British Socialism; an Examination of its Doctrines, Policy, Aims and Practical Proposals



J ELLIS BARKER

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BRITISH SOCIALISM

BRITISH SOCIALISM

AN EXAMINATION OF

ITS DOCTRINES, POLICY, AIMS AND PRACTICAL PROPOSALS

BY

J. ELLIS BARKER

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'MODERN GERMANY: HER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, ETC.'
'THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE NETHERLANDS'

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BRITISH SOCIALISM

CHAPTER I[ToC]

INTRODUCTION—WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

What is Socialism?

It is exceedingly difficult to answer that question in a few words, for Socialism is exceedingly elusive and bewildering in its doctrines, its aims, and its

proposals.

Its opponents have described it as "a doctrine of sordid materialism and of atheism," they have denounced it as "the gospel of everlasting bellyful,"[1] and as "the coming slavery."[2] They have stated that Socialism means to abolish religion, that it "would try to put laziness, thriftlessness, and inefficiency on a par with industry, thrift, and efficiency, that it would strive to break up not merely private property, but, what is far more important, the home, the chief prop upon which our whole civilisation stands."[3]

The Socialists, on the other hand, claim that "Socialism presents the only living ideal of human existence"[4]; that "Socialism is science applied with knowledge and understanding to all branches of human activity"[5]; that "Socialism is freedom,"[6] and that it is exceedingly just, for "the justice of Socialism will see all things, and therefore understand all things."[7] One of the Socialist leaders has told us "Socialism is much more than either a political creed or an economic dogma. It presents to the modern world a new conception of society and a new basis upon which to build up the life of the individual and of the State."[8] Another informs us "Socialism to Socialists is not a Utopia which they have invented, but a principle of social organisation which they assert to have been discovered by the patient investigators into sociology whose labours have distinguished the present century."[9] A third has stated that "Socialism is really neither more nor less than the science of sociology."[10] A fourth asserts that "it is a scientific scheme of national government entirely wise, just, and practical."[11] A fifth states "Socialism to me has always meant not a principle, but certain definite economic measures

which I wish to see taken."[12]

Other Socialists have taught that "Socialism is an ethical system founded on justice and truth; it is a heartfelt, soul-inspiring religion, resting upon the love of God."[13] "Socialism is a theory of social organisation, which reconciles the individual to society. It has discovered how the individual in society can attain to a state of complete development."[14] "Socialism is the right of the community, acting in its corporate capacity, to intervene in the lives and labours of men and women."[15] "Socialism is nothing but the extension of democratic self-government from the political to the industrial world."[16] "Socialism is an endeavour to substitute for the anarchical struggle or fight for existence an organised co-operation for existence."[17] "Socialism may be described as an endeavour to readjust the machinery of industry in such a way that it can at once depend upon and issue in a higher kind of character and social type than is encouraged by the conditions of ordinary competitive enterprise."[18] "Socialism is the development of policies concerning the welfare of society."[19] "It is not arbitrary destruction and reconstruction, but a natural process of development."[20] "The idea of Socialism will conquer the world, for this idea is nothing but the real, well understood interest of mankind."[21] "Its principles will carry the whole human race to a higher state of perfection."[22] "It is the great modern protest against unreality, against the delusive shams which now masquerade as verities."[23] "Socialism is of the character of a historical discovery."[24] "Socialism, the inspiring principle of all Labour Parties, whether they know it or not, is the next world movement—the movement of the constructive

intellect."[25]

Socialism is rich in promises, and its claims to our consideration and support are manifold. Are these claims justified or not? Are the Socialists or the Anti-Socialists right in their conception of Socialism?

The Socialists maintain that all opposition to Socialism is based either on self-interest or ignorance, and principally upon the latter. Therefore one of the Socialist leaders wrote: "Those who wish to understand Socialism will be wise to study Socialist books and papers. One does not expect a true and fair account of any theory or cause from its enemies. The man who takes his ideas of Trade-Unionism from the Free Labour League, his ideas of Liberalism from the Tory papers, his ideas of South African affairs—or any other affairs—from the Yellow Press, will be misled into all manner of absurdities and errors. The statements of party politicians and party newspapers on most controversial subjects are prejudiced and inaccurate; but there is no subject upon which the professional misleaders of the people are so untrustworthy and so disingenuous as they are upon the subject of Socialism."[26] A leading Socialist organ complained: "Our opponents decline to deal with the fundamental principles of Socialism—its unanswerable indictment of the capitalist system, with all its concomitants of wage-slavery and slumdom; prostitution and child murder—and prefer instead to indulge in calumniation and misrepresentation of Socialism. We need not complain about that. It is a tribute to the soundness of the Socialist position, to the irrefutability of its principles, the impregnability of the rock of economic truth upon which it is based, that our enemies dare not oppose the principles of

Socialism, dare not attempt to meet the charge Socialism levels against the existing order."[27]

There is much truth in these complaints. The general public and most writers and speakers know very little about Socialism, because this most interesting subject has been very inadequately treated in the existing books.

The existing books on Socialism describe, analyse, and criticise the Socialist doctrines only in the abstract as a rule. However, Socialism is not only an elaborate economic doctrine, it is at the same time a complete system of practical politics. Hence it does not suffice to study the doctrines of Socialism by themselves. In order to understand Socialism we must also investigate its practical proposals.

Following the methods of our political economists, most writers on Socialism have, unfortunately, treated Socialism rather as a scientific abstraction than as a business proposition. Consequently the most important practical details of Socialism, such as: What are the views of the Socialist with regard to the Monarchy, the Army, the Banks, the National Currency, the Law, Education? what are their practical aims as regards Parliamentary Representation, Foreign Policy, Agriculture, Taxation, Old-age Pensions, Fiscal Policy? what are their relations with the Parliamentary Parties, the Trade-Unions, the Co-operators, etc? what is their attitude towards International Communism and Anarchism? is English Socialism an Evolutionary or a Revolutionary Movement?—these and many other questions are touched but lightly or are not touched at all.

It is somewhat difficult to deal fully with the practical proposals of the Socialists, because the

Socialists are very averse from formulating their aims and disclosing their plans. An English Socialist wrote: "To dogmatise about the form which the Socialist State shall take is to play the fool."[28] Another one stated: "It is quite impossible, at this time, nor would it be desirable, if possible, to lay down any hard and fast line as to the development of the details of Socialist organisation. Broad principles are all that can with any degree of confidence be spoken about. The details will arrange themselves, as the time arrives when it becomes necessary to settle them."[29] Gronlund, perhaps the most prominent American Socialist, stated: "Socialists do not profess to be architects. They have not planned the future in minute detail."[30] Herr Bebel, the leader of the German Social-Democratic Party, said on February 3, 1893, in the Reichstag, replying to the Roman Catholics, "We do not ask from you the details of the future life of which you speak so incessantly. Why, then, do you ask us about the future society?"[31] Although we are told that "Socialism claims the consideration of mankind, because it comes forward and offers a complete scheme to improve the conditions of human life,"[32] Socialists carefully abstain as a rule from giving us the details of that scheme.

The Socialists of all countries have very excellent reasons for keeping to themselves the details of their plans for the future. Nevertheless, a careful search through their numerous writings will enable us to obtain a fairly clear and comprehensive view of their political and economic plans and intentions.

Great Britain does not as yet possess a great Socialist party but only a number of Socialist groups and factions which are totally at variance as regards

their aims, policy, and tactics. "They differ as to the best means of getting what they want, and as to the best ways of managing the work, and as to the proper way of sharing the earnings. Some Socialists still believe that Socialism will have to be got by force. I think there are not many. Some are in favour of buying the land, the railways, the machinery, and other things; and some are in favour of taking them, by force, or by new laws. Then some say that there should be no wages paid at all, but that everyone should do an equal share of work, and take whatever he needed from the nation's goods. Others say that all men should do an equal share of work, and have an equal share of the goods, or of the earnings. Others say it would be better to pay wages, as now, but to let the wages be fixed by the Government, or by corporations, or other officials, and that all wages should be equal. Others, again, say that wages should be paid, that the wages should be fixed as above stated, and that different kinds of work should be paid for at different rates. In one kind of Socialism the civil engineer, the actor, the general, the artist, the tram guard, the dustman, the milliner, and the collier would all be paid the same wages. In another kind of Socialism there would be no wages, but all would be called upon to work, and all who worked would 'take according to their needs.' In another kind of Socialism the civil engineer would be paid more than the navvy, the opera singer more than the milliner, the general more than the sergeant, and the editor more than the scavenger."[33]

Notwithstanding these numerous and important differences, of which more will be learned in the course of this book, British Socialists are absolutely united in certain important respects. "The policies of Socialism are a changeable quantity, though the

principle is as fixed as the Northern Star."[34] "Socialism is as flexible in its form as it is definite in its principles."[35]

A superficial study of Socialism reveals to us not a single and generally accepted plan, but a confused and confusing mass of mutually contradictory plans and doctrines. Therefore he who wishes to know what Socialism is, must study the many-headed movement in its entirety and give an impartial hearing to all its advocates. We can understand Socialism only if we are acquainted with practically its entire literature.

Unfortunately the literature of Socialism is very vast. A complete collection of modern Socialist literature would embrace at least thirty thousand items. Therefore a full analysis of international Socialism based upon the study of the original sources is a forbidding undertaking. I have consequently limited myself to the investigation of the British Socialist movement, although I have cast a cursory glance upon foreign Socialism whenever it seemed necessary to do so.

I have consulted altogether about a thousand books and pamphlets, and have given representative extracts from four hundred or five hundred of those which seemed most proper to elucidate the subject of this book. Having given space to the views of all the Socialist groups, this book is a summary of the whole literature of British Socialism and a key to it. It is based exclusively on first-hand evidence, and every statement contained in it can instantly be verified by reference to the original sources indicated in the footnotes. In the Bibliography at the end of this volume the full title, publisher's address, and date of publication of all sources drawn upon are given, so

that readers will have no difficulty in procuring any Socialist books they may want for further study.

Most of the books quoted are unknown to booksellers, and are not in public libraries. Even the British Museum Library possesses only part of the publications used in this book, which is the first to exploit fully the whole Socialist party literature. Whilst most books on Socialism take note only of Socialist text-books addressed to students, the present volume considers chiefly the propaganda literature which is educating the Socialist rank and file and shaping its political views. For all practical political purposes the propaganda literature is undoubtedly by far the more important of the two to the statesman and the citizen.

The present volume is the only book of its kind, and I hope that the Socialist movement in Germany, France, and the United States will be treated with similar completeness by writers of these countries. The perusal of the present volume will enable us to form an opinion of the merits or demerits of the Socialistic theories and practical plans, and make it possible for us to separate the grain from the chaff, the wisdom from the folly, in the teachings of the Socialists. Thus we shall be able to see which of their complaints and proposals are justified and practical, and which are unjustified and unpractical.

Popular dissatisfaction, Socialistic and non-Socialistic, points to the existence of ills in the body politic, and the Socialistic agitation is exceedingly valuable inasmuch as it draws general attention to these ills. Some complaints of the Socialists will be found to be imaginary, others are very real.

It would be a sterile undertaking merely to analyse and criticise Socialism and the Socialistic proposals.

Therefore, after having described the policy, ideals, and aims of the Socialists, I mean to analyse the disease of which Socialism is a consequence and a symptom, and to propose practical measures for curing it.

In the course of this book I shall show that Socialism seems likely to become a very great danger in this country—a far greater danger than is generally realised. Therefore its opponents will be wise not to sneer at Socialism, but to study it and to try to understand it. That task will be found worth our while, and only after it shall we be able to further Socialism if it is beneficial, to combat it if it is pernicious, and to correct it if it is only the misguided expression of genuine suffering and want. Indifference to a great and dangerous political movement such as Socialism may have the gravest consequences. Idlers do not make history. They suffer it.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Millar, *Socialism*, p. 21.

[2] Herbert Spencer, *The Man versus the State*, p. 18 ff.

[3] Roosevelt, Presidential Message, December 1907.

[4] Walter Crane in Squire, *Socialism and Art*, Foreword.

[5] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 256.

[6] Kessack, *Capitalist Wilderness*, p. 2.

[7] Ford, *Woman and Socialism*, p. 3.

[8] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 1.

[9] Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 3.

[10] Hyndman, *Socialism and Slavery*, Preface.

[11] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 100.

[12] Shaw, *The Impossibilities of Anarchism*, p. 3.

[13] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 1.

[14] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 3.

[15] *Labour Record*, February 1907.

[16] Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 15.

[17] *Will Socialism benefit the British People?* p. 4.

[18] Ball, *The Moral Aspects of Socialism*, p. 3.

[19] Williams, *The Difficulties of Socialism*, p. 3.

[20] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 257.

[21] Sorge, *Socialism and the Worker*, p. 13.

[22] *Ibid.* p. 16.

[23] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. ix.

[24] Lafargue, in Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, p. 1264.

[25] Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, p. 108.

[26] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* p. 2.

[27] *Justice*, October 19, 1907.

[28] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 96.

[29] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 44.

[30] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 126.

[31] Guyot, *Pretensions of Socialism*, p. 11.

[32] Hird, *From Brute to Brother*, p. 1.

[33] Robert Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 15.

[34] Williams, *Difficulties of Socialism*, p. 4.

[35] Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, p. 1265.

CHAPTER II[ToC]

SOME SOCIALIST VIEWS OF PRESENT SOCIETY AND OF THE SOCIETY OF THE FUTURE

"We are not indebted to reason," wrote the greatest American Socialist, "for the landmarks of human progress, for the introduction of Christianity, the institution of the monastic orders, the Crusades, the Reformation, the American Revolution, or the abolition of slavery. Man is only irresistible when he acts from passion. The masses of men are never moved except by passions, feelings, interests."[36] "Socialism has the advantage of appealing to the interests as well as to the enthusiasm of all except the few who think the world good enough as it is.... It is, of course, to the discontented wage-workers

that the Socialist can appeal with the greatest chance of success."[37] These indiscreet words, which might have been written by the most implacable of Anti-Socialists, sum up and explain the Socialistic agitation and tactics. They are a proclamation and an avowal, and the worst enemy of Socialism would have found it difficult to pen a more damaging statement. Socialists rely not on reason or justice, but on unreason and passion, for the victory of their cause; and that fact is very much to be regretted, for it is bound to create prejudice and suspicion, and to greatly weaken their case.

The British Socialists, seeking to rouse the passions of men, habitually rely on exaggeration and misrepresentation. They do not tire of painting the present state of society in the darkest colours and of describing with an unbounded but hardly justifiable optimism and enthusiasm the advantages which will accrue to society when Socialism has come to rule. It will be seen that in describing society of the present and society of the future, Socialists let their imagination run riot in the most astounding fashion.

To the Socialist modern civilisation is worse than a failure. "Our civilisation seems all so savage and bestial and filthy and inartistic; all so cowardly and devilish and despicable. We fight by cheatery and underselling, and adulteration and bribery, and unmanly smirking for our bone of a livelihood; all scrambling and biting round the platter when there is abundance for all, if we were orderly and courteous and gentlemanly; all crushing the weaker; all struggling to the platter-side for the privilege of wearing tall hats and of giving good advice to the poor dogs outside. We, the well-fed, shout lordily to the hungry and cheer them with legends to the effect

that though the poor are juggled out of earth, they may be masters in Heaven. Our civilisation is barbarous."[38]

Where'er we go, to east or west
North or south, 'tis all the same;
Civilisation at it's best
Is savagery's newer name.
For we see on every hand
'Midst the whirr and noise of trade
The toilers, crushed and trampled, and
Into beasts of burden made.
[39]

"The one reality of the nineteenth century is the scramble for wealth; politics, literature, science, religion, art, are, apart from money-getting, mere lifeless wraiths."[40] Government in general, and British Government in particular, is vicious, tyrannous, and neglectful, and deserves the utmost contempt. "National Government is devised for other objects than the adjustment of essential, economic, and hygienic arrangements for the redemption of human life; to use it for such a purpose is gross tyranny and a deadly blow at the very foundations of morality and religion! Governments exist for quite other purposes than this—to pay a million pounds yearly to one family and its immediate parasites, to supply power of life and death over the people to the exploiting class and fat places to their satellites and creatures, to squander hundreds of millions on gunpowder and armaments, to use the whole socialised power of the nation to overawe, exploit, rob, and ruin the so-called lower races—all these are

the proper objects of government according to our orthodox wiseacres, but to use the same obvious instrument adequately to protect human life at home, and that life, to quote Mr. Burns, 'the weakest, the smallest, and the dearest to us all,' is to undermine the foundations of British manliness and to poison the fountain of British liberty and greatness. Such is the curious *mélange* of selfishness, hypocrisy, prejudice, ignorance, and incoherence which passes muster for argument amongst our anti-Socialist opponents."[41]

British social legislation has been a failure. Never was the lot of the workers worse than it is now. "Your legislation for the past hundred years is a perpetual and fruitless effort to regulate the disorders of your economic system. Your poor, your drunken, your incompetent, your sick, your aged, ride you like a nightmare. You have dissolved all human and personal ties. The salient characteristic of your civilisation is its irresponsibility. The making of dividends is the universal preoccupation; the well-being of the labourer is no one's concern. You depend on variations of supply and demand which you can neither determine nor anticipate. The failure of a harvest, the modification of a tariff in some remote country dislocates the industry of millions, thousands of miles away. You are at the mercy of a prospector's luck, an inventor's genius, a woman's caprice—nay, you are at the mercy of your own instruments. Your capital is alive and cries for food."[42]

Virtue has disappeared, religion is a fraud, clergy and priesthood are mercenary, cowardly, and interested time-servers. "The priests and the parsons are salary-slaves as much as the workers are wage-

slaves. The majority of them dare not preach the Gospel of Humanity, Justice, and Socialism from their pulpits owing to their fear of their paymasters. Religion is divorced from business, politics, the administration of public authorities, the treatment of the aged worker, and written across the actions of the professing Christians is 'Self-interest; every man for himself and the Workhouse take the hindmost.'"[43]

Life is hell, and only Socialism can regenerate the world.

Things are all wrong, and we
must put them right
So say all Socialists, and truly
too.
Man does not get the chance
here to subdue
The brute in self; and hence the
fearful blight
Which makes one sicken at the
dreadful sight
Of all society in one hell stew.
[44]

Apparently all British workers spend their lives in terrible misery and constant privation. Hunger and despair are their constant companions, and they will see in Socialism their only salvation even if Socialism should destroy individual liberty, for to them individual liberty is a word without meaning. One of the most prominent British Socialists, Mr. Philip Snowden, M.P., in a pamphlet addressed to working men, writes: "Let those who fear that Socialism will destroy individual liberty and hinder intellectual development go with their talk to the machine-

workers of our great northern towns, who are chained for eleven hours a day to a monotonous toil, with the eye of the overseer and the fear of dismissal spurring them on to an exertion which leaves them at the end of their day's work physical wrecks, with no ambition but to restore their wasted energies at the nearest public-house. Let them go with their talk of the blessings of civilisation to the pottery and chemical workers, whose systems are poisoned, whose sight is destroyed, where, through the bodies of the parents being saturated with poison, half the children are born dead, and of the rest not one in four lives to be five—tell them to hold fast to their share of the blessings of our glorious civilisation. Or go to the sweaters' victims, living, eating, working, dying in one room, for which a vampire landlord will take in rent one-half of all the family can earn by working day and night—talk to them of individual liberty and warn them of the tyranny of the coming Socialism. Or go on a bitterly cold winter morning to the dock gates of one of our great ports and see thousands of men waiting in the hope of a day's job, and watch how a few here and there of the strongest are selected, and the rest left to another day of hunger and despair; or, wait still, and see how a few remain behind in the hope that their mate may meet with an accident and 'they can snatch at the work he had.' Why, to talk of individual freedom and equality of opportunity under a system of cannibalistic competition like this is like the mocking laughter of a raving maniac gloating over the torture of the victim it holds in its murderous grip."[45] In another popular pamphlet the worker is told: "After all, John, does it not strike you that there is some foul iniquity in a system which allows one part of the community to do another portion of it to death and to rob and

enslave those it is pleased to let live? Do you not see that those your capitalists find it convenient and profitable to employ may live; and that those they do not choose to employ must die? Do you not see that these are hurried and driven hither and thither in haggard, destitute misery; are thrust into festering heaps in your foul slums; into your gaols, and penitentiaries, and workhouses; that they wander in hopeless misery, hungering within sight of food, penniless amid plenty, enforcedly idle, and work to which they can have no access lying upon every hand of them, as though the world were under an enchantment and God were dead!"[46]

The British working man, as he is generally known, is a manly and very independent personage. As a rule his master is more afraid of him than he is of his master. Yet, according to the picture drawn of him by the Socialists, he is a timorous, cowardly, whining, pitiful creature who has to cringe to his tyrannic employers:

See the toiler, how he slaves
For a trifle of his toil.
How disease and death he braves,
Yet the masters take the spoil;
And how often, cap in hand,
Trembling, pleading piteously,
He is forced to take his stand
In the mart of slavery.

Oh! ye tyrants of the earth,
Who make others' ruin your trade,

'Midst licentious love and mirth
Fashion, pomp, and church
parade.
Do you never think, oh, tell
[16]
Of the hideous crime and
shame
That has made this earth a hell
Of commercial fraud and
shame?[47]

During the week the British workers work at most five and a half days out of seven, and as a rule they work during from eight to ten hours a day. Generally speaking, the pace at which British workmen work is not forced. Except in a few special industries overwork among the working men is practically unknown. Besides, the pace at which work is performed is as a rule determined not by the employer, but by the employees. Nevertheless we read, "It is monstrous that, while some half million of men are vainly seeking employment, millions of their fellows should have no respite from arduous ill-requited toil and should be hastening to a premature death through overwork."[48] In prose and verse the British workers are constantly told that they are slaves[49] who are driven into starvation and suicide:

Let them brag until in the face
they are black
That over oceans they hold
their sway,
Of the flag of Old England, the
Union Jack,
About which I have
something to say.
'Tis said that it floats o'er the

free; but it waves
Over thousands of hard-
worked, ill-paid British
slaves,
Who are driven to pauper and
suicide graves—
The starving poor of Old
England.

Chorus.

'Tis the poor, the poor
the taxes have
to pay,
The poor who are
starving every
day,
Who faint and die on
the King's
highway—
The starving poor of
Old England.

There's the slaves of the needle
and the slaves of the
mine,
[17]
The postmen, and the sons of
the plough,
And the hard-worked servants
on the railway line,
Who get little by the sweat of
their brow.
'Tis said that the labourer is
worthy of his hire;
But of whom does he get it?
we'd like to enquire.

Not of any mill-owner, or
farmer, or squire,
Who grind down the poor of
Old England.[50]

Now let us cast a glance at the Socialist picture of the society of the future under Socialistic rule.

The first thing which Socialism would do would be to organise work, for "practical Socialism is a kind of national scheme of co-operation, managed by the State."[51] There would be no more employers, for "under Socialism all the work of the nation would be managed by the nation for the nation,"[52] and all would have plenty to eat, because "Socialism would leave no man to starve."[53] "All the work of the nation would be organised—that is to say, it would be ordered or arranged so that no one need be out of work, and so that no useless work need be done, and so that no work need be done twice where once would serve."[54]

It is expected that the national organisation and administration of all the industries would prove more efficient than private enterprise. We are assured that "under Socialism the efficiency of production developed by Capitalism will not only be preserved but improved. Mechanical invention will be encouraged and utilised to the utmost."[55] Compulsory labour, State regulation of work, and increased production would lead to increased consumption and increased comfort. "Who would deny that, if it is everybody's duty to work, if the production of unnecessary—nay, even of injurious—articles is abolished, if production is organised in conformity with the real wants and pleasures of mankind—who would deny, I ask, that the standard of life of the whole human race might be raised

infinitely above its present grade?"[56]

Although Socialism would make work compulsory to all, and place every man, woman, and child under the direction of the great Socialist organisation with its army of officials, and although it would destroy individual liberty as at present understood, by placing the daily life of every citizen under Government regulations and restrictions, it would bring with it a greater liberty. Unfortunately the Socialists fail to say what that liberty consists in, and we must take their assurances in lieu of details. "Those who fear that Socialism will destroy individual liberty fail to distinguish between liberty and licence. Individualism is licence—it is the freedom of the individual to do as he likes without regard to the effect of his action on others, or even without regard to his own best welfare. Socialism is liberty; for it will restrict the freedom of the individual to inflict injury upon others or to do what is morally injurious to himself."[57]

Socialism will release the British slaves out of their slavery, and restore them to everlasting freedom. "Such Socialism as we champion means for all future generations not slavery, but full and never-ending freedom."[58] "Socialism declares it to be the duty of man to remove all artificial barriers to the improvement of circumstances, in order that humanity, as a whole, may have freedom and all possible assistance to attain to its full stature, physically, mentally, and spiritually."[59]

With the introduction of the Socialist *régime* the earth would, as by a magician's wand, be transformed into a paradise. Over-population, bad harvests, the maladjustment of international demand and supply, and individual folly, laziness,

wastefulness, improvidence, and passion would apparently no longer have the same unfortunate consequences which they have now. "The struggle for individual existence disappears...."[60] "The words 'poor' and 'charity' will be expunged from the dictionary as relics of a barbarous past."[61] "There would be no starvation, there would be no pauperism, there would be no sweaters; there would be no barefooted children in the streets; there would be no fraudulent trustees, no bankrupts; there would be no slums, no annual massacre of innocents by preventable disease; there would be hardly such a thing known as ignorance, there would be scarcely any drunkenness, and crime would shrink to microscopic dimensions."[62]

"Practical Socialism would educate the people. It would provide cheap and pure food. It would extend and elevate the means of study and amusement. It would foster literature and science and art. It would encourage and reward genius and industry. It would abolish sweating and jerry-work. It would demolish the slums and erect good and handsome dwellings. It would compel all men to do some kind of useful work. It would recreate and nourish the craftsman's pride in his craft. It would protect women and children. It would raise the standard of health and morality; and it would take the sting out of pauperism by paying pensions to honest workers no longer able to work."[63]

"There is something in Socialism to kill ignorance and to destroy vice. There is something in it to shut up the gaols, to do away with prostitution, to reduce crime and drunkenness, and wipe out for ever the sweater and the slums, the beggars and the idle rich, the useless fine ladies and lords, and to make it

possible for sober and willing workers to live healthy, and happy, and honourable lives."[64]

The Socialist Government would apparently be all-powerful and all-wise. At any rate, it would improve the character of the people. "Socialism would teach and train all children wisely; it would foster genius and devotion to the common good; it would kill scamping, and loafing, and jerrymandering; it would give us better health, better homes, better work, better food, better lives, and better men and women."[65]

When Socialism is introduced and private capital abolished, the golden age of the world will begin:

When all mankind are workers,
And no drones in the hive;
Oh, what a happy, glorious time
They'll have who are alive.
This world will be a garden,
An Eden full of bliss;
Oh, brother—sister—won't you strive
For such a state as this?

There will be no starving children, no;
Nor tramps, nor beggars then;
No workhouses, nor prisons, and
No slums, nor sweater's den.
The land-grabber and the vampire,
And the fleecer of our toil,
Will all have ceased to crush us

In their vile rush for the
spoil.[66]

So far we have looked chiefly at the economic consequences which the introduction of Socialism is going to bring about. However, according to the Socialists, it is not true that "Socialism is merely sordid and material, and has no regard for the more ideal side of human interests. The Socialist recognises, far more than others, the higher ideals of human life as being its true end."[67] Therefore "Socialism seeks to improve the physical, mental, and spiritual environment of every man, woman, and child, so that all mankind may be purer, healthier, happier, stronger, nobler, and that each generation may be nearer perfection than the one immediately preceding."[68] In other words, "the creation of a higher type of mankind than the modern man will be the result of Socialism. Men will have no need to think, day in, day out, where to get the bread for to-morrow."[69] "Material conditions form the fundamental basis of human existence. When these become common property, free to all and abundant for all, they will cease to have that importance they now possess. The sordid struggle for mere material things will disappear; free play will be given to man's higher faculties, and the struggle, competition, or emulation between man and man will be for the realisation of his highest conceivable aspirations."[70]

According to many Socialists, money and wages would disappear. Food, clothing, lodging, &c., would be given gratis to the citizens. "Under ideal Socialism there would be no money at all and no wages. The industry of the country would be organised and managed by the State, much as the Post Office now is; goods of all kinds would be produced and

distributed for use, and not for sale, in such quantities as were needed; hours of labour would be fixed, and every citizen would take what he or she desired from the common stock. Food, clothing, lodging, fuel, transit, amusements, and all other things would be absolutely free, and the only difference between a prime minister and a collier would be the difference of rank and occupation."[71]

Not only food, clothing, and shelter would be supplied gratis by a bountiful State to the people. In order to banish *ennui* from among the workers, entertainments and amusements also would be provided, free of charge. Gratis travel on the railways would make life a permanent holiday, and the last cause of dissatisfaction would be removed by transferring the surroundings of the gratuitously maintained and amused people into a garden of Eden. "I would have the towns rebuilt with wide streets, with detached houses, with gardens and fountains and avenues of trees. I would make the railways, the carriage of letters, and the transit of goods as free as the roads and bridges. I would make the houses loftier and larger, and clear them of all useless furniture. I would institute public dining-halls, public baths, public washhouses on the best plans, and so set free the hands of those slaves—our English women. I would have public parks, public theatres, music-halls, gymnasiums, football and cricket fields, public halls and public gardens for recreation and music and refreshment. I would have all our children fed and clothed and educated at the cost of the State. I would have them all taught to play and to sing. I would have them all trained to athletics and to arms. I would have public halls of science. I would have the people become their own artists, actors, musicians, soldiers, and police. Then,

by degrees, I would make all these things free."[72] In the words of the Socialist poet—

We'll grow up true men and
women
And enjoy life from our birth.
[73]

Men, being no longer compelled to work hard for a living, will lose the desire for wealth and all that wealth supplies and will devote themselves more and more to the culture of their mind. "Under Socialism the possession of riches will cease to be a ruling passion, for honest labour will be a guarantee against want, and riches will no longer be the passport to social position. Under such conditions the possession of riches will be a superfluous burden which no sane man will wish to bear."[74] "When land and capital are the common property of all the people, class distinctions, as we know them at present, will no longer exist. The Mind will then be the standard by which a man's place among his fellows will be determined."[75] Hence "Socialism means the elevation of the struggle for existence from the material to the intellectual plane. Socialism will raise the struggle for existence into a sphere where competition shall be emulation, where the treasures are boundless and eternal, and where the abundant wealth of one does not cause the poverty of another."[76]

The poet has described in a vision this phase of the golden age of Socialism as follows:

A strain of distant music
Floats on the gentle breeze,
Its captivating sweetness

Bends e'en the proudest
knees;
Now soft as angel whispers,
Then, loud as trumpet's blast
It sounds the knell of sorrows
And pains for ever past.

Now sweeter and more varied,
The music doth appear;
Ten thousand harps Æolian
Seem to be drawing near.
Ten thousand angels' voices
[24]
Are mingled with the strain,
Chanting the song of Freedom
—
Justice has come to reign;

Telling of bounteous harvests,
Of waving golden corn,
Waiting the reaper's sickle,
And asking to be shorn;
Lands rich with milk and honey
Promised in days of yore;
Asking all those that hunger
To eat and faint no more.

The song grows loud and
mighty
As thunder in the storm,
The tyrant quakes and
trembles,
And hides his guilty form;
And stronger and still stronger
The joyous chorus grows—
Rejoice! all ye that labour,
Ye triumph o'er your foes.[77]

"Socialism, being at the same time the sublimest science, art, and religion, will naturally elevate man. The British people will become a nation of scientists and philosophers who, throwing natural enjoyments aside, will lead a life of pure intellectual happiness. Mortal men will become demi-gods. Socialism will justify God's way to man."[78] "Socialism comes as the Angel of Light bearing to mankind this message of truth. Socialism, equipped with all the learning of the ages, takes up the ripest teaching of the poet, the philosopher, the economist, the scientist, the historian, and joins the conclusion of each together into one harmonious whole. Now we know that suffering, misery, and poverty are a violation of God's will. Now we know that the fulness of time has come for us to cast the last relic of our fallen nature from us and to follow the beckoning angel who is waiting to lead us back through the gates of Paradise into an Eden of intellectual joys."[79]

These things shall be! a loftier
race
Than e'er the world hath
known shall rise
With flame of freedom in their
souls,
And light of science in their
eyes.

They shall be gentle, brave, and
strong,
To spill no drop of blood, but
dare
All that may plant man's
lordship firm
On earth, and fire, and sea,
and air.

Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.

New arts shall bloom of loftier mould,
And mightier music thrill the skies,
And every life shall be a song
When all the earth is paradise.

These things—they are no dreams—shall be
For happier men when we are gone.
These golden days for them shall dawn,
Transcending aught we gaze upon.[80]

All men will be brothers. The difference among nations and races will disappear by the rule of love and justice. "Justice is to be the foundation on which we must build: not the kind of justice we have hitherto considered as sufficient for us, and which many countries pride themselves is their watchword and standard, but a justice that demands freedom for all."[81]

Equal rights it gives, my brothers,
To the eagle and the dove;

Right to air, and light, and knowledge,
Right to rise your toil above —
Hearken! hearken! O, my brothers,
For this new great Right is Love.[82]

Wars will be abolished.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming;
The pen shall supersede the sword,
And right, not might, shall be the lord
In the good time coming.
Worth, not birth, shall rule mankind,
And be acknowledged stronger;
The proper impulse has been giv'n—
Wait a little longer.[83]

Being a religion of peace and love, and preaching the brotherhood of man, Socialism will conquer the world. "Socialism with its promise of freedom, its larger hope for humanity, its triumph of peace over war, its binding of the races of the earth into one all-embracing brotherhood, must prevail."[84] "We mean the establishment of a political power which shall have for its conscious and definite aim the common ownership and control of the *whole* of the world's industry, exchange, &c."[85]

According to many Socialists, Socialism is not an original religion, but it is the most sublime form of Christianity. "Socialism is in accordance with the revealed will of God."[86] "Karl Marx was an utter pagan, but there is not an essential proposition in 'Das Kapital' that Jesus of Nazareth did not inculcate. Is it a question of rent? You are as much entitled to immunity from it as the birds of the air, or the grass of the fields. Is it a question of usury or interest? Lend, hoping for nothing again. Is it a question of profit or inequitable exchange? Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you."[87] "Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism? Unless we are prepared to deny the truth of the Gospel, there can be but one answer—Yes. And Socialism naturally evolves from Christianity."[88] Socialism will mean the establishment of the rule of Christ upon earth. "The political democracy, dominated by the social ideal, will be the coming of Christ to rule the nations in righteousness."[89] The Socialist leaders see visions. "I do sometimes dream dreams, and I see a vision of what the world will be when this spirit of love and sacrifice which has actuated some noble spirits in all ages and which shone with the glory of full perfection in the life and example of Jesus of Nazareth—I sometimes see, as through a glass darkly, a vision of what the world will be when this spirit of love and sacrifice shall animate all men. I see our modern towns swept away, and in their place beautiful cities whose buildings reflect the pride of the community in their common life, and whose healthy homes show the value society attaches to the individual life. I see everywhere a change come over the face of the landscape; every meadow smiles with plenty, every valley blossoms as the rose, every hill is green with the glory of Lebanon. I see a revived art

and a revived literature. I see a people healthy, happy, cultured, contented, whose wealth is life, full and free, 'whose ways are ways of pleasantness, whose flowery paths are paths of peace.' And my vision extends, though more dimly, beyond the confines of my own dear land, and I see this spirit of brotherhood among the nations has broken down international barriers, and international hatred is no more. The sword is beaten into a ploughshare, the spear into a pruning-hook, and the peoples of all lands are one, each freely sharing of its special bounties to add to the comforts of all."[90]

The new Christian religion, like the old one, demands its saints and its martyrs, if not the reincarnation of Christ. "The only way to regain the earthly paradise is by the old, hard road to Calvary—through persecution, through poverty, through temptation, by the agony and bloody sweat, by the crown of thorns, by the agonising death, and then the resurrection to the New Humanity—purified by suffering, triumphant through Sacrifice."[91]

The new Christ also has his forerunner and herald. "Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., the leader of the Labour Party, resembles John the Baptist,"[92] and the Socialist leaders will do even greater things than did Christ. We are told: "When Christ told His disciples that it was possible for them to do greater things than they had seen Him do they must have been fairly staggered. Just think for a moment of the nature of the works He had done, most of them in their very presence. Those who are striving to obtain a better social order and provide a fairer distribution of the good gifts of God among the sons of men, these men I say, in so far as their efforts are successful, are doing greater things than Christ did

when He performed the miracle of feeding the hungry."[93]

"Man is only irresistible when he acts from passion. The masses of men are never moved except by passions feelings, interests. It is of course to the discontented wage-earners that the Socialist can appeal with the greatest chance of success."[94] All Socialists agree in depicting to the workers life in present society as hell incarnate and in giving a picture of life in the Socialist State of the future which resembles the descriptions found in the "Arabian Nights" tales. They only disagree in this: that some promise him heaven, whilst those possessed of less enthusiasm promise him only an earthly paradise.

FOOTNOTES:

[36] Gronlund, *The Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 187.

[37] *Ibid.* p. 184.

[38] *Forward*, October 12, 1907.

[39] Neil, *Songs of the Social Revolution*, p. 22.

[40] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 140.

[41] Fisher, *The Babies' Tribute*, p. 6.

[42] Glyde, *The Misfortune of being a Working Man*, p. 1.

[43] *Ibid.* p. 7.

[44] Neil, *Songs of the Social Revolution*, p. 1.

[45] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, pp. 4-5.

[46] Washington, *A Corner in Flesh and Blood*, p. 15.

[47] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 29.

[48] Quelch, *The Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 7.

[49] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 18.

[50] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 32.

[51] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 100.

[52] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* p. 7.

[53] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 96.

[54] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* pp. 5, 6.

[55] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 74.

[56] Sorge, *Socialism and the Worker*, p. 13.

[57] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, pp. 12, 13.

[58] Hyndman, *Socialism and Slavery*, p. 13.

[59] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 1.

[60] Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, p. 81.

[61] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 170.

[62] Blatchford, *The Pope's Socialism*, p. 16.

[63] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 102.

[64] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 89.

[65] *Ibid.* p. 89.

[66] Neil, *Songs of the Social Revolution*, p. 8.

[67] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 43.

[68] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 1.

[69] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 43.

[70] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 44.

[71] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 103.

[72] *Ibid.* pp. 43, 44.

[73] Neil, *Songs of the Social Revolution*, p. 8.

[74] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 9.

[75] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 24.

[76] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 8.

[77] *Clarion Song Book*, p. 18.

[78] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 8.

[79] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 9.

[80] *Clarion Song Book*, p. 14.

[81] Ford, *Women and Socialism*, p. 2.

[82] *Clarion Song Book*, p. 31.

[83] *Ibid.* p. 25.

[84] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 104.

[85] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 9.

[86] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 15.

[87] Davidson, *The Gospel of the Poor*, p. 153.

[88] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 16.

[89] Snowden, *The Christ that is to be*, p. 13.

[90] Snowden, *The Christ that is to be*, pp. 13, 14.

[91] *Ibid.* p. 14.

[92] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 4.

[93] Ward, *Prevention is Better than Cure*, pp. 2, 5, and 6.

[94] Gronlund, *The Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 184.

CHAPTER III[ToC]

THE GRIEVANCES OF THE SOCIALISTS

"Socialism is not only a theory of another and better system of society: it is an indictment of the existing order."[95] The Socialist conception of society as at present constituted, given in the preceding chapter, will have prepared the reader to some extent for the Socialist grievances. These grievances are three in number, and may be summed up as follows:

(1) The workers are for all practical purposes slaves who are kept in chains and forced to work by

the capitalist class.

(2) The rich men cause the poverty of the poor by defrauding them of the largest part of their wages.

(3) The workers receive only from one third to one fourth of the wage which is their rightful due.

Let us look into these grievances.

According to the Socialist leaders, the workers—

> Helots in hunger nursed
> Slaves of their reign
> accursed[96]—

keep the rich in affluence. Nevertheless they themselves are kept in poverty, degradation, and slavery by the capitalists whom they nourish by their labour. "The landlord owns the raw material and can live in idleness. The capitalist owns the machinery and can live in idleness. The worker has nothing, except his ability to work, and he cannot work without the consent of the landlord and the capitalist. Therefore, he is virtually a slave. He cannot control his own life."[97]

As a matter of fact the position of the worker is worse than was that of the slave. "It did not always pay to starve a slave, because if he died you might have to buy another one. Therefore the lot of the slave under a good master was in many respects better than that of the proletariat in our great cities."[98] "Poverty rather than property is the reward of labour to-day."[99] "Poverty is our reward for creating plenty, and the class that lives in luxury by exploiting our labour contemptuously informs us that the law of supply and demand condemns us to suffer the most hideous privation whenever our

excessive industry has created a glut of all the things that satisfy human needs."[100]

The workers are unfree, being enslaved by the capitalists. It is true that they possess freedom of contract, but freedom of contract, like individual liberty, is an illusion, because the workers, being penniless, are compelled to accept whatever work is obtainable, and to be satisfied with whatever wages are offered. "The right to sell in the markets is now well established, but the chief difficulty with the majority of workers lies in the fact that they have nothing but their labour to sell, and a market is not easy to find even for that."[101]

Although co-operation has made millions of workers in Germany, France, Belgium, and other countries prosperous and independent, independence is, according to the Socialists, for some unspecified reason, unobtainable for the workers of Great Britain, and co-operation is a failure. "The chance of the great bulk of the labourers ever coming to work upon their own land and capital in associations for co-operative production, has become even less hopeful than it ever was."[102] "Everywhere the workman is coming to understand that it is practically hopeless for him, either individually or co-operatively, to own the constantly growing mass of capital by the use of which he lives."[103] The advent of the great industry has not benefited but harmed him. "The supersession of the small by the great industry has given the main fruits of invention and the new power over Nature to a comparatively small proprietary class, upon whom the mass of the people are dependent for leave to earn their living."[104] "The worker is now a mere item in a vast industrial army over the organisation and direction

of which he has no control. He is free, but free only to choose to which master he will sell his labour—free only to decide from which proprietor he will beg that access to the new instruments of production without which he cannot exist."[105]

As the capitalist class owns the factories, workshops, &c., the worker has become to that class a slave in the full and generally accepted meaning of the word. "The effect of private property in land and capital is in all essential respects the same as was the effect of private property in human beings. In each case slavery is the result. The form may have changed, but the substance remains."[106] "The labourer to-day is a slave, and labour has become a mark of bondage."[107] Except for a slight difference in outward form, the British wage-slaves are no better off than were the black slaves on the sugar plantations in the past. "Much as the 'free-born Briton' may dislike to hear the painful truth recited, it is a fact, not to be controverted, that four-fifths of our total population are bound as completely and as miserably as ever was a black African slave to a Western planter. There is no real freedom which is not economic freedom. He is a slave who depends for his bread upon the will or the whim of a man like himself, or of a number of such masters."[108] In other words, capitalism and slave-owning are for all practical purposes synonymous words, as may be seen from the Socialist Catechism: "*Q.* What constitutes the chief difference between capitalism and slave-owning? *A.* The fact that the capitalist goes through the form of bargaining with the labourer as to the amount of the portion of the produce that shall be returned to him.—*Q.* What is this farce called? *A.* Freedom of contract.—*Q.* In what sense is it free? *A.* In this sense—that the labourer is free to

take what is offered or nothing.—*Q.* Has he anything to fall back upon? *A.* He has absolutely nothing in countries where the tyranny of capitalism is untempered by any form of Socialism."[109]

To those working men who might object that it is a gross exaggeration to say that the British worker is a slave, and that he is penniless, the Socialist agitator answers: "What? You are a free man and not a slave? There are no slaves in this country? What is a slave? One who works at the bidding of another, and only by permission of another, and for the profit of that other. Does not that fit your case exactly? Do you work when you like and idle when you like? Not you! You work when the capitalist requires your labour, when your services will be useful in making a profit for him. When that is not the case you can starve in the gutter, although there may be all the necessaries of life in profusion around you. These things do not belong to you, although you and your class have made them; they are so much wealth which your masters have acquired from your unpaid labour, things which you have produced, but for which you have never been paid, out of which you have been swindled by the natural operation of the system of wage-slavery of which you are the unconscious victim. From this condition of things there is no escape while the whole of the people do not own the means of production. Nothing but the abolition of the class ownership of the means of life, and the substitution of ownership of the whole people, will abolish this form of slavery."[110]

The foregoing grievance is absurd. If regular work for a regular wage, agreed upon by contract, is slavery, then all salaried men from the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor downward are also

"wage-slaves."

The Socialist agitator, after having told the working men that they are no better off than negro slaves, then asks his hearers, as a rule: "Why is it that the producers in this country are the poorest of the population? Why is it that those who do not produce are the richest?"[111] The manner in which this question is put suggests the reply. Indeed, all Socialists agree in holding the rich responsible for the poverty of the poor, as the following utterances will show: "Socialism contends that the poverty of the poor is caused by robbery on the part of the rich. The mansion explains the hovel. Belgravia has its counterpart in Shoreditch. The factory, the foundry, the ship-building yard account for the shooting lodge, the yacht, and the tours in foreign lands. The long day's toil of one class renders possible the life-long play of the other."[112] "If you have no unemployed at the top of the social ladder you will have none at the bottom."[113]

"The riches of the rich class are the cause of the poverty of the masses."[114] "You make the automobile, he rides in it. If it were not for you, he would walk; and if it were not for him, you would ride."[115] "Colossal poverty is the foundation of colossal wealth; he who would eliminate the poverty of the masses assails the wealth of the few."[116]

The foregoing arguments, or rather assertions, may sound very convincing and may be exceedingly useful for propaganda purposes, but they are disproved by facts. If the existence of the rich were the cause of the poverty of the masses, the workers in countries which possess few rich capitalists, such as Ireland, Spain, Italy, Servia, and Bulgaria, should be exceedingly well off; the workers in the countries

where the richest millionaires live, such as the United States, should be the poorest. In reality, the American workmen are the most prosperous, whilst the workers in Ireland and other millionaire-less countries are the poorest. Rich men are not the consumers, but merely the trustees and managers, of the national wealth which is invested chiefly in reproductive undertakings—mills, railways, mines, &c.—which supply comforts and conveniences to all.

