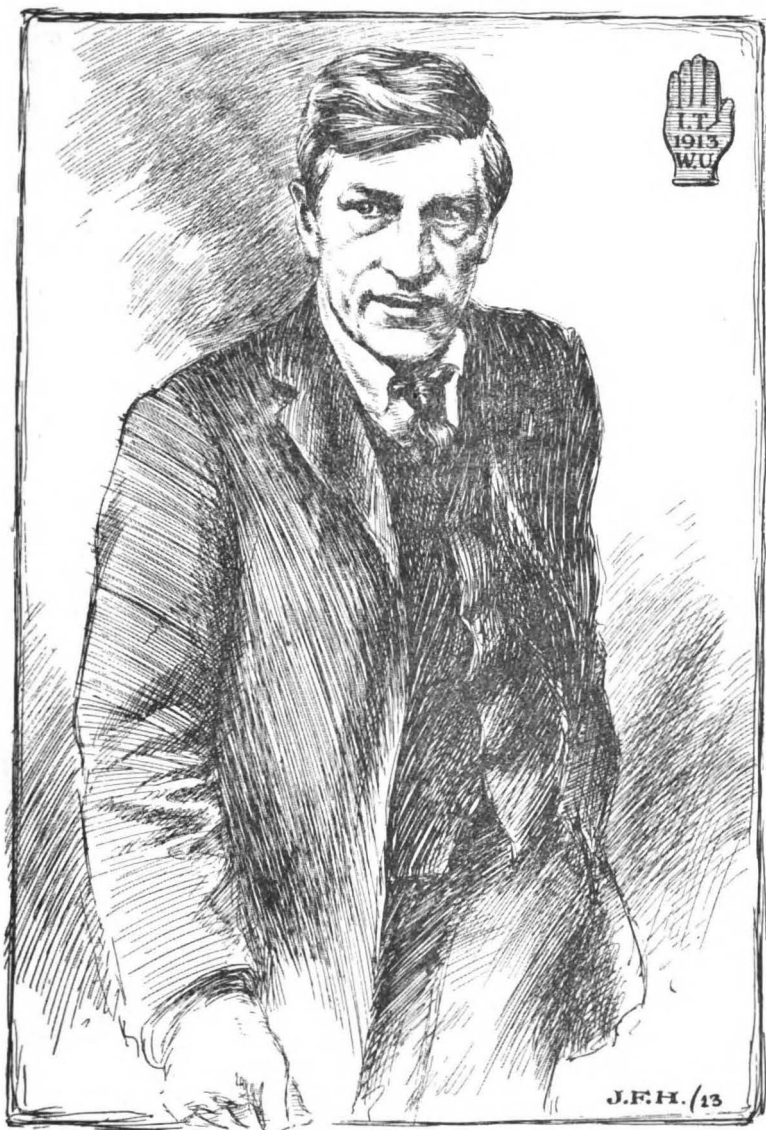
THE Dublin strike of the Irish Transport Workers Union has resulted in a wonderful display of working class sympathy. It is a typical instance of the coming to consciousness of the great giant, Labour. The ‘Red Hand’ of Irish

The Red Hand Labour has tumbled over the ‘goods’ so stridently advocated by Liberal and Tory politicians. Land Reform and Home Rule in spite of all the well-managed Press boom are of little public moment compared with this movement of the Workers, represented by the I.T.W.U. and personified in one, Jim Larkin, labourer and rebel. There is little in the material facts of the Dublin situations to single it out from those of other parts of industrial Great Britain, there is the same old slums, the same ruthless repression by Capital of all human ties, the same vicious State help to coerce the workers involved in an industrial dispute. What then is it that has captured our fancy, roused our feelings, precipitated our otherwise lethargic natures to swift and spontaneous activity? It cannot be told in a single word or sentence. The causes are many. Principal among these, probably, is the dramatic character of the organization involved. The establishment of the Irish Transport Workers Union in 1908 was in itself a monumental undertaking, a gigantic break with the past of labour organization. It is not industrial unionism or syndicalism, though the product of both or rather the expression of some portion of the theory of each. The I.T.W.U. aims at the organization of all so-called unskilled labour in Ireland; in that sense it is a National Union; in another sense it is a sectional union viz., in the claim it makes for the recognition of the equality of the “unskilled” with the ‘skilled’ worker. Is it

apparently a pure accident that the word "Transport" appears in the Union's title, since membership is not restricted, in practice, at least, to Transport workers. So far, the break with orthodox unionism does not appear great—that lies in the policy of the Union. That policy is; direct action, swift, accumulative, widespread; with just as much and just as little concern about the spirit and letter of contracts as the bosses display. That is the *policy*; not merely an exceptional expression, but an orderly and regulated plan of action. And its justification is the general cynical indifference of Capital to the contracts it has entered into with Labour, and its disregard of arbitration awards, when, as occasionally happens, the decisions are not favourable to its interests—as in Dublin. Needless to say such a policy does not commend itself to the official representatives of the older English Unionism. Traditional policy is difficult to smash, yet there is a magic about this new type of policy, this vigorous directness and fighting zeal, which appeals to that instinctive desire among the rank and file of the English Unions for new men and new measures which desire has been so persistently foreshadowed in our recent Labour disputes. And this magnetism has been intensified by the personality of the Irish Labour leader.



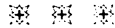
LARKIN is a man of whom any organization might be proud. Physically he is a giant, standing 6 ft. 2 in. in height, he has a breadth and depth in keeping, and the powerful body is topped by a fine head, with rugged features and alert eyes. There is no "Jim" denying the appeal of *the man*, physically and mentally. "Half-educated" he was termed at the Albert Hall meeting of November 19th; well maybe so! but that "half" is more to we workers than that of the fulsome variety, such as is displayed by present and would-be Cabinet Ministers. For Larkin is a man of the world in the best sense of the term. His "half-education" has been gathered in all quarters of the globe, and from the stern struggle for daily bread under every phase of modern capitalism. And with it all remains the glamour of the rich imagination of the Celt, the restlessness and vitality of youth and the vigour of the clean-living, clear thinking man, above all that manhood of the self-respecting, self-reliant, and therefore self compelling type, characteristic of the best of the human race. And the man and the methods of the I.T.W.U. are one and indivisible. He is Dublin Labour articulate, —the voice of human sorrow, of the remedial wrongs of ours. Such a combination is irresistible under certain conditions and those conditions are present in Dublin at the present time. Against the dim, yet powerful figure of Murphy, the representative of Capitalism, half-draped but unashamed, stands the clear-cut, dominant, insistent, and forceful personality of the Labourer's representative, Jim Larkin. It may even be that this fight will see the temporary triumph of the



“JIM”

“I have patience, but I have also strong arms, dear comrades, . . . and . . . a firm resolve, happen what may . . . ” (*Taine*).

sinister representative of Capital, but ever there will rise in the path, disputing his passage step-by-step this Irish personification of Labour's gradually awakening forces—this strong, but far from silent representative of the ages-old but ever-youthful heir of all the Past, and guardian of the Future, the Army of the World's Workers.



