

THE
Social Revolution
AND
**On the Morrow of the
Social Revolution.**

BY KARL KAUTSKY.

(Translated from the German by J. B. ASKEW.)

SOLE TRANSLATION AUTHORISED AND REVISED BY
THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

THE present pamphlets are the outcome of a suggestion made to me by the Socialist Reading Union in Amsterdam—an association consisting mainly of “Intellectuals”—which invited me to speak there and in Delft. Among the subjects which I proposed was also the “Social Revolution.” As the comrades in both towns accepted the same subject, I, in order not to repeat myself, divided it into two lectures, which, though externally independent of each other, are nevertheless connected with one another internally.

“REFORM AND REVOLUTION” AND “ON THE MORROW OF THE REVOLUTION.”

The union wished then to publish these two lectures in the form of a pamphlet. To that I had no objection; nevertheless, for the sake of a wider circulation, not to speak of other reasons, I preferred that they should appear in the German Party press. To this our Dutch comrades readily assented.

What is given here is no verbatim report. In writing down what I had said, I have introduced several new ideas, which at the time of delivery I was obliged to omit for the sake of brevity. Nevertheless, I have kept well within the bounds of the lectures and have not made a book of them.

The object of the work will be plain to the reader and needs here no explanation. A special interest, however, is attached to it in the case of Holland, as shortly before my lectures, which took place on April 22 and 24, the late Minister, Mr. Pierson, made a public statement to the effect that a proletariat Revolution is of necessity bound, for reasons inherent in it, to come to grief. My lectures were a direct reply to that. The Minister was so good as to attend the second one. He diligently took notes but unfortunately did not rise to reply to me.

Apart, however, from general as well as local propaganda

reasons, I was induced to take up the subject of the Social Revolution also because of the preponderatingly academical composition of my audience. For are not the "Intellectuals" precisely those among us, who—at least in Germany—find it most difficult to reconcile themselves to the idea of revolution? However, in Holland things appear to be in a somewhat different position, and the temper of my Dutch audience was an agreeable surprise to me. My lectures met with no opposition whatever, and found only sympathy. I hope that that is not to be placed wholly to the credit of international courtesy, for does not Marxism count quite a number of its best representatives among the "Intellectuals" of Holland?

I cannot wish for anything better than that my remarks may find the same favour with our German comrades as they did with the Dutch. To warmly thank here the latter once more for the friendly reception they gave me is really a pleasant duty to me.

K. KAUTSKY.

Berlin, Friedenau, June 2nd, 1902.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

The following addresses originated in the head of an Austrian, resident in Germany, and were delivered in Holland. Thus they are already, by their very origin, international, and hence required no alteration when my friend Askew undertook to translate them into English—the only English translation which has been revised by me. Nor do the criticisms which have been passed on them give me, as yet, the slightest reason to alter anything in them.

In various places I come to speak about English conditions, and occasionally let drop very severe remarks about the spirit which to-day prevails in a large section of the English working class. These opinions are in no way consistent with international solidarity, but rather arise out of it, since the history of the various sections of the international proletariat are now so closely bound up with one another that every mistake, as well as every progress made by the labour movement of one country reacts on the other countries as well. It is precisely from England with her highly-developed labour movement that we on the Continent have always been able to learn a great deal. We learnt from her the first forms of a rational labour movement—Chartism, trade unionism, co-operation, the movement for labour protection—in all these England showed us the way. Now, alas, we only learn from England how not to do things, how a big and strong working class becomes powerless as soon as it loses the spiritual tie which binds the various component parts of the labour movement together, and make of it an irresistible whole.

If I speak disapprovingly of the spirit prevailing in the English trade unions, it must not be supposed that I think meanly of trade unions. I regard the trade unions as an equally indispensable weapon in the proletarian class war as a Socialist Labour Party, and both are intimately dependent on one another.

Just as absurd as the opposition or indifference of many trade unions to a Socialist Party, would be opposition or indifference of the latter to the trade unions. In the trade unions we have the most capable portion of the proletariat organised, that which has

to form the backbone of a Socialist Party; and a Socialist movement has only thus succeeded in striking firm root where it includes the mass of the trade unionists. To win these, despite all the machinations of a Conservative or a corrupt trade union bureaucracy; and to see that no occasional friction with this bureaucracy ever becomes antagonism to the trade union movement itself, is, in my opinion, one of the most important, in Anglo-Saxon countries certainly, one of the most difficult problems for a Socialist.

If my criticism of the present day spirit of the English labour movement in no way arises from contempt, but rather from a great admiration for the English trade unionism, so does it neither arise from contempt, but a high admiration for the English people in general. Just because we on the Continent are accustomed to expect the highest from the English people, whose proletariat Marx in his "Capital" described as the prize fighters of the European working-classes, and which gave us Thomas More and Robert Owen—for that very reason we feel the more disappointed to-day when the labour movement there exhibits of late years far less vigour and courage than that of any other country of capitalist civilisation.

But our conception of history teaches us that the roots of this are to be found in passing economic conditions, not in any natural characteristics of the English people. We have every reason to expect that the present lethargy of the English labour world will at no too distant time yield to a period of activity similar to that which Socialism shows to-day in America, where, too, for many years the most self-sacrificing and hardest propaganda appeared fruitless. Like the English, the American Socialists too, had to fight for years and years against a foe which for us is far worse than police tricks, than prison and exile, than knouts and bayonets, namely the apathy of the workers, who despise their best friends and sneer at them. To bid defiance to this foe for so long a period requires the greatest courage, the greatest tenacity, the firmest conviction of the necessity of one's own cause.

May my English comrades, who have to fight this great fight, soon reap the same reward as our American comrades have. Then the last link in the chain will be closed, which twines itself ever tighter and tighter round the neck of capitalist exploitation till it finally will strangle it.

K. KAUTSKY.

Berlin, February, 1903.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

In presenting these timely pamphlets from the pen of one of the greatest European writers on Socialism and the recognised living authority on Marxism to our English readers, no remarks are required from me. The pamphlets are probably destined to dispel completely the remains of that wave of opportunism which seemed a year or two back to have spread from England to the Continent, but which has received a decisive check from the recent course of events in England as elsewhere. In conclusion, I may be permitted to say that this translation is the only one authorised by Karl Kautsky.

J. B. ASKEW.

Locarno, August, 1902.

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

SOCIAL REFORM AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.—THE CONCEPTION OF THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

There are few conceptions about which so much has been debated as that of the Social Revolution. That can partly be explained by the fact that none is so opposed to all existing interests and prejudices as this, partly, however, by the circumstance that few are ambiguous to such an extent.

Occurrences, as a rule, cannot be so sharply defined as things, especially social occurrences, which are exceedingly complicated and grow the more so as society develops, that is, as the forms of associated human activity become more manifold. And to the most complicated occurrences belongs that of a Social Revolution, that is, the complete overthrow of the established forms of associated human activity.

No wonder that this word, though in everybody's mouth, is employed by everybody in a different sense, and even by the same person at different times with a different meaning. Some understand by it, barricades, conflagrations of castles, guillotines, September massacres—all sorts of hideous things thrown into one. Others, again, would deprive the word of all its sting, and use it only in the sense of a great, but imperceptible and peaceful social transformation, something like, for example, that caused by the discovery of America, or the invention of the steam engine. Between these two extremes there are yet many shades and grades.

Marx, in his preface to the "Critique of Political Economy," defines as the social revolution that more or less rapid transformation of the vast juridical and political superstructure of society which results from the transformation of its economic foundations.

If we keep to this definition, we at once eliminate from the conception of the Social Revolution "the transformation of the economic foundations," such as was caused by the steam engine or the

discovery of America. This transformation is the *cause* of the revolution, not the revolution itself.

But I would not adhere strictly to this definition of the Social Revolution. One can also interpret it in a narrower sense. In that case it is not every transformation of the juridical and political superstructure of society that constitutes a revolution, but some *particular* form or some *particular* method of it.

Every Socialist strives for the Social Revolution in the wider sense; yet there are Socialists who reject the *revolution*, and want to arrive at the social transformation through *reform* only. They oppose social reform to Social Revolution. This opposition it is which is discussed in our ranks to-day. It is only with the Social Revolution in this narrower sense, that is, as a particular method of the social transformation, that I will deal here.

The opposition between reform and revolution does not lie in the fact that in one case force is employed and in the other not. Every juridical and political measure is an application of force, a physical force measure which will be enforced by the power of the State. Nor do particular methods of employing physical force, such as street fights or executions, constitute the essential element of social revolution as opposed to reform. They arise from particular circumstances, are not necessarily bound up with a revolution, and may accompany a reform movement. The constitution of the delegates of the Third Estate as the *National Assembly* of France on June 17, 1789, was a revolutionary act without any apparent use of force. The same France had, on the contrary, seen in 1774 and 1775, great insurrections, for the sole and by no means revolutionary purpose of assizing the bread, and thus put a stop to the continued rise in its price.

The reference to the street fights and executions as characteristics of revolution affords, however, at the same time a clue to the source from which we can obtain information as to the essentials of a revolution. The great transformation which commenced in France in 1789 has become the classical type of all revolution. It is mainly this transformation which people have in mind when speaking of revolution. From it we can best study the nature of revolution, as well as of its opposition to reform. The revolution was preceded by a series of attempts at reform, among which the best known is that of Turgot—attempts which, in many respects, aimed at the very same thing which the revolution actually accomplished. What distinguished the attempts at reforms by Turgot from the corresponding measures of the revolution? Between the two lay the *conquest of political power by a new class*. It is here that the essential distinction between revolution and reform lies. Measures which have for their object to adapt the political and juridical superstructure of society to the new economic conditions are *reforms*, if they proceed from the class which has hitherto ruled society politically and economically—they are reforms even if they

are not freely accorded, but are obtained through the pressure of the governed classes, or by the force of circumstances. On the other hand, measures of that kind constitute the outcome of a revolution if they proceed from a class which has hitherto been economically and politically oppressed, and which has now conquered the political power, in order, as it in its own interests necessarily must, to transform, more or less rapidly, the entire juridical and political superstructure of society, and so to create new forms of social activity.

It is, therefore, the conquest of the powers of the State by a hitherto oppressed class—in other words, the *political revolution*—which is an essential characteristic of the *social revolution* in its narrower sense, as opposed to social *reform*. Those who repudiate political revolution as means of the social transformation on grounds of principle, or who wish to confine the latter to such measures as can be obtained from the ruling classes, are *social reformers*, no matter how opposed their social ideal may be to the existing form of society. On the other hand, everyone is a revolutionary whose aim is that a hitherto oppressed class should conquer the power of the State. He does not cease to be such if he wishes to prepare and hasten on this conquest by means of social reforms wrested from the ruling classes. Not the striving for social reforms but the explicit confining oneself to them, distinguishes the social reformer from the social revolutionary. On the other hand, only that *political revolution* becomes a *social revolution*, which results from a *hitherto socially oppressed class* being forced to complete its political emancipation by its social, on account of its low position in society becoming incompatible with its political predominance. A split in the ranks of the ruling classes, be it even so great as to assume the most violent forms of a civil war, is not a social revolution.

It is only the social revolution, as thus defined, that we will discuss in the following pages.

CHAPTER II.—EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION.

A social reform can very well agree with the interests of the ruling classes. It certainly leaves for the moment their social position unshaken, and in certain circumstances may even enhance it. A social revolution on the contrary is quite incompatible with their interests, implying as it under all circumstances does, the destruction of their power. No wonder that the ruling classes, for the time being, always deprecated and condemned the Revolution, and when feeling themselves insecure, opposed to the idea of revolution that of social

reform, praising the latter to the skies—very frequently, of course, without letting it become an earthly reality.

The arguments against revolution were invariably taken from the systems of thinking prevailing at the time. So long as Christianity ruled the human mind, revolution was repudiated as a sinful rebellion against the God-appointed authorities. The New Testament supplied any amount of evidence for that, since it arose in the time of the Roman Empire, at an epoch when all rebellion against the existing powers appeared hopeless, and all independent political life had ceased to exist. The revolutionary classes, of course, cited by way of reply the evidence from the Old Testament, in which the spirit of a primitive peasant democracy still makes itself frequently felt.

When, however, the theological system of thinking gave way to the juridical, the Revolution was defined as a violent breach of the existing legal order. Since no one could have the right to break the law, the right to revolution was an absurdity—revolution was in every case illegal. But the champions of the uprising classes opposed to the existing historically developed law, their own law for which they strove, as the eternal law of reason and nature, as the inalienable rights of man, and argued that the reconquest of this law, which obviously could only have been lost through some breach or breaches of the law, was certainly no breach of the law, even when brought about by a revolution.

To-day theological shibboleths have little weight—least of all with the revolutionary classes of the people. But even the appeal to the historical law has lost its force. The revolutionary origin of the law and of the Governments of to-day, is still too recent for anyone to venture to claim for them legality. Not only the Governments of France, but also the dynasties of Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, England, Holland, are of a revolutionary origin; the Kings of Bavaria and Wurtemberg, the grand Dukes of Baden and Hesse, owe not only their titles but also a considerable portion of their territories to the protection of the revolutionary upstart Napoleon; the Hohenzollerns have risen to their present position on the ruins of thrones, and even the Hapsburgs made their submission to the Hungarian Revolution. Andrassy, who had been hanged in effigy in 1852 for high treason, became Imperial Minister in 1867 without being false to the ideas of the National Hungarian Revolution of 1848.

The bourgeoisie herself took an active part in all these violations of the historical law. It, therefore, could not well, on having become the ruling class, condemn revolution in the name of that law, however much her philosophers of law tried their best to reconcile natural law with the historical one. It was obliged to look out for more effective arguments in order to condemn the revolution, and those it found in the new system which arose simultaneously with it, viz., in the natural scientific. So long as

the bourgeoisie was revolutionary, natural sciences (geology and biology), too, were dominated by *catastrophic theories*, starting from the idea that the development of nature proceeds by sudden and enormous leaps and bounds. When, however, the middle-class revolution was accomplished the place of the catastrophic theory was taken up by that of a gradual and imperceptible development, formed by the accumulation of countless and infinitesimal advances and adaptations in the struggle for existence. To the revolutionary middle-class the idea of catastrophies, even in Nature, was very congenial; to the conservative middle-class this idea appeared irrational and unnatural.

I, of course, do not mean to assert that the natural philosophers were each time prompted in choice of their theory by the political and social needs of the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, the upholders of catastrophic theories were often enough extremely reactionary and least of all in sympathy with any revolutionary ideas. But every one is involuntarily influenced by the mode of thinking of the class in which he lives, and everyone carries a certain amount of it into his scientific views. In the case of Darwin we know for a fact that his scientific hypotheses were strongly influenced by the economic views of Malthus, a decided opponent of the revolution. Nor is it wholly accidental that the theories of evolution came from England (Lyell, Darwin), the country whose history for the last 250 years has only shown revolutionary beginnings which the governing classes always knew how to nip in the bud.

Of course, the dependence of a theory on the opinions prevailing in the class from which it arises, does not in the least prove its correctness or incorrectness. Still, its historical success much depends upon those opinions. If the new theories of development were at once and with enthusiasm accepted by the masses of the people who were absolutely unable to test them, that was due to the fact that they responded to deeply-felt needs of those people. On one hand—and this rendered them valuable in the eyes of the revolutionary section as well—they superseded much more thoroughly than the old catastrophic theories all and every necessity to postulate a supernatural power, which by a series of creative acts pushes the world ever farther and farther. On the other side and in this they chiefly pleased the middle-class, they declared all revolution, all catastrophic change, as something unnatural, as something opposed to the laws of nature—therefore also irrational. Whoever wishes, now-a-days, to combat, scientifically, the revolution, does it in the name of the scientific theory of evolution, which shows that nature knows no leaps, that all sudden change in the social condition is impossible, that progress can only proceed by way of accumulation of the smallest changes and improvements called in society social reforms. The revolution regarded from this point of view is an unscientific conception at which scientifically-educated men can only shrug their shoulders.

To this we may reply, that after all it does not do to draw straightaway a strict parallel between social and natural processes. Unconsciously, of course, our conception of the one will influence our conception of the other, as we have just seen, but that is by no means an advantage, and our duty with regard to the direct transference of the laws from one domain to the other is not to encourage it consciously, but rather to discourage. Every advance in the methods of observation, and in the proper understanding of one sphere may, and will certainly, help on our methods and our understanding of others, but equally certain it is, that each of these spheres is governed by its own peculiar laws, which to the other have no application.

Even between animate and inanimate nature a sharp distinction must be drawn, and no one would dream, on the ground of a mere outward similarity, of applying without any further consideration a law that operates in one sphere to the other; for example, to solve the problems of sexual propagation and inheritance simply by the laws of chemical combinations. An equally serious mistake, however, is made when the laws of external nature are directly applied to society, as, for example, when competition, on the strength of the struggle for existence, is proclaimed a natural necessity, or the reprehensibility or the impossibility of the social revolution is deduced from laws of evolution in nature.

One may go, however, still further. If the old catastrophic theories in natural science are gone for ever, the new theories which see in evolution only the accumulation of infinitesimal and imperceptible changes meet also with an ever stronger opposition. On the one hand, increases predilection for quiet, for conservative theories which reduce evolution itself to a negligible quantity; on the other hand, facts make it imperative again to accord to catastrophic changes a larger part in the natural development. This applies equally to Lyell's theories of geological, and to Darwin's theory of organic, evolution.

There is thus being formed a kind of a synthesis of the old catastrophic and the modern evolutionary theories analogous to that which they have found in Marxism. Just as the latter distinguishes between the gradual economic development and the more rapid transformation of the juridical and political superstructure, so many of the latest biological and geological theories recognise along with the slow accumulation of small and fractional changes, also sudden and far-reaching changes of form—catastrophic changes—which proceed from the former.

As a remarkable example of this we may quote the observations which De Vries communicated to the last congress of natural scientists in Hamburg. He had found that the plant and animal species remain for a long time unchanged; some finally disappear, when they become old and unfit for the conditions of life, which have in the meantime altered. Others are more successful.

and, to use his very expression, suddenly "explode" and give life to numerous new forms, of which some assert themselves and multiply, and others, which are unfit for the conditions of life, disappear.

I have no intention of drawing from these new observations a conclusion in favour of the Revolution. That would be committing the same mistake which is committed by those who argue from the theory of evolution as to the non-acceptability of revolution. Nevertheless, to say the least, the observations in question prove that the natural philosophers are themselves not agreed as to the part played by catastrophic changes in the development of the earth and of organisms, and therefore on this ground alone it would be a mistake to conclude rashly from any of their theories as to the *role* of revolution in the development of society.

If, however, in spite of all, people still persist in doing it, then we can present them with a very popular and well known example, which proves *ad oculos* that Nature, too, proceeds by leaps and bounds—I mean the act of birth. That act is a leap. At one blow a foetus, which has hitherto formed a part of the maternal organism, shared in the circulation of its blood, has been nourished by it, and has known no breath, becomes an independent human being, with its own blood circulation, which breathes and cries, takes its own nourishment, and passes it through the bowels.

The analogy between birth and revolution does not, however, extend only to the suddenness of the act. If we look closer we find that this sudden change at birth is limited to the *functions*. The *organs* develop but slowly, and it is only when the development has reached a certain stage that the leap becomes possible which releases suddenly their new functions. Should, however, the leap take place before that stage of the development is reached, the result is not the beginning of new functions of the organs, but the stopping of all functions, the death of the new creature. On the other hand, the slow development of the organs in the womb of the mother might have proceeded ever so long, they would never have been able to begin their new functions without the revolutionary act of birth. At a certain stage of the development of the organs this becomes unavoidable.

We find the same in Society. Here also revolutions are the result of slow developments (evolutions). Here also it is the social organs which slowly develop. What may alter suddenly, at a blow, are their functions. The railway system has but slowly developed. On the other hand, it is possible to transform a railway at one blow, from a capitalistic concern, serving the purpose of enriching a number of capitalists, into a Socialist undertaking working for the exclusive good of the community. And just as at birth all the functions of the child are revolutionised at one and the same moment—circulation of the blood, breathing, digestion, &c.—so must all the functions of the railway line be revolutionised at one

and the same time, too, since they all are bound up in the most intimate fashion with one another. It is impossible to nationalise these functions gradually, one by one—say, now the functions of the engine-driver and stoker, then a few years hence those of the guards, again, after a lapse of some years the functions of clerks and bookkeepers, &c., &c. That, in the case of a railway, is perfectly evident; but no less absurd than the gradual Socialisation of the different functions of a railway is that of a Ministry in a centralised State. The latter, too, is a homogeneous organism, whose organs must work together, and the functions of the one cannot change without those of all changing at the same time. The idea of the gradual conquest of the various departments of a ministry by Social-Democracy, is not less absurd than the attempt would be to divide the act of birth into a number of consecutive monthly acts, in each of which one organ only would be transformed from the condition of the fœtus to that of an independent child, leaving all the whole child itself on the navel cord till it learns to speak and to walk.

But if a railway or a Ministry cannot be transformed from working on capitalist lines to a Socialist institution gradually, step by step, but only at one blow, and with all their organs at the same time, that is nevertheless only possible at a certain stage of the development of all the social organs—though certainly in the case of society it is not possible, as it is in the case of the maternal organism, to scientifically determine when the necessary stage of maturity is reached.

On the other hand, however, the act of birth marks, not the close of the development of the human organs, but the commencement of a new epoch of development. The child comes into new conditions of life, in which new organs form themselves and those already existing develop farther in their proper directions. The teeth grow, the eyes learn to see, the hands to grasp, the legs to walk, the mouth to speak, &c. In the same way a social revolution cannot mark the close of the social development but, on the contrary, must denote the beginning of a new. A Socialist revolution can at one blow transform a factory from capitalist into social property. But only gradually, in the course of a slowly proceeding development, is it possible to alter a factory from a place of monotonous, repulsive, and forced labour into an attractive home of pleasurable activity of happy human beings. A Socialist revolution could also change at one blow the existing large estates into Socialist property. Where, however, small agricultural holdings prevail, there the organs of social or Socialist production in agriculture have first to be created, and that can only be the result of a slow development.

We see, then, that the analogy between birth and revolution is pretty close. But that naturally only proves that it is a mistake to refer to nature and on the strength of that to describe revolution as

something in itself irrational and unnatural. We, however, have no right, as has already been shown, to draw from nature direct conclusions as to the character of social processes. We consequently cannot go further and conclude on the strength of that analogy that, as every animal being must undergo a catastrophic change, in order to arrive at a higher stage of development (the act of birth or the bursting of the egg shell), therefore so can a society, too, only be raised to a higher plane of development by means of such a catastrophic change.

CHAPTER III.—REVOLUTIONS IN ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES.

We can only decide whether revolution is a necessity or not by examining the facts of the development of society, not from analogies taken from natural science. It is, however, only necessary to cast a glance at this development to see that the Social Revolution, in the narrower sense in which we have defined the term here, is no necessary consequence of every social development. There was a social development, and indeed, a very far-reaching one, long before the class antagonisms and the power of the State had arisen. It is, however, evident that at this period the conquest of the political power by an oppressed class, in other words the Social Revolution, was impossible.

But even when class antagonisms and a State have arisen, we are still very far from finding what fully corresponds to our idea of the Social Revolution, either in antiquity or mediæval times. Certainly, we find bitter class struggles, civil wars, political upheavals innumerable, but we do not see any of these upheavals producing a permanent and fundamental change in the property-relations, and, consequently, bringing about a new form of society.

The reasons for that, I find, are as follows: In antiquity and even in the Middle Ages, the centre of gravity of economic and political life lay in the commune or parish. Every commune formed a community, self-contained in all essentials and only bound up with the external world by a few loose ties. Great States were only conglomerates of communes, which were either held together through a dynasty or through one commune ruling and exploiting the rest. Each commune had its own particular economic development in accordance with its own particular local conditions, and consequently its own particular class-struggles. The political revolutions of those times were, therefore, in the first instance, only communal revolutions. It was quite impossible to transform the whole social life of a larger territory by means of a political revolution.

Now, the smaller the number of individuals taking part in a social movement - in other words, the less the movement is a mass movement—the feebler does the universal, the law-determined, come to the surface, the stronger is the preponderance of the accidental and of the personal. This must have increased the diverse character of the class struggles in the different communes still more. But as in those class struggles no mass phenomena ever came forward, and the law-determined and the universal was hidden under the accidental and the personal, a deeper knowledge of the social causes and of the aims of the class movements was also impossible. Great as were the achievements of the Greek philosophy, the conception of a scientific national economy remained unknown to it. Aristotle offered only suggestions for such; otherwise what the Greeks and Romans accomplished in the sphere of theoretical economics were only manuals for practical business men, principally for agriculturists, such as were compiled by Xenophon and Varro.