The capitalists, the employers, British Socialists say, have become rich by defrauding the worker of his wages. The worker must starve so that a few rich people may live in luxury, and things will become better for the worker only when there are no more rich men. "The gains of the capitalist are simply the losses of labour! The partly or wholly unearned incomes of the rich consist of the unpaid, withheld wages of the industrious poor."[117] "Only by living off another man's labour and denying another man the fruits of his toil can riches be acquired. Riches are directly responsible for poverty, and the art of being rich is the art of keeping one's neighbour poor. When there are no rich there will be no poor. To the wealth of the few, acquired at the expense of the many, and not to drink or want of thrift, are all the evils of our social life to be ascribed."[118] "Production is carried on to-day purely in the interest and for the profit of the class which owns the instruments of production."[119]

There are ninety-and-nine who
live and die
In want and hunger and cold,
That one may revel in luxury,
And be wrapped in its silken
fold;

The ninety-and-nine in their
hovels bare,
The one in a palace with riches
rare.[120]

Ye poor of wealthy England,
Who starve and sweat and
freeze
By labour sore to fill the store
Of those who live at ease;
'Tis time to know your real
friends,
To face your real foe,
And to fight for your right
Till ye lay your masters low;
Small hope for you of better
days
Till ye lay your masters low.
[121]

The working men are, according to the Socialist agitators, "excluded" from property by the capitalist class which owns all the land, factories, machinery, &c. The capitalist class has thus reserved for itself a monopoly of all the instruments of production. Consequently, "the only means by which the excluded class can live is by working for the capitalist class—by getting some one or other of the capitalist class to allow them access to the tools and materials in his possession, and pay them wages in return for their labour."[122] However, the capitalists do not grant to the workers access to the instruments of production free of charge. They exact a toll from them, and employ them only if, by so doing, they can secure a profit for themselves. In the fact that an employer will engage workmen only if he can make a profit by their labour, the Socialists see a cruel

injustice. "Your capitalist class draw upon this excluded horde of landless, toolless, foodless lack-alls, and do actually find work for as many as they can employ at a profit to themselves. This excluded class have no rights—not even the elementary right to exist. What God meant by creating them when He knew, or might have known, that everything belonged to the capitalists, nobody can understand."[123] "The whole of our industrial system is founded on a principle existing nowhere else in Nature, the principle of production and distribution for profit. If no employer can make a profit out of the worker's labour he is cast into the unemployed army."[124] "Seven out of every eight persons in your community, 37,500,000 of the men, and women, and children who form your nation, can lay no claim to any right to exist—exist only on sufferance. If one or other of the irresponsible persons who own the country can be induced to allow them to earn their bread, well and good; if not, they must die. At the present moment there are 700,000 persons shut out in this manner from any chance of obtaining food to eat. You call it being 'out of work,' and can see the spectral army, 700,000 strong, hungry and in want. They are not kept idle and hungry because there is no 'work.' The earth is there with all its boundless store that their 'work' would turn into wealth if they could but get at it. They are kept idle because those who own the country cannot find them employment at a profit to themselves, because the blind, fatuous insanity of your 'system of trade' makes no provision even for keeping its slaves in work."[125]

According to the Socialists, the employer of labour has no right to work at a profit, and the capitalist has no right to demand rent or interest. "The great central truth of Socialistic economy, ever to be kept

in mind, is Adam Smith's definition of wages: 'The produce of labour is the natural recompense or wages of labour.' From this 'natural recompense' rent and profit are, in Socialist eyes, unnatural, illegitimate abstractions, to be recovered and added to wages as speedily as possible."[126] "Profit is the result of unpaid labour; it is the produce of the working man, for which the latter receives no equivalent. If he received his proper and just share, if the capitalist could not deprive him of this, then the capitalist could make no profit."[127]

Not only are "rent" and "profit" illegitimate abstractions, but they are downright theft. Every landowner, every banker, every manufacturer, every shopkeeper is a thief. All business for profit is swindling. "Land-rent and capital-rent are thefts from the produce of labour."[128] "The manufacturer aims primarily at producing, by means of the labour he has stolen from others, not goods, but profits."[129] "What is successful business but cheating? What is the whole basis of capitalist industry but the use of the means of production, not for the legitimate end of producing wealth for use, but for the purpose of making profit for the few by despoiling, sweating, pillaging, and murdering the many?"[130]

Even the more moderate Socialists complain that work is carried on by the employers only "at a profit to themselves," and they wish to abolish this state of affairs, which, they argue, is demoralising to the working men, and is the cause of low wages and unemployment. "The workman is called into the workshop when capital can profitably employ him, and turned adrift again the moment capital finds it can no longer turn his services to profitable account. He is not consulted as to when he shall be employed

or when cast adrift. His necessities and those of his dependents are no concern of anyone save himself. He has no right to employment, no one is under obligation to find him work, nor is he free to work for himself, since he has neither the use of land nor the command of the necessary capital."[131] "So long as industry is carried on for profit instead of for use, for gain instead of for need, so long must the evils of low wages and no wages go on."[132]

The grievance that the manufacturers manufacture "not for use but for profit" is ridiculous. The manufacturers manufacture things which the public will buy and use. There is consequently no distinction between manufacturing for use and manufacturing for profit, except this, that no manufacturer will give his time and trouble, and run considerable risks, without adequate compensation. The complaint must therefore be limited to the fact that the employer of labour makes a profit. The question now arises: "What does the manufacturer do with his earnings?" In the vast majority of cases he will use by far the larger part of his profits for renewing machinery and enlarging his works, and thus increase the national capital and the national power of production, spending privately only a director's salary which he would also receive as a director-employee of the Socialist commonwealth. "The employer who works without a profit breaks himself,"[133] and in breaking himself he breaks up the factory. Universal production regardless of profit would lead to universal bankruptcy, whilst the curtailing of profits may lead to a proportionate curtailment in the expansion of industry and in the production of articles for use, and to general poverty. It has the same effect whether the workers destroy the capitalist's capital or whether they break the

machinery and devastate the corn-fields.

The complaints of the Socialists as to the way in which the workers are exploited by the capitalist class are founded not only on arguments such as those given in the foregoing but on figures as well, and these are exceedingly curious and interesting. Under titles such as "How the Worker is Robbed,"[134] statements are made every day, and by all Socialists, which are to prove that the national income is inequitably divided between capitalists and workers. These statements are calculated to make every workman's blood boil, and they seem to confirm the contention of the Socialists that the capitalists inhumanely plunder the working masses. However, these figures are so palpably false and so grossly misleading that attention cannot sufficiently strongly be drawn to the deception which is constantly being practised upon the workers. I hope, therefore, that my readers will patiently and carefully consider the following.

The figures relating to the yearly income of the "capitalist class" and the "working class" which are given in innumerable Socialistic writings, and which are brought forward at almost every Socialist meeting and lecture, are usually taken from a pamphlet entitled "Facts for Socialists from the Political Economists and Statisticians," published by the Fabian Society. The copy lying before me bears the notice, "Tenth Edition (Revised), 111th thousand, 1906." That pamphlet furnishes the statistical basis of fact to the Socialist agitation. Its effect may be measured by its enormous circulation. It contains a vast number of quotations from Blue-books, political economists, and statisticians; and a certain show of learning, of thoroughness, and of conscientiousness

gives it at first sight the appearance of being a reliable and honest production. However, appearances are proverbially deceptive.

According to "Facts for Socialists," the whole national income amounts to 1,800,000,000*l.* per year (page 3), and is derived from the following sources:

"I.—Rent

"The total profits from the ownership of lands, houses, tithes, &c., the rents of mines, quarries, ironworks, gasworks, waterworks, canals, fishings, shootings, markets, tolls, &c., must amount to at least 290,000,000*l.*[135]

"II.—Interest on Capital

"The profits of public companies, foreign investments, railways, &c., assessed to income tax in the United Kingdom, the interest payable from British public funds and from Indian, Colonial, and Foreign Governments' funds, and the interest on capital employed in private undertakings of manufacture or trade cannot be less than 360,000,000*l.* Adding hereto the rent (290,000,000*l.*), we have a total of 650,000,000*l.* for rent and interest together. This represents the proportion of the nation's income claimed from the workers, *not in return for any service rendered to the community, but merely as the payment for permission to use the land and the already accumulated capital of the country*.[136]

"III.—Profits and Salaries

"The numbers and total income of this large class cannot be exactly ascertained. It includes workers of

all grades, from the exceptionally skilled artisan to the Prime Minister, and from the city clerk to the President of the Royal Academy. It is convenient for statistical purposes to include in it all those who do not belong to the 'manual labour class.' If we take the 'rent of ability' to have increased in the same proportion as the assessments to income tax, this prosperous body may be estimated to receive for its work as profits and salaries about 460,000,000*l.* annually.[137]"

Adding up the income from "Rent," "Interest and Capital," and "Profits and Salaries," the pamphlet continues:

"The Classes

"The total drawn by the legal disposers of what are sometimes called the 'three rents' of land, capital, and ability amounts at present to about 1,110,000,000*l.* yearly, or just under two-thirds of the total produce.

"And the Masses

"Allowing for the increase since these estimates were made, we may safely say that the manual labour class receives for all its millions of workers only some 690,000,000*l.*"[138]

In a short table the distribution of the national income is then given as follows:

Rent	£290,000,000
Interest	360,000,000
Profits and Salaries	460,000,000
Total (that is, the income of the legal proprietors of the three natural monopolies of land, capital, and ability)	1,110,000,000
Income of manual labour class	690,000,000
Total produce	£1,800,000,000[139]

At first sight it seems outrageous that "the income of the legal proprietors of the three natural monopolies of land, capital, and ability" should come to 1,110,000,000*l.* per annum, and the income of the manual labour class only to 690,000,000*l.* per annum, about one-third of the whole, especially as we learn on page 4 of the pamphlet that the "idle rich" are only a small fraction of the community. This statement would prove the assertion that the idle rich are causing the poverty of the poor to be correct if it were honest and fair, but it is neither the one nor the other.

In the first place the foregoing statement divides the nation into two classes "the masses" and "the classes": manual labourers and "the legal proprietors of the three natural monopolies." As the pamphlet is

addressed to the uncritical body of general readers, and especially to working men, these will naturally divide, owing to the artful wording of the phrase, the national income between manual labourers and capitalist monopolists. According to this pamphlet everyone who is not a labourer is a capitalist monopolist. Therefore the capitalist monopolist class includes all lawyers and doctors, all parsons and clerks, all officers and salaried officials. Every business man, every farmer, every fisherman, every greengrocer, every baker, every butcher, every sailor, every cobbler, every chimney-sweep, every clerk, being not a wage-earning labourer, is "one of the legal proprietors of the three natural monopolies," or in plainer language, a monopolist. At least, the income of this very large class has barefacedly been credited to the capitalist class, whilst its members have been utilised (on page 4 of the pamphlet) to swell the ranks of the workers. This is dishonesty number one.

The income of the exceptionally skilled artisans, who also form a very large class, is credited on page 7 to the "classes" under the heading "profits and salaries." They also are included among the "monopolists," although their number has likewise been utilised (on page 4) to swell the number of the workers. This is dishonesty number two.

Let us now look at the result of the dishonest Fabian juggling with figures by comparing the statement regarding the national income contained in the Fabian pamphlet with a recent statement of Mr. Chiozza Money, M.P., who is a Socialist, and who divides the national income as follows:

Income of working class (33,000,000 people)	about £650,000,000
Income of middle class (all except manual labourers and the rich—small business men, managers, clerks, public servants, &c., with incomes up to £700—9,750,000 people)	about 475,000,000
Income of rich (with incomes £700 and above) (1,250,000 people)	about 600,000,000
Total	about £1,725,000,000[140]

From the foregoing statement it appears that the rich draw not two-thirds, but only one-third, of the

national income, and this fact should be carefully borne in mind in view of the contents of the following pages.

The pamphlet states on page 6 that 650,000,000*l.* per annum are paid in the shape of rent and interest, "not in return for any service rendered to the community, but merely as the payment for permission to use the land and the already accumulated capital of the country." The national capital is invested chiefly in perishable objects such as houses, factories, railways, steamships, mines, &c., which depreciate unless kept in proper repair. There is wear and tear in capital as in everything else. Capital is lost and destroyed every day. Lastly, the national capital is growing, and must continue growing, in accordance with the growing capital requirements of the time and the growing number of its inhabitants, or the country will decay. New houses, new factories, new railways, new steamships must be built and new mines be opened to increase the comfort of all. From 200,000,000*l.* to 300,000,000*l.* are thus reinvested every year in Great Britain, and only by this constant process of reinvestment is it possible to maintain and increase the productive power of the country for the benefit of all. The 200,000,000*l.* to 300,000,000*l.* which are yearly reinvested in reproductive undertakings are found by the capitalists, the trustees, directors and managers, not the consumers, of the national industry and of the national wealth. This sum comes out of their earnings, which thus benefit not only the capitalists but the whole nation. Much irrelevant statistical matter is given in the pamphlet, but this large item is left out. That is dishonesty number three.

On page 6 the profits of public companies are treated as "Interest on capital," and interest on capital is disparagingly called "unearned income" on page 7. Most British industries are carried on by limited companies, and limited companies are as a rule formed in this way, that the partners in the former private enterprise become directors. As directors they receive a purely nominal salary. They work as much as they did whilst the business was a private concern, and their income depends on their usually very large holding of shares. The large director-shareholders, and their number is very great, earn their dividends by hard work. Nevertheless their whole income is included in the item "interest on capital," and called "unearned income." This is dishonesty number four.

On page 7 the property of the "manual labour class," or the poor, in land and capital is given as follows:—

In 1901 the deposits in P.O. Savings Bank were	£140,392,916
The deposits in Trustee Savings Banks were	51,966,386
Consols purchased for small holders were	14,450,877
In 1900 the capital of Building Societies was	46,775,143

The funds of Trade-Unions, Co-operative, Friendly, and Provident Societies were	72,219,991
The funds of Industrial Life Assurance Societies were	22,998,793
Total	£348,804,106[141]

In reality the property of the "manual labour class" in land and capital amounts not to 348,804,106*l.*, but to at least 1,000,000,000*l.*[142] This is dishonesty number five.

The imports of Great Britain are larger than the exports by about 150,000,000*l.* The larger part of the money paid for these imports goes in wages paid to foreigners, and is paid away by the British capitalist class out of their earnings. British wage-earners surely cannot expect to be paid wages in respect of articles made abroad. However, no allowance for this large item has been made in comparing the appropriation of the national income between capital and labour. This is dishonesty number six.

Between one hundred and two hundred million pounds of the national income is derived from foreign investments. The income derived from foreign investments should in fairness either be left out of the account or the income of foreign labour, received in respect of these investments, be added to the British labour income. In comparing the income of capital and labour, the pamphlet takes note of the

earnings of British capital on all five continents and on the sea, and compares with it only the income of British labour—although foreign, not British labour, produces the foreign income of British capital.

Giving as authority an ancient Board of Trade Return, and wishing to magnify the difference in the earnings of the idle rich and the industrious poor, the average yearly income of "those of the manual labour class who are best off" is given at 48*l.* per adult. This means 18*s.* per week. In view of the fact that most British workers earn between 1*l.* and 2*l.* per week, that in many Trade-Unions the *average* wage is about 35*s.* per week, the figures given are palpably wrong unless the female workers are included. Whether this is the case or no is not stated, but even if the wages of both sexes should be joined together they appear to be very considerably understated. This is dishonesty number seven.

There are many more unfair, misleading, and dishonest statements in this pamphlet which it would lead too far to enumerate.

Most of the important pamphlets issued by the Fabian Society are signed by their authors. The fact that the most effective, "Facts for Socialists," is unsigned seems to indicate that the author—apparently a well-known leader of the Fabians—had some sense of shame, and it is to be hoped that the Fabian Society will immediately, and publicly, repudiate this dishonest pamphlet.

The statements contained in the pamphlet "Facts for Socialists," may be misleading and utterly dishonest, but they are very useful for propaganda purposes. Nothing is more likely to inflame the masses than to be told that the "idle rich" take more than two-thirds of the national income. The practical

effect of this pamphlet may be seen in utterances such as the following: "It has been estimated that in our country of the wealth produced, one-third is enjoyed by those who earn it and two-thirds by those who have not laboured for it. To put it in other words, of every three pounds earned by labour, one pound goes to him who earned it and two pounds to others who have done nothing towards its production."[143] "For two-thirds of his time the worker is a slave, labouring not for himself but for others."[144] "On the average at the present time the workers produce nearly four times as much as they consume."[145] "Nearly two-thirds of the wealth produced is retained by an eighth of the population."[146] "The great mass of the people, the weekly wage-earners, four out of five of the whole population, toil perpetually for less than a third of the aggregate product of labour, at an annual wage averaging at most 40*l.* per adult, and are hurried into unnecessarily early graves by the severity of their lives."[147] "Out of the wealth which his labour creates, the worker receives but one-third. He is paid one-third the value of his labour, and when he seeks to lay it out he is robbed of one-half its purchasing power, and all this is done by a Christian people."[148] "*Q.* How does the capitalist act? *A.* He extorts from those labourers who are excluded from the land a share of all that they produce, under threat of withholding from them the implements of production and thus refusing to let them work at all. —*Q.* On what terms does the capitalist allow the labourers to work? *A.* The capitalist agrees to return to them as wages about a quarter of what they have produced by their work, keeping the remaining three-quarters for himself and his class.—*Q.* What is this system called? *A.* The capitalist system."[149] "By

analysing the returns of the income-tax, various economists show that the value received by the working class and the superintendents of labour amount to a third or less of the wealth produced. The income-tax returns, however, are not a very reliable test of the degree of exploitation, though, of course, they afford us valuable and incontestable evidence that the worker does not receive more than a third of what he produces. One to four, or one to five, in my opinion, expresses more accurately the rate of exploitation."[150]

I am not prepared to give an estimate how the national income is distributed between hand workers, brain workers, and men who live on their income without doing any useful work, because such an estimate could be arrived at only by guesswork. However, it is quite clear that it is untrue that the wage-earners receive only one-third, one-fourth, or one-fifth of the wages which they ought to receive, as is constantly stated.

FOOTNOTES:

[95] *Justice*, October 19, 1907.

[96] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 13.

[97] *The Worker's Burden*, p. 1.

[98] Hyndman, *Social Democracy*, p. 9.

[99] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 12.

[100] *Protect the Home*, p. 1.

[101] *John Ball*, p. 10.

[102] *Facts for Socialists*, p. 12.

[103] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 15.

[104] *Ibid.* p. 7.

[105] *Ibid.* p. 12.

[106] Keir Hardie, *Can a Man be a Christian on a Pound a Week?* p. 12.

[107] McClure, *Socialism*, p. 27.

[108] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 11.

[109] Joynes, *The Socialist Catechism*, p. 5.

[110] *To the Man in the Street*, Social-Democratic Federation Leaflet.

[111] Hyndman in Debate, *Will Socialism Benefit the English People?* p. 5.

[112] Leatham, *The Class War*, p. 4.

[113] *Socialism, For and Against*, p. 6.

[114] Snowden, *Socialists' Budget*, p. 11.

[115] Debs, *Industrial Unionism*, p. 5.

[116] Kautsky, *Class Struggle*, p. 10.

[117] Hall, *The Old and New Unionism*, p. 4.

[118] Lister, *Riches and Poverty*, pp. 13, 14.

[119] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 7.

[120] *Poems for Socialists*, p. 8.

[121] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 25.

[122] Washington, *A Corner in Flesh and Blood*, p. 14.

[123] *Ibid.*

[124] Benson, *Socialism*, p. 5.

[125] Washington, *Nation of Slaves*, p. 11.

[126] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 30.

[127] *Some Objections to Socialism*, p. 7.

[128] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 45.

[129] Morris, *Useful Work and Useless Toil*, p. 30.

[130] *Some Objections to Socialism*, p. 20.

[131] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 52.

[132] Hall, *The Old and New Unionism*, p. 5.

[133] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 6.

[134] *The Socialist Annual*, 1907, p. 16 f.

[135] *Facts for Socialists*, p. 5.

[136] *Facts for Socialists*, pp. 6, 7.

[137] *Ibid.* p. 7.

[138] *Ibid.* p. 8.

[139] *Facts for Socialists*, pp. 8, 9.

[140] See *Daily News*, November 28, 1907.

[141] *Facts for Socialists*, p. 7.

[142] See Mr. Quail's paper in the *Contemporary Review* for August 1907.

[143] Ward, *The Ideal City*, pp. 5, 6.

[144] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 15.

[145] Quelch, *Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 5.

[146] *Manifesto of the Socialist Party of Great Britain*, p. 8.

[147] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of*

Individualism, p. 8.

[148] Keir Hardie, *Can a Man be a Christian on a Pound a Week?* p. 7.

[149] Joynes, *The Socialist Catechism*, p. 2.

[150] Hazell, *Summary of Marx's "Capital,"* p. 9.

CHAPTER IV[ToC]

THE FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES OF SOCIALISM

In describing the doctrines of Socialism I do not mean to state in detail the whole of the Socialistic theories. Such a statement would fill a volume, it would be excessively tedious to most readers, and it is for all practical purposes quite unnecessary. A statement of the leading doctrines on which the activity of the Socialists is based—the doctrines which are constantly asserted and which are the fundamental dogmas of the Socialist faith—will enable us to obtain a clear view of the foundations upon which the theoretic fabric of Socialism is built, and to judge whether that foundation is scientific and sound, or unscientific and unsound.

The basic doctrine of Socialism, upon which the great edifice of Socialistic theory has been reared, may be summed up in the phrase

"Labour is the only Source of Wealth"

Therefore we read in the celebrated pamphlet "Facts for Socialists," of which some important extracts were given in the preceding chapter: "Commodities are produced solely by the 'efforts and sacrifices' (Cairns), whether of muscle or of brain, of the working portion of the community, employed upon the gifts of Nature. Adam Smith 'showed that labour is the only source of wealth.... It is to labour, therefore, and to labour only, that man owes everything possessed of exchangeable value (McCulloch's 'Principles of Political Economy,' Part II., section 1). 'No wealth whatever can be produced without labour' (Professor Henry Fawcett (Cambridge), 'Manual of Political Economy,' p. 13),"[151]

This statement is scarcely honest, for it quotes opinions of Adam Smith and others which are erroneous, as will be seen in the following, and which have been generally abandoned. This statement may impose upon the simple by its show of learning, but it is somewhat vague, for it only suggests, but does not distinctly assert, that manual labour is the only source of wealth. However, in most—one might say in nearly all—Socialist books, pamphlets, and declarations of policy we find the basic doctrine of Socialism asserted in a form which leaves no doubt that according to the Socialist theories the manual labour of the labourer is the only source of wealth.

The founder of modern Socialism declared, "Labour is the only source of wealth,"[152] and his disciples—at least his British disciples—support that declaration. "All wealth is due to labour; therefore, to the labourers all wealth is due."[153] "Labour applied

to natural objects is the source of all wealth."[154] The Socialist Party of Great Britain declares: "Wealth is natural material converted by labour-power to man's use, and as such is consequently produced by the working class alone."[155] The Independent Labour party asserts: "No man or class of men made the first kind of wealth, such as land, minerals, and water. Therefore no man or class of men should be allowed to call these things their own, or to prevent others from using them (except on certain conditions), as the landowners and mine-owners do now. The only class of human beings who make the second kind of wealth are the workers. Working men and women produce and prepare for us all those things which we use or consume, such as food, clothing, houses, furniture, instruments and implements, trams, railways, pictures, books, gas, drains, and many other things. They produce all the wealth obtained by toil from the land."[156]

Those who maintain that labour, or, as some Socialists assert, the labourer's labour, is the only source of wealth, look merely at the mechanical factor, but omit the force which directs and controls it. The Socialistic argument "We can run the mills without the capitalists, but they cannot run them without us"[157] is misleading. Labour is certainly an indispensable ingredient in production, but it is no more indispensable than is direction, invention, and thrift. Hence it is as absurd to assert "All wealth is due to labour" as to say "All wealth is due to invention," or "All wealth is due to thrift." As the brain is more important than the hand, at least in a highly organised state of production, so invention, organisation, management, and thrift are more important than manual labour, because invention, organisation, management, and thrift alone enable

manual labour, working with modern machinery, to be highly productive. In fact, it may be asserted that wealth is created not so much by labour as by the saving of labour. A factory-owner who is dissatisfied with the profits of his factory or with its products does not get better workers, but gets a better manager or better machinery, keeping his workers. This fact proves that labour is the least important factor in modern production. The doctrine "Labour is the only source of wealth" is untenable and absurd.

Another fundamental doctrine of Socialism is that of

"The Iron Law of Wages"

According to that law, "wages under competition can never be higher than that which will just support the labourer and enable him to renew his kind."[158] In the words of Lassalle, the inventor of the Iron Law of Wages, "the wages of the labourer are limited to the exact amount necessary to keep him alive."[159]

The British Socialist writers tell us: "The average price of wage-labour is the minimum wage—*i.e.* that quantum of the means of subsistence which is absolutely requisite to keep the labourer in bare existence."[160] "The labourer cannot as a rule command more than his cost of subsistence in return for his labour. This principle, that the return to labour is determined by the cost of subsistence of the labourer, is generally known as 'The Iron Law of Wages.' But has not this law been discarded even by some Socialists? There have been attempts in some quarters to demonstrate that this law does not actually operate with the rigidity at first claimed for it; but in truth, it stands as firmly to-day as when insisted upon by Lassalle."[161] "Capitalism always keeps the wages down to the lowest standard of

subsistence which the people will accept,"[162] for "the basis of wages is the cost of subsistence of the labourer. This is called the 'Iron Law of Wages.'"[163] "By the Iron Law of Wages the recompense of the workers always tends to the minimum on which they are willing to subsist. If they are content with water to drink and cabbage to eat, they may be sure that the means of buying whisky or roast beef will very soon be taken from them. Messrs. Rentmonger, Interestmonger, and Profitmonger will speedily scent additional swag, and they will have it, too."[164] "The 'Iron Law of Wages' reduces the wages to as near the level of the means of subsistence as local circumstances will admit of."[165] If these arguments were correct it would follow that the workers could cause their wages to rise by drinking wine instead of whisky, and by smoking Havana cigars instead of pipe-tobacco.

This theory of wages is called the "Iron Law of Wages" because of its absolute and pitiless rigidity. For instance, the Iron Law of Wages will prevent lower prices of food benefiting the workman in any way. "If the working class is enabled to buy cheap bread, the operation of the 'Iron Law of Wages' will secure all the advantage for the capitalists, as it did in the days of the saintly Bright, when the corn laws were repealed. Capital is always the same in its effect on the working-class, whether manipulated by an individual capitalist, joint-stock enterprise, municipality, or government, and with each step in concentration the working-class gets relatively less and the master class gets richer, more corrupt, and more bestial, as recent events in Berlin and elsewhere show."[166] The "Iron Law of Wages" is irrefutable and irresistible. "Economists have come to talk about the 'Iron Law of Wages' with as much

assurance as if it were an irreversible law of Nature."[167]

The Iron Law of Wages exists chiefly in the imagination of British Socialists. The general wage of British workmen living in towns ranges from, say 18*s.* to more than 2*l.* per week, and its amount does not depend on the cost of subsistence, but on the working skill and various other factors. If the Iron Law of Wages were correct, wages would be almost uniform. The Iron Law of Wages can possibly apply only to one small class of workers, the lowest and least skilled labourers, provided that unemployment is so great among them that they abandon collective bargaining and underbid one another down to the level of subsistence. When workers are organised, the Iron Law of Wages does not apply. The level of wages depends, broadly speaking, on supply and demand. Wages rise when two employers run after one workman; wages fall when two workmen run after one employer. An employer who engages a workman does not ask, "How much do you eat?" but "What can you do?" and he proportions the worker's remuneration not to his appetite, but to his ability and his value as a producer. The wages paid to married men and to unmarried men are identical in the same trade. If there was an "Iron Law of Wages," the wages of married men should be about twice as large as those of unmarried men.

The Iron Law of Wages is manifestly absurd. It has therefore been officially abandoned by the German Socialists at the Halle Congress of 1890 "as being scientifically untenable."[168] "German Social Democracy no longer recognises the Iron Law of Wages."[169] The British Socialists have not abandoned it, probably not because they believe it to

be scientifically correct—no one can believe that—but because it is a plausible and effective means of poisoning the minds of the people.

As regards the factors which determine wages, one of the foremost Socialist authorities says: "Thoughtful workmen in the staple trades have become convinced by their own experience, no less than by the repeated arguments of the economists, that a rising standard of wages and other conditions of employment must depend ultimately on the productivity of labour, and therefore upon the most efficient and economical use of credit, capital, and capacity."[170] In other words, productivity and profit determine wages, and it is ridiculous that Socialists argue: "Over 90 per cent. of our women do not drink, back horses, smoke, attend football or cricket matches, they do not stop off their work to watch England and Australia play at cricket, and the result is they are paid less wages than men in our factories for doing the same work."[171] Does Councillor Glyde really believe that women's wages would rise as soon as they took to smoking and drinking?

The Law of Increasing Misery

According to this law the improvements in machinery, the increase of capital and increase of production do not benefit the worker. They only lead to a decline in wages and thus increase the workers' misery. "In proportion as the use of machinery and division of labour increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work exacted in a given time, or by increased speed

of the machinery, &c."[172] "The faster productive capital increases, the more does the division of labour and the employment of machinery extend. The more the division of labour and the employment of machinery extend, so much the more does competition increase among the labourers and so much the more do their average wages dwindle. And thus the forest of arms outstretched by those who are entreating for work becomes ever denser and the arms themselves grow ever leaner."[173] "The more the worker labours the less reward he receives for it; and that for this simple reason, that he competes against his fellow-workmen and thus compels them to compete against him and to offer their labour on as wretched conditions as he does, and that he thus, in the last result, competes against himself as a member of the working-class."[174] "The worker in the factory gets, as a worker, absolutely no advantage from the machinery which causes the product of his labour to be multiplied a hundredfold."[175] "John Stuart Mill, it will be remembered, questioned whether mechanical invention had lightened the labours of a single human being."[176] "With increasing powers of production, the worker's share, and therefore his purchasing power, grows less."[177] "Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers."[178] "The iron law of competition means, and must mean, continued degradation for the workers, even though their physical condition in youth may be improved."[179] "The worker in the factory is now seen to work no shorter hours or gain no higher wages merely because the product of his labour is multiplied a hundredfold by machinery which he does not own. 'The remuneration of labour as such,' wrote Cairnes in 1874, 'skilled or unskilled,

can never rise much above its present level.'"[180]

The celebrated "Doctrine of Increasing Misery" stands in diametrical opposition to those facts with which nowadays every child is acquainted. During the time when our Socialists have been preaching the "Doctrine of Increasing Misery" working hours have been very greatly diminished and wages have not been reduced, but have risen by about 100 per cent. During the same time working hours in Germany have also been reduced and wages have risen up to 400 per cent.[181] The German Socialists have been honest enough to abandon the Doctrine of Increasing Misery under the guidance of Bernstein; the French have dropped it under the guidance of Sorel; the Dutch have seen its absurdity, guided by Vandervelde, their foremost leader. The British Socialists, on the other hand, have not abandoned it, though they must see its absurdity, probably because, though palpably and ridiculously false, the Doctrine of Increasing Misery is considered to be a useful and effective part of the Socialist agitator's stock-in-trade.

The next doctrine to be considered is

The Surplus-Value Doctrine

The Socialists argue that the position of the worker cannot improve because the capitalist, possessing the monopoly of property, pockets all that the worker produces except the mere cost of his subsistence, which, owing to the "Iron Law of Wages," is given to the workman in the form of wages. "The amount of wealth which the labourer produces in the time for which he has sold his labour-force is out of all

proportion to what it costs to produce and maintain his labour-force for that time. This, the difference between what he produces and his own cost of production, is surplus-value, and is taken and divided up by the capitalist into rent, interest, profit. This surplus-value, then, this profit, is so much robbery effected by taking advantage of the necessity of the proletarian—the naked propertyless labourer."[182] "All that the worker produces beyond what is absolutely necessary to keep himself and his offspring in life, this surplus beyond subsistence—this difference between the recompense of labour and its products—this unrighteous subtrahend, this swag, is the booty alike of slavelord, serflord, and drudgelord, or capitalist."[183] The question now arises: "How does the capitalist secure this surplus-value of labour without paying for it? If the workman is free, why cannot he insist on receiving, not the mere exchange-value of his commodity —'labour-power'—but the full value of the labour he expends for the capitalist? The capitalist obtains this surplus-value owing to his monopoly of the means of production. The labourer cannot, as a rule, command more than his cost of subsistence in return for his labour—although his wages, like the prices of all commodities, sometimes rise above this and sometimes fall below—because, although apparently free, he is really not free. He must sell his labour-power in order to live; he has no other commodity to dispose of. Consequently he must accept the terms that the purchaser will offer, subject only to two conditions—his own cost of subsistence and the fluctuations of the market."[184] "Owing to the monopoly of the means of production in the past, industrial inventions and the transformation of surplus income into capital have mainly enriched the

proprietary class, the worker being now dependent on that class for leave to earn a living."[185]

The Surplus-Value Doctrine, like the preceding doctrines, is founded rather upon imagination than upon fact. In the first place, it is absurd to speak of a "capitalist class" which, having a "monopoly of the means of production," exploits "the naked and propertyless labourer." This picture is a fancy picture. In the second place, "class" is not synonymous with "caste." The population is not divided into two rigidly defined and limited castes of capitalists and wage-earners. There is neither a monopoly of capital nor a monopoly of labour. Capital is founded by thrift. Most respectable workmen are capitalists to a greater or lesser extent. Every day workmen become capitalists. It should not be forgotten that many of the wealthiest men, such as Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Carnegie, Krupp, the first Rothschild, Sir Thomas Lipton, Passmore Edwards, and many others, have risen from the ranks and were working men—and every day capitalists lose their money and become workmen. Workmen may become capitalists by thrift. Co-operating workmen in England, France, Germany, and other countries own vast industrial undertakings, banks, &c. In those districts where thrift and co-operation are general (France, Switzerland, Holland) the "naked and propertyless labourers" disappear, whilst in equally prosperous districts where improvidence is general, they are many. The prosperity of the working classes in France, Switzerland, Holland, and other countries disproves the assertion that the workman is condemned to everlasting poverty because of the Surplus-Value Doctrine.

Assertions in support of the "Surplus-Value

Doctrine" such as "Carnegie and other millionaires have wrung their wealth literally out of the bodies of the underfed"[186] are as malicious as they are untrue. Men like Carnegie and Krupp have not "wrung their wealth out of the bodies of the underfed," but out of Nature. They have created vast industries in barren places, and the industries which they have created nourish now tens of thousands of working men. Men like Krupp and Carnegie have diminished misery, not increased it. Their capital, created by their brains with the assistance of labour out of Nature, has rather enriched labour than that labour has enriched Carnegie and Krupp. Their wealth is not dead wealth; it produces wages and articles of use. The "Surplus-Value Doctrine" is a grotesque distortion of, and an unjustified protest against, the fact that manufacturers and other organisers and directors of labour will not work for nothing.

We have seen in the foregoing that, according to the fundamental Socialist doctrines, "labour is the only source of wealth." We have also seen that, according to the "Iron Law of Wages" and the "Law of Increasing Misery," the workmen are condemned to great, permanent, and constantly increasing misery. Further, we have learned that, according to the "Surplus-Value Doctrine," all the fruit of their labour, minus the cost of their bare subsistence, is taken from the workers by the capitalists. Hence it is only natural and logical that the assertion of the fundamental doctrines, namely—

1. Labour is the only source of wealth,
2. Wages maintains mere animal existence,
3. The misery of the workers is constantly increasing,

4. The position of the worker is hopeless,

has led to this fifth doctrine:

The Labourer is Entitled to the Entire Product of His Labour

This doctrine is put forth by practically all British Socialists, not only as a doctrine but also as a demand. For instance "the New School of Trades-Unionists declare themselves in open and uncompromising revolt against the established relations between capital and labour; and they expound a new political economy which says that nothing less than the full fruits of industry shall be reckoned the fair reward of the producing class. They want the whole four-fourths of their earnings, instead of the one-fourth at present doled back in wages."[187] This demand must have precedence over all other measures whatsoever, for "until you have settled the material question as to how the producers of wealth are to get for themselves the full value of what they produce by their labour, it is impossible to settle anything else."[188]

According to many Socialists, Socialism would immediately abolish their grievances and give to the worker the entire produce of his labour. "At present the frugal workman only gets about one-third of his earnings. Under Socialism he would get all his earnings."[189] "Under the new order all will be productive workers, receiving an equivalent for what they produce—not merely one-half of it as now under the wage-system—in some form."[190] Under the heading "Basis of the Fabian Society," the Fabian Society publishes a statement of the fundamental

principles of that Society in which we read: "If these measures" (confiscation of all private property) "be carried out, without compensation (though not without such relief to expropriated individuals as may seem fit to the community), rent and interest will be added to the reward of labour, the idle class now living on the labour of others will necessarily disappear, and practical equality of opportunity will be maintained by the spontaneous action of economic forces with much less interference with personal liberty than the present system entails."

The absurdity of the demand for "the entire product of labour," which is raised by Socialists on behalf of the labourer is clear even to the most superficial thinker. The majority of Socialists know quite well that writing off, repairs, renewals, the replacing of machinery, the enlargement of factories, &c., cannot be done gratis, that the distribution of the whole produce of labour to the workers can be effected only by neglecting and destroying the means of production.

The impossibility of giving to the worker the "whole product of his labour" by abolishing the private capitalist is clearly recognised and honestly admitted by the German Socialists. Kautsky, for instance, writes: "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. For these reasons our Socialists are guilty of wilful deception if they tell the workers that under a Socialist *régime* their wages would be doubled and trebled."[191] Nevertheless, the doctrine and the demand that "the labourer is entitled to the entire product of his labour" is not abandoned by British Socialists, apparently because it is extremely useful for arousing the passions of the workers against the capitalists in accordance with Gronlund's advice,[192] and for bringing new adherents to the Socialist camp.

Only the Fabian Society, the more scientific section of the English Socialists, has mildly protested against this absurd doctrine and demand, but that protest has not been heeded. In a little-read pamphlet of that Society, the following statement may be found: "The Fabian Society steadfastly discountenances all schemes for securing to any person or any group of persons the entire product of their labour. It recognises that wealth is social in its origin and must be social in its distribution" (which means in plain English, must be preserved by the thrifty few, official or non-official, for the use of the unthrifty many), "since the evolution of industry has made it impossible to distinguish the particular contribution that each person makes to the common product, or to ascertain the value."[193] Notwithstanding these emphatic statements, the Fabian Society preserves with characteristic duplicity[194] the statement in its programme that "rent and interest, will be added to the reward of

labour."

Most British Socialist writers are not aware, or rather pretend not to be aware, of the necessity of preserving and increasing the national capital. In "Land, Labour, and Liberty," we read: "Whilst in 1845 the total wealth of this country was estimated at 4,000,000,000*l.*, it is now estimated at over 12,000,000,000*l.* The monopolist classes, without denying themselves anything, and whilst producing comparatively nothing, have piled up an additional eight thousand millions. The superfluous handful of mere possessors remain the flowers and foliage of society; the three-quarters of the nation of indispensable producers remain the manure."[195] This writer, like most Socialists, though acknowledging the enormous growth of the national capital of Great Britain, pretends that the "monopolist classes" have not denied themselves anything. If that were true, the national capital would still amount to only 4,000,000,000*l.* as in 1845. Great Britain would have few factories, no new machinery, no steamships, and but a very few miles of railway. But for the self-denial, the thrift of the "superfluous handful of mere possessors," Englishmen would still live in the Hungry Forties and Great Britain would be able to nourish only about 20,000,000 people as she did in 1845. National capital and the comforts and conveniences which it supplies to all are at least as much the result of thrift, inventiveness, enterprise, and wise direction as of manual labour.

The foregoing shows that, to say the least, the grievances of the Socialists are greatly—one might almost say grotesquely—exaggerated, and that they are largely founded on a perversion of facts; a

perversion which can be easily explained by the desire of the Socialist leaders to arouse the blind passions of the discontented wage-earners in accordance with Gronlund's advice, quoted on page 10.

The next doctrine which should be considered may be summed up in the words:

"The Existing Misery can be Abolished, not by Increasing Production, but by Altering the Distribution of the Wealth Produced"

"The Socialist emphatically denies the assertion that the poor must always be with us. The productive capacity of society is now so great that none need want, and all are able to earn their livelihood, and more, except where they are prevented from doing so by sickness, infirmity, or by the existence of laws and customs which the individual cannot himself, acting alone, remove."[196] "There is a demand for the labour of every man under any well-ordered social system. If there is a waste of men now, it is the fault of the wage system."[197] "Sufficient wealth is produced in this country to-day which would, under a well-ordered state of society, enable every man, woman, and child to have a sufficiency of all things essential to a healthy human life. To-day the people produce this wealth, and, after they have produced it, quite two-thirds of it is taken from them by a very small section of the people. Consequently we have a very few rich, and many that are poor."[198] "We may claim to have solved the problem of how to produce enough, and the question which confronts us is how

to bring distribution into line with the productive capacity of our people."[199] "The old argument that there is not enough work to do cannot be seriously listened to by anyone who has walked through a London or Manchester slum. There is work in the world for all, just as there is wealth in the world for all, and every man has a right to work, just as he has a right to wealth."[200] "The chief problem is not the production of more wealth, but its equitable distribution."[201]

The increase of production and therefore of reproductive capital in the form of machinery, mines, railways, ships, &c., in which most of the "Surplus-Value" is invested, is explained to be a matter of secondary consideration and importance, and it is stated that the world suffers rather from over-production than from under-production. "The tendency of the conditions of employment under present circumstances, under the capitalist system, always is for production to outstrip consumption."[202] "Our power to produce has always, since the beginnings of capitalism, shown a tendency to grow more rapidly than our power to consume."[203] "Then because there is a plethora of goods and a dearth of purchasers, the workshops are closed and Hunger lashes the working population with his thousand-thonged whip. The workers, stupefied by the dogma of work, do not understand that the cause of their present misery is the overwork that they have inflicted on themselves during the time of sham prosperity."[204] "For some insane reason the capitalist has thought of nothing but production."[205] "If, by a fiat from heaven, the wealth of the world were doubled to-morrow and the present system of capitalistic monopoly and commercial competition were allowed to continue,

the social misery would, in a very short time, reappear in a form even still more accentuated, were that possible. Individualism, commercialism, capitalism—call it what we may—has demonstrably produced the evil."[206]

The Existing Capitalist System is Responsible for Poverty, Want, and Unemployment

Unemployment is largely caused by commercial crises, commercial crises are caused by over-production, over-production is caused by the fact that the national industries are divided and the industrial output is regulated not by the nation in accordance with the national demand but by irresponsible private individuals whose aim is profit, not the fulfilment of a national demand. "The causes of commercial depression lie in the non-consumption of the incomes of our millionaires."[207] Another Socialist writer asserts: "Our era is cursed with crises occurring far more frequently than plagues and causing as much misery. Economists say that these crises are caused by over-production. Private enterprise compels every producer to produce for himself, to sell for himself, to keep all his transactions to himself, without regard to anybody else in the wide world. Merchants have got no measure at hand by which they can, even approximately, either estimate the effective demand of their customers or ascertain the producing capacity of their rivals. Production by all these manufacturers is, and must necessarily be, absolutely planless. This planless production must end in the market being overstocked with commodities of one kind or another; that is, that it must end in 'over-

production.' In the trade which has been thus overdone, prices fall and wages come down; or a great manufacturer fails and a smaller or greater number of workmen are discharged. Crises are therefore the direct result of private enterprise."[208] "Why are men—men that is who are able and willing, nay, eager and anxious, to work—unemployed? Because, it is said, there is nothing for them to do. Nothing for them to do? Is all the necessary work of the world, then, already finished, so that there is nothing more remaining for anyone to do? No; it is not because all the necessary and useful work is done that men are unemployed, it is because all the means of production—all the machines, tools, and implements of labour and all the raw material—are owned by a class, and may only be used by permission of that class, and when that class can make a profit out of their use."[209] "It is indisputable that modern poverty is artificial. It is neither the result of divine anger nor the niggardliness of Nature. It is the product of the private ownership of land and capital by which men are prevented from earning their living unless the proprietary class can make profit from their labour. The inevitable result of this system is that in all industries and at all times there are more men seeking employment than there is employment for. [210]" "Your system of private ownership, in conferring the possession and control of the nation's storehouse of wealth and of the instruments by which all further wealth must be obtained from it, upon your capitalist class, has reduced the nation at large into nothing more nor less than an elaborate machine which your capitalists use for extracting wealth from the earth for their own benefit.... It is not well that by a foolish and wicked system of

government, one small class of the community should be enabled to organise its production in such a manner that the full stream of wealth is diverted into their own possession whilst the mass of the nation by whose labour it is obtained are defrauded of it, and brought into a state of subtle slavery worse both in kind and degree than could be possible under any system of direct and open slavery."[211] "Unemployment is an inevitable feature of capitalism, and is impossible of removal without at the same time abolishing the capitalist system that produces it. That is a fact known to any Socialist with the most elementary knowledge of the economics of capitalism. Unemployment is caused by the exactions of the capitalist class. The prime cause of unemployment is the robbery of the workers by which the capitalist class appropriate the whole of the wealth produced by the workers, returning to them just as much on the average as will keep them physically fit to continue working. The difference between the quantities produced and consumed by the working class (a difference continually increasing with every increase in the productivity of labour) represents a surplus which all the waste and all the luxury of its owners cannot absorb, with the result that the markets are glutted with an excess of commodities. Thus the 'over-production,' the crisis, and the slackening of production involving an increase of unemployment."[212]

Employers of labour profit directly from unemployment, and will therefore presumably do all they can to bring it about. "Employers and other well-to-do people have no interest in finding work for the workless. They benefit from the unemployment of the poor."[213] The foregoing statement is as malicious as it is absurd. Employers

do not desire unemployment, partly from humanitarian reasons, partly because it is a loss to them. The father of English Socialism taught: "The labourer perishes if capital does not employ him. Capital perishes if it does not exploit labour."[214] In other words, unemployed labour means unemployed capital; besides, those business men who do not actually dismiss their workers suffer also through unemployment, because the unemployed are supported by the rates.

The doctrines that "the existing misery can be abolished, not by increased production but by altering the distribution of the wealth produced," and that the "capitalist system is responsible for want, poverty, and unemployment," are manifestly unsound. A larger consumption of food, clothing, &c., can be effected only by a larger production. Gluts and crises, with consequent unemployment, occur, not through general over-production, which would benefit all, but by ill-balanced production, as the following example will prove: Imagine an island off the African coast on which there are two villages, the inhabitants of which require only two commodities, loin-cloths and mealies. One village manufactures loin-cloths, the other raises mealies, and these are exchanged against each other. These villages fulfil the Socialistic ideal. There are no capitalists and no middlemen, and production is only "for use," not "for profit." Balanced over-production will result in this, that every native will have a superabundance of loin-cloths and food. But supposing that the agriculturists go in for loin-cloth making, finding that occupation more congenial, and that they abandon much agriculture; or supposing that inclement weather, or a plague of grasshoppers, should seriously curtail the harvest, then there will

soon be a glut of loin-cloths and a crisis. The cry of over-production will arise among the loin-cloth makers, but that cry will be unjustified and absurd. The more the people make the more they will have, provided production is properly balanced. The doctrine that we suffer from over-production and that the capitalist system is at fault, that altered distribution rather than increased production will abolish misery, and that Socialism can prevent want and unemployment by a scientific organisation of production, is wrong.

Socialists may, of course, argue, "In the Socialist State production would be organised, and controlled, and properly balanced and harmonised," an argument which is irrelevant with regard to the over-production doctrine, and which besides is unsound, although it may be found in most Socialistic writings. As production is world-wide, the Socialists' control of production would also have to be world-wide. It would involve not only the control of all human energy throughout the world, but also the control of the seasons, of the weather, of insect plagues, of fashions, of appetite, &c.

The foregoing proves that "men can never become richer till the produce of their labour increases. The more they produce the richer they will be, provided there be a demand for the produce of their labour. If a shoemaker makes four pairs of shoes in a day he will be twice richer than he would be if he made only two pairs in a day, provided that an increased demand is co-existing. The question, therefore, 'How can we become richer?' is reduced to this one, 'How can we increase the produce of labour and at the same time maintain an equivalent demand for that produce?'"[215] The doctrines that want and

unemployment are due to over-production and to the capitalist system are wrong.

We now come to the

Doctrine of the Class War

Having, by the fundamental doctrines enumerated in the foregoing, proved that all misery of the working masses is caused by the existence of a capitalist class which has enslaved the workers, the Socialists conclude that there is a natural antagonism between capital and labour; that social life is dominated by the Class War.

"The Socialists say that the present form of property-holding divides society into two great classes."[216] "Capitalist society is divided into two classes: owners of property and owners of no property."[217] "Society is to-day divided into two classes with opposing interests, one class owning the means of life, and the other nothing but their power to work. Never in the history of society was the working-class so free from all traces of property as to-day."[218] "There are in reality but two classes, those who live by labour and those who live upon those who labour, the two classes of exploiter and exploited."[219] "Society has been divided mainly into two economic classes, a relatively small class of capitalists who own tools in the form of great machines they did not make and cannot use, and a great body of many millions of workers who did make these tools and who do use them, and whose very lives depend upon them, yet who do not own them."[220]

It is usually said that society has three classes, but Socialists maintain that there are in reality only two classes. William Morris still divided society into three groups, which, however, at closer inspection will be found to form but two classes. According to Morris, "Civilised States consist of (1) the class of rich people doing no work, who consume a great deal while they produce nothing. Therefore, clearly they have to be kept at the expense of those who do work, just as paupers have, and are a mere burden on the community. (2) The middle class, including the trading, manufacturing, and professional people of our society. It is their ambition and the end of their whole lives to gain, if not for themselves, yet at least for their children, the proud position of being obvious burdens on the community. Here then is another class, this time very numerous and all-powerful, which produces very little and consumes enormously, and is therefore supported, as paupers are, by the real producers. (3) The class that remains to be considered produces all that is produced and supports both itself and the other classes, though it is placed in a position of inferiority to them, real inferiority, mind you, involving a degradation both of mind and body. To sum up, then, civilised States are composed of three classes—a class which does not even pretend to work, a class which pretends to work but which produces nothing, and a class which works."[221] In other words, William Morris divided society into two classes: propertied non-producers and non-propertied toilers.