No wonder this Dublin business has stirred our blood, quickened our imagination, fired our hearts, and—clouded our thinking apparatus, For Dublin after all is but the legitimate successor to the struggles of our own early youth—as a class of wage-earners.

**Nationalist
or
Nationalism**

True it is fought under different conditions of time, place, and race, but nevertheless it is but the regulation prologue to the real drama yet to be enacted. For this movement is intensely Irish and therefore local in its immediate aims. Ireland has long been struggling for self-government and in this political struggle, the success of which is the basic condition for its growth and development, the interests of all classes have been submerged. What wonder then if within sight of success, we find the rumblings of the threatened upheaval of the old order of the common aims and unity of the political purpose; if in these demands of the Irish workers, that something should be done to improve their positions as industrial workers, is expressed but the usual realization of the fact that, under a system of private property, there can be no unified national aspiration, no inclusively satisfying aims and ideals! Political Nationalism has, temporarily, been discovered to cloak a Class Division of Interests, has brought clearly home to the workers of Dublin that which the Irish Intellectuals of the Yeats and Synge school had already clearly expressed in words—that Nationalist and Nationalism are not interchangeable terms. With that aspect of Irish development, Larkin and others are quite familiar—for Jim is a Socialist. But no one knows better than he how much propanganda and practical experience, by the workers, of this fact is necessary before this as yet, to them, instinctive antagonism is consciously realized by the Irish workers. It is this recognition of the future struggle with the local forces of privilege that has resulted in a strictly Irish workers Union—the I.T.W.U. Each country has to work out its own salvation, settle with its own ruling class and establish its own workers organizations along its own peculiar lines of development—and this is not the less true of Ireland, than e.g. of America, Germany, or France. And "Larkinism" is the first real step in this direction—and its greatest (immediate) enemy is not, directly, Murphyism, but the inherited traditions of the Nationalist Party movement—indirect Murphyism, cloaking its class aims under the essentially necessary step of Home Rule backed by the traditionally inseparable forces of Land, Law, and Religion.

THE Home Rule movement is the Irish expression of immediate economic aims and just as necessary to Ireland, if not so essential to capitalism generally, as the American, French and English revolutions of the past to the various peoples concerned. How

**Land Law
Religion**

little the Nationalist movement can sympathize with and assist Labour in Ireland is seen from the sudden silence of that political movement in the face of the Dublin struggle. If any further antagonism of aims was needed we have it in the fact of Murphy's, of Dublin, position in the Nationalist Party. The attitude of the dominant religious movement in Ireland is also clearly apparent from their diatribes against Larkin, and their actions in connexion with the proposal of the *Daily Herald* Leaguers to find temporary homes in other parts of Britain for some of the Dublin strikers' children. While the legal expression of partizanship against Labour has been represented by the combined efforts put forth by Tory, Liberal, and Nationalist lawyers on behalf of Murphyism. And the alien absentee landlords' attitude to Irish Labour is too well known to need elaboration. In short, whatever differences may exist among the propertied interests in Ireland—as elsewhere—are silenced in the presence of Labour-class militant. The silence of the Big Six of Dublin (M.P.'s) is but the expression of assent to the activities, vocal and otherwise, of the propertied interests generally against the organized proletarian supporters of the Dublin Nationalists—a silence that we hope will help to clarify the future outlook and expression of the Irish Labour Movement. Of course the general cry of "impossibilism" from our own ranks and "undesirable citizen" from the capitalist ranks have been levelled against Larkin. What else would we have? the man *who does something* is always a thorn in the side of established prejudice and conventionalism. We offer the "croakers" whatever consolation is contained in the fact that—the impossibilist of to-day is the reactionary of to-morrow.



THERE is great satisfaction in the fact that Larkin has kept his balance in all this splendid expression of loyalty and assistance offered by the British Trade Unionists to the I.T.W.U. and Larkin personally.

**Labour's
Chance**

And that all the publicity accorded him by Press and Platform have not for one instant weakened his action, lessened his work, or obscured the, to him, main issue—the success of his Union in this industrial fight. Those of us who heard his splendid speech at the Albert Hall recently, its thrilling human note on the labour conditions in Dublin and his forcefully-moderate statement of the relations between the "heads" of the Labour Movement here and the I.T.W.U. will readily understand how well Larkin is able to keep himself in hand, in spite of all the temptations to rant. Knowing this, and remembering the grip he has displayed during the five years' struggle to build

up the I.T.W.U., we look confidently forward to able generalship in the very ticklish task confronting him and his Union, immediately and in the future. We are no hero worshippers, on the other hand we cannot overlook the personal element in any movement, and this personal element always looms large in the early phases of a movement, and this stage requires of a leader a singleness of purpose, allied to a forceful personality and a combination of sentiment, understanding of the practical affairs of life, and a keen appreciation of racial characteristics—all these Larkin has in a very marked degree. He will make mistakes, but such mistakes are the lot of our common humanity, redeemable, in no uncertain way, by clear thinking and swift action, and such are the qualities of this Dublin labourer. We have wasted many movements and many men, as good as Larkin, for want of a little timely help in the day of struggle—**on December 9th we are asked to put forth the helping hand to our Dublin comrades, to put the seal of success on their heroic struggle, to secure their right to Home Rule in industrial organization. This can be done by our representatives at the coming National Conference taking immediate steps to entirely stop the passage of goods to and from Dublin by calling out the organized workers of British Unions at present engaged in assisting OUR enemies by such Transport work: and guaranteeing financial support to all engaged in the struggle.**