But if the deeper social causes of the position of the various classes were hidden beneath the acts of individual persons and local peculiarities, what wonder that the oppressed classes, when succeeding in getting hold of the political power, used this mainly for the purpose of getting rid of individual personalities and individual local institutions, never going so far as to establish a new order of society?

The most important cause, however, which stood in the way of a revolutionary effort of that sort was the slowness of the economic development. It proceeded imperceptibly. Peasant and artisan worked just as their fathers and forefathers had done; the old, the traditional, was the best and the most satisfactory. Even where people sought for something new, they tried to persuade themselves and others that it was really a return to the forgotten past. The progress in technique did not create the need for new forms of property, since it consisted only in an ever-increasing social division of labour, in a splitting up of one trade into several. In each new trade, however, production was still carried on by hand as in the old, the means of production were scanty, and manual skill played the decisive part. Certainly we find, in addition to the peasant and the artisan, also farming on a large scale, and—in the latter period of antiquity—even industrial undertakings; but they were carried on by slaves who stood outside the pale of the community exactly like foreigners. These were only undertakings for the production of luxuries, incapable of developing any great economic power—except temporarily in the time of great wars, which weakened the peasant class and made slaves cheaper. A higher form of economic life and a new social ideal cannot arise from slavery.

The only forms of capital which develop in antiquity and the Middle Ages are the usurers' and the merchants' capital. Both may sometimes lead to rapid economic changes. But even so com-

mercial capital could only encourage the splitting up of old trades into numerous new ones and stimulate the further advancement of large farming based on slave labour; whilst the usurers' capital had only the effect of disintegrating the then existing forms of production without creating any new. The struggle against the usurers' capital and farming on a large scale led from time to time to political struggles which somewhat resemble the social revolutions of our time. But their object was only the re-establishment of the previous conditions, not the renovation of society. This was the case with the measures undertaken by Solon in ancient Greece for the reduction of the indebtedness of the people (*Seisachtheia*); and with the movements of the Roman peasants and proletarians which derived their name from the two Gracchi.

To all these causes—the slowness of the economic development, the lack of a deeper knowledge of the interdependence of social forces, the splitting up of the political life into numerous and different communities—there was added in the classic antiquity and, to a great extent, also in mediæval times, the fact that the means of power to keep down the rising classes were comparatively meagre. There was no bureaucracy, or at least there was none where political life was still at full flow, and the class struggles were fought out vigorously. In the Roman world, for example, bureaucracy first developed under the Empire. The inner as well as the mutual relations of the communes were simple and easy to survey, and did not require any special professional knowledge. The ruling classes could easily provide from their own ranks the requisite men for the administration of the State, and this all the more as at that time domination brought with it leisure, which used to be devoted to artistic, philosophical, and political activity. The ruling classes did not simply rule, they also governed.

On the other hand, the mass of the people were not wholly bereft of arms. It was precisely at the best time of classical antiquity that the militia system prevailed, and each citizen had to bear arms. Under these circumstances, a slight shifting in the respective power of the classes often sufficed to bring a new class to the helm. The class antagonisms, therefore, could hardly become so acute as to impress the subjected classes with the firm idea of a complete overthrow of the existing order, and on the other hand, to make the oppressors obstinately and invariably cling to all their privileges. To this also contributed the circumstance that, as has already been noticed, political revolutions were only made with the object of removing certain individual abuses and individual persons; it also had, however, the effect of not infrequently preventing such political revolutions by means of compromises.

Among the modern great States England is the one which, although not economically, still by its political forms, most reminds one of the Middle Ages. Here bureaucracy and militarism has developed the least; it still possesses an aristocracy which not

only rules, but also governs. Accordingly, it is also the one modern great State in which the endeavours of the oppressed classes have to the greatest extent been confined to the removal of individual evils, instead of being directed against the entire social system, and in which the practice of preventing revolutions by means of compromise has developed most.

If the universal duty of bearing arms did not favour great social revolutions it facilitated for that very reason the armed conflicts between the classes, even on the least occasion. Of violent uprisings and civil wars there is in antiquity and in the Middle Ages no lack. The passion with which they were fought out was often very great; they often led to expulsion and expropriation, nay, even to the extermination of the conquered. Those who see in violence the characteristic of a social revolution will find numerous examples of such in ancient times. Those, however, who only recognise a social revolution where the conquest of political power, through a previously oppressed class, leads to a complete transformation of the legal and political superstructure of society, especially of the conditions of property, will find no social revolutions there.

The social development proceeds more by little leaps and jerks, not concentrated in single great catastrophes, but split up in numerous small ones apparently without any connection with each other, often intercepted, always starting afresh, and always essentially unconscious. The biggest social transformation of those times, the disappearance of slavery in Europe, took place so imperceptibly that no contemporary took notice of the process, and we to-day are forced to reconstruct it by means of hypotheses.

CHAPTER IV.—THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION OF THE CAPITALIST PERIOD.

Things assume quite a different shape as soon as the capitalist mode of production develops. It would take us too far, and would mean the repetition of what is already well known, were I to explain here its mechanism and its consequences. Enough to say that the capitalist method of production creates the modern State, puts an end to the political independence of the communes and districts, while at the same time their economic independence also disappears. Each becomes a part of the whole, loses its own particular law and its particular physiognomy; they all become reduced to the same level, and subjected to the same legislation, the same system of taxation, law courts and administration. There-

fore, the modern State must also endeavour to become a national State and to add to the other uniformities the uniformity of language.

The influence of the power of the State on social life becomes now quite a different thing to what it was in ancient times or in the Middle Ages. Every important political change in a modern great State influences at the same time, and in the same way, and at one blow, an enormous field of social life. The conquest of political power by a hitherto oppressed class must, therefore, have now quite different social effects than it had formerly.

To this must be added the fact that the means of power at the disposal of the modern State have enormously increased. The technical revolution produced by capitalism extends also to the technical development of the weapons of war. Since the time of the Reformation the weapons of war have steadily grown more perfect, but at the same time also more expensive; they have now become a privilege of the State. By this alone the army has become separated from the people, even where universal service exists, so long as it is not supplemented by the arming of the people, which is nowhere as yet the case in any great State. And everywhere are the leaders of the army professional soldiers, separated from the people, and confronting it as a privileged caste.

But the economic power of a modern centralised State is enormous, too, in comparison with the former States. It keeps in its hands the wealth of an enormous field, where even the technical appliances leave the highest civilisations of antiquity a long way behind.

And, in addition, the modern State has at its disposal a centralised bureaucracy such as was possessed by no State before. So enormously have the duties of a modern State grown that it is impossible to discharge them without far-reaching division of labour and highly-developed specialisation. The capitalist method of production deprives the ruling classes of the leisure which they at one time had. Even if they do not produce themselves, but live by the exploitation of the producing classes, they nevertheless are no idle exploiters. Thanks to competition, this mainspring of the economic life of to-day, the exploiters are compelled to carry on with each other, and without intermission, the most exhausting fights, which threaten the vanquished with total annihilation.

The capitalists, therefore, have neither the time, nor the zest, nor the education necessary for artistic and scientific activity. They even lack the conditions for regular participation in the administration of the State. Like art and science has the administration of State affairs, too, ceased to be the occupation of the ruling classes. That they leave to wage-workers, to bureaucrats. The capitalist class rules but does not govern. It contents itself with ruling the government, just as its predecessor did the decaying feudal nobility, which assumed the form of a court nobility. But that

which, in the case of the feudal nobility, was the result of decadence, of the abdication by it of its social functions, arises in the case of the capitalist class precisely from its social functions, and is part of its very essence.

With the help of such an enormous political power a class can maintain its position long after it has become superfluous, nay, even mischievous. And the stronger the power of the State, the more will a ruling class rely upon it, the more obstinately will it cling to its privileges, the less will it be inclined to make concessions. The longer, however, they assert their supremacy in this fashion the sharper must the class antagonisms become, the more tremendous must the political catastrophe turn out when it finally takes place, the more radical must the social transformations be which proceed from it, the more readily must the conquest of political power through an oppressed class become a social revolution.

Simultaneously, however, the contending classes become more and more conscious of the social consequences of their political struggle. Under the capitalist mode of production the pace of the economic evolution is enormously increased. The economic transformation which the epoch of discoveries and inventions ushered in was carried further on by the introduction of machinery in the domain of industry. Since that time our economic conditions have become subject to constant change—not simply to the rapid decay of the old, but also to the quick building up of the new. The idea of the old, of the traditional, ceases to be synonymous with the tried, the worthy of respect, with the sacred. It has become synonymous with the imperfect, the inadequate, the antiquated. From the domain of economics this conception is transferred to those of art and science, to the sphere of politics. If people formerly clung blindly to the old, they now reject it just as blindly for the sole reason that it is old—and the period which suffices to make a machine, an institution, a theory, an artistic movement obsolete and antiquated becomes ever shorter and shorter. And if before people worked with the idea of creating things for ever, with all the earnestness which such an idea inspires, they now work for the passing effect of the moment, with all the hurry born of such consciousness. In consequence, the thing created nowadays frequently becomes soon useless and obsolete, not merely for the fashion, but as a matter of actual fact.

The new, however, is that which is observed the quickest and examined the closest. The traditional and the everyday fact pass for self-evident. Man certainly pondered much earlier over the causes of the eclipses of the sun than over sunrise and sunset. In the same way, the inducement to study the law of social phenomena must have been but slight, so long as they were the traditional, the self-evident, the "natural," and *vice versa*. It must have at once become strong when new and hitherto unknown formations arose in the life of society. Not the old traditional forms

of feudal economy called forth in the seventeenth century scientific observations, but the new capitalist economy which was arising by its side.

But economic science was still more encouraged by another agency. The capitalist production is production *en masse*; the type of the modern capitalist State is the large State. Modern economics, like modern politics, have to do with phenomena *en masse*. The larger, however, the number of similar phenomena which one observes, the more, as already mentioned, does the universal, the normal, assert itself, the more do the individual and the accidental recede to the background; the more readily, therefore, it becomes possible to see the laws underlying their movements. The systematic observation of social phenomena *en masse*—statistics—and the science of society which starts from political economy, and reaches its high water mark in the materialist conception of history—these only became possible with the capitalist mode of production. It is only now that the classes have been able to acquire a clear insight into the social contents of their struggles, and could set up great social ideals, not as arbitrary dreams and pious wishes liable to shatter against the hard facts of life, but as results of scientific insight into what was economically possible and necessary. Well may this scientific knowledge also err and several of its conclusions prove illusory. Nevertheless, great as these errors may sometimes prove, they cannot obscure the characteristic feature of every true science, namely, the striving after a homogeneous conception of all the phenomena as a consistent whole, that is in application to social science, the recognition of the whole of Society as a compact organism, in which single component parts cannot be altered arbitrarily and apart from the rest. The theoretical criticism of the oppressed classes is directed henceforth more and more, not simply against individuals or individual institutions, but against the *entire existing social order*, and in the same way every oppressed class, when gaining political power, will by this very recognition be forced to transform the *entire* foundations of Society.

The Capitalist Society which sprang from the Revolution of 1789 and its offshoots, had already in its outlines been previously seen mentally by the Physiocrats and their English successors.

On these distinctions between the modern State and modern Society, and the ancient and mediæval organisations, rests the difference in the forms of their development: there a development essentially unconscious, split up into continual local and personal feuds, struggles, rebellions of countless small communities of the most varied degree of development; here a development growing ever more and more conscious, striving after well-recognised, great social aims, defined and propagated by the labour of scientific criticism. The political revolutions become less frequent, but embracing ever larger and larger fields, and growing more powerful in their social effects.

The transition from the ancient and mediæval civil wars to the modern revolution, the social revolution in the above-mentioned sense, forms the Reformation, which is already half mediæval and half modern. Still higher stands the English Revolution of the 17th century, till finally the great French Revolution gives the classical type of the Revolution, of which the risings of 1830 and 1848 are only a weak echo.

The Social Revolution, in the sense employed here, is a stage peculiar to the development of the capitalist Society and the capitalist State. It is not to be found before capitalism, because previously the political forms were too narrow and the social understanding too backward. It will disappear with capitalism, because capitalism can only be overcome by the proletariat, which, as the lowest of all classes, must use its supremacy in order to abolish class rule and classes altogether—that is, *ipso facto*, the possibility of all social revolution.

Now, however, arises a big question, a question which deeply agitates us to-day because of its enormous bearings on our practical attitude at the present day—viz., is the time for social revolutions already past or not? Are the political conditions already to hand which render possible the transition from capitalism to Socialism without a political revolution, and without the conquest of political power by the proletariat, or have we yet to look forward to a period of decisive struggles for the possession of this power—in other words, a period of revolutions? Does the conception of the social revolution belong to those obsolete ideas to which only thoughtless repeaters of worn-out ideas or demagogic adventurers, angling for the applause of the ignorant masses, cling, but which must be repudiated by every honourable up-to-date man, who observes the facts of modern society impartially?

That is the question. Certainly an important question, and one not to be got rid of with a few phrases.

We have seen that the social revolution is a product of particular historical conditions. It presupposes not only highly-strained class antagonisms, but also a great national State, which abolishes all provincial and communal privileges, and bases itself on a mode of production which equally has the effect of bringing all particularism to a common level; and, moreover, a State rendered powerful by a bureaucracy and militarism, a science of political economy, and a rapid pace of economic progress.

None of these factors of the Social Revolution has in the last decades been weakened; on the contrary, every one has been strengthened. Never was the pace of the economic development so quick. Scientific economics advances, if not in depth, at least, thanks to the Press, in popularity. Never was economic understanding so widely spread as to-day; never were the ruling classes, as well as the masses, able to see to such an extent the distant consequences of their activity and endeavours as to-day. That alone

shows that the transition from capitalism to Socialism cannot be accomplished imperceptibly. The rule of the exploiting classes cannot be undermined slowly without those latter perceiving it, putting themselves on the defensive, and employing all their power in order to keep down the proletariat growing in strength and influence.

If, however, the insight into the correlation of social phenomena was never so widely spread as to-day, on the other hand the power of the State was also never so great as to-day, its military, bureaucratic, or economic means never so wonderfully developed. This means that the proletariat, if it conquers the political power, acquires with it the power to at once be able to carry out the most far reaching social alterations; it means, however, also that the ruling classes of to-day, with the help of this power, can continue their existence and their exploitation of the toiling masses long after their economic indispensability has ceased. The more, however, the ruling classes rely on the machinery of the State and misuse it for the purposes of exploitation and oppression, the more must the bitterness of the proletariat against them rise, the more the class hatred grow, and the endeavour to conquer the machinery of State increase in violence and strength.

It has been objected that this conception does not take into consideration the latest social phenomena, which clearly show that the development is proceeding quite differently. The antagonism, it is said, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat does not increase, but tends to become milder; and in every modern State we see a sufficient number of democratic institutions which allow the proletariat to gain, if not *the* power, at least some power, that can be increased little by little, slowly and gradually, so that all necessity for a social revolution disappears. Let us see how far these objections are justified.

CHAPTER V.—THE SOFTENING DOWN OF THE CLASS ANTAGONISM.

Let us examine in the first place the first objection: The social antagonism between the middle classes and the proletariat tends to diminish. I will here pass over the question of commercial crises, of which it was predicted some years ago that they would become weaker. This view has since then been so emphatically refuted by undisputed facts, that I am in the position to forego on that head all further discussion, which otherwise would have taken us too far out of our way. Nor am I going to make any further contribution to the debate on the already *ad nauseam* discussed theory of the progressive increase of misery, which, with a little ingenuity, could be debated for ever, and in which the debate turns more on interpretation of the word "misery," than on the recognition of certain facts. We Socialists are unanimous in this, that the capitalist mode of production, when left to itself, has for its result an increase

of physical misery; equally unanimous, however, are we in the opinion, that even in the present society the organisation of the working class and the interference of the State are in a position to check this misery; finally we all agree that the emancipation of the proletariat is to be expected not from its increasing decadence, but from its growing strength.

Another question, however, is that of the growing *antagonism* between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This is, in the first place, a question of the increasing exploitation.

That this does increase, has already been shown by Marx a generation ago; and has, so far as I know, never been refuted by anybody. Those who deny the fact of the increasing exploitation of the proletariat, must in the first place be able to back their words by a refutation of Marx's "Capital."

Now, certainly, it will be said in objection to this that all this is but so much theory; we only recognise as true and demonstrated what we can grasp for ourselves. We do not want economic laws, but statistical figures. These are not easily found. It has not yet occurred to anyone to demonstrate statistically, not only the wages but also the profits, for the very simple reason that the safe is like unto a castle to the bourgeois which, be he even the most cowardly and weak-spirited of the lot, he is ever ready to defend like a lion against the encroachments of the authorities.

Nevertheless we can find some figures as to the increase of wages and other incomes. Some of these, the latest which we know, shall be given here. They were computed by Mr. A. L. Bowley, who read a paper on the question in March, 1895, before the London Royal Statistical Society (printed in the journal of the Society, June, 1895, pp. 224-85). We take the following table:—

YEAR.	Total Yearly Wage-Income.		Incomes not arising from Wages.			
			Subject to Income tax.		Not subject to Income tax.	
	Amount in million pounds sterling.	Per cent. of total national income.	Amount in million pounds sterling.	Per cent. of total national income.	Amount in million pounds sterling.	Per cent. of total national income.
1860	392	47	376	45½	64	7½
1866	464	45	485	47	81	8
1870	486	44½	521	48	85	7½
1874	609	45½	635	47½	100	7½
1877	591	43	652	47½	130	9½
1880	567	42	652	48½	126	9½
1883	609	42½	696	49	122	8½
1886	605	42	715	49½	125	8½
1891	699	43½	782	48½	130	8

Against this picture many objections may be raised. It seems to me too optimistic and makes the sum of the wages come out much bigger than it is or was in reality.

In reckoning the wages the author did not allow for unemployment. He, moreover, took for granted that a number of important factors bearing on the conditions of the working classes remained the same wherever the alterations could not exactly be determined. As a statistician he had naturally the right to do so, but these are precisely the factors which alter more and more in a direction unfavourable to the workers. Thus, for example, the proportion between male and female, skilled and unskilled labour, &c.

The greatest objection, however, is that the computation is limited to but a few trades, all of which, with the exception of agriculture, are very well organised, and that the author takes for granted that the condition of the entire working class has, on the average, improved in the same proportion as that of the organised workers who, even in England, form a fifth of the workers of all trades. It is not uninteresting to consider the alterations in the wages of this class of workers. The rates, in comparison with those of 1860 (the latter taken as 100), were:—

	1860	1866	1870	1874	1877	1880	1883	1886	1891
Agricultural Labourers	100	105	107	130	132	122	117	111	118
Building Trades	100	116	116	126	128	125	125	126	128
Cotton Manufacture	100	125	125	148	148	135	146	155	176
Woollen Industry... ..	100	106	112	121	130	126	120	115	115
Iron Industry	100	127	127	143	112	112	110	100	124
Engineering	100	108	110	124	123	120	127	126	126
Gasworkers	100	115	120	125	128	128	130	130	149
Seamen	100	113	103	150	129	123	118	110	143
Miners	100	?	100	150	115	100	115	100	150
AVERAGE	100	113	113	138	132	124	130	125	140

We see that the increase of wages by 40 per cent. from 1860 to 1891, which Bowley calculates for the whole of the English working classes, does not even hold good for the entire labour aristocracy. With the exception of the cotton spinners, who in England are not without reason conservative and the patterns for all dreamers of "social peace," the average is only exceeded by the gasworkers, the sailors and the miners. The gasworkers owe their rise partly to the influence of political action, which in larger towns has brought to the municipal employees some improvements. In the case of the gasworkers, considerations of competition and exploitation through private enterprise enter least into account. Partly also the rise in 1891 must be accounted for by the sudden advent of the "new unionism" which aroused so many hopes, but soon fizzled out. Still more, even than in the case of the gasworkers, does the rise of wages in 1891 appear sudden, almost accidental, in the case

of the seamen and the miners. With the miners the wages were, in 1886, on a level with 1860, and in 1891 they were 50 per cent. higher! This cannot be called an assured advance. In the case of the workers in the building trade, and the woollen and the iron industries, the increase of wages since 1860 falls far below the average. Bowley, therefore, wishes us to believe that the wages of all the unorganised workers of England rose 40 per cent. in the same period in which those of the excellently-organised iron workers only rose 25 per cent.!

But let us take the figures as they stand. What do they prove? Even according to this quite exceptionally optimistic view, wages form an ever-diminishing portion of the national income. In the period 1860-74 they form on the average 45 per cent. of the national income, in the period 1877-91 only 42½ per cent. Let us assume, for lack of more reliable figures, the sum total of the incomes subject to income tax and not arising from wages to be equal to the total amount of surplus value. Thus the latter was in 1860 less than the total amount of the wages by 16 million pounds; in 1891, however, the sum total of the surplus value was greater than that of the wages by 80 million pounds.

That shows a very palpable increase of exploitation. The rate of surplus value, *i.e.*, the rate of exploitation of the worker, would, according to this, have risen from 96 per cent. to 112 per cent. As a matter of fact, according to Bowley's figures, that is the extent to which exploitation has risen in the organised trades. The exploitation of the mass of the unorganised must have increased to an even greater extent.

We do not attach any very great importance to these figures. But as far as they prove anything at all they do not speak against the assumption of the increasing exploitation of labour, which Marx, by another method, and by an enquiry into the laws of the capitalist mode of production, has proved in a manner not yet confuted. Now it may be said: Granted that exploitation increases, but the wages rise as well, if not at the same rate as surplus value, how is, then, the worker going to feel the increasing exploitation, if it is not patent to his eye, but must be discovered by means of a lengthened enquiry? The mass of the workers neither carry on statistical researches, nor ponder over the theory of value and surplus value.

That may easily be so. And yet there are means by which the increase of their exploitation is made evident to them. To the same extent as the profits rise, does the mode of living of the bourgeoisie improve. But the classes are not divided by Chinese walls. The increasing luxury of the upper classes trickles gradually through into the lower, awakes in them new needs and new demands, to the satisfaction of which, however, the slow rise in the wages is inadequate. The bourgeoisie bewails the disappearance of unpretentiousness on the part of the lower orders, their increasing covetousness,

and forgets that the increasing pretentiousness in the lower classes is only a reflex of the rising standard of life in the upper, that it is their own example which has inflamed the covetousness of the workers.

That the standard of life in the bourgeoisie rises faster than among the workers, can be seen at every step. The working class dwellings have, during the last fifty years, not improved to any great extent, whilst the dwellings of the bourgeoisie to-day are magnificent in comparison with an average bourgeois house of fifty years ago. A third-class railway carriage of to-day and one of fifty years ago, are not so very different in their internal appointments. But compare a first-class carriage of the middle of last century with the modern Pullman cars.* I do not believe that the seaman in an ocean steamer is to-day much better off than fifty years ago. But certainly the luxury of a saloon of a modern passenger boat was a thing undreamt of even in royal yachts fifty years ago.

So much about the increasing exploitation of the worker. But is not this economic factor neutralised by the two classes drawing increasingly nearer to each other on the political field? Is not the worker more and more recognised by the bourgeois as equal to himself?

Undoubtedly the proletariat gains rapidly in political and social respect.

If its economic advancement has been outdistanced by that of the bourgeoisie, and must in consequence necessarily give rise to an increasing covetousness and dissatisfaction, the most remarkable feature of the last fifty years has, on the contrary, been the steady and uninterrupted *advancement of the proletariat in moral and intellectual respects.*

Only a few decades ago the proletariat stood at such a low level, that there were even Socialists who expected from a victory of the proletariat the worst results for civilisation. After 1850 Rodbertus wrote: "There is a very great danger at hand lest a new barbarism, this time arising from the midst of society itself, lays waste the abodes of civilisation and of wealth."

At the same time Heinrich Heine declared that the future belonged to the Communists. "This admission—that the future belongs to the Communists—I made in a spirit of uneasiness and greatest anxiety, and ugh! that was by no means dissimulation on my part. I actually could only think with fear and horror of the time, when those dark iconoclasts would attain to power; with

* This can hardly be said to apply to England—e.g., the G.N.R. or the L. and N.W.R. with their third-class dining cars, &c. Of course, that is in consequence of the tendency which was so strongly noticeable on our railways in the direction of a single class, or, at the most, two classes. Prussia still has four, and of the fourth it is quite safe to say that, short of having no roof, it could not be worse.—TRANSLATOR.

their horny hands they will break all the marble statues of beauty," &c.

As is well known, things have since become quite different. It is not the proletariat that threatens modern civilisation; on the contrary, it is the Communists who have become to-day the surest guardians of art and science, and have often stepped forward on their behalf in a most decided manner.