According to practically all living English Socialists, there are but two classes in society. "Modern society is divided into two classes—the possessors of property and the non-possessors: the dominant class and the subject class; the class which

rules and the class which has to obey. He who possesses sufficient wealth to exercise control over the labour of others, to exploit that labour for his own profit, belongs to the one class; he who possesses nothing but the power to labour contained in his own body, and who is therefore compelled to sell that labour power in order to live, belongs to the other. It is this struggle and conflict between these two classes that Socialists call the class war, a recognition of which is essential to a clear conception of what the Socialist movement involves."[222] "Society is divided into two opposite classes, one, the capitalists and their sleeping partners the landlords and loanmongers, holding in their hands the means of production, distribution, and exchange, and being therefore able to command the labour of others; the other, the working class, the wage-earners, the proletariat, possessing nothing but their labour power, and being consequently forced by necessity to work for the former."[223] "In society there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess."[224] "The people of this unfortunate country have been aptly divided by Mr. Gladstone into the 'masses' and the 'classes'—that is to say, into those who live by their own labour and those who live on the labour of others. Among the latter tribe of non-producers are included all manner of thieves, pick-pockets, burglars, sharpers, prostitutes, Peers of Parliament, their families and menials, all, or nearly all, the 'six hundred and odd scoundrels of the House of Commons,' the twenty thousand State parsons, who every Sunday shamelessly travesty the Christian religion in the interest of the 'classes.'"[225]

The theory of dividing society into two classes,

capitalists and workers, or as others put it, "exploiters and exploited," is manifestly absurd, and its absurdity has been pointed out by a few Socialists. "It is not true that there are only two great economic classes in the community. The Communist Manifesto, even in its day, admitted as much, but made no place for the fact in its theories. There is an economic antagonism between landlords and capitalists as well as between capitalists and workmen."[226] Besides, most capitalists are workers, and probably the great majority of English workers are capitalists to a larger or smaller extent.

Now let us study the Socialists' description of the hostile forces which are engaged in the Class War.

According to the Socialist teaching, the property-owners as a class are useless idlers who impoverish the workers and who shamelessly spend their whole income on demoralising luxuries. "The idlers and non-workers produce no wealth and take the greater share. They live on the labour of those who work. Nothing is produced by idleness; work must be done to obtain a thimble, a pin, and even a potato for dinner. The non-workers get the greater share of the wealth, and the greater part of this share is wasted. Therefore it is not good to have any people in the land who do not work. Only those who are old or sick should be kept by the toil of the rest."[227] Taking their figures from the pamphlet "Facts for Socialists," of which details have been given on pp. 41-48, the Independent Labour party states under the heading of "Wealth Makers and Wealth Takers": "The total incomes of persons in the United Kingdom amount in round figures to 1,800,000,000*l.* How is this wealth distributed? 250,000 persons actually receive a total of 585,000,000*l.*—that is, one-

thirtieth of the population receive one-third of the national income. Nearly the whole of these large incomes are unearned—*i.e.* they are made up of rents, interest, dividends, &c. This small class of rent and interest receivers perform no useful function. We may describe these people as social parasites, absolutely useless, yet levying toll to the extent of 6*s.* 8*d.* in every 20*s.* value of wealth created."[228] "At present more than 600,000,000*l.* of the national income goes in the form of unearned rent and interest to support an idle class who spend it mainly on profitless and demoralising luxuries."[229]

The foregoing extracts make it clear that, in the eyes of Socialists, practically all citizens, manual labourers excepted, are "drones and parasites." Directors, managers, doctors, chemists, ships' captains, teachers, &c., and even workmen of exceptional ability also, rob the general body of workers of half their wages and subsist only owing to the monopoly of property-holders who control the distribution of wealth. Upon these curious premisses are based the conclusions: "The profits and salaries of the class who share in the advantages of the monopoly of the instruments of production, or are endowed by Nature with any exceptional ability of high marketable value, amount according to the best estimate that can be formed, to about 460,000,000*l.* annually, while out of a national income of some 1,800,000,000*l.* a year the workers in the manual labour class—four-fifths of the whole population—obtain in wages not more than 690,000,000*l.* It may be safely said that the workers from top to bottom of society pay a fine of one-half the wealth they produce to a parasitic class before providing for the maintenance of themselves and their proper dependents."[230] "It is this robbery and waste on the

part of the minority which keeps the majority poor."[231] "So long as the instruments of production are in unrestrained private ownership, so long must the tribute of the workers to the drones continue, so long will the toiler's reward inevitably be reduced by their exactions."[232]

"Socialism regards the capitalist proper not as a useful captain of industry, but as a mere share-holding, dividend-drawing parasite upon labour, and the Socialist party presses forward to his elimination from the field of production."[233] "The workers who have produced all this wealth only get a part—the smallest part at that—of the wealth they produce. Now we Socialists say that this wealth produced by the labour of the workers should belong to them, and not to the capitalists who produce nothing. Seeing that the interest of the worker is to get as much of this wealth, and on the other hand the capitalist wants as much of this wealth, as he can get, therefore we say that the interests of the workers and of the capitalists are not identical, but opposite."[234] "The interest of the working class can only be served even in the smallest degree by the curtailment of the power of the master class; that every material advance is useless except in so far as it helps to effect other achievements, and that the realisation of Labour politics, the well-being of the working class, can only be accomplished by its complete emancipation from capitalism."[235] In other words, the Socialist writers quoted agree in this: that the lot of the wage-earners can be improved only by taking the wealth from the rich. In order to introduce Socialism the present social order must be overturned. With this object in view they have addressed declarations of war to the owners of property.

We owe to Marx not only the Class War doctrine, but also a declaration of war to the propertied class: "The Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things. In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time. Finally they labour everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries. The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!"[236]

Marx's disciples have issued similar declarations. For instance, in the official programme of the Social Democratic Federation we read: "The Social Democratic Federation is a militant Socialist organisation whose members, men and women, belong almost entirely to the working class. Its object is the realisation of Socialism, the emancipation of the working class from its present subjection to the capitalist class. To this end the Social Democratic Federation proclaims and preaches the Class War."[237] "There is no way in which the Class War can be avoided. You cannot have the reward of your labour and the idler have it too. There is just so much wealth produced every day. It may be more, it may be less; but there is always just so much, and the more the capitalist gets the less you will get, and *vice versa*. We preach the gospel of hatred, because in the circumstances it seems the only righteous thing we can preach. The talk about the 'Gospel of Love' is

simply solemn rubbish. It is right to hate stealing, right to hate lying, it is right to hate meanness and uncleanness, right to hate hypocrisy, greed, and tyranny. Those who talk of the Gospel of Love with landlordism and capitalism for its objects want us to make our peace with iniquity."[238] "The Class War is inevitable under the present form of property-holding, and for it there can be neither truce, quarter, nor ending, save by the extinction of the class system itself. The identity of interests between capitalism and labour is a shibboleth that can only be given any sane meaning at all in the cynical sense that the interests of the wolf and the lamb are also 'identical' when the wolf has got the lamb inside him."[239]

The doctrine of the Class War is a holy faith, the expropriation of property-owners is a divine task. "Unless we hate the system which prevents us from being what we otherwise might have been, we will not be able to strive against it with the patient, never-flagging zeal which our work, to be well done, requires. And to keep alive and undimmed this flame of hatred, divine not diabolical, we require to not only look around us, but especially to look back upon the world as it has been and to the example of those who have fought the good fight. To Socrates, to Savonarola, to John Ball, Wat the Tyler, and Jack Cade, in our land the first forerunners of Socialism; to Bruno and Vanini, to Cromwell, Milton, Hampden, and Pym, to John Eliot, Harry Vane; to Defoe, Mure, and Thomas Spence; to Ernest Jones, Bronterre O'Brien, and Robert Owen; to Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmet; to Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien; to Vera Sassoulitch, Marie Spiridonova, Sophia Perovsky; to Karl Marx."[240] The company of reformers and revolutionists seems somewhat mixed.

The doctrine that the interests of employers and employees are irreconcilably opposed, not identical, is false, Socialist rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding. As soon as a calamity threatens capital—for instance, a rise in raw cotton or a cotton famine—masters and men are seen to be in the same boat and devise combined measures for meeting the difficulty. The doctrine of the Class War is opposed to common experience and to common-sense.

Let us now take note of the doctrine

Private Property is Immoral and Private Wealth is a Crime

In the Class War right is, according to the Socialists, on the side of the propertyless. Not only are the owners of property objectionable in their persons, being "drones and parasites" who squander the earnings of the poor on riotous living, as we have learned in the foregoing pages, but private property as an institution is immoral in itself and ought to be abolished. No man has a right to be rich; no man can become rich honestly. Hence it follows that all rich men are robbers, thieves, and swindlers. "The poor owe no duty to the rich, unless it be the duty which an honest man owes to the thief who has robbed him. The rich have no right to any of their possessions, for there is but one right, and that is the right of the labourer to the fruits of his labour, and the rich do not labour. No man has any right to be rich. No man ever yet became rich by fair means. No man ever became rich by his own industry."[241] "No man or class of men made the first kind of wealth, such as land, minerals, and water. Therefore no man

or class of men should be allowed to call these things their own."[242] As private property is immoral in itself, it is doubly immoral to lend out such property and to charge rent or interest for the use of it. Mr. G.J. Wardle, M.P., said, in a recent speech at Glasgow, that rent "was social immorality, and the State or society which allowed crimes of that kind to go on unpunished could never be a moral society. The same thing applied to interest on money. From the moral standpoint interest is unearned by the man who gets it, and it does not matter how that is cloaked over, that is the fact. Nowadays it was counted the greatest virtue to lend at so much per cent. That was a socially immoral proceeding, and because it was socially immoral it ate like a canker into the heart of society. As Socialists they objected to profit."[243]

There are Socialists who preach the same doctrine of immorality and criminality of private property in more decided terms. They assert that it is criminal and immoral to make a profit as a compensation for the work of directing and taking heavy capital risks in productive business because such profits are opposed to the principle, "The labourer is entitled to the whole product of his labour" (see page 61). "A man has a 'right' to that which he has produced by the unaided exercise of his own faculties; but he has not a right to that which is not produced by his own unaided faculties; nor to the whole of that which has been produced by his faculties aided by the faculties of another man."[244] "Everyone who pockets gains without rendering an equivalent to society is a criminal. Every millionaire is a criminal. Every company-chairman with nominal duties, though his salary be but 400*l.*, is a criminal. Everyone who lends his neighbour 5*l.* and exacts 5*l.* 5*s.* 0*d.* in

return, is a criminal."[245] "When Proudhon advanced the somewhat startling proposition, 'Property is theft,' he merely stated positively what good, orthodox Adam Smith, in his 'Wealth of Nations' set forth more urbanely when he wrote, 'The produce of labour (it is clear from the context that he meant the whole produce), is the natural recompense or wages of labour.'"[246] "'Property' is theft, said Proudhon, and surely private property in the means of production is not only theft, but the means of more theft."[247]

Starting from the premiss that profit is immoral, the philosopher of British Socialism logically concludes: "The cheapest way of obtaining goods is not to pay for them, and if a buyer can avoid payment for the goods he obtains, he has quite as much right to do so as the seller has to receive for them double or treble their cost price and call it profit."[248]

Private property being, according to the Socialist doctrines, immoral and criminal, it follows that

"Private Property Ought to be Abolished"

Let us take note of an utterance in support of that doctrine: "If the life of men and women were a thing apart from that of their neighbours, there would be no need for a Socialist party nor any call for social reform. But man is not an entity; he is only part of a mighty social organism. Every act of his has a bearing upon the like of his fellow. It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the moral title to private property in anything. Private property exists entirely on sufferance. Private property therefore

cannot be justly allowed when it interferes with the law of our social life or intercepts the progress of social development."[249]

Let us now consider the doctrine

"Competition should be Replaced by Co-operation"

Socialists teach: "Under Socialism you would have all the people working together for the good of all. Under non-Socialism you have all the persons working separately (and mostly against each other), each for the good of himself. So we find Socialism means co-operation and non-Socialism means competition."[250] "Socialism is constructive as well as revolutionary, and Socialists propose to replace competition by co-operation."[251]

The question now arises: "On what ground do capitalists defend the principle of competition? *A.* On the ground that it brings into play a man's best qualities.—*Q.* Does it effect this? *A.* This is occasionally its result, but it also brings out his worst qualities by stimulating him to struggle with his fellows for the relative improvement of his own position rather than for the absolute advancement of the interests of all."[252]

"Apart altogether from its injustice, competitive capitalism, regarded as a system of serving the community, is a business bungle. What the party of the Fourth Estate objects to in the existing commercial and industrial system is, not merely the stealages which go on under the guise of rent, profit, and interest, but the enormous waste arising from

lack of consolidation and co-operation in the processes of production and distribution."[253] "During the last half-century we have lost more by our 'business principle' of dividing up our national work into competing one-man and one-company speculations, and insisting on every separate speculation paying its own separate way, than by all the tariffs and blockades that have been set up against us."[254] "In our age there is, as we have seen, throughout our whole economic sphere, no social order at all. There is absolute social anarchy. Against this anarchy Socialism is a protest."[255] "There is only one remedy for both the waste and the stealages, and that is the substitution of public enterprise with organisation for private enterprise with competition."[256] "Socialism means the socialising of the means and instruments of production, distribution, and exchange. For the individual capitalist it would substitute, as the director and controller of production and distribution, the community in its organised capacity. The commercial and industrial chaos and waste which are the outcome of monopolistic competition would give place to the orderliness of associated effort, and under Socialism society would for the first time in history behave like an organism."[257] Private capitalism and consequent competition are responsible not only for waste and muddle, but also for the adulteration of food and other necessaries of life. "Every man who knows anything of trade knows how general is the knavish practice of adulteration. Now all adulteration is directly due to competition. Did not Mr. John Bright once say that adulteration is only another form of competition?"[258]

There is much truth in the contention of the

Socialists that co-operation is mightier, and often better, than free competition. However, that is no new discovery, and the introduction of Socialism is not needed to bring about co-operation. In Germany, Switzerland, and Denmark national and private co-operation are far more developed than in Great Britain, and waste, muddle, and stealages are rare in those countries, although none of these is ruled by a Socialist Government. Co-operation, national as well as private, is developing also in Great Britain, and it will continue to develop as its value becomes more and more understood. It is a curious fact that Socialists, though they recommend co-operation in the abstract, oppose it in the concrete for similar reasons. They fear that satisfied and prosperous co-operators will oppose Socialism.[259]

The assertion that adulteration is due to competition is not founded upon fact. Adulteration springs from many causes, and would continue to flourish even under the Socialistic *régime*. If all cowkeepers were salaried officials of the Socialist State or municipality, they might nevertheless mix water with the milk to obtain milk for their own consumption and that of their families, and to diminish the labour of milking. Adulteration may be abolished by efficient supervision and well-devised and rigorously enforced sanitary laws.

Let us now glance at the doctrine

"The Socialist State will Arise by Natural Development, and it will Handle Business more Efficiently than do Private Individuals"

"The State now registers, inspects, and controls nearly all the industrial functions which it has not yet absorbed. The inspection is often detailed and rigidly enforced. The State, in most of the larger industrial operations, prescribes the age of the worker, the hours of work, the amount of air, light, cubic space, heat, lavatory accommodation, holidays, and meal-times; where, when, and how wages shall be paid; how machinery, staircases, lift-holes, mines, and quarries are to be fenced and guarded; how and when the plant shall be cleaned, repaired, and worked."[260] "Step by step political power and political organisation have been used for industrial ends, until a Minister of the Crown is the largest employer of labour in the country, and at least 200,000 men, not counting the army and navy, are directly in the service of the community, without the intervention of the profit of any middleman."[261]

From the fact that the State inspects many things and carries on some business, it does not by any means follow that the State should inspect all things and could efficiently carry on all business. Questions such as "If the State can build battleships and make swords, why not also trading ships and ploughshares,"[262] are ridiculous. One might as well ask, "If Messrs. Whiteley or Marshall Field can supply furniture, houses, dresses, and funerals, being universal providers, why not also battleships, armies, and colonies?" It is also not true that the State or municipal corporations have more business ability than private business men. As an example of successful business management Socialists are fond of pointing to the Post Office, and of asserting that no private company could work as efficiently and as cheaply. These statements are erroneous. The success of the British Post Office, as of every post office, is

due not to ability but to monopoly, as the following example will prove. Private individuals in Germany discovered some years ago a flaw in the legislation regarding the Post Office which enabled them to compete with the Imperial Post Office, not in postal business between different towns, but in local delivery. Private post offices sprang up in many towns and began to deliver letters at the rate of two pfennigs (one farthing) each. Although the German Post Office is the most efficient Post Office in Europe, it could not compete with these private post offices, and, after lengthy competition, steps had to be taken to extend the postal monopoly to town deliveries. The British Post Office, like most public offices, is a most conservative institution. Every progress and every reform had to be forced upon it by outside agitation. Services such as money delivery at private residences, cash on delivery parcels, &c., which other countries have enjoyed during several decades, are stubbornly denied to England. Private competition would probably have furnished these conveniences long ago. In London the Messenger Boy Company competes with the Post Office in the carrying of express letters, and various private carriers compete with it in delivering parcels, and in both instances the private trader supplies a better and cheaper service than the Government Post Office. A comparison of the Post Office telephone in England and the private telephone in America shows the great superiority of the latter. The slow and ultra-conservative British Post Office supplies no proof that the Government would handle production and distribution better than private enterprise. On the contrary.

British Socialists claim unanimously that their theories and demands are founded upon science.

"The Socialist doctrine systematises the industrial changes. It lays down a law of capitalist evolution. It describes the natural history of society. It is not, therefore, only a popular creed for the market-place, but a scientific inquiry for the study. Like every theory in Sociology, it has a political bearing, but it can be studied as much detached from politics as is Darwinism."[263] Do the fundamental doctrines of British Socialism bear out the claims of its champions? The foregoing pages prove that the scientific basis of Socialism, or rather of British Socialism, consists of a number of doctrines which cannot stand examination and which are disproved by daily experience and by common-sense.

The question now suggests itself: "How is it that the British Socialists base their demands on pseudo-scientific doctrines of obvious absurdity?"

British Socialism has been imported from Germany. Marx, Engels, Lassalle, Rodbertus, and various other Germans are the fathers of modern scientific Socialism. "To German scholars is largely due the development of Socialism from the Utopian stage to the scientific. Universality is its distinguishing feature."[264] "Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in 1847 laid, through the 'Communist Manifesto,' the scientific foundation of modern Socialism."[265] "And 'Capital,' Karl Marx's great work, has become the loadstar of modern economic science."[266] Karl Marx's "Manifesto" appeared in 1847; the first volume of his "Capital" was published in 1867. Since the appearance of the former sixty years, and since the publication of the latter forty years, have passed by. Much has changed in the world, but the Marxian doctrines have remained unchanged.

The worst about speculative doctrines is that time is apt to disprove them.

Whilst the German Socialists have thinkers in their ranks who have adapted the older Communist theories to present conditions, leaving out those theories which are palpably false, English Socialists have stood still and are satisfied to repeat those ancient doctrines which the Germans have abandoned long ago. English Socialists try to impose upon an uncritical public by parading the worn-out stage properties of the forties. Marx is to the vast majority of British Socialists still an oracle and the fountain head of all wisdom. "Marx is the Darwin of modern sociology."[267] "All over the world his brain is put on pretty much the same level as Aristotle's."[268] "Modern Socialism is based, nationally and internationally, theoretically and to a large extent practically, on the writings of Karl Marx. These writings have been expounded, and where necessary applied, extended, and amplified, to meet conditions which have developed since his death nearly a quarter of a century ago, in every civilised country. It is safe to say that no one who does not understand and accept in the main the views set forth by Marx, comprehends the real position of capitalist Society, nor, what is even more important, can fully master the problems of the coming time."[269] "The Social-Democratic Federation, which is by far the oldest and still the most active Socialist organisation in this country, bases its teaching to-day, as it has always done, upon the words of Karl Marx."[270]

Most active Socialists in Great Britain think Marx and Lassalle infallible. It is true that the Fabian Society has pointed out "the necessity of maintaining

as critical an attitude towards Marx and Lassalle, some of whose views must by this time be discarded as erroneous or obsolete,"[271] but that protest appears to have been left unheeded by most British Socialists. In fact, the abandonment of revolutionary Marxianism has caused the Fabians to be treated with open hostility by the other Socialist sections. The reasons for that hostility are obvious. The doctrines of Marx and Lassalle, though they are, to say the least, erroneous and obsolete, are admirably fitted to inflame the passions of the masses. Their doctrines may not be true, but they are useful to professional agitators. Independent Socialists in all countries have not disguised their opinion of Marx's "Capital," which, in the words of an English Socialist, "is not a treatise on Socialism; it is a jeremiad against the bourgeoisie, supported by such a mass of evidence and such a relentless Jewish genius for denunciation as had never been brought to bear before."[272]

British Socialism is neither scientific nor sincere. Its leaders know that the Iron Law of Wages (see p. 53), the Law of Increasing Misery (see p. 56), and other doctrines, which are exceedingly useful to the agitator who wishes to poison the mind of the masses, have been thrown into the lumber room in Germany and most other countries (see the writings of Bernstein, Jaurès, and others), but they do not abandon them. Apparently it is their policy rather to create strife and confusion than to alleviate existing misery. That attitude must have covered English Socialists with ignominy in the eyes of foreign Socialists. The very humiliating treatment which the English Socialists received at the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart of 1907 from their Continental comrades suggests that the curious

attitude and the not very estimable tactics of British Socialists have not found the approval of their Continental colleagues.

The doctrines of the English Socialists with regard to property are identical with those of most Anarchists (see Eltzbacher, "Der Anarchismus"). For instance, Proudhon taught: "We rob (1) by murder on the highway; (2) alone, or in a band; (3) by breaking into buildings, or scaling walls; (4) by abstraction; (5) by fraudulent bankruptcy; (6) by forgery of the handwriting of public officials, or private individuals; (7) by manufacture of counterfeit money; (8) by cheating; (9) by swindling; (10) by abuse of trust; (11) by games and lotteries; (12) by usury; (13) by farm rent, house rent, and leases of all kinds; (14) by commerce, when the profit of the merchant exceeds his legitimate salary; (15) by making profit on our product, by accepting sinecures, and by exacting exorbitant wages."[273] "What is property? It is robbery."[274] "Property, after having robbed the labourer by usury, murders him slowly by starvation."[275] Practically the identical doctrines are propounded by British Socialists. Further instances of the resemblance between Socialism and Anarchism will be found in Chapter XXX, "Socialism and Anarchism."

Society is at present based upon individualism. In their anxiety to prove the failure of modern civilisation British Socialists deny that the world has progressed under individualism. "Not by individual selfishness, or national selfishness, has the progress of the human race been advanced."[276] And they boldly declare that all history, having been written by men of the dominant class, is a deception. "Are we then to understand that the whole of history, so far,

has been written from the point of view of the dominant class of every age? Most assuredly so; and this applies to well-nigh the whole of the sources of past history."[277]

The foregoing should suffice to make it clear that the Socialist agitation is not based on irrefutable scientific doctrines, as Socialists pretend, but on deception. It may be said that no agitation is free from deception, that the end justifies the means, that Socialism means for the best. We have been told "Socialism is a religion of humanity. Socialism is the only hope of the race. Socialism is the remedy—the only remedy—which Lord Salisbury could not find."[278] We must look into the practical proposals of British Socialism in order to be able to judge its character.

FOOTNOTES:

[151] *Facts for Socialists*, p. 3.

[152] Hazell, *Summary of Marx's "Capital,"* p. 1; Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 54.

[153] *Socialism made Plain*, p. 8.

[154] Hobart, *Social-Democracy*, p. 7.

[155] *Manifesto*, Socialist Party of Great Britain, p. 8.

[156] *What Socialism Means*: Independent Labour Party Leaflet, No. 8, p. 3.

[157] Debs, *Industrial Unionism*, p. 20.

[158] Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, 1368.

[159] *Ibid.* 807.

[160] *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 17.

[161] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 15.

[162] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 163.

[163] Quelch, *Economics of Labour*, p. 13.

[164] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 107.

[165] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 99.

[166] *Socialist Standard*, December 1907.

[167] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 32.

[168] Stegman und Hugo, *Handbuch*, p. 473.

[169] *Christliche Arbeiterpflichten*, p. 15.

[170] Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, p. 548.

[171] Councillor Glyde, *A Peep behind the Scenes on a Board of Guardians*, p. 5.

[172] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 12.

[173] Marx, *Wage, Labour, and Capital*, pp. 23,

24.

[174] Marx, *Wage, Labour, and Capital*, p. 22.

[175] *English Progress towards Social-Democracy*, p. 12.

[176] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 99.

[177] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 8.

[178] *Ibid.* p. 16.

[179] Hyndman, *Socialism and Slavery*, p. 12.

[180] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 9.

[181] Ellis Barker, *Modern Germany*, p. 528.

[182] Quelch, *Economics of Labour*, p. 18.

[183] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 3.

[184] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism*, p. 15.

[185] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 19.

[186] *Clarion*, November 29, 1907.

[187] Hall, *The Old and New Unionism*, p. 5.

[188] *Socialism and the Single Tax*, p. 6.

[189] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 189.

[190] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 86.

[191] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, pp. 7, 8.

[192] See *ante* p. 10.

[193] *Report on Fabian Policy*, p. 8.

[194] See Chapter XXXIII.

[195] Hall, *Land, Labour, and Liberty*, p. 5.

[196] Jowett, *The Socialist and the City*, p. 66.

[197] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 86.

[198] *Rich and Poor*, Introd.

[199] Martyn, *Co-operation*, p. 3.

[200] Lister, *Riches and Poverty*, p. 12.

[201] Fisher, *The Babies' Tribute*, p. 16.

[202] *Socialism and the Single Tax*, p. 7.

[203] Kessack, *The Capitalist Wilderness and the Way Out*, p. 9.

[204] Lafargue, *Right to Leisure*, p. 11.

[205] Tillett, *Trades Unionism and Socialism*, p. 14.

[206] Fisher, *The Babies' Tribute*, p. 16.

[207] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 67.

[208] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, pp. 32, 33.

[209] Social-Democratic Federation, *The Unemployed*, leaflet.

[210] Smart, *The Right to Work*, p. 3.

[211] Washington, *A Corner in Flesh and Blood*, p. 12.

[212] *The Socialist Standard*, December 1907.

[213] *Why Labour Men should be on Town Councils*, p. 2.

[214] Marx, *Wage-Labour and Capital*, p. 12.

[215] L'Auton, *The Nationalisation of Society*, p. 4.

[216] Jaurès, *Studies in Socialism*, p. 1.

[217] *Handbuch für Sozialdemokratische Wähler*, 1903, p. 233.

[218] *Manifesto of the Socialist Party of Great*

Britain, p. 7.

[219] *The Socialist Standard*, December 1907.

[220] Debs, *Industrial Unionism*, p. 4.

[221] Morris, *Useful Work* versus *Useless Toil*, pp. 22, 25.

[222] *The Class War*, p. 1.

[223] *Programme and Rules, Social-Democratic Federation.*

[224] *Socialist Standard*, October 1, 1907.

[225] Davidson, *The New Book of Kings*, p. 115.

[226] Macdonald, *Socialism and Society*, pp. 111, 112.

[227] *What Socialism Means*, p. 3.

[228] *Wealth Makers and Wealth Takers*, p. 2.

[229] *After Bread, Education*, p. 12.

[230] *Capital and Land*, p. 13.

[231] Morris, *Useful Work versus Useless Toil*, p. 26.

[232] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 8.

[233] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 4.

[234] *The Socialist*, October 1907.

[235] *The Socialist Annual*, 1907, p. 42.

[236] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, pp. 30, 31.

[237] Quelch, *The Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 1.

[238] Leatham, *The Class War*, p. 10.

[239] Hall, *The Old and the New Unionism*, p. 4.

[240] Leatham, *The Class War*, p. 11.

[241] Blatchford, *The Pope's Socialism*, p. 2.

[242] *What Socialism Means*, p. 3.

[243] *Forward*, November 23, 1907.

[244] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 58.

[245] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 166.

[246] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 4.

[247] McClure, *Socialism*, p. 16.

[248] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 98.

[249] Williams, *The Difficulties of Socialism*, pp. 3, 4.

[250] Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 11.

[251] Hyndman, *Social-Democracy*, p. 24.

[252] Joynes, *The Socialists' Catechism*, p. 13.

[253] Leatham, *The Evolution of the Fourth Estate*, p. 3.

[254] *Fabianism and the Fiscal Question*, p. 19.

[255] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 41.

[256] Leatham, *The Evolution of the Fourth Estate*, p. 3.

[257] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 4.

[258] Blatchford, *Competition*, p. 15.

[259] See Chapters VII & XXIII.

[260] *English Progress towards Social-Democracy*, p. 14.

[261] *Ibid.* p. 13.

[262] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 15.

[263] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 3.

[264] McClure, *Socialism*, p. 13.

[265] Kautsky, *The Class Struggle*, p. 24.

[266] Kautsky, *The Socialist Republic*, p. 21.

[267] Hyndman, *Historic Basis of Socialism*, p. 435.

[268] *Justice*, October 12, 1907.

[269] *Justice*, October 12, 1907.

[270] *The Social Democrat*, November 1907, p. 676.

[271] *Report on Fabian Policy*, 1896, p. 6.

[272] G.B. Shaw, quoted in Jackson, *Bernard Shaw*, p. 100.

[273] Proudhon, *What is Property?* pp. 252-256.

[274] *Ibid.* p. 37.

[275] *Ibid.* p. 184.

[276] Snowden, *The Christ that is to be*, p. 6.

[277] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 32.

[278] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* p. 11.

CHAPTER V[ToC]

THE AIMS AND POLICY OF THE SOCIALISTS

Those people who formerly called themselves Communists now call themselves Socialists. Marx and Engels wrote in their celebrated "Manifesto": "The theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property."[279] The policy of modern British Socialism may be summed up in the identical words. Indeed, we are told by one of its most eager champions that "The programme of Socialism consists essentially of one demand—that the land and other instruments of production shall be the common property of the people, and shall be used and governed by the people for the people."[280] "We suggest that the nation should own all the ships, all the railways, all the factories, all the buildings, all the land, and all the requisites of national life and defence."[281]

According to the Socialist doctrines which have been given in Chapter IV, private property is the enemy of the workers. Therefore they quite logically demand that all private property must be abolished. "The problem has to be faced. Either we must submit for ever to hand over at least one-third of our annual product to those who do us the favour to own our country without the obligation of rendering any service to the community, and to see this tribute augment with every advance in our industry and numbers, or else we must take steps, as considerately as may be possible, to put an end to this state of things."[282] "The modern form of private property is simply a legal claim to take a share of the produce of the national industry year by year without working for it. Socialism involves discontinuance of the payment of these incomes and addition of the wealth so saved to incomes derived from labour. The economic problem of Socialism is thus solved."[283]

A general division of the existing private property among all the people is not intended, because it is considered to be impracticable. "Socialism does not consist in violently seizing upon the property of the rich and sharing it out amongst the poor."[284] "Plans for a national 'dividing up' are not Socialism. They are nonsense. 'Dividing up' means individual ownership. Socialism means collective ownership."[285] "It is obvious that, in the present stage of economic development, individual ownership is impossible. All the great means of production are collectively owned now. Individual liberty based upon individual property is therefore out of the question, and the emancipation of the working class can only be achieved in social freedom, based upon social property, through the transformation of privately owned collective property into publicly owned collective property."[286]

Starting from these premisses, the Socialists arrive at the demand that "all the means of production and distribution, all the machinery, all the buildings, everything that is necessary to provide the fundamental necessaries of life, must be common property."[287] "We want all the instruments for the purposes of trade to be the property of the State. With that will have come at the same time the abolition of power permitting any individual to exact rent or interest for the loan of land or of the implements of production. The abolition of all private property will mean the extinction of the parasite."[288] "The overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth, by and in the interest of the

whole community: That is Socialism."[289] "The Fabian Society aims at the reorganisation of society by the emancipation of land and industrial capital from individual and class ownership, and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit. The Society accordingly works for the extinction of private property in land, and of the consequent individual appropriation, in the form of rent, of the price paid for permission to use the earth, as well as for the advantages of superior soils and sites. The Society, further, works for the transfer to the community of the administration of such industrial capital as can conveniently be managed socially."[290] "Here in plain words is the principle, or root idea, on which all Socialists agree—that the country and everything in the country shall belong to the whole people (the nation), and shall be used by the people and for the people. That principle, the root idea of Socialism, means two things: (1) That the land, and all the machines, tools, and buildings used in making needful things, together with all the canals, rivers, roads, railways, ships, and trains used in moving, sharing (distributing) needful things, and all the shops, markets, scales, weights, and money used in selling or dividing needful things, shall be the property of (belong to) the whole people (the nation). (2) That the land, tools, machines, trains, rivers, shops, scales, money, and all the other things belonging to the people, shall be worked, managed, divided, and used by the whole people, in such way as the greater number of the whole people shall deem best."[291]

A perusal of the party programmes and other Socialist documents contained in the Appendix will show that the abolition of all private property, and its transference to the State, is the aim of all the

Socialist organisations and parties, and no further extracts need be given in order to prove the unanimity of the Socialists on this point.

The question now arises: How is this transference of all private property to the State to be effected? Will the present holders of property be fully compensated, partly compensated, or not compensated at all? Do the Socialists aim at purchase or at confiscation of existing private property. Will they respect existing rights, or are they bent upon open or more or less disguised spoliation?

It is, unfortunately, very difficult to obtain a plain and straightforward answer upon this important point. Instead of giving this answer, British Socialists loudly protest that it is not their aim to destroy or abolish property. As nobody has suspected the Socialists to be foolish enough to abolish or destroy property—which means the instruments of production, such as factories, machines, railways, &c., by the use of which the people live, and thus bring starvation upon themselves—their eagerness to explain that they do not intend to abolish or destroy property can only be explained by the surmise that they hope shallow simpletons will say, "The Socialists have no intention to take our capital away from us by force and without compensation, for they have declared that they do not intend to abolish property." A few of these declarations should here be given: "So far from abolishing property, Socialism desires to establish it upon the only basis which makes property secure—that of service, of creative service."[292] "Socialism does not propose to abolish land or capital. Only a genius could have thought of this as an objection to Socialism."[293] "Socialism is far from aiming at the destruction of private

property. Its object is to increase private property amongst those whose property is so limited that they have a difficulty in keeping themselves alive."[294] Another Socialist makes the very irrelevant and unnecessary observation: "It is a firm principle of Socialism never to interfere with personal property in order to investigate its origin or to arrange it in a different way. Never and nowhere! And whoever asserts to the contrary either does not know the principles of Socialism or willingly and knowingly asserts an untruth. The Socialists deem an investigation into the origin of an acknowledged personal property an unnecessary trouble. They consider the personal property an accomplished fact and respect it: so much so, that they consider stealing a crime."[295] Mr. Blatchford informs us, "We do not propose to seize anything. We do propose to get some things and to make them the property of the whole nation by Act of Parliament or by purchase."[296]

As regards the question whether compensation or no compensation will be given, our Socialist leaders give us very vague and unsatisfactory replies, which rather contain highly respectable but perfectly irrelevant commonplaces than definite proposals. Most Socialists will answer the plain question of confiscation or no confiscation with a quibble or a conundrum, as the following examples will show: "One view of Socialism is that it is a scheme of confiscation of property from one class to give it to another class—that Socialists are Dick Turpins made respectable by using Acts of Parliament instead of pistols. Now the real fact is that the Socialist has come to put an end to Dick Turpin methods. Socialism is a rational criticism of our present methods of production and distribution. It desires to

say to the possessors: Show us by what title you possess; and it proposes to pass its judgments upon the axiom that whoever renders service to society should be able to have some appropriate share in the national wealth."[297] In other words, an inquisitorial tribunal with arbitrary powers would be empowered to confiscate at will. "Socialism is not a plan to despoil the rich: it is a plan to stop the rich from despoiling the poor. Socialism is not a thief; it is a policeman."[298] "Do any say we attack private property? We deny it. We attack only that private property for a few thousand loiterers and slave-drivers which renders all property in the fruits of their own labour impossible for millions. We challenge that private property which renders poverty at once a necessity and a crime."[299] "Socialism would not rob anyone. It would distinguish between the lawful possessor and the rightful possessor, and it would compel the 'lawful' possessor to restore to the rightful possessor the property of which he had robbed him."[300] "We do not propose to rob the rich man of his wealth; we deny that it is his wealth. Wealth is a social product, and therefore belongs to society. It is not an act of brigandage to demand that society shall own and use what society has created."[301]

Some Socialists consider the question of compensation or no compensation as one of very minor importance. "The question of compensation need not greatly worry us. Socialists hold that plutocrats owe all their wealth to society; and therefore that society has the right at any moment to take it back."[302] The more cautious and moderate French and German Socialists are apt to promise compensation in terms such as the following: "We declare expressly that it is the duty of the State to

give to those whose interests will be damaged by the necessary abolition of laws which are detrimental to the common interest compensation as far as it is possible and consistent with the interests of all."[303]

It will be observed that the plain word compensation is circumscribed by the phrase, "compensation as far as it is possible and consistent with the interests of all." In other and plainer words, compensation is to be arbitrarily given, and its proportion to the property acquired is apparently to be determined not by its value or by fairness and equity, but by the will of those who may be in power.

English Socialists, on the other hand, are apt to recommend a far more drastic treatment of property-owners. "We claim that land in country and land in towns, mines, parks, mountains, moors, should be owned by the people for the people, to be held, used, built over, and cultivated upon such terms as the people themselves see fit to ordain. The handful of marauders who now hold possession have, and can have, no right save brute force against the tens of millions whom they wrong."[304] The most moderate school of British Socialism, the Fabian Society, favours in its statement of policy given under the heading "Basis of the Fabian Society" the expropriation of all private capital "without compensation, though not without such relief to expropriated individuals as may seem fit to the community." In other words, expropriated property-owners may, or may not, be given something to protect them from starvation, not as a matter of right, but of charity.

Most Socialists who favour compensation recommend that it should be given only in the form

of consumable articles such as food, clothes, &c., or in bonds which are changeable only into consumable articles. "Rothschild will be paid in bread and meat and luxury and wine and theatre tickets."[305] "When capitalistic property shall have been socialised, the holders of compensation deeds will not be able to purchase either fresh means of production or producers; they will only be able to buy products."[306]

Some Socialists suggest that the bonds given in exchange for property acquired by the State might be cancelled later on. The property-owners could be deprived of their possessions without any difficulty, either gradually by taxation or at one blow by confiscation at the option of the men in power. "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."[307] The foregoing is a simple plan of swindling property-owners out of their holdings.

Some of the more moderate Socialists argue: "There is much to be said in favour of the liberal treatment of the present generation of proprietors and even of their children. But against the permanent welfare of the community the unborn have no rights."[308] On the other hand, Bax, the philosopher of British Socialism, quite logically and honestly states that the idea of compensation has no room in the Socialist code of ethics, that the bourgeois idea of compensation on grounds of justice is irreconcilable with the Socialist conception of justice. He says: "Between possession and confiscation is a great gulf fixed, the gulf between the bourgeois and the Socialist worlds. Well-meaning men seek to throw bridges over this gulf by schemes of compensation, abolition of inheritance, and the like. But the attempts, as we believe, even should they ever be carried out practically, must fall disastrously short of their mark and be speedily engulfed between the two positions they are intended to unite. Nowhere can the phrase 'He that is not for us is against us' be more aptly applied than to the moral standpoint of modern individualism and of modern Socialism. To the one, individual possession is right and justice, and social confiscation is wrong and injustice; to the other, individual possession is wrong and injustice, and confiscation is right and justice. This is the real issue. Unless a man accept the last-named standpoint unreservedly, he has no right to call himself a Socialist. If he does accept it, he will seek the shortest and most direct road to the attainment of justice rather than any longer and more indirect ones, of which it is at best doubtful whether they will attain the end at all. For be it remembered the moment you tamper with the sacredness of private property, no matter how

mildly, you surrender the conventional bourgeois principle of justice, while the moment you talk of compensation you surrender the Socialist principle of justice, for compensation can only be real if it is adequate, and can only be adequate if it counterbalances, and thereby annuls, the confiscation. It is just, says the individualist, for a man to be able to do what he likes with his own. Good; but what is his own?"[309] "The great act of confiscation will be the seal of the new era; then and not till then will the knell of civilisation, with its rights of property and its class society, be sounded; then, and not till then, will justice—the justice not of civilisation but of Socialism—become the corner-stone of the social arch."[310]

I think the straightforwardness of Bax is preferable to the crooked and insincere explanations and proposals of the British and foreign Socialist given in the foregoing. Bax's opinion is irrefutable. According to the doctrines of Socialism given in Chapter IV., labour is the source of all wealth; the greater part of the products of that labour is dishonestly abstracted from the labourer by the capitalist class, which has converted the result of that labour into property. Hence Socialists think with Proudhon, and they very often openly declare, that property is theft. Capitalist society will not compensate the thief when taking from him his booty. Socialism will not compensate property-owners when taking away their property. Besides, compensation would be utterly opposed to the root idea of Socialist justice. At present expropriation without indemnity is called theft, but it would not be called theft under a Socialist *régime*. The chapter on "Law and Justice under Socialism" will make that quite clear.

Socialism teaches that no man is entitled to anything except that which he has made himself. "No man has a right to call anything his own but that which he himself has made. Now, no man makes the land. The land is not created by labour, but it is the gift of God to all. The earth belongs to the people. For the nonce please take the statement on the authority of Herbert Spencer, All men 'have equal rights to the use of the earth.' So that he who possesses land possesses that to which he has no right, and he who invests his savings in land becomes a purchaser of stolen property."[311] "No man made the land, and laws and lawyers notwithstanding no man has any moral right before God to call a solitary strip of God's earth his than has the burglar to call his stolen goods his personal property. It is therefore evident that the bite named 'rent' given to landlords for permission to live upon and use God's free gift to man is as much the fruit of robbery, the spoil of plunder, as is the result of a burglar's night's marauding, a common pickpocket's day's 'takings.'"[312] Capital is in the same position as land, for "Land and capital are indistinguishable."[313]

The more honest Socialists agree with Bax that compensation for property acquired would be inadvisable and impracticable. "In a pamphlet called 'Collectivism and Revolution' M. Jules Guesde said, 'Expropriation with indemnity is a chimera. And whatever regret one may feel, however difficult may appear to peaceful natures the last method, we have no other way than to retake violently that which belongs to all, by—let us say the word—the Revolution.' He added, 'Capital which it is necessary to take from individuals, such as the land, is not of human creation; it is anterior to man, for whom it is

a *sine qua non* of existence. It cannot therefore belong to some to the exclusion of others, without the others being robbed. And to make the robbers deliver up, to oblige them to restore in any and every way is not so much a right as a duty, the most sacred of duties."[314] A respected English Socialist says bluntly, "How to secure the swag to the workers is the problem."[315] A Christian Socialist clergyman sarcastically proposes: "If you are a Christian and love your rich neighbour as yourself, you will do all you can to help him to become poorer. For if you believe in the Gospel, you know that to be rich is the very worst thing that can happen to a man. That if a man is rich, it is with the greatest difficulty that he can be saved; for 'it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God' (Mark x. 25). This is startling now, but it was not less strange and startling to the disciples who 'were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?' But the needle's eye has not grown any larger since then, and the camels certainly have not grown smaller! All true Christians then must desire to relieve the rich man of his excess for his own sake, since the inequality that ruins the body of Lazarus ruins the soul of Dives; and Dives is the more miserable of the two, because the soul is more precious than the body."[316]

The abolition of private property requires also the abolition of the right of inheritance, as otherwise capital might again be accumulated in the hands of the thrifty and the enterprising. Therefore the manifesto of Marx and Engels already demands the "abolition of all right of inheritance."[317] Other Socialists say that this right should not be abolished. "Socialists used to insist upon the abolition of the

right of inheritance and bequest. But if what I gain by my own labour is rightfully my property—and the Co-operative Commonwealth will, as we have seen, declare it to be so—it will be inexpedient in that Commonwealth to destroy any of the essential qualities of propertyship; and I can hardly call that my property which I may not give to whom I please at my death. No man in a Co-operative Commonwealth could acquire so much more wealth than his fellows as to make him dangerous to them."[318] "Socialists do not object to property; they are not opposed to private property. They are therefore not opposed to inheritance. The right to acquire and hold involves the right to dispose by will or by gift. We only object to such a use of property as enables classes for generation after generation to live on the proceeds of other people's labour without doing any useful service to society."[319] This very diplomatic sentence may be explained in a variety of ways. Probably it means that holders of property of large size could summarily be deprived of their possessions by order of the Government, as has been indicated by that writer in another passage (see page 97). Such a power would make the right to hold and to bequeath property a farce. Property could be held then only on the same terms on which, I believe, it is held by Central African negroes. Another Socialist states, "If I am entitled to what I produce, then it follows that I am entitled to dispose of all that I produce;" and then denies the right to personal property by continuing: "The Socialists say, 'Not thine or mine, but ours.'"[320]

It would be only logical that the Socialist State, after abolishing private property by following the principle "not thine but ours," should not allow its re-creation and re-accumulation. "This pernicious right

(wrong) of inheritance must be abolished. It is the means by which the 'classes' perpetuate their robbery of the 'masses' from generation to generation and age to age. The disinherited would of course have the community to look to for sound education in youth, suitable employment in years of maturity, generous pension in old age, &c., and to what else can any rational human being lay just claim?"[321] Some Socialists argue that in the Socialist State "there will be nothing to bequeath, unless we choose to regard household furniture as a legacy of any importance. This settles the question of the right of inheritance, which Socialism will have no need to abolish formally."[322] "Socialism condemns as reactionary and immoral all that tends to the debasement of humanity. It condemns our industrial and commercial system as a degrading system—degrading both to the few who amass wealth and to the many who by their labour enable the few to lay up riches. It is degrading to those who rob and to those who are robbed; to those who cheat and to those who are cheated; to those who swim and to those who sink; to those who revel in luxury and to those who, barely sustaining their own lives, are compelled by their toil to supply luxuries for others to enjoy."[323] Therefore Socialism means to abolish the present system root and branch, and the most straightforward Socialists are frankly in favour of the most thorough measures for abolishing private property.

Children and poets proverbially speak the truth. Let us see what the Socialist poets think of the expropriation of property-owners.

Some of the poets tell the workers that the labourers not only produce all the wealth, but are

also all-powerful, and, if they wish to, they can do what they like with the country.

Shall you complain who feed
the world—
Who clothe the world, who
house the world?
Shall you complain who are the
world
Of what the world may do?
As from this hour you use your
power,
The world must follow you.
As from this hour you use your
power.
The world must follow you.
[324]

Others remind them of their grievances, and urge them to drive the rich man out of the country:

Think on the wrongs
ye bear,
Think on the rags ye
wear,
Think on the insults endured
from your birth;
Toiling in snow and
rain,
Bearing up heaps of
gain,
All for the tyrants who grind ye
to earth.

Your brains are as keen as the
brains of your masters.
In swiftness and strength ye

surpass them by far,
Ye've brave hearts that teach ye
to laugh at disasters,
Ye vastly outnumber your
tyrants in war.
Why, then, like
cowards stand.
Using not brain or
hand,
Thankful, like dogs, when they
throw ye a bone?
What right have they
to take
Things that ye toil to
make?
Know ye not, boobies, that all
is your own?[325]

Arise, unite each
scattered band,
To sweep all masters
from our land,
Then shall each mine
and loom and
field
Its produce to the
workers yield.
[326]

Others, again, urge the workers to seize all property and to make the rich man work for them.

They're never done
extolling
The nobility of work;
But the knaves! they
always take good

care
Their share of toil to
shirk.
Do they send their sons
and daughters,
To the workshop or
the mill?
Oh! we'll turn things
upside down, my
lads;
It will change their
tune, it will!
[327]

We'll drive the robbers from
our lands, our meadows
and our hills;
We'll drive them from our
warehouses, our
workshops and our mills;
We'll make them fare upon
their bonds, their
bankbooks and their
bills,
As we go marching to
liberty.[328]

Some Socialists believe that they will come to power suddenly and by violence, and abolish private capital at a stroke. Others are inclined to think that they will only gradually abolish it. Karl Marx was of the latter opinion. Therefore he wrote in his "Manifesto": "The first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class to win the battle of democracy. The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the

bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State—*i.e.* of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible. Of course in the beginning this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property and on the conditions of bourgeois production: by means of measures therefore which appear economically insufficient and untenable, but which in the course of the movement outstrip themselves, necessitate further inroads upon the old social order, and are unavoidable as a means of entirely revolutionising the mode of production. These measures will of course be different in different countries. Nevertheless in the most advanced countries the following will be pretty generally applicable:

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.

2. A heavy progressive or graduated income-tax.

3. Abolition of all right of inheritance.

4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.

5. Centralisation of credit in the hands of the State by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.

6. Centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.

7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing

into cultivation of waste lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.