Dublin

[*Foreword*]

Not the least significant feature of recent happenings in Dublin has been the outspoken championship of the workers' cause by the "intellectuals"—the leaders of that striking literary and artistic revival which has taken place in Ireland during the past twenty years. Foremost among them has been Mr. George Russell ("A.E."), poet, critic, dramatist, painter, writer on Irish economic questions, and pioneer of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. In literary achievement, "A.E." stands with Yeats and Synge at the head of the Irish movement. His play, "Deirdre," was one of the earliest productions of the Irish National Theatre. His poems reveal him as a mystic—not of the fashionable, sentimental kind; the kind that (in the words of a recent critic) "finds in its alleged mysticism an excuse for every kind of inactivity and an authority for every kind of loose assertion." "The early so-called mystical works of Maeterlinck," remarks the same writer, "were about as bracing as a fortnight spent in a warm conservatory full of tube roses. . . . Mr. Russell does not use his visions as a means of escape from the

world ; on the contrary, the draught that, in quiet and remote places, he inhales from the unquenchable fountain, is for him a stirrup-cup refreshing him before his knightly charge against, say, the embattled hosts of Murphyism." Mr. Russell's work as a co-operator has been the practical result of his vision of a commonwealth whose ideal is the expression of the needs of all the men and women of a nation ; he has learned from long experience (the Nationalist Party has consistently opposed the work of the I.A.O.S. on account of its non-party basis) that the shibboleths and vain repetition of party politicians will achieve nothing—and are intended to achieve nothing but the hoodwinking of the mass of mankind. With Larkin and Connolly, he has seen clearly that Nationalism may be the narrowest and emptiest of war-cries. And with the fine courage of the sensitive man convinced of his plain duty, he has taken his stand alongside the men who are fighting Murphyism. The questions of policy or expediency he has ignored entirely. His action has aroused the fiercest antagonism among many whom, from his personal point of view, it might have been better to "conciliate". His open letter to the Dublin bosses, reprinted below, is as inspiring an expression of scorn and contempt for greed and oppression as it is a masterly piece of English prose.

J. F. H.

Reprinted from THE IRISH TIMES, Tuesday, October 7th, 1913.

TO THE MASTERS OF DUBLIN.

AN OPEN LETTER.

(By "A. E.")

SIRS—I address this warning to you, the aristocracy of industry in this city, because, like all aristocracies, you tend to grow blind in long authority, and to be unaware that you and your class and its every action are being considered and judged day by day by those who have power to shake or overturn the whole Social order, and whose restlessness in poverty to-day is making our industrial civilisation stir like a quaking bog. You do not seem to realise that your assumption that you are answerable to yourselves alone for your actions in the industries you control is one that becomes less and less tolerable in a world so crowded with necessitous life. Some of you have helped Irish farmers to upset a landed aristocracy in this island, an aristocracy richer and more powerful in its sphere than

you are in yours, with its roots deep in history. They, too, as a class, though not all of them, were scornful or neglectful of the workers in the industry by which they profited; and to many who knew them in their pride of place and thought them all-powerful they are already becoming a memory, the good disappearing together with the bad. If they had done their duty by those from whose labour came their wealth they might have continued unquestioned in power and *prestige* for centuries to come. The relation of landlord and tenant is not an ideal one, but any relations in a social order will endure if there is infused into them some of that spirit of human sympathy which qualifies life for immortality. Despotisms endure while they are benevolent, and aristocracies while *noblesse oblige* is not a phrase to be referred to with a cynical smile. Even an oligarchy might be permanent if the spirit of human kindness, which harmonises all things otherwise incompatible, is present.

You do not seem to read history so as to learn its lessons. That you are an uncultivated class was obvious from the utterances of some of you upon art. That you are incompetent men in the sphere in which you arrogate imperial powers is certain, because for many years, long before the present uprising of labour, your enterprises have been dwindling in the regard of investors, and this while you have carried them on in the cheapest labour market in these islands, with a labour reserve, always hungry, and ready to accept any pittance. You are bad citizens, for we rarely, if ever, hear of the wealthy among you endowing your city with the munificent gifts which it is the pride of merchant princes in other cities to offer, and Irishmen not of your city who offer to supply the wants left by your lack of generosity are met with derision and abuse. Those who have economic power have civic power also, yet you have not used the power that was yours to right what was wrong in the evil administration of this city. You have allowed the poor to be herded together so that one thinks of certain places in Dublin as of a pestilence. There are twenty thousand rooms, in each of which live entire families, and sometimes more, where no functions of the body can be concealed, and delicacy and modesty are creatures that are stifled ere they are born. The obvious duty of you in regard to these things you might have left undone, and it be imputed to ignorance or forgetfulness; but your collective and conscious action as a class in the present labour dispute has revealed you to the world in so malign an aspect that the mirror must be held up to you, so that you may see yourself as every humane person sees you.

The conception of yourselves as altogether virtuous and wronged is, I assure you, not at all the one which onlookers hold of you. No doubt, you have rights on your side. No doubt, some of you suffered without just cause. But nothing which has been done to you cries aloud to heaven for condemnation as your own actions. Let me show you how it seems to those who have followed critically the

dispute, trying to weigh in a balance the rights and wrongs. You were within the rights society allows you when you locked out your men and insisted on the fixing of some principle to adjust your future relations with labour when the policy of labour made it impossible for some of you to carry on your enterprises. Labour desired the fixing of some such principle as much as you did. But, having once decided on such a step, knowing how many thousands of men, women, and children, nearly one-third of the population of this city, would be affected, you should not have let one day have passed without unremitting endeavours to find a solution of the problem.

What did you do? The representatives of labour unions in Great Britain met you, and you made of them a preposterous, an impossible demand, and because they would not accede to it you closed the Conference: you refused to meet them further: you assumed that no other guarantees than those you asked were possible, and you determined deliberately, in cold anger, to starve out one-third of the population of this city, to break the manhood of the men by the sight of the suffering of their wives and the hunger of their children. We read in the Dark Ages of the rack and thumb screw. But these iniquities were hidden and concealed from the knowledge of men in dungeons and torture chambers. Even in the Dark Ages humanity could not endure the sight of such suffering, and it learnt of such miss-use of power by slow degrees, through rumour, and when it was certain it razed its Bastilles to their foundations. It remained for the twentieth century and the capital city of Ireland to see an oligarchy of four hundred masters deciding openly upon starving one hundred thousand people, and refusing to consider any solution except that fixed by their pride. You, masters, asked men to do that which masters of labour in any other city in these islands had not dared to do. You insolently demanded of those men who were members of a trade union that they should resign from that union; and from those who were not members you insisted on a vow that they would never join it.