In the same way the fear which possessed the whole bourgeois world after the Paris commune, lest the victorious proletariat would behave in the midst of our civilisation like the Vandals of the great tribal migration, and establish on heaps of ruins an empire of barbaric asceticism has practically disappeared.

It is partly due to the disappearance of this fear that among the bourgeois Intellectuals there is a visibly growing sympathy with the proletariat and Socialism.

Like the proletariat, the Intellectuals as a class are also a peculiar feature of the capitalist mode of production. I have already pointed out that the ruling classes need and make use of them in so far as they, the ruling classes, have neither the interest nor the leisure to attend to the business of the administration of the State, or to apply themselves to art and science, as the aristocracy of Athens or the clergy at the best period of the Catholic Church did. The whole of the higher intellectual activity, which was formerly a privilege of the ruling classes, they leave to-day to paid workers, and the number of these professional scholars, artists, engineers, officials, &c., is rapidly increasing.

These make up the class of the so-called "Intellectuals," the "new middle-class;" but they differ essentially from the old middle-class in that they have no separate class consciousness. Particular sections of them have a separate consciousness of their order, very frequently a conceit of their order; but the interests of each of these sections is too particular to allow of a common class consciousness to develop. Their members ally themselves with the most different classes and parties; the Intellectuals provide each of these with its intellectual champions. Some champion the interests of the ruling classes, whom many of them have to serve in their professional capacity. Others have made the cause of the proletariat their own. The majority, however, have remained up till now hide-bound by the petty bourgeois way of thinking. Not only have they often come from a petty bourgeois stock, but their social position as a "middle class" is very similar to that of the petty bourgeois, namely, a cross between the proletariat and the ruling classes.

These sections of the Intellectuals it is who, as said above, evince more and more sympathy with the proletariat and Socialism. As they have no particular class interests, and are, thanks to their professional activity, the most accessible to scientific insight, they are the most easily won through scientific considerations for parti-

cular parties. The theoretical bankruptcy of the bourgeois political economy and the theoretical superiority of Socialism must have become patent to them. In addition, they found that the other classes strive more and more to hold art and science in subjection. Many, finally, are also impressed by the success, by the continual rise, of Social-Democracy, especially when it is compared with the continual decay of Liberalism. In this way, sympathy with Labour and Socialism become popular among the educated; there is hardly a drawing-room where one does not tumble across one or more "Socialists."

Were these circles of the educated identical with the bourgeoisie, then certainly we should have had the day won, and all Social Revolution would have been superfluous. With these classes one could discuss the matter peaceably; from them the slow, quiet development has no violent intervention to fear.

Unfortunately, however, they form only one section of the bourgeoisie, and that the one which, though writing and speaking in the name of the bourgeoisie, does not determine its action. And classes, like individuals, are to be known not by their words but their deeds.

Also it is the least energetic and militant section of the bourgeoisie which evinces a sympathy with the proletariat.

Formerly, of course, when Socialism, even in the ranks of the educated, passed for almost a crime or lunacy, bourgeois elements could only join the Socialist movement when completely breaking with the bourgeois world. Whosoever at that time passed from bourgeois circles to Socialism, required much greater energy, revolutionary enthusiasm, and force of conviction than a member of the proletariat. In the Socialist movement, therefore, these elements belonged as a rule to the most Radical and revolutionary.

Quite different is it to-day, when Socialism has become fashionable with the drawing-rooms. It requires no particular energy, no break with the bourgeois society, for anyone to call himself a Socialist. No wonder that an ever-growing number of new Socialists remain stuck in the traditional modes of thinking and feeling of their class. But the methods of warfare of the intellectuals are different to those of the proletariat. The latter can only bring against wealth and the force of arms its superior numbers and the solidarity of its class organisations. The Intellectuals, on the other hand, are insignificant in numbers and without class organisation. Their only weapon is that of persuasion by word of mouth and by pen; they fight with "intellectual weapons" and "moral superiority," and with these weapons the drawing-room Socialists would also wish to decide the proletarian class war. They declare themselves ready to lend the proletariat their moral support, but on condition that it gives up all idea of using force—and that not only where it has no prospect of success—there even the proletariat gives it up—but even where it has. Hence they try to bring into discredit the

idea of revolution, and to represent it as a worthless method. They endeavour to detach from the revolutionary proletariat a Social Reform wing, and help thereby to divide and weaken it.

This, so far, has been the sole result of the commencing conversion of the Intellectuals to Socialism.

By the side of the "new middle-class," the old one, the petty bourgeoisie, is still dragging on its existence. This species of middle-class was formerly the backbone of all Revolution; vigorous and militant, it readily, when circumstances were favourable, rose against any and every kind of oppression and exploitation from above, against bureaucracy and militarism, against feudal and priestly privileges. It formed the advance guard of the bourgeois democracy. Just as a portion of the new middle-class to-day, too, the old one was at various times inspired with sympathy for the proletariat, co-operated with it, and gave to and received from it intellectual inspiration and material support. But just as the new, so the old one, too, always was an untrustworthy ally, precisely because of its intermediate position between the exploited and the exploiting classes. As already said by Marx, the petty bourgeois is neither a thorough proletarian nor yet fully a bourgeois, and feels himself, according to circumstances, now the one, then the other.

From this double situation there arises a split in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie. One portion of it identifies itself with the proletariat, the other with its opponents.

The fate of the petty industry is sealed and its decay is irresistible. But this shows itself but slowly in the reduction of small undertakings, although very rapidly in their ruin. Some of the petty owners become entirely dependent on the large capital, and turn into mere home workers, wage slaves, who instead of working in a factory, work for the employer at home. Others, especially small dealers and small publicans, remain independent, but find their only customers among the working-class, so that their existence is entirely bound up with the fortunes of the workers. These sections draw more and more closely to the fighting proletariat.

Quite different it is with those sections of the petty bourgeoisie which have not yet become completely subjected to the large capital, but stand on the verge of ruin, as well as with those who look for their customers in other than proletarian circles. They doubt their ability to raise themselves by their own efforts, and expect everything from above, from the upper classes and the State. And, since all progress is a source of danger to them, they are bitterly opposed to it in any and every sphere of life. Servility and the need for reaction makes them ready accomplices and fanatical defenders of the Monarchy, the Church, and the nobility. With all that, they remain democratic, because only under democratic forms of government can they exercise political influence and secure through it the support of the State.

It is to this division in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie that the decline of the bourgeois democracy is due. A portion of it joins the proletarian Social-Democracy, others the reactionary democracy, which, though flying different colours of anti-Semitism, Nationalism, Christian Socialism, of certain sections of the Conservative and Centre parties, are nevertheless always, essentially and socially, the same.

Many of their phrases and arguments this reactionary democracy have borrowed from the Social-Democratic mode of thinking, and some at the beginning believed that they formed but a special transitional stage from Liberalism to Social-Democracy. To-day this view is manifestly no longer tenable. Social-Democracy has no more bitter enemy than the reactionary democracy. If it has devolved on Social-Democracy to champion every and any kind of progress, whether it directly advances the class interests of the proletariat or not, the reactionary democracy is by its whole being, driven to oppose all progress, even where it does not directly threaten the petty bourgeoisie. If Social-Democracy is the most progressive, the reactionary-democracy is the most reactionary of all parties, since over and above the hatred which all reactionary classes feel towards progress, it is yet inspired by the recklessness which comes from crass ignorance of everything lying outside its narrow mental horizon. To this must be added that the petty bourgeoisie succeeds in dragging on its existence, thanks only to the merciless exploitation of the weaker and most defenceless human labour, that of women and children. In this it naturally meets, first and foremost, with the opposition of the Social-Democracy, which tries by organisation and compulsory laws to prevent such a wastage of human life.

Thus the petty bourgeoisie, so far as it does not come over to Social-Democracy, turns from an ally and an intermediary element between the upper classes and the proletariat into a bitter foe of the latter. Instead, therefore, of softening down, the class antagonism becomes here as accentuated as can be; indeed, it increases very rapidly, since it is but recently that it has become clearly noticeable at all.

What is true of the petty bourgeoisie, is also—with but a few qualifications—true of the peasantry. This also splits into two camps, one of proletarian (peasant owners of tiny plots) and another of propertied elements. It is our task to accelerate this process by enlightening the former as to the solidarity of their interests with those of the proletariat, and by thus winning them over for Social-Democracy. We hinder it, however, if we ignore it and appeal to the entire agricultural population without distinction of class. The reactionary democracy in the country, though, perhaps, not always fully conscious of this antagonism, is, in its essence, just as hostile to us as that in the towns. Those, therefore, who believed that the peasant association movement is for the peasants

but a stage of transition from the old parties, viz., the Centre (Clerical) Party to the Social-Democratic Party, were just as mistaken as those who expected the same from anti-Semitism in the towns. The middle and large peasant proprietors hate the Social-Democracy, if but for the reason that it champions shorter hours and higher wages for the worker, and constitutes thereby an important factor which draws the labourer from the land and leaves the peasant in the lurch.

Thus, in the country districts, too, the class antagonisms between the propertied class and the proletariat grow ever more acute.

But even more than the antagonism between peasant and wage worker does this hold good of the antagonism between the cottier and the large landed proprietor.

In the system of farming on a large scale the wage labourer plays a far more important part than in the small peasant economy. At the same time high prices of the necessaries of life are, too, of quite a different value to the former system than to the peasant who consumes the greater part of his produce himself. Of course, the opposition between the producer and the consumer of the necessaries of life is not that between the worker and his exploiter, but between town and country. But in town the proletariat forms the most numerous, the best organised, and the most militant class; and so the seller of the necessaries of life comes here again into direct conflict with the proletariat as his most energetic opponent.

No wonder the big ground landlord thinks of the industrial worker nowadays differently to what he did formerly. In former times the struggle between the industrial capitalist and his workers left him indifferent—nay, he watched often with an unconcealed malicious pleasure, even with a certain sympathy for the proletariat. It was not the latter who then stood in his way, but the capitalist, who demanded protective tariffs where he, the ground landlord, wanted free trade, and, *vice versa*, looked on ground rent as reducing his profits, and wished to snatch from him the monopoly of the better-class positions in the army and bureaucracy.

To-day, all that has changed. The times when there were friends of labour among the Tories and the Junkers, the Disraelis, Rodbertus, Vogelsangs, are long gone. Like the petty bourgeoisie and the class of the middle and larger peasant proprietors, the big ground landlords, too, have become more and more hostile to the labour movement.

But the *capitalist class*? This is to-day the paramount class. Does not it at least become more friendly to labour, like the Intellectuals?

I am sorry to say I have not noticed anything of the sort.

Certainly, even the capitalist class changes; it does not remain always the same. But what are the most important of its changes within the last decades?

On one hand we find a softening down—nay, sometimes even a complete cessation—of the competition in which the capitalists of a single branch of industry are engaged throughout their particular country, by means of employers' associations, trusts, &c. On the other hand, we see the accentuation of international competition through the rise of new capitalist countries, especially of Germany and the United States.

The employers' associations abolish competition among the masters, not only as against the buyers of their products, but also as against their workers. Instead of being confronted with numerous purchasers of their labour-power, the workers have now only to deal with a single master. How much the advantages of the employers are thereby increased, and also to what extent their opposition to the workers is thus accentuated, needs no further elucidation.

According to the last census of the United States, the wages of the workers in American industry have, during the decade 1890-1900, suffered an absolute decrease. If that is so, we cannot be far wrong in attributing it to the work of the syndicates and trusts.

In the same direction, moreover, works the growth of foreign competition. Here, too, in addition to the consumers, it is the workers against whose interests this development proceeds. Over and above the raising of prices by means of protective tariffs, which in their turn favour the formation of employers' associations, it is the increased exploitation of labour by which the capitalists seek to meet foreign competition. Hence the accentuation of their struggle against the militant organisations of the workers, political and trade union, which stand in their way.

Thus here, too, there is no softening down, but, on the contrary, an intensification of the class war.

To this may be added, as a third factor, the increasing fusion of the industrial capital with the money capital, with the *haute finance*. The industrial capitalist is an employer in the domain of production (this taken in the widest sense and including transport) in which he exploits hired wage labour and extracts a profit out of it. The money capitalist is, on the other hand, the modern form of the ancient usurer. He draws an income from his money, which he nowadays lends on interest, not simply to needy private individuals as formerly, but also to capitalist employers, local authorities, States, &c.

Between the industrial capitalist and the money capitalist there is a great antagonism, similar to that between the former and the landowner. Like the ground rent, the interest on borrowed capital is a deduction from the profit. The interests of both kinds of capital are thus on that point antagonistic. Nor do they agree politically. Just as the great landowners are to-day in favour of a strong, preferably a monarchical form of government, because so far as they are a court nobility they are in a position to bring personal influence

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to bear on the monarch and thereby on the Government; just as they, further, are enthusiastic for militarism, which provides their progeny with an officer's career, for which the bourgeois youth is less fitted, and always therefore advocate a policy of brute force at home and abroad, so in the same way is the high finance enamoured of militarism and a strong spirited policy both home and foreign. The lords of the money capital need not fear a strong State power, independent of the people and Parliament, since they can always dominate it as creditors, and often, too, through personal court influences. They have, moreover, an interest in militarism, in wars and national debts, both as creditors and Government contractors, because the sphere of their influence, their power and wealth, is thereby enhanced.

It is different with the industrial capitalist. Militarism, wars, national debts imply increased taxation, in which it has to bear a considerable share, or which increase for it the costs of production. War implies over and above this a slump in the production and sale of goods, business difficulties, often bankruptcy. If the financier is rash, extravagant, and a supporter of brute force, the industrial capitalist is, on the contrary, economical, prudent, and peaceful. A strong Government arouses his suspicions, all the more as he cannot directly influence it. Not a strong Government but a strong Parliament answers to his interests. In opposition to the big land-owners and the high finance he is inclined to Liberalism. Its half-and-halfness is his too. Do ground rents, interest, taxes, limit his profit on one hand, then the rise of the proletariat threatens on the other the whole profit system. But even in his relations to the proletariat, where the latter does not appear to him too menacing, he prefers the peaceful methods of "divide and rule," of corruption and attraction by means of philanthropic institutions, &c., to violent means of suppression. Where the proletariat has not yet struck out a line of political action of its own, there the industrial capital is only too ready to use it as a battering-ram and as a voting machine to increase its own political power. To the petty bourgeois the opposition between the industrial capitalist and the worker appears of less moment than that between the employer's profit on the one hand and the ground rent as well as the interest on capital on the other. The abolition of interest and the ground rent he looks upon as the solution of the social question.

The opposition, however, between finance and industry ceases now more and more, since with the advance in the concentration of capital finance gets an ever-increasing hold of industry. An important means thereto is the increasing supersession of the private employer by the *joint stock companies*. Well-meaning optimists see in this a means to "democratise" capital, and thus gradually, and in a peaceful manner, without exciting attention, to change it into national property. As a matter of fact, it is a means to transform all the money of the middle and lower classes,

which they do not require for immediate consumption, into money capital, and to place it as such at the disposal of the big financial money capitalists in order to buy out the industrial capitalists. It thus increases the means whereby finance can concentrate industry in the hands of a few money lords. Without the joint-stock company system the big financiers could only control those businesses which they had bought with their own money. Thanks to the company system they can make numerous businesses dependent on themselves and thus acquire such of them which they would not otherwise be able to purchase for lack of cash. The whole fabulous power of Pierpont Morgan and Co., who, within the space of a few years, have concentrated railways, mines, the greater part of the ironworks, in one hand, and have already monopolised the most important ocean lines of steamers—this sudden capture of supremacy in industry and transport of the most important civilised nations would have been impossible without the joint-stock company system.

According to the London *Economist*, five men, J. D. Rockefeller, E. H. Harriman, J. Pierpont Morgan, W. R. Vanderbilt and G. D. Gould possess together over £150,000,000. They, however, control more than £1,500,000,000, while the entire capital which is deposited in the banks, railways, and industrial companies of the United States amounts to but £3,500,000,000. Thus, thanks to the company system, they control nearly one-half of this capital on which the entire economic life of the United States depends.

Now, as always, moreover, the crisis which will not fail to reach America will expropriate the small holders, and increase and strengthen the property of the bigger ones.

The more, however, money capital gains control over industry, the more does the industrial capital, too, take on the methods of the money capital. To the private employer, who lives side by side with his workers, the latter are still human beings, whose welfare or the reverse can hardly remain quite a matter of indifference to him, if he is not totally hardened. But to the shareholder there only exists the dividend. The workers are to him nothing but so many figures in a computation, in whose result, only, he is interested to the highest degree, since it can bring him increased comfort, increased power, or a diminution of them and social degradation. The rest of the consideration for the worker, which the private employer could still preserve, is in his case non-existent.

Money capital is that species of capital which is the most favourably inclined towards the use of violent means; that which easiest combines into monopolies, and thereby acquires unlimited power over the working class; that which is farthest removed from the workers: it is that which drives out the capital of the private industrial employer and gains an ever-increasing control over the entire capitalist production.

The necessary consequence of all this is here, too, the accentuation of the social conflict.

But England will be quoted against me. Do we not find in England an increasing toning down of the class antagonisms? And has not Marx indeed said, England is the classic land of the capitalist mode of production, which shows us our own future? Is not, therefore, the present condition of England the one to which we are coming?

It is always England which the enthusiasts for social peace point out to us, and, curious to say, it is the very same people who make us, the "orthodox" Marxists, the loudest reproaches for clinging blindly to Marx's formulas, that think of demolishing us in the most decisive manner by the above formula of Marx.

As a matter of fact, however, the circumstances since the "Capital" was written have altered enormously. England has ceased to be the classic land of capitalism. Its development approaches ever nearer and nearer its culmination; it is being overtaken by other nations, especially Germany and America, and now the relation between them begins to change. England ceases to give us a picture of our future, while *our* conditions begin to show England's future as regards the capitalist mode of production. This it is which an examination of the actual circumstances shows to those "orthodox" Marxists, who do not blindly repeat Marx, but apply his method in order to understand the present.

England was the classic land of capitalism, that in which individual capital first attained supremacy. It came to supremacy, overpowering economically not only the other classes of its own country, but also the foreign countries. Thus it was able to develop those peculiarities which I have described above as its own, in the freest way. It gave up the holding down of the working class by force, and applied itself far more to the task of "peaceably" dividing them, by bestowing on their stronger and better organised sections political privileges and seeking to buy and to corrupt their leaders by friendly compromise—a policy which too often succeeded. It gave up force and violence abroad, and peace and free trade became its motto. It lived peacefully with the Boers, and even finally put on the air of wishing to expiate the centuries of wrongs inflicted on Ireland by granting to it Home Rule.

But in the meantime foreign competition has become stronger, in many ways too strong, and this forces the capitalists to try to get rid of all resistance to their exploitation at home, and at the same time to secure markets by force. Hand-in-hand with this, the high finance steadily gets more and more powerful in the domain of production. England has consequently become of a different complexion. "The spirit of the time," state Mr. and Mrs. Webb in the *Sozial Praxis* (March 20, 1902), "has in the last ten years become adverse to the 'collective self-help' in the relations between

employers and employed, which distinguished a previous generation. Nay, public opinion in the propertied and professional classes is, in fact, more hostile to trade unionism and strikes than was the case a generation ago."

As a consequence of this change the trade unions are now most seriously limited in their efficiency by the English courts of law. In place of free trade there is now a tendency to raise the price of the necessaries of life by a customs tariff; the policy of colonial conquest begins afresh, and with it coercion in Ireland. Only the remodelling of the army on Prussian lines remains to be done, and then England will follow in the train of Germany in her Polish policy, her customs policy, her social policy, her foreign policy, her military policy.

Does not that show clearly that it is possible to study the future of England in Germany (and also in America), that English conditions have ceased to paint our future? The stage of the "softening down of the class antagonisms" and of the opening of the era of "social peace" was confined to England, and is even there a thing of the past. Gladstone was the most prominent representative of that policy of conciliating antagonisms by concessions, which corresponded to the mode of thinking of the industrial capital of England then dominating economically all other classes and countries. The most prominent representative of the new methods of money capital now fighting for supremacy is Mr. Chamberlain. It is among the strangest ironies of history that the Gladstone stage of social development is held up for our admiration in Germany as our future and as England's achievement never to be lost, at the very time when the Gladstone heritage crumbles into dust, and Chamberlain is the hero of the English people.

I will openly confess that I, too, formerly had laid great hopes on England. Though I did not expect that the Gladstone era would ever pass to Germany, I did, however, hope that in England in consequence of its peculiar conditions the evolution from capitalism to Socialism would proceed not by means of a social revolution, but peacefully by a series of progressive concessions to the proletariat on the part of the ruling classes. The experience of the last few years has destroyed my hopes for England, too. The English home policy now commences to shape itself on the lines of their German rivals. May this, also, have a corresponding effect on the English proletariat.

We now see how far the assumption of a gradual softening down of the class antagonism, of an approach between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, is justified. It turns out to have been not wholly without foundation in fact, but its mistake lay in that it generalised facts which were limited to a narrow area. It substituted a small section of the intellectuals for the entire bourgeoisie, and represented a particular social tendency of England, and that already belonging to the past, as the general and ever-growing tendency of the entire capitalist mode of production.

CHAPTER VI.—DEMOCRACY.

But does not Democracy offer the basis for a gradual, imperceptible transformation of capitalism into Socialism, without any such violent break with the existing order of things, as would be caused by the capture of political power by the proletariat?

There are a number of politicians who assert that only the despotic rule of a class makes a revolution necessary, whilst Democracy makes it superfluous. They further assert that in all civilised countries of to-day there is enough Democracy to render a peaceable evolution, free from revolution, possible. It is everywhere possible to establish co-operative stores, which, as they grow, lead to setting up productive co-operatives of their own, and so slowly drive out capitalist production from one sphere to another. It is everywhere possible to organise trade unions, which circumscribe more and more the power of the capitalist in his business, set up in the workshop in the place of an absolutism, constitutionalism, and so prepare the slow transition to a republican factory. Almost everywhere can Social-Democracy force its way into the municipal councils, use the influence of these bodies as regards public works in favour of the workers, extend the range of municipal duties, and by continually enlarging the sphere of communal production narrow the field of private production. Finally, Social-Democracy forces its way into Parliament, wins there more and more influence, carries through one social reform after another, puts a check on the power of capitalism by means of factory laws, and at the same time extends continually the sphere of State production by working for the nationalisation of the big monopolies. Thus, through the mere exercise of the democratic rights within the existing order of things, the capitalist society gradually, and without any disturbance, grows into the Socialist Commonwealth, and the revolutionary capture of political power by the proletariat becomes unnecessary—nay, all endeavours in that direction are harmful, because it can accomplish nothing except a disturbance of this slow but sure progress.

Thus argue the opponents of social revolution.

It is a charming idyll which is thus presented to us, and even in this case one cannot say that it is entirely imaginary. The facts on which it is based actually exist. But the truth they paint to us is only a half-truth. A small amount of dialectical thinking would have revealed the whole truth to them.

This idyll, namely, is only valid if we take for granted that only one of the opposing forces, the proletariat, grows and gains in strength, while the other side, the bourgeoisie, remains stuck in the mud. In that case the proletariat must gradually grow over the

head of the bourgeoisie without any revolution and expropriate it without attracting any notice.

But the question appears quite different when the other side is also considered, and it is seen that the bourgeoisie also gains in strength and is spurred by every advance of the proletariat to develop new strength, to think out and apply new methods of opposition and of oppression. What from a one-sided consideration appears as a peaceful growth into Socialism turns out, then, to be but the organisation of greater and greater masses of troops, the fitting out and the application of ever more and more powerful weapons of war, the continual enlargement of the battle ground, consequently not the gradual abolition of the class war by the absorption of capitalism, but its reproduction on an even larger scale, and the intensification of the results of every victory and every defeat.

The most harmless are the co-operative societies, among which only the distributive societies are of any account. They are ranked very high by all the opponents of revolutionary developments on account of their peaceful nature. Undoubtedly they offer the workers a number of important advantages, but it is ridiculous to expect from them even a partial expropriation of capitalism. So far as they at all expropriate any class to-day, it is the class of small shopkeepers and many sections of hand workers, which have hitherto maintained their position, *e.g.*, the bakers. It is in thorough keeping with this fact that nowhere do the big capitalists fight the co-operative stores, through whom they are said to be being driven out of existence. No, it is the petty bourgeoisie which is so rabid against them, and amongst it those very sections which depend on the workers, and which, therefore, are the easiest influenced in favour of a proletarian policy. If the co-operative stores offer to some sections of the workers material advantages and render them stronger, they at the same time repel from the movement sections of the community which are very near to them. The means which are intended for the peaceful absorption of capitalism, and for abolition of the class war, becomes itself a new objective in the class war, a means by which class hatred is inflamed. And the power of the capitalist remains at the same time undisturbed. The co-operative movement has up till now successfully fought the small tradesmen; the fight with the capitalist warehouse is still to be fought out. That will not be so easy.