8. Equal liability of all to labour. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.

10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, &c."[329]

Marx's programme has served as a model to the English Socialists, as the following demands of some of our Socialists will show: "The things you will be working for will be something like this. Shorter hours is the first thing, then a tax on landlords, then abolition of the House of Lords and the Monarchy, then more Home-Rule and more Local Government, then extension of municipal operations, the socialisation of coal stores, dairy farms, bakeries, laundries, public-houses, cab-hiring, the slaughter of cattle and the sale of butcher meat, the building and letting of houses—in short, the taking over by the local bodies of as many departments of production and distribution as need be. By this time the Class War will be shaping for a last great engagement."[330]

"As stepping stones to a happier period we urge for immediate adoption: The compulsory construction of healthy artisans' and agricultural labourers' dwellings

in proportion to the population, such dwellings to be let at rents to cover the cost of construction and maintenance alone. Free compulsory education for all classes, together with the provision of at least one wholesome meal a day in each school. Eight hours or less to be the normal working day in all trades. Cumulative taxation upon all incomes above a fixed minimum not exceeding 500*l.* a year. State appropriation of railways with or without compensation. The establishment of national banks which shall absorb all private institutions that derive a profit from operations in money or credit. Rapid extinction of the National Debt. Nationalisation of the land and organisation of agricultural and industrial armies under State control on co-operative principles. By these measures a healthy, independent, and thoroughly educated people will steadily grow up around us, ready to abandon that baneful competition for starvation wages which ruins our present workers, ready to organise the labour of each for the benefit of all, determined, too, to take control finally of the entire social and political machinery of a State in which class distinctions and class privileges shall cease to be."[331]

The Social-Democratic Federation demands the following immediate reforms: "The socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange to be controlled by a democratic State in the interests of the entire community, and the complete emancipation of labour from the domination of capitalism and landlordism with the establishment of social and economic equality between the sexes. Abolition of the Monarchy. Democratisation of the governmental machinery, viz. abolition of the House of Lords, payment of members of legislative and administrative bodies, payment of official expenses

of elections out of the public funds, adult suffrage, proportional representation, triennial Parliaments, second ballot, initiative and referendum. Foreigners to be granted rights of citizenship after two years' residence in the country, on the recommendation of four British-born citizens, without any fee. Canvassing to be made illegal. Legislation by the people in such wise that no legislative proposal shall become law until ratified by the majority of the people. Legislative and administrative independence for all parts of the empire.

"Repudiation of the National Debt. Abolition of all indirect taxation and the institution of a cumulative tax on all incomes and inheritances exceeding 300*l.*

"Extension of the principle of local self-government. Systematisation and co-ordination of the local administrative bodies. Election of all administrators and administrative bodies by equal direct adult suffrage.

"Elementary education to be free, secular, industrial, and compulsory for all classes. The age of obligatory school attendance to be raised to sixteen. Unification and systematisation of intermediate and higher education, both general and technical, and all such education to be free. Free maintenance for all attending State schools. Abolition of school rates, the cost of education in all State schools to be borne by the National Exchequer.

"Nationalisation of the land and the organisation of labour in agriculture and industry under public ownership and control on co-operative principles. Nationalisation of the trusts, of railways, docks, and canals, and all great means of transit. Public ownership and control of gas, electric light, and water-supplies, tramway, omnibus, and other

locomotive services, and of the food and coal supply. The establishment of State and municipal banks and pawnshops and public restaurants. Public ownership and control of the lifeboat service, of hospitals, dispensaries, cemeteries and crematoria, and control of the drink traffic.

"A legislative eight-hour working day or forty-eight hours per week to be the maximum for all trades and industries. Imprisonment to be inflicted on employers for any infringement of the law. Absolute freedom of combination for all workers, with legal guarantee against any action, private or public, which tends to curtail or infringe it. No child to be employed in any trade or occupation until sixteen years of age, and imprisonment to be inflicted on employers, parents, and guardians who infringe this law. Public provision of useful work at not less than trade-union rates of wages for the unemployed. Free State insurance against sickness and accident, and free and adequate State pensions or provision for aged and disabled workers. Public assistance not to entail any forfeiture of political rights. The legislative enactment of a minimum wage of 30*s.* for all workers. Equal pay for both sexes for the performance of equal work.

"Abolition of the present workhouse system, and reformed administration of the Poor Law on a basis of national co-operation. Compulsory construction by public bodies of healthy dwellings for the people, such dwellings to be let at rents to cover the cost of construction and maintenance alone, and not to cover the cost of the land. The administration of justice to be free to all; the establishment of public offices where legal advice can be obtained free of charge."[332]

Mr. Blatchford suggests the following: "The public maintenance and the public education of children. The public provision of work for all. The taxation of the land and of all large incomes. The confiscation of unearned increment. Old-age pensions. The minimum wage. Compulsory land cultivation. Universal adult suffrage. The second ballot. The payment of election expenses. The nationalisation of the railways and of the land. The nationalisation or municipalisation of trams, gas, water, bread, liquor, milk, coal, and many other things. The abolition of hereditary titles and of the House of Lords."[333]

The general policy which the Socialists should follow was summed up by Marx in the following way. "The Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things."[334] "Socialism is the only hope of the workers. All else is illusion. Workers of all lands, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win."[335]

"This is the final struggle. The extinction of classes must follow the overthrow of the last form of class domination and the emancipation of the last class to be set free. Rally then, fellow workers, to the standard of the international class-conscious proletariat, the Red Flag of Social-Democracy. 'Workers of all countries, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win!'"[336] "The land of England is no mean heritage."[337]

"What has hitherto prevented the workers from combining for the overthrow of the capitalist system? *A.* Ignorance and disorganisation.—*Q.* What has left them in ignorance? *A.* The system itself, by compelling them to spend all their lives upon monotonous toil and leaving them no time for

education.—*Q.* What account have they been given of the system which oppresses them? *A.* The priest has explained that the perpetual presence of the poor is necessitated by a law of God; the economist has proved its necessity by a law of Nature; and between them they have succeeded in convincing the labourers of the hopelessness of any opposition to the capitalist system.—*Q.* How is it that the labourers cannot see for themselves that they are legally robbed? *A.* Because the present method of extracting their surplus value is one of fraud rather than of force, and has grown gradually."[338]

The philosopher of British Socialism well sums up the aims and policy of the Socialists. He says: "What is vital in Socialism? In the first line, I take it, come

"1. The collectivisation of *all* the instruments of production by *any* effective means;

"2. The doctrine of the Class War as the general historical method of realising the new form of society;

"3. The principle of internationalism, the recognition, *i.e.* that distinction of nationality sinks into nothingness before the idea of the union of all progressive races in the effort to realise the ideal of true society as understood by the Social-Democratic Party;

"4. The utmost freedom of physical, moral, and intellectual development for each and all consistent with the necessities of an organised social State.

"The Socialist's adhesion to the doctrine of the Class War involves his opposition to all measures subserving the interest of any section of capitalism. This coupled with his 'Internationalism' leaves him no choice but to be the enemy of 'his country' and

the friend of his country's enemies whenever 'his country' (which means of course the dominant classes of his country, who always are for that matter his enemies) plays the game of the capitalist. Let us have no humbug! The man who cannot on occasion be (if needs be) the declared and active enemy of that doubtful entity, 'his country,' is no Social Democrat."[339]

"Justice being henceforth identified with confiscation, and injustice with the right of property, there remains only the question of 'ways and means.' Our bourgeois apologist, admitting as he must that the present possessors of land and capital hold possession of them simply by right of superior force, can hardly refuse to admit the right of the proletariat organised to that end to take possession of them by right of superior force. The only question remaining is, How? And the only answer is, How you can."[340]

FOOTNOTES:

[279] Page 17.

[280] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 100.

[281] *Clarion*, October 11, 1907.

[282] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 10.

[283] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, pp. 26, 27.

[284] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 99.

[285] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* p. 1.

[286] *Socialist Annual*, 1907, p. 39.

[287] Kirtlan, *Socialism for Christians*, p. 15.

[288] Tillett, *Trades Unionism and Socialism*, p. 12.

[289] *Manifesto of the Socialist Party of Great Britain*, p. 9.

[290] *Basis of the Fabian Society*.

[291] Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 10.

[292] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 103.

[293] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 11.

[294] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 3.

[295] Sorge, *Socialism and the Worker*, p. 9.

[296] Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 3.

[297] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 103.

[298] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* p. 2.

[299] *Socialism made Plain*, p. 10.

[300] Blatchford, *The Pope's Socialism*, p. 3.

[301] Hobart, *Social-Democracy*, p. 7.

[302] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 94.

[303] Jaurès, *Practical Socialism*, p. 3.

[304] *Socialism Made Plain*, p. 8.

[305] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 105.

[306] Jaurès, *Practical Socialism*, p. 5.

[307] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 10.

[308] Sidney Webb, *The Difficulties of Individualism*, p. 10.

[309] Bax, *The Ethics of Socialism*, pp. 75, 76.

[310] *Ibid.* p. 83.

[311] Blatchford, *The Pope's Socialism*, p. 6.

[312] Muse, *Poverty and Drunkenness*, p. 9.

[313] *Facts for Socialists*, p. 7.

[314] Guyot, *Pretensions of Socialism*, p. 16.

[315] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 9.

[316] Dearmer, *Socialism and Christianity*, pp. 17, 18.

[317] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 22.

[318] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p 105.

[319] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 105.

[320] *Socialism, For and Against*, p. 9.

[321] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 158.

[322] Bebel, *Woman*, pp. 231, 232.

[323] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 2.

[324] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 56.

[325] *Ibid.* p. 30.

[326] *Independent Labour Party Song Book*, p. 33.

[327] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 43

[328] *Independent Labour Party Song Book*, p. 7.

[329] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, pp. 21, 22.

[330] Leatham, *The Class War*, pp. 13, 14.

[331] *Socialism Made Plain*, p. 10.

[332] Programme, *Social-Democratic Federation*.

[333] *Clarion*, October 18, 1907.

[334] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 30.

[335] *Motto of The Socialist*, weekly, taken from Marx and Engels' *Manifesto*.

[336] *The Class War*, p. 2.

[337] *Socialism Made Plain*, p. 10.

[338] Joynes, *The Socialist Catechism*, p. 5.

[339] Bax, *Essays in Socialism*, pp. 101, 102.

[340] Bax, *Ethics of Socialism*, p. 82.

CHAPTER VI[ToC]

THE ATTITUDE OF SOCIALISTS TOWARDS THE WORKING MASSES

Before investigating the attitude of British Socialism towards the working masses, it is necessary to take note of its doctrines regarding work.

Most thinkers, from the time of King Solomon, Socrates, and Confucius down to the present age, have seen in work conscientiously performed a blessing; many, probably most, British Socialists declare it to be a curse and a vice. The leading English philosopher of Socialism, for instance, tells us: "To the Socialist labour is an evil to be minimised to the utmost. The man who works at his trade or

avocation more than necessity compels him, or who accumulates more than he can enjoy, is not a hero but a fool from the Socialists' standpoint."[341] A leading French Socialist informs us: "Through listening to the fallacious utterances of the middle-class economists, the workers have delivered themselves body and soul to the vice of work."[342] When Mr. Victor Grayson, M.P., a Socialist, in a speech ventured to refer to work as "one of the greatest blessings and privileges ever conferred on humanity," one of the Socialist papers wrote: "Victor Grayson is simply an agent of the capitalist class. Is Mr. Victor Grayson, M.P., trying to allure the capitalist class by picturing work as a blessing, or is he trying to get the worker to look upon work through a rosy mist conjured from the brains of the capitalist's agent who is saturated with capitalist philosophy? It is time the Beatitudes were extended or revised. How would this do?—'Blessed is the worker who works (for the capitalist), for he shall inherit the kingdom (of starvation and misery under capitalism).' 'Blessed is work in itself, because it enables (the capitalist) to live in peace and happiness.' Since work is a blessing, it follows that whatever saves work is a curse. All the beautiful machinery which the working class have shed their life blood to produce, to develop which an army of them have been sacrificed under capitalism by the capitalists; this which the workers of ages and ages have contributed their mite towards; have laboured long and suffered silently to create; this is an evil!!!"[343]

British Socialists do their utmost to convert the workers into shirkers by teaching them not only that work is an evil in itself, but by constantly admonishing them, "on scientific grounds," to work

as little as possible during the time they are employed. "It is the interest of the employer to get as much work out of his hands as possible for as little wages as possible. It is the interest of the workers to get as high a wage as possible for as little labour as possible."[344] "The workers have been taught by the practical economists of the trade-unions, and have learnt for themselves by bitter experience, that every time any of them in a moment of ambition or good will does one stroke of work not in his bond, he is increasing the future unpaid labour not only of himself, but of his fellows."[345]

The Independent Labour Party has issued a leaflet entitled "Are you a Socialist?" in which the question occurs, "Do you believe that every individual should have sufficient leisure to cultivate his higher faculties and enjoy life to the fullest extent?" and the answer is, "If you say 'Yes,' join the Independent Labour Party and help to carry its principles into effect."[346]

Many Socialists promise the workers that the Socialist State of the future will abolish the curse of work by greatly diminishing the hours of labour. A leading English Socialist writer says: "It is as plainly demonstrable as that twice four make eight that a due system of organised effort would enable your 43,000,000 of people to win from Nature an overflowing superfluity of all that man desires, without one-fourth the effort put forth now to win a beggarly subsistence so far short of what your community requires that 13,000,000 of your people live continually upon the very verge of starvation."[347] A leading American Socialist promises somewhat vaguely, "A few hours of work will secure to everybody all necessaries, decencies, and comforts of life."[348] William Morris tells us that

four hours' work will suffice, and that it will not all be "mere machine-tending."[349] Morrison-Davidson prophesies that the "hours of labour will probably not exceed a minimum of two and a maximum of five daily."[350] Hyndman feels quite certain that "two or three hours' labour out of the twenty-four by all adult males would be enough to give the whole community all the wholesome necessaries and comforts of life,"[351] and Bax thinks that "In a perfectly organised Socialist State men never worked more than two or three hours a day."[352] Yves Guyot wittily says: "There is no reason why their demands should not go further. Zero alone can bid them defiance."[353] It is worth noting that many Anarchists also promise a great lessening of the hours of labour when the State has been destroyed. Kropotkin, for instance, requires only from four to five hours' work.[354] Agitators desirous to secure the support of the workers cannot be too lavish in their promises.

In the Socialist State of the future a few hours' work every day will give boundless prosperity to all, for "Wealth may easily be made as plentiful as water at the expense of trifling toil."[355] "Under Socialism, nineteen-twentieths of the people will be better off materially than they are to-day, for they will be equal partners in all the productive and distributive wealth of the community."[356] "Comparative affluence would be enjoyed by each member of the community."[357]

In the Socialist commonwealth of the future "all wages will be immediately increased," for "the social community will apply itself to raise all salaries of workers and peasants."[358] "In a Socialist State you will have everyone paid a living wage. The surplus

will be dispensed by the State, bringing happiness to the whole community."[359]

The British national revenue amounts at present only to a little more than 140,000,000*l.* By the abolition of the private capitalists and landowners the Socialist Government of Great Britain "would at once find themselves in possession of a revenue amounting to some 900,000,000*l.* per annum, and would probably be puzzled for a time how to dispose of it and prevent themselves being buried under its accumulation."[360] This is neither a joke nor a misprint, for the well-known writer, author of countless Socialist pamphlets, continues: "After a variety of attempts to dispose of it by dividing into good fat salaries among those of your community who had had least to do with its production, after the usual custom, I believe means would be employed ultimately for inducing them to keep it under by increasing the wages of the workers, which is another way of saying that those whose labour had produced the wealth would be allowed to enjoy it, which would be something quite novel."[361]

The Socialist Government would not only diminish the working hours making them from three to five hours a day, but would also double and treble wages, partly in order to get rid of the glut of money flowing into the National Exchequer, partly because the workers would presumably receive the whole produce of their labour (see Chapter IV.) in the form of wages as soon as the private capitalists were eliminated. Repairs, renewals, replacement of capital losses, and the extension of national industry, which are at present effected out of the savings of private capitalists, would, under the Socialist *régime*, apparently no longer be required, and direction,

supervision, and distribution would apparently no longer cost anything. The workers are quite seriously told by the philosopher of British Socialism, collaborating with the editor of "Justice": "Under present conditions the total wealth produced would, if equitably divided, amount to a value equal to more than 200*l.* per year per family. But to suppose that any mere distributive readjustment is what is meant by Socialism is to entirely misunderstand what Socialism really involves. Socialism means the complete reorganisation of production as well as distribution. With production scientifically and socially organised, the productivity of labour would be quintupled, and the amount of wealth would be increased in proportion."[362] In other words, there would be 1,000*l.* a year for each family. Another Socialist more plainly states: "At the present hour it is calculated that the wealth of the United Kingdom exceeds 2,000 millions per year. This divided among forty millions gives 250*l.* per family. It is said that the abolition of waste labour and the absorption of the idle classes would quadruple the production. One thousand pounds per year per family is a very good standard of comfort under a co-operative system of living."[363]

The two estimates agree in this, that the Socialist family of five should receive in wages 1,000*l.* per annum, or about 3*l.* 10*s.* per working day. In another chapter we shall learn that in the Socialist State only the young and strong would work, and they would work, as we have seen in the foregoing pages, between three and four hours a day. In other words, the worker who earns now, say, 10*d.* an hour, would, under the Socialist commonwealth, receive 1*l.* per hour. Who would not be a Socialist?

A leading German Socialist has endeavoured to gauge the effect of Socialism upon the working classes. In making his calculations he has borne in mind the necessity of providing for the wear and tear of capital, and for other expenditure, and he has arrived at the conclusion: "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."[364]

The value of high wages lies in the produce they buy. It is of course quite clear that a nation, in order to consume more, must also produce more. It would be interesting to know whether leading Socialists, such as Messrs. Bax, Quelch, and Hazell, who must be acquainted with the sober estimates of the German Socialists, honestly believe that under a Socialist *régime* 1,000*l.* per annum will be available per family, or whether these statements have only been made to obtain supporters on the not very honourable principle, *Vulgus vult decipi, decipiatur*.

Let us now look into the practical proposals of the Socialists to the workers.

In the official programme of the Social-Democratic Federation[365] the following "Immediate Reforms" concerning the workers are demanded:

"A legislative eight hours' working day, or forty-eight hours per week, to be the maximum for all trades and industries. Imprisonment to be inflicted on employers for any infringement of the law.

Absolute freedom of combination for all workers, with legal guarantee against any action, private or public, which tends to curtail or infringe it. No child to be employed in any trade or occupation until sixteen years of age, and imprisonment to be inflicted on employers, parents, and guardians who infringe this law. Public provision of useful work at not less than trade-union rates of wages for the unemployed. Free State insurance against sickness and accident, and free and adequate State pensions or provision for aged and disabled workers. Public assistance not to entail any forfeiture of political rights. The legislative enactment of a minimum wage of 30*s.* for all workers. Equal pay for both sexes for the performance of equal work."

It will be noticed that imprisonment is to be inflicted upon employers who allow their men to work overtime. Would there also be imprisonment for workers working undertime? Similar demands have been made by other Socialist bodies. Let us look more closely into some of those demands which are to be fulfilled forthwith.

Old-age Pensions

With the same recklessness with which the Socialist leaders promise to the working man a large income in return for three or four hours' daily work in the golden age of Socialism, they try to dazzle him with promises of wonderful old-age pension schemes which are to be carried out in the immediate future. Mr. Smart thinks "The smallest sum upon which an old man can exist, even when his lodging is provided by his friends, is 7*s.* a week. The pension, therefore,

should not be less than this amount, and should be obtainable at sixty years of age. The annual cost for a universal system would be, with the necessary administrative expenses, about 60,000,000*l.*"[366] To Councillor Glyde the pensionable age of sixty seems to be too high, and the pension too low. Therefore he proposes that "Old-age pensions of at least 7*s.* 6*d.* per week should be provided for all aged workers over fifty-five years of age."[367] But why should a working man have to wait till he is fifty-five before receiving a pension? In another pamphlet, Mr. Glyde amends his scheme and tells us, "To give a pension of 7*s.* 6*d.* per week to all who wished to give up work at fifty years of age would have very satisfactory results. In the first place, it would make the aged workers happy and comfortable. In the second place, it would help to solve the unemployed question by the steady withdrawal of the aged workmen from the labour market, give them purchasing power, and thus find a home market for the productivity of the younger, able-bodied workers. Thirdly, it would prevent the competition for jobs, and the playing off against the younger workmen by the employers of the cheaper-paid labour of those who cannot as they formerly could, so that there would be less strikes, reduction in wages, and petty tyranny practised upon the younger generation of workers. Fourthly, it would cause the abolition of workhouses, with their great army of expensive, well-paid officials. There would be no need for workhouses, because cottage homes would be provided for those who were infirm and feeble, on the lines of the present homes for children; an infirmary for those who were sick and invalids, and asylums for the imbecile. Thousands would be cared for by relatives and friends. Fifthly, by Imperial funds being used for old-age pensions,

the Poor rate could be reduced from 6*d.* to 1*s.* in the pound. These reforms could be carried out without a single farthing extra taxation, nor anyone being any worse off than formerly, by the practice of economy."[368] To pension all workers at fifty would cost about 100,000,000*l.* a year, and I think it would be very difficult to save that amount on a budget of 140,000,000*l.* unless army, navy, and civil service were abolished. Mr. Morrison Davidson is neither satisfied with a pension of 7*s.* 6*d.* a week nor with the pensionable ages of sixty, fifty-five, or even of fifty. He proposes, therefore, that "Superannuation *on full pay* will take place at, say, forty-five or, at the most, fifty."[369]

Unemployment

In the Socialist State of the future there would be no unemployed workers. Many Socialist writers make forecasts such as the following: "Under Socialism all the work of the nation would be organised—that is to say, it would be 'ordered,' or 'arranged,' so that no one need be out of work and so that no useless work need be done, and so that no work need be done twice where once would serve."[370] "There would be a mathematical ordering of production determined by the demands of the consumer."[371] "Periods of glut and want of work will be impossible in the new community."[372]

It is already difficult enough even for the ablest manager to secure constant employment to workers in a moderate-sized manufactory, shop, or office. A Socialist Administration composed of fallible men would have to control and satisfy the whole national

demand and supply. It would have to sow and to reap, to dig for coal and ore, to fish, to manufacture and to distribute everything wanted and made by all the people. At the same time it would have to control the vast international trade on the regular flow of which constant employment in Great Britain necessarily depends. To satisfy every demand by an adequate supply, it would therefore have to direct and control not only all British industries, but also the fashions and the seasons in Great Britain and in all the countries which stand in commercial relations with the United Kingdom. The British Socialist Administration would not only have to provide a sufficient cotton crop in the United States, a sufficient wool crop in Australia, a sufficient wheat crop in Canada, but it would also have to provide an adequate demand for British cotton goods in India and China, for British coal on the continent of Europe, &c. It would have to provide sufficient sun in America to produce an adequate cotton crop and sufficient rain in India to enable the natives to buy part of that cotton crop in the shape of manufactured articles made in Lancashire. Unless the Socialist Administration controls not only all foreign tariffs but also Nature the world over, there might be unemployment in a socialised Great Britain—and worse.

The doctrines of English Socialism may be summed up in a single phrase. Every existing evil is due solely to the capitalistic system, and every existing evil can be abolished only by Socialism. Unemployment is no exception to the rule. Our Socialists have, for reasons which will presently be given, concentrated much energy upon convincing the working masses that unemployment is due solely to private property in land and capital. The Social-Democratic Federation

has shown that "The existence of an unemployed class is an essential characteristic of the capitalist system."[373] The Fabian Society in congress assembled has registered the declaration: "That the existence of a class of unemployed willing but unable to find work is a necessary result of the present industrial system, in which every improvement in machinery throws fresh masses of men out of work" [would improved machinery not have the same effect in the Socialist commonwealth?] "and the competition of capitalists for the market produces recurring commercial crises; that, consequently, unemployment can only be abolished with the complete abolition of the competitive system, and can only be limited in proportion as order and regulation are introduced into the present competitive confusion."[374] Yet the same Fabian Society frankly admits in another pamphlet that "No plan has yet been devised by which the fluctuations of work could be entirely prevented, or safe and profitable employment found for those rendered idle by no fault of their own. It is easy enough to demand something should be done, and I entirely agree with agitating the subject; but something more than agitation is required. It is of no use urging remedies which can be demonstrably proved to be worse for the patient than the disease itself. I fear that if we were given full power to-morrow to deal with the unemployed all over England, we should find ourselves hard put to it how to solve the problem."[375] At the last Conference (1907) of the Social-Democratic Federation the resolution was moved, "That this Conference reasserts its statement that unemployment is due to the private ownership of land and capital."[376]

The emphatic statements contained in the

foregoing declarations that unemployment is due to the private ownership of land and capital are absurd. If the private ownership of land and capital were the cause of unemployment, unemployment should be almost equally great in all civilised countries, because in all civilised countries land and capital are in private hands. Whilst in Great Britain unemployment is a fearful and permanent evil, it has been practically unknown during a long time in Germany, where there has been for many years so great a scarcity of labour that immigration is greater than emigration.[377] Whilst in capitalist Great Britain employment is so bad that from 200,000 to 300,000 people have to emigrate every year, employment in capitalist Germany has been excellent, and in the capitalist United States it has been so good that they have absorbed during a number of years almost 1,000,000 immigrants per year. These facts prove that private ownership of land and capital and over-production have nothing to do with unemployment, which is, as a rule, due not to over-production but to ill-balanced production, as has been proved on page 70 of this book. In the case of a country such as Great Britain, unemployment is due principally to the insufficiency and insecurity of her markets for her manufactured goods and to the decay of her agriculture.

The various Socialist organisations have so constantly preached the doctrine that unemployment is due to the private ownership of land and capital that the Trade Unions have at last come to believe it. Owing to Socialist inspiration, the Trade Union Congresses have passed resolutions in favour of the nationalisation of land and of the other means of production at most of the meetings since 1888, and a Socialist weekly has been able to assert that "Every

member of the Socialist Labour Party, either by Trade Union Congresses or by Independent Labour Party programme, is committed to the nationalisation of land and the instruments of production."[378] To the delight of the Socialists, resolutions of the Trade Unions urging the nationalisation of all land and capital are becoming more and more emphatic. In the "Social Democrat" for October 1907 we read, under the heading "Trade Unionists and Unemployment," the following: "The resolution on unemployment passed at the Bath Trade Union Congress shows that the Trade Unionists are falling into line with Social Democrats on this question, and that they are beginning to see that Trade Unionism alone is no solution for this evil. After referring to the failure of the Unemployed Workmen Act, and the niggardly manner of doling out the grant of 200,000*l.*, the resolution goes on to say that 'This Congress, recognising that unemployment is now permanent in character in busy as in slack seasons, in summer and in winter, and is common to all trades and industries; also that this is due to industry being unorganised and carried on for private profit and is bound to continue, and indeed become more accentuated as the development of machinery and other wage-saving methods proceeds, calls the attention of the Government to its neglect of the interests of the people in not grappling with this social evil, and urges it to at once embark upon work of public utility with the object of (a) absorbing the present unemployed labour, (b) laying the foundation for a permanent reorganisation of industry upon a co-operative basis.'"[379]

The Socialists have been anxious to convince the workers that unemployment is due to the private ownership of land and capital, and that all

unemployed should be relieved by the State because "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, whenever 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."[380] "The right to work is a charter of industrial freedom, the emancipation of labour from capitalist tyranny. Till it is obtained there can be neither social nor moral progress. When it is obtained all other things become possible."[381]

The British Labour Party has drafted a Bill which, asserting the right to work, makes provision of work for the unemployed compulsory and enables the local authorities compulsorily to acquire land with a view of setting the unemployed to work.[382] The Annual Conference of the Independent Labour Party of 1907, going a step further, demanded the erection of a national department for creating work and

giving a living wage to the unemployed. It resolved:

"This Conference welcomes the news that a Bill to secure the right to work is to be introduced into Parliament by the Labour party, expresses the hope that every effort will be made to secure its passing into law, and declares in favour of the establishment of a properly equipped and financed national department for dealing with the whole problem of unemployment on the basis of putting useful work at a living wage within the reach of every worker, and of training such as require to be taught in husbandry, and other forms of work upon the land."[383]

There is a great danger in these proposals.[384] Creating work for the unemployed may not cure, but may aggravate, the disease which springs not from private property in land and capital, but from an insufficient outlet for British manufactures. If the disease is wrongly treated, the unemployed may become an incubus which will cripple both workers and capitalists.

A champion of the policy of *laisser faire* argues: "The State cannot make work, if by work is meant the doing of something that somebody wants done. It is of course true that the State can take on new functions, and do more of the work that is now left to private enterprise. But that would not make additional employment; it would only transfer employment from one set of men to another. When the State or the municipality, instead of seeking to do the thing that is wanted in the most economical and most efficient manner, deliberately picks out the least competent workmen and sets them to work on things that are not wanted, no new wealth is created, and the previous creation of wealth is diminished, because the taxpayer has been deprived of the means

of employing as many persons as he would have employed. Artificial jobs may be created for the unemployed, who will be perfectly conscious that these jobs are artificial, and thus the independent and self-respecting workman will be arbitrarily deprived of his job. It cannot be too often repeated that the so-called 'right to work,' on which Socialists are fond of insisting, means in practice the right to deprive another man of his job."[385] These arguments are fallacious. There is work such as the reclamation of the foreshore, draining of bogs, constructing canals, planting of forests, &c., which are, as general experience shows, rather the province of the community than of the private individual. Unemployment may be relieved by the State and the local authorities if discretion be used. Proposals to create work of this kind for the genuine unemployed, and to provide compulsory labour for idlers and loafers, have been advanced by many Socialists and non-Socialists, and these proposals are worth considering and adopting.

FOOTNOTES:

[341] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 94.

[342] Lafargue, *Right to Leisure*, p. 11.

[343] *The Socialist*, October 1907.

[344] Leatham, *The Evolution of the Fourth Estate*, p. 13.

[345] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 145,

[346] *Are you a Socialist?* p. 1.

[347] Washington, *A Nation of Slaves*, p. 5.

[348] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 170.

[349] Morris, *A Factory as it Might Be*, p. 10.

[350] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 170.

[351] Hyndman, *Socialism and Slavery*, p. 10.

[352] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 58.

[353] Guyot, *Pretensions of Socialism*, p. 9.

[354] Kropotkin, *Conquête du Pain*, p. 239.

[355] *Socialism Made Plain*, p. 11.

[356] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 10.

[357] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 159.

[358] Jaurès, *Practical Socialism*, p. 6.

[359] *Socialism, For and Against*, p. 11.

[360] Washington, *Milk and Postage Stamps*, p.

5.

[361] *Ibid.* p. 5.

[362] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 17.

[363] A.P. Hazell, *Summary of Marx's "Capital,"* p. 17.

[364] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 18.

[365] See Appendix.

[366] Smart, *Socialism and the Budget*, p. 12.

[367] Councillor Glyde, *A Peep Behind the Scenes on a Board of Guardians*, p. 27.

[368] Councillor Glyde, *Britain's Disgrace*, pp. 31, 32.

[369] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 170.

[370] Robert Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 13.

[371] Ben Tillett, *Trades Unionism and Socialism*, p. 12.

[372] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 192.

[373] Quelch, *The Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 5.

[374] *Report on Fabian Policy and Resolutions*, p. 11.

[375] Webb, *Socialism True and False*, pp. 8, 9.

[376] *Report of 21th Annual Conference, 1907, Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 17.

[377] Ellis Barker, *Modern Germany*, p. 546.

[378] *New Age*, November 30, 1907.

[379] *Social Democrat*, October 1907, p. 580.

[380] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 6.

[381] Russell Smart, *The Right to Work*, p. 15.

[382] A Bill to Provide Work through Public Authorities for Unemployed Persons.

[383] *Independent Labour Party Report, Annual Conference, 1907*, p. 54.

[384] See Thorold Rogers, *Work and Wages*, p. 557.

[385] Cox, *Socialism*, pp. 37, 39, 40.

CHAPTER VII[ToC]

THE ATTITUDE OF SOCIALISTS TOWARDS TRADE UNIONISTS AND CO-OPERATORS

The British Socialists have during many years attacked and denounced the Trade Unionists and the Co-operators, firstly, because the trade unionists and co-operators are "capitalists," and therefore traitors to the Socialist cause; secondly, because Socialism unconditionally condemns providence and thrift among the working men, as will be seen in Chapter XXIII.

Although the Socialists pretend that they denounce co-operation and thrift, and even abstinence from alcoholic drink, on economic and scientific grounds, their real reasons are political. Socialism can flourish only if the masses are dissatisfied. The Socialists are

therefore little interested in improving the position of the worker, but very greatly in increasing his poverty, unhappiness, and discontent. Socialism is revolutionary, and the Socialists know that people who are well off are not revolutionists. For tactical reasons, therefore, the Socialists oppose and denounce thrift, co-operation, and abstinence, qualities which are found pre-eminently in co-operators and trade unionists.

The trade unionists, the aristocracy of British labour, are too conservative, too temperate, too cautious, too prosperous, and too little revolutionary for the taste of Socialists. The Socialists complain: "The British trade union suffers from three fatal defects: (1) It is anti-revolutionary. It disavows the fact of the class struggle. It accepts the capitalist system as a permanency. The rules and constitutions of many unions explicitly refer to the 'just rights of the employer,' and those who do not set forth any such statement openly, admit it in actual practice. The capitalist class, as voiced by the capitalist press, recognise in these unions the bulwark of present-day society against the advance of Socialism. (2) The British trade union method of organisation is a complete negation of the solidarity of labour. Each trade or section of a trade has its own particular and autonomous organisation. Even trades which are most closely connected are divided into separate unions, each union ignoring the interest of the rest, making its own special contracts with the capitalists, and assisting them by remaining at work when their fellow-workers in a kindred trade are on strike. The most noteworthy example of this form of inter-trade treachery was offered in the case of the engineers' strike of 1897-8, when the Boilermakers' Society by remaining at work were the means of defeating the

Amalgamated Society of Engineers and of forcing them to return to work on the masters' terms. (3) The British trade union refuses to admit to its ranks those teeming millions of workers whom it terms 'unskilled.'"[386]

Other Socialists complain: "Trade unionism recognises the present system of society, justifies capitalism, and defends wage-slavery, and only seeks to soften the tyranny of the one and assuage the evils of the other. Social Democracy aims at destroying the whole system."[387] "We are never allowed to forget the splendid incomes earned by these aristocrats of labour, a mere tenth of the whole labour class. The trade unionist can usually only raise himself on the bodies of his less fortunate comrades."[388] "The old-fashioned policy of the English trade unions has made them *guilds of privileged*, rather than fighting representatives of their class."[389]

Similar complaints are raised against the co-operators. "Co-operation, though regarded by the individual trader as an enemy, does not necessarily enter into conflict with the capitalist at all. Indeed, so far as it transforms workmen into shareholders, it forms a bulwark for capitalism, the same as the creation of small landholders or any other class of small proprietors would do."[390] "At present the co-operative societies in England are very apathetic with regard to political affairs."[391] "In spite of abstract resolutions, our trade unionists are devoted to the wages system; still our co-operators yearn after dividends; still the mass of our producers admire the men who rise upon their shoulders to place and pay. The twin curses of democracy, slavishness and jealousy, are curiously blended in

their views of social and political life. They envy capacity; they bow down before successful blackguardism."[392]

Some Socialists have called for the unification of all the trades unions, arguing "Union has failed to adapt itself to changed conditions. Just as budding industrial development called into being the shop union, and further industrial expansion meant development of the union to the local and then the national organisation, so the exigencies of our time demand a working-class union—one union, not eleven hundred, as now."[393] Others have bespattered the unions with insults, and some do so still. A very violent Socialist organ recently wrote: "Our trade union leaders are not so corrupt as those of America? Are they not? As a matter of fact, the corruption is tenfold greater. The difference is that here it is legalised and respectable. In America the corruption takes the form of a wad of dollar notes pushed into the fakir's hands in a dark corner. In this country our trade union leaders are openly corrupted in the face of day by positions on conciliation boards, Justiceships of the Peace, Cabinet positions" [this is a hit at Mr. John Burns], "and well-paid jobs in the Labour Department of the Board of Trade. Are Shackleton, Bell, and Barnes honester men than Gompers, Mitchell, and Tobin? As Dr. Johnson very coarsely expressed it: 'It is difficult to settle the question of precedence between a bug and a louse.'"[394]

To the more far-sighted Socialists the folly of attacking the powerful trade unions, with their 2,000,000 members, was perfectly clear. One of the Socialist leaders wrote: "Of all the blind, fatuous policies in the world, that of decrying trades

unionism by professing Socialists is about the worst; and the next worst thing is the trades unionist abusing Socialism."[395] Some Socialists recommended changing the policy of denunciation for a wiser one: "We have to *convert* the trade unions, not to *antagonise* them"[396]; and their conversion was thought to be all the more easy because, to quote Ben Tillett, "The whole of the trades union movement has been tinged with Socialism; unconsciously the guides of the working classes have always marched towards the goal of Socialism."[397]

With this object in view the trade unionists were urged to reform their tactics, to abandon the economic struggle in the form of strikes, and to enter upon the more efficacious political struggle with the employers of labour in the House of Commons. "To go on following the old beaten paths of trade unionism is simply to go on exhausting the possibilities of error for an indefinite period. If the new unions are simply to play the part of regulators of wages, as trade and prices rise and fall, they will be of very slight advantage to the workers compared with what they might accomplish if they took a broader view of their opportunities and their duties. What they have to do, and that now, is to use the power which organisation gives them to get control of the political machinery of the country and use it for the advancement of their class. By this means they could, if they chose, achieve as much in a year or two as would be gained in a century by the old methods of trade agitation and strikes."[398] "If the Labour party had a tithe of the money that the unions have spent upon getting thrashed and starved and defrauded, it would be a party to wonder at and be proud of. The miners of Yorkshire have spent 212,000*l.* on six strikes—all of which have been lost.

Do you call this industrial warfare? Insanity and suicide—that is what it is. The engineers spent three-quarters of a million on the great lock-out. That is a sum in itself, the ransom of all the workers from the bonds of wage-slavery. What can the engineers show for their money to-day? Ask them! We could capture the British Parliament with that sum *plus* a little brains and courage."[399] The Fabian Society has issued numerous pamphlets in which it has shown how the position of the workers might be improved, and in these it has at every opportunity urged upon every worker to join a union, and has urged upon the trade unions to better the position of the workers by relying upon political action.[400]

In pursuance of this policy the railway employees were told by the Socialists, when the difference between the British railway companies and their workers had been arranged: "You men must cling tight to the union and keep fostering the discontent of your fellows, not only with the sectional wrongs which affect you personally, but with the brutal system of competition of which your own wrongs are but one fractional consequence. Stick to the Labour party. You have two representatives in Parliament. Run some more. You need not bother now to build up a strike fund. Spend the money in politics. The more men you get in the House, the better chance you will have of convincing a Government arbitrator of the justice of your claims."[401]

Wishing to secure the support of the trade unionists and the co-operators, the Socialists began to preach that there was no antagonism between Socialists, trade unionists, and co-operators, and to stretch out a hand towards them. "Socialist influence makes its way in the union. The trade unions

generally must sooner or later become—they already in some instances are to-day—part and parcel of the working-class Socialist movement, or must cease to exist as class organisations. Co-operation is in its inception Socialist. That is to say, that all co-operation implies co-operative effort and social union."[402] Another Socialist writer said: "I am sorry that some Socialists used to cry down the co-operative movement. I know it has some serious defects, but it has taught the workers of this country what they can do when they choose. If any power could induce trade unionists, co-operators, and Socialists to unite, a co-operative commonwealth would be flourishing in this country before the rich and educated classes had rubbed open their drowsy eyes."[403]

The recommendations which the Socialists addressed to the trade unionists to increase their political power, and to improve their economic position by the use of their political power, became louder and louder. They were told that the capitalists were the enemies of both trade unionists and Socialists, and that co-operation would be of the greatest benefit to both bodies. The Socialist group of the London Society of Compositors, for instance, argued:

"It is unfortunate that after some dozen years or more of Socialist propaganda there should still be considerable bitterness existing between trade unionists and Socialists. The cause of the unpopularity of the Socialists was not due to any desire on their part to irritate trade unionists, but arose out of the stupid prejudices of the spokesmen and leaders of the trade unionists themselves. Socialists are staunch trade unionists. The New trade

unionism is evidence of this, for Socialists are responsible for calling it into existence. The movement which is now gaining ground in favour of federation among trade unionists generally, is one of Socialist origin. Trade unionists look solely to unionism to maintain their miserable standard of living, ignorant of the economic laws working against them. Socialists accept unionism as only one method to maintain their present standard of comfort.

"Both Socialists and trade unionists have a common enemy, a common want, and a common economic force which continually and relentlessly drives them in one direction. Both are driven to defend attacks against their standard of living by the capitalist, and the one point of agreement between Socialists and trade unionists, therefore, is that they both desire to maintain and increase their present standard of living. Trade unionists enter a union to resist the exactions of the capitalists, and to baulk attempts on their part to reduce wages. Socialists enter a union for precisely the same reason. If they would view Parliamentary action from the standpoint of the collective welfare of the people, they would soon realise its far-reaching effects. A legal forty-eight hour working week, for instance, would bring benefit to all and raise the standard of all by giving more leisure; thereby affording workers an opportunity of obtaining fresh air and following artistic and intellectual pursuits.

"One of the strongest agents which work in favour of the capitalists is the necessity of the workers to find food and clothing for their families. This evil can be met by the State proposal which is now making such headway in England—namely, Free

Maintenance for Children. The old-fashioned prejudices, fostered by the capitalists and their hangers-on, that it is degrading to accept anything from the State, is fast dying out in the face of free education, free libraries, free maintenance for all sickened with infectious fevers. Free maintenance for children would be a tax on that surplus wealth which the capitalists and the aristocracy share between them. To the worker, free maintenance for his children would be equivalent to an additional income. His standard of living would rise. No doubt the capitalist would reduce his wages as much as possible, but the worker would then be able to fight him on more equal terms. His children being well cared for, he would be able to hold out against the capitalist for an indefinite period.

"The Housing Question is also worthy of attention. Trade unionism should require the State to erect buildings to be let at a sum which would cover cost of construction and maintenance alone. This would give them a stationary rent, and when locked out by their employers, they, as unemployed workers, would not be so liable to be turned into the street.

"The workers, unconscious of economic development, unfortunately side with one political party or the other, not seeing that the one must inevitably be as antagonistic to their interests as the other. Tory and Liberal politically represent two classes, who divide the spoils between them. One is connected by tradition with the soil, the other with commerce. When they have a quarrel, it is as between kites and crows for the possession of prey. To assert that a Tory is better than a Liberal, or a Liberal better than a Tory, is like affirming that one exploiter is less a thief than another. Until trade

unionists form themselves into an independent party, there can politically be no common agreement between them and Socialists, because, while they support the capitalist class they are placing power into the hands of the exploiting class, who is the common enemy. Co-operation between Socialists and trade unionists should be adopted whenever possible, and, when occasion offers, an alliance should be entered into for common purposes. In America a large section of trade unionists have already recognised that the class war is inevitable under the present system of exploitation, and they have entered into an active alliance with the Socialist party. It is to be hoped that the trade unions of Great Britain will ere long see their way to follow the example set by their American brethren in the United States."[404]

Another writer urged: "Is it not time that we combined and strove for something higher, wider, and more far-reaching? Let the trade unionists unite, combine, federate; not for constantly squabbling with the capitalist over the spoil which the workers alone create, but to secure for the latter, organised, the control of their own tools and raw materials—of the mines, the railways, the factories, the shipping, the land—of all those things which only have value through their labour. Let the co-operators co-operate with each other, with trade unionists, and Social Democrats for the same object. Let us all agitate, educate, and organise to form the workers of the world into a gigantic Trade Union, an International Co-operation, a Social-Democratic Commonwealth."[405]

Since the time when these words were written attempts have constantly been made by the Socialists to co-operate with the unionists, and, at least

outwardly, their relations have become intimate. Many Socialists have high hopes for a united Socialist Labour party. At a recent conference of the Social-Democratic Federation the chairman declared, in his opening address: "There can be but one Independent Labour Party, and there ought to be a united Socialist party. Not many years will pass before the new Labour party will join the Socialist movement, but in the meantime everything seems ripening for a united Socialist party, consolidating both forces and funds, preventing overlapping and removing friction. Never were the times so favourable to Socialism. In spite of the boycott, the misrepresentation, the influence of the temporal powers against us, the word Socialism is no longer unknown or feared. In the workshop, the mine, the train, or the tram, men are eagerly discussing Socialism. The workers need grumble of their chains no longer; they can fling them off at will; for they, and they alone, hold the keys of freedom. This poor blind Samson is waking up and groping his way; Socialists must be ready to lead him."[406]

Socialism has of late years strongly permeated the unions. Will it succeed in capturing them? The Socialists are very optimistic on that point. "The outlook is full of promise for the political Labour movement. It only requires the adoption of a candidate by the united local societies to turn every trade union institute or office, miners' lodge and branch meeting-room into a committee-room, and when the call is made by the Parliamentary group there will be plenty of voluntary workers. The great fact stands out prominently: Labour is moving; and that fact points to stirring times and a new phase in the history of the nation."[407]

The character of the trade unions has undoubtedly been greatly changed through Socialist agitation. The trade unionist has almost ceased to be an individualist. "The modern trade unionist is out for a political revolution. He has dismissed, as an obsolete absurdity, the idea of paying for his benefits, pensions, sick-pay, unemployed relief, out of his union subscriptions. He intends to combine with his fellows of all trades in a demand for Parliamentary legislation which will provide these benefits out of national funds, mainly by way of a graduated income-tax. So he demands old-age pensions and an Unemployed Act. He has given up the tedious task of bargaining with his master for higher wages and shorter hours; he intends to compel him by the more drastic method of an eight-hour day and a minimum wage and State Arbitration Act."[408] There is much truth in this description. As the real nature of the relations between the trades unions and the Socialists is known to only a few, the following documents should be of great interest:—

> "In consequence of a decision of the International Socialist Bureau (June 9, 1907), its secretary sent a circular to the affiliated parties in order to obtain from them official notes on the relations between the political Parties and trade unions of their country, and he received the following replies from the Social-Democratic Federation, the Labour party, and the Independent Labour Party:—
>
> "'Although from its formation in March 1881 the Social-Democratic Federation has strongly opposed the abstention of the older trade unions from politics, and has still more strongly objected to the very close alliance which some

of its leading members have made with the capitalist Liberal party, resulting in high office and even Cabinet rank'" [another hit at Mr. John Burns] "'for those who have thus deliberately betrayed the interests of their fellows and supporters of the working class; nevertheless, we have never at any time failed to help in every way possible, personally and pecuniarily, every strike which has taken place since 1881 (even in spite of our doubting the value of the mere strike as a weapon against organised capitalism), and our organisation has invariably agitated in favour of every Parliamentary measure accepted by the trade unions which could at all help the trade unionists and the workers at large. Our relations with the trade unions may therefore be described as friendly whenever they take action against capitalism, and appreciative of their increasing tendency towards Socialism. We always recommend all workers to join the trade union of their trade. No Socialist propaganda is officially carried on by the trade unions, but as quite 75 per cent. of the members of the Social-Democratic Federation are also trade unionists in their respective trades, by their agency Socialist thought is steadily permeating the ranks of trade unionism. As also the older leaders, brought up entirely in the bourgeois school of thought and action, die or are superannuated, there can be no doubt whatever that they will be succeeded by Socialists, and in fact they are being so replaced at the present time. Trade union Socialist leaders, of course, will then use the trade union organisation to spread Socialism.

So far as they have been elected to executive office, they do this even now.—H.W. LEE, Secretary.'

'"The Labour party is a federation of Socialist societies and trade union organisations. Trade unions are directly affiliated, their membership forming, together with the membership of the Socialist organisations, the membership of the Labour party. In some cases Socialist propaganda is conducted by the trade unions, several of them embracing the Socialist basis in their rules.—J.S. MIDDLETON, for J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.'

'"The Independent Labour Party is affiliated to the Labour party, which is a federation of trade unions, co-operative societies, and Socialist societies, for political action. The Independent Labour Party consists of individual members, and not of federated organisations. Our membership is only open to Socialists individually. Our association with the trade unions comes through the Labour party, with which both we and they are affiliated. The trade unions of Great Britain do not carry on any specific Socialist propaganda among their members, although several of the unions state in their constitution that they believe in Socialism. Many Socialist speeches are made from trade union platforms and demonstrations held under the auspices of trade unions.—FRANCIS JOHNSON, Secretary.'"[409]

The foregoing three letters are most interesting and most important, and they should be carefully read because they prove that the forces of trade unionism and Socialism are commingling, and that

the trade unionists may reckon upon the support of the Socialists whenever they come into conflict with capitalists. Although in constructive policy Socialism and trade unionism are as yet things apart, they possess a common working basis as soon as trouble occurs between capital and labour.