Your insolence and ignorance of rights conceded to workers universally in the modern world were incredible, and as great as your inhumanity. If you had between you collectively a portion of human soul as large as a threepenny bit, you would have sat night and day with the representatives of labour, trying this or that solution of the trouble, mindful of the women and children, who at least were innocent of wrong against you. But no! You reminded labour you could always have your three square meals a day while it went hungry. You went in conference again with representatives of the State, because, dull as you are, you knew public opinion would not stand your holding out. You chose as your spokesman the bitterest tongue that ever wagged in this island, and then, when an award was made by men who have an experience in industrial matters a thousand times transcending yours, who have settled disputes in industries

so great that the sum of your petty enterprises would not equal them, you withdraw again, and will not agree to accept their solution, and fall back again on your devilish policy of starvation. Cry aloud to Heaven for new souls! The souls you have got cast upon the screen of publicity appear like the horrid and writhing creatures enlarged from the insect world, and revealed to us by the cinematograph.

You may succeed in your policy and ensure your own damnation by your victory. The men whose manhood you have broken will loathe you, and will always be brooding and scheming to strike a fresh blow. The children will be taught to curse you. The infant being moulded in the womb will have breathed into its starved body the vitality of hate. It is not they—it is you who are blind Samsons pulling down the pillars of the social order. You are sounding the death knell of autocracy in industry. There was autocracy in political life, and it was superseded by democracy. So surely will democratic power wrest from you the control of industry. The fate of you, the aristocracy of industry, will be as the fate of the aristocracy of land if you do not show that you have some humanity still among you. Humanity abhors, above all things, a vacuum in itself, and your class will be cut off from humanity as the surgeon cuts the cancer and alien growth from the body. Be warned ere it is too late.—Yours, etc.,

"A. E."

DUBLIN, OCTOBER 6th, 1913.

The Materialist Conception of History

(Continued from last Month)

[*Foreword.*—We have "lifted" the following article from the New York *Weekly People*. We have no scruples in doing so because the aim of that journal is not commercial but educational. They, like we, desire to popularize the only really explanatory social science of the age. The article has been translated by C. H. Seaholm from the Scandinavian of Gustav Bang.]

IV—Capitalist Society

IN contrast to earlier historic periods where the sources of information in many fields are very meagre, where absolute historical knowledge is constantly interrupted by greater or smaller gaps, the filling of which must be a matter of conjecture, and where consequently the cause-and-effect connexion between the evolution of the powers of production and the various social phenomena can be disclosed only through penetrating and arduous scientific research—in contrast hereto in the age of capitalism one sees this connexion

stand out in bold relief. Here it is no longer the question of a higher or lesser degree of plausibility but of absolute knowledge before which no thinking man can be blind.

It is the modern technique of production that determines the entire modern social life in all its ramifications. The industrial revolution took its start in the latter part of the eighteenth century with the spinning machines and weaving looms which the English cotton industry took into service, and which at that time had become an indispensable historical necessity. The new machinery in the textile industry speedily compelled the invention of the steam engine, and the use of the steam engine step by step spread from one branch of industry to another. Trade after trade passed from the old-fashioned method of manual production over to manufacture; the services of the steam boat and locomotive were enlisted; each new technical advance carried others in its wake. Discoveries in the field of chemistry created new conditions of production for manufacturing as well as for agriculture. The development of electrical arts gave impetus to one surprising and fabulous result after the other.

And in all fields of industrial activity this revolutionary process has progressed at a growing pace; new discoveries and inventions follow each other, not casually but uninterruptedly, they follow of natural necessity from man's conscious efforts to bring to perfection that which has already been attained, and to overcome the obstacles unsuccessfully grappled with in times past; the stage of development reached at any given period lays down the problems the solution of which becomes necessary and must be accomplished under the next following period.

Each such step forward in the material technique of production carries with it changes in the social conditions for man's intercourse and life in communion with his fellow men.

Let us take one of the plainest examples of all, one that is typical of the process which at present is completely revolutionizing our social life. A series of inventions has made it possible to convert with advantage some industry or another—for instance that of making shoes—from a handicraft to a factory industry. In the course of a few years the thousands of craftsmen who formerly sat and worked each in his own shop, sometimes with the assistance of an apprentice or journeyman shoemaker, have, for the greater part, disappeared. And now instead, society's need of shoes is in effect filled by a few great factories where a multitude of people work as wage-workers for the capitalists who own the factories and the attendant implements of production. The property relations are completely transformed wherever such a technical change has taken place. Instead of the old, pre-capitalist property relations, which meant the workers' right of ownership to the tools and the raw material and thereby also his right of ownership to the finished product, there have come about the capitalist property relations which signify that the worker is made use of by the capitalist in return for

a greater or lesser part of the values which he has produced through his labour. If the worker succeeds in raising his wages he does so only by lowering the profits reaped by the capitalist. And, on the other hand, if the capitalist succeeds in lowering the workers' wages he thereby—other things being equal—increases his profits. Thus there has arisen a relation of absolute antagonism between the two parties, the worker and the capitalist. What is of advantage to the one is detrimental to the other, their interests are diametrically opposed to each other.

This antagonistic relation, however, is not individual but social. It is not the individual workingman that stands face to face with the individual capitalist, but the working class as a whole that stands face to face with the capitalist class as a whole. The worker finds around him a large number of people in precisely the same position as himself, and he soon experiences that his own interests are in accord with their interests. If they succeed in improving their conditions of work it has a felicitous influence also on the conditions under which he is working, makes it easier for him to raise his wages and shorten the hours of labour. He understands there must be class solidarity between himself and other wage-workers, he feels himself as part of a class that only through well-planned joint action can preserve the mutual interests of its members. And in like manner do things stand with the capitalists. They may be of quite dissimilar temperaments, the capitalists of the various branches of industry have in many respects widely divergent interests, in each different line of business there is competition, but when it comes to their relation to the working class all these antagonisms vanish and the capitalists stand forth as one homogeneous class in opposition to that of the workers. Everywhere one finds proof of this class solidarity. To mention but one [speaking of Denmark]: how significant is the fanatical opposition on the part of the capitalists of the provinces as well as of the cities to even the least increase in the pay of the men employed on the government railroads? They understand full well that that would have for its effect the raising of the wages they have to pay to their own workers.