Completely absurd, too, is the assumption that the dividends of the co-operative stores, even if they are not paid out, but accumulated, could grow quicker than the accumulation of capital, so that they are able to overtake it and thus gradually limit more and more the field of capitalism.

The co-operative stores can only acquire importance for the emancipation of the workers where the working-class is carrying on a determined class war; they are the means to lend the militant

proletariat new strength and power. But in that they are completely dependent on the state of legislation and on the attitude taken up by the State. So long as the proletariat has not gained political power, the importance of the co-operative store for the proletarian class war is invariably limited within very narrow bounds.

Far more important than the *co-operative stores* for the proletariat are the *trade unions*. They are so only, however, as *militant organisations*, not as *organisations for social peace*. Even where they enter into agreements with the employers—single or organised—they can only do so and insist on the agreements being carried through by virtue of their ability to fight.

Important, however, and indispensable as the trade union is for the proletariat, it must reckon nevertheless sooner or later with its counterpart, the association of employers, which, when it assumes the form of a closer corporation, of a pool or a trust, may only too easily prove irresistible for the trade union.

However, it is not only the employers' associations which threaten the trade unions, but also the State. We in Germany know that too well. That, however, even in democratic England the trade unions are not yet entirely out of danger, is shown by the recent judicial decisions which threaten to fully paralyse them.

To this, too, testimony is born by the already quoted article of Mr and Mrs. Webb in the *Sozial Praxis*, which throws a singular light on the future of the trade unions. It points out how unequally the trade unions in England have developed. "Generally speaking, the strong are grown stronger, while those who were already previously weak, *are now weaker than ever*." The trade unions which have grown are those of the miners, cotton spinners, the building trades, the iron trade. Those which have grown smaller are those of agricultural labourers, of seamen, in clothing and unskilled trades. The whole trade union world is, however, threatened by the growing opposition of the propertied classes. The English law is admirably adapted to the suppression of inconvenient organisations, and the danger that it will be now used against the trade unions "is increased, and the cause for anxiety has grown, with the dislike to trade unionism and strikes which judges and juries share with the remainder of the middle and upper classes." The existing laws are in a position "to hand over the worker, bound hand and foot, to the masters," so that the authors reckon with the possibility of a time coming when "collective bargaining, together with its necessary accompaniment—the collective withholding of labour and the occasional stoppage of the industry—will be made impossible, or at least costly and difficult, by the judicial interpretation of the law."

We must not forget that the trade unions have up till now proved themselves, at the most, only a nuisance to the employers, and of any real limitation of exploitation by the trade unions there can be no question. One can easily imagine how the State would

proceed to work, even in that Eldorado of trade unionism, England, if the trade unions really succeeded in putting a perceptible restraint on the will of capital.

In the same way, municipal Socialism finds its limitations in the existing order of State and society, even where universal suffrage prevails in the communes. The commune is always tied down to the general economic and political conditions, and cannot extricate itself from them singly. Certainly, in municipalities, in industrial districts, the workers may get the administration into their own hands before they are strong enough to capture the political power in the State, and they are then in a position to eliminate from this administration at least the most objectionable features of hostility to labour, and to introduce reforms which cannot be expected from a bourgeois régime. But these municipalities soon find their limits, not simply in the power of the State but also in their own economic helplessness. It is for the most part poor districts, almost exclusively inhabited by the proletariat, which are first won by the Social-Democrats. From whence can they obtain the means for carrying out their greater reforms? As a rule, they are limited in the levying of rates by the laws of the State, and even where this is not the case they cannot go beyond a certain limit in the taxation of the rich and well-to-do, without driving these, the only inhabitants from whom anything is to be obtained, away. Every thorough-going reform leads, among other things, to new rates and taxes, which will be found disagreeable, not only to the upper classes but also to the wider circles of the population. Many a municipality, which was won by Socialists or reformers standing very close to them, is again snatched from them by reason of the rate-question, though their administration was exemplary. Thus it was once in London, thus recently at Roubaix.

But the political field! There, these limitations are unknown, and do we not find there an uninterrupted progress of labour protection laws; does not every Parliamentary session bring us new limitations of capitalism? And does not every election increase the number of our representatives in Parliament? Does not, thereby, our power in the State, our influence with the Government, grow slowly, but steadily and continually? Does not, thereby, capital become more and more dependent on the proletariat?

Certainly, the number of factory laws grows from year to year. But if one looks closely into the matter, these laws will be found to be simply an extension of those already existing, to new sections of the proletariat—to shopmen, to barmen, to children outside the factories, to home workers, to seamen, &c. (an extension mostly of an insufficient and doubtful nature)—not an increasing strengthening of protection where it already exists. If, however, one considered how fast the capitalist mode of production extends its sphere, how fast it lays its hands on one trade after another, one country after the other, it will be found that the extension of labour protection

follows at a far slower pace, that it nowhere overtakes the expansion of capitalism, but only with difficulty hobbles after it. And while the extension of the latter goes ever faster and faster, the former comes always more and more nearly to a standstill.

If, however, the progress of labour protection is small in extension, in depth it is almost nothing. In 1847 in England, under the pressure of the Chartist movement and the rapid impoverishment of the textile workers, the ten hours day was won for women and young persons; that is, practically for the entire workers in the textile industry. Where have we advanced since then over the ten hours day?

The Second Republic in France had in 1848 settled the working day for all workers: in Paris at ten hours, in the rest of France at eleven hours. When recently Millerand (on paper, and in a very inadequate way) got the Chamber to pass a ten hours day for those trades in which women and children work along with men (consequently not for all industrial establishments), this was looked on as a remarkable achievement, of which only a Socialist Minister could have been capable. And yet he gave less than the English legislation of 50 years ago, since he allowed the ten hours day to apply even to children, for whom, in England, as early as 1844 a day of six and a-half hours was fixed.

Already the Geneva Congress of the "International" in 1866 had demanded an eight hours day as the first step towards all fruitful social reform. Thirty-six years later, at the last Congress of French Socialists at Tours, a delegate was found to oppose the acceptance of the eight hours day as one of our immediate demands. He wished simply "measures preparatory to the introduction of the eight hours day." And the man was not laughed at, but was able to stand as a candidate in Paris at the last elections!

It would seem that the only progress we make in social reform is as regards the modesty of the social reformers.

But how is that possible in face of the increase of Socialist representation on public bodies? The answer is simple, when this fact is not taken alone, but the reverse side of the medal is also considered. Certainly the number of Socialist deputies grows, but at the same time the bourgeois democracy decays more and more. Very often this last manifests itself externally in the decrease of its vote at the elections, but more often it is shown in its inner decay. It becomes more and more cowardly, and weak of character, and only knows one means of combatting reaction—that is, to declare itself ready to carry out reactionary measures itself—a thing it really does when it gets into power. That is the present-day method of Liberalism of gaining political power.

When Bismarck saw his rule tottering, he prolonged the legislative periods of the Reichstag from three to five years. It was a desperate reactionary measure which roused a storm of indignation. In France, however, the last Radical Ministry of Republican

defence, with a Socialist Minister in its midst, asked, on the eve of the elections, for the prolongation of the legislative periods from four to six years and got it from a Republican majority. But for the Senate, this reactionary measure would have passed into law.

But bourgeois Liberalism does not simply disappear in proportion as Social-Democracy grows, but simultaneously with the increasing influence of Social-Democracy in the different Parliaments, the influence of the Parliaments themselves wanes. These two phenomena proceed together at the same time, but have no direct connection with each other. On the contrary, Parliaments, where there are no Social-Democrats, as for instance, the Saxon or the Prussian Diets, decline in influence and efficiency much more rapidly than is the case with others.

For this decadence of Parliaments there are various reasons. We cannot, however, regard as the most important among them anything pertaining to the Parliamentary machinery and technique, which could be altered by an alteration in the rules of procedure, or in the sphere of Parliamentary powers; the most essential lie in the character of the classes who through Parliament influence the Government.

If Parliamentarism is to flourish it must have two things. One is a strong united majority, and, second a great social aim, for which this majority is energetically striving, and towards which it also drives the Government. Both were to hand at the heyday of Parliamentarism. So long as capitalism represented the future of the nation, it was supported in its struggle for emancipation by all sections of the population which had any Parliamentary importance; above all, by the mass of the Intellectuals. The majority of the petty bourgeoisie, even the workers, followed, too, the bourgeois lead.

Thus arose Liberalism as a homogeneous party with great aims. The struggle of Liberalism for Parliament and in Parliament lent the latter its importance.

Since then, that development has commenced, which as described already drives the proletariat which acquires a class consciousness of its own, as well as a section of the Intellectuals and of the petty bourgeoisie, and of the smaller peasant proprietors, into the Socialist camp, and makes the remainder of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasants absolutely reactionary, while the most energetic elements of the industrial capital unites with the high finance, which never attached great importance to Parliamentarism although it understands how to use it—as *vide* Panama.

In this way the Liberal party falls to pieces, without the ruling class being able to form another great Parliamentary party of a homogeneous character capable of taking its place. The more reactionary the propertied classes grow, and the less homogeneous they become, the more they split up into small parties, the harder it becomes to bring together a solid Parliamentary majority. More

and more is a majority only possible in the forms of temporary coalitions between the most divergent political parties—coalitions which rest on very insecure foundations, because not inner ties, but merely considerations of external efficiency, form the motive—coalitions which from the outset are doomed to fruitlessness, because their elements are so varied that they can only hold together by each one giving up all thought of carrying into effect its own ideas. It is a peculiar misconception of the essential nature of these coalitions, arising as they do from the decay of Parliamentarism, and implying its political and social helplessness, for people to see in the participation of them the means for a slow and gradual growth of the proletariat into political power.

But the social development does not only lead to the break up of the big homogenous Parliamentary parties into numerous fractions of a different, nay, antagonistic nature; it leads also to the fact that the Parliamentary majorities are often more reactionary and hostile to Labour than the Governments. Though the latter are but the servants of the ruling classes, they nevertheless still possess a better insight into the totality of political and social relations, and though the bureaucracy may be an obedient servant of the Government, nevertheless it develops its own life and tendencies, which, in their turn, react on the Government. The bureaucracy is recruited from the Intellectuals, in which, as we have seen, an understanding of the importance of the proletariat, be it ever so faint-hearted, is, after all, still on the increase.

From all this it results that not infrequently the Governments, with all their reactionary views and their hostility to labour, proceed not half so blindly as the ruling classes, who stand behind them with their following of petty bourgeois and peasant proprietors. Parliaments, which used to be a weapon to force the Government forward on the path of progress, becomes more and more a means of nullifying the small progress, which the Governments are having forced on them by circumstances. In proportion as the classes ruling through Parliamentarism become superfluous, nay, obnoxious, the Parliamentary machine itself loses in importance.

If, on the other hand, with an eye to the proletarian electors, a representative body here and there goes in for labour protection and democracy out-bids the Government, the latter finds always sufficient means whereby to circumvent the Parliament.

In the United States the attack on the trade unions is carried on less by the legislature than by the law courts; in the same way it was the decision of the House of Lords, and not the legislation of the House of Commons, dependent on the electors, through which the attack on trade unionism was delivered in England; and that the spirit of the rejected anti-revolutionary Bill is again active in

the German courts of justice, the German workers know all too well.

Thus the candle burns at both ends. The ruling classes and the Governments condemn the Parliaments even more and more to fruitlessness. Parliamentarism becomes more and more incapable of pursuing a settled policy in any direction. It becomes more and more senile and powerless, and can only then regain its youth and vigour when the proletariat wins control over it, together with the entire machinery of the State, and makes it serve its purpose. Parliamentarism, so far from making revolution impossible or superfluous, requires itself the Revolution to become again efficient.

I must not be misunderstood in the sense that I consider democracy to be superfluous, or that I think co-operative societies, trade unions, the entry of Social-Democracy into municipalities and Parliaments, or the securing of individual reforms, to be worthless. Nothing could be further from my intention than that. On the contrary, that is all of great service to the proletariat; it only becomes of no importance as a means of staving off the Revolution—in other words, the capture of political power by the proletariat.

Democracy is of the greatest value, if only for the reason that it renders possible higher forms of the class war. The latter will no longer be, like that of 1789, or as recently as 1848, a fight of unorganised masses without political education, without any insight into the co-relation of forces of the different factors; without any deep conception of the final end of the struggle or the means of its realisation, no longer a fight of the masses who allow themselves to be led astray and put in confusion by every rumour, every accident. It will be a fight of organised, enlightened masses, steady and deliberate, who do not follow any and every impulse, do not break out in revolt at every grievance, but do not either allow themselves to be depressed by every failure.

On the other hand, the electoral struggles are a means of counting our own forces and those of the enemy; they allow a clear insight into the relative strength of classes and parties, their advance and relapse; they restrain from premature outbreaks and guard against defeats; they make it also possible for the opponents themselves to see the untenability of this or that position and thus prompt them to voluntarily abandon it, in case its maintenance is not of vital importance. In this way the struggle becomes less cruel and less gruesome, less dependent on blind chance.

But the practical achievements too, which can be won by democracy, and the exercise of its liberties and rights must not be underrated. They are much too small to limit the capitalist domination and to effect its imperceptible growth into Socialism. But the smallest reform or organisation can become of greatest importance for the physical and intellectual *rebirth of the proletariat*, which, without them, would be a helpless prey to capitalism,

hopelessly sunk in the misery with which it is continually threatened. And not only, too, for the raising of the proletariat from its misery is the activity of the representatives of the proletariat in Parliament, and on local bodies, and the efficiency of the working men's organisations indispensable; it is also needed for the better practical acquaintance of the proletariat with the duties and machinery of the State and municipal administration with the working of the industry on a large scale—in other words for the attainment of that intellectual ripeness which the proletariat needs if it is to dispense with the bourgeoisie as a ruling class.

Thus, democracy is indispensable as a means to make the proletariat ripe for the social revolution. But it is not in a position to prevent this revolution. Democracy is for the proletariat what light and air are for the organism; without them it cannot develop its strength; but through the growth of one class one ought not to overlook the simultaneous growth of its opponent. Democracy does not hinder the growth of capitalism, whose organisation, and political and economic power grow at the same time as the strength of the proletariat. Certainly the Co-operative movement grows, but the accumulation of capital proceeds still more quickly; certainly the trade unions increase, but at the same time the concentration of capital, its organisation in gigantic monopolies, grow still more rapidly. Certainly too, to touch on a hitherto undiscussed point, the Socialist press grows, but so does, at the same time, the colourless unprincipled press, which demoralises and poisons large sections of the community; certainly wages rise, but still more rapid is the rise of profits; certainly the number of the Socialist deputies in Parliament increases, but still deeper and deeper sink the importance and efficiency of these institutions, while at the same time their majorities, as well as Governments, become more and more dependent on the power of high finance.

Thus develop along with the means at the disposal of the proletariat, also those of capitalism, and the end of it can be none other than a great general battle between the two, a battle which can only end when the proletariat has won the day.

For the capitalist class is superfluous, while the proletariat has become the most indispensable class of society. The capitalist class is not in the position to eliminate the proletariat, or to annihilate it. After every defeat the latter is bound to rise anew and more threatening than ever; on the other hand it cannot use the first great victory over capital, which puts the political power into its hands, otherwise than by the way of abolishing the capitalist nexus. As long as this does not occur the fight between the two classes will and can come to no conclusion. Social peace under the capitalist mode of production is a utopia which has arisen from the very real needs of the Intellectuals, but finds in reality no means for its realization. And no less a utopia is the imperceptible growing of capitalism into Socialism. We have not the

slightest ground to assume that capitalism will end otherwise than it began. Neither the economic nor the political development points to the period of the revolutions which have characterized capitalism having come to an end. Social reform and the growth of strength of the proletarian organizations cannot prevent them, they can at most effect that the class war against capital should, with the higher developed sections of the militant proletariat become, from a struggle for the first necessities of life, a struggle for the possession of power.

CHAPTER VII.—FORMS AND MEANS OF THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

But what are the forms under which the decisive struggles between the proletariat and the ruling classes will be fought out? When have we to expect it? What weapons will then be at the command of the proletariat?

To these questions it is difficult to give definite answers. We can, of course, to a certain extent, inquire in advance into the *direction* of the development, but not into its *forms* or *pace*. In analysing the direction of the development we have to deal, comparatively speaking, with very simple laws; we can here abstract from the whole of the perplexing variety of those phenomena, which we cannot recognise as law determined and necessary, and which in consequence appears to us as accidental. On the other hand the latter play a great part in determining the forms and the pace of the movement. Thus, for example, in all modern civilised countries the *direction* of the capitalist development has been the same, but in each one the *forms* and the *pace* were very different. Geographical peculiarities, racial qualities, the goodwill or illwill of the neighbours, the help or the hindrance offered by great personalities—all that and many other things influenced them. Much of it could never have been foreseen in advance, but even the features which could be foreseen, act and react on each other in such a variety of ways that the result turned out extremely complicated and, with the present state of knowledge, absolutely indeterminable beforehand. Thus, it came to pass that even men who, like Marx and Engels, towered high above all contemporaries in their thorough and many-sided knowledge of the social conditions of our civilised countries, and in the consistent and fruitful method of their researches, could well determine for many decades to come the direction of the economic development in a manner which was afterwards brilliantly justified by the events, and at the same time err considerably as to the pace and forms of the development within the next few months.

Only one thing, I believe, can already be said of the coming revolution with any certainty. It will have a different shape and

form to its predecessors. It is one of the greatest mistakes, often made both by revolutionists and their opponents, that they imagine the coming revolution after the style of the old, and as nothing is easier than to prove that such revolutions are nowadays impossible, the conclusion seems obvious that the idea of the Social Revolution is entirely obsolete. It is the first time in the world's history that we are confronted with revolutionary struggles which will be fought out under democratic forms between organisations built on the basis of democratic liberties, and forces such as the world has never seen before—that is to say, the employers' associations, before which even monarchs bow, and whose strength is increased by the weapons of the State, the bureaucracy and the army, which absolutism has called into existence and perfected.

One of the peculiarities of the present situation, consists also in the fact, that as already mentioned, it is not as a rule the Governments who offer us the greatest opposition. Under absolutism, against which former revolutions were directed, the Government was all-powerful, and the class antagonism could not distinctly develop itself; the Government did not merely prevent the exploited but also the exploiters from freely defending their interests. And, by the side of the Government there stood only a portion of the exploiting classes; the other, the greater portion of the exploiters, especially the industrial capitalists, were in the opposition, as well as the mass of the working people—not only the proletariat, but also the petty bourgeoisie and peasants—certain backward districts excepted. The Government was thus isolated also in the nation, it had no support in any broad section of the people, and represented the most prominent force which oppressed and robbed the people. To overthrow it was, under these circumstances, but a matter of one bold *coup de main*.

Under democracy, not only the exploited, but also the exploiting classes can develop their organisations more freely; they must do so if they wish to resist the growing strength of their opponent. Not only the strength of the former, but also that of the latter is greater than under absolutism; they use their weapons more unscrupulously and sharply than the Government itself, which no more stands over them, but under them.

The revolutionary parties have thus no longer to deal with the Government alone, but also with powerful organisations of the exploiters. And the revolutionary parties no longer represent, as in previous revolutions, the enormous mass of the people as against a handful of exploiters. They represent to-day essentially only one class, the proletariat, which is confronted not only by the whole of the exploiting classes, but also by the majority of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasants, with a great part of the Intellectuals.

Only a fraction of the Intellectuals, as well as the petty peasantry and the lower middle class, who are practically wage workers or are dependent on the custom of wage workers, unite

with the proletariat. But they prove not unfrequently very untrustworthy allies and are all more or less incapable of appreciating the weapon from which the proletariat derives its greatest strength, namely *Organisation*.

If previous revolutions were thus uprisings of the mass of the people against the Government, the coming revolution, apart perhaps from Russia, will probably assume rather the character of a struggle of one portion of the nation against the other, and in that, but only in that, resemble less the French Revolution and more the Reformation Wars. I might almost say, it will be less like a sudden revolt against authority and more like a prolonged *civil war*, if we did not associate with the latter actual war and slaughter. But we have no reason to assume that *armed insurrection*, with barricades and similar warlike incidents will nowadays play a decisive part. The reasons for that have already been too often set out for me to need to dwell on that point any longer. Militarism can only be overcome through the military themselves proving untrustworthy, not through their being defeated by the revolted people.

No more than from armed insurrections can we expect the collapse of the existing order of society from financial difficulties. In this respect, too, the situation is very different from that of 1789 and 1848. At that time capitalism was still weak, the accumulation of capital unimportant, capital rare and difficult to obtain. Besides, capitalism was then in part hostile to absolutism; in part, to say the least, suspicious of it. The Governments at that time were still independent of capital, that is, of the industrial capital, and occasionally, though for the most part unwillingly, stood much in the way of its development. The decay of feudalism, however, led to the drying up of all material resources, and the Governments were thus able to squeeze less and less money out of their countries, and more and more compelled to have recourse to borrowing. That was bound to lead to a financial collapse, or to concessions to the rising classes, which, just as much as the former, brought a political break-up in its train.

It is quite different to-day; capitalism does not, like feudalism, lead to under-production, but to over-production; it is smothered in its own fat. The drawback is not any lack of capital, but, on the contrary, a superfluity of capital, which seeks profitable investment, and is not afraid of risk. The Governments are fully dependent on the capitalist class, and the latter have every reason to support and protect the former. The growth of national debts can become a revolutionary factor only in so far as it increases the burden of taxation, and, with it, the exasperation of the population. It can, however, hardly—here, too, Russia forms, *perhaps*, an exception—lead to a direct financial collapse, or even to serious financial difficulties of the governments. There is as little prospect of a revolution from a financial crisis as from an armed insurrection.

The means of pressure and the weapon of warfare peculiar to the proletariat is the organised refusal to work, the *strike*. The more the capitalist mode of production develops, the more capital concentrates, the more gigantic become the dimensions which the strikes assume. And the more the capitalist mode of production drives out production on a small scale, the more the entire society becomes dependent on the undisturbed progress of capitalist production, so the more every serious disturbance of the latter, such as is caused by a strike on a large scale, becomes a national calamity, a political event. At a certain stage of the economic development it is, therefore, but natural that there should arise the idea of using the strike as a political weapon. This idea has already made its appearance in France and in Belgium, and has here and there been applied with success. In my opinion it will play a great part in the revolutionary struggles of the future.

That has long been my view of the matter. In my articles on the new party programme (*Neue Zeit*, 1890-91, No. 50, p. 757), I already pointed to the possibility "that, under circumstances, when something very important is at stake and awaits its decision, when the mass of the workers have been stirred to their innermost depths by some great events, strikes on a large scale may have a great political effect."

In saying this I naturally have no wish to advocate a general strike in the Anarchist sense, or the sense of the French trade unionists. In this sense the strike is to take the place of political, viz., Parliamentary, action of the proletariat, and to be the means of overthrowing the existing order of society at one blow.

That is nonsense. A general strike in the sense that all the workers of a country at a given signal lay down their tools, assumes a unanimity and a state of organisation of the workers hardly attainable under the present conditions of society, and if once attained would prove so irresistible, as to make the general strike itself superfluous. Such a strike, however, would at one blow render not merely the existing society, but *all* existence impossible, and that of the proletariat even sooner than that of capitalists; it would therefore necessarily fail at the very moment when its revolutionary effects would begin to develop.

The strike as a political method of warfare will scarcely ever, certainly not within any time we can foresee, assume the form of a strike of *all* the workers of a country; nor can it be expected to *replace* the ordinary weapons of political warfare of the proletariat. It can only *complement* and *strengthen* them. We are approaching a time when, confronted by the enormous superiority of the employers' associations, the isolated, non-political strike will have no more prospect of success than the merely parliamentary action of the Labour Parties against the power of the capitalist-ridden State. It will become ever more and more necessary that both should each complete the other and draw new strength from co-operation.