To increase the intimacy between them and the representatives of labour pure and simple, and to accustom them to co-operation, the Socialist cannot do anything better than to cause conflicts to arise between capital and labour. Therefore it is only natural that the Socialists will urge the trade unionists to make great, and ever greater, demands upon capital; that every concession will only be considered as a stepping-stone to a further concession. Every conflict between capital and labour, everything that will increase the dissatisfaction of the workers, will serve the Socialists, because it will cause the workers to believe in the doctrine of the Iron Law of Wages, in the Law of Increasing Misery, and in the promised Socialist paradise. Therefore the Socialists will do all they can to embitter the relations between capital and labour, and to bring about strikes. For instance, at the time when, in the autumn of 1907, the differences between the British railway companies and the men were acute, practically the whole Socialist press urged the railway servants to declare a strike, and the settlement of the difficulty by Mr. Lloyd George was greeted with derision and regret. Mr. Bell, who had accepted the settlement, was treated with contempt, and the result of the Railway Conference was declared to be the Sedan of the British trade union movement.[410]

Owing to the persistent agitation of the Socialists,

the trade unions are becoming permeated with Socialism. Of late years there have been few great strikes in Great Britain, but, unless the relations between Socialists and trade unionists alter, it seems likely that great and violent industrial disputes will occur in the near future.

FOOTNOTES:

[386] *S.L.P. Bulletin No. 2, 1907.*

[387] Quelch, *Trade Unionism*, p. 10.

[388] *English Progress towards Social Democracy*, p. 8.

[389] *S.L.P. Bulletin No. 1, May 1907.*

[390] Quelch, *Trade Unionism*, p. 16.

[391] John Penny, *The Political Labour Movement*, p. 10.

[392] Hyndman, *Darkness and Dawn of May Day, 1907*, p. 2.

[393] J. O'Connor Kessack, *The Capitalist Wilderness and the Way Out*, p. 15.

[394] *S.L.P. Bulletin No. 2.*

[395] Ben Tillett, *Trades Unionism and Socialism*, p. 1.

[396] Quelch in *The Socialist*, November 1907.

[397] Ben Tillett, *Trades Unionism and Socialism*, p. 14.

[398] Quelch, *Trade Unionism*, p. 13.

[399] *Clarion*, November 29, 1907.

[400] *The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, What it Means and How to Make Use of it*; *How Trade Unions Benefit Workmen*; *Eight Hours by Law: A Practical Solution*; *Cottage Plans and Common Sense*; *Houses for the People*; *The Case for a Legal Minimum Wage*.

[401] *Clarion*, November 15, 1907.

[402] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 40.

[403] Dennis Hird, *From Brute to Brother*, p. 14.

[404] *Socialism and Trade Unionism: Wherein do they Differ?* pp. 2-8.

[405] Quelch, *Trade Unionism*, p. 16.

[406] Opening Address, Chairman Hartley at Annual Conference, *Social-Democratic Federation Annual Report, 1906*, pp. 3, 4.

[407] John Penny, *The Political Labour Movement*, p. 15.

[408] *New Age*, November 30, 1907.

[409] *Social Democrat*, September 1907, pp. 548, 549.

[410] See the *Labour Leader*, *Clarion*, *Justice*, *Socialist Standard*, *Socialist*, &c., for November 1907.

CHAPTER VIII[ToC]

SOCIALIST VIEWS AND PROPOSALS REGARDING

LAND AND THE LANDLORDS

British Socialists, as we have learned in Chapter IV., [411] adopting the celebrated formula of Proudhon, have proclaimed "Property is theft," and they are of opinion that property in land is a particularly heinous form of theft. Therefore they demand the restitution of the land to the people, not as a matter of expediency but as a matter of right. "Man has a right only to what his labour makes. No man 'makes' the land."[412] "Land is the gift of Nature. It is not made by man. Now, if a man has a right to nothing but that which he has himself made, no man can have a right to the land, for no man made it."[413] "The land belongs by inalienable right not to any body of individuals but to all."[414]

O high cliffs looking
heavenward,
O valleys green and fair.
Sea cliffs that seem to gird and
guard
Our island once so dear,
In vain your beauty now ye
spread,
For we are numbered with the
dead;
A robber band has seized the
land,
And we are exiles here.

The ploughman ploughs, the
sower sows.
The reaper reaps the ear;
The woodman to the forest goes

Before the day grows clear,
But of our toil no fruit we see;
[146]
The harvest's not for you and me:
A robber band has seized the land,
And we are exiles here.[415]

Appealing to the passions, hatred, and greed of their followers, and relying on their credulity, Socialist leaders proclaim not only that the landlords are useless, but also that the people will have the land rent free as soon as the present owners have been expropriated. "The landlord, *qua* landlord, performs no function in the economy of industry or of food production. He is a rent-receiver; that, and nothing more. Were the landlord to be abolished, the soil and the people who till it would still remain, and the disappearance of the landowner would pass almost unnoticed."[416] "Rent is brigandage reduced to a system. So long as the English people are content to be tenants-at-will on their own soil, and to pay for the privilege, they will remain virtually slaves."[417] "The tenant earns the rent. The landlord spends it. If the tenant had not to pay the rent he could spend it himself, and so it would get spent, and get spent by the man who earns it and has the best right to spend it."[418]

Whilst some Socialist agitators are unscrupulous enough to make their followers believe that in the Socialist State they may have land for the asking, others are so unkind as to destroy that pleasing illusion. For instance, we learn from a Fabian pamphlet, "A Socialist State or municipality will charge the full economic rent for the use of its land

and dwellings, and apply that rent to the common purposes of the community."[419] Another Socialist authority very pertinently remarks: "It is of not the least consequence to the person who rents the land whether he pays the rent for it to an individual or whether he Pays it to the State,"[420] and therefore it is clear that statements such as "If the tenant had not to pay the rent he could spend it himself," are merely meant to deceive the simple. Tenants, instead of paying their rent to a human landlord, would have to pay it to an impersonal State or municipality, and the latter might prove as grasping and as heartless as rating committees are now.

Others base their demand for the spoliation of landlords upon the Bible and upon the ideal of a "Divine brotherhood," forgetting that the Bible contains a commandment "Thou shalt not steal," as well as many warnings against lying, deceit, cant, and covetousness. One of the champion Bible-Socialists, for instance, writes: "If all men are brothers, as Christ undoubtedly taught, then the land, the source of wealth, the means by which men can earn their livelihood, should not be the property of any set of individuals, but should belong to the whole community. The fact of a man being born into the world gives him the divine right to the opportunity of earning his living, and that right cannot be enjoyed so long as there is a single man on earth deprived of access to the land from which to earn his bread. When the spirit of brotherhood prevails, it will be a simple and a natural thing to arrange that these things shall be used not in the interests of the few, but for the common good. There are innumerable signs that the hearts and minds of men are now turning in this direction, and that they are coming to see that the only just and permanent

arrangement is the divine solution of working on the basis of universal brotherhood."[421] There is a fraternity among Sicilian bandits. The "Divine brotherhood" of the writer would be based on robbery, and have robbery as its object.

Others demand the confiscation of all land by relying upon misrepresentation: "If the injustice of the land monopoly is great in the country, by robbing the grower of his improvements or scaring him from making any, by robbing the nation of its own legitimate independent food supply, and by laying waste vast tracts of the surface, the injustice is even greater in the towns, if only by reason of the greater numbers whose interests are now involved: (1) by flooding the town labour markets with surplus labourers, and so—by their competition between each other for jobs of any sort at any terms, rather than starve—keeping wages down at the privation point; (2) by robbing the town workers of that proper and legitimate home market which a flourishing and proportionately numerous agricultural population would afford; (3) by the bloated rentals in cities, only made possible by driving and crowding the people into our unnaturally swollen centres; and (4) by the continuous re-investment of those enormous rent extortions in all those secondary monopolies of transit, finance, and business generally, which can only arise from the primary monopoly of the soil, and which complete this devil's chain of the subjection of labour and the dependence of the community."[422]

The complaints that land is going out of cultivation, that the British home market has been spoiled, and that towns are overgrown and overcrowded are unfortunately only too well

justified, but these phenomena are not due to private property in land. Private property in land is universal, but the desertion of the country and overcrowding in towns are not universal. These evils are to be found chiefly in Great Britain, because British economic policy, whilst fostering trade and the manufacturing industries, has deliberately sacrificed to them the rural industries. That fact is acknowledged by many Socialists, as will be seen in Chapter XXL., "Some Socialist's Views on Free Trade and Protection."

The question now arises: How do the Socialists propose to deal with the land and the owners of land? Mr. Blatchford informs us: "The titled robbers of England have always done their robberies in a legal manner. We propose to enforce their cessation in a legal manner. We respect the law, and mean to use it. We are not mere brigands. We are the new police; our duty is to 'arrest the rogues and dastards'; our motto is, 'The law giveth and the law taketh away, blessed be the name of the law.'"[423] A leading Christian-Socialist clergyman tells us "As for compensation, from the point of view of the highest Christian morality, it is the landlords who should compensate the people, not the people the landlords. But practically if you carry out this reform by taxation, no compensation would be necessary or even possible."[424] Mines and mine-owners are to be treated in the same way as land and land-owners. "The minerals should be at once taken over without compensation; the present owners should think themselves well off if they escape paying compensation for previous robbery of the people."[425] Views such as those expressed in the foregoing are held not only by some unscrupulous agitators. At the last Annual Conference of the

Independent Labour Party the following resolution was carried: "This Conference, being of opinion that the high price of coal is a serious menace to the nation, and bears extremely hard upon householders and especially upon the working classes of the country, declares in favour of the nationalisation of the mines and municipalisation of the coal-supply."[426] At the last Annual Conference of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, various resolutions urging the nationalisation of all mines were proposed and carried. Mr. W.E. Harvey, M.P., for instance, moved "That the members of Parliament supported by this federation be instructed to direct the attention of the Government to bring in a Bill for the nationalisation of land, mines, and mining royalties, as we believe that it is only by such reforms that the workers can obtain full value for their labours."[427] It will be observed that nothing is said about compensation in this resolution, which was passed unanimously.

How is the nationalisation of the land to be effected? "The land of every country belongs of natural and inalienable right to the whole body of the people in each generation. We say therefore, 'You need not kick the landlords out; you must not buy them out; you had better tax them out.'"[428] "If the people rose in revolt, took up arms, confiscated the lands of the nobles, and handed them over to the control of a Parliament, that would not be brigandage; it would be revolution. But if the people by the exercise of constitutional means, passed an Act through Parliament making the estates of the nobles the property of the nation, with or without compensation, that would be neither brigandage nor revolution; it would be a legal, righteous, and constitutional reform. We propose to be neither

revolutionaries nor brigands, but legal, righteous, and constitutional reformers."[429] Legality implies and presupposes justice, but Socialist law and justice are different from that conception of law and justice which has been held hitherto. Chapter XXIV. will make that point clear.

The foregoing should suffice to show that the Socialists intend to abolish private property in land by "taxing landowners out of existence."

They apparently forget that not all the owners of land are rich; that many small farmers, shopkeepers, artisans, &c., own freehold land and freehold houses; and that the insurance companies have a very large proportion of their funds invested in land and on the security of land. A confiscation of land would therefore ruin a vast number of hard-working people. It would cripple some insurance companies and ruin others. Hence the savings of thrifty workers would be confiscated or destroyed by the State together with those of the larger capitalists.

The Socialists are not entirely agreed as to the way by which the abolition of private ownership in land should be effected, but some interesting proposals will be found in Chapter X., "Socialist Views and Proposals regarding Taxation and the National Budget." The purely agricultural aspect of the land question is treated in Chapter XVIII., "Socialism and Agriculture," and in Chapter XXI., "Some Socialist Views on Free Trade and Protection."

FOOTNOTES:

[411] Page 81.

[412] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 61.

[413] *Ibid.* p. 60.

[414] Washington, *A Corner in Flesh and Blood*, p. 60.

[415] *Clarion Song Book*, p. 6.

[416] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 11.

[417] Davidson, *Book of Lords*, p. 25.

[418] Blatchford, *Land Nationalisation*, p. 9.

[419] Sidney Webb, *Socialism, True and False*, p. 19.

[420] *Socialism and the Single Tax*, p. 7.

[421] Ward, *Are All Men Brothers?* pp. 14, 15.

[422] Hall, *Land, Labour, and Liberty*, p. 12.

[423] Blatchford, *Some Tory Socialisms*, p. 6.

[424] Headlam, *Christian Socialism*, p. 14.

[425] *Forward*, October 12, 1907.

[426] *Independent Labour Party Report, Annual Conference, 1907*, p. 59.

[427] *Times*, October 12, 1907.

[428] Headlam, *Christian Socialism*, p. 7.

[429] Blatchford, *Some Tory Socialisms*, p. 3.

CHAPTER IXToC

SOCIALIST VIEWS AND PROPOSALS REGARDING CAPITAL AND THE CAPITALISTS

We have seen in Chapter VIII. that Socialists claim that "Man has a right to nothing but that which he has himself made," that therefore, "No man can have a right to the land, for no man made it." May, then, owners of property keep at least that part of their property which is not invested in land?

The reply is, of course, in the negative. "As land must in future be a national possession, so must the other means of producing and distributing wealth."[430] "Supposing we assume it true that land is not the product of labour and that capital is; it is not by any means true that the rent of land is not the product of labour and that the interest on capital is. Since private ownership, whether of land or capital, simply means the right to draw and dispose of a revenue from the property, why should the landowner be forbidden to do that which is allowed to the capitalist, in a society in which land and capital are commercially equivalent? Yet land nationalisers seem to be prepared to treat as sacred the landlords' claim to private property in capital acquired by thefts of this kind, although they will not hear of their claim to property in land. Capital serves as an instrument for robbing in a precisely identical manner. In England industrial capital is mainly created by wage workers—who get nothing for it but permission to create in addition enough subsistence to keep each other alive in a poor way. Its immediate appropriation by idle proprietors and shareholders, whose economic relation to the workers is exactly the same in principle as that of the landlords, goes

on every day under our eyes. The landlord compels the worker to convert his land into a railway, his fen into a drained level, his barren seaside waste into a fashionable watering-place, his mountain into a tunnel, his manor park into a suburb full of houses let on repairing leases; and lo! he has escaped the land nationalisers; his land is now become capital and is sacred. The position is so glaringly absurd and the proposed attempt to discriminate between the capital value and the land value of estates is so futile, that it seems almost certain that the land nationalisers will go as far as the Socialists. Whatever the origin of land and capital, the source of the revenues drawn from them is contemporary labour."[431]

Most Socialists think it wiser to tax capital gradually out of existence than to confiscate it at one stroke. "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 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."[432]

The argument that excessive taxation would drive capital out of the country is laughed at by Socialists. A Socialist pamphlet says: "It is true that the land-sweaters and labour-skinners whom the people keep on electing to rule and rob them can still frighten noodles by threatening that they will run away from

the country and take their capital with them; that

They'll ship the mines and
farms to Amsterdam,
The houses and the railways to
Peru,
The canals and docks to Russia,
The woods and workshops off
to Prussia,
And all the enterprise and
brains to Timbuctoo.

"We calmly reply that there is not one single service that all the landlords, financiers, and their lesser parasites pretend to perform for society that could not be performed far more efficiently and infinitely more cheaply without them."

Straightway those rich men
started
To move their capitals.
On board of ships they carted
Their railways and canals;
With mines mine-owners
scurried.
The bankers bore their books.
With mills mill-owners hurried.
The bishops took their
crooks.[433]

The despoiled capitalists might leave the country, but they would have to leave in the country all their property except perhaps a few valuables which they might remove.

Property being theft, capitalists as well as landowners are thieves who possess no claim

whatever to consideration or even to mercy. "To talk about 'the respective claims of capital and labour' is as inaccurate as to talk about the 'respective claims' of coals and colliers, or of ploughs and ploughmen. Capital has no claims. This is not a quibble. The distinction between capital and the capitalists is one of vital importance. Capital is a necessary thing. The capitalist is as unnecessary as any other kind of thief or interloper. The capitalist, though as loud as greedy in his 'claims,' has no rights at all."[434]

"Do you mean to say, then, that the capitalist does not perform a useful function in running a risk for the profit he receives?—No. In so far as he exercises the function of management and receives remuneration for this, his remuneration is not profit at all, but wages of superintendence, and the functions of management would be undertaken by the organised society of the future through its appointed representatives. As to any necessary risks, all individuals would be relieved from this under Socialism, as it would be borne by the whole of society."[435] "If capitalists attempt to justify their way of making profit by saying that they have to run risks sometimes, that a part of their property might occasionally be lost, we answer that labour has nothing to do with that."[436]

Capital large and small is the result of thrift. If capital is theft, then thrift also is theft. The thrifty investor, being an immoral person, has no right to protest against the confiscation of his property. "By capitalist I mean the investor who puts his money into a concern and draws profits therefrom without participating in the organisation or management of the business. Were all these to disappear in the night, leaving no trace behind, nothing would be

changed."[437] Nothing would be changed for the Socialist agitator, the loafer, and the tramp. On the contrary, they would profit from the ruin of the industrious and the thrifty. The fact that honest and hardworking men who do their duty to their family and who wish to leave their children provided for should have the result of the economy of a lifetime confiscated matters little to the Socialist leaders. According to the Socialist doctrines the industrious and the thrifty are thieves and exploiters of those workers who have never saved a penny. On the other hand, those men who live from hand to mouth, who work only a few days each week and loaf on the remaining days, who waste all their earnings in drink, gambling, and music-halls, and who possess nothing they can call their own, are honest and excellent citizens. They are entitled to the savings of the thrifty.

In accordance with the Socialist principles stated in the foregoing, all shareholders, being merely exploiters of labour, would be expropriated. "Are shareholders in companies useful in organising labour?—As a rule they employ others to organise labour, and the work done by the company would go on just as well if the shareholders disappeared."[438] Besides, "Stocks when analysed, in nine cases out of ten simply mean the right to squeeze tribute out of workers who are nominally free. By far the greatest part of what is set down as national 'capital' is merely slave flesh-and-blood."[439]

Holders of Government stocks would be treated no better than landowners and shareholders. Foremost among the "immediate reforms" demanded in the programme of the Social-Democratic Federation[440] ranges the "Repudiation of the National Debt." The

repudiation of the National Debt has during many years been demanded, and is still demanded, by the Social-Democratic Federation, as may be seen from a recent issue of "Justice," its weekly publication, in which we find the following statement: "The National Debt is simply a means of extracting unearned incomes from the people of this country. It is idle to nationalise or municipalise industries by means of loans on which interest is paid. Such interest would be only another form of rent and profit. When capitalism is abolished, every one of its many forms will necessarily have to go."[441]

The repudiation of the National Debt is demanded by many Socialist leaders and leading writers. "The National Debt (falsely so-called) has already been paid thrice over in usury. All future interest-payments should be held as part of the principal."[442] "The few thousand persons who own the National Debt, saddled upon the community by a landlord Parliament, exact 28,000,000*l.* yearly from the labour of their countrymen for nothing."[443] "Outside the land monopoly, the most infamous source of usury is unquestionably the so-called 'National Debt.' There the whole of the capital is absolutely spurious. The real capital consisted of the gunpowder and the lead which Sovereigns and statesmen expended so liberally about a century ago in attempting to murder liberty on the Continents of Europe and America. Our war debt is the most stupendous monument of human crime and folly in existence; and worst of all, the 'butcher's bill' has already been paid by the unhappy toilers thrice over in usury."[444] "The entire national liability has been discharged to the moneylenders by the people once during the last thirty-seven years. We repay public debts once every thirty-seven years without wiping

out a penny of the said debts. We pay away in blank usury 20,000,000*l.* per year on this one head, or enough to provide old-age pensions for three-fourths of our aged poor in the United Kingdom on the basis of 7*s.* 6*d.* per head per week."[445] "236,514 blackmailers suck the udder of industry through the convenient teat of what, with audacious cynicism, is called the 'National Debt.'"[446]

The largest part of the National Debt was not created by "murdering liberty" but by fighting the armies of the French Revolution and of Napoleon I. Besides, the defence against the French Revolution and Napoleon was not a "crime," but a necessary duty. Furthermore, the holders of the National Debt are not "blackmailers" but industrious, useful, and thrifty citizens, or the children and descendants of industrious, useful, and thrifty citizens.

About one-half of the National Debt is held by thrifty wage-earners, as all the money deposited in the savings banks, and most of the savings deposited with friendly societies, &c., is invested in Consols, and as a very large part of the assets of the industrial and other insurance societies consists of Government Stocks. Property being theft, and thrift being akin to it, the thrifty workman whose savings are invested in Consols has apparently no right to complain of being robbed of his savings by the Socialists.

Some Socialist agitators have the audacity to tell the thrifty worker that he will not suffer, but benefit, by the confiscation of his savings. "Opponents try to scare this man against Socialism by the fear of losing his interest. Granting for a moment he would do so, would he not gain by the general abolition of interest, &c., which would double his wage in common with that of all workers?"[447]—The worker

is to be indemnified for his positive and certain loss in property through the confiscation of his savings, or at the least of the interest paid on them, by a problematical rise in general wages which would benefit the unthrifty quite as much as the thrifty. But if the promised doubling of wages should not take place, what will happen? The Socialist agitators will explain that they are sorry to have made a mistake, whilst the thriftless are squandering the property of the thrifty.

According to the Socialist teachings, the capitalist is a perfectly useless being in the national household. "Does he himself want to work: to do something useful? Far from it. His money works for him; his money makes money, as the saying is."[448] Most capitalists—and I think the large majority of wage-earners are capitalists to some extent—are engaged in useful productive work of hand or brain. However, the capitalist of the Socialist imagination, the wealthy man who lives without any work, who studies the money market and Stock Exchange quotations, and who is occupied solely in investing and reinvesting his money to the best advantage, is an extremely useful member of society. It is of the utmost consequence to all workers, and to the whole nation, that the national capital should grow, that mines, railways, ships, machinery, houses, &c., should multiply and be constantly improved. Now the thrifty, not the wasteful, preserve and increase the national capital. Wise and cautious capitalists in enriching themselves will enrich the nation. Careless ones will lose their money and impoverish the nation. The wealth of France has, to a very large extent, been created by cautious and far-seeing *rentiers*, and thus France has become the banker among nations.

Socialists teach that the wealth of the few causes the poverty of the many; that therefore the private capitalist should be destroyed. Why, then, are the workers most prosperous in those countries which possess the wealthiest capitalists, such as France and the United States, and why are they poorest in countries, such as Turkey and Servia, where wealthy capitalists do not exist? And may not the destruction of the capitalists reduce Great Britain to the level of Turkey and Servia?

FOOTNOTES:

[430] *Socialism Made Plain*, p. 9.

[431] *Capital and Land*, pp. 5, 6.

[432] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 11.

[433] Blatchford, *The Clarion Ballads*, p. 9.

[434] Blatchford, *The Pope's Socialism*, p. 2.

[435] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 17.

[436] Sorge, *Socialism and the Worker*, p. 11.

[437] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 11.

[438] Joynes, *The Socialist Catechism*, p. 3.

[439] Davidson, *The Gospel of the Poor*, p. 54.

[440] See Appendix.

[441] *Justice*, October 19, 1907.

[442] Davidson, *The Democrat's Address*, p. 5.

[443] *Socialism Made Plain*, p. 8.

[444] Davidson, *The Gospel of the Poor*, p. 49.

[445] McLachlan, *Tyranny of Usury*, p. 13.

[446] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 76.

[447] *Wealth Makers and Wealth Takers*, p. 1.

[448] Sorge, *Socialism and the Worker*, p. 10.

CHAPTER X[ToC]

SOCIALIST VIEWS AND PROPOSALS REGARDING TAXATION AND THE NATIONAL BUDGET

To Socialists taxation is chiefly a means for impoverishing the rich and the well-to-do. It is their object to transfer by taxation the wealth from the few to the many, as they believe that the impoverishment of the rich will mean the enrichment of the poor. Therefore they do not aim at economy in national and local expenditure. On the contrary, they wish to spend as much as possible. As money is to be obtained solely from the rich, "An increase in national taxation has no terrors for Socialists."[449] Every increase in expenditure is greeted by them with joy, and wastefulness in national and local undertakings is rather encouraged than condemned. "Socialists look to the Budget as a

means not only of raising revenue to meet unavoidable expenditure, but as an instrument for redressing inequalities in the distribution of wealth."[450] Let us first look into the financial views of the Socialists, and then into their positive proposals.

"The purpose of Socialism is to transfer land and industrial capital to the people. There are two ways in which, simultaneously, this object may be carried out. The one way is by the municipal and national appropriation—with such compensation to the existing owners as the community may think fit to give—of the land and industrial concerns. The second method is by taxation. Taxation has its special sphere of usefulness in helping the community to secure some part of its own by diverting into the national purse portions of the rent, interest, and profit which now go to keep an idle class in luxury at the expense of the industrious poor."[451]

"The existence of a rich class, whose riches are the cause of the poverty of the masses, is the justification for the Socialist demand that the cost of bettering the condition of the people must be met by the taxation of the rich. The Socialist's ideas of taxation may be briefly summarised as follows: (1) Both local and national taxation should aim primarily at securing for the communal benefit all 'unearned' or 'social' increment of wealth. (2) Taxation should aim deliberately at preventing the retention of large incomes and great fortunes in private hands, recognising that the few cannot be rich without making the many poor. (3) Taxation should be in proportion to ability to pay and to protection and benefit conferred by the State. (4) No taxation should

be imposed which encroaches upon the individual's means to satisfy his physical needs."[452]

"To the Socialist taxation is the chief means by which he may recover from the propertied classes some portion of the plunder which their economic strength and social position have enabled them to extract from the workers; to him, national and municipal expenditure is the spending for common purposes of an ever-increasing proportion of the national income. The degree of civilisation which a State has reached may almost be measured by the proportion of the national income which is spent collectively instead of individually. To the Socialist the best of Governments is that which spends the most. The only possible policy is deliberately to tax the rich, especially those who live on wealth which they do not earn; for thus, and thus only, can we reduce the burthen upon the poor."[453]

The Fabian Society suggests the following reform of national taxation: "In English politics successful ends must have moderate beginnings. Such a beginning might be an income-tax of 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. Unearned incomes above 5,000*l.* a year would pay 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, below 5,000*l.* a year 1*s.* 8*d.* in the pound. The estate duty might be handled upon similar principles. Estates between 500,000*l.* and 1,000,000*l.* would be charged twelve and a half per cent, instead of seven and a half, and estates exceeding 1,000,000*l.* fifteen per cent, instead of eight."[454] The Fabian Society does not disguise its aim in proposing the foregoing: "These suggestions are doubtless confiscatory, and that is why they should recommend themselves to a Labour party. But even so, the confiscation is of a timorous and a slow-footed sort. The average British

millionaire dies worth about 2,770,000*l.*, on which the death duty would be 415,500*l.*, leaving the agreeable nest-egg of 2,254,500*l.* to the heirs. Even if we assume that the inheritance passes to one person only, so as to be subject to the highest rate of duty, it would not be until five more lives had passed that it would be reduced to a pitiful million. The most patient Labour party might not unreasonably demand something a trifle more revolutionary than this."[455]

According to the above proposals the income-tax would return 47,600,000*l.* per annum. This sum seems far too moderate to most Socialist writers. Councillor Glyde, for instance, gives in a widely read pamphlet elaborate tables in which the produce of a graduated income-tax is carefully calculated. The Fabian Society would make "a moderate beginning" by taxing large incomes 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. Councillor Glyde would begin by levying a 3*s.* income-tax on them. Taxation of incomes in accordance with his proposals would bring in 70,281,839*l.* per annum.[456]

Mr. Smart, of the Independent Labour Party, gives lengthy details of a taxation reform scheme in which figure a foundation-tax, a special property-tax, and a super-tax. Large incomes would have to pay 17-1/2 per cent., or 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, and his property and income tax would bring in 78,000,000*l.* per annum.[457]

Mr. Philip Snowden, M.P., submits a different scheme of taxation. There is to be an income-tax of 1*s.* in the pound and a graduated super-tax up to 6*s.* in the pound. Whilst the three authorities mentioned so far propose to take from the large incomes 2*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.*, and 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound as a "moderate

beginning," Mr. Snowden would, presumably also as a "moderate beginning," take 7*s.* in the pound from them. He is quite touched with his own generosity and magnanimity, for might he not demand at once 17*s.* or 20*s.* in the pound? "To console the possessors of incomes in the higher grade, say 50,000*l.* a year, to the payment of an income-tax of 1*s.* in the pound, we may remind them that they still retain 33,500*l.* a year, which is a very generous payment by labour to them for the privilege of seeing them exist in gorgeous splendour and sumptuous idleness."[458]

The proposals regarding the estate duty to be charged also vary. The Fabian Society proposes a maximum of 15 per cent. Mr. Smart would be satisfied with a graduated estate duty with a maximum of 25 per cent, instead of the present maximum of 8 per cent.[459] Mr. Snowden proposes a scale of duties which ranges from 1 per cent, up to 50 per cent.[460]

Besides the very greatly increased income-tax and estate duty, there would be, according to Mr. Snowden, a land value tax of a penny in the pound of its capital value, which is equal to 10 per cent. annual value. It is to be the small beginning of the policy of taxing landowners out of existence, to be speedily followed by confiscation. "The annual value of land being 250,000,000*l.*, the produce of the land value tax would be 25,000,000*l.* a year."[461] The author justifies the creation of that tax as follows: "Liverpool, London, Glasgow owe their existence and their prosperity to their respective situations, which are natural advantages and which ought not in justice to be enjoyed solely by those who live upon the sites. Every town and village in the country contributes to the prosperity of every other part. The

nation is a unit; its resources and its obligations should be mutually shared."

"Land values are so obviously not created by individual effort that the justice of taking the increment for the use of the community appeals to those who may have some difficulty in grasping the working of the 'unearned increment' in commercial concerns, where, however, it operates just as truly though not so obviously. The imposition of an Imperial tax of one penny in the pound on the capital value of the site would be a beginning, but by no means the end, of the process of diverting socially-created rent of land into the public exchequer. Taxation will do something towards that end; but taxation would be a long, irritating, and untrustworthy way of trying to secure the whole annual value of the land for the community."[462] "The taxation of land values is not a land reform. To get the full usefulness and the full value of the land for the community there is no way but for the State to own the land."[463]

The contemplated reform of taxation will not be limited to taxing the rich and the well-to-do out of existence. Relief will be afforded to the masses by the repeal of all duties on food, and, indeed, of all indirect taxation. "The reforms which the Labour party will endeavour to obtain from the Government, in which it believes it will be expressing the democratic sentiment of the country, are:

1. Repeal of the duties on foods.

2. A minimum wage of 30*s.* to all workers in Government employ or working under a contractor for the Government.

3. Old-age pensions of 7*s.* a week for persons over

sixty."[464]

Practically all Socialists agree that all indirect taxation should be abolished. "Indirect taxation has nothing whatever to recommend it to an intelligent people, however advantageous it may be to the well-to-do. Indirect taxation violates every principle of sound economy."[465] "Its maintenance is excused on the ground that indirect taxation is the only means by which the working class can be made to contribute to the cost of national government at ah. The poorer working classes should not be taxed by the Government at all."[466] "Under a just system of taxation all indirect taxation for revenue purposes would be abolished."[467] "With 43 per cent, of the working classes living in poverty, with an average wage over the whole working class not sufficient to provide themselves with the standard of workhouse comfort, it becomes a crime to tax them for the protection of their property and the enjoyment of their privileges"[468]—Is it true that, as Mr. Snowden, M.P., writes, the whole working class of Great Britain is so badly paid that it cannot provide for itself the standard of workhouse comfort? How then can he reconcile with that assertion the following statement which he gives in the same book a few pages further on: "Experts assign the proportion of the total annual drink bill of the United Kingdom contributed by the wage-earning classes at 100,000,000*l.* A committee of the British Association, reporting on the 'appropriation of wages,' in 1882 said that 75 per cent, of the total consumption of beer and spirits, and 10 per cent. of the wine bill, might be assigned as the shares of the working class."[469]

As a matter of fact experts estimate that the British working men spend even more than 100,000,000*l.*

per year on drink, and that they spend about 50,000,000*l.* on betting. It is really very inartistic for a professional agitator to tell us that the British workers are too poor to pay any taxes, that it is a "crime" to tax them at all, and then to remind us that the same starving ill-used workers can afford to spend more than the amount of the whole nation's Budget in drink and betting, that about one-sixth of the workman's wages are spent at the public-house, that many workmen spend the larger half of their income in drink, and that the British nation is the most drunken in the world, although drink is far more expensive in Great Britain than in any other country.

With part of the money taken by means of extortionate taxation from the rich, whole sections of the population are to be bribed into supporting Socialism. "Two objectionable heads of revenue would find no place in a Socialist national balance-sheet—the profit from the Post Office and the stamp duties. Improvements in the wages and conditions of labour in the lower grades of the postal service would absorb a considerable part of the present annual profit of 5,000,000*l.* and the rest might, with benefit, be utilised for cheapening the cost to the public of postal rates and services."[470]

Mr. Snowden, in promising in one phrase the repeal of stamp duties and cheapening of postage, very likely thought that that step would relieve the poor. He apparently imagined that duty stamps were identical with postage stamps. If he had known that stamp duties are largely derived from Stock Exchange transactions and the sale of every kind of property on a large scale, from legal documents, &c., he would probably have proposed that they should

be increased tenfold in order to strike another blow at private property, not that they should be abolished. Even the policy of confiscation requires an elementary knowledge of facts.

Furthermore, "The Socialist Budget would provide for a very considerable increase of the grants-in-aid, retaining for the central Government just sufficient control or inspection over the expenditure as would not interfere with the reasonable freedom of the local authority."[471] "Control which would not interfere" is at present illogical and impossible, because the one excludes the other. It may be possible in the Socialist State of the future, because logic will have to be abolished in it. At all events it seems clear that Mr. Snowden wishes to secure the support of the local authorities by the same curious means by which he strives to secure the support of the Post Office servants.

The foregoing extracts should suffice to show that the Socialists mean to ruin the owners of property of every kind by indirect confiscation in the form of extortionate taxation, which is to be constantly increased and which may be followed by direct confiscation, and that they rely upon force for achieving their aim. Capitalists may leave the country, but they must leave their capital behind, and their disappearance, Socialists assert, will be no loss. "The vast majority of our employers are routineers, who could no more contribute an intelligent statement of their industrial function to this paper than a bee could write the works of Lord Avebury. Routineers can always be replaced, and replaced with profit, by educated functionaries. Consequently when the employers threaten us with emigration, our only regret as to the majority of

them is that it is too good to be true."[472] "Supposing those who have the money were to threaten to leave the country and to take their money with them, would not that upset your plans? Money is not wealth. You would have cause to rejoice. So would the country which was fortunate enough to see its capitalists emigrate."[473]

According to the Socialist teaching, the workers maintain the capitalists. The brain is mightier than the hand, though the brain requires the hand. In reality it rather seems that the capitalists maintain the workers. It cannot too often be pointed out that those countries which have many wealthy capitalists are highly civilised and prosperous, and their workers are well off. On the other hand, those countries which have few or no wealthy capitalists are little civilised and poor, and their workers are exceedingly badly off. The masses may conceivably rob the capitalists of their property, and try to manage the national capital themselves, but whether they will benefit by spoliation remains to be seen. Lacking direction, foresight, unity, organisation, discipline, and thrift, the masses will probably quickly waste the national capital, and national ruin and distress and starvation will be the consequences of wholesale robbery.

The confiscation experiment has often been tried in the past, and it has always failed. The last time it has been tried was at the time of the French Revolution. The money secured by robbery was recklessly squandered. Production was neglected, and the people became poorer than ever. In the country agriculture came to a standstill, weeds grew where corn had been growing, gardens became a natural wilderness, and wolves roamed in thousands.

[474] The great manufacturing towns were dead, manufacturers in Paris who had employed sixty or eighty men employed but ten.[475] The people in town and country were starving. Many lived on roots and bark. Many of the poor in Paris waited outside the slaughter-houses and lapped the blood from the gutters like dogs.

Private capital has existed in all countries and at all times, because it is a plant of natural growth. One can destroy it, but it will ever grow again.

FOOTNOTES:

[449] Snowden, *Socialist Budget*, p. 1.

[450] *Ibid.*

[451] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, p. 2.

[452] *Ibid.* pp. 7, 8.

[453] *Socialism and Labour Policy*, p. 4.

[454] *Ibid.* pp. 4, 5.

[455] *Ibid.* p. 5.

[456] Glyde, *A Peep Behind the Scenes on a Board of Guardians*, pp. 28,29.

[457] Smart, *Socialism and the Budget*, pp. 14,15.

[458] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, pp. 78, 79.

[459] Smart, *Socialism and the Budget*, p. 8.

[460] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, p. 81.

[461] *Ibid.* p. 82.

[462] *Ibid.* pp. 82, 83.

[463] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, p. 84.

[464] Smart, *Socialism and the Budget*, p. 15.

[465] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, p. 15.

[466] *Ibid.* p. 31.

[467] *Ibid.* p. 16.

[468] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, p. 17.

[469] *Ibid.* pp. 21, 22.

[470] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, p. 71.

[471] *Ibid.* p. 59.

[472] G.B. Shaw in the *New Age*, November 30, 1907.

[473] Wheatley, *How the Miners are Robbed*, p. 12.

[474] Vandal, *Avènement de Bonaparte*, 1903, vol. i. p. 25.

[475] Schmidt, *Tableaux de la Révolution*, vol. iv. p. 383.

CHAPTER XI[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND THE EMPIRE

Most British Socialists object to the Empire on

various grounds, and desire its downfall and dissolution. According to their views Great Britain should, in the first place, give up her non-self-governing colonies. Let us take note of some Socialistic pronouncements to that effect:

"Governments have no right to exist except with the consent of the governed, and the British have no more right to dominate other peoples than other peoples have to dominate us. What we can only hold by maintaining an alien garrison had better be given up. The people of these islands would not be losers, but the gainers by such a course."[476] "Is it possible for a self-governing people to rule a subject race, and yet keep its own love for liberty? Neither the Greeks nor the Romans could do it, and we are not doing it very well ourselves. The reason is obvious. No nation can play the part of the despot (even the benevolent despot) abroad and that of the democrat at home."[477] "Socialists should oppose the creation of empires on this simple ground—that empire-building is accompanied by terrible misery and suffering for those subject races, as they are called, which are the chosen victims sacrificed on the altar of cupidity and pride."[478] "A people gain power and influence in the world in proportion as they solve for themselves the great problems of democratic self-government. We shall do more to civilise Africa by civilising the East End of London than by governing from Cape to Cairo."[479] "It is not only impossible for one nation to civilise another by governing it; it is wrong that it should attempt to do so. Conquest may have opened up one civilisation to another in times long antecedent to the steam engine and a world commerce, but to-day its only effect is to crush out and level down all national life to the dead uniformity of an alien political routine."[480]

"What is the attitude of Socialism towards backward races, savage and barbaric peoples who are to-day outside the civilised world? The position of Socialism towards these races is one of absolute non-interference. We hold that they should be left entirely alone to develop themselves in the natural order of things; which they must inevitably do or die out. It is the duty of Socialists to support the barbaric races in their resistance to aggression."[481] "It is the duty of International Socialists, the only international non-capitalist party, to denounce, and wherever possible to prevent, the extension of colonisation and conquest, leaving to each race and creed and colour the full opportunity to develop itself until complete economic and social emancipation is secured by all."[482] "Duty, like charity, begins at home, and if the civilisation of the blacks is to be purchased only by the destruction of our own democratic spirit, the balance to the world is of evil, not of good. There is another view of Imperialism expressed with brutal candour by Mr. Rhodes when he said that the flag was our best commercial asset, that trade follows the flag. Trade does no such thing. Trade follows business enterprise. Imperialism is, indeed, a policy of industrial deterioration, and by impoverishing the skill of the country and encouraging the worst forms of financial capitalism, must crush out every budding hope that labour has of becoming economically and politically free."[483]

The foregoing extracts should suffice to show that there is among British Socialists a strong desire to abandon the non-self-governing colonies.

The attitude of the British Socialists towards the great self-governing dominions is not much more

favourable than it is towards tropical colonies. Their attitude is one of hardly disguised hostility, which appears to spring partly from jealousy of the colonists, partly from hatred of the British capitalists who have invested money in the colonies. The loss of British capital invested in the colonies would probably be greeted with jubilation by the Socialists. "The well-to-do sections of society in Great Britain have found a secure and profitable outlet for their capital in loans and advances to the colonists alike as organised communities and as individual property-owners. But the drain for interest and dividends to England on this account is heavy, and is severely felt at times of depression, such as that which Australia as a whole has been suffering from during the recent seven years of almost continuous drought. It seems tolerably certain, therefore, that this comparative handful of colonists, eleven millions in all, of which only four millions in Australia, will in time to come, and as the Labour party and Socialists gain strength, repudiate, or at any rate reduce, these onerous obligations. It is also probable that with regard to Australia, as the white population does not increase and England's day as a colonising power proper is practically over (having no longer any agricultural population to send out as emigrants), this huge territory will not be permanently left at the sole dog-in-the-manger control of its present handful of inhabitants. We may expect, at least, that Australia will not be permanently able to retain its position without an infusion of entirely fresh blood, and should other peoples require an outlet in that direction, the present preposterous policy will have to be abandoned."[484]

Socialists seem, on the whole, to be opposed to the federation of the British Empire. "The Labour party

approaches Imperial problems with the politics of the industrious classes as guide on the one hand, and the internationalism of its nature as guide on the other."[485] Its "internationalism" apparently prevents it from approving of any practical scheme of Imperial Federation. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., of the Labour party, has not expressed actual hostility to the Empire. In fact, he has even declared: "Socialism did not intend to re-write history. It accepted the facts of life, and one of these facts was that we were responsible for the Empire, and, whether we liked it or not, we had to rule that Empire. He was overjoyed the other day to find that at Stuttgart their Dutch and German and French friends were fully aware of the fact that, if Socialism was to play the proper part that belonged to it, it must devise a colonial policy."[486] Nevertheless, Mr. Macdonald's views do not appear to be very practical, as will be seen in the following pages.

"These free colonies, though of enormous extent, count for little in the matter of population. Their wealth is out of all proportion to their numbers, as their pretensions are out of all proportion to their power. That they will play any very great part in the future of the world, either federated to the mother country or in any other way, seems exceedingly improbable."[487] "Imperialism is crudely ineffective. Imperial Federation would give the colonies a fuller sense of independence and liberty, and thus far would benefit them. But Imperial Federation is not approved on this account, but because it is supposed to be a way of uniting the Empire. That, it will not do: it will very likely do the opposite. In whatever form it comes, it will give to the independent interests of the colonies new importance. We shall then hear less of the Empire and more of Canada, or

New Zealand, or South Africa, and a great danger will arise that a purely sectional view of Imperial interests may secure the support of the might and the arrogance of the whole Empire."[488] "Canada has almost claimed that it is a right of self-governing States to be allowed to make treaties for themselves. When that happens, the colonies might as well sever themselves from the mother country altogether. For under present circumstances the authority which makes treaties is the authority which ultimately controls armies. To give any of our colonies the power to embroil us in war, or to determine our relations with European Powers, is to give the first shattering blow to Imperial solidarity."[489]

Nearly all British Socialists passionately oppose the retention of India. They never tire of condemning British rule in India, and of endeavouring to incite the native races to rebellion. According to the assertions of Socialists, the British Government has "manufactured" famine and plague in India, and its rule is the worst, the most cruel, and the most pernicious form of despotism which the world has seen.

Mr. Hyndman says: "India is the greatest and most awful instance of the cruelty, greed, and short-sightedness of the capitalist class of which history gives any record. Even the horrors of Spanish rule in South America are dwarfed into insignificance in comparison with the cold, calculating, economic infamy which has starved, and is still deliberately starving, millions of people to death in British India."[490] "I charge it against the British Government, at this moment, that the economic condition of India is much more horrible than ever it was. I declare that the despotism of Russia is more

apparently cruel, but the actual economic effect of the British Government's rule in India is more desperate than anything in the situation in Russia."[491]

Mr. Hare also speaks of "famine made by Government"[492]—India suffers from two great evils: famine and the plague. India is very densely populated. The natives live chiefly upon rice, and rice requires an enormous quantity of moisture. If rain fails, there is famine, and no Government can prevent it, though it may alleviate it. Therefore all rice countries—China, India, Japan—are periodically stricken by famine. It is difficult enough, and taxes the resources of a country to the utmost, to feed in a barren country an army of 500,000 men who are closely assembled. It is impossible to feed a population of 60,000,000, even if funds and stores of food are unlimited. With the most perfect system of harbours, canals, railways, &c., the distribution of food for 60,000,000 people offers insurmountable obstacles. Plague is caused by infection, and may be stamped out by the observance of those sanitary rules which Indians refuse to observe. Cases of plague are not reported to the authorities, but are hidden from them, so that the sanctity of the home may not be defiled by the entrance of a medical man. Nevertheless, Socialists never tire of preaching: "If there is one disease which is more directly the outcome of poverty than any other, it is the plague."[493] "Just think of 250,000 people dying of manufactured black plague in one month. It is not the people of England who benefit by our murderous despotism in India. It is not the working classes who would suffer if India were relieved from its present frightful oppression. If the present trade is beneficial, it is beneficial to the wealthy rather than to the

workers."[494] "If ever there was a population in the history of the world possessed of a remarkable climate, with a fruitful soil, with all the opportunities for making wealth, and having been the source of wealth to the peoples who have traded with them for centuries, the population of India is that people and Hindostan is that country which ought to be supremely wealthy."[495]

Socialists have done all in their power to arouse the hostility of Europe and America against Great Britain by denouncing British misrule, cruelty, and tyranny in India. "I rejoice, as an Englishman, that I have done my share for nearly thirty years to expose in Europe, America, and Asia the systematic rascality of my aristocratic and plutocratic countrymen."[496] "I appeal to this International Socialist Congress to denounce the statesmen and the nation guilty of this infamy before the entire civilised world, and to convey to the natives of India the heartfelt wish of the delegates of the workers of all nations here assembled that they may shortly, no matter in what manner, free themselves finally from the horrors of the most criminal misrule that has ever afflicted humanity."[497]

Socialists unceasingly work for the overthrow of British rule in India. Theirs is a larger humanity. They wish to bring about a rising of the Indian population, and they seem to care little if the 250,000 British people residing in that country are incidentally exterminated. Their hatred of the "capitalist" Empire is apparently greater than their sense of humanity and duty towards their own countrymen.

At a recent Socialist meeting in connection with the unrest in India, Mr. Hyndman submitted the

following motion: "This meeting of the citizens of London expresses its deepest sympathy and admiration for Lajpat Kai, Adjit Singh, and the Sikh leaders at Rawal Pindi, Amritsar, and Lahore, now undergoing imprisonment without trial, at the command of Mr. John Morley and the Liberal Government, and sends its cordial greetings to the agitators all over India who are doing their utmost to awaken their countrymen of every race and creed to the ruinous effect of our rule, which, by draining away 35,000,000*l.* worth of produce yearly from India without return, has manufactured poverty upon a scale unprecedented in history and is converting the greatest Empire the world has ever seen into a vast pauper warren and human plague farm. This meeting further records its fervent hope that this infamous British system which crushes all economic, social, and political life out of 230 millions of people will ere long be peaceably or forcibly swept away for ever."[498] Proceeding, Mr. Hyndman said: "I may mention I have just finished a pamphlet on India I have written for the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart, which is going to be translated by the International Socialist Bureau into German and French, and I will take care it is translated into some other languages—Eastern languages—including the Japanese language."[499]

Attempts to incite the native Indians to rise in rebellion and to massacre the British garrison and the British people residing in India are not restricted to Mr. Hyndman. We read in the leading Socialist monthly: "The maintenance of British rule in India means that the working people of Great Britain are engaged in helping their masters—the class which robs them—to plunder the unfortunate people of India of over thirty millions sterling every year. We

desire to see the people of India, as of every other country, not only possessed of national independence and political rights, but of social and economical liberty and equality. We assert the right of the Indian people to manage their own affairs, and ardently desire the destruction of British rule there."[500] From the official organ of the Independent Labour Party we learn that that party also "has declared itself wholly in favour of constitutional government in India and the social emancipation of the poverty-stricken Indian people. We believe that Mr. Hardie has had that purpose solely in view, and the party will stand solidly with him in conveying to the Indian people the strongest expression of the sympathy and support of British Socialists in their struggle against social and political oppression."[501] If British subjects are murdered in India by the ten thousand, we may thank our revolutionary Socialists.