The relation between workers and capitalists thus gets to be a class antagonism; the same makes its appearance all over, wherever the capitalist property relations have separated the worker and the means of production from each other, it is given expression in the class struggle. The economic struggle waged by the workers' trades unions, is the first form that this conflict takes, it lies nearest to hand; here the antagonism between capitalists and workers becomes manifest in a quite palpable manner.

But also the political struggle is defined, in an ever higher degree, by this relation of antagonism.

The political parties gather around certain political ideas and ideals; as a rule they disavow being class parties, they call them-

selves parties of the commonwealth having for their purpose the preservation of the interests of all the people. But a closer analysis shows that this is, and must be, a self-delusion, for how can it be possible, in the long run, to conciliate utterly antagonistic class interests within one and the same party? Consciously or unconsciously the different classes organize, each within the party whose programme and entire political activity best corresponds to its peculiar class interests. The party of the Right [in modern Danish politics] represents the landowners and the capitalists, and came into existence when the old conservative party, representing the proprietors of the great country estates, and the capitalist National-Liberal party fused, fearing, it seemed, the common adversary,—the radical peasants' party, the Left. The party of the Left represents the land-holding small farmers, and guards the material interests of that group in a way that can best be designated as cynical. The Social Democracy represents the propertyless, that part of the population which is working for wages. Every political debate, whether it is over military affairs, educational institutions, constitutional problems, customs duties, or social legislation, reflects the conflicting class interests. When on certain occasions one sees the capitalist parties acquiesce in the matter of instituting reforms that in themselves are contrary to the interests of the capitalists, he will find the explanation of this seeming contradiction through a close study of the entire political situation; legislation that will serve as a sort of safety valve is resorted to for the purpose of diverting the discontent among the lower class which otherwise might lead to an outbreak of a more explosive nature. A lesser sacrifice is made in order that the greater may be kept clear of.

Just like the national politics of each separate country, so also are international political affairs shaped by class interests. It is the capitalists of each country who dominate the machinery of State and they use it for the promotion of their class-egotistic interests. Modern colonial politics, which are the mainspring of all international complications, and constitute the basis on which is reared the entire institution of modern militarism, are an unmistakable manifestation of the capitalists' efforts to conquer new markets for their products, to find new opportunities for the investment of idle capital, new fields to exploit. A great portion of the capitalist class is directly interested in the armament preparations, because they occasion the providing of ever new war equipment and the issuing of new government bonds—on which a fair rate of interest is paid. Furthermore, the false patriotism, developed under the influence of the high-sounding and musically alluring militarist phrases is advantageous to the interests of the capitalist class inasmuch as it may for a time divert attention from the class antagonisms and keep a considerable number of the exploited workers from becoming class conscious.

The workers and the capitalists are the two classes in modern society the struggle between which in effect imparts complexion to the political life. But they are not the only classes. There are others, who, like the holders of the great country estates, and the small tradesmen, are remnants of earlier social stages though capitalist conditions have more or less permeated their life, and those, who like the "intellectuals" and the class of small independent farmers, have developed under the peculiar forms of labour and property to which the modern ways of production have given rise. Some of them, who, like the small farmers, in regard to their social position, approximately rank with the actual agricultural proletariat, more and more embrace their social doctrines and, in growing numbers, join their political organizations; others, like the great landed proprietors, melt more and more into the capitalist class proper, in a common hatred of the proletarian movements; others again, whose mind is swayed, in part by the fear that they may sink into the proletarian class, in some measure by the hope that they may rise into that of the bourgeoisie, stand divided, wavering.

We have seen how the evolution of the material forces of production leads to new working conditions, thereby to new property relations and in turn to new class antagonisms and a class struggle never before met with, a class struggle which becomes evident everywhere and which imparts new forms and new contents to the political life. But these social transformations have a still wider reach; they also have **a revolutionizing effect on all mental life.**

Within each particular class develops a certain mutuality of conception, of ways of thinking, of judgment, or, in other words a certain **class psychology**, determined by the peculiar social conditions under which that class lives and works and which consequently is quite divergent from the psychology developing with others classes, living under other social conditions. If one regards a number of persons separately and each by himself he will meet with a variety of minute differences of character, shading into one another, while in studying the great social average of any one class one will find a succession of strongly conspicuous traits. The capitalist, on the whole, reasons and reckons quite differently from the workingman, that which strikes the one as a good thing in many cases appears harmful to the other, that which greatly enthruses the one will ordinarily be regarded with indifference by the other, or even arouse his disgust and indignation. The capitalist generally will be found to look upon contentment as one of the most charming virtues the broader layers of the people can possess; if the hours of labour for adult men is fixed through law at a certain maximum he will consider that a violation of personal liberty, he hold that the private ownership of the means of production is not merely the only natural order but also a morally justifiable state of affairs,—while the workingman generally will be found to harbour entirely opposite opinions.

This class psychology permeates all fields of mental life, it manifests itself in varying manner, changing as the position of the separate classes in society changes. The moral ideas, the scientific views, the æsthetic conceptions, the religious apprehensions, are all under its influence. To mention but one example: it is in no wise an accident that not only the lowest situated, most ignorant layers of the nether class, but also large portions of the upper class, evince no mean receptiveness to a mystic, inimical-to-life pietism. As long as the capitalists were a revolutionary class, impelling historical evolution forward, they were as a rule strongly critical before the dogmas of creed, rational in their ways of thinking, tolerant in regard to religion. But gradually, as they became socially conservative and reactionary they also change their attitude in reference to this question. The fear of the growing power of the proletariat and the instinctive feeling premonishing the impending extinction of their own selves as a ruling class, fills their breasts with a mystic anguish, they grasp for some medium to deaden this sentiment, and they find such an anæsthetic, in some measure, in an unsound, perverse religiosity, which directs their thoughts from earthly life over to "the other side." The key to all the mystic, religious, pietistic, spiritualistic and other similiar movements among the bourgeoisie, is legitimately to be found in the class-psychological tendencies developed at a certain stage. And side by side with these inner motives, driving the capitalists to support such movements, others, of a purely exterior character exist. The capitalists realize that such movements, if they can be successfully planted among the working class, may contribute to the paralyzing of the workers' class consciousness, and blunt the class struggle.