As with every other weapon, the use of the political strike must first be learnt. Not only is it not the cure-all which the Anarchists claim for it, but it is not even the under-all-circumstances-infallible remedy as they regard it. It cannot be my task here to investigate the requisite conditions under which it can be used; only with reference to the recent events in Belgium I may point out that they showed to what a great extent it demands methods of its own that cannot be combined just at mere wish with others, such as, for example, co-operation with the Liberals. I do not object to the latter under all and any circumstances. It would be foolish on our part if we were not to take advantage of the disagreements and splits among our opponents. But one must not expect from the Liberals more than they can give. In the sphere of Parliamentary activity, when a certain measure is concerned, the antagonism can under circumstances well be greater between them and their bourgeois opponents than between them and us. Then a temporary working agreement may well be in order. But a fight outside Parliament for a proposal of revolutionary importance cannot be fought with the help of the Liberals. To wish to increase, in case of such an action, the strength of the proletariat by an alliance with the Liberals means to neutralise one of the employee's weapons by the other. The political strike is a purely proletarian weapon, which can only be used in a fight which the proletariat fights alone. It therefore only comes into account in a fight against the entire bourgeois society. In this sense it is, perhaps, the most revolutionary of all the weapons of the proletariat.

In addition, still other weapons and methods of warfare may, perhaps, develop of which we cannot even think to-day. There is between the knowledge of the methods and organs and that of the direction of the social struggles, yet that difference that the latter can be theoretically investigated in advance, while the former are, in the first place, created by the practical workers, and only then observed by the theoreticians, and examined by them from the point of view of their importance for the further development. Trade unions, strikes, joint stock companies, trusts, &c., sprang from practical life, not from theory. In this field there may yet be many surprises in store for us.

War may also become a means to hasten the political development and to place political power in the hands of the proletariat. War has already proved frequently a great revolutionary factor. There are historical situations in which a revolution becomes necessary for the further development of society, and yet the revolutionary classes are too weak to overthrow the ruling classes. The necessity of a revolution must not be understood in the sense that the revolutionary classes necessarily attain at the right moment also the right strength for it. Unfortunately, the world is not arranged so fitly. There are situations where it is absolutely necessary that a ruling class should be supplanted by another, and

yet the former still know how to keep the other down. If such a state of things lasts too long, the whole society disintegrates and breaks up. Very often, however, in such a case war effects what the rising class has not been equal to. It does this in two ways. War cannot be made without straining the whole of the energy of the nation. If, however, the nation is seriously divided against itself, war forces the ruling class to make concessions to the oncoming class to try to interest it in the life of the community, and thus to concede to it a power which it would not have obtained without the war.

If, on the other hand, the ruling class is incapable of such a sacrifice, or it is already too late, then war leads only too easily to a disaster in the field, which then brings along with it a disaster at home. By smashing up the army which a given *régime* has hitherto regarded as its surest support, it breaks up the *régime* itself.

Thus war has not unfrequently, under circumstances, proved a brutal, destructive, but withal an efficient instrument of progress, when other means failed.

The German bourgeoisie, for example, was by the shifting of Europe's economic centre of gravity to the coast countries of the Atlantic Ocean, and by the Thirty Years' War and its consequences, too enfeebled to free itself from feudalism by its own strength. It got rid of it, thanks to the Napoleonic wars and the wars of the Bismarck era. The legacy of 1848 was, as has often been proved, altogether carried out by the wars of the anti-revolutionary powers.

To-day we have arrived at a period of foreign and interior political antagonisms not unlike that of the fifties and sixties. Again there is a mass of inflammable material piled up. Ever greater and greater become the problems of inner and foreign politics which we have to solve, but none of the ruling classes and parties dare seriously undertake it. The least earnest attempt to do so would lead to great convulsions, and that is a thing which they are afraid of, knowing full well the enormous power of the proletariat, which would be set free each time.

I have pointed out before the stagnation of the inner political life, which finds its most remarkable expression in the decay of Parliamentaryism. Hand in hand with this stagnation in home affairs proceeds also a stagnation in the foreign policy of Europe. People shrink from a spirited policy, which might lead to an international conflict, not from any ethical repudiation of war, but from fear of the revolution which would follow it. In consequence of this the whole statesmanship of our rulers, not only in home, but also in foreign affairs, consists in putting off the solution of questions for as long as it is possible, and in thus piling up a vast number of unsolved problems. Thanks to this there still exist to-day a number of States which a stronger revolutionary race had half a-century ago put on their death-beds, *e.g.*, Austria and Turkey, and on the other side the interest of the bourgeoisie in an

independent Polish national State has, for the same reason, completely died out.

But these embers of a crisis are not extinguished, they may any day burst out afresh, like the Mount Pelée on Martinique; and blaze out in tremendous wars. The economic development, itself, creates new centres and causes of crisis, new conditions of friction, and new opportunities for international complications, in that it awakes in the ruling classes the greed for the monopolisation of the markets for the conquest of transmarine territories, and sets up in the place of the peacefully-inclined mind of the industrial capitalist the lust for violence of the financier.

The sole guarantee for peace lies to-day in the fear of the revolutionary proletariat. It remains to be seen how long yet this will keep down the ever-growing number of causes making for war and prevent them from bursting out. Besides there are a number of States who still have no independent revolutionary proletariat to fear, and many of them are completely ruled by an unscrupulous, brutal clique of men of the high finance. These States, hitherto unimportant in the domain of international politics, or peacefully inclined, come more and more to the front as disturbers of the peace. Thus, in the first place, the United States, and then England and Japan. Russia figured formerly first in the list of the disturbers of the peace; her heroic proletariat has for the moment set it down. But just as an insolent Government, wielding absolute power within its dominions, afraid of no revolutionary class at its back, so may a tottering régime, driven to desperation, pick up a war, as was the case with Napoleon III. in 1870, and may still be the case with Nicholas II. It is by these powers and their antagonisms, and not by those between France and Germany, or Austria and Italy, that the world's peace is most seriously threatened to-day. We must reckon with the possibility of a war in the near future; consequently, also with the possibility of political convulsions which may either directly result in insurrection on the part of the proletariat, or lead the way to such.

I must not be misunderstood. I examine, I do not prophesy, and still less do I express my wishes. I inquire what *may* come, I do not say what *will* come, nor have I the slightest wish to say what *ought* to come. If I speak here of war as a means of revolution, that does not mean I wish for war. Its horrors are so terrible that only military fanatics can nowadays find the melancholy courage to ask for war in cold blood. But even if a revolution were not a means to an end, but an ultimate end in itself which could not be bought at too dear a price, be it ever so much blood, one could not desire war as a means to let loose the revolution. For it is the most irrational means to this end. It brings with it such terrible destruction, puts such tremendous demands on the people, that a revolution which arises from it is heavily overloaded with tasks which are not its own and which for the time being absorb all its means and strength.

Besides, a revolution which arises out of a war is a sign of weakness of the revolutionary class, often a cause of further weakness, if only through the sacrifice which it brings with it, as well as through the moral and intellectual degradation which it causes. We thus have an enormous increase of the burdens of the revolutionary government, and at the same time a weakening of its strength. That is why a revolution which arises out of a war collapses more easily or loses sooner its original impulse. How differently turned out the bourgeois revolution in France, where it arose from an insurrection of the people, to that in Germany, where it was imported by a number of wars! And the cause of the proletariat in Paris would have derived far greater benefits from the rising of the Paris proletariat, if it had not been forced upon it by the war of 1870-71, but had taken place later, when the Parisians would have attained sufficient strength to expel Louis Napoleon and his gang without war.

Thus we have not the slightest reason to wish for a forcible acceleration of our march by means of a war.

But our wishes are of no account. Certainly men make their own history, but they do not choose at will the problems which they have to solve, or the circumstances under which they live, or the means wherewith to solve. Had it all depended on our wishes, who of us would not prefer a peaceful solution to a violent, to which our personal strength is not perhaps equal, which may, perhaps, even get the better of us? But our duty is not to utter pious wishes and to demand of the world that it shall accommodate itself to them, but to recognise the *given* tasks, circumstances, and means in order to be able to apply suitably the latter to the solution of the former.

Investigation of the actual, that is the foundation of a rational policy. If I am of the opinion that we are approaching a revolutionary epoch, as to the date of which, however, it is impossible to say anything, I have come to this conclusion through my examination of the actual facts, not through any of my wishes. I might even wish that I may be wrong, and those right who think the greatest difficulties of the transition from capitalism to Socialism are already behind and that we have gained all the essentials for a peaceful progress to Socialism. Unfortunately, I cannot see my way to accepting this view. The greatest and most difficult things, the struggle for possession of political power, is still before us; it will only be decided in the course of a long and hard wrestling in which we will have to exert all our energies to the uttermost.

No worse service to the proletariat can be done than to advise it to disarm, in order to meet half-way an apparent conciliatory move on the part of the bourgeoisie. That means in the present state of affairs, nothing less than handing it over to the bourgeoisie, to bring the proletariat into intellectual and political dependence on

the bourgeoisie, to unnerve it, degrade it and make it incapable of fulfilling its great historical mission.

That this is no exaggeration is best proved by the example of the English working class. Nowhere is the proletariat more numerous, nowhere its economic organisation better developed, nowhere its political freedom more complete than in England. But nowhere is the proletariat more politically helpless. It has not only lost all independence in the domains of high politics, it cannot even defend the interests which lay nearest to them.

Here, too, the already more than once quoted Mr. and Mrs. Webb, who surely cannot be suspected of revolutionary sympathies, will bear out our statement. "During the last period of prosperity, that is within the last decade," they say in the article already referred to, "the participation of the English working man in Labour politics gradually decreased. The question of an eight hours day, and the constructive Socialism after the Fabian fashion, to which the trade unions so eagerly turned in the period 1890-93, gradually ceased to engage their attention. The number of Labour members in the House has not increased."

Even the recent lashes from the whips of their opponents cannot wake the English proletariat from its slumber. They remain dumb while their trade unions are attacked, dumb when their bread is made dearer. The English workers stand to-day as a political factor lower than the workers of the economically most backward and politically most enslaved State in Europe—Russia. It is its active revolutionary consciousness which lends the proletariat of the latter its great practical strength; it is the repudiation of the revolution, the exclusive predominance of the interests of the moment, the so-called practical politics, which make the former of no account in actual politics.

Hand in hand, however, with the loss of political power there goes, in the case of these practical politics, moral and intellectual degradation.

I have spoken before of the moral restoration of the proletariat, who have become, from the barbarians of modern society, the most important factor in the maintenance and progress of our civilisation. But they have raised themselves to such a height only in those countries where they have remained in the sharpest antagonism to the bourgeoisie, where the struggle for political power has kept alive in them the consciousness that they are called upon to uplift with themselves the whole society to a higher plane. There, again, England shows us where a working class will land which repudiates the revolution, and only deals in practical politics, brushing aside its ideals with a contemptuous laugh, and sweeping out from its struggle every aim which cannot be expressed in the terms of £ s. d. Even from bourgeois sources there come laments over the moral and intellectual decadence of the pick of the English working class who share in the decay of the bourgeoisie, and are to-day

little else than petty bourgeois, only differing from the rest by a somewhat greater lack of culture, and having for their most exalted ideal to copy their masters, to follow them in their hypocritical respectability, in their admiration for wealth, no matter how acquired, and in their spiritless way of killing their leisure time. The emancipation of their class appears to them only an empty dream; on the other hand, football, boxing, racing, betting are things which deeply excite them, and take up all their leisure, all their spiritual power, all their material resources.

In vain people seek by ethical sermons to arouse the English worker to a higher conception of the world, and to a sense of nobler pursuits. The ethics of the proletariat spring from its revolutionary aspirations; it is ennobled and strengthened by them. The idea of the revolution it is which has effected that marvellous rise of the proletariat from the depths of degradation, which forms the most magnificent result of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Let us, then, keep, first and foremost, to this revolutionary idealism. Then let come what may, we shall be equal to the most difficult and to the highest, and prove worthy of the great historical mission which is in store for us.



ON THE MORROW OF THE
SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

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CHAPTER I.—THE SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY.

Before I enter on the subject proper of the present inquiry, I must, first of all, clear myself of the suspicion under which I may fall in the eyes of some people as to the title of this work. "On the Morrow of the Revolution!" Does that not prove that we "orthodox" Marxists are in reality only disguised Blanquists, who expect, by means of a *coup de main*, to snatch, one fine day, the social dictatorship? And is it not a relapse into the Utopian mode of thinking, if I inquire now into the measures which are to be taken after an event of which we do not know in the least when and under what conditions it will come about?

Certainly, if the title of the present pamphlet implied *that*, one would have had every reason to approach it with the greatest mistrust. I hasten, therefore, to remark that I hold the revolution to be an historical process, which may extend over a longer or shorter period—which can even drag on with hard fighting for many and many years. On the other hand, I am quite convinced that it cannot be our duty to manufacture recipes for the cookery of the future. How little I believe in that, an example will show.

When, more than ten years ago, the German Social-Democracy were discussing their new programme, it was proposed by some to include in it those measures which would facilitate the transition from the capitalist to the Socialist mode of production. At that time, I was among those who rose against that kind of proposal, because I considered it a mistake to lay down in advance a definite route for the party, in the anticipation of an event which we could not at all picture to ourselves, of which we could but have the vaguest idea, and which will yet bring us many surprises.

At the same time, however, I consider it to be a good mental exercise, and a means of promoting political clearness and consistency of thought to attempt to draw the logical consequences of our endeavours, and to inquire into the problems which may arise for us out of the conquest of political power. This is also valuable from a propagandist point of view, since on one hand it is con-

stantly asserted by our opponents that we would be confronted, through our victory, with insurmountable difficulties, and, on the other hand, there are in our own ranks men who cannot paint the consequences of our victory black enough. Already, they say, the day of our victory contains in itself the day of our defeat. Thus it is of importance to see how far this is the case.

If, however, we are to arrive, in our inquiry, at definite conclusions, and not lose ourselves in endless discussions, then it is necessary that we should examine the respective problems in their simplest form, in which they will never manifest themselves in reality, and abstract from all complicating circumstances. That is a common method of procedure in science, under which we remain fully aware that things in reality are not so simple, and are not so smoothly reduced to their simplest elements, as in the abstract. I have already said that the social revolution is a process of many years' duration; but if we wish to reduce it to its simplest form, we must proceed from the assumption that the proletariat one fine day acquires, at one stroke, the entire political power without any limitation, and that it permits itself to be solely guided in the application of the same by its class interests, and intends to use it to the best advantage. The first will certainly not be the case, the last also need not be true throughout. The proletariat itself is not compact enough, not sufficiently homogeneous for that. The proletariat, as is well known, consists of different sections, different in their development, different in their traditions, different in their states of mental and economic attainments. It is besides very probable, that along with the proletariat other social groups, bordering on it, will also come to the top, portions of the petty bourgeoisie, or of the petty peasantry, whose modes of thinking are not quite identical with those of the proletariat; hence there may arise frictions and errors of the most manifold kind, and we shall not always be able to do what we want nor what we ought. These disturbing elements, however, we must ignore here.

On the other hand we must start, in our inquiry, from well known and ascertained facts. We cannot take for its basis a set of circumstances such as they might develop in the future, since thereby we at once land into the region of the fantastic and unlimited. And yet it is self-evident that we shall not attain power under the present conditions. The revolution itself presupposes a long and all-pervading struggle, which will change our present political and social structure. After the conquest of political power by the proletariat, there will arise problems of which we know nothing to-day, and many in which we are engaged to-day will by that time be settled. There will, however, also arise means for the solution of the various problems, of which we have as yet no idea.

Just as the physicist investigates the law of falling bodies in *vacuo* and not in moving air, so we investigate here the position of

the victorious proletariat under assumptions which will never occur in their absolute purity, namely, on the supposition that it will tomorrow at one stroke, attain to absolute power, and the means which will be at its disposal for the solution of its problems are those which are to-day at hand. By this we may arrive at results which are as different from the real course of the coming change as the law of falling bodies from the real fall of the different bodies. But despite these deviations, the laws of falling bodies do exist and rule the fall of all particular bodies, and the latter can only be understood when those laws are grasped.

Of a like reality are the prospects and the drawbacks for the victorious proletariat which we shall find in the way indicated, assuming, of course, that we do not commit any methodical mistakes, and they will play a decisive part in the struggle of and before the social revolution, even if the reality should be somewhat different to that assumed here. And only by these means is it at all possible to arrive at definite scientific opinions regarding the prospects of the social revolution. Those to whom this method appears too uncertain to offer any prognostication, must keep their peace and be silent when the question of the revolution is brought up, and simply declare that those who will live through it will know what it looks like—which is undoubtedly the safest method.

Only such problems of the social revolution are open to discussion, which can be discerned in the way indicated here. Regarding all others, we cannot allow ourselves any opinion either one way or the other.

CHAPTER II.—THE EXPROPRIATION OF THE EXPROPRIATORS.

Let us assume then that the fine day has come which gives the proletariat at one stroke all the supreme power. How will it set to work? Not how it will wish to work on the ground of this or that theory, or opinion, but how it will have to work under the pressure of its class interests and the force of economic necessity.

In the first place, it is evident that it will have to make up what the bourgeoisie has neglected. It will sweep away all the remnants of feudalism, and make the democratic programme, which the bourgeoisie too had at one time represented, a living reality. In the capacity of the lowest class, it is necessarily also the most democratic of all classes. It will introduce universal suffrage for all elective bodies, confer full liberty of the press and of combination; it will separate the State and the Church, and abolish all hereditary privileges. It will confer on the communes complete self-government and abolish militarism. This last can be effected in two ways, through arming the people, and through

disarmament. The arming of the people is a political measure, the disarmament a financial one. The first can, under certain circumstances, cost just as much as a standing army, but it is needed for the safety of the democracy in order to deprive the Government of its most important weapon against the people. Disarmament on the other hand aims in the first place at a diminution of the military budget. It can be carried through in a manner which would still further increase the power of the Governments, if, instead of the army based on universal service, an army of unprincipled loafers is created, which for the sake of money would do anything. A proletarian government will naturally endeavour to combine the two measures, to arm the people, and at the same time to put an end to the increase of armaments, through the invention of new rifles, cannon, battleships, fortresses, &c.

Naturally the victorious proletariat will also place the system of taxation under thorough reform. It will endeavour to abolish all taxation which burdens the working classes to-day, therefore, in the first place, the indirect taxation which raises the price of the necessaries of life; and on the other hand, to tap the big incomes and properties for the purpose of meeting the national expenses by means of a progressive income-tax or property tax. I shall return to this point later on, here it is sufficient to mention the matter.

A field of special importance for us will be that of education. Popular education has, from time immemorial, engaged the attention of proletarian parties, and played a great part even among the ancient communist sects of the middle ages. To snatch from the propertied classes their monopoly of education was always bound to be one of the aims of the thinking portion of the proletariat. It is natural that the new *régime* should increase and improve the schools, pay the teachers more suitably and better. It will, however, go still farther. The victorious proletariat, be it ever so radical in its convictions, cannot certainly abolish at one stroke the class distinctions, which are the result of a development lasting over many thousands of years. They and their effects cannot be effaced in the same simple way as chalk marks are effaced from a blackboard. But the school can do the preliminary work in this direction, and contribute very materially to the abolition of the class distinctions, by feeding and clothing all the children equally well, by educating them in a like fashion, and by giving them all equal opportunity for an all-round development of their intellectual and physical capacities.

The influence of the school must not be rated too high. Life is still weightier than the school, and where the latter comes into collision with reality, there it always comes to grief. If, for example, we were to make an attempt to abolish class distinctions forthwith by means of the school, we would not get very far. But the school can, so long as it works in the direction of the real social development, give a powerful stimulus to the latter, and

hasten it on. Thus, where these circumstances tend towards the abolition of class distinctions, the school can do pioneer work in that direction, and realise, if but on a limited area, for the generations coming under it, that which is growing in the whole society, simultaneously with this generation.

Those are all aims which bourgeois Radicalism had set before itself, but which it *cannot* attain, because it requires strength and small consideration for capital—things which no bourgeois class has ever possessed. The schools of a type indicated here would cost, for instance in the German Empire, according to the calculations which I have made in my "Agrarfrage" one and a-half perhaps even two milliard marks (75 to 100 million pounds). Almost twice as much as the present military budget! Such sums for educational purposes can only be raised by a community in which the proletariat has the control, because then it does not respectfully come to a stop before the big incomes.

But the Revolution will naturally not be confined to these changes. It is no mere bourgeois-democratic, but a proletarian revolution. As we have just said, we will not investigate what the proletariat will do on the strength of this or the other theory, because we do not know what theories may yet arise, and under what circumstances the revolution will be accomplished. We will only inquire what the victorious proletariat will be driven to do by the force of economic circumstances, if it *wants* to accomplish its purpose.

There is a problem, before all others, which will engage the attention of every proletarian Government in the very first instance. It will have in any case to solve the problem of the unemployed. Unemployment is the most terrible curse of the worker. It implies for him misery, degradation, crime. The worker lives solely by the sale of his labour-power, and when he cannot find a purchaser for it, he falls a prey to starvation. Unemployment, however, haunts the worker, even when he is at work, since at no time is he certain that he may not be thrown out of employment and sink into misery. A proletarian Government will, therefore, first of all endeavour to bring this state of affairs to an end, even where the proletariat will not think as Socialists but as Liberals, as, say, in England. In what fashion the question of unemployed will be solved, is not our duty now to enquire. There are different methods of doing it, and various proposals have been made by a number of social reformers. Even on the bourgeois side, as is well known, attempts have been made to check the evil of unemployment, and various insurance schemes have been proposed and partly carried out. But bourgeois society can in this field only do unsatisfactory patchwork, as otherwise it would cut off the branch on which it sits. Only the proletariat, the victorious proletariat, can and will devise adequate measures for combating unemployment, whether caused by illness or otherwise. A really adequate

system of helping the unemployed will completely alter the relation of power between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; it will make the proletariat masters in the factory. If the workers sell themselves to-day to the employer, if they allow themselves to be exploited and oppressed, it is the ghost of unemployment, the whip of hunger which compels them to it. If, on the other hand, the worker is secure in his existence, even when not in work, then nothing is easier to him than to disable the capitalist. He no longer requires the capitalist, while the latter cannot conduct his business without him. When the matter has gone so far as that, every employer, wherever a dispute breaks out, will get the worst of it and be forced to yield. The capitalists may certainly continue to be managers of the factories, but they will cease to be their masters and exploiters. But in that case the capitalists will recognise that they only carry the burdens and risks of the undertakings, without receiving any advantage, and will be the first to give up capitalist production, and insist on being bought out. We have already had such cases. In Ireland, for instance, at the time when the tenants' agitation reached its highest point and the ground landlords were no longer able to get their rents, the landlords themselves demanded to be bought out by the State. The same is what we should expect from the capitalist employers under a proletarian régime. Even if this régime were not guided by Socialist theories, and did not set out with the idea of socialising the capitalist means of production, the capitalists themselves would demand that their businesses should be bought up. The political supremacy of the proletariat and the continuation of the capitalist mode of production are mutually incompatible. Those who allow the possibility of the former must also grant the possibility of the disappearance of the latter.

Now what purchasers are at the disposal of the capitalists, to whom they could sell their factories? A portion of the factories, mines, &c., could be sold to the workers engaged in them, and thus henceforth be carried on on co-operative principles. Others could be sold to co-operative societies; others, again, to municipal authorities or the State. It is evident, however, that the capitalists will most readily turn to those purchasers who are able to offer the best terms and the best security for payment, and those are the State and the municipalities. It is therefore, for this reason alone, if for no other, that the majority of the undertakings will pass into the hands of the State or municipalities. That the Social-Democracy, if it got into power, would work from the outset for such a solution, is well known. On the other hand, even a proletariat uninfluenced by Socialist ideas will, too, from the very start direct its policy towards the nationalisation or communalisation of those concerns which by nature—e.g., mines—or by the form of organisation—e.g., trusts—have become monopolies. These private monopolies are becoming, even to-day, unbearable, not only for the wage workers, but also for all classes of Society who have no share in them. It is

only the helplessness of the bourgeois world in the face of capitalism which prevents it from attacking them. A proletarian revolution will naturally lead to the abolition of private property in these monopolies, and as they, even to-day, are spread already all over the world, and control to a very large and ever-increasing extent the whole economic life, their nationalisation and municipalisation will alone imply the control of the whole field of production by Society and its organs, the State and municipality.

The undertakings most adapted for nationalisation are the national means of transport—railways, steamships, and the production of raw materials and stores—such as mines, forests, ironworks, engineering works, &c. These are also the domains where industry on a large scale and trustification have developed most. The working-up of raw material, and of half-manufactured articles for personal consumption, as well as petty commerce, have often a local character, and are yet strongly decentralised. In these domains, the municipalities and co-operative societies will come to the forefront, and the State will play but a secondary part. But with the increasing division of labour the production for immediate personal consumption recedes more and more before the production of the means of production. This extends the field of production by the State. On the other hand, this field is also continually being enlarged by the development of transit and of industry on a large scale, which abolish the local limits of the markets for one branch of production after the other, and turn them from local into national ones. Thus, *e.g.*, gas lighting is obviously a municipal affair. On the contrary, the development of electric lighting and power transmission makes the nationalisation of water-power in mountain regions an absolute necessity. This has the effect of transforming even lighting from a mere communal into a national concern. On the other hand, the shoemaking trade was formerly bound by the local market. The shoe factory to-day provides, not only the locality, but also the whole country, with its products, and is therefore ready, not for municipalisation, but for nationalisation. Just the same with sugar refineries, breweries, etc.