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., of the Labour party very sensibly recommends with regard to India: "The Government should win the confidence and assent of the people."[502] He then continues: "The immediate reforms necessary are a lightening of India's financial load by relieving it of the Imperial burdens which it now unjustly bears, and a readjustment of taxes; the extension of local and State self-government and further opportunities for natives to be employed in public offices; the freeing of the press."[503] It is easy to formulate a policy by expressing generous abstract sentiments. Is Mr. Macdonald aware that "the lightening of India's financial load" would mean its transference to English shoulders, that the granting of self-government and the freeing of the press might lead to a position which would put before this country the alternative of a war of repression in India or of its abandonment, and that the

abandonment of India would ruin Lancashire?

We have taken note of the destructive part of the policy which Socialists wish to pursue towards the Empire. Now let us take note of their constructive proposals, though these are not nearly as numerous as their destructive ones.

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., of the Labour party, is dissatisfied with Imperial administration in its present form. He would democratise it and replace the present Imperial Governors by labour men and Socialist agitators and orators. "The Crown cannot be the custodian of an Imperial policy, though it may be an Imperial link—and even in this respect its influence is greatly exaggerated at home."[504] "The real difficulty lies in securing the confidence of the Imperial States for whatever authority is to be custodian of the Imperial standard. Downing Street is ignorant of colonial opinion and needs. Above all, Downing Street is the surviving symbol of the era of the British 'dominions' and the real 'colonies.' The Imperial States will not repose confidence in Downing Street, therefore Downing Street cannot remain the custodian of Imperial standards. What is to take its place?"[505]

"The failure of our Empire, except to produce mechanical results, such as keeping warring tribes at peace, is largely owing to the fact that the Empire is governed by the most narrow-visioned of our social classes. National pride may be a valuable possession, but when it becomes a consciousness of racial superiority it ceases to be an Imperial virtue. Thus it is not only in its origin, but also in its present administration, that the Empire in a special sense is a perquisite of the rich classes, and the influence of the Labour party on Imperial politics must be to

democratise the *personnel* of the Imperial machine. A trade union secretary could govern a province *prima facie* better than the son of an ancient county family or someone who was a friend of the Colonial Secretary when he was passing time at Balliol. We honestly think that the colonies appreciate our aristocracy, but the colonies laugh at our amiable illusions."[506]

Is Mr. Macdonald sure that the dominions and colonies would welcome a change, and that "trade union secretaries" in their very narrow circle of activity might not become even more "narrow-visioned" than our present pro-consuls? At the same time it cannot be doubted that all labour leaders and Socialist agitators will highly approve of his proposals to make all vice-royalties and governorships their "perquisites." Apart from a few not very practical proposals, Socialists follow not a constructive, but a purely destructive, policy with regard to the Empire, which in their eyes is merely a capitalist institution. Pursuing consciously or unconsciously a policy of revolutionary anarchism, they would break up the Empire and even Great Britain herself. Therefore many Socialists advocate the legislative independence of both Ireland and Scotland, although some preach, "'Home Rule' *per se* will not rid Ireland of Lord Deliverus and the gang he represents; the remedy for Ireland's distress, as the early leaders of Irish discontent perceived, is release from the grip of the brigands who stole the nation's heritage. In other words, the real object of the Irish movement is Socialism; their cause is ours, and our paths lie side by side. But they too have been tricked and led astray by the old political will-o'-the-wisp, the seeming angel of 'Liberty' translated in their case to 'Home Rule.' For many years now they have

pursued this shifty light through the arid desert of politics, and unless they can come to a clear understanding of their own original purpose again, and join with their English Socialist comrades to find a way out of our common difficulties, they are like to abide in that dreary desert for ever."[507]

Whilst the vast majority of British Socialists are unpatriotic, anti-national, and anti-Imperial, and would act as traitors to their country, the powerful Socialist party of Germany is strongly, one might almost say passionately, national and Imperial. Many German Socialists are enthusiastic supporters of the German Navy League, and they would not hesitate in depriving, if possible, and if need be by force, Great Britain of those colonies which her Socialists desire to get rid of.

The attitude of German Socialists towards their Fatherland, Empire, colonial possessions, and native races, may be gauged from the words of Herr Bernstein, one of her most prominent Socialist leaders: "The national quality is developing more and more. Socialism can and must be national. Even when we sing *Ubi bene, ibi patria* we still acknowledge a *patria*, and therefore, in accordance with the motto 'No rights without duties,' also duties towards her. To-day the Social-Democratic party is, and that unanimously, the most decided Imperial party that Germany knows. No other party is so keen to make over more and more legislative authority to the Empire and to widen its competence as the Social-Democratic party. The idea that in a country there exists a powerful party which is only waiting for war in order to make difficulties for its own Government, to set on foot a military strike and such-like, this idea may become the greatest menace

to peace by being a spur to adventurous politicians to work towards a war with that country. But the home Government knows very well that the declaration that the Social-Democrats would, in case of need, give their lives for the independence of Germany against a foreign Power is by no means a free pass for them to take war easily."[508]

In another periodical Herr Bernstein wrote: "The advantages of colonial possessions are always conditional. At a given period a nation can only sustain a certain quantity of such possessions. As long as she was ahead of all other nations in productive power, England could support a much larger amount than any other modern nation. But the time of her industrial supremacy has passed away, or at least is nearing its end. Protectionism on the Continent and in the United States may protract the advent of the inevitable in some degree. But its hour will strike one day, and when the advantages which free trade secures her to-day disappear, she would either have, I believe, to free herself of part of her colonial burdens or lose more and more of her trade, and with it her regenerative force. So much for England. With Germany the question is quite different. Although her rural population is now decreasing, she could, with a yearly increase of about 800,000, well stand more colonial possessions than she actually holds, nor would the costs and outlays for her colonies press very hard on her finances. Where two civilisations clash, the lower must give way to the higher. This law of evolution we cannot overthrow, we can only humanise its action. To counteract it would mean to postpone social progress."[509]

It is sad to compare the sane, manly, national, and

patriotic attitude of German Socialists with the foolish, anti-national cosmopolitanism of British Socialists, who, parading beautiful motives of the largest humanity, would not hesitate to sacrifice their country and their countrymen, their Empire and their colonies.

FOOTNOTES:

[476] Quelch, *Social Democracy and the Armed Nation*, p. 14.

[477] *Imperialism: Its Meaning and Its Tendency*, p. 10.

[478] Norman, *Empire and Murder*, p. 3.

[479] *Imperialism: Its Meaning and Its Tendency*, p. 15.

[480] *Ibid.* p. 7.

[481] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 36.

[482] Hyndman, *Colonies and Dependencies*, p. 14.

[483] *Imperialism: Its Meaning and Its Tendency*, pp. 12, 13.

[484] Hyndman, *Colonies and Dependencies*, p. 8.

[485] Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, p. 108.

[486] *Labour Leader*, October 10, 1907.

[487] Hyndman, *Colonies and Dependencies*, p. 8.

[488] *Imperialism: Its Meaning and Its Tendency*, p. 5.

[489] Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, pp. 76, 77.

[490] Hyndman, *Colonies and Dependencies*, p.

12.

[491] Hyndman, *The Unrest in India*, p. 13.

[492] Hare, *Famine in India*, p. 17.

[493] Hyndman, *The Unrest in India*, p. 7.

[494] *Ibid.* p. 16.

[495] *Ibid.* p. 7.

[496] Hyndman, *Colonies and Dependencies*, pp. 11, 12.

[497] *Ibid.* p. 14.

[498] Hyndman, *The Unrest in India*, p. 1.

[499] *Ibid.* p. 4.

[500] *Social-Democrat*, July 1907, pp. 393, 394.

[501] *Labour Leader*, October 11, 1907.

[502] Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, p. 104.

[503] *Ibid.* p. 105.

[504] Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, p. 70.

[505] *Ibid.* pp. 67, 68.

[506] Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, pp. 27, 28.

[507] Thompson, *That Blessed Word Liberty*, p. 10.

[508] Ed. Bernstein in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, translated in the *Social-Democrat*, July 1907.

[509] *Nation*, October 12, 1907.

CHAPTER XII[ToC]

SOCIALIST VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

"Socialism," Mr. Ramsay Macdonald writes, "has a great part to play immediately in international politics. It alone can banish national jealousies from the Foreign Offices; it alone offers the guarantees of peace which are a necessary preliminary to disarmament. Socialism has a world policy as well as a national one—a corollary to its belief in the brotherhood of man."[510] These words contain assurances, not a plan, and therefore we must inquire, What is the foreign policy of Socialism?

As regards foreign policy one may divide the Socialists into two classes: revolutionaries and visionaries. It will be seen in the following pages that the aims of both are similar.

The foreign policy of the revolutionary Socialists of Great Britain is based on the celebrated "Communist Manifesto" of Marx and Engels, which contains the following programme regarding foreign policy: "The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: in the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality."[511] "The Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things. In all these movements they bring to

the front, as the leading question of each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time. Finally, they labour everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries. The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!"[512]

In accordance with the foregoing proclamation of Marx and Engels, the philosopher of British Socialism teaches: "For the Socialist the word 'frontier' does not exist; for him love of country, as such, is no nobler sentiment than love of class. Race pride and class pride are, from the standpoint of Socialism, involved in the same condemnation. The establishment of Socialism, therefore, on any national or race basis is out of the question. The foreign policy of the great international Socialist party must be to break up these hideous race monopolies called empires, beginning in each case at home. Hence everything which makes for the disruption and disintegration of the empire to which he belongs must be welcomed by the Socialist as an ally. It is his duty to urge on any movement tending in any way to dislocate the commercial relations of the world, knowing that every shock the modern complex commercial system suffers weakens it and brings its destruction nearer. This is the negative side of the foreign policy of Socialism. The positive is embraced in a single sentence; to consolidate the union of the several national sections on the basis of firm and equal friendship, steadfast adherence to definite principles,

and determination to present a solid front to the enemy."[513]

The head of the Social-Democratic Federation informs us: "We have never failed to hold up before the people the high ideal of a complete social revolution, which shall replace the capitalist sweating system and its terrible class war by the happiness, contentment, and glory of a great co-operative commonwealth for all mankind."[514]

Faithful to the teaching of Karl Marx, Mr. Tom Mann proclaims: "We do not want any walls built round cities or nations for fear of invasion; what we do now stand in urgent need of is an international working alliance among the workers of the whole world. The only position of safety will be found in international action among the organised workers of the world."[515]

These being the doctrines of revolutionary Socialism, it is only natural that many British Socialists take the enemy's part in case of war.[516]

The foreign policy of the visionary Socialists is based on the idea of human brotherhood and the equality of men of all races, creeds, and colours. "Socialism is brotherhood; and brotherhood is as wide as the heavens and as broad as humanity. The growth of international Socialism is the promise of the realisation of the angels' natal song: On earth, peace; Good will toward men. Socialism will remove the causes of international antagonism and make the interests of all nations the same."[517] "Socialism implies the inherent equality of all human beings. It does not assume that all are alike, but only that all are equal. Holding this to be true of individuals, the Socialist applies it also to races. Only by a full and unqualified recognition of this claim can peace be

restored to the world. Socialism implies brotherhood, brotherhood implies a living recognition of the fact that the duty of the strong is not to hold the weak in subjection but to assist them to rise higher and ever higher in the scale of humanity, and that this cannot be done by trampling upon and exploiting their weakness, but by caring for them and showing them the better way."[518] Thus Socialism will bring to the world eternal peace. In the words of the poet:

There's a good time coming,
boys,
A good time coming;
And war in all men's eyes shall
be
A monster of iniquity,
In the good time coming.
Nations shall not quarrel
then,
To prove which is the stronger;
Nor slaughter men for glory's
sake—
Wait a little longer.[519]

The ideas expressed in the above are very noble, but they seem to be hardly in accordance with historical experience or with human nature as we know it. The race war on the Pacific coast, and the murderous attacks by strikers on free labourers who have taken their place which are of frequent occurrence in all countries, show that even Socialists are apt to rely rather on threats, violence, and superior force than on brotherliness and reason, although the Chinaman and the Japanese have, according to the Socialist doctrines given in the foregoing, as much right to earn a living as any white man.

"Socialism is essentially international. It recognises no distinction between the various nations comprising the modern civilised world. 'My country, right or wrong,' the expression of modern patriotism, is the very antithesis of Socialism.... This internationalism means liberty and equality between nations as between individuals, and amalgamation as soon as feasible, and as close as possible, under the red flag of Social Democracy, which does not recognise national distinctions or the division of progressive humanity into nations and races."[520] "The new community will be built up on an international basis. The nations will fraternise together, will shake hands over old quarrels, and unite in gradually extending the new State over all peoples of the earth."[521]

"Nationalisation is only the beginning of Socialism. Once let any nation be thoroughly imbued with the Socialist spirit, it will become a missionary nation. It will preach the glad tidings of salvation to people of other tongues, and that which was national shall become universal: East and West, North and South, all shall realise, all shall rejoice in, the glorious brotherhood of man."[522]

The "brotherhood of man" reminds one of the French Revolution. Like the French Revolution, Socialism has imposed upon itself the mission to convert the world to its doctrine, and people may again be placed before the alternative "La Fraternité ou la Mort."

Let despots frown and tyrants
sneer,
The red flag is unfurled;
We'll to our principles adhere
And socialise the world.[523]

Being anxious to "socialise the world," Socialists eagerly note every progress of Socialism in foreign countries from Paris to Pekin. For instance, we read in the "Reformers' Year Book": "The belief that the quick-witted Japanese would, at the beginning of their new civilisation, avoid the evils of European capitalism by accepting a scheme of Socialism is not being fulfilled. The dividend-hunter, who has been to Europe and received a business training, is fastening the chains of monopoly upon the people. To meet this growing danger there is already a thriving Socialist-Labour party, which has a daily newspaper, the 'Hikari' ('Light')."[524] To facilitate the "socialisation of the world" and the introduction of "the brotherhood of man" by making Socialism truly international, Socialists are urged to study Esperanto, which apparently is to be the international Socialist language of the future. The "Clarion" and other Socialist papers regularly contain articles written in Esperanto, and the anti-patriotic writings of Hervé and Gohier—an extract from the writings of the former will be found in Chapter XIII.—have been translated into Esperanto, apparently in the hope that these incendiary pamphlets may help in bringing about the great Socialist revolution.

Among the 'immediate reforms' demanded in the programme of the Social-Democratic Federation (see Appendix) are to be found the demands: "The people to decide on peace and war. The establishment of international courts of arbitration." In view of these demands, which are made by most Socialist organisations, it is quite natural that Socialists condemn the secret action of diplomacy. For instance, a Socialist writer remarks on the Anglo-French agreements: "Are we the masters of our destinies, when a Delcassé may at any moment

immerse us in international troubles of the first magnitude? Lord Lansdowne, as the accomplice of Delcassé, was equally guilty, and Sir Edward Grey, by now securing this triple alliance without the consent or the knowledge of the 150 millions of people whom it most vitally concerns, completes a trio of international plotters and murderers."[525]

Many Socialists believe that wars may soon be abolished by international agreement, either among the nations or among the working masses, who will force their views upon the governments. According to a very prolific Socialist writer, "There are many signs and portents to-day that the evil of war, which is not more deeply rooted than was slavery a hundred years ago, will, ere long, meet a similar fate."[526] And what are the "signs and portents" upon which the belief is based that war will be abolished? "It is a significant fact that whenever the working classes meet to discuss this question of war, they invariably express themselves in favour of its speedy end. A few days ago, when the Trades Union Congress met at Liverpool, when delegates were present representing some two millions of the organised workers of the country, the representative of the Navvies' Union declared, amid the resounding cheers of the Congress, that it was impossible for a man to be a Christian and in favour of war at the same time."[527] The Navvies' Union will no doubt play a great part in the foreign policy of the Socialist commonwealth, but is the importance of their declaration not exaggerated? Wars begin, as a rule, by an act of aggression. What would the Navvies' Union and the Trades Union Congress have said if the secretary had read a telegram stating that British ships had been fired upon and sunk by an enemy, or that British territory had been invaded and British

blood had been spilt? I fear that eternal peace is not yet in sight, notwithstanding the "sign and portent" of the statement made by the representative of the Navvies' Union. Indeed, clear-headed foreign Socialists are aware of the very limited usefulness of Peace Conferences, and they deride disarmament proposals, such as that submitted to the last Hague Conference by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

An exceedingly able article in the foremost Socialist organ of Germany gave, early in the spring of 1907, the following views on the probable result of The Hague Conference and on the British proposals regarding the limitation of armaments, views which are particularly interesting because they show the sound good sense of the German Socialists and the difference between the political views of German and British Socialists. The article stated:

"Just as the first Hague Conference of 1898 in reality achieved nothing more than a few secondary amendments to the law of nations, conformity with which was left completely to the fancy of the individual Powers, so the second Hague Conference will, it is highly probable, result in nothing further than a few general peace assertions and international arrangements which, when it comes to a war, will not outlive the first interchange of shots. Certainly the English Premier is right. There does exist among the thoughtful persons in all European States an intellectual tendency towards the peaceful settlement of differences between the nations and the diminution of the gigantic military and naval armaments. But this body of thoughtful people is—as the last elections in Germany have again proved—on the whole rather small; and above all, these thoughtful people do not belong to the economically

powerful class who determine the policy of Governments.

"The old ideologic conception of the English free trade doctrine, that the free exchange of goods between the nations leads to the abolition of war, to the brotherhood of humanity, that conception which found its most original expression in Dr. Bowring's exclamation 'Free trade is Jesus Christ,' still haunts some people's minds. With the greatest number of the liberal advocates of disarmament, their point of view originates simply in the consideration that the strong naval and military armaments demand more and more, not only from England's purse, but from her human material, while, on the other hand, England possesses all that she can expect, and has, on that account, not much more to gain. All over the earth's surface she has the most valuable colonies, and is, since the alliances with Japan and France, in a perfectly secure position, which awakens in her the wish to consolidate her position and to economise her finances for the upholding of her supremacy. It is that satisfied state of mind which makes the fortunate winner of the game say, 'Let us leave off; I am tired of playing now.' English capitalists feel themselves in a safe position. Nothing can easily go wrong at present. The thing is, therefore, to secure what they have got and to diminish the heavy burdens. This desire is comprehensible—only the other Powers will probably not respect it.

"The working-class party is very much in sympathy with the disarmament idea in itself. For this party is the most consistent opponent of militarism, and demands in its programme not only the formation of a citizen army in place of the standing army, but also that questions of peace and war should be

determined by the people themselves, and that all international differences should be settled by arbitration. But no amount of sympathy can get over the fact that in the present capitalist world there is very little chance of a general disarmament of the Powers. The conception that war is only a product of human unreason is on the same level as the idea that revolutions are only mental aberrations of the masses. War is rooted in the opposing interests of the nations, as are revolutions in the opposing interests of the classes."[528]

FOOTNOTES:

[510] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 120.

[511] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 1

[512] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 31.

[513] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, pp. 126, 127.

[514] Debate, Hyndman, *Will Socialism Benefit the English People?* Introduction.

[515] Mann, *International Labour Movement*, p. 6.

[516] See, for instance, Hyndman in *The Transvaal War and the Degradation of England*.

[517] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 14.

[518] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 10.

[519] *Clarion Song Book*, p. 25.

[520] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of*

Socialism, p. 31.

[521] Bebel, *Woman in the Past, Present, and Future*, p. 235.

[522] "Veritas," *Did Jesus Christ teach Socialism?* p. 2.

[523] Neil, *Songs of the Social Revolution*, p. 13.

[524] *Reformers' Year Book, 1907*, p. 195.

[525] *Social-Democrat*, September 1907, p. 534.

[526] Ward, *The War Drum shall Throb no Longer*, p. 13.

[527] *Ibid.* p. 14.

[528] *Vorwärts*, March 10, 1907, translated in the *Social-Democrat*, April 1907, pp. 220-224.

CHAPTER XIII[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND THE ARMY

Most Socialists, British and foreign, are opposed to the existing armies, for two reasons:

(1) Because they wish to overturn practically all existing institutions from the Monarchy downwards, and they fear that the military may defend the *status quo*;

(2) Because they aim at the abolition of States and

of nationality and at the disappearance of frontiers, as the ideal Socialist State of the future would, for economic and political reasons, have to embrace the world.

The Socialist State of the future, embracing the whole universe, can be created only after the existing States have been overturned. Therefore the more immediate aim of Socialists is to seize upon the political power in accordance with the advice given by Karl Marx in his celebrated "Manifesto."[529]

Most Socialists apparently believe that not by Parliamentary means but only by violence will they succeed in making themselves supreme, for we are told: "The ballot-box is no doubt a safer weapon than the rifle; but even when there will be a sufficient number of people in these islands convinced of the necessity and possibility of the co-operative commonwealth, the end will not yet be certain. There are the classes in possession to be considered. Are they going to allow themselves to be voted out? Will they respect a franchise and ballot-box which will vote that they shall get off the backs of the workers? Franchise 'Reform' Bills—and it is astonishing to what use 'reform' can now be put—can be rushed through Parliament, like Crimes Acts, in twenty-four hours; and there is the 'voluntary' professional army, under military law, to overawe the recalcitrants who may resent the suffrage and the ballot-box being jerrymandered against the popular interest. But none are so likely to be overawed by threatened displays of armed force—whether voluntary or conscript—as those who have a difficulty in distinguishing the butt end of a rifle from its muzzle."[530]

Under the heading "Will it come to barricades?" we

read: "The barricade is to-day, all will agree, in this country at any rate, an impossible weapon. Armed insurrection on the part of the workers in this country would to-day be the height of folly, and will continue to be so, so long as our standing army of hired mercenaries exists. Standing armies are the instruments of capitalist oppression at home and aggression abroad. But so long as even one great Power maintains the present form of military organisation, so long as war is possible, so long will it be necessary that some form of military organisation exist in all countries. We dare not preach peace when we know there can be no peace. This is why the Socialists of all countries are to-day in favour of an educational policy which will make every citizen fit for military service within the ranks of a citizen army, organised and maintained for purposes of defence only. The advantages of such a force, from the Socialist standpoint, are so obvious that they need hardly be stated. And it would at least put the working class in a position to understand what a barricade means, and how, if need be, to act in their own defence. There are, I am well aware, a handful of individual Socialists with us who are against universal military training, but they are a diminishing quantity, and will in due season find their natural vocation within the ranks of the Liberty and Property Defence League."[531]

Mr. Quelch, the editor of "Justice," shares the foregoing opinion, for he tells us: "Revolutions, it is said, can no longer be accomplished by force, but only by peaceful means—the vote, Parliamentary action, and legislation. It may be so, but it will be unprecedented if the present ruling class surrender without a struggle. And if they had the armed force of the nation at their command, they would struggle

successfully no matter what the Legislature may have done. The ruling class will not be made to submit to law and order which is not their law and order, except by overwhelmingly superior force. Nobody supposes that in such a contest the people could win against the ruling class unless they had been able first to win over the army. With a professional 'voluntary' army, well paid and well affected to its paymasters, such winning over would be practically impossible. But with the armed nation there would be no winning over required. An armed nation—whatever it may do or submit to—is essentially a free nation, and whatever such a nation determines upon, that it can do and have, in spite of any ruling class."[532]

Similar opinions have frequently been expressed by leading Continental Socialists. Herr Kautsky, for instance, wrote under the heading "Expropriation of the Expropriators," as follows: "The arming of the people is a political measure. It 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."[533]

Those who are of opinion that only the extreme section of British Socialists, the revolutionary wing, is hostile to the army, are mistaken. This may be seen from the following resolution of the Fabian Society, which is the most moderate exponent of British Socialism: "Armies act as a standing menace not to neighbouring States, but to the working populations of their own countries. A study of the strategical disposition of many of the great railway stations and barracks of the Continent will prove that the most important function of the modern army is

to suppress the resistance of labour to capital in the war of classes."[534]

Among the "immediate reforms" demanded in the programme of the Social-Democratic Federation[535] we find a demand for "the abolition of standing armies and the establishment of national citizen forces." Army and police are to most Socialists very objectionable because it is their function to protect the national order and national property against predatory, anarchistic, and revolutionary attempts. Therefore it is only natural that "No Social Democrat regards the present police system as a satisfactory one, or a professional police as other than a dubious expedient."[536] According to the opinion held by many Socialists, "The soldier's primary function is to come to the rescue of the policeman when the latter is overpowered."[537]

Voluntary armies of the British type are quite as objectionable to Socialists as are the national armies of the compulsory type raised on the Continent of Europe. "We are told that the advantage of our present military system is that it is not compulsory, that people are free to join the service or not as they please. The freedom of the average recruit to join the army is about on a par with the freedom of an unemployed workman to work for lower wages than the recognised rate of wages, or the freedom of the prostitute."[538] "Your soldier, ostensibly a heroic and patriotic defender of his country, is really an unfortunate man driven by destitution to offer himself as food for powder for the sake of regular rations, shelter, and clothing."[539] "A standing army of professional soldiers is the most effective instrument in the hands of the dominant class, the greatest menace to democracy and popular liberty,

and the most effective barrier to revolutionary change that could possibly be devised. And surely, too, the antithesis to that is the Armed Nation—every citizen a soldier and every soldier a citizen."[540]

The ideal army from the Socialist point of view is the armed nation. It is, as we shall see in the following, an army composed of Socialist workmen and commanded by Socialist leaders. It is not an army for national defence, but one for attack on the existing order; it is a revolutionary army, an army of plunder. The very natural desire of Socialists to create such a force is, as a rule, disguised under the demand for a democratic army and universal military training. "We Socialists advocate the military training of all citizens and the abolition of professional armies, as ensuring the maximum of military efficiency and the minimum of menace to democratic principles and popular rights. We propose that every man should undergo a thorough military training so as to be equal to any other man. A professional army is maintained in the main for the defence and maintenance of the master class. A professional army is a specialised class or caste, divorced from civil life, hostile to the general body of the community, and maintained as an instrument to serve the purpose of the master class. That purpose is as often the suppression of popular movements at home as aggression abroad. If it were possible to abolish all military organisations, the remedy would be simple. But we have seen that that is, under present conditions, impossible. Therefore we urge that all citizens should be armed and trained to the use of arms, so that all reasonable military requirements may be met and professional soldiering be entirely dispensed with."[541] The fact that the

abolition of the professional army would involve the loss of India and of other possessions to Great Britain is a matter of no importance to the Socialists. In fact the Socialists wish Great Britain to lose not only India but all her colonies, as will be seen by reference to Chapter XI., "Socialism and the Empire."[542]

Every attempt at improving the voluntary army of Great Britain is considered a blow at Socialism, and is therefore vigorously resisted by the Socialists. Hence the scheme of army reform of Mr. Haldane, Secretary of State for War, has been loudly condemned by them as reactionary and likely to strengthen the capitalists, and they entreat the workers not to oppose universal military training. "The capitalist class would be perfectly delighted that all the rest of the people outside themselves and their mercenaries should be peaceful unarmed non-resisters. Nothing could suit them better. We have Mr. Haldane's territorial army—on paper; and a more reactionary, militarist (in the worst sense), and anti-democratic system than that to which the present War Minister has had the effrontery to apply our term of the 'Armed Nation' could scarcely be devised."[543]

Whether Mr. Haldane's proposals give Great Britain a better army for national and Imperial defence, is apparently immaterial to the Socialists, for they criticise it merely from the point of view of intending rioters and revolutionaries. They complain: "The position of the Volunteers now is this, that they are not under military law, and cannot be called out as soldiers to shoot down workmen at the bidding of the capitalists. Mr. Haldane's scheme, however, destroys the civilian character of the Volunteers, and

converts them into professional soldiers."[544]

Although most Socialists are in favour of a national militia, a considerable number oppose even a national militia of the Swiss type, fearing that it would refuse to aid the Socialists in overturning society as at present constituted. "We have been told of the readiness with which the Swiss militia have donned their uniforms and seized their rifles when called upon to act against strikers."[545] The Socialist delegates who accompanied the committee of inquiry which the National Service League sent to Switzerland in the autumn of 1907 were apparently less interested in the efficiency of the Swiss army for national defence than in its attitude during conflicts between labour and capital.[546]

Fearing that a national militia might not be willing to lend itself to revolutionary purposes, that it might become a patriotic force as is the Swiss militia, many Socialists condemn every kind of military service, and are quite ready to disarm the nation in the name of humanity and civil freedom. For instance, at the annual conference of the Socialist Independent Labour Party of 1907 the following was moved by a well-known revolutionary Socialist, Mr. Bruce Glasier:

"That this Conference believes that the time has come when militarism in every form should be denounced and resisted as alien to civil freedom and social progress, and expresses itself emphatically against compulsory military service, and the attempts which are being made to introduce military training in public schools or other public institutions, and views with alarm the purposes of Mr. Haldane's Army Territorial Bill, which, if passed, will make military service practically compulsory under officers

drawn wholly from, the upper classes, will make industrial employment dependent upon military service, and, instead of promoting international unity, will foster and increase the spirit of militarism and aggression."[547]

In moving this resolution Mr. Glasier said that "he denounced militarism root and branch," and Mr. Keir Hardie, a Communist Socialist, in seconding, said: "The resolution was not only a declaration against militarism, but a special and specific condemnation of the Territorial Army Scheme now before the House of Commons. The Socialist party was bound to protest against a system of that kind. The particular feature which emphasised the danger was that there were to be county associations formed to have charge of the new territorial forces, and to have a majority of military men upon them with landlords and possibly employers of labour. A citizen army was as great a menace to an industrial population as a professional army. The new army would be recruited from the people, and officered by the enemies of the people, just as the professional army was. Children were to be taught that the flag was the great thing to value in life. They would find that a citizen army, officered by the rich and recruited from their own ranks, would be taught to regard the flag as something holy, while they shot down strikers and Socialists just as freely as the most exclusive professional army in the world could do. Patriotism was one of the weapons used by the enemies of the people to blind them to facts."[548]

The Trade Union Congress of 1907, disregarding the security of the country and the Empire from foreign aggression, also condemned military training of every kind. Commenting hereon, the "Social-

Democrat," the organ of the Social-Democratic Federation, which favours a national democratic army, wrote: "The Trades Union Congress declares against conscription and also condemns military training, which is a totally different matter. To condemn conscription is purely negative. It would be very much more to the point if the representatives of the organised working class would formulate an expression of opinion on the actual military problem. Conscription, at the worst, is in the air; but the present-day military problem is not in the air; it is on the earth, practical and urgent. What have the trade unionists to say to it? Do they approve of the present system of a nominally voluntary professional soldiery, maintained as an instrument at the service of the capitalist class for suppression at home and aggression abroad?"[549] The trade unionists were urged to abolish the voluntary army and to create a national citizen army, which will assist the Socialist in overturning society.

A national citizen army, composed of Socialists and commanded by Socialists, is the ideal, and until such an army be created it is in the interest of Socialists to weaken the existing army and to undermine its discipline to such an extent that, in the event of a rising or a revolution, it will side with the revolutionaries. With this object in view, Socialists are trying to create dissatisfaction in the army by means of emissaries and literature. For instance, in a leaflet entitled "An Appeal to Soldiers," the Social-Democratic Federation says: "If you are to fight for patriotism and country, then let it be a national duty for all, wealthy as well as poor, to bear arms. Let not those who are called upon to fight remain a pariah class apart, bereft of the rights of citizenship—regarded by the upper classes as something to be

avoided."[550]

In its official programme the Social-Democratic Federation demands, under the heading "Immediate Reforms," "the abolition of courts-martial: all offences against discipline to be transferred to the jurisdiction of civil courts."[551] Why do the Socialists demand the abolition of military law? Because, in their own words, "With the abolition of military law, upon which we have always laid the greatest possible stress, militarism falls to the ground."[552] Therefore the "Appeal to Soldiers" admonishes the military: "You are and will remain a class apart from the rest of the nation so long as you are compelled to serve under a barbarous military code called 'military law.' The system of trial by court-martial is a mere farce and a mockery. We of the Social-Democratic Federation intend to do our utmost to abolish it root and branch. Give us your support. Remember that the late War Minister, Mr. St. John Brodrick, compared the soldier to the Chinese coolie in South Africa. This is how you are looked upon by the very people who use you as food for powder in the interest of their class. Now is the time for all who wish you well to demand the abolition of military law, the civilising of military service, and the establishment of a national citizen force."[553]

In the autumn of 1907 a letter to the editor was published by the "Daily Telegraph" which contained the following statement:

> "I do not think that many people, least of all the authorities, realise what a vigorous campaign is now being waged amongst the rank and file by the Social-Democratic Federation. Herewith I forward a leaflet which, I believe, is

being distributed in thousands to the military stations in all the corners of our Empire. The one I enclose I found attached to a tree by the roadside during the recent manœuvres near Aylesbury. Copies of the same leaflet have reached me from India and Belfast, where they were distributed during the recent strike trouble. It is no exaggeration to say that this leaflet is dangerous; the men of our army are peculiarly susceptible to the tenets of the Social-Democratic Federation. Officers and N.C.O.s will tell you what a serious effect such propaganda must have upon discipline.

"Yours faithfully,
"H.C. SMART,
Editor, 'Army Graphic'"

"*October 7, 1907.*"

Socialism is carrying on a vigorous propaganda for destroying discipline in the army and also in the navy. Hervéism has been imported into Great Britain, and is making rapid progress. "The Socialist," the organ of the Socialist Labour party, a party which at present is small in number, but which is most violent in attitude, in an article entitled "The Socialist Labour Party and the Citizen Army," quotes with approval Hervé's saying: "The present countries are cruel step-mothers to the proletariat. There is at present no country so superior to any other that its working class should get themselves killed in its defence. In case of mobilisation the proletariat should respond to the call to arms by an insurrection against their rulers to establish the Socialist or Communist *régime*. Rebellion sooner than war! In case of an order to mobilise, we would seize the moment to attempt the revolution, to place our

hands on the social wealth to-day usurped by a minority." The foregoing is printed in very large type. The article then continues, commenting upon Hervé's advice as follows: "The soldier has been fed and clothed by the working class. His continued efficiency as a military automaton depends upon regular supply of food, clothing, and the necessaries of life from the same source. He has been transported to the field of conflict by the labour of a whole army of railwaymen. Let us suppose that the day of the final struggle has been reached. Suppose the capitalist attempts to stifle the revolution in blood; suppose he calls upon the army to crush the revolutionary working class by brute force. Let us suppose, too, that the revolutionary agitation has not penetrated the Chinese walls of military discipline (a most improbable hypothesis) and that the soldiers, instead of turning their guns against the capitalist murderers, cheerfully and willingly serve their masters in the attempt to crush the people—what then? We shall put the army in quarantine. We shall isolate it from the rest of the community. We shall cut off supplies of food, clothing, and fuel. The railway and telegraph service will no longer be at its disposal—and in this respect we are in a more advantageous position than our French and German fellow-workers, inasmuch as the Government ownership of the railways in these countries is used to deny the workers connected with them the right of organisation. The army would be in a state of siege, surrounded on all sides by implacable foes. That, coupled with whatever may be possible and necessary in the way of armed insurrection within and outside of the army, is the policy proposed by the Socialist Labour party and Industrial Unionism. Circumstances may, and probably will, modify it in

many important details, but there is the main outline. Is it not more logical, more coherent, more likely to succeed than any 'citizen army scheme'?"[554]

Love of country has apparently no room in the Socialist's ethics. Its defence does not trouble him, since he is taught that his worst enemies are those Englishmen who happen to be better off.

Waste not your ready
blows,
Strike not at foreign foes,
Your bitterest enemies tread
your own soil;
The preachers who blind
ye,
The landlords who grind
ye,
The gluttons who revel whilst
ye are at toil.

Rise in your might, brothers,
bear it no longer,
Assemble in masses
throughout the whole
land;
Teach the vile bloodsuckers
who are the stronger
When workers and robbers
confronted shall stand.
Through Castle, Court, and
Hall,
Over their acres all,
Onward we'll press like the
waves of the sea.
Seizing the wealth we've

made.
Ending the spoilers' trade;
Till Labour has triumphed, and
England is free.[555]

In their desire to abolish the army, some Socialists argue that "The whole of your military system is entirely unnecessary."[556] Others falsify history and boldly assert that British wars, "in nearly every case have been waged for the suppression of liberty abroad, or from the irritating desire on the part of British statesmen to interfere with the internal affairs of other nations."[557] On the other hand, Mr. Quelch very sensibly argues: "Militarism is an evil against which we have to fight with all the means in our power, but to talk of universal disarmament at the present stage is mere Utopianism, a crying of peace where there is no peace, and where existing antagonisms make peace impossible. We have at first to eradicate the causes of conflict. To-day the unarmed nation offers itself as a temptation and a prey to some mighty brigand Power. War is the last argument of kings, and all Governments rest on force. So long as that is the case, it is only the people which is armed that can maintain its freedom, or can indeed lay claim to be a free people. An unarmed nation cannot be free. An armed nation, on the contrary, is a guarantee of individual liberty, of social freedom, and of national independence."[558] Mr. Quelch would have the same ideals as the National Service League, did not later utterances of his contradict sensible statements such as the above.

It is a curious and most interesting phenomenon that in France and Great Britain, two eminently non-aggressive countries, the Socialists do all in their power to disarm the nation, whilst in Germany,

which can hardly be described as non-aggressive, the Socialists are patriotic and are ready to go to war, not only for the defence but also for the aggrandisement of their country. Numerous declarations to that effect made by the leading German Socialists are on record, and the following extract is characteristic of their attitude:

"That Germany be armed to the teeth, possessing a strong fleet, is of the utmost importance to the working men. What damages our exports damages them also, and working men have the most pressing interest in securing prosperity for our export trade, be it even by force of arms. Owing to her development, Germany may perhaps be obliged to maintain her position sword in hand. Only he who is under the protection of his guns can dominate the markets, and in the fight for markets German working men may come before the alternative either of perishing or of forcing their entrance into markets sword in hand."[559]

In the spring of 1907 the leading German Socialist paper wrote in a weighty article on the Peace Conference at The Hague: "The conception that war is only a product of human unreason is on the same level as the idea that revolutions are only mental aberrations of the masses. War is rooted in the opposing interests of the nations, as are revolutions in the opposing interests of the classes."[560]

A comparison of German Socialism with English Socialism shows that English Socialism is more violent and far less patriotic than German Socialism. German Socialists love their country. Most British Socialists apparently love only themselves.

FOOTNOTES:

[529] See p. 107.

[530] H.W. Lee in the *Social-Democrat*, June 1, 1907.

[531] Thomas Kennedy in *Forward* of May 25, 1907, reprinted in the *Social-Democrat*, June 1907.

[532] Quelch in the *Social-Democrat* for October 1907.

[533] Kautsky, *Social Revolution*, p. 4.

[534] *Report on Fabian Policy and Resolutions*, p. 11.

[535] See Appendix.

[536] *Social-Democrat*, October 1907, p. 588.

[537] Shaw, *The Impossibilities of Anarchism*, p. 25.

[538] *Social-Democrat*, June 1907.

[539] Shaw, *The Impossibilities of Anarchism*, p. 25.

[540] *Social-Democrat*, October 1907, p. 586.

[541] *Social-Democrat*, April 1907, p. 204.

[542] See p. 170.

[543] *Social-Democrat*, October 1907, p. 586.

[544] *Social-Democrat*, October 1907, p. 589.

[545] *Ibid.*

[546] See *The Nation in Arms*, October 1907, and *Journal de Neuchatel*, September 22, 1907.

[547] *Independent Labour Party Report*, 1907, p. 64.

[548] *Ibid.* pp. 64, 65.

[549] *Social-Democrat*, November 1907, p. 516.

[550] *An Appeal to Soldiers.*

[551] See Appendix.

[552] H.W. Lee in *Social-Democrat*, June 1907.

[553] *An Appeal to Soldiers.*

[554] *Socialist*, October 1907.

[555] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, No. 30.

[556] Kirtlan, *Socialism for Christians*, p. 6.

[557] Smart, *Socialism and the Budget*, p. 6.

[558] Quelch, *Social Democracy and the Armed Nation*, p. 3 f.

[559] *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, December 1899.

[560] *Vorwärts*, March 10, 1907.

CHAPTER XIV[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND THE MONARCHY

The first of the "Immediate Reforms" demanded in the official programme of the Social-Democratic Federation[561] is the "Abolition of the Monarchy."

That that demand has been made so crudely and that it has been given so prominent a position cannot surprise anybody who is acquainted with British Socialism. "Socialists are essentially thorough-going Republicans. Socialism, which aims at political and economic equality, is radically inconsistent with any other political form whatever than that of Republicanism, Monarchy and Socialism, or Empire and Socialism, are incompatible and inconceivable. Socialism involves political and economic equality, while Monarchy or Empire essentially imply domination and inequality."[562]

"As in the political history of the race the logical development of progress was found in the abolition of the institution of monarchy and not in its mere restriction, so in industrial history the culminating point to which all efforts must at last converge lies in the abolition of the capitalist class, and not in the mere restriction of its powers. The Socialist Labour Party, recognising these two phases of human development, unites them in its programme, and seeks to give them a concrete embodiment by its demand for a Socialist Republic."[563]

Most Socialists describe all monarchs as the drones of society, and habitually refer to crowned heads either as "loafers" or as "Royal paupers, able-bodied and outdoor."[564] "If the people were of my mind they would not tolerate for twelve months that the Royal paupers should wear robes and have every luxury, and the honest, industrious aged poor should wear rags and eat a crust or be imprisoned for being hungry."[565] (Has ever anybody in Great Britain, or in any other country, been imprisoned "for being hungry"?)

"Is it possible that this degrading monarchical

superstition can survive in England much longer? Has the schoolmaster now been abroad so long in vain? Will the English people never take their destinies into their own hands and close the long era of monarchical and aristocratic robbery? Are we never to have a Government that can hear the bitter cry of the outcast, and, hearing, act? We know the goal. The goal is the Democratic Republic."[566]

Many further extracts regarding English and foreign monarchs might be given, but they are so indescribably coarse and so offensive—even the late Queen is most shamelessly slandered, abused, and calumniated—that they are hardly fit for publication, and their authors shall be nameless.

FOOTNOTES:

[561] See Appendix.

[562] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 37.

[563] *Platform, Constitutions, Rules, and Standing Orders, Socialist Labour Party*, pp. 2, 3.

[564] See *The Socialist Annual*, 1907, p. 25.

[565] Glyde, *Britain's Disgrace*, p. 9.

[566] Davidson, *The New Book of Kings*, p. 107.

CHAPTER XV[ToC]

SOCIALIST VIEWS ON PARLIAMENT AND THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

The opinion of most Socialists with regard to the British Parliament is well summed up in the phrase "Parliament a way to the Democracy? Why, 'tis not a road at all, but only a barricade across our road."[567] It will be seen in this and the following Chapter that Socialism means either to capture and hold that barricade or to pull it down.

Let us take note of some representative Socialist opinions on the British Parliament. "The House of Commons is a machine elaborately contrived by the exploiting classes to serve their own ends. In the race for Parliamentary seats the wisest and the best are nowhere. They are rarely even permitted to start. The prizes are for the richest, the most unscrupulous, cunning, and pushing. And without a complete revolution in our ideas regarding the objects as well as the methods of legislation, it must always remain so."[568] "Parliament is appointed, we are told, to fulfil the will of the nation. Then why doesn't it do it? If it has a job to do, why does it stand day after day, week after week, year after year, cackling, cackling, cackling about it? Can the mind of man conceive anything more intensely ridiculous than this spectacle solemnly presented for our admiration by the champions of the system, of six hundred garrulous old gentlemen making a set and formal business of cackling—cackling, cackling, cackling,

with infinite pride in their own preposterous squeaking and nagging, and then filing out one by one at intervals, like a stately Lord Mayor's procession in the kingdom of the black and white penguins? What is to be done with such a museum?"[569] "Government by Parliament is a preposterous pretence—a delusion and a snare to the people. It is a gag imposed by the classes on the aspirations of the masses. Our Parliamentary representation is a fraud. If we could appeal directly to the whole people as to whether willing workers should starve, or little children suffer hunger, then something might be done. But how can the electors express their desires on this vital matter under our present electoral system?"[570]

Socialists complain that Parliament is run by a class. "It is colossal impudence for a party paper to talk against 'class representation.' Every class is over-represented—except the great working class. The mines, the railways, the drink trade, the land, finance, the army (officers), the navy (officers), the Church, the law, and most of the big industries (employers) are represented largely in the House of Commons. And nearly thirty millions of the working classes are represented by about a dozen men, most of whom are palsied by their allegiance to the Liberal party."[571] "The rich man's club at St. Stephen's is merely a committee of plutocrats—rentmongers, interestmongers, and profitmongers—assembled for the purpose of safeguarding the spoils which the 'classes' have theftuously contrived to heap up."[572] "The inequality of representation of classes in Parliament at present is somewhat startling. It stands as follows:

House of Lords	
Capitalist members	614
Labour members	0
Total	614
House of Commons	
Capitalist members	640
Labour members	30
Total	670

"That is, we have 640 members representing the interests of, say, 6,000,000 of persons, and 30 members representing the interests of 37,000,000."[573] "As recipients of rents, royalties, interests, and dividends, some 600 of the representatives of the people in the House of Commons are parasites upon the people's backs. The railway shareholders have 78 representatives; the railway workers, nearly 400,000 strong, have one. One hundred and eighty thousand landed proprietors have 155 members; 1,000,000 agricultural labourers have one. Coal-mine owners have 21; and 655,000 miners have seven members. The shipowners and builders have 22 representatives; the 200,000 sailors have none."[574]

"The social composition of the House of Commons is as follows: 124 lawyers, 108 manufacturers (including brewers, colliery-owners, &c.), 85 landowners, 64 merchants and shopkeepers, 37 army and navy men, 33 journalists and authors, 28 financiers, 23 professors, teachers, &c., 18 Civil

servants, 18 newspaper proprietors and publishers, 16 heirs to the peerage, 67 of miscellaneous occupations and professions, and 50 working men. Thus the bulk of the present House of Commons consists of rent, profit, and interest mongers and their hirelings and hangers-on. The exploited masses of the people are only represented by fifty men."[575]

See your masters, how
unceasingly they strive
to keep you down,
How they manage all your
business up in
Parliament and town;
Well, it is not quite your
business, for it really is
their own.
And that is why the millions of
the toilers slave and
groan.[576]

"On the top of all this political chicanery and impudent pretence of popular representation, there sits an autocratic, irresponsible, hereditary legislative body, consisting exclusively of idlers and parasites who reserve to themselves the right of rejecting all laws which do not clearly further their own exactions and monopolies! Then ask yourselves: Of what use is Parliament? Of what use can it ever be to the mass of the common people?"[577]

Parliament is not only useless to the worker, but is also, according to the Socialists, utterly corrupt and callous to the sufferings of the people. "Whenever an American is met abroad with the assertion that government in the Republic is corrupt, he can safely say that for one ounce of corruption in America there

is a full pound avoirdupois in Britain."[578] "It is extremely doubtful, indeed, whether either slavery or the slave-trade would be abandoned in the British Empire if they still existed to-day, and their abrogation and suppression depended upon the English House of Commons. The hideous corruption in that assembly and the utter indifference of the majority of its plutocratic members and their retainers to the welfare of any people, at home or abroad, where money is to be made by neglecting the commonest rules of ethics, have never been so clearly manifested as they are to-day."[579]

"The suffrage in Great Britain is very unsatisfactory, as the following table shows:

	Per cent. of the population having a vote.
France	27.9
Switzerland	23.5
Greece	23.0
Spain	22.4
Belgium	21.5
Germany	21.2
Bulgaria	21.2
Norway	19.9
Austria	19.9
Portugal	19.0
Great Britain	16.5

Denmark	16.4
Servia	16.0
Holland	16.0

As to England, she occupies a very low place in the scale. But then the people here have not even got universal suffrage! And this is a 'democratic,' 'self-governing' community."[580]

Furthermore, "The time has come when members of Parliament will have to receive payment for their services in the House of Commons, because the people have realised that they cannot be adequately represented only by men of wealth and position who are able to pay their own expenses."[581]

The national Administration is quite as unsatisfactory to Socialists as is the national Parliament. "To-day honesty wears rags, and rascality and idleness wear robes. Every pint of beer, and every drop of wine or spirits the workers drink, every pipe of tobacco or cigar they smoke, every cup of tea, coffee, or cocoa they drink, every patent medicine they purchase, every dog they keep, every pound of sugar they use, even their playing cards and their insurance policies, are taxed to help to pay big salaries and pensions to the younger sons of the aristocracy, &c. The eldest sons live on the family estate; the younger live on the State. One becomes a lawyer, and will lie for anyone who will pay him well; another becomes an officer in the army or navy, and he will cut the throat of anyone in return for a good salary; another becomes a parson, and in return for a good stipend he will pray for anyone; the others are quartered on the consular or the diplomatic service, or are placed as clerks at 1,000*l.*

per year in the Colonial, Foreign, or Home Office, &c."[582] The official Parliamentary Report of the Independent Labour Party for 1907 states: "Our short experience has been sufficient to teach us that it is as important to democratise our administrative departments as it is to democratise our Statute Book. We have found that the doors to the higher offices in Whitehall are closed to everyone who has not had a middle-class or aristocratic education, and recent changes have placed our Civil service more completely in the hands of the wealthy classes."[583]

In the foregoing statements we find some of the principal complaints of the Socialists regarding the national Parliament and Administration. Let us now take note of their wishes and proposals.