We have seen that all elements in the modern social life, from the rudest and most tangible, to the finest and most recondite, are gradually built up on the basis provided by the material relations of production and that they change with every new step forward in the development of the forces of production. And the same causal connexion that we perceive in the broad general features, meets us in the studying of each specific phenomenon. Everywhere one's investigations,—having disposed of a larger or smaller number of intermediaries,—terminate in the purely material conditions of production as the final, decisive explanation.

For instance, it is impossible to understand the modern bourgeois woman's movement without taking into consideration all the technic advances, such as the installation of gas and electricity, the industrial mass production of ready-to-wear clothes, &c.; which have liberated women of to-day from a number of the occupations they formerly superintended at home, and thereby given them more leisure and opportunities to devote themselves to new interests such as their grandmothers never had any knowledge of. Similarly it is impossible to understand and appreciate the import of the cultural achievements

of our own [the Danish] peasants, if one is not acquainted with the totality of the progress bearing upon the cultivation of the soil, the care of the domestic animals and the turning of the agricultural products into goods for the world markets,—all these steps forward in the methods of production which in communion have created the singular position of Danish agriculture and accorded the peasantry its peculiar social, political, and intellectual development.

Thus we find throughout, in regard to the conditions under which we live, the evolution of the material forces of production to be the final, the determining fundamental cause of social phenomena and the constant changes in their nature. No perplexing scientific apparatus is needed in order to understand this causal connexion, on the contrary, it is remarkably simple and intelligible and stands forth self-evident before every workingman who uses his sound reasoning faculties in thinking over his position in society. But thereby it also becomes obvious that the social conditions we are approaching can only be the result of the forces prevailing within the frame of the present social system. An understanding of the materialist conception of history inevitably leads to recognition of Socialism.

To be continued.

The Policy of the International

FOREWORD.—The following article in pamphlet form has reached us from France, apart from its historic value, it is interesting as showing the influences which are at work in a section, at least, of the Syndicalist movement. Who was Bakounine? For answer, we give a brief outline of the information on the point contained in the work of Gustav Jaekh—*The International*, published by the Twentieth Century Press, price 1s. Bakounine, or Bakunin, was the stormy petrel of the International Working Men's Association.—the dreaded "International" of bourgeois society from 1866 to 1873—a dreaded association that Bakounine did much to remove. Bakounine was a Russian of high position who "affected" revolutionary aims and "realized" reactionary ones. "According to the testimony of those who knew him well he was a most extraordinary person. He had the glowing, eager eye of the bird of prey, a mighty mane, so that he appeared somewhat like a lion. Marx had known him since his youth, when they had both listened to the lectures of Hegel. After the Dresden rising in May, 1848, Bakunin had been taken prisoner at Chemnitz, sentenced to death, handed over to Russia, whither he had been sentenced to perpetual banishment to Siberia, where his cousin, Count Muravief Aminski, a relative of the "pacifator" of Poland, was Governor-General. The imprisonment was made easy; Bakunin had a pass which allowed him to travel all over Siberia, and in the year 1861 he escaped by way of Japan and came to London. There he entered into relations with Herzen, who was publishing the "Kolokol," [*The Bell*], and laboured in advocating the cause of Pan-Slavism. In 1867 he joined the peace movement [called in the pamphlet "League of Peace and

Liberty"], and in 1868 the International. After the fiasco of the peace movement [at Berne Conference, 1867], the minority of that Conference founded a new organization, which took the name of "The Social Democratic Alliance," and which professed to be in agreement with the International, but which had its own programme and its own president The programme of the new alliance was the same as that which Bakounine had read at the Berne Peace Conference. It was called "Equality of Classes," and advocated the abolition of inheritance as the beginning of the Social Revolution. According to its preamble, it had for its object 'the study of political and philosophical questions on the basis of the great principle of freedom.' This 'theoretical programme,' as Karl Marx said in his confidential communication of March 28, 1870, to the Brunswick Committee, was only a farce—the important point was the organization. The new Union should become an International of its own, with a central committee at Geneva, under Bakounine's personal leadership, that, like the General Council [of the International Association], should have the right of forming new sections with national organizations subordinate to the Central Committee, and which should direct the local groups; indeed, as well as an international congress there were to be local ones. While the General Council [of the I.W.M.A.] was to be chosen by the congress itself, this usurping Central Committee was to elect itself. The new organization was at once out of, and partly in, the International, and it was eventually the means of breaking up the latter."

The General Council refused to recognize this precious alliance, in this form, so it presented itself for acceptance with some modifications—mainly "paper" ones. Upon their programme under this new guise, which said that the alliance strove "for the political, the economic and the social equalization of classes," the G.C. comments, "the equalization of classes must rest on the harmony between Capital and Labour, while the true aim of proletarian progress would be the abolition of classes. Perhaps this was a slip of the pen"! It was: for the alliance proceeded to rectify the "error," by stating that it now strove "for the political, economic and social equalization *of the individual*," (the italics are ours). However, the General Council were finally compelled to take drastic action, if the International was to be saved. Karl Marx therefore decided to attend the Hague Conference, called for September 2, 1871, and try to lay the evil influence of Bakouninism. Bakounine, however, did not attend—discretion taking the place of valour. Nevertheless the followers of Bakounine and his policy were "laid"—for a time. Still the propaganda was carried on by them with much success, the main factor of the latter being: that the International, in its then form, was becoming unnecessary. Once its general policy had been successfully established in every capitalist country the local needs demanded a freedom, a national character, that urgently called for treatment on the lines of racial and individual economic development; "every country must first settle its own problems." So finally the General Council was removed to New York, a move that effectually maintained the *name* against the machinations of the Bakounine section—no other International could be started along the same lines. The Bakounine movement finally degenerated into a number of secret societies. "After each section had been made 'autonomous,' then each individual must be made 'autonomous,' too, and this step was duly taken. The sections crumbled into small

groups, whose only bond was their dislike of each other, and this greatly exceeded their enmity for the enemies of Labour"—a process that had been greatly accelerated by the General Council's damaging exposure of Bakounine's secret propaganda in other countries.