Thus the economic development has the tendency of making production and distribution by the State the principal form of production and distribution under a proletarian *régime*.

So much about the property in the means of production of the large industry, to which agriculture also belongs. But what about money capital and landed property? The money capital is that portion of capital which assumes the form of money lent on interest. The money capitalist has no personal function to perform in economic life, he is superfluous, and can be expropriated by the stroke of the pen. This will the more readily be done, as this very class, the superfluous portion of the capitalist class, the high finance, obtains an ever increasing control over the whole economic life. It controls the great private monopolies, the trusts,

etc. Besides it is impossible to expropriate the industrial capital and cry a halt before the money capital. The two are much too closely bound up together. The socialisation of the capitalist concerns (a short expression for their transition into national, municipal, and co-operative ownership), would lead, of itself, to the socialisation of a large portion of the money capital; when a factory or a farm is nationalised, their debts are also nationalised, that is, turned from private into national debts. If it is a joint-stock company, the shareholders become creditors of the State.

In addition there comes into consideration also the landed property. I am speaking here of property in land, not of agricultural farms. The large agricultural farms, managed on capitalist principles, will in the natural order of things pass through the same mill as the rest of the large industry. They will lose their labourers, and be forced to offer their concerns to the State or the commune for purchase, and thus they will be socialised. The small peasant farms may, on the other hand, well remain private property. I will return to this later.

And so we are not dealing here with farming, but with the property in land, apart from farming—that real estate, whether town or country, which allows its owner to draw ground rent, be it in the form of rent or lease or interest on mortgage.

What we said about the money capitalist applies also to the landlord. He, likewise, has no longer any personal functions to perform in economic life, and can be easily shoved on one side. Just as in the case of the private monopolies mentioned above, so too, in the case of private ownership in land, we find to-day even among the middle-class a demand for its socialisation, since this private monopoly becomes—especially in the towns—ever more and more oppressive and obnoxious. Here also, it needs only the requisite power to effect the socialisation. The victorious proletariat will provide this power.

The expropriation of the exploiting classes reveals itself as a simple question of power. It is the necessary outcome of the economic needs of the proletariat and will thus be the unavoidable result of its victory.

CHAPTER III.—CONFISCATION OR COMPENSATION?

With less certainty than the question of the necessity and the possibility of the expropriation of the expropriators, are we in a position to answer the question which follows as a corollary to it—Will the expropriation proceed as confiscation or as purchase? Will the owners be compensated or not? That is a question which it is not

possible to answer to-day. It is not we who have to effect this development, and of any compulsion inherent in the circumstances which would make one or the other solution absolutely necessary, there can in this case be no question. Nevertheless, a number of reasons point to the probability of a proletarian government preferring the way of purchase, of compensation of the capitalists and of the landlords. Of these reasons, I will only mention two, which seem to me the most weighty. Money capital has, as we have said, become an impersonal power, and anybody can turn any sum of money into money capital without its possessor necessarily becoming an active capitalist. We know that if one has saved up a shilling one can invest it on interest, without thereby becoming a capitalist. This, as is well known, is made a very great deal of by optimistic champions of the existing order of society. They argue that it would be possible in this way to expropriate the capitalists by every worker simply putting his savings into the savings banks, or buying shares, and thus becoming part-proprietor of the capital. These very optimists have said in another place, that if we were to-day to confiscate capital, we should be confiscating not only the capital of the rich, but also that of the worker; we should be robbing the poor, the widows, and the orphans of their savings. In this way we should produce great discontent among the workers themselves, which would be another inducement to them to overthrow their own rule—a contingency which these enthusiasts for the existing order look for with certainty.

The first assumption need not be expatiated upon. It is too foolish. Those who wish to expropriate capital by the growth of savings do not perceive the still greater growth of the large capital. On the other hand, however, there is some justification in saying that a proletarian *régime* which would proceed by way of a general confiscation would also confiscate the savings of the small people. That is certainly no reason why the workers should become disgusted with their own rule—one must be very hard up for effective arguments against the social revolution to indulge in such expectations—still it may well be a reason why the victorious proletariat should hesitate to confiscate the means of production.

If, however, compensation should take place, one may well ask, What advantage, then, do the workers obtain from the expropriation? The expropriation simply results in all capital becoming mere money capital, that is, becoming national, municipal and co-operative societies' debts, and surplus value, instead of being extracted from the workers directly by the capitalists, will be taken from them by the State, municipality, or the co-operative society, and be paid over to the capitalists. Has, however, in that case, anything changed in the position of the worker?

This question is certainly justified. But even if the proletarian *régime* had to hand over to capital the same amount of profit which it had hitherto drawn, the expropriation would nevertheless, with

the further existence of the proletarian rule, bring with it the great advantage that all increase of exploitation would henceforth be precluded. Every fresh investment of capital, therefore any increase of the latter, as well as all increase of the rent, would be out of the question. That in itself would constitute a splendid achievement of the proletarian revolution. Every further increase of the social wealth would henceforth be for the benefit of society.

But then there is yet another advantage. As soon as all capitalist property assumes the form of bonds issued by the State, by the municipality or by the co-operative societies, it would be possible to introduce a progressive income, property and inheritance tax of and on such a scale as up till now has been impossible. It is even to-day one of our demands that such a tax should replace all others, especially indirect taxation. If, however, we were to-day to obtain the power to carry that through, say, by the support of other parties (which of course is out of the question, since no bourgeois party would go so far), we would nevertheless meet with great difficulties in carrying it out. It is a well known fact that the higher the tax the more numerous are the attempts to defraud the revenue. But even if we succeeded in making the concealment of income and property impossible, even then we should not be in a position to screw up the income or property tax as high as we should like, because the capitalists, if the tax pressed too heavily on their income or property would simply leave the country, and the latter would be left in the lurch. The State would then have the income and property tax but without income and property. Thus to-day, it is impossible to go beyond a certain limit even if we possessed the necessary political power. The situation, however, alters entirely when the entire capitalistic property takes the form of State bonds; the property, which it is impossible to ascertain to-day, would then be known to everybody. It would only be necessary to decree that all bonds are to be registered in the name of the owner, and it would be possible to estimate exactly the capitalist income and the property of everyone. It would then also be possible to screw up the taxes to any extent without fear of their being evaded by any concealments. It would then be also impossible to escape them by emigration, since it is the public institutions of the country, and in the first place the State, from which all interest comes, and the latter can deduct the tax from the interest before it is paid out. Under these circumstances it would be possible to raise the progressive income and property tax as high as necessary—if necessary as high as would come very near, if not actually amount to, confiscation of the large property.

Now it may be asked, What advantage would it be to take this roundabout way of confiscating large property instead of doing it directly? Is it not a jugglery intended merely to avoid the appearance of confiscation, when capital is first bought out at

its full value, and then confiscated by the tax collector? The difference between this method and the direct method appears to be merely a formal one.

To this I will reply, the distinction is not so unimportant as it seems. The direct confiscation of capital affects all, the small and the great, those unable to work and the able-bodied, everybody in an equal way. It is difficult by this method, often quite impossible, to separate the large property from the small invested with those money capitals in the same undertakings. The direct confiscation would also proceed too quickly, often at one stroke, while confiscation through taxation would permit the abolition of capitalist property being made a long-drawn process, working itself out further and further in the measure as the new order gets consolidated and makes its beneficent influence felt. It renders it possible to extend the process of confiscation over a number of decades, so that it attains its full effect not before the younger generation, which had grown up under the new conditions, and is no longer compelled to reckon with capitals and interest, reaches maturity. Thus confiscation loses its acerbity, becomes more adaptable and less painful. The more peacefully the conquest of political power by the proletariat is accomplished, the better organised and the more enlightened the latter is, the sooner may we expect that it will prefer the more refined method of confiscation to the more primitive.

I have dwelt somewhat longer on this question, because it forms one of the principal objections of our opponents, not because its solution constitutes the greatest difficulty we have to deal with. The great difficulties begin rather after the proceedings in question. The expropriation of the means of production is relatively the simplest process in the great transformation of the Social Revolution. Only the necessary amount of power is required for that, and that is the first and indispensable assumption of our entire enquiries. The difficulties for a proletarian government lie not in the domain of property, but in that of production.

CHAPTER IV.—THE MEANS OF ATTRACTING THE WORKERS TO THE WORK.

We have seen that the social revolution makes the continuation of the capitalist mode of production impossible, that the political domination of the proletariat is necessarily bound up with an economic revolt against the capitalist mode of production, which would hinder the continuation of the latter. Production, however, must continually go on, it must not be allowed to stand still, not

even for a few weeks, otherwise the whole society breaks to pieces. Thus there arises for the victorious proletariat the urgent problem of securing the undisturbed progress of production, and of leading the workers who had turned away from the factory back again into their many places of work and of keeping them there so that production might go on uninterruptedly.

What means then, are there at the disposal of the new *régime* for the solution of this problem? Certainly not the hunger-whip, still less physical compulsion. If there are some who think that the domination of the proletariat would lead to despotism, that to everybody there would be allotted his work by those in authority, then they have very little knowledge of the proletariat; indeed, the proletariat which would then make its own laws, has a far stronger feeling for liberty than those servile Professors who thunder against the barrack or prison character of the future State.

A victorious proletariat will never tolerate a prison or a barrack-like system of regulation. Indeed it has no need of them at all, it has other means at its disposal to keep the workers at their work.

First of all, we must not forget the force of habit. Capitalism has accustomed the modern worker to work day in, day out, so that he is absolutely unable for a length of time to do without work. There are some who are so used to work, that they do not even know what to do with their spare time, and feel most unhappy when they cannot work. There are few who would feel happy going about permanently without work. I am convinced that were work to lose its repulsive character of overwork, were the hours of labour to be reduced to a reasonable limit, the force of habit would alone suffice to keep a large number of workers in the factories and mines at regular work.

But naturally we must not rely on this inducement alone, it is after all the weakest. Another, and a still stronger motive, is the discipline of the proletariat. We know that when a trade union resolves on a strike, the discipline of the organised workers is strong enough to induce him freely to face all the dangers and horrors of unemployment, and to starve, often for months at a time, in order to bring the common cause to a victorious end. Now, I believe that if it is possible, by this power of discipline, to take the workers out of the factories, it will be possible, by the same power, to keep them there. If a trade union recognises the necessity of a continuous and regular progress of production, we may be sure that in the interest of the community scarcely any of its members will leave his post. The same power which the proletariat, by bringing production to a temporary standstill, turns into an effective engine of war will be used by it as a no less effective means of securing the regular progress of the social labour. The higher to-day the trade union organisation of the workers the better the prospects for an undisturbed progress of production after the conquest of political power by the proletariat.

But the discipline that lives in the proletariat is not the military discipline; it does not imply blind obedience to an authority appointed from above; it is the democratic discipline, the free submission to self-chosen leadership, and to the will of the majority of one's own comrades. If this discipline is to prevail in the factory, it will presuppose a democratic organisation of the work, that is, the substitution of the democratic factory for the autocratic. It is self-understood that a Socialist régime will endeavour from the very start to organise industry on democratic principles. But, even if the victorious proletariat should not be possessed of such intentions from the outset, it will be driven to it by the necessity of assuring the further progress of production. The maintenance of the necessary discipline in the work will only be realised by the introduction of trade union discipline into the process of production.

That, however, will not be possible everywhere in the same way, since every concern has its peculiarities, to which the organisation of the workers must adapt itself. There are, for example, concerns which cannot dispense with a bureaucratic organisation—for instance, the railways. The democratic organisation can be effected there in such a way that the workers choose delegates, who form a kind of parliament to settle the working rules, and to watch over the working of the bureaucratic machinery. Other concerns can be handed over to the trade unions, others again can be managed on a co-operative plan. Thus there are innumerable forms of democratic organisation of the concerns possible, and we cannot expect that the organisation of the entire industry will proceed on one cut-and-dried plan.

We have seen how different will be the forms of property—State, municipal and co-operative property. In addition, private property might also continue to exist in some of the means of production, as will be shown later. Now we see that the organisation of industry will also be different for various concerns.

But democratic discipline and the habit of regular work, powerful as they are, do not yet, perhaps, offer us sufficient guarantee that the entire working class will always take part in production. We cannot expect that trade union organisation and discipline will ever embrace in the present society, we will not say the whole, but at least the majority of the working class. When the latter attains to power, it is, therefore, probable that only a minority of its members will be organised. It will, therefore, be necessary to look for other motives to work. And a proletarian régime will have one very close at hand—the *power of attraction, exercised by work*. It will have to make work—which is to-day a burden—a joy, so that it should be a pleasure to work and to go to work.

No doubt, that is no simple matter; still the proletariat will make at least a beginning in this direction by shortening, immediately on assuming power, the hours of labour. Along with this

it will also endeavour to make the places of work more hygienic and attractive, and eliminate as much as possible from the processes of labour their unpleasant and repulsive aspects. That is all but a continuation of the endeavours which make themselves felt even today, in the shape of laws for the protection of labour. But greater progress in all these directions presupposes structural and technical alterations which do not admit of being carried out in a day. It will scarcely be possible to make the work in the factories and in the mines instantly very attractive. Besides the attractiveness of the work itself, therefore, will have to be brought into play some additional powers of attraction, namely, *that of the wages*.

I speak here of wages. What, it will be asked, will wages still exist in the new society? Are we not going to abolish wage-labour and money? How can we talk of wages? These objections would be valid if the revolution at once proceeded to abolish money. That, however, I consider impossible. Money is the simplest means as yet known, which renders it possible, in a mechanism so complicated as the modern system of production, with its enormously-minute sub-division of labour, to arrange for the smooth circulation of products and their distribution among the individual members of society; it is the means which enables everyone to satisfy his needs according to his individual taste (naturally within the limits of his economic power).

As a medium of circulation money will remain indispensable so long as nothing better is found. Certainly some of its functions—so far, at least, as economic relations within national limits are concerned—will be lost to it, above all that of measure of value. A few remarks on Value may perhaps not be out of place here, since they will also render clearer what is to come later on.

Nothing can be more erroneous than the view that it is incumbent on a Socialist society to realise completely the law of value, and to see that only equal values exchange with one another. Rather is the law of value peculiar only to a society based on production of commodities.

Production of commodities is that mode of production in which, under a highly developed division of labour, producers independent of each other produce for one another. But no system of production can exist without a certain definitive proportionality of productions. The amount of labour, which society commands, is limited, and it can only satisfy its needs and carry on production if, in every branch of production, there is an amount of labour engaged which corresponds to the given state of productivity. In a communist society the work is arranged systematically, that is, labour is distributed between the different branches of production, according to a settled plan. Under a production of commodities, this regulation is effected by the law of value. The value of every commodity is determined, not by the amount of labour actually spent on it, but by the *socially necessary* time of labour. We will

overlook here the modification which this law undergoes under capitalism, thanks to profit, as that would render the argument too complicated without adding any new light to the problem in question. The time of socially necessary labour in each branch of industry is determined, first, by the state of mechanical arts and sciences in society, by the prevailing intensity of labour, &c.—in short by the average productivity of the individual labourer, then by the mass of the products, which the needs of society demand from the particular branch of industry, and finally by the entire mass of labour which is at the disposal of society. Free competition insures it that the price of products, that is, the amount of gold which they can be exchanged for, should always tend towards their value as determined by the amount of socially necessary labour. In this way it comes about that production itself in each particular branch of industry, although not regulated from any centre, never deviates too far, and for long, from the right level. Without the law of value, and with the anarchy which prevails under the capitalist production of commodities, the latter would soon collapse in a hopeless confusion.

An example will make this clear. We will put it in as simple a form as we can. We will take as the result of the social production only two commodities of some sort, say trousers and braces.

Let us assume that in a society the socially necessary labour time amounts, within a certain period (its exact length is here immaterial), to 10,000 days' labour for trousers, and 1,000 days' labour for braces. That means that in order to satisfy the requirements of society in trousers and braces, so many days of labour at a given state of productivity are necessary. If the product of a days' work be worth 10s., then the value of the trousers will amount to £5,000, and of the braces to £500.

If a worker deviates in his work from the social average, if he produces in a day, say, only one-half of what his comrades produce, then the price of his day's product will only amount to one-half of what is produced in a day by the others. That is known to everybody. The same, however, takes place, if the proportion of the different kinds of work has deviated from the normal. For example, if the production of braces attracts more labour than is socially necessary, it means that labour is withdrawn from somewhere else, since the amount of labour at the disposal of society is limited. Let us assume, for the sake of simplicity, that it is withdrawn from trousers making. Instead of the socially necessary time of 10,000 days here and 1,000 there, we find in reality, say 8,000 days in one and 3,000 in the other, people are nearly crushed under the weight of braces, but have not enough trousers to put on. What will be the result? The price of the braces will fall, that of the trousers will rise. The 3,000 days actually spent on the production of braces will only represent the value of 1,000 socially

necessary days, and the value of each pair of braces will drop to a third of its previous value. The price will fall as well, probably below this third. The value of the trousers will however be now as before determined by the socially necessary 10,000 days, not by the 8,000 actually spent on them; the value of each single pair of trousers will amount to five-quarters of the previous value. As a consequence, the production of braces will be unprofitable, the amount of labour employed in it will be decreased, and it will flow back to the production of trousers, now grown so uncommonly profitable.

In this way the law of value regulates production under the system of free competition. It is not the best method conceivable of regulating production, but the only one possible under the system of private property in the means of production. In its place there would, under a social ownership of the means of production, come the social regulation of production. The need for regulating production through the exchange of equal values would cease. With that would also cease the necessity for money to be a measure of value and an object of value. The place of metal-money can be taken by any token-money. The prices of products themselves can now be fixed independently of their value. Still the amount of labour-time incorporated in them will always retain its essential importance as their measure, and it is just possible that the prices prevalent at the time as the result of the past commercial history will even be made the starting point.

If, however, money and prices of products are still to prevail, labour will also be paid in money, and, therefore, wages will remain.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to speak of a continuation of the present-day wage-system, as many Fabians do, who say that the business of Socialism is not to abolish the wage-system, but far more to universalise it. That is only superficially correct. As a matter of fact, the wage under a proletarian *régime* is something quite different to what it is in a capitalist society. To-day it is the price of the commodity called Labour-Power. It is in the last resort determined by the cost of subsistence of the worker, while its oscillations depend on the changes in supply and demand. In a society controlled by the proletariat that will cease, the worker will no longer be compelled to sell his labour power, it will cease to be a commodity, which is in its price determined by the cost of reproduction, its price will be independent of the relation between demand and supply. What in the last resort will now determine the rate of wages will be the quantity of products available for distribution among the working class. The greater this quantity, the higher can and also will rise the general rate of wages, though, at the same time, the respective wages in the different branches of industry will still to a certain extent be determined in their relative amounts by supply and demand. As the workers of course will not

be drafted into the different branches of production under military compulsion, irrespective of their wishes, it may well turn out that some will have a superfluity of labour, while others will suffer from scarcity. The necessary equilibrium could then be restored by reducing the wages in those industries where the applicants are too many and by raising them in those where the applicants are too few, till each branch has just the number of workers which it requires. It could be restored also by other means; for instance, by the shortening of the hours of labour in those industries that are short of workers. With all that, however, the general rate of wages throughout the working class will be influenced no longer by supply and demand, but by the quantity of available products. A general fall of wages in consequence of overproduction will be impossible. The more wealth is produced, the higher will be, generally speaking, the wages.

Now, however, another question arises. If a continued progress of production is to be secured, it will be necessary to rivet the worker to his work by a general rise of wages. Where, however, are the higher wages to come from?—in other words, where is the increased quantity of products to be got from?

If we assume the most favourable case—a thing which we hitherto have not done—viz., that all property has been confiscated, and the entire income of the capitalists flows to the workers, then this alone would, of course, produce a very great rise in wages. In my pamphlet on “Reform and Revolution” I have quoted a statistical table, according to which the total income of the workers in England was, for the year 1891, £700,000,000 in round figures, and the total of the capitalist income amounted to £800,000,000. I have further remarked that in my opinion these statistics are too rosy. I have reason to think that the wages were put too high and the capitalist income too low. If, however, we accept these figures of 1891, then they show that if the income of the capitalists were added to that of the workers, the wages of each *would be doubled*. Unfortunately, however, the matter will not be settled so simply. If we expropriate capitalism, we must at the same time take over its social functions—among these the important one of capitalist accumulation. The capitalists do not consume all their income; a portion of it they put away for the extension of production. A proletarian régime would also have to do the same in order to extend production—it would not, therefore, be able to transfer, even in the event of a radical confiscation of capital, the whole of the former income to the working class. Besides, a portion of the surplus value which the capitalists now pocket they must hand over to the State in the shape of taxes. This portion will grow enormously if the progressive Income and Property Tax is to form the only State and communal tax, and the more so as the burden of taxation will not diminish. I have shown above what costs the re-organisation of education alone would entail. Besides, a generous sick insurance

will have to be set up as well as an invalid and old age insurance for all incapacitated workers, &c.

Thus we see that not much will remain for the raising of the wages from the present income of the capitalists, even if capital were confiscated at a stroke—still less if we were to compensate the capitalists. It will, consequently, be necessary in order to be able to raise the wages, to raise at the same time the production far above its present level.

Not only the maintenance of the production, but also its increase will constitute one of the most urgent problems of the social revolution. The victorious proletariat must speed up production as fast as possible if it is to meet the enormous demands which the new *régime* will be called upon to satisfy.

CHAPTER V.—THE INCREASE OF PRODUCTION.

There are various means of increasing production within a short time. Two of them, the most important, have already now become of great value. Both have been applied with success by the American Trusts, from which we could in general learn much for the methods of the Social Revolution. They show us how the productivity of labour can be raised at a stroke. This is done by simply concentrating the entire production in the best, in the most successful undertakings, and closing all those which are not up to date. The Sugar Trust, for instance, for the last few years has only been working a quarter of all the concerns which it owned, and in this quarter of the entire number of its concerns it has produced as much as was formerly produced in all put together. Also the Whisky Trust has acquired 80 big distilleries, and of these 80 it has at once closed 68. It has proceeded only with the remaining twelve and in these twelve it has produced *more* than in the 80 before. In a similar way it will also proceed a proletarian *régime*, and that the more easily as it will not be impeded by considerations of private property. Where the individual undertakings represent private property, the elimination of the unfit can only proceed slowly by way of free competition. The Trusts could only get rid of this sort of businesses at once by abolishing private property in them and concentrating them all in one hand. The methods which the Trusts can only apply to a relatively small field of production, a proletarian *régime* will be able to extend over the entire field of social production, since it will abolish capitalist private property in its entirety.

But its methods of raising the rate of productivity, by the elimination of the more backward undertakings, will not only

differ from those of the modern trusts in the extent of their application; they will also be applied in a different way and for different objects. The new *régime* will effect the change with the view in the first place of raising the wages. The trust, on the contrary, proceeds regardless of the workers. Those who become superfluous are simply dismissed. They are at the most used in order to bring pressure on the remaining workers, to lower their wages and to increase their dependence. The victorious proletariat will, of course, proceed on totally different lines. It will transfer the workers who have become superfluous through some of the factories being closed, to others which will continue working. The trusts, on the other hand, rather tend to create unemployment, inasmuch as it is not their object to materially increase production. The more the mass of products is increased, the greater their supply, the lower, other things being equal, their price. But it is precisely the lowering of the price that the trusts aims at counteracting. Their tendency, therefore, is rather to restrict production than to increase it. If they carry on production only in the best of their undertakings, it is solely done with a view of reducing the cost of production, in order, thereby, to raise the profits—the prices remaining the same or even rising—and not with a view of extending production. The proletarian *régime*, on the contrary, is vitally concerned in the extension of production, since its aim is to raise not the profits but the wages. It will consequently increase the number of the workers in the best undertakings to the utmost, and will raise the production by such means as, for instance, shifts working one after the other. How this can be done, and to what an extent it can influence production, will be shown by an illustration, based on figures naturally arbitrary, yet not fanciful, and modelled after the actual working of the trusts. Let us take the German textile industry. It employs to-day about a million workers (in 1895—993,257). Of these the greater half (1895—587,599) are employed in factories, each counting more than 50 hands. We assume that the larger factory is also technically the most perfect. That, of course, does not always hold good in reality. A factory with 20 hands can be technically better organised than one in the same branch of industry with 80. But on the whole, it holds good, and we may assume it here the more readily, as we are dealing with an example for illustrative purposes, not with a positive proposal to be carried out the next day on the basis we lay down here. Let us assume that the most imperfect are those factories which employ less than 50 hands. All these would be closed, and their hands transferred to the factories employing more than 50. They could then be allowed to work alternately in two shifts. If a day's work amounts at present to 10 to 11 hours, the hours could be reduced to eight hours for each shift. The factories would thus work daily six hours longer, their machinery would be made of far greater

use, and the daily hours for each labourer would at the same time be shortened by two hours or more. We may safely assume that the productivity of each worker would not be diminished thereby, since we have numerous examples to prove that the advantages consequent upon such a reduction in the hours of labour are, generally speaking, at least equal to the disadvantages. Let us then further assume that every worker produces to-day in the more backward factories a yearly product which represents a value of £100, and that the worker in the larger factories is about 100 per cent. more productive (Mr. Sinzheimer assumes such a ratio between the productivity of large and small undertakings), so that every worker in a large factory produces a value of £200. Then the half-million workers in the smaller textile factories and workshops produce at present value to the amount of fifty millions, whilst the other half-million in the large concerns produce a hundred millions. The one million workers together therefore produce total value to the amount of 150 million pounds.