Among the "Immediate Reforms" demanded in the programme of the Social-Democratic Federation we find the following regarding Parliament and the Administration:

"Abolition of the Monarchy. Democratisation of the Government machinery, viz. Abolition of the House of Lords, Payment of members of legislative and administrative bodies, Payment of official expenses of elections out of the public funds, Adult suffrage, Proportional representation, Triennial parliaments, Second ballot, initiative and referendum. Foreigners to be granted rights of citizenship after two years' residence in the country, on the recommendation of four British-born citizens, without any fees. Canvassing to be made illegal. Legislation by the people in such wise that no legislative proposal shall become law until ratified by the majority of the people. Legislative and administrative independence for all parts of the Empire."

As the above demands are somewhat vague, it is

worth while to take note of another and clearer statement of the political demands made by the Social-Democratic Federation. "We of the Democratic Federation demand complete adult suffrage for every man and woman in these islands, because in this way alone can the whole people give free expression to their will; we are in favour of paid delegates and annual conventions, because by this means alone can the people control their representatives; we stand up for the direct references of all grave issues to the country at large and for the punishment as felony of every species of corruption, because thus only can tyranny be checked and bribery be uprooted; we call for the abolition of all hereditary authority, because such authority is necessarily independent of the mass of the people. But all these reforms, when secured, mean only that the men and women of these islands will at length be masters in their own house. Mere political machinery is worthless unless used to produce good social conditions."[584]

A widely read Socialist writer formulates the Socialistic demands regarding Parliamentary reform as follows: "(1) The suffrage should not be given to a man's house or his lodgings, but to the man himself. I believe in adult suffrage, male and female. (2) Constituencies should be numerically equal, each having three members, one retiring annually by rotation. (3) Cabinets should be chosen annually by the members of the House of Commons, to whom alone they should be responsible. (4) Payment of members and election expenses. Members should receive reasonable 'wages' according to the ancient practice of the Constitution, while all election expenses (not strictly personal to the candidate) should be defrayed out of the rates. (5) The Monarchy. If we are to have more kings or queens,

their cost ought not to exceed that of the President of the United States, viz. 10,000*l.* a year. 'The office of a king in this nation is useless, burdensome, and dangerous, and ought to be abolished' (Resolution of the Long Parliament, 1649). (6) The House of Lords. 'A House of Peers in Parliament is useless and dangerous and ought to be abolished.'"[585]

The Fabian Society proclaims: "To complete the foundation of the democratic State, we need manhood suffrage, abolition of all poverty disqualifications, abolition of the House of Lords, public payment of candidature expenses, public payment of representatives, and annual elections."[586]

"The problem how the Lords are to be abolished is of easy solution. They cannot present themselves at the Gilded Chamber without writs, and these a democratic Ministry could and would peremptorily stop. Should they come without writs, Inspector Denning could be instructed to take charge of them. Or the House of Commons could simply revive its resolution of January 6, 1649, decreeing their abolition."[587]

Many Socialists are opposed not only to the House of Lords but to all second chambers. "When the hereditary House is abolished, the demand which will be made by reactionaries for a representative second chamber must be sternly resisted. True, most nations have second chambers in imitation of our pernicious example; but there is not one of them, however constituted, whose history is not a conclusive argument against such institutions. The second chambers of Europe and America are nothing more than standing monuments of the gregarious folly of mankind. Nations can no more have two

wills than individuals. A second chamber at one with the first is superfluous, in opposition it is noxious."[588]

A large number of Socialists do not think that the democratisation of the House of Commons and the abolition of the House of Lords will suffice. They fear that party politics and party intrigues may become more pernicious in a Labour Parliament than they have proved to be in a middle-class Parliament. They fear that adult suffrage may not improve matters, and that impecunious professional politicians may prove worse than the class of politicians who up till now have sat in Parliament. "We stand in England at the parting of the ways. One leads to the payment of members and the creation of a class of professional political adventurers; the other leads to the referendum and initiative."[589]

"In the Republics of France and the United States the electors are virtually endowed with male adult suffrage, and Labour representation is facilitated by State payment of members and of their election expenses. Yet the French Chamber, with its Panama and Southern Railway scandals, in which the patriots have gorged their servile lusts, has stood for many years before the nations as a monument of infamy. The United States Congress has not a single Labour representative within its walls, and the Government of the country is become a vile synonym for corruption."[590] "In America the compensation of each Senator and each Representative is fixed at five thousand dollars, or one thousand pounds per year. In addition to this the members have special fares on the railways, and many other perquisites. Yet the American 'Encyclopedia of Social Reform,' edited by W.D.P. Bliss, says, on page 325, 'Congressmen,

notoriously, do not represent the people, but special interests and great moneyed corporations. The Congress is almost the only great national legislative body owned wholly by the well-to-do. In the British Parliament, even after the Conservative victories of the last election, there are thirteen Labour men. In Congress there is not one."[591] "Better the stupid British hereditary gentleman than the cunning politician-for-a-living. Better a Cabinet of Chamberlains and Gladstones than a circus of conflicting unscrupulous demagogues on the make."

"The Parliamentary system tends, not to the summoning of thoughtful patriots to their country's service, but to the exaltation and glorification of plausible windbags."[592] "The panacea of Labour representation will not remedy those defects. It is in the eternal nature of things that in the electoral competition of rival personalities the scum must rise to the top. So long as self-seeking is rewarded by the highest honours self-seeking will flourish."[593] "A Parliament of Labour members would develop just the same tendency as any other to division into parties commanded by rival ambitions, between which the democratic vote would, as always, annul itself."[594] "If there were five hundred delegates of Labour, if the whole of the Cardiff Trade Unions Congress could be suddenly translated to Parliament and power, there might still be some envious, spiteful braggarts subterraneously scheming and gnawing to undermine and engulf a rival, though a people's cause were wrecked in the catastrophe. Leaders are always dangerous. The workmen have too many leaders. Their first political necessity is to get rid of the politicians. Therefore I would like to see abolished all Legislative Chambers, Senates, and Councils of State."[595]

Views identical with the foregoing are held by many Socialists, and therefore a Socialist writer has asked: "Why cannot the people, even of a populous and extensive country, vote upon all laws?"[596] "Instead of representation we shall have what is technically called the referendum, or submission of all proposed measures to the people, who must signify their approval by vote before the measures can pass into law. This has been practised already to some extent in Switzerland, both in national and cantonal affairs. It was first proposed by Robespierre when he advised the king of France to say: 'My people, here are the laws I have made for you. Will you accept them?'"[597]

Another Socialist says: "It is impossible that any delegate should completely represent the desires of ten or twenty thousand electors. No two human beings are agreed about everything; and, in every election, electors, in order to express approval of one cherished principle, are driven to adopt half-a-dozen others which they bitterly disapprove."[598] "The way to true democracy will never be found through delegacy. The only safe way is through direct legislation—through the referendum and initiative. The referendum and initiative does not mean more laws, but fewer, shorter, simpler, and more understandable ones."[599] "What is wanted is neither aristocracy, plutocracy, nor demagoguecracy, but democracy—the one governing system which never has been tried. The people must learn that the game of politics is not an unfathomable science, but a struggle of rival interests in which no delegate can so well represent their needs as themselves."[600] "The referendum quite changes the character of the Federal Assembly. It ceases to be a Parliament, and becomes merely a drafting committee. In other

countries the initiative comes from above; the Parliament and the King are together the legal sovereign. In Switzerland it comes from below, for the legal sovereign is the electorate."[601]

Other Socialists are strongly opposed to the referendum: "Democracy, as understood by the Fabian Society, means simply the control of the Administration by freely elected representatives of the people. The Fabian Society energetically repudiates all conceptions of democracy as a system by which the technical work of Government administration, and the appointment of public officials, shall be carried on by referendum or any other form of direct popular decision. Such arrangements may be practical in a village community, but not in the complicated industrial civilisations which are ripening for Social-Democracy."[602] "The people can only judge political measures by their effect when they have come into operation; they cannot plan measures themselves, or foresee what their effect will be, or give precise instructions to their representatives; nor can any honest representative tell, until he has heard a measure thoroughly discussed by representatives of all other sections of the working class, what form the measure should take so as to keep the interests of his constituents in due subordination to those of the community. It is to be considered, further, that intelligent reformers, especially workmen who have grasped the principles of Socialism, are always in the minority; they may address themselves with success to the sympathies of the masses and gain their confidence; but the dry details of the legislative and administrative steps by which they, move towards their goal can never be made interesting or intelligible to the ordinary voter. For these reasons

the referendum, in theory the most democratic of popular institutions, is in practice the most reactionary."[603]

Other Socialists are in favour of a reformed Parliament which is to be a glorified trade union congress. "Each industry would have adequate representation in the Parliament of Industry, and this Parliament would connect and harmonise the affairs of the whole. In the future society the descendant of the union of to-day will be the centre of social life and the administration of things. Let 'workers of all trades unite.'"[604] Others, again, call for a Parliament of a frankly revolutionary type which is characteristically called a "National Convention." "What is the use of the suffrage? It has but one use—to enable the workers, as a class, to take peaceful possession of the power of the State, so as to use that power for social purposes. But to do this you must have paid delegates from your own class, not timeserving unpaid representatives from the classes which rob you; you must put your servants, not your masters, at Westminster; you must have a National Convention of the People, not a House of the Confiscating Classes."[605] Readers will no doubt remember the French National Convention and its reign of terror and crime which culminated in the execution of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette.

Many Socialists, like most Anarchists, are utterly opposed to Parliamentary government and majority rule, preferring rule by violence to rule by argument. "What has hitherto been called the will of the people, or the will of the majority as manifested in the modern constitutional State, does not express any act of will at all, but the absence of will. It is not the will but the apathy of the majority that is

represented."[606] "The preaching of the *cultus* of the majority in the modern State is an absurdity which can only for a moment go down with the Parliamentary Radical who is wallowing in the superstitions of exploded Whiggery."[607] "The Socialist has a distinct aim in view. If he can carry the initial stages towards its realisation by means of the count-of-heads majority, by all means let him do so. If, on the other hand, he sees the possibility of carrying a salient portion of his programme by trampling on this majority, by all means let him do this also."[608]

The Women's Suffrage problem has lately come to the front, and it is characteristic and noteworthy that it has been taken up with the greatest energy, we might almost say with hysterical energy, by Socialist women. They tell us, "We desire the stain removed from our womanhood. Remove the hateful stigma from your mothers, your wives, and your daughters, which places the noblest and the best of them in a lower position than the most uncultured and immoral specimen of the male sex who pays his rates and taxes."[609] According to a woman Socialist, the Votes-for-Women problem is "the greatest moral and spiritual problem that has torn asunder the souls of men since the fall of Adam and the coming of Christ."[610] "Society has no brighter hope, humanity no larger promise than her coming, radiant with health and happiness, love and liberty shining from her eyes, the beautiful, high-souled, sister-mother of the men that are going to be."[611] "The State cannot spare from its high councils the deep wisdom of its mothers and the comradeship of its wives."[612]

It is obvious why Socialist women demand the vote with almost frenzied fervour, and why the

various Socialist societies and parties support their agitation. Socialists believe that their wives, and the women workers in general, will vote for Socialism, and that most other women will be indifferent and abstain from voting. Therefore we learn: "Socialism in the only true sense of that term, in the only wise conception of that state, can never be brought into the fulness of its being until women have been made equal with men as citizens."[613] "The benches of the National Chamber may yet be seen accommodating three hundred and thirty-five intelligent women."[614] In referring to the elections in Finland, Mrs. Snowden writes: "To Socialists, an interesting point is the fact that, in spite of the women voters, who are supposed to be retrograde in politics, by far the largest number of party votes recorded were for the Socialist party."[615]

The claims of women for the franchise have been supported by large majorities at important meetings of Socialists. The resolution of the Independent Labour Party, "That this Conference declares in favour of adult suffrage and the political equality of the sexes, and considers that the right of suffrage should immediately be extended to women on the same conditions as men," was carried by 236 votes to 24.[616] The Social-Democratic Federation resolved: "That this Conference declares that the time has arrived when equal rights of citizenship be extended to all women and men of full age; urges all members to take advantage of the present suffrage agitation to focus public opinion upon the only logical solution of the question, viz. the abolition of existing franchise qualifications and the establishment of universal adult suffrage; and calls upon them actively to work for this practical measure of reform." This resolution was carried by 42 votes to 9.[617]

The recent clamour of "Votes for Women" emanated not so much from philosophic Radicals who had read John Stuart Mill as from Socialists, and many non-Socialist women have become their dupes. Socialist women hope that they will have the voting all to themselves. Therefore they, and most men Socialists also, would very likely resist to the utmost all proposals which would make voting compulsory for *all* women.

FOOTNOTES:

[567] Thompson, *Hail Referendum*, p. 3.

[568] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 99.

[569] Thompson, *Hail Referendum*, pp. 4, 5.

[570] Thompson, *The Referendum and Initiative in Practice*, p. 4.

[571] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 152.

[572] Davidson, *The Gospel of the Poor*, p. 59.

[573] Washington, *Whose Dog art Thou?* p. 14.

[574] Thompson, *The Only Way to Democracy*, p. 8.

[575] *The Socialist Annual*, 1907, p. 43.

[576] Neil, *Songs of the Social Revolution*, p. 21.

[577] Thompson, *Hail Referendum*, p. 7.

[578] Davidson, *The New Book of Kings*, p. 118.

[579] Hyndman, *Colonies and Dependencies*, p. 9.

[580] *The Socialist Annual*, 1907, p. 58.

[581] *The Reformers' Year Book*, 1907, p. 121.

[582] Councillor Glyde, *Britain's Disgrace*, p. 30.

[583] *Report Annual Conference of Independent Labour Party*, 1907, p. 52.

[584] *Socialism Made Plain*, p. 7.

[585] Davidson, *A Democrat's Address*, p. 4.

[586] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 187.

[587] Davidson, *The Book of Lords*, p. 78.

[588] Davidson, *The House of Lords, Useless, Dangerous, &c.*, p. 13.

[589] Thompson, *The Only Way to Democracy*, p. 11.

[590] Thompson, *Hail Referendum*, p. 8.

[591] Thompson, *The Only Way to Democracy*, p. 10.

[592] Thompson, *The Referendum, &c.*, p. 3.

[593] *Ibid.* p. 1.

[594] *Ibid.* p. 16.

[595] Thompson, *Hail Referendum*, pp. 8, 9.

[596] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 130.

[597] *Ibid.* p. 129.

[598] Thompson, *The Only Way to Democracy*, p. 4.

[599] *Ibid.* p. 15.

[600] Thompson, *The Referendum, &c.*, p. 5.

[601] *Ibid.* p. 11.

[602] *Report on Fabian Policy*, p. 5

[603] *Report on Fabian Policy*, p. 13.

[604] Kessack, *The Capitalist Wilderness and the Way Out*, p. 3.

[605] *What Use is a Vote?* p. 1.

[606] Bax, *The Ethics of Socialism*, p. 120.

[607] *Ibid.* p. 128.

[608] *Ibid.* pp. 127, 128.

[609] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 20.

[610] *Ibid.* p. 19.

[611] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, Introd.

[612] *Ibid.* p. 93.

[613] *Ibid.* p. 97.

[614] *Ibid.* p. 92.

[615] *Ibid.* p. 98.

[616] *Independent Labour Party Report, Annual Conference*, 1907, p. 45.

[617] *Report of 27th Annual Conference, 1907, Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 26.

CHAPTER XVI[ToC]

THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOCIALISTS TOWARDS THE TWO PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES

From the Socialist point of view there is for all practical purposes no difference between the two great parties. Both are representative, not of the people, but of capitalism. Both are hostile to labour.

"The difference between Liberalism and Toryism is merely a question of phraseology; there is no fundamental clashing of principle. Both stand for the private ownership of the means of life. They both support a competitive state of society with its inevitable exploitation of the wealth-producers."[618] "Both the Conservative and Liberal parties are agreed in supporting private ownership in the instruments of production for the purposes of profit-making. Their differences are merely superficial and their programmes admittedly offer no solution of the problems of poverty. The Independent Labour Party regards them both as equally the enemies of labour, and in fact merely as two sections of the entrenched forces of plutocracy."[619] "There are not really two parties in the State. There is but one great party, that of privilege, divided into two factions, labelled Whig and Tory, or Liberal and Conservative. Both do much the same things in office. The mimic warfare which they wage with each other, no shrewd observer takes seriously. It is merely a pleasant game of which the stakes are the spoils of office and patronage. An 'organised hypocrisy' is but a mild description of an English Government, whether Liberal or Conservative. The Liberal and the Conservative are

the two thieves between whom the people are evermore crucified."[620] "Neither of the political parties is of any use to the workers, because both the political parties are paid, officered, and led by capitalists whose interests are opposed to the interests of the workers. The Socialist laughs at the pretended friendship of Liberal and Tory leaders for the workers."[621] "There's no difference whatever between Bannerman, the Scottish landowner, and Balfour, whose uncle made 200,000*l.* out of army contracts in India in four years. These people are entirely antagonistic to the worker."[622]

The assertions of the Liberals that they are the true friends of the people, that they have always fought for liberty and democracy, that they have given the vote to the people, and that they trust the people, are treated with derision and contempt. "Liberalism has historically opposed itself alike to Toryism, landed interest, and democracy, working-class interest whenever that interest appeared as a distinct political party."[623] "Since 1832 the Liberals had eight opportunities to give justice to the voteless multitude. In every election from 1832 to 1865 solemn pledges were made by the Liberals that a Reform Bill should be introduced as soon as they were elected, and each time these pledges were ignored after they had secured power and position."[624] As regards the giving of the franchise, the Conservatives have not been much better than the Liberals. "Neither party can claim much credit for its Reform Bills, extorted as they have been, not by belief in democracy, but by fear of the opposing faction. Even now the citizen is tricked out of his vote by every possible legal and administrative technicality; so that more than one-third of our adult men are unenfranchised, together with the whole of

the other sex. Neither the Conservative party nor the self-styled 'Party of the Masses,' gives proof of any real desire to give the vote to this not inconsiderable remnant; but both sides pay lip-homage to democracy."[625]

Socialists say that the claims of the Liberals to the gratitude of the masses are hypocritical. Their policy has not been based on philanthropy, but on a sordid selfishness. They attacked the landed interest not in order to benefit the people, but in order to make themselves supreme in the State and to fill their own purses. Liberalism, with talk of liberty of the individual and of freedom of trade on its lips, is in reality the representative of capitalism of the most heartless kind. "The political power of the landed classes was to be broken; the capitalists were to be allowed to do as they liked with their own; a state of individualism was to be established; it was to be a fair field for all and devil take the hindmost. So far as politics and the law are concerned, this ideal of Liberalism has been realised. Land is no longer supreme. Money ranks with it. Everyone has a chance of obtaining money. *Ergo*, we are a democratic nation."[626] "With the change in economic conditions, with the growth of manufacture, the rise of the bourgeoisie meant the downfall of feudalism. The plutocrat supplanted the baron, capitalism became king. The 'old nobility' of England to-day are successful brewers, bankers, and traders, and the Nonconformist Conscience dominates in the place of Holy Mother Church."[627] "The representatives of this class in Parliament repealed the Corn Laws, securing cheap bread for their workers at the expense of the landlords and the farmers. The new masters opposed the Factory Acts, championed by Tories such as Lord Ashley, Thomas

Sadler, and 'King Richard' Oastler, They fostered railway development, at the public expense, so that they might have quick and cheap transit for their manufactures."[628]

The Liberals have shown their selfishness, heartlessness, and greed by opposing the greatest boon to workers, the Factory Acts. "Was it the Liberal party which initiated the Factory Acts, which were certainly the greatest step towards the elevation of the working class that was ever taken in the course of the last century? Oh, no! So far from the Liberal party initiating the Factory Acts, we know perfectly well that the Liberal party—leading members of the Liberal party, like Mr. John Bright and Mr. Richard Cobden—fiercely and bitterly opposed the Factory Acts. We know that no one fought more strenuously against the ten-hour day than Mr. John Bright. We know that all these canting Liberal hypocrites—I can call them nothing else—said with regard to the ten-hour day, just what they say now about the proposal for an eight-hour day—one of the proposals we put forward in order to get rid of this hideous difficulty of the unemployed. The argument was put forward then, that the restriction of the hours of labour would ruin our industries. Precisely the same argument was put forward when it was proposed to put a stop to the terrible over-work of the children deep down in the bowels of the earth. Women and children were mercilessly driven by brutal overseers at their task, and this was maintained by your Liberal party in order that they might obtain large profits out of their white slaves. Only let the Liberal party appeal to history in its claim for working-class support, and then the working class will arrive at the conclusion to which many of us have already come—that the Liberal party, so far from being entitled to

our support, is entitled to our greatest loathing and hatred."[629] "As to the Factory Acts, it was not a question of Messrs. Bright and Cobden alone, but of the whole organised body of the Liberal party, which opposed the Factory Acts, and they were only carried by the hostility of the Tory party to the Liberals for having dared to interfere with the Corn Laws. The Factory Acts were passed in retaliation by the landlord party against the capitalist party."[630]

"Mr. Gladstone was the only member who endeavoured to delay the Bill which delivered women and children from mines and pits; and never did he say a word on behalf of the factory children until, when defending slavery in the West Indies, he taunted Buxton with indifference to the slavery in England."[631] "If I were to draw a comparison between the Liberal and the Tory parties, I should say that the Tory party has done more in that direction than the Liberal party has done."[632] Mr. Blatchford wrote in the "Clarion" that "the Liberal party has never helped the trade unions," and proved this assertion by giving a detailed statement of the trade union legislation, which showed that modern trade unionism was constantly opposed by the Liberals and was created by the Conservatives.[633]

In consequence of its record, Socialists see in Liberalism not a friend, but an enemy. "Liberalism stands for individualism, and the Liberal capitalist and trader are bitterly opposed to the trade union and co-operative society. They found that these bodies, however, were beginning to exercise an important, if indirect, influence upon their party. Liberal leaders, alive to the importance of vote-catching, began to angle for the support of the working-class organisations."[634] "We have no

reason for supporting the Liberal party any more than the Tory party. Men do not gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles. The Liberal party is to-day what it has always been—an organisation of capitalists formed to serve the interests of the capitalist class."[635]

Liberalism, with its championship of exaggerated individualism, stands not for liberty, but for administrative anarchy. "The trouble with nineteenth century Liberalism is that, by instinct, by tradition, and by the positive precepts of its past exponents, it 'thinks in individuals.' It visualises the world as a world of independent Roundheads, with separate ends, and abstract rights to pursue those ends. Nineteenth century Liberalism is, in fact, axiomatically hostile to the State. It is not 'little Englandism' that is the matter with those who still cling to such views; it is, as Huxley and Matthew Arnold correctly diagnosed, administrative Nihilism. So far as political action is concerned, they tend to be inveterately negative. They have hung up temperance reform and educational reform for a quarter of a century, because, instead of seeking to enable the citizen to refresh himself without being poisoned or inebriated and to get the children thoroughly taught, they have wanted primarily to revenge their outraged temperance principles on the publican and their outraged Nonconformist principles on the Church. Of such Liberals it may be said that the destructive revolutionary tradition is in their bones; they will reform nothing unless it can be done at the expense of their enemies."[636]

"The question is frequently put: 'Why are Socialists so much opposed to Liberalism?' But a little serious reflection will explain the circumstance. Liberalism is

really more conservative than Toryism. This is not a paradox, it is a fact. Toryism stands for government, and it does not necessarily follow that it stands for bad government. Liberalism, on the other hand, admittedly seeks an unrestrained operation of the individual will. It is opposed to government. It does not consciously subscribe to the recognition of our social being. It regards individuals as self-contained units operating in separate spheres. The less government we have the better, is the keynote of Liberalism. This was Emerson's theory, and Emerson was an anarchist."[637] "The modern Conservative candidate is politically a man without prejudices. No abstract principle forbids him to listen sympathetically to any proposal for reform. Hence he seems on the platform less belated than the nineteenth century Liberal with his stock of shop-soiled principles at full price."[638] "In many people's minds the terms 'Liberalism' and 'insincerity' are held to be synonymous. Lacking a central idea of its own, and necessarily failing to nourish on borrowed ones, there is nothing before the Liberal party but decay. For progress in the future we must look to a party which has an ideal and is prepared to stand by it."[639]

Before the general election of 1906 Socialists wrote: "The political force of Liberalism is spent. During the last twenty years its aspirations and its watchwords, its ideas of daily life, and its conceptions of the universe, have become increasingly distasteful to the ordinary citizen as he renews his youth from generation to generation. Its worship of individual liberty evokes no enthusiasm. Its reliance on 'freedom of contract' and 'supply and demand,' with its corresponding 'voluntaryism' in religion and philanthropy, now seems to work out

disastrously for the masses who are too poor to have what the economists call an 'effective demand' for even the minimum conditions of physical and mental health necessary to national well-being."[640] "For the last twenty years the Liberal party has been trying to fit itself with a new programme. It took up Home Rule for Ireland, but found that split the party; it took up temperance reform, quite a deviation from its old policy of individual liberty, and again found itself divided; it avowed friendliness to Labour, and frightened off still another batch of supporters. The Party of Progress finds itself now in the unhappy position that its basic idea is old-fashioned, and when it tries to assimilate a new one it becomes a case of putting new wine into old bottles. That is the sad plight of the Liberal party. The party is merely living from hand to mouth as an anti-Tory party, hoping to profit by the mistakes of its rival. The party has split up on temperance, on labour, on the war, on Imperialism, on education, simply because there is no central vivifying ideal to bind together and shape the policy. Can the party adopt a new ideal? is the great question. Can it drop its fundamental idea of individualism and take up the idea of co-operation? and the answer is emphatically 'No.'"[641]

The philosopher of British Socialism thinks that, owing to the principles and attitude of the Liberal party, Liberalism and Socialism are deadly enemies. "Liberalism, in so far as it aims at maintaining the liberty of private property, is reactionary and false to the principle which it has always implicitly or explicitly maintained, of the right of each and every individual to a full and free development. In so far as Liberalism does this, in so far as it assumes as axiomatic a state of society based on unrestricted

freedom of private property, and proceeds to adjust social arrangements solely or primarily in the interests of the owners of private property, in so far Liberalism and Socialism are death enemies."[642] The leading Fabian organ stated: "A party subsisting on illusions, concealments, and hypocrisies, could hardly survive in the atmosphere engendered by a real fight like that between plutocracy and Socialism. For some time it may contrive to subsist by telling the electorate that the only true way of resisting Socialism is by means of Liberal reforms, while at the same time (with doubtful consistency) asking for Socialist support on the ground that it goes 'part of the way.' But its best chance is probably to divert public attention from Socialism to other matters, and this the Prime Minister evidently feels. The existence of the Liberal party is incompatible with the existence of intellectual honesty in its leaders. And with all his faults Sir Henry is too fundamentally honest a man to lead it effectively at the present juncture. The reins had better be handed over to Mr. Winston Churchill, against whom no such objection can be urged."[643]

Before the Liberals set to work in 1906, Mr. Philip Snowden wrote: "It might be said that in the next Parliament the Liberal party is on its last trial."[644] That trial has had, as far as the Socialists and the Labour party are concerned, an unsatisfactory result. Before the general election Socialists asked themselves: "Will the Liberal party come into power with a clear mandate for reform which even the House of Lords will not dare entirely to obstruct, or will it shuffle into power on the misdoings of its predecessors and carry out a halfhearted policy in the hope of not estranging any of its moderate followers? If it takes the latter course, it will win the

undying contempt of all real reformers; it will be the last time that a Liberal Administration holds sway, and Labour will be left the only really progressive force in the country."[645] Twelve months later, in a review of the activity of the Liberal Government, "The Reformers' Year Book" stated: "The story of Chinese labour in the Transvaal during the year 1906 has been one of continuous perfidy on the part of the Liberal Government at home. Returned to power largely on account of the opposition of the people of this country to Chinese slavery in any shape or form, they have burked the main issue at every point, and only carried out a few minor changes which have been totally ineffective, retaining all the while a hypocritical devotion to the popular ideal."[646] "The Liberal Government has failed entirely to justify the confidence reposed in it by the electorate, not only upon the newer questions as they have arisen—such as the war in Natal—but on the very matters upon which it was returned to power, of which the chief was the continuance of Chinese labour in the Transvaal."[647]

Socialists think that the Liberal agitation against the House of Lords is insincere and hypocritical. "Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's brave talk about fighting the House of Lords sounds very much like blarney when we call to mind the fact that he has beaten all records in the creation of peers. He has not yet been two years in office, but he has managed to make no less than twenty new peers. They include a tobacco man, a whisky man, a newspaper man who sold his journal to the Tories, several usurers and company promoters."[648]

The assurance of the Liberals that they are the friends of Labour is doubted in view of the attitude

of the party towards Labour candidates. "Liberals are continually saying that there is no quarrel between Liberalism and Labour. Why, then, do we have the constantly recurring spectacle of a middle-class Liberal being run against a popular and capable man who can claim to directly represent the people who live by the work of their hands and heads as distinguished from those who live upon rent, dividends, or interest? Are there not even upon the Liberal side plenty of landlords, railway directors, bankers, stockbrokers, and employers of labour, that a seat cannot be spared to a workman till he wins it in despite of Liberal and Tory opposition alike?"[649]

An amalgamation of the Liberals and the Socialist-Labour members is impossible. "Liberal-Labourism" is a delusion. "Labour men and capitalist Liberals are beginning to see that individualism and co-operation will not mix. If Liberalism to-day swallows Labourism, it will have a severe attack of indigestion. Mr. Keir Hardie in the Liberal ranks would do more to disrupt and destroy the Liberal party than he can possibly do from the outside. Labour, it is true, might capture the Liberal party, and this is advocated by some, but if this took place the party would wither away. The capitalist element would drop out and Labour would be left alone. Labour might just as well build up a new party outside. It is no use capturing a weapon which crumbles to pieces as soon as you grasp it. Better make a new weapon."[650] "The Labour party in the House of Commons is as yet not disliked only because as yet it is not feared. Until it has made itself both disliked and feared, it will be far short of having fulfilled the objects of its very existence. It is not saying too much to say that in the very near future the measure of the Labour party's effectiveness will be its unpopularity in the House of

Commons. Acrimonious as are the feelings often evoked by political controversies, they are urbanity itself as compared with the passions aroused over economic issues. The limits of Liberal concession must needs soon be reached. The Liberal-Labour candidate is but a transient phenomenon of our time, and with his disappearance the storm will break."[651]

The great Liberal majority was created by accident and it is rapidly dissolving. "The Liberals succeeded to power through no merit of their own, but merely through the errors of their opponents. Liberalism is shedding its supporters at both ends, and is rapidly on the way to becoming a mere *caput mortuum*."[652] It is true that "at the general election many Socialists climbed into Parliament on the backs of the Liberals,"[653] but Liberal-Socialist co-operation is not possible.

Many Socialists believe that Liberalism and Socialism are fundamentally antagonistic, and that therefore Socialism must fight its battles unaided. "In Great Britain, as in France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy, the cleavage has now been definitely marked between capitalist Liberalism and Socialist Democracy."[654] "Political power, properly so-called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another."[655] "All political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to every other party."[656] "We shall see Liberals and Tories working together in cordial agreement, as they do in Germany, to prevent the election of the only politicians who can really profess to go to the

poll on the broad ground of citizenship—labour done by hand or brain for the community, as apart from idleness and pleasure-seeking supported by rents, dividends, and interest taken from the community."[657]

"As the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic."[658] "The property question is the issue which is creating a new political cleavage in the State. Somewhat dimly at present, but with growing clearness of vision, the worker begins to see that he will remain a menial, outcast and forlorn, until he has made himself master of the machine he tends, and the soil he tills."[659]

"The only true position for a genuine working-class party is that of open hostility to all who support capitalism in any shape or form. This is the safe, sure, and scientific position."[660] "Liberals will declare and do declare in most pathetic tones that they have done more, and will do more, for the workers than the Tories have done or will do. And Liberals will assure you that they are really more anxious to help the workers than we Socialists believe. But those are side issues. The main thing to remember is, that even if the Liberals are all they claim to be, they will never do as much for Labour as Labour could do for itself."[661]

Oh heed not the talk of those

fat agitators.
[238]
Who prattle of Gladstone, or
Churchill, or worse;
Expect not your rights from
professional praters,
But manfully trust in your
courage and force.[662]

Onward! Sons of Labour! nerve
ye for the fray;
Soon shall beam the dawning of
a brighter day.
Keep the red flag flying, herald
of the free—
On yourselves relying, on to
liberty.

See! the coming glory streams
across the plains.
Soon the Sons of Labour shall
take up the reins.
Then in every nation shall our
Cause increase
Till it reigns triumphant—
pledge of joy and peace.
[663]

On the other hand, there are Socialists who think that Socialism cannot succeed if it cuts itself adrift from the great national parties and pursues a purely Socialistic Labour policy. "A member of an Imperial Parliament is an Imperialist in spite of himself. A party which concerns itself with sectional interests only will soon cease to be a party; it will degenerate into a group, and as such it cannot hope to receive serious backing in the country."[664]

Many Socialists feel confident that they will conquer power by conquering Parliament. "Parliament has always governed the country in the interest of the class to which the majority of its members belonged. It governed in the interest of the country gentlemen in the old days when they were in a majority in the House of Commons; it has governed in the interests of the capitalists and employers since they won a majority by the Reform Bill of 1832; and it will govern in the interest of the people when the majority is selected from the wage-earning class."[665] "No sooner shall two hundred Labour members be firmly seated upon the cross-benches of the House, than both parties will approach them with bended knee, bringing gold and frankincense and programmes."[666] "There is a fine impartiality about the policeman and the soldier, who are the cutting edge of the State power. They take their wages and obey their orders without asking questions. If those orders are to demolish the homestead of every peasant who refuses to take the bread out of his children's mouths in order that his landlord may have money to spend as an idle gentleman in London, the soldier obeys. But if his orders were to help the police to pitch his lordship into Holloway Gaol until he had paid an income-tax of twenty shillings on every pound of his unearned income, the soldier would do that with equal devotion to duty, and perhaps with a certain private zest that might be lacking in the other case. Now these orders come ultimately from the State, meaning in this country the House of Commons. A House of Commons consisting of 660 gentlemen and 10 workmen will order the soldier to take money from the people for the landlords. A House of Commons consisting of 660 workmen and 10

gentlemen will probably, unless the 660 are fools, order the soldier to take money from the landlords for the people."[667]

FOOTNOTES:

[618] *John Burns and the Unemployed*, p. 1.

[619] Independent Labour Party, *A Statement of Principles*, p. 3.

[620] Davidson, *The New Book of Kings*, p. 7.

[621] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 151.

[622] Casey, *Who are the Bloodsuckers?* p. 16.

[623] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 70.

[624] Councillor Glyde, *Liberal and Tory Hypocrisy*, p. 12.

[625] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, pp. 39, 40.

[626] Penny, *The Political Labour Movement*, p. 2.

[627] Quelch, *Economics of Labour*, pp. 9, 10.

[628] Leatham, *The Evolution of the Fourth Estate*, p. 11.

[629] *Should the Working-class Support the Liberal Party?* p. 10.

[630] *Ibid.* p. 19.

[631] Diack, *Socialism and Current Politics*, p. 10.

[632] *Should the Working-class Support the Liberal Party?* p. 19.

[633] *Clarion*, February 16, 1906.

[634] Penny, *The Political Labour Movement*, p. 2.

[635] *Should the Working-class Support the Liberal Party?* p. 13.

[636] *Twentieth Century Politics*, p. 4.

[637] Russell Williams, *The Difficulties of Socialism*, pp. 3, 4.

[638] *Twentieth Century Politics*, p. 6.

[639] Penny, *The Political Labour Movement*, p. 4.

[640] *Twentieth Century Politics*, p. 2.

[641] Penny, *The Political Labour Movement*, p. 3.

[642] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, pp. 69, 70.

[643] *New Age*, October 10, 1907.

[644] *Daily News*, January 20, 1906.

[645] *The Reformers' Year Book*, 1906, Preface p. 6.

[646] *Ibid.* 1907, p. 104.

[647] *Ibid.* Preface.

[648] *Clarion*, November 1, 1907.

[649] Leatham, *The Evolution of the Fourth Estate*, p. 14.

[650] Penny, *The Political Labour Movement*, p. 13.

[651] *Socialism and Labour Policy*, p. 14.

[652] *New Age*, November 7, 1907.

[653] *Ibid.*

[654] *Clarion*, January 19, 1906.

[655] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 22.

[656] *Declaration of Socialist Party of Great Britain*, see Appendix.

[657] Leatham, *The Evolution of the Fourth Estate*, p. 16.

[658] *Declaration of Principles of Socialist Party of Great Britain.*

[659] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 30.

[660] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 16.

[661] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, pp. 148, 149.

[662] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 30.

[663] *Clarion Song Book*, p. 21.

[664] *Socialism and Labour Policy*, p. 3.

[665] *What Socialism Is*, p. 3.

[666] Leakey, *Co-operators and Labour Platform*, p. 16.

[667] Shaw, *The Impossibilities of Anarchism*, p. 26.

CHAPTER XVII[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Many Socialists, especially the Fabians, hope to introduce Socialistic principles and Socialistic rule into Great Britain rather through the local than through the national authorities. They are strenuously exerting themselves to bring about that result, and so far their exertions have been by no means unsuccessful.

"Socialists to-day are working in the towns with a twofold object. (1) To level up their districts. If Glasgow has municipal telephones, there is a very good precedent for Liverpool, Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, &c., doing likewise. If Liverpool owns a municipal milk-supply, London, Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, must be brought into line. Each town must adopt the good points from every other town. (2) To urge their districts to launch out into something new."[668] "The property held and worked and controlled by municipalities already exceeds 500,000,000*l.* sterling in value, and is being added to yearly. This process has but to continue long enough to ensure that every industry will pass under public control, and thus State Socialism will become an accomplished fact by a gradual process of easy transition."[669]

"The proper sphere of municipal activity includes everything a municipality can do better than a private company."[670] "The immediate object should be to municipalise all those services which are necessary to a healthy life. Food, fuel, clothing, shelter—these are required by all—and no man should have the right to deny them to any worker. We must not stop at municipal trams. We must not stop at municipal gas. We must not stop at municipal electricity. These are only stepping-stones. Not until

we can say that poverty and disease and unemployment are abolished out of the land shall we have the right to discuss the limits of municipal trading."[671] "The economic forces which replaced the workshop by the factory will replace the private shop by the municipal store, and the private factory by the municipal one."[672]

According to Socialist teaching the destruction of private enterprise by municipal undertakings will be a blessing to all citizens. "Where a city supplies its own gas there is no 'middle-man.' The corporation stands in the place of the 'middle-man,' and as the corporation is elected by the citizens the people are thus in the position of getting their own gas made and paying for it in their own way. Some of the citizens are makers of gas, or workmen; most of the citizens are users of gas, or consumers; and all of the citizens are owners and managers of the gasworks and of the gas supply."[673]

The suppression of the "unnecessary middleman" sounds so very plausible that it is certain to prove an excellent election cry. But has the middleman really disappeared when a city corporation takes his place? Does the corporation-middleman supply gas gratis? Are the private middleman's profits not distributed to a host of corporation officials in the shape of substantial salaries? The transfer of gasworks, &c., from private hands to a city corporation is no doubt very beneficial to those who draw the corporation salaries. It may be very profitable to the local politicians and their hangers-on. Jobs may be had as a reward for political support. But the citizens may find the gas to be no cheaper and the rates to be considerably higher after the suppression of the "unnecessary middleman." And will it then console

him that he is the "owner and manager of the gasworks and of the gas supply"?

Under the heading "The Justice of Abolishing the Private Trader" one of the leading champions of municipal Socialism writes: "Is it unfair to take away the living of the private trader? Then it is unfair to take away the living of the unemployed, the twelve millions on the verge of starvation, and the thousands slain annually by poverty and preventable disease. I say that the welfare of the nation must be considered before the profits of the monopolists and the wasteful freedom of the small trader. Under the present system a large proportion of the population have so deteriorated in health and stamina as to endanger the existence of the nation. Private enterprise and competition are responsible for nine-tenths of the misery and suffering of our twenty million poor. But we must not attempt to alter the conditions because the small private trader would be ruined. Nevertheless the system is going to be altered, whether the small trader likes it or not."[674]

The foregoing are typical Socialist arguments. In the first place, the writer grossly exaggerates existing poverty by speaking of "twenty million poor." Then he boldly asserts that all poverty is due to private enterprise and that municipal enterprise will abolish it. So far municipal enterprise has not even succeeded in diminishing poverty. On the contrary, with the phenomenal growth of municipal enterprise in Great Britain pauperism, actual and percentual, has also grown at an alarming rate. It is significant that poverty and distress have increased most rapidly, and have become most acute, in those localities in which municipal enterprise has been most active and in which Socialist councils have held

undisputed sway, as, for instance, in East and West Ham and Poplar. Municipal enterprise, by increasing the rates—and, with the rates, the rents—has increased the general cost of living without at the same time increasing production. On the contrary, it has driven factories away through high rates. Therefore municipal enterprise has increased the expenditure of the general body of workers without increasing their earnings, and consequently has directly increased the existing poverty which it has promised to abolish. Municipal enterprise has succeeded chiefly in giving from the rates high wages to municipal employees at the cost of all other workers.

Municipal Socialists rather rely on force than on justice in dealing with private business men. "For private traders to fight against municipalisation is a short-sighted policy. One thing is certain—they have to go. 'What! Compete with us with the ratepayers' money? Our own money? What injustice!' says the small trader."[675] This just objection of the ratepayers is answered with a contemptible quibble. "The small trader is mistaken. The municipality does not use their money, and would not use their money, under the supposed circumstances. If the London County Council decided to open 1,000 bread-shops, how would they raise the capital required? Not by taking the ratepayers' money, or the private traders' money, but by going into the money market and borrowing on the credit of all the citizens. Suppose 100,000*l.* were required? Not a penny would come out of the rates. The credit of all the citizens of London is so good that they can borrow all the money they want without any difficulty."[676] In other words, the Social-"Democratic" politician claims for himself the right of arbitrarily depriving

citizens who possess property of that property and to ruin them by underselling them. They borrow the money they require for these undertakings on the credit of the very property-owners whom they wish to ruin, not on the credit of "all the citizens," as Mr. Suthers pretends, and then they have the impudence to assert that the corporations do not ruin the citizens with their own money but only with money borrowed on their credit—as if the one were not identical with the other.

The objections to municipal enterprise on a Socialist basis are twofold:

(1) That it increases the rates and the municipal debt, and therefore the rent of houses and lodgings;

(2) That it is, on the whole, unprofitable, being undertaken without due regard to sound finance, efficiency, and economy.

Socialists intend to "tax the rich out of existence." Therefore they endeavour to increase as much as possible not only the Imperial taxation but also the rates. Owners of house property are used to a certain income. If the rates are put up, they put up the rent. Therefore every increase in the rates leads, as a rule, automatically to an equivalent increase in the rent. The fact that a rise in the rates leads to a rise in the rent of houses and lodgings, and that the Socialist policy of waste and squander falls therefore most heavily not on the capitalist but on the working man, is boldly denied. "Generally speaking, the reduction of rates is of no benefit whatever to the working class. Rates are levied upon property.—*Q.* Do not the working class pay the rates and taxes? *A.* No. Rates and taxes are paid out of the surplus value taken from the workers by their exploiters. As already explained, the return to the workers, their wages, is

determined by their cost of subsistence, regulated by competition in the labour market; consequently they have nothing wherewith to pay taxes, and whether these be high or low, or whoever has to pay them directly, the position of the worker remains the same. He gets, on the average, his subsistence, that is all."[677]

Unfortunately, many working men know to their cost that the arguments given above are absolutely untrue. Whilst their wages have remained stationary, their expenditure for rent has greatly increased owing to municipal enterprise carried on by Socialists regardless of expense, which has greatly increased rates. At West Ham "Local government was to be carried on in a way regardless of expense, and under the compounding system the vast majority of the electors were not to realise that there were such things as rates at all. One member of the Socialist party publicly declared that it did not matter to the working men of the borough how high the rates were. But the 'people' got to see in course of time that there were drawbacks, even for them, in unrestricted Socialism. They found that, because of the increased rates, house rents were going up twelve and a half to twenty per cent., notwithstanding the threats of the Socialists that every landlord who raised his rents should have his assessments increased."[678]

Owing to municipal enterprise directed by Socialists, "The sum-total of the rates, which stood at 6*s.* in the pound in 1890 and at 8*s.* 1*d.* in 1896, rose to 8*s.* 10-1/2*d.* in the pound in 1900 and 9*s.* 5-1/2*d.* in the pound in 1901. From that figure it advanced to 9*s.* 8*d.* in the pound,"[679] and to 10*s.* 8*d.* a little later. It is an impudent misstatement of fact when

Socialist leaders tell the workers, "We are not killed by rates, we are killed by rent."[680] "The whole of our municipal expenditure is only a paltry 110 millions a year. What do we pay in rent? Two hundred and seventy-five millions!"[681] After all, people in other countries, where the blessings of Socialist local government are unknown, and where poverty is much rarer than in Great Britain, also pay rent. On an average the rates are 150 per cent. higher in Great Britain than in Germany.[682]

Whilst the national Government endeavours to diminish the dead weight and the heavy yearly charge of national indebtedness, Socialist local authorities vie with each other in piling up local indebtedness as fast as possible with a reckless disregard of the future. The increase of the municipal debt, the increase of local taxation, like the increase of national taxation, has no terrors for Socialists. On the contrary, "Municipal debt is not a burden. It is a splendid investment. We 'owe' 370 millions. Do we 'own' nothing? The municipalities own all the roads, drains, sewers, public buildings, parks, libraries, a thousand waterworks, two hundred and sixty gasworks, three hundred and thirty-four electricity undertakings, one hundred and sixty-two tramways, two or three hundred markets, a hundred and fifty cemeteries, forty-three harbours, piers, and docks, numerous baths, washhouses, and working-class dwellings, thousands of schools, and thousands of acres of land."[683] Since these words were written local indebtedness has increased. "We owe" now 470 millions.

Unfortunately, many of the splendid assets enumerated possess no realisable value whatever, and many municipal enterprises are run without an

adequate profit or with a loss.

The Socialist views and aims regarding local indebtedness are well summed up as follows by Suthers: "The 'municipal debt' argument is a bogey. The greater the municipal debt, the less private enterprise there will be. The greater the municipal debt, the cheaper and better the public services will be. The less private capital, the less profits going into a few pockets, the richer the general public will be. Up, then, with municipal debt."[684] These are principles which threaten to make Great Britain bankrupt. "The annual report of the work of the Local Government Board for 1907 shows that the local debt of England and Wales, from being 17 per cent. of the National Debt in 1879-80, has grown to 58.5 per cent. of the National Debt in 1904-5. The National and Local debts have grown as follows:

	1879-80	1904-5	*Increase*
National Debt	£770,604,774	£796,736,491	£26,131,717
Local Debt	136,934,070	466,459,269	329,525,199"[685]

Unless the Imperial Government interferes, the local debt will soon be larger than the National Debt.

We have seen in the beginning of this Chapter that, as regards local government, the Socialists pursue a twofold aim: (1) To level up their districts; (2) To urge their districts to launch out into something new. Therefore we find, as Mr. John A. Fairlie says in his book on "Municipal Administration," that "the danger of excessive debt is most serious in the smallest cities. The largest cities, while they have the largest debts, have also the largest resources, and also the best-developed

financial administration. The cities of modest size, however, which attempt to equal the works of the metropolis without its available sources of revenue, are very likely to find themselves in serious difficulties."