Bakounine finally disappeared, as a force in the movement of Labour, under the accumulated evidence that seemed to leave no shadow of doubt as to his acting as a Pan-Slavic agent—a charge that was publicly levelled against him by a former partner of his activities. Nevertheless "the evil that men do lives after them," and so every now and again circumstances favour a spread of the policy of "direct action" in the form of individual "propaganda by deed," for this policy the part truths of Bakouninism afford a ready expression. That worshipping of phrases is the early phase of every movement history is the proof, and the truth of Goethe's expression "in the beginning was the deed" is just as true of movements as of individuals. Apart from this, this article is a part of the written history of our movement and as such is valuable. It belongs to the period (1869) when the Alliance was running avowedly under the International, i.e., before the open rupture.

Our thanks are due to Mr. A. J. Hacking, M.A., of the C.L.C., for this translation.

THE INTERNATIONAL when receiving a new member into its circle does not ask him if he is religious or an atheist; if he belongs to such a political party, or if he belongs to none: it asks him simply:—Are you a worker, or if you are not, do you experience the need and do feel the strength to embrace freely, completely, the cause of the workers, to identify yourself therewith to the exclusion of all other causes which could be adverse thereto?

Do you know that the workers who produce all the riches of the world, who are the creators of civilization, and who have acquired all liberty for the bourgeois, are to-day condemned to misery, to ignorance and to slavery? Have you understood that the chief cause of all the ills which the worker endures is poverty, and that this poverty, which is the lot of all the workers in the world, is a necessary consequence of the actual economic organization of society, and notably of the bondage of labour, that is to say, of the proletariat, under the yoke of capital, that is to say, of the bourgeoisie?

Do you understand that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie there exists an antagonism, which is irreconcilable, because it is a necessary consequence of their respective positions? that the prosperity of the bourgeois class is incompatible with the well-being and the freedom of the workers, because this excessive prosperity is only, and can only be founded on the exploitation and on the bondage of their labour, and that, for the same reason, the human prosperity and dignity of the working masses demand absolutely the abolition of the bourgeoisie as a separate class? that, in consequence, the war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is to the death, and can only end by the destruction of the latter?

Do you understand that no worker, however intelligent and energetic he may be, is capable of fighting single-handed against the power, so well-organized, of the bourgeois, a power represented and maintained chiefly by the organization of the state, of all states? that, to give yourself strength, you ought to associate yourself, not with the bourgeois—which would be a folly or a crime on your part, because all the bourgeois, as far as they are bourgeois, are our irreconcilable enemies—nor with unfaithful workers, and those who would be cowards enough to go to beg for the smiles and the benevolence of the bourgeois, but with honest energetic workers, and those who wish frankly what you wish?

Do you understand that in view of the formidable coalition of all¹ the privileged classes, of all the owners and capitalists, and of all the states in the world, isolated working association, local or national, if it belongs even to one of the greatest countries of Europe, will never be able to triumph, and that, to hold head against this coalition and to gain this triumph, nothing less is necessary than the union of all the workers' associations, local and national, into an universal association, the great International Working-Men's Association, of the workers of all lands?

If you know, if you well understand, and if you really wish all that, come to us whatever may be otherwise your political or religious beliefs. But that we may be able to receive you, you must promise us:

(1) To subordinate forthwith your personal interests, even those of your family, as well as your political and religious convictions and manifestations, to the supreme interest of our association: the struggle of labour against capital, of the workers against the bourgeoisie in the economic field;

(2) Never to have dealings with the bourgeois with a view to personal interest.

(3) Never to seek to raise yourself individually, only for your own advantage, above the mass of workers, which would immediately make a bourgeois of you, an enemy and an exploiter of the proletariat; for all the difference between the bourgeois and the worker is this, that the former seeks his welfare always outside that of the community, and that the latter does not seek it nor pretend to acquire it except unitedly with all those who work and who are exploited by bourgeois capital;

(4) To remain always faithful to the solidarity of the workers, for the least betrayal of this solidarity is considered by the International as the greatest crime and the greatest infamy that a worker can commit.

In a word you must accept frankly and fully our statutes in general, and you will take a solemn engagement to conform thereto your acts and your life henceforth.

We think that the founders of the International Association acted with very great wisdom by eliminating, to begin with, all political and religious questions from the programme of this association. Without doubt, they have not themselves been without either political opinions, or anti-religious opinions well defined; but they have refrained from setting them forth in this programme, because their principal end was above all to unite all the masses of the workers of the civilized world in a common action. They have had of necessity to seek a common basis, a series of simple principles on which all workers,—whatever may be otherwise their political and religious aberrations, however little they may be serious workers, that is to say, men harshly exploited and suffering,—are and ought to be in agreement.

(To be continued)

Reports

NORTH EAST LANCS. AREA

The work in connexion with the Tutorial Classes is proceeding quite satisfactorily. The attendance may not be all that can be desired, but as the session advances that may be remedied. The total attendance at the six classes in the area is about 150 students, made up as follows :

Colne	...	...	24	Students
Padiham	...	...	28	"
Accrington	...	...	25	"
Burnley	....	...	20	"
Nelson	...	...	24	"
Blackburn	...	...	27	"
			<hr/>	
			148	

Now, in my opinion the attendance at the Burnley and Nelson classes should be considerably increased, especially where we take into account the large population which these towns contain. It is up to the Socialist and Labour organizations to take advantage of the educational facilities offered by these tutorial classes.

Recently I addressed the Accrington branch of the Gasworkers' Union, and was successful in getting them to make a grant to the Accrington class of £2. This is all at present. Trusting that the educational work is proceeding quite successfully in the other areas.

W. H. BARTON, Gen. Secretary.

38, Scott Street, Burnley.