If, now, under the new *régime*, the workers are all concentrated in the larger factories with more than 50 hands, every worker will produce an annual value of £200, the whole of the textile workers—200 million pounds, 50 million more than was produced previously. We assume for the sake of comparison that the values of each product would still be the same.

One may go, however, still further, and close not only the small factories but also those of a medium size with 50 to 200 hands, and concentrate the entire textile production in factories with more than 200 hands. The entire number of workers employed in these amounted in 1895 to 350,306, or about a third of all the textile workers. We should have therefore to introduce a three-shifts system in order to provide employment for all workers only in the big factories. Let us assume that in order to avoid night work, the hours of labour of each will be reduced to five hours, the half of the present ones. At present the worker in the large factory produces perhaps four times as much as in the small—according, therefore, to our assumption about £400 per annum. By the reduction of the hours of labour, its product would not be reduced in an equal degree, since the worker, after a good rest, can perform more than when overworked. If there is good reason to assume that in eight hours he can do as much as he does now in ten, we shall hardly be regarded as too optimistic if we further assume that the reduction of hours from eight to five will reduce the output by no more than 25 per cent.—certainly by less than 37 per cent. Accordingly every worker will then produce at least £250, perhaps £300 per annum; thus the million workers altogether £250,000,000 to £300,000,000. The entire product will thus amount to *double* the present, *the wages could correspondingly be doubled*—even while giving up all idea of confiscating the capital—*simultaneously with the hours of*

labour reduced by one-half. Nay, under certain circumstances the rise of wages can on the basis of the above figures be still greater. Suppose of the present annual product of the textile industry, which we calculated at £150,000,000, £50,000,000 falls to the workers as wages, another £50,000,000 goes to the replacement of raw material, machinery, &c., and still another goes as profit on capital. Now under the new *régime* there will be produced £300,000,000. Of that, £100,000,000 fall to raw material, machinery, &c., and £50,000,000 go for compensation to capitalists, and for fulfilling their former social functions, £150,000,000 will remain for wages. These, therefore, could now be *trebled*. And all that without any new enlargements, without any new expenditure on machinery, simply by closing the smaller factories and by transferring their hands to the larger ones. We only need to carry out on a big scale what the trusts have done before us on a smaller. It is only the private property in the means of production which hinders such an expansion of the modern productive forces.

This method, however, has yet another aspect. Our critics are very fond of pointing out to us that it will yet for many years be impossible to nationalise production, the number of factories and workshops at the present day being far too large for that. It will be a long time yet before competition has extinguished the smaller concerns and created therewith the possibility of Socialist production. The number of all industrial undertakings in the German empire still amounts to two and a-half millions, those in the textile industries alone to over 200,000. How is it possible to manage such a number of concerns on a national basis?

Certainly the task seems enormous, but it reduces itself considerably, if we assume that the proletarian *régime* applies the methods of the trusts, and though expropriating all the existing concerns maintains in action only those which are organised best. Of the 200,000 textile factories only 3,000 employ more than 50 hands. It is clear that the concentration of the industry in these last-named establishments will greatly simplify the work of the social regulation of production. It will be still simpler, if we assume the new *régime* will close all concerns which employ less than 200 workers; there will then remain of the 200,000 only 800. To control and supervise such a small number of factories will be by no means an impossibility.

This gives rise to yet another remarkable point of view. Our opponents and the pessimists in our ranks measure the ripeness of our society for Socialist production by the number of ruins which still cling to it, and which it is unable to emancipate itself from. Again and again the number of still existing small concerns is triumphantly pointed out to us. But the ripeness for Socialism is not to be measured by the number of petty concerns *still* existing, but by that of large concerns *already* existing. Without a developed large industry Socialism is impossible. Where, on the other hand,

there is an extensive large industry it is easy for a Socialist society to concentrate in it the entire production, and to get rid quickly of the petty concerns. The Cassandras of Socialism, who can only announce misfortunes for it, cling obstinately to the fact that the number of small concerns has in the German Empire increased, from 1882 to 1895, by 1.8 per cent.; but they are blind to the fact that within the same period the number of big industrial concerns with more than 50 hands has increased 90 per cent., that of the gigantic establishments with more than 1,000 hands 100 per cent. It is this latter growth which is the necessary condition of Socialism, and it is amply fulfilled. Even if petty industry does not diminish absolutely, that proves only that the number of ruins which the proletarian régime will have to get rid of is still considerable. However, the trusts promise, even in this respect, to prepare, efficiently and in advance, the way for us.

In still another respect can they be regarded by us as a model. The present-day trusts increase their profits not only by raising the profit-rate, but also by economies of the most various description. A Socialist production will be obliged to do the same in an even greater degree. To these economies belong those on machinery, accessories and transport costs. To stick to our example of the textile industry; it requires quite a different sort of expenditure to convey raw material and accessories to 200,000 or to 800 factories. The same with management. Of the 200,000 textile factories and workshops, only the smallest require practically no supervision; among these we can reckon those with less than five workers. Here the manager works alongside with them. Only 12,000 factories are above this figure. But even their management involves, of course, considerably more work than the supervision of merely 800. Other economies are attained by the trusts dispensing with the competitive struggle for customers. Since they have arisen in the United States the number of commercial travellers has decreased; most striking is a case related by Mr. G. W. Jenks in an article on the question: A certain trust has extended the sphere of its production to such an extent that the number of unskilled workers employed by it increased by 51 per cent., and the number of skilled by 14 per cent. At the same time the number of its commercial travellers declined by 75 per cent. The same Mr. Jenks reports that many trusts, according to their own showing, have saved, in advertising, &c., 40 to 85 per cent., and so on.

Finally, however, the raising of wages in industry will set free a great amount of labour, which to-day finds a parasitic existence as middle men. They drag on a miserable existence in their small shops, not because there is a need for them but because they doubt if they will be able to earn a living elsewhere, or because they do not earn enough by wage labour and look out for some by-occupation.

Of the close upon 2,000,000 persons who are engaged to-day in

commerce and the transport industry in the German Empire (leaving out the post and railways), and in restaurants, public houses, &c., possibly a million could, under sufficiently high wages in industry and a sufficient demand for labour, be set free and transferred from parasitic to productive activity.

Such are the two methods of increasing the productive power of the workers—the abolition of parasitic businesses and the concentration of production in the best organised establishments. By the application of these two methods a proletarian *régime* could at once raise the production to such a high level, that it will be possible to increase the wages considerably, and at the same time reduce the hours of labour. Every rise of wages and reduction of hours must also increase the attractive forces of work and draw in new workers who previously were only active in a parasitic way as servants, small dealers, &c. The higher the wages the more numerous are the workers. But in a Socialist society one can also reverse the sentence—the more numerous are the workers, that is, the fewer are the idlers, the more will be produced and the higher will be the wages. This law would be meaningless in a society under free competition—the wages fall in the same ratio as the supply of labourers increases—others things being equal. This is a wage law of a Socialist mode of production.

CHAPTER VI.—THE ORGANISATION OF THE PROCESSES OF REPRODUCTION.

With the application to production of the two above described methods of the trusts the initial duties of a proletarian *régime* with respect to the further progress of production are not yet exhausted. The process of production as a self-renewing process, as a process of reproduction, needs the uninterrupted progress not only of *production*, but also of *circulation*. If production is to proceed without any interruption, it is not merely the workers who create the products that are required; it is also requisite that no stoppage should occur in the supply of the raw materials, accessories (coals), tools and machinery, food, &c., for the worker, and also that the products when ready should find a market.

A stoppage in the circulation means an economic crisis. It can come to a standstill because *too much* is produced of certain commodities. In this case the factories where they have been produced can no longer work at full pressure on account of the insufficient market for their products. They get no money for them, and in

consequence lack the means to buy new raw material, to pay wages, &c. But a crisis can also arise when *too little* is produced of some commodities, as was the case, *e.g.*, during the English cotton crisis which was caused by the Civil War in America, when the growth of cotton greatly decreased.

The crises are the worst curse of the modern method of production. To remove them is one of the most important problems of a proletarian régime. That, however, can only be done by a regulated scheme of production and circulation, that is, of reproduction.

The object of Socialism is usually taken to be *the organisation of production*. But already capitalism performs a portion of this task, in that it substitutes for many petty concerns, independent of each other, the organisation of production on a large scale, in large factories, sometimes employing thousands of hands. The trusts even go so far as to organise entire branches of industry. But what only a proletarian government can effect, is the regulation according to a definite plan of the *circulation* of the products, of the interconnection between one concern and another, between the producers and the consumers, taking the latter term in the widest sense, embracing not only personal, but also productive consumption. The weaver, for instance, uses yarn, that is *productive consumption*; on the other hand, he eats a piece of bread, that is *personal consumption*.

It is the proletariat, and only the proletariat, who can bring about this regulation of the circulation of the products by the abolition of private property in industrial concerns; and not only *can*, but it *must*, carry it out if the process of production under its control is to go on, if its government is to subsist. It will have to fix the extent of the production of every single social factory in accordance with the amount of the existing labour power (workers and means of production) and the given demand. Then it will have to provide that each of these factories gets not only the requisite number of workers, but also the means of production which it needs. Finally, it will have to see that the ready products are delivered to the consumers.

But is it possible to accomplish all that, in a modern great community? Let any one imagine in Germany the State acting as manager of production in two million factories and as intermediary for the circulation of their products. It has to re-deliver a portion of the latter to the factories themselves as means of production, and another portion to hand over as means of consumption to sixty million consumers, each of whom has its own particular and changing needs! The task seems crushing, unless one is going to regulate the needs of mankind by authority, according to a fixed and cut-and-dried scheme, to reduce them to a minimum and to apportion each his share out barrack-like fashion—in other words, to reduce modern civilised life to a much deeper level. Are we then, after all ready to stoop to a barrack or convict-prison community?

Certainly the problem is no light one. It is the most difficult of all which the proletarian government will have to deal with, and it will certainly give it many a hard nut to crack. Still the difficulties must not be exaggerated.

In the first place it must be pointed out that it can be no question here of creating, over night, an entirely new organisation of production and circulation. Some sort of organisation already exists to-day, otherwise the existence of our present society would be impossible. The problem simply is, how to transform this organisation—which hitherto has been *unconscious*, working its way through by the agency of the law of value, behind the backs of those concerned, with the utmost difficulty, with frictions, bankruptcies, and crises—into a conscious organisation, in which calculation in advance of all the principal factors is substituted in the place of the posterior emendations by means of supply and demand. The proportionality of the various branches of labour exists already, if incomplete and unsteady; it is not necessary to create it quite afresh, but only to make it more complete and steady. As in the case of money and prices, it is a question here of starting from what has been handed over by history, not of making a radical change all round. We have simply to develop some points, limit others, and draw tighter together where it is loose.

But in that case the problem is materially narrowed down by the fact already discussed—viz., that the concentration of production in the best organised factories will considerably reduce the number of industrial concerns. Of the 2,146,972 factories and workshops which the industry of the German Empire had to show in 1895, there were only 17,943 large ones with more than 50 hands, employing, however, altogether 3,000,000 workers out of a total of 8,000,000 industrial workers. I do not say, of course, that only those factories will be working. To try to give exact figures of the future conditions would be absurd. All these figures which we have given are only intended to *illustrate* the problems that arise, not to *present* more or less exactly how the things will look in reality. The proportion of the 2,000,000 industrial concerns to the 18,000 large factories, is only meant to show that the number of industrial concerns under a proletarian government will considerably diminish.

But the difficulty of the organisation of production and circulation can yet be reduced in other ways than by the reduction of the number of concerns.

Production can be classified under two great heads: production for *consumption* and production for *production*. The production of the means of production has, thanks to the division of labour, become to-day the most important part of production, and is continually extending. Scarcely any article of consumption comes straight from the hand of one single producer; it passes through a number of workshops, so that the one who makes an article ready for our use is only the last in a long series of producers. The pro-

duction of articles for consumption and for production, has however, each of them quite a different character. The production of the articles of production is the domain of gigantic concerns, as the iron industry, mining, &c. These have already attained to-day a very high degree of organisation in the shape of employers' association, trusts, rings, &c. Also among the purchasers of these articles of production the employers' association are already widely developed. Here very frequently it is not the individual employer who deals with the individual employer, but employers' associations with each other, branches of industry with branches of industry. And even where the organisation of the employers is less advanced, still it is more often than not the case in this sphere of production that but a comparatively few producers confront but a comparatively few consumers. For the consumer is here not an individual, but an entire concern. In the spinning and weaving machine-making for example, there were in 1895 1,152 establishments with 17,047 workers; of those, however, 774 establishments, with only 1,474 workers, can hardly be taken into account. Of the large factories there were only 73, employing 10,355 hands. As against these, there were 200,000 textile mills (not merely spinning and weaving factories), whose numbers, however, as we have seen, could be reduced to a few thousand, perhaps hundreds. On one side there remain, after concentration has taken place in the best organised works, perhaps 50 machine-making establishments; on the other 2,000 spinning and weaving factories. Is it so very impossible for the former to come to terms with the latter as to the supply of machines, and so to regulate their production?

With this comparatively small number of producers and consumers, it is easily conceivable that in the sphere of production of the means of production the production for the open market is already to-day steadily decreasing, while production for order—that is, regulated, pre-arranged production and circulation—grows.

Of quite a different character is the production of articles of consumption. Though here, too, we find gigantic concerns (sugar refineries, breweries, &c.), still in this domain, generally speaking, petty industry is the rule. Here it is still frequently a question of accommodating itself to the individual tastes and needs of the customer, and a small concern can do that better than a big one. The number of workshops here is large, and cannot be reduced so easily as in the case of the production of the means of production. Here prevails also production for the open market, the latter itself being, owing to the large number of consumers, far more difficult to survey than in the production for production. The number of employers' associations here is smaller. The organisation of production and circulation in the articles of consumption will accordingly offer greater difficulties than in those of production.

But here, too, we have to distinguish two kinds of production—namely, the production of the *necessary articles of consumption*, and

those of *articles of luxury*. The demand for necessaries fluctuates comparatively little ; it is tolerably steady. Day in, day out, people require the same quantity of flour, bread, meat, vegetables ; year in, year out, the demand for boots and clothes varies insignificantly. But other articles of consumption partake of the nature of dispensable luxuries, the use or possession of which is pleasant, but not imperative, and the demand for them varies. Here the demand is far more subject to the whim. But if we examine the thing closer, we find that these whims arise less with the purchasing individuals than with the industry itself. Thus, for example, the changes in fashion arise less from changes in the taste of the public, and far more from the needs of the producers, who make the old, already sold goods appear no longer fit for further use, in order thus to induce the consumers to buy new goods. The latest, the new articles must, therefore, be strikingly different from the old. Along with the restlessness which lies in the nature of the modern method of production, these endeavours on the part of the producers are the main cause of the quick changes of fashion. It is they who first produce the new fashions, and then force them on the public.

The fluctuations in the sale of articles of consumption, especially of articles of luxury, are however, to a yet greater degree, caused by changes in the incomes of the consumers rather than by changes in their tastes. The former changes again, so long as they do not remain isolated but extend widely throughout the community and thus considerably influence the consumption, arise from the alternations between prosperity and crisis, from the oscillation between a strong demand for labour and the increase of unemployment. But if we examine whence these oscillations spring, we shall find that they arise in the sphere of the production of *the means of production*. It is generally known and recognised that it is principally the iron industry to-day which causes the crises.

Thus the alternations between prosperity and crisis and consequently the great fluctuations in the consumption of articles of consumption, is produced in the field of the production of means of production, in that field where, as we have seen, the concentration of concerns and the organisation of industry is to-day so far developed as to render the organisation of production and circulation possible at the earliest. Steadiness in the production of the means of production will bring with it steadiness in the demand for articles of consumption, which it will then be easily possible to fix statistically without compulsorily regulating the consumption.

To a proletarian *régime*, however, only one kind of interruption in the circulation could prove dangerous, so far as it arises from production—*under-production*, not *over-production*. To-day, it is the latter which is the principal cause of crises, since the greatest difficulty to-day is the *sale* of the articles, the market for the products. The *purchase* on the other hand, the acquiring of products which one needs, causes, as a rule, little anxiety, at least to those

lucky people who have the wherewithal in the pocket. Under a proletarian *régime* this state of affairs will be reversed. The distribution of the goods will not present much difficulty. It will not be a case of private persons producing to sell to other private people, but of the community producing for its own requirements. Crises could then only arise, if *insufficient* is produced to meet the needs in articles either of consumption or of production. If, on the contrary, too much is produced in this or that line, or even generally, it will certainly mean a waste of labour, consequently a loss to the community, but it will not stop the progress of production and of consumption. That too little is not produced anywhere, in any branch of industry, will be the main object of care of the new *régime*. It will, also, of course, take every care that labour is not wasted in needless production, since every waste of that kind would lead, apart from everything else, to a needless lengthening of the hours of labour.

CHAPTER VII.—REMNANTS OF PRIVATE PROPERTY IN THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION.

We have seen that the proletarian *régime* will, for the most part, quickly extinguish the petty concern where it represents an imperfect stage of development, be it in industry or in distribution.

The efforts just discussed, the organisation of circulation, will, too, lead to the greatest elimination of the small middlemen, partly through co-operative stores, partly through communal undertakings. It certainly facilitates the task of surveying and organising the process of production, if the latter is carried on not for a large number of customers, but for a small number of organisations.

Besides the distribution, the direct production of articles of consumption for local needs will, too, fall to co-operative societies and municipalities, as will, for example, bread, dairy produce, vegetables, provision of dwellings.

Yet it is scarcely possible to assume that in this way all private small concerns will disappear. Above all we cannot expect that in agriculture. No doubt those farming concerns which already today constitute capitalist concerns, will break down before the new system of wages and become State, municipal, or co-operative concerns. In addition to these, many of our smaller peasant proprietors will give up their existence and go as workers into the large industrial or agricultural concerns, which will secure them a decent living. Still one may assume that a number of peasants

will nevertheless remain, who with the help of their own family or at most of a lad or a girl (one may regard them as part of the family), will continue to work their little farms. With the present conservative nature of our peasants it is highly probable that a number of them will continue to work in the same way as heretofore. And a proletarian *régime* will have little inclination to take over that sort of petty business. No Socialist of any weight and standing has ever as yet demanded that the peasants should be expropriated or their lands confiscated. Every small peasant will far more likely be allowed to remain and work his farm as he has been doing it in the past. The peasant has nothing to fear from a Socialist *régime*.

It is even quite probable that peasant farming will receive a new strength from the new *régime*. The latter will bring the peasants abolition of militarism, reduction of taxation, self-government, nationalisation of the schools and highway rates, abolition of the poor rates, nationalisation and perhaps decrease of the mortgage burdens and many other advantages. We have, however, seen also that the victorious proletariat will have every reason to increase the mass of products, and among the products for which demand will grow, first and foremost will be agricultural produce. In spite of all the refutations of the theory of the increasing misery of the proletariat under capitalism, there is still a vast amount of hunger to be satisfied to-day, and this fact alone justifies us in the supposition that a rise of wages will, in the first place, show itself in an increased demand for agricultural produce. The proletarian *régime* will, therefore, have the greatest interest in the increase of the production of the peasants, and with a view to this will lend them all the assistance it can. Its own vital interest will demand that the backward peasant farming should be brought up to date by grants of cattle, machines, manures, improvements in the soil, &c. In this fashion it will help to increase the amount of agricultural produce even on those farms which have not yet become socialised.

But here, too, as in other fields, the circumstances will make it necessary to simplify the process of circulation by substituting, in the place of a large number of private persons exchanging their products with one another, a few organisations which could enter into business relations with each other. The State will much rather supply breeding animals, machines, manures, &c., to peasant communities and co-operative societies than to individual peasants. The same communities and co-operative societies will, in their turn, have as purchasers of their produce no longer private middlemen, but again co-operative stores, communal and national establishments (flour mills, sugar refineries, breweries, &c.). Thus private enterprise will here, too, gradually retire before social, and the latter will finally revolutionise the peasant way of farming itself, and develop out of the co-operative or communal organisation of a number of such concerns a social agricultural industry on a large scale. The peasants will amalgamate their

holdings and work them in common, especially when they see how the co-operative working of the expropriated large farms holds its own, or it becomes clear that the latter can, with the same expenditure of labour, produce considerably more, and with the same amount of produce secure to the labourers considerably more leisure than the farming on a small scale ever could before. If farming on a small scale holds its own to-day, it owes it not the least to the mysterious art it possesses of getting more labour out of its labourers than large farming ever can. It is not to be denied that the peasant works far harder than the labourer of the big landowner. The peasant has hardly any leisure time, and even then he is constantly revolving in his mind how he could improve his business. He has nothing else in the world but his farm, and that is one of the reasons why it is so very difficult to win him over to our cause.

But that applies only to the older generation. The younger ones feel quite differently, they have a strong craving for pleasure and amusement, for joy, but also for a higher culture. And because they cannot find any satisfaction for this craving on the land, they flock into the towns and depopulate the villages. But if the peasant sees that he can stick to agriculture, without thereby being compelled to give up all idea of leisure and culture, then he will no longer run away from agriculture, but simply pass from petty farming to farming on a large scale—and with that one of the last bulwarks of private property will disappear.

But the victorious proletariat will not think of accelerating the speed of this development by force, if but for the very good reason that it has no particular thirst for unnecessary blood. And that would be the result of any attempt to force down the throats of the peasants a new method of production. However highly we should estimate the militant spirit and the bravery of the proletariat, the war it wages is directed not against the small people, who are themselves exploited, but against the big exploiters.

Along with farming there are yet the petty concerns in industry itself to be considered. These also may not perhaps disappear fully for some time yet. Of course, the new *régime*, as we have seen, will try, wherever badly organised businesses came into competition with better organised, to stop the former and to concentrate their workers in the best organised concerns—a thing that will easily be done without any compulsory measures, simply by offering them better wages. Nevertheless, there are still a number of trades where machinery cannot successfully compete with hand-work or perform what the latter performs. It is, however, remarkable that on looking through the trade statistics of the German Empire I have not succeeded—apart from one insignificant exception (four trades with one worker apiece)—in finding any trade in which industry on a small scale should still exclusively prevail. A few figures, which have never to my knowledge been quoted before, will prove not without interest. In the following branches of

industry production on a small scale prevails almost exclusively (more than 97 per cent. of the entire number of concerns), and production on a large scale (concerns with more than 50 workers) is as yet totally unknown:—

	No. of Establishments with		No. of Motors.
	1-5 workers.	6-50	
Whetstone-makers	77	2	52
Violin-makers	1,037	24	5
Anatomical preparation-makers	126	3	—
Flayers	971	2	11
Spinners, without description of material...	275	3	2
Weavers, without description of material...	608	9	5
Indiarubber toys	4	—	—
Barbers and wig-makers	60,035	470	6
Clothes cleaners and boot polishers	744	4	7
Chimney sweeps	3,860	26	—
Painters and sculptors	5,630	84	2

If one overlooks the artists, barbers, chimney-sweeps, violin-makers, and for my part also the flayers, then the field where small industry exists without competition from the large industry is reduced almost to *nil*.

Still, one may concede yet a certain future for the small industry, above all in those branches which work directly for human consumption, since machinery, as is well-known, only produces mass-products, while many purchasers prefer to have their personal taste considered. It would even be quite possible that under a proletarian *régime* the number of small industrial concerns would increase, since, as the standard of life of the masses rises, the demand for hand-products might well become greater; artistic handicraft might well receive a new impetus. Certainly, we cannot hope to see the picture of the future sketched out by William Morris realised, where, amidst a delightful Utopia, machinery plays no part. Machines will remain supreme in the process of production. They will never again yield this position to hand-work. It is not, however, impossible that hand-work should again increase in various artistic trades, and even conquer new fields. Still, if it to-day frequently merely drags on its existence as a product of extreme misery, as *sweating industry*, it could, in a Socialist society, only exist as a costly luxury, which, owing to the general rise of well-being, might well find a further extension. The foundation of the process of production will continue to be large industry worked by machinery. The small industries in question will, at most, exist as islands in a sea of great social establishments.

They themselves can assume the most varied forms of property in their means of production and use the most various methods by way of disposing of their products. They can become branches of a large State or municipal concern, getting their materials and tools from the latter and delivering to it their products; they could also work for private customers or the open market, &c. As to-day, so, too, in the future, the worker can work under the most varied forms of industry one after the other. A dressmaker can at one time work in a national factory, at another make a dress for a private customer at home, then again make for another customer a dress in the latter's house, and finally with a few fellow-working women found a productive society on co-operative principles which would make dresses to order or for stock.

In this, as in all other respects, there could prevail the greatest variety and adaptability. Nothing is more erroneous than to imagine a Socialist society as a simple, cut-and-dried piece of machinery, which, once set in motion, must always go on in the same monotonous way.

The most varied kinds of property in the means of production—State, municipal, co-operative (distributive), co-operative (productive), private—could exist side by side in a Socialist society. Also, the most varied forms of concerns—bureaucratic, trade union, co-operative, individual; the most varied modes of paying for labour—fixed salary, time wages, piece wages, participation in all the economies in raw material, machinery, &c.; participation in the results of more intensive work; the most varied forms of the circulation of the products—by delivery contracts; by sale from the national, the municipal, or the co-operative stores, or from those of the producers themselves, &c. The same variety of the economic machinery as exists to-day would be quite possible in a Socialist society. Only the hurry and the bustle, the fighting and the struggling, the extermination and the ruin of the present-day struggle for life will be eliminated, just as the antagonism between the exploiter and the exploited will disappear.

CHAPTER VIII.—INTELLECTUAL PRODUCTION.

Thus far we have discussed the most important economic problems and the means for their solution. It would be very tempting to pursue the subject further in the same way, and to examine what problems the domestic economy, the international relations, the relations between town and country, &c., would bring with them, since they would all be most deeply affected by the

accession of the proletariat to power, and could not be carried on in the same way as before. But I must desist from entering on these subjects, as I have already said the most essential that I have to say on them elsewhere (the attitude of a Socialist community towards the Colonies and the world-trade I have discussed in my preface to *Atlanticus's* "A Glimpse into the Future State," pp. xix. and following, and "The Future of the Home" in my "Agrarian Question," pp. 447 and the following). Only one more point I should like to discuss in this connection, about which a great deal of vagueness exists: *The future of intellectual production.*

We have hitherto only studied the problems of *material* production, which is the foundation. But on this foundation there is built up a production of works of art, of scientific research, of literary work of the most varied kinds. The continued progress of this production has become to the modern civilised man no less a necessity than the undisturbed progress of the production of bread and meat, coal and iron. A proletarian revolution, however, would make their continuation on the same lines as hitherto impossible. What would it put in their place?

That no sensible man believes nowadays that the victorious proletariat would behave in the fashion of the ancient barbarians, and consign art and science as superfluous triflings to the lumber room; that, on the contrary, among the wider sections of the people the proletariat is precisely the one which evinces the greatest interest in—nay, the highest respect for—art and science, has already been mentioned by me in the pamphlet on "Reform and Revolution." But the whole of my inquiry here concerns itself, not with what the victorious proletariat would *wish* to do, but what, by the logic of facts, it will be *able* and *forced* to do.

Of the necessary *material* means for art and science there would be no lack. We have seen how it is precisely the proletarian *régime* which, by the abolition of private property in the means of production, creates the possibility of getting rid, in the quickest possible manner, of those survivals of obsolete means and methods of production, which to-day obstruct everywhere the development of the modern productive forces, and are, under the present rule of private property, slowly and incompletely eliminated by competition. The wealth of Society must, in consequence, at once rise far above the level attained by capitalist society.

But the material means are not everything. Wealth alone does not suffice to produce a vigorous intellectual life. The question is whether the conditions of the production of material goods in a Socialist society are compatible with the necessary conditions of a highly developed intellectual production. That is frequently disputed by our opponents.

Let us first see what is the nature of the intellectual production to-day. It is of three kinds—one carried on by organs of society, serving society to satisfy social needs; second, the production of

commodities by the individual worker; and third, the production of commodities on capitalist lines.

To the intellectual production of the first kind belongs the entire educational apparatus from the communal school to the university. If we ignore the unimportant private school the apparatus is now entirely in the hands of society and is worked by it, not on a basis of profit-making or as a trading concern. This applies more especially to the modern national or communal schools; to a great extent, however, also to those schools—chiefly existing as mediæval survivals—of ecclesiastical organisations and charitable institutions, which are principally to be found in countries of Anglo-Saxon civilisation.

The social educational system is of the highest importance for the intellectual life, especially the scientific, and that not merely on account of its influence on the growing youth. It dominates ever more and more the sphere of scientific research by constituting its teachers, namely, in the high schools, more and more the sole possessors of that scientific apparatus without which scientific research is to-day almost impossible. This applies especially to the domain of natural science, where the technique has developed to such an extent, that apart from a few millionaires, only the State can command the means which are required for the provision and maintenance of the necessary scientific institutions. But in many branches of social science, ethnology, archæology, and others, the scientific apparatus of research, too, becomes ever more extensive and costly. At the same time, science becomes more and more a non-paying pursuit, by which no human being can live, and to which only those people can devote themselves who are paid by the State for the purpose—unless, indeed, they were careful enough in the selection of their parents or . . . their wives. The very acquisition of the necessary preliminaries for scientific activity demands ever larger and increasing means. Thus science becomes more and more a monopoly of the State and the propertied classes.

A proletarian *régime* cannot but lead to the removal of the conditions hindering the development of scientific activity. It will have, as we mentioned at the beginning, so to organise its educational system as to render it possible for any gifted person to acquire all the knowledge which the educational establishments of society are in a position to impart. It will increase enormously the demand for teaching and therewith for scientific research-power. Finally, it will tend, by the abolition of the class antagonisms, to make the State-paid student of social sciences more free, both outwardly and inwardly. As long as there are class antagonisms, there will always be different standpoints from which one could view society. There can be no greater hypocrisy or self-deception than to talk of a science standing superior to the class antagonisms. Science only exists in the brains of the students, and they are products of their

society, and cannot get out of it or above it. Even in a Socialist society science will be dependent on the social conditions; but then these will at least be homogeneous, not antagonistic.

Still worse, however, than the inner dependence on the social conditions, from which no student can escape, is the external dependence on the power of the State, or other ruling institutions, such as the Church. These compel them to accommodate their views to those of the ruling classes, not to investigate freely and independently, but to seek in the domain of science for arguments to justify the existing order and to refute the rising classes. In this way the class rule has a directly demoralising effect on science. The latter will have every reason to breathe more freely when the proletarian rule will abolish the direct or indirect control of the capitalist and landlord classes over our schools. The intellectual life, so far as it depends on the educational system, has, therefore, everything to hope for, from a victory of the proletariat, and nothing to fear.

But how does it stand with the production of intellectual commodities?

We will consider first the independent producer. Under this head come principally painting and sculpture, as well as a portion of literature.

A proletarian system will make this sort of intellectual production of commodities as little impossible as the small private concern in material production. Just as little as the needle and the thimble do the paint brush and the palette, or the pen and ink, belong to those means of production which must under all circumstances be socialised. But one thing is certainly possible, namely, that with the capitalistic exploitation should also disappear the moneyed buyers, who have hitherto formed the market for the commodity-production of the individual art-worker. That would certainly not remain without effect on the artistic production; still it would not make it impossible, but merely alter its character. The picture painted on an easel, and the statuette, which can change their place and owner, which can be set up wherever one likes, are the real expression of the production of commodities in art, they are those forms of art which easiest assume the form of commodities, which can be collected like gold coins in great numbers, whether to sell them again for a profit or to keep them as a treasure. Possibly in a Socialist society their production with a view to selling them will meet with considerable difficulties. But in their place other forms of artistic production will necessarily arise. A proletarian *régime* will increase enormously the number of public buildings; it will also endeavour to make every resort of the people—whether it be for labour, deliberation, or pleasure, beautiful and attractive. Instead of turning out statues and pictures which are thrown into the process of circulation of commodities, and arrive finally at a place quite unforeseen by the artist, there to serve a purpose equally un-

known to him, he will co-operate in an organised manner with the architect, as was the case during the most flourishing periods of art, in Athens under Pericles and during the Italian Renaissance; and one art will support and raise the other, artistic work will acquire a conscious social aim, therefore its influence, its surroundings and its public will not depend on chance.

On the other hand, however, there will no longer be any *necessity* of producing works of art for sale as commodities. In fact, the necessity of performing intellectual labour, be it as wage-labour or as production of commodities, for money-making purposes will altogether cease.

I have already pointed out that a proletarian *régime* will endeavour, as is from the standpoint of the wage-workers only too natural, to reduce the hours of labour and to raise the wages. I have also shown to what a great extent this could be done even at once in a country with a highly-developed capitalist industry, simply by closing the backward concerns, and working to the utmost those whose organisation is the most perfect. It is not at all fantastic to assume that it is possible to double the wages and to reduce the hours of work by half immediately. And the technical sciences are advanced enough to permit us to expect a rapid progress in this field. The greater the progress in the domain of technique, the greater the possibility afforded to those employed in material production to devote themselves also to intellectual activity, such activities even as bring no material profit, as are themselves their own reward; in other words, the highest kind of intellectual activity. The increased leisure may partly—nay, mainly—lead to mere intellectual enjoyment. With gifted persons it will set free the creative activity and bring about a union of material production with that of art, or fiction, or science.

But this union will not merely be a possibility, it will also be an *economic necessity*. We have seen how a proletarian *régime* must endeavour to make education general. If, however, we were to spread education in the present-day fashion, we would only secure that the growing generation would become unfit for all material production, that is, the foundations of society would be undermined. To-day, the social division of labour is carried out in such a way that material labour and intellectual are almost mutually exclusive. Material labour takes place under conditions which permit only a few individuals, favoured by nature or circumstances, to perform, in addition, the higher intellectual work. On the other hand, intellectual labour, as it is carried on to-day, renders men incapable of, and averse to, bodily labour. To provide all mankind with education would mean, under the circumstances, to render all material production impossible, because nobody would be found who could and would carry it on. If, therefore, intellectual labour is to become a common possession, without endangering the existence of society, not only pedagogy but also economic necessity

demands that this should be done in such a way as to make the rising generation in the school conversant not only with intellectual but also with bodily labour, and to implant in them the habit of associating intellectual and material production.

There are two ways in which the proletarian *régime* will have to introduce among the mass of the people the union of material with intellectual production and therewith bring about the emancipation of the latter from its present material limits. On one hand by shortening the labour of the so-called manual worker as a consequence of the progressive productivity of labour, thus affording more and more leisure for those active in the material field to work at intellectual pursuits. On the other hand, by an *increase* of physical labour of the educated, as a necessary consequence of the continual increase of the number of the latter.

It is, however, obvious, that under such a union physical labour will become industrial labour, obligatory labour in the service of society, whilst intellectual labour will become voluntary labour as the activity of the individual freed from all social compulsion. For intellectual labour is far less compatible with such a compulsion than physical. The emancipation of intellectual labour by the proletariat is not merely the pious wish of utopists, but is an economically necessary consequence of its victory.

Finally, we have to consider the third form of intellectual production carried on on capitalist lines of exploitation. If the first of the three forms of intellectual production embraces principally science, the second the fine arts, then here we are concerned with all spheres of intellectual activity, mainly, however, with the heroes of the pen and the stage, who are confronted with publishers, newspaper proprietors and managers of theatres as their capitalist employers.

To continue capitalist exploitation of that nature under a proletarian *régime* will be impossible. That exploitation rests, however, on the fact that intellectual products in question can only be conveyed to the public by means of a costly, technical apparatus, and the co-operation of many persons. The single individual can by himself accomplish here nothing. Does not that mean that here, too, the alternative to a capitalist concern is a concern carried on by the State? If so, would not the State organisation of so large and important a part of the intellectual life threaten it with the very worst that can befall it—viz., monotony and stagnation? True, the State ceases to be the organ of a class; but does it not become the organ of the majority? Is it possible to make intellectual life dependent on the decisions of a majority? Was not every new truth, every new idea and feeling first grasped and championed only by an insignificant minority? Does not this new order threaten to bring into constant conflict with the proletarian *régime*, just the best and the bravest of the intellectual champions in the most varied fields? And even if the proletarian *régime* does

create greater freedom for artistic and scientific development of the individuals, does it not more than undo it by fettering intellectual activity in those fields where it can only take place through social channels? Here is certainly a serious problem; but not an insoluble one.

In the first place, it must be observed that in the case of the social institutions for intellectual production, just as in that of production as a whole, not only the State, but also the municipality comes into account as manager and purveyor of means. This alone is a guarantee against all uniformity and over-ruling of the intellectual life on the part of the State. There are, however, yet other organisations to be considered as substitutes for the capitalist organisations of intellectual production, namely, *private societies or associations* for art, science, and public life, which will encourage or directly undertake production in these fields in the most various ways. To-day already we possess numerous societies which arrange for theatrical representations, publish newspapers, collect objects of art, publish books, fit out scientific expeditions, &c. The shorter the time of labour in the material production, and the higher the wages, the more will these free associations flourish, increase in number, and in the zeal and the understanding of their members, as well as in the means which the individual members can subscribe, which they collectively can raise. From these free associations I expect that they will play an ever greater part, and that it will be reserved for them, in the place of capitalism, to organise and lead the intellectual life, so far as it is of a social nature.

Thus even here the proletarian *régime* leads not to greater constraint, but to greater freedom.

The emancipation of education and of scientific research from the fetters of class rule; the emancipation of the individual from the pressure of exclusive and exhausting physical labour; the substitution for capitalist management of social intellectual production the management of free associations, this will be the direction in which a proletarian *régime* will proceed in the intellectual field.

We see its problems in the field of production are of a contradictory character. The capitalist mode of production has created the problem of organising the social process of production on a homogeneous and systematic basis. This problem involves the fitting in of the individual into a fixed order, to whose regulations he has to accommodate himself. On the other hand, the same mode of production has brought the individual more than ever to self-consciousness, placed him on his own feet, and divorced him from society. More than ever people demand to be allowed the opportunity of developing their own personality, and of determining their relations to each other, and that the more freely, the more delicate and individual those relations are; thus, in the first place, their marriage relations; also, moreover, their relations, as artists and thinkers, to the outside world. The regulation of the social chaos

INTELLECTUAL PRODUCTS

and the emancipation of the individual, those are the historical problems which capitalism has placed before society. They appear to contradict each other; yet they admit of simultaneous solution, because each of them concerns different fields of social life. Certainly, those who would try to regulate these two fields in the same fashion would soon land in a hopeless confusion. It is precisely here that Anarchism comes to grief. It arose from the reaction of the petty bourgeoisie against capitalism, which threatens and oppresses it. The small craftsman, who was accustomed to arrange his work as he thought best, rebelled against the discipline and the monotony of the factory. His ideal remained the free labour of the individual; where the latter was no longer possible, he sought to substitute for it the social co-operation in free associations which stood independently of one another.

The "new middle class," the intellectuals, is, as we have already remarked more than once, in its social position only a refined and delicate offshoot of the original petty bourgeoisie. Its method of working develops in it the same need for free labour, the same aversion towards discipline and uniformity. Therefore, its social ideal is also the same, that is the Anarchist ideal. But what, for its sphere of production, is a progressive ideal, proves reactionary for the sphere of material production, in which it corresponds to the ideal of the decaying handicraft.

In the present condition of production there are only two kinds of *material production* possible, so far as it is production *en masse*, and consequently ignoring certain survivals, which are for the most part only curiosities. On the one hand, the *communistic*, with social property in the means of production and a systematic arrangement of the production from a centre, and on the other the *capitalist*. The Anarchist mode of production could at best prove but a temporary episode. Material production by means of free associations without a central management would lead to chaos, unless it were production of commodities, accompanied by exchange of commodities on the basis of the law of value, asserting itself through free competition. We have already seen what importance this law has under free production by individual concerns. It brings about the proper proportionality of the individual branches of production to one another, prevents society from being flooded say, by buttons when it wants bread. Production of commodities, however, must, at the present state of social production, inevitably assume again the form of capitalist production, as the numerous co-operative societies prove. To strive after the Anarchist ideal in the material production, means at best to perform a labour of Sisyphus.

It is different with the intellectual production. It is based on the material production, on the surpluses of products and of labour-power yielded by that production; it flourishes only when the material life is assured. If the latter come to confusion, then our existence itself is threatened. On the other

hand it is absolutely of no consequence to it, in what proportion the existing surpluses of products and of labour-power are distributed among the different spheres of intellectual activity. The only exception is education, which has laws of its own and is even now, in a society of free competition, not left at the mercy of the latter, but is socially controlled. Society would be in a bad state if the entire world applied itself to the manufacturing of some one sort of commodities, say, buttons, and so much labour was attracted thereto, that not enough remained for the production of another, say, bread. On the contrary, the proportion in which lyrical poems and tragedies, works of assyriology and botany ought to be produced, is not a fixed one; it has neither a minimum nor a maximum limit, and if to-day twice as many dramas are written as yesterday, and on the other hand only half as many poems; if to-day twenty books on assyriology appear and only ten on botany, while yesterday, the proportions were reversed, the prosperity of society is not in the slightest degree affected by it. This fact finds its economic expression in that the law of value, despite of all psychological theories of value, is only valid for the field of material production and not for the intellectual. In this a central management of production is not only unnecessary, but directly opposed to reason; here can free production prevail, without becoming necessarily production of commodity-values or capitalist production on a large scale.

Communism in material production, anarchy in the intellectual—that is the type of a Socialist mode of production, as it will develop from the rule of the proletariat—in other words, from the Social Revolution through the logic of economic facts, whatever might be the wishes, intentions, and theories of the proletariat.

CHAPTER IX.—THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE RULE OF THE PROLETARIAT.

It will, perhaps, have struck some readers that in this enquiry I have only spoken of economic conditions. I have not enquired what the ethical foundation of the new society should be, whether it should be based on the Spencerian or the Kantian ethics, whether the categorical imperative or the greatest happiness of the greatest number should be its guiding principle. Nor have I enquired what its highest legal principle must be, whether the

right to the entire product of labour, the right to existence, or some other economic fundamental right discovered by juridical Socialism. Undoubtedly law and ethics will also play a part in the Social Revolution, but what will always assert itself, will be the demands of economics.

But besides ethics and law, psychology also has to be considered. Will not some problems, and those of the greatest importance, arise from psychology which the proletarian *régime* will have to solve? Does not the Socialist society presuppose extraordinary human beings, real angels as regards unselfishness and gentleness, joy of work and intelligence? Is not the Social Revolution, with the present brutal and egoistical race of men, bound to become the signal for desolating struggles for the booty or for general idleness, in which it would go to ruin? All change in the economic foundation is useless, so long as men are not reformed.

The text and the tune are not new. They were already sung a century ago, when the song was of the limited intelligence of the *subjects*. The gentle shepherds of the Holy Alliance would have only too willingly granted their flocks every possible freedom. But they had first to attain the requisite "ripeness."

Now, I would not dream of denying that every form of production requires not only certain technical, but also psychological pre-requisites, without which it cannot come into existence. Of what nature these psychological pre-requisites for a given method of production must be, follows from the nature of the economic problem which it sets itself to solve.

No one will wish to assert that in my investigation I have assumed men of angelic character. The problems which were to be solved presupposed *intelligence, discipline and ability to organise*. Those are the psychological pre-requisites for a Socialist society. But they are precisely the ones which already to-day are called into being by capitalism. It is the historical mission of capitalism to discipline the workers, and to organise them, and to widen their mental horizon far beyond the range of the workshop and the parish church steeple.

To pass over to Socialism from handicraft or peasant industry is not only on economic grounds impossible, that is, on account of the small productivity of the concerns, but also on psychological grounds. I have already pointed out how the petty-bourgeois psychology inclines towards Anarchism and rebels against the discipline of a productive concern, carried on on social lines. This is one of the greatest difficulties which capitalism encounters at the beginning of the capitalist mode of production, since it has to draw its first workers from the handicrafts or the peasantry. That was what it had to contend with in England in the 18th century, that is it which, in the Southern States of the American Union, renders even to-day difficult the rapid progress of the large industry so favoured otherwise by the proximity of important raw material.

But not only discipline, the ability to organise also is very little developed under a petty-bourgeois and peasant conditions. There are in such a society no large masses which could be associated for systematic co-operation. At this economic stage only the armies offer an opportunity for the organisation of large masses. The great military commanders are also great organisers. The capitalist method of production transfers the task of organising big masses of men to industry. The capitalists, as is well known, have their captains and their leaders, and naturally all those among them who distinguish themselves, are great organisers. Correspondingly the talent for organisation is highly appreciated by capitalism among its employees, and is well paid by it. In this way countless organising talents are being fostered and bred which the proletarian *régime* will know how to utilise with advantage. We will not condemn the factory managers and leaders of the trusts to idleness.

Capitalism, however, also requires intelligent labour, and thus we see that the struggle of competition everywhere necessitates an improvement in at least the technical education. On the other hand, the growth of the means of communication and of the press naturally widens the horizon of the workers.

But not only the endeavour of the capitalists to exploit the great mass of the working people, but equally so the struggle of the proletariat against this exploitation, creates the psychological conditions of Socialist production: it develops discipline—certainly, as we have seen, of a totally different character than the one imposed by capitalism; then, however, it also develops a capacity for organisation, since it is only by the unanimous co-operation of its vast numbers that the proletariat can hold its own in the struggle against capitalism and the capitalist State. Organisation is the strongest weapon of the proletariat, and almost all its great leaders are also great organisers. To the money of the capitalist and the weapons of the militarist State the proletariat has nothing to oppose except its economic indispensability and its organisation. That with these and through these its intelligence also grows requires no proof.

The proletariat will require high intelligence, strong discipline, perfect organisation of its great masses; and these must, at the same time, have become most indispensable in economic life if it is to attain the strength sufficient to overcome so formidable an opponent. We may expect that it will only succeed in the latter when it will have developed these qualities in the highest degree, and that, therefore, the domination of the proletariat, and with it the Social Revolution, will not take place until not only the economic, but also the psychological, conditions of a Socialist society are sufficiently ripened. Since for that it is not necessary that men should be angels, we shall not have to wait too long for this psychological maturity.

But if the proletariat need not change so very greatly in order to become ripe for the Socialist society, we may certainly expect that the latter will itself alter considerably the character of men. What is usually set up as the pre-requisite condition for a Socialist society, and what capitalist society is unable to produce, what therefore would thus be an impossible condition—viz., the creation of a higher type of mankind than the modern man, that will be the *result* of Socialism. It will bring security, rest and leisure to men; it will lift their thoughts above the every-day life, because they will not have need to think; day in, day out, where to get the bread for to-morrow. It will make the individual independent of other individuals, and so root out the slavish feeling, as well as the feeling of contempt for humanity. It will also equalise the difference between town and country, render the treasures of a magnificent culture accessible to all mankind, and return it back to Nature, from which to draw the strength and the joy of life.

Simultaneously with the psychological roots of pessimism, it will also exterminate its social roots, the misery and degeneracy of some who make a virtue of their need, and the surfeiting of others who in their toil-less pleasure have emptied the cup of happiness to the dregs. Socialism abolishes need and surfeit, and all that is unnatural, and makes men joyous of life and of beauty, and capable of pleasure. And, in addition, it brings freedom of scientific and artistic creative activity for all.

May we not assume that under these conditions a new type of mankind will evolve which will surpass the highest type which culture has produced up till now? An overman, if you please, not as an exception, but as the rule; an overman compared with his ancestors, but not with his fellow men; an elevated man who seeks his satisfaction not in being great among crippled dwarfs but great among great, happy with happy, who draws his strength not by raising himself on the bodies of the crushed, but by gaining courage through the union with men of similar aspirations, the courage to venture on the grappling with the highest problems.

Thus, we can expect that a kingdom of strength and of beauty will arise which will be worthy of the ideals of our loftiest and noblest thinkers.

THE END.