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1912-13.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
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Collections ...	2	13 9½	„ Social Expenses ...	9	5 11½
Socials, &c. ...	16	4 10½	„ Class Secretaries' Expenses ...	1	8 0
Trade Union Grants	11	13 3	„ General Secretaries Expenses ...		10 0
Lecture ...		16 10	„ Syllabuses ...	1	10 0
Profit on Books ...		8 2	„ Rent ...		10 9
			„ Sundries ...		10 5½
			„ Student's Fee returned ...		5 0
			„ Balance in hand ...	4	14 7
	<u>£70</u>	<u>2 2</u>		<u>£70</u>	<u>2 2</u>

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<i>Positive Outcome of Philosophy</i> ...	40	„
<i>Industrial History</i> (Gibbons) ...	80	„
<i>Philosophical Essays</i> ...	3	„
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Revisionism

[TO THE EDITOR,—The enclosed is a translation I made on board ship coming home from S. Africa of a passage from a book by Huret, who was sent over to Berlin by the *Figaro* to study social and economic questions in that town. The *Figaro*, as you know, is one of the leading papers of Paris, and Huret's book deals in a fair and lucid way with many interesting German questions besides that of shades of Socialism. But the enclosed passage struck me as so important, from the point of revolutionary Socialists, as pointing out so clearly the weakness of the reformist position as voiced by a fairly intelligent worker, that I translated it then and there, with the idea of giving it eventually to English workers, who are not able to get at the original. I think now you may perhaps like to publish it in *Plebs*. Huret's book in which it appears is called *Berlin*.]

D. B. MONTEFIORE.

PAGE 253. I reproduce exactly our conversation, keeping to the order and the disorder of his ideas.

"Already at school, I had no taste for religion; I became a Socialist, and decided to remain at Berlin, where I have been living for the last 13 years. I am 32, am married, but have no children. I earn 6 marks for a day of 9 hours."

"You have not much to complain of then?"

"Oh, no! I am satisfied. But I have comrades who earn only 3 or 4 marks a day, and who have 6 or 8 children. It is for them specially that we must agitate."

"Why are you a Socialist?"

"It is the duty of a workman to be a Socialist. In the present state of Society the workman should fight the Government, which forces heavy taxation on us in order to keep up the army. We will not have that any longer."

"But if the taxation were removed to-morrow?"

"We should still be obliged to fight until religion is abolished. We have in our programme 6 principal reforms which we intend to realize:—

1. The abolishing of religious teaching in schools; religion must be a private matter only.
2. The destruction of the army.
3. Complete freedom in political suffrage.
4. The eight hours' day.
5. The increase of wages, and the improvement of workmen's dwellings.
6. The abolition of taxes, which fall on the workers; for if taxation of income exists in Prussia, it does not exist everywhere in Germany.

"We desire also the abolition of indirect taxation on meat, bread, salt, &c., and the establishment of free trade."

"Why do you want to destroy the army?"

"Because we desire to do away with war."

"But if to-morrow you were attacked?"

"I don't care if I have to become a Frenchman, an Austrian or an Italian—but we don't want to be Russians. My comrades and I have agreed that Prussia had much better have left Alsace-Lorraine to those to whom it belonged."

"Have you any hope of realizing your programme?"

"It may be that we shall have to wait 10, 15 or 20 years. But not longer. In two or three years we shall have fresh elections for the Reichstag [those just held in 1912.—D. B. M.]. The Party will then have more Deputies than has the Centre, and we shall play the part that they play now."

"But will the Emperor allow that?"

"We shall see about that."

"What would you do?"

"If the Emperor forbids certain reforms, we shall make ourselves Emperor, and we shall take up arms."

"The army which is under the orders of the Emperor will prevent that!"

"Between now and then it will belong to us. All the soldiers coming from industrial centres are Socialists. There are many, even in the Guards, with the exception of the regiments composed of recruits from Poland and Eastern Prussia. These will shoot down the workers. But the regiments composed of industrial workers will march with us against the other regiments."

"So you would make a revolution?"

"It is the duty of each one of us to be at his post, and we are too enthusiastic to be cowards."

He spoke without gestures, and in a quiet voice.

"If there were a war," he continued, "the Socialist party would say it is the fault of Germany, and on the first opportunity they would surrender to the enemy. Besides, if our leaders were to decide that none of us were to fight, none of us would fight. The Government can have no confidence in the reserve or in the territorials."

"And if the police and the army together forced you to march?"

"Then we would take up arms to fight them. I don't mind if I am killed by the bullets of the police or by those of foreign soldiers. If I have to die, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that I have not shot down people who never did me any harm."

I asked him what he and his comrades thought about private property?

On that subject, he said: "Opinions are very different. It is quite unjust that some should have millions, which they don't know what to do with, and others have nothing. The worker should have enough to live with dignity and to bring up his children. But I do not believe in the victory of that form of socialist teaching whose aim is to abolish private property. To destroy capitalism would be impossible. What we have to do is to diminish it in order to augment the salary of the workers. The ideas of Karl Marx are just, but are impracticable. The capitalists are so strong that we can't destroy them. We want to be independent of the capitalists in the sense that the Party would buy all the necessaries of life, and would retail them to the workers through co-operative societies."

I desired to press him further, so I asked "But if, in a few years, the Socialists have a majority, why should not they abolish interest on money? And then the State could exploit mines, railways, &c."

The man shook his head doubtfully, and repeated several times, "No, that's impossible. The end would be that the people who have money would take it to other countries."

"But," I said, "are not the workers the producers of all wealth? You would not therefore require the money?"

"No," he replied, "I do not believe in those ideas. The Socialist party will never be more than a fraction of humanity, and all that I want is the realization of the programme I mentioned to you just now."

I could not push him further along this road.

We spoke then of laws on workmen's insurance, of sickness and old-age pensions, on hygiene in workshops, the shortening of working hours in certain State and Government workshops, of the "paternal" Hohenzollerns.

"Was it not the influence of the monarch which caused the passing of these laws, which even France has not yet obtained?" I asked.

"Everything of any good has been done by the Socialists," he replied. "The Emperor cares for his crown even more than for conservative principles; and he is only prudent enough to follow a movement which he felt was irresistible."

"The Emperor is therefore useless?"

"Completely so. We don't want an Emperor who spends 20 millions a year, while the President of a Republic would spend ten times less. We don't want an Emperor who despises his people, and whose son speaks of the workers as miserable brutes. (This in allusion to a speech of the Crown Prince at the time of the Socialist campaign against Alfred Krupp)."

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