The time may come, and it may come soon, when British local indebtedness will become greatly reduced by local bankruptcy and repudiation. That process would have no terrors for Socialists. They ought rather to look forward to it. As they demand the repudiation of the National Debt (see Chapter IX.), they should logically also strive to repudiate the local debt. A general repudiation of local debt would be the fitting and logical aim and end of municipal enterprise. Municipal enterprise aims at expropriating private property-owners, who, rightly considered, are paid not in cash but in debt certificates. The repudiation of all local debts would convey gratis to the municipality the municipally managed undertakings which, rightly considered, belong to the stockholders, and would at the same time ruin the capitalists who have advanced the money for acquiring those undertakings. The Socialist policy would triumph. This would be the fitting end of a rule by irresponsible and penniless demagogues.

To the Socialist there is no limit to municipal enterprise. Not some branches of private trade and production, but all private trade and production are to be taken over by the municipalities. Private enterprise is to be extinguished altogether. The municipalities are to be universal owners, manufacturers, and providers. Among the first things which Socialist municipalities wish to control are the supply of bread, milk, coal; hospitals and public-

houses, banks, fire insurances, and pawnshops.[686]

All workers are to be municipal officials. Stretching out beyond their borders, the municipalities are ultimately to absorb the country, and to bring it under Socialist management and government.[687]

Some of the more immediate aims of Socialism as regards London are expressed by Sydney Webb, the brilliant, but unfortunately somewhat over-imaginative, leader of British scientific Socialism, as follows:

"We see in imagination the County Council's aqueducts supplying London with pure soft water from a Welsh lake; the County Council's mains furnishing, without special charge, a constant supply up to the top of every house: the County Council's hydrants and standpipes yielding abundant cleansing fluid from the Thames to every street. When every parish has its public baths and washhouses open without fees, every Board school its swimming-bath and teacher of swimming, every railway station and public building its drinking-fountain and basin for washing the hands, every park its bathing and skating ponds—then we shall begin to show the world that we do not, after all, fall behind Imperial Rome in this one item of its splendid magnificence. By that time the landlord will be required, as a mere condition of sanitary fitness, to lay on water to every floor, if not to every tenement, and the bath will be as common an adjunct of the workman's home as it now is of the modern villa residence. And just as in some American cities hot water and superheated steam are supplied in pipes for warming purposes over large areas, we may even see the County Council laying on a separate service of hot water to

be drawn at will from a tap in each tenement. Why should London's million families waste their million fires every time hot water is needed?

"The economy of fuel leads, indeed, to the municipalised gas-supply, then laid on, as a matter of course, to every tenement, and used, not only for lighting, but still more largely for cooking in the stoves supplied at a nominal charge.

"In order to relieve the pressure of population in the centre, and reduce the rents of the metropolitan "Connaughts," the County Council tramways will doubtless be made as free as its roads and bridges. Taxes on locomotion are universally condemned, and the economic effects of a penny tram-fare are precisely the same as those of a tax on the trip. The County Council will, however, free its trams on the empirical grounds of economy and the development of its suburban estates of artisans' dwellings, built on land bought to retain the unearned increment for the public benefit. Free trams may well imply free trains in the metropolitan and suburban area. Does not the Council already run a free service of steamboats on the Thames at North Woolwich—eventually, no doubt, to be extended all along the stream?

"Public libraries and reading-rooms in every ward are nearly here already, but we may expect that the library and the public hall will go far to cut out the tavern (at present our only 'public' house) as the poor man's club. As for bands of music in the parks, municipal fêtes, and fireworks on 'Labour Day,' and other instances of the communalisation of the means of 'enjoyment,' all this is already common form in France. The parks, indeed, will be tremendous affairs. But when London's gas and water and markets are owned and controlled by its public

authorities; when its tramways, and perhaps its local railways, are managed like its roads and parks, not for private profit, but for public use; when the metropolis at length possesses its own river, and its own docks; when its site is secure from individual tyranny, and its artisans' dwellings from the whims of philanthropy; when, in short, London collectively really takes its own life into its own hands, a vast army of London's citizens will be directly enrolled in London's service."[688]

The foregoing political and economic programme would be more creditable to an imaginative schoolgirl ten years old than to a man of science and a politician. How are all these wonderful and almost miraculous changes to be financed? Quite simply and very easily—by plunder. Mr. Sidney Webb, like most "scientific" Socialists, is a loose and shallow thinker. He forgets in his calculations that stubborn little item —human nature. He forgets that nobody can become richer by transferring money from the right pocket to the left. If you plunder all capitalists and all middlemen, the workers will certainly not be better off. Owing to the absence of direct self-interest, the management by salaried officials will be inefficient. All experience of management by public bodies through officials shows that public enterprise is far more wasteful and far less efficient than private enterprise; that in official management routine, sloth, waste, irresponsibility, nepotism, favouritism, and often peculation too, become supreme. Besides, far more money than is wasted now by capitalists on themselves will be wasted by politicians hankering after popularity, and after jobs for themselves and their followers and dependents. The greatest wasters in the poorest districts are the irresponsible Socialist authorities. In palatial town halls sumptuously

furnished, in magnificent public libraries, in marble baths, and other outlets of civic magnificence, money wrung from the hard-worked wage-earners is wasted in far greater sums than could possibly be spent by the most reckless capitalist on his private amusement. The most magnificent town halls, &c., are to be found in the poorest districts. Besides, "salaries must be liberal enough to attract the best men to the public service."[689] It is a matter of course that the rule of irresponsible Socialist agitators, that a system of local government whereby those who have no money are enabled to spend lavishly by drawing upon those who have money, will not make for efficiency and economy, and the end will be the Poplar-ising of Great Britain. There is a generally accepted principle, "No taxation without representation." That principle requires as a supplement, "No representation without taxation." Otherwise Great Britain will be ruled by a mob headed by imaginative and dishonest demagogues.

No enterprise is too large or too costly for the Socialists. Quite recently the Fabians recommended in a leaflet that Glasgow should acquire the whole built-over ground of the city at a cost of 24,000,000*l.*, issuing against that sum Corporation Bonds bearing 3-1/4 per cent. interest. Provided that everything should be settled according to expectations, and supposing that Glasgow should be able to borrow 24,000,000*l.* at 3-1/4 per cent., which seems extremely unlikely, there would accrue, on the most favourable showing, a net profit of 200,000*l.* per annum to Glasgow, if nothing be allowed for the cost of management.[690] The possibility that that gigantic speculation might prove a failure is not even considered. On the contrary, it is assumed as certain that Glasgow will greatly profit

by the growing value of land. Now if through natural economic development, or through the rule of a Socialist national or local administration, Glasgow should decline and land in Glasgow should fall in value, the town might be ruined. Of course that would not hurt the penniless Socialist agitators. Besides, there would always be the sovereign remedy of repudiation.

According to the fundamental Socialist doctrines which condemn profit,[691] "Municipal trading does not seek profit. To the private trader the making of profits or losses is a vital matter. He makes the mistake of thinking the same motives induce a municipality to provide a public service."[692] To the Socialist administrators it is quite immaterial whether their enterprises are run at a profit or at a loss, so long as they can draw freely on the rich and well-to-do to pay for their extravagance. "The Socialist view of the fair way of dealing with profits on trading concerns is to have none—if one may be excused so paradoxical a statement. Fair wages and good conditions generally for the employees, and selling at cost so that all may use freely the commodity or service, is the nearest approach to justice in respect to such municipal concerns as are incapable of being used with equal freedom by all."[693] "The only sound principle of municipal management is to run all these things primarily for use, with no idea of making profit at all, and as far as possible at a price to the user covering the cost of the production only. Such profits as are made should be used either to extend municipal enterprise or be utilised for what in Scotland is known as "the common good," that is, in the provision of instruction, amusements, parks and open spaces, helpful and beneficial to all."[694]

"Municipalisation or nationalisation must proceed on the right lines and for a practical object. What should be the object of municipalisation and nationalisation? The primary object should be the most economical provision of the best possible public services. The general well-being should be the first consideration to be served, having due regard to the welfare of each and all engaged in these services. The idea of profit either in the shape of interest on loans, or of reduced rates and taxes, should be eliminated altogether."[695] "The private trader always pursues profits. That is why he is such a dreadful failure. The motive of municipal trading, on the contrary, is public welfare—the benefit of all the citizens. That is why it is such a tremendous success. No one ever thinks of criticising a town council because they make no profits on these services. Now when we consider the question of municipal trading in gas, tramways, and electricity, is the principle involved any different? Not at all. The provision of gas, trams, and electricity is inspired by just the same motives as inspired the provision of roads, parks, libraries, sewerages, police, and education. That is to say, the benefit of all the citizens."[696] "The day may come when municipal trams and municipal light will be just as free as municipal streets and municipal libraries. That is to say, a rate will be levied on the citizens for their upkeep, and everyone will be free to use them as required."[697]

Such an ideal state of affairs, as pictured by scientific Mr. Webb and his rapacious followers, would be most desirable from the point of view of the town loafer. He would no longer monopolise the free library, the lodging-house, and the public-house corners, as he does at present. He would vary the monotony of the reading-room and the street corner

by free rides up and down the town and into the country. In the evening he would take a hot bath in the free public baths recommended by Sidney Webb, sit for a while in the free clubs recommended by the same gentleman, and then stroll out to the free public park to view the free fireworks and listen to the free music. Free meals and lodgings will no doubt follow in due course. Great Britain will be ruled for the benefit of the tramp. Why should anybody work in such a "free" country? Who would not be a loafer or a tramp under these conditions—especially as the "vice" of work, to use a Socialistic expression, would speedily be visited by punishment in the shape of confiscatory taxation, if not of direct confiscation? The populace of decaying Athens and Rome lived under those conditions which are the ideals of British Socialists. The citizens lived by their votes for a time in idleness. They were fed and clothed by slaves and subject nations. But the end was starvation.

To provide all these free benefits for those unwilling to work, the owners of property would of course have to be taxed out of existence. "There is no limit to the present rating powers of the local authority, nor to the taxing powers of the State. The recognised limits to local and national taxation are the needs of the respective authorities. Though not perhaps clearly or generally understood, the taxing powers of the community are based upon the principle that private property is only permitted to be held or enjoyed by individuals so long as that private possession is not opposed to the general welfare, and so long as the community does not require the property or the income for public purposes. The Socialist accepts the principle of taxation—taxation 'according to ability derived from

the profits of stock-in-trade and other property'—but desires deliberately to incorporate another idea and purpose in taxation, namely, the taxation of the rich to secure such socially created wealth as is now taken in rent, interest, and profit, and to use this revenue for social reform purposes. In other words, we would by that means compel 'the rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.'"[698] Municipal funds would be provided, not only by local rates, but also by a local income and land taxes.[699] In other words, Socialism would eat the goose that lays the golden eggs.

According to leading Socialists, municipal enterprise is preferable to private enterprise, not only for economic but also for moral reasons. "The system of private enterprise and competition reeks with corruption. Honesty under it is impossible. Municipal Socialism, on the contrary, would provide an environment which would encourage and promote the growth of moral activities. Instead of leading to corruption it would lead away from it."[700] "Private enterprise must lead to fraud, deceit, bribery, corruption, and even murder, in the struggle for existence. Municipal Socialism would entirely remove any temptation to commit these immoral actions. Why? Because, under municipal Socialism, every person who worked would be sure of a living."[701] We have seen some samples of the moral and purifying influence of municipal Socialism in the investigations recently made by the Board of Trade. Unfortunately these have revealed the fact that, in many of the most advanced Socialist corporations, fraud, bribery, intimidation, favouritism, and common theft are of daily occurrence. What else can be expected when men of predatory instincts, who preach the gospel of idleness and confiscation, who

live not by work but by talk, who have been accustomed to handle pence, and who have to be taught by the town clerk how to sign a cheque, are suddenly enabled to dispose of thousands of pounds and to negotiate loans?

The general public takes little interest in local elections. Most citizens abstain from voting. Therefore the numerous corporation employees often have the decisive vote in local elections, and they will support only a candidate who promises shorter hours or higher pay. Municipal employees sitting in the public galleries will even dominate the council chamber, intimidate councillors, and shout down those of whom they disapprove. Besides, they may strike and disorganise the public services, and make the Socialistic authorities look ridiculous. Therefore it is better to humour and to obey them than to oppose them. The Fabian Society demands for municipal servants "full liberty of combination," because "the servants of the public may often need protection against the public, as in the Post Office."[702] The results of Socialist teachings are to be seen in many municipalities. "The servants of the public" are already, and will in an increasing degree become, the masters of the public.

Under municipal Socialism the wages of tramwaymen have increased as follows: "In Sheffield, where the private company paid 100*l.* for labour, the Corporation pay 165*l.* for the same amount of work. In Bolton, where the private company paid 100*l.*, the Corporation pay 137*l.* In Wallasey, where the private company paid 100*l.*, the District Council pay 185*l.* In Northampton, where the private company paid 100*l.*, the Corporation pay 120*l.* In Birkenhead, where the private company paid 100*l.*, the Corporation pay

315*l.* In Portsmouth, where the private company paid 100*l.*, the Corporation pay 130*l.* In Sunderland, where the private company paid 100*l.*, the Corporation pay 145*l.* When the Manchester Corporation took over the trams they paid increased wages amounting to 60,000*l.* a year."[703]

The foregoing information is given by a Socialist. Some of the advances may be justified, but others, and probably the majority, have been made with that fine disregard of economy which is commonly found among men who can afford to be generous at other people's expense. Municipal Socialism is an ever-growing cancer which is rapidly exhausting the country.

"Half the municipal debt is of a nature which can never yield a profit."[704] The other half is invested in enterprises many of which are run regardless of economy and of expense, regardless of profit and loss, in accordance with the Socialistic principles stated in this Chapter. The policy of deliberate waste and of constant increase of debt, the principles of "launching out into something new" and "levelling up their districts," perhaps also the fear of eventual bankruptcy and repudiation, have at last frightened the investor. Corporation stocks can no longer be considered as safe first-class securities. Besides, the banks have begun to refuse to accommodate Socialistic municipalities with the necessary funds by overdrafts, short loans, &c. Socialists have therefore begun to complain when they saw that the unlimited supply of other peoples' money was diminishing. They consider it a grievance that they can no longer arbitrarily squander on fantastic undertakings what is not their own. "The hostility of the banking interest to municipal borrowing, and the threat to

'cut off supplies' has at length taken practical form. Disappointed in their attempt to secure sufficiently favourable treatment from their bankers (Parr's), the Chester Corporation applied to four other banks in the city, viz. Lloyds, North and South Wales, National Provincial, and Liverpool Banks. All refused to tender for the account. The banks are not run for the public, the public are run for the bankers."[705] Also, the banks, instead of lending their funds gratis to Socialist corporations, are heartless enough to demand interest "usury" on their loans. "Unfortunately at present public bodies must pay heavy tribute as interest on borrowed money."[706] "Our embryo Socialistic enterprises are even now suffering from the toll of interest which a restricted credit and currency permit the money lords to exact."[707]

Has the attitude of the investing public and the banks caused the Socialist municipalities to restrain their insane expenditure, and to keep it within legitimate bounds? No, they have tried to obtain money by borrowing it in small sums directly from the public. "The Corporation of Bolton, the Boroughs of Heywood, Middleton, and others, invite the investment of small sums of money in municipal enterprise, offering a higher rate of interest on deposits than the banks can supply."[708]

Many Socialists advocate that the municipalities should raise money by issuing paper-money in unlimited quantities or that they should become bankers, pay interest on deposits, and invest the savings of the poor in highly speculative enterprises carried on without regard to economy and expense, or to profit and loss. "Why pay in usury at all? Abolish the gold monopoly by demonetising metals,

and the sole remaining argument against municipal trading disappears along with the most crippling restriction under which public enterprise labours."[709] "Credit notes would be of little use were the city's credit gone, because the people would be afraid to take them. However valuable the assets of a municipal authority might be—and municipal concerns are usually far more substantial and sound than banking companies are—it is public confidence that constitutes the first requisite, and this it is the duty of all reformers to establish and maintain against the assaults of those whose interest it is to break it down. The institution of municipal savings banks under the protection of, and subject to inspection by, the State would assist public authorities and render them less dependent on the bankers; then when people had become accustomed to thinking their city's credit at least equal to that of the leading banks, a limited issue of notes might be allowed."[710] Further proposals for "demonetising" gold and issuing unlimited amounts of unconvertible notes, on the model of the assignats of the French Revolution, will be found in Chapter XX. "Some Socialist Views on Money, Banks, and Banking."[711]

These and many other dangerous experiments could easily be undertaken by needy demagogues with fantastic ideas, if the supervision of municipalities by the national Government were abolished. Therefore the Independent Labour Party passed at the last Annual Conference the following resolution: "That this Conference urges the Labour party in Parliament to secure the extension of power to municipalities, enabling them to undertake trading and the development of existing municipal concerns, without the sanction of the Local Government Board, and to use any profits accruing

from same in such manner as may be decided by the municipality, without the necessity of promoting Parliamentary Bills."[712]

No administration can continue for long a financial and general policy of waste and pillage, such as that followed by the Socialist municipalities of Great Britain, without diminishing not merely private wealth but also the national wealth. The British Socialists seem determined to do all they can to destroy as fast as possible the accumulated wealth of the country and its productive power.

FOOTNOTES:

[668] *The Advance of Socialism*, p. 2.

[669] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, pp. 27, 28.

[670] Snowden, *Straight Talk to Ratepayers*, p. 8.

[671] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, p. 148.

[672] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 157.

[673] Blatchford, *Competition*, p. 4.

[674] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, pp. 93, 94.

[675] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, pp. 87, 88.

[676] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, p. 88.

[677] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 42.

[678] *The Times, Municipal Socialism*, p. 43.

[679] *Ibid.*

[680] Suthers, *Killed by High Rates*, p. 12.

[681] *Ibid.* p. 11.

[682] Ellis Barker, *Modern Germany*, p. 552.

[683] Suthers, *Killed by High Rates*, p. 9.

[684] Suthers, *Municipal Debt*, p. 4.

[685] *Daily Mail*, November 26, 1907.

[686] See *A Municipal Bread Supply*; *Municipal Bakeries*; *Municipal Drink Traffic*; *Municipal Fire Insurance*; Washington, *Milk and Postage Stamps, &c.*

[687] *Municipalisation by Provinces.*

[688] Sidney Webb, *The London Programme*, 1892, pp. 208-213.

[689] Jowett, *Socialism and the City*, p. 17.

[690] *Forward*, October 12, 1907.

[691] See Chapter IV.

[692] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, p. 14.

[693] Jowett, *The Socialist and the City*, p. 40.

[694] Irving, *The Municipality*, p. 6.

[695] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 42.

[696] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, p. 9.

[697] *Ibid.* p. 8.

[698] Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, pp. 3, 4, 6.

[699] Jowett, *The Socialist and the City*, p. 38; Snowden, *The Socialist's Budget*, p. 83.

[700] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, p. 119.

[701] *Ibid.* p. 122.

[702] *A Labour Policy for Public Authorities*, p.

19.

[703] Suthers, *Mind your own Business*, p. 103.

[704] Snowden, *A Straight Talk to Ratepayers*, p. 8.

[705] McLachlan, *The Tyranny of Usury*, p. 15.

[706] Jowett, *The Socialist and the City*, p. 42.

[707] McLachlan, *The Tyranny of Usury*, p. 11.

[708] McLachlan, *The Tyranny of Usury*, p. 13.

[709] *Ibid.* pp. 13, 14.

[710] Jowett, *The Socialist and the City*, pp. 45, 46.

[711] See p. 281 ff.

[712] *Independent Labour Party Report, Annual Conference*, 1907, p. 50.

CHAPTER XVIII[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND AGRICULTURE

In one of his books Mr. Blatchford gives prominence to the following statement contained in Prince Kropotkin's book, "Fields, Factories, and Workshops": "If the soil of the United Kingdom were cultivated only as it was thirty-five years ago, 24,000,000 people could live on home-grown food. If the

cultivable soil of the United Kingdom were cultivated as the soil is cultivated on the average in Belgium, the United Kingdom would have food for at least 37,000,000 inhabitants. If the population of this country came to be doubled, all that would be required for producing food for 80,000,000 inhabitants would be to cultivate the soil as it is now cultivated in the best farms of this country, in Lombardy, and in Flanders."

Commenting on this statement Mr. Blatchford says: "Why, indeed, should we not be able to raise 29,000,000 quarters of wheat? We have plenty of land. Other European countries can produce, and do produce, their own food. Take the example of Belgium. In Belgium the people produce their own food. Yet their soil is no better than ours, and their country is more densely populated, the figures being: Great Britain per square mile, 378 persons; Belgium per square mile, 544 persons. Suppose wheat will cost us 2*s.* a quarter more to grow it than to buy it. On the 23,000,000 quarters we now import we should be saving 2,000,000*l.* a year. Is that a very high price to pay for security against defeat by starvation in time of war?"[713]

Many Socialists very wisely demand that everything possible should be done to bring about a revival of our agriculture. They point to the agricultural prosperity of Belgium, France, and Germany, and they would be quite ready to sanction the re-introduction of Protection, as will be seen in Chapter XXI. Nevertheless they absolutely and unconditionally oppose the creation of a class of peasant proprietors, although the intensive agriculture of France, Belgium, and Germany is founded upon the system of peasant proprietorship,

and although general experience, both in Europe and on other continents, has proved the great superiority of peasant proprietors over large farmers in intensive culture. "No Socialist desires to see the land of the country divided among small peasant freeholders, though this is still the ideal professed by many statesmen of 'advanced' views."[714] "Socialism is hostile to small properties."[715]

Socialists pretend to be opposed to the creation of peasant proprietors either on scientific grounds or for ethical reasons. "As a matter of economic evolution, small properties will have to go. But viewed from an ethical standpoint, surely nothing has been more conducive to the development of the worst side of human nature—of 'hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness' than the system of small properties."[716] "If England were cut up into small allotments, the general state would be harder and leaner than before."[717] "Would Socialists take away the land from the landlords and let it out in little plots? No. Because that would make a lot of little proprietors as selfish as the landlords."[718] "Divide the land into small allotments and very soon the cunning and rapacious would 'acquire' the estates of other men, and so we should come back to the present state of chaos. In fact, the parcelling out of the land means putting back the clock of civilisation about one thousand years."[719]

The real reason which prompts Socialists to oppose by all means the creation of peasant proprietors is to be found neither in the realm of political economy nor in that of abstract ethics, but in that of party politics. The peasant proprietor, like every sensible owner of property, is hostile to Socialism. "The peasant 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. He is, indeed, one of the last bulwarks of private property."[720] The philosopher of British Socialism frankly confesses: "On the Continent the peasant proprietor, who may now be reckoned as part of the *petite bourgeoisie*, just as the large landlord with us may be reckoned as part of the big capitalist class, is a potent factor in retarding the process of Socialisation."[721]

The experience of Socialists in Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Switzerland shows that Socialism finds practically no adherents among the land-owning peasants. At the German Reichstag elections of 1903, for instance, the Social-Democrats received almost 60 per cent. of the votes in the large towns as compared with less than 20 per cent. of the votes in the country. Of the latter, the vast majority was given by artisans and landless rural labourers. The peasant, like every property-owner, is an enemy of fantastic schemes of confiscation and of general plunder lavishly embellished with promises of Utopia. Therefore Social-Democrats will rather see the countryside of Great Britain turned into a wilderness than see it peopled by peasants.

Desperately anxious lest the Government of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman should create a British peasantry, the Socialist press opposed the creation of a British peasantry as unscientific and certain to lead to disaster. The people were told in countless articles that peasant proprietorship had proved a failure everywhere. Under the heading "The Small-Holding Fraud" the "Social-Democrat" showed the true motive of the Socialist agitation by expressing the hope that "The Government will assuredly fail in their attempt

to erect a peasant proprietary barrier against the rising proletariat"[722]—Has the Socialist outcry against creating peasant proprietors influenced Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Government in its land-settlement policy? Did Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman wish to satisfy the Socialists by rather creating small leaseholders than small freehold farmers?

The positive proposals of Socialists for bringing about a revival of agriculture are frankly Utopian. Their proposals can of course not be practical, because they object to the present agricultural arrangements of Great Britain and to those prevailing on the continent of Europe. Many Socialists desire the towns to control and resettle the country. "The towns should claim the right of dictating to England the way in which the land should be put to profit. The great majority of the classes nearest the land, squires and farmers and parsons, are disqualified respectively by self-interest, by religious prejudice that scruples at anything that may lead to the mental enfranchisement of the poor, and by sheer sluggishness of intellect joined to a blind selfishness without parallel in any class of English society. The land and the labourer have hitherto been left to them. And we want a change of management."[723]

Socialists want a "change of management" in agriculture, replacing the expert by the amateur in accordance with their general policy of turning everything upside down. Their ideal would seem to be that the owners of land should be dispossessed and driven into the towns, and be replaced by Socialistic town officials who would exploit the country in the interest of the town.

The tenants whom the Socialists would like to

create would, rightly considered, be merely wage-earners in the pay of the Socialistic administration, who, living from hand to mouth, would not be able to put anything by. With that object in view, rents would apparently be adjusted by Socialist administrations. "Tenancies would be granted for seven years or for twenty-one years revisable at periods of seven years, so that the tenant might not be able to appropriate the unearned increment of the land; but it should also be clearly understood that a satisfactory tenant would not be arbitrarily disturbed in his holding. At the same time no mercy would be extended to a bad cultivator; and when a tenant left his holding, either by the efflux of time or for any other reason, he would have no tenant-right to dispose of, but would only be entitled to compensation for unexhausted improvements and to a fair settlement of accounts as between himself and the committee. Rents would be fixed and disputes settled by the independent agricultural court, which would also continue the regulation of agricultural wages. Exploitation of the economically weak must not be permitted, even to a communal authority. It would be within the power of the committee to rent farms to co-operative associations of labourers if satisfied as to their industrial and financial capacity. Arrangements might also be made whereby a town could run its own dairy-farm or farms, since this is probably the only way in which a municipality can be sure of an uncontaminated supply of milk."[724]

Many Socialists would like to resettle the country with colonies of town unemployed, but these proposals are opposed by some as impractical. "To imagine that any such colony could be self-supporting, that the land which no capitalist will now till with expert farm labourers at ten shillings a

week would yield trade-union rates of wages to a mixed crowd of unemployed townsmen, that such a heterogeneous collection of waifs and strays, without a common acquaintanceship, a common faith, or a common tradition, could be safely trusted for a single day to manage the nation's land and capital; finally, to suppose that such a fortuitous agglomeration of undisciplined human atoms offers 'the most suitable and hopeful way of ushering in a Socialist State'—all this argues such a complete misconception of the actual facts of industrial and social life, such an entire misunderstanding of the process by which a democratic society passes from one stage of its development to another, that I feel warranted in quoting it as an extreme instance of Utopia-founding."[725]

Whilst the various Socialist schools propound different Utopian schemes for the resettlement of the land in the future, their immediate aim is of course not so much to benefit agriculture, as they profess, but to gain adherents among the rural labourers. With this object in view they are urged to agitate for, and are promised to be given by the Socialists, better wages, safe and healthy homes, more powers for the parish councils, which are to be used for the restoration of common lands, real free schools and better ones, cheap and good allotments, pensions for the old people, reform of taxation, &c. The rural labourers are urged to form trade unions, and they are told, "All these things you can get for yourself by your trade union and your vote if you and all the other labourers in the district will join the union and will agree to vote only for those who will promise to help to get them for you."[726]

In other pamphlets specially addressed to the rural

labourers they are told how to get allotments, how to force the district councils to build good cottages for them, &c.[727]

Many Socialists propound the doctrine that the first and the principal object in re-creating the rural industries must be the bettering of the wages of rural labourers, and that the State should secure them better wages by arbitrarily reducing rents. The object, it need hardly be mentioned, is rather to destroy private capital in accordance with the Socialists' tenets than to benefit the labourers. The Fabian Society, for instance, claims, "It is necessary for the State to interfere, partly to secure the better utilisation of our national resources, partly to increase our agricultural population. The class most needing protection, the labourers, must be dealt with first in order to raise them to a decent level of comfort. A living wage must be secured to them, and, as a consequence, the farmers' rents must be fixed at a fair level. An agricultural court must be set up in each county to regulate wages and fix rents. Continental success in agriculture depends on co-operation, and that in turn is associated with the peasant-proprietor system. That system for sundry reasons cannot be adopted here, but its advantages can be obtained through security of tenure. The small farm system should, therefore, form the basis of our reconstruction, free play being left for a graded system of farms where possible. In each county an agricultural committee should have compulsory power to acquire land and let it out to tenants, chiefly smallholders. It should have power to advance capital to individuals on the collective guarantee of its tenants, and it should be its duty to organise the collection of farm produce and its disposal in the market."[728]

FOOTNOTES:

[713] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, pp. 111, 112.

[714] *Socialism True and False*, p. 18.

[715] *Some Objections to Socialism Considered.*

[716] *Ibid.*

[717] Blatchford, *The Pope's Socialism*, p. 8.

[718] Hazell, *The Red Catechism*, p. 11.

[719] Blatchford, *The Pope's Socialism*, p. 9.

[720] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 30.

[721] Bax, *Essays in Socialism*, p. 41.

[722] *Social-Democrat*, November 1907.

[723] Pedder, *The Secret of Rural Depopulation*, p. 18.

[724] *The Revival of Agriculture*, p. 17.

[725] Sidney Webb, *Socialism True and False*, p. 12.

[726] *What the Farm Labourer Wants*, p. 4.

[727] *Allotments and How to get Them*; *Parish Council Cottages and How to get Them.*

[728] *The Revival of Agriculture*, p. 22.

CHAPTER XIX[ToC]

SOCIALIST VIEWS ON BRITISH RAILWAYS AND SHIPPING

Many Socialists complain, and they complain with good cause, about the railways of Great Britain. All the British railways are in private hands, and they are very inefficient. They are in many respects very backward, badly equipped, and badly managed. They have wasted their capital, watered their stock, and have paid dividends out of capital; their freight charges are exorbitant; besides, they give habitually

and by various means, with which it would lead too far to deal in this book, preferential treatment of a very substantial kind to the foreigner.

Many Socialists have extracted from British Government publications instances of such preferential treatment. One of the most widely read Socialist writers, for example, gives among others the following freight charges favouring the foreigner:

"Carriage of a ton of British meat, Liverpool to London, 2*l.*: Carriage of a ton of foreign meat, Liverpool to London, 1*l.* 5*s.*: Carriage of a ton of eggs Galway to London, 4*l.* 14*s.*: Carriage of a ton of eggs Denmark to London, 1*l.* 4*s.*: Carriage of a ton of plums, apples, and pears, Queenborough (Kent) to London, 1*l.* 5*s.*: Carriage of same from Flushing (Holland), 12*s.* 6*d.*: Carriage per ton of English pianos Liverpool to London 3*l.* 10*s.*: Carriage as above of foreign, 1*l.* 5*s.*: British timber per ton Cardiff to Birmingham, 16*s.* 8*d.*: foreign as above 8*s.* 10*d.* In the carriage of iron ore and steel rails the American railways charge 6*s.* 3*d.* where the British charge 29*s.* 3*d.*"[729]

"The real enemy are the monopolists of land and locomotion—the landlord and the raillord who are uprooting the British people from their native soil. It is in fact by no means easy to say which is the greater malefactor of the two."[730] Such differential charges are bound to cripple the British industries, and in view of the harm which is thus being done to British farmers, manufacturers, and traders, it is only natural that British Socialists are unanimous in condemning the anti-British freight policy of the railways and in recommending that they should be taken over and managed by the State.

"There are nearly 24,000 miles of railway in the

kingdom, the greater part of which is owned or controlled by a dozen great companies, who, moreover, have standing conferences through which they exercise a virtual monopoly against the public, although they have all the expenses of competing concerns. The public bears the costs and inconveniences of competition without many of its benefits. The total capital of the companies is 1,300,000,000*l.* of which 200,000,000*l.* is nominal or 'watered' stock. A very large part of the rest was for extravagant sums paid to great landowners for their land and another large part for legal expenses. On this huge capital a sum of 44,000,000*l.* has to be earned in dividends. If the State bought out the railways, it could borrow this necessary sum for at least 5,000,000*l.* to 8,000,000*l.* a year less than this, and at once effect enormous savings resulting from the present competitive and chaotic methods of the companies. Despite the virtual monopoly, there are over 3,000 railway directors drawing fees or salaries amounting to nearly 1,500,000*l.* Of the principal of these there are eighty in the Lords and twenty-five in the Commons. Mr. Gladstone predicted that if the State did not control the railway companies, they would control the State, and this has come to pass. Their servants are overworked and underpaid, extortionate freights are charged on the carriage of goods, unfair preferences are given, but Parliament is powerless to check this."[731]

"The railway system to-day is the greatest protection ever heard of in favour of the foreigner, and neither Mr. Chamberlain nor Mr. Balfour, nor any other man makes a single proposal to touch the railway question. Why? Because the House of Commons is dominated by the railway interest."[732] "Our railway experience proves that it is not enough

to make preferential rates illegal. They reappear too easily in the form of rebates and even of allowances which belong to the more private chapters of capitalist history. The attempt of the Railway Commission to abolish preference in railway rates has left us with a system which could not be much worse from the national industrial point of view."[733]

"Imperial trade suffers no more serious handicap than that imposed upon it by shipping rings and railway companies, which exploit the Imperial needs of transport for their own purposes, which hamper the ready flow of Imperial trade, and, for an insignificant percentage, turn the British seamen off the water in favour of the Lascar."[734]

"The railways of India, which yield a great portion of our Indian revenue, are owned by the Indian Government. The well-managed and prosperous systems of Australasia, with the best conditions of labour and the lowest freights of any railways in the world, are State owned. Why, then, should not the British Government own and control in the public interest the systems which are so wastefully and inefficiently managed by the present companies?"[735]

The last Annual Conference of the Independent Labour Party resolved: "That in the opinion of this Conference the time is ripe for the nationalisation of the railways of the country, and that our representatives be asked to urge forward a measure to that effect in Parliament."[736] The Fabians think that "An equitable basis of purchase may be found in Mr. Gladstone's Act of 1844, which enables the Treasury to buy out the shareholders of lines built since that date at twenty-five years' purchase,

calculated on the earnings of the previous three years. The price of the railways need not be an insuperable, or even a serious, difficulty in the way of national possession of the means of transit."[737]

The demand of the Socialists that the Government should acquire the railways would perhaps be reasonable if that demand was not coupled with extravagant and fantastic ideas regarding their future management. The different Socialistic views as to the proper management of State railways are summed up as follows by Mr. Blatchford: "The railways belong to railway companies, who carry goods and passengers and charge fares and rates to make profit. Socialists all say that the railways should be bought by the people. Some say that fares should be charged, some that the railways should be free—just as the roads, rivers, and bridges now are; but all agree that any profit made by the railways should belong to the whole nation, just as do the profits now made by the Post Office and the telegraphs."[738]

One Socialist writer modestly proposes that the fare anywhere in Great Britain should be a shilling. "Look at our railroads—might they not be the property of the community at large as well as the high roads, instead of being a monopoly in the hands of private persons whose sole object is to enrich themselves at the cost of their fellow citizens? If so, it has been proved that you could go to any part of these islands with a shilling ticket."[739]

Other Socialists advocate that railway travelling should be made absolutely free to all, and that the costs of running the railways free of charge should be borne exclusively by the rich. "The blessings of free travel are too many by far for enumeration, but one stands out. It is the only effective means yet

suggested for the extirpation of our vile city slums. At present the sweated must live near their work."[740] "Overcrowding can only be cured outright by one sovereign remedy—by giving the toiler a home in the country; and free travel alone makes this possible. There is no reason why a 'docker' should not grow his own vegetables and be his own dairyman at the same time. Free travel would in a few years change the whole face of society."[741] "A nation that can afford to spend 140,000,000*l.* a year on strong liquors might not unreasonably be asked to strike even the forty odd millions off its drink-bill—about half that amount would suffice for the purpose—and take them out in free ozone."[742] "Then would rise the question how to make up for the abolition of passenger fares. The answer, it seems to me, is not far to seek. The substitute tax must be levied on the 'unearned increment' of land, urban and rural. The people must therefore unfalteringly press for the reassessment of the 'land-tax' by gradual increase up to 20*s.* in the pound, and in the meantime procure any further funds necessary from our surplus capital by a graduated income-tax. Personally I abhor usury, whether in the shape of railway dividends or Government Consols, as alike *contra naturam* and *contra Christum*."[743]

In order to further the policy of free travelling by railway, Socialists appear to have founded a "Free Railway Travel League," domiciled at 359 Strand, London, W.C. I am not aware whether the Free Railway Travel League—every tramp should join it—exists still.

It is only logical that, if the railways should be made free for the carriage of people, they should

likewise be made free for the transport of goods. "It is obvious that if railways can be worked free for passengers they may be made free for goods as well. Free goods traffic would everywhere equalise the price of commodities, be they the produce of sea or land, mine or manufacture, and equal wages in town and country would speedily follow equal prices with beneficial results to the people altogether incalculable. Granted free passes, free freights will doubtless in time follow almost as a matter of course."[744]

When free travel by railway has been established, free travel by tramway, which has already been demanded by municipal reformers (see Chapter XVII.), will necessarily also be introduced. A publication issued by the most scientific body of British Socialists, the Fabian Society, urges: "There is only one safe principle to guide the reformer. The tramways, the light railways, and the railways must be regarded as the modern form of the king's highway. Our fathers spent time and trouble ridding the roads of tolls; and railway rates and passenger fares are merely modern tolls. Their abolition must come sooner or later."[745] "We have abolished the turnpike gate and the toll-collector, and our highways are free in the sense that they are maintained by general assessment. And if the turnpike gate was an odious obstruction to the traveller, how much more obnoxious to him, or her, is the railway ticket-box?"[746]

Railways may be made free before the ideal Socialist State of the future has been created, but they will certainly be free as soon as the Socialist commonwealth has been established. "Railways will play a very great part indeed in the Socialist State,

They will be absolutely 'free' for every purpose. The cost of actual working is comparatively inconsiderable, while the benefits of free transit are incalculable. To decentralise the population so as to efface the distinction between dwellers in town and country is to renovate humanity physically and morally."[747]

After travel and transport has been made absolutely free on land throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, the free travel and transport principle will of course be extended to travel and transport by sea, and free travel and transport by sea will better bind the Empire together than a Pan-Britannic Customs Union. The most scientific body of British Socialists, the Fabian Society, says: "A logical consequence of the national management of internal means of communication will be the completion of the State control of our oversea transit. It is impossible here to go into details. Let it suffice to remark that already the nation has a direct financial interest in the great steamship lines, through its mail subsidies and Admiralty loans with corresponding claims for service in war; that intellectually the nation, by its pride in its magnificent mercantile fleet, regards it as a national possession, and declines to consider our shipping as the mere private property of the shareholders of the steamship companies; and finally, that our navy is maintained at enormous public expense expressly to protect the mercantile fleet, which at present is mainly private property."[748] "The notion that the forces making for disintegration can be neutralised by 10 per cent. preferential duties is not worth discussing; indeed, the raising of the fiscal question seems at least as likely to reveal our commercial antagonisms as our community of interests. And the huge distances will

be mighty forces on the side of disintegration unless we abolish them. Well, why not abolish them? Distances are now counted in days, not in miles. The Atlantic Ocean is as wide as it was in 1870; but the United States are four days nearer than they were then. Commercially, however, distance is mainly a matter of freightage. Now it is as possible to abolish ocean freightage as it was to make Waterloo Bridge toll-free, or establish the Woolwich free ferry. It is already worth our while to give Canada the use of the British Navy for nothing. Why not give her the use of the mercantile marine for nothing instead of taxing bread to give her a preference? Or, if that is too much, why not offer her special rates? It is really only a question of ocean road making. A national mercantile fleet plying between the provinces of the Empire, and carrying Empire goods and passengers either free or at charges far enough below cost to bring Australasia and Canada commercially nearer to England than to the Continent, would form a link with the mother-country which once brought fully into use could never be snapped without causing a commercial crisis in every province."[749]

The purchase of the whole British mercantile marine by the Government would incidentally have the effect of abolishing the British shipping rings, which, like the British railways, frequently penalise with discriminating rates the British producer and shipper. "Of the real conditions of ocean traffic, at present, the public has no suspicion. All our lines of communication are controlled by shipping rings which carry preferential rating (an illegal practice in our inland transit) to an extent that would shock Mr. Chamberlain back again to Free Trade if he realised it; for their preferences are by no means patriotic; they have helped Belgium into our Indian market,

and Germany and America into South Africa and New Zealand. The cotton conference of Liverpool directly assisted the American exporters of cotton to China by the heavy charges they made against the Lancashire manufacturer—charges which were modified only after repeated protests. These rings and rates constitute the most dangerous disintegrating force we have to face."[750]

There is much justification in the complaints of the Socialists with regard to British railways and shipping, but their proposals are, as usual, quite Utopian. For all ills of the body politic and economic, the Socialists have only one remedy, and that an infallible one—nationalisation, or rather Socialisation.

The policy of the British railway and shipping rings is no doubt a national scandal, but their defects and delinquencies may no doubt be counteracted by appropriate Government action and legislation. It is probably now too late for the State to acquire the railways. The State cannot afford to risk a large capital loss. Railway purchase would apparently be too speculative an undertaking.

If the State should acquire the railways, they would certainly be run at a profit. The sooner the Socialists abandon their fixed idea that profit on private and national undertakings is immoral, the better will it be for them. So long as they decry profit and propose to work State undertakings without a profit, so long can they not be taken seriously. Profit consists in part of the salary of direction, in part of the earnings set aside for effecting the necessary alterations, improvements, and extensions, and for forming a reserve fund for making losses good, &c. Therefore abandonment of profit would mean the

decline and decay of the national capital.

FOOTNOTES:

[729] Davidson, *Free Trade* v. *Fettered Transport*, p. 9.

[730] *Ibid.* p. 7.

[731] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1907, pp. 119, 120.

[732] Hyndman, *Real Reform*, p. 14.

[733] *Fabianism and the Fiscal Question*, p. 17.

[734] Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, p. 96.

[735] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1907, p. 120.

[736] *Independent Labour Party Report, Annual Conference*, 1907, p. 50.

[737] *Socialism and Labour Policy*, p. 14.

[738] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 86.

[739] Sorge, *Socialism and the Worker*, p. 13.

[740] Davidson, *Free Trade and Fettered Transport*, p. 17.

[741] Davidson, *Free Rails and Trams*, p. 9.

[742] *Ibid.* p. 13.

[743] Davidson, *Free Rails and Free Trams*, p. 7.

[744] *Ibid.* p. 14.

[745] *Public Control of Electric Power and Transit*, p. 10.

[746] Davidson, *Free Rails and Trams*, p. 5.

[747] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 158.

[748] *Public Control of Electric Power and Transit*, p. 14.

[749] *Fabianism and the Fiscal Question*, p. 16.

[750] *Fabianism and the Fiscal Question*, p. 16.

CHAPTER XX[ToC]

SOME SOCIALIST VIEWS ON MONEY, BANKS, AND BANKING

All Socialists wish to abolish private capital. Money embodies private capital in its most portable form. It can easily be hidden, and as the Socialists wish to prevent the re-accumulation of new private capital, the abolition of money, and especially of gold and silver, has prominently figured in all Socialistic programmes since the time of Protagoras and of Plato. Socialists wish to effect the exchange of commodities, the payment of labour, and the settlement of accounts mainly by book-keeping.

"As there are no wares in the new community neither will there be any money."[751] "In the Social-Democratic State the citizen will be granted an income, which will be indicated by labour checks or credit cards, as advocated by Gronlund, Bellamy, and John Carruthers."[752] "Under ideal Socialism there would be no money at all and no wages. The

industry of the country would be organised and managed by the State, much as the Post Office now is; goods of all kinds would be produced and distributed for use and not for sale, in such quantities as were needed. Hours of labour would be fixed, and every citizen would take what he or she liked from the common stock. Food, clothing, lodging, fuel, transit, amusement, and all other things would be absolutely free, and the only difference between a Prime Minister and a collier would be the difference of rank and occupation."[753]

"How will exchange then be carried on? By account facilitated by some such contrivance as labour checks. When in the Co-operative Commonwealth money becomes superannuated we shall have nothing but checks, notes, tickets—whatever you will call them—issued by authority."[754] And how will international exchange be carried on? Very simply and easily. By barter. "So much tea is wanted from China. The Chinese Government is advised of the quantity and asked what British goods will be acceptable by the Celestials in exchange. There will be international barter on a grand and equitable scale."[755] It is quite logical that the Socialists who wish to introduce the primitive Communism of the prehistoric ages (see Chapter XXIX.), wish also to reintroduce the aboriginal system of barter.

However, the contemplated form of "international barter on a grand and equitable scale" will have its difficulties. China, for instance, may sell much silk and tea to England and take in exchange mostly foreign manufactured goods from America, Germany, Belgium, and Japan, as she does at present. It is to be feared that the "grand and equitable system of

international barter" will prove impracticable even if, as most Socialists somewhat rashly assume, all States should become Socialistic commonwealths, or if the grand Socialist Republic of the world should actually be created. We have at present an international currency, Gold. The contemplated creation of unlimited paper issues in lieu of gold, the fulfilment of the ideal of many Socialists, would have a very simple, a very certain, and a very unpleasant consequence. Foreign merchants, doubting the value of the new paper currency and the stability of the new Socialist Government, would of course refuse to part with their goods. Not a pound of cotton, not a bushel of wheat would reach England from abroad. The nation would be starving, and Socialist deputations would hasten to search out Lord Rothschild in the workhouse, where no doubt he would reside, and implore him to reintroduce capitalism and food into Great Britain.

Some Socialists of the saner kind fear that it will not be possible to abolish money. Kautsky, for instance, writes: "To abolish money 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 subdivision 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."[756]

Socialists declaim against the immorality of charging interest—"usury" as they call it (see

Chapters IV., IX., and XVII.), and they are indignant that the banks are unwilling to advance gratis unlimited funds to Socialist town councils to be wasted as fancy may direct (see page 258). Therefore they wish to abolish "that most costly of all modern parasites, the banker."[757] Some very irreligious, if not atheistic, Anarchist-Socialists, such as Mr. Morrison Davidson, pretend to object to interest on religious grounds because, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life said, 'Lend hoping for nothing again.'"[758] Other Socialists wish to abolish the banks and the charging of interest for the benefit of the people and of the Socialist municipal and other councils. "Usury —in that offensive pregnant little word is contained the secret of Society's worries and Man's woes. Abolish usury: that is the true Fiscal Reform Policy."[759]

"Usury can be arrested at present by nationalisation of exchange. The nationalisation of exchange must be undertaken. Metal must be demonetised and reduced to the ranks. Banking must be undertaken by the municipalities and county councils, and by these elective bodies only, while a durable paper currency issued on the basis of the ascertained wealth of the nation, and maintained in true relation to it, shall supersede gold. Then we arrive at a scientific solution of the question of exchange and put in operation the currency and credit system of Socialism."[760]

When the banks and the gold currency have been abolished and when "exchange has been nationalised" the Socialist local authorities will no longer have any difficulty in procuring the unlimited funds they need for the execution of their boundless plans. They will raise the money by the printing of

practically unlimited quantities of paper money issued against the security of "the ascertained wealth of the nation." If they wish to spend money, they simply "make it" by means of an ordinary printing press. Could a simpler and more ingenious system for making money be devised?

"Recently notice has been given by leading bankers of their intention to discriminate against municipal loans. And as things now stand, it is certain that, if an organised effort is made generally by the bankers throughout the country by advising clients against such investments and by refusing to accept municipal bonds as collateral security for overdrafts, &c.—a serious check will be put upon public enterprise. Those who imagine bankers either impotent or incapable of such treason against the public interest should remember what took place in the United States in 1893.

"The natural suggestion to be offered as a counter-move to the threat of the bankers and their Industrial Freedom League is to add to those enterprises now under municipal control that of banking. And surely there is nothing which lends itself more easily to municipalisation! If the credit of a banking house can be employed for promoting enterprise and earning dividends, why cannot municipalities employ their own credit directly? In others words, why cannot the credit of a city be utilised to carry on its municipal works instead of it having to borrow the credit of a bank and pay interest charges? Consider how public works are now financed. The London County Council decides to build decent and respectable houses in some locality for the working classes. It requires, we will say, 500,000*l.* with which to build dwellings for 2,000 families. Bankers are invited to tender for the

loan, and finally the Council gets this advance on a guarantee of 3 per cent. per annum, the principal being repayable at the end of thirty-three and a third years. At the end of this period the Council will have paid the bank 500,000*l.* in interest as well as the 500,000*l.* original loan. The charge for the loan is equal to the entire cost of the whole undertaking; the result is that each family must pay about twice the amount of rent that it would otherwise have to pay if the Council had not incurred interest charges through borrowing other people's credit. Was there ever greater lunacy in public affairs?

"Suppose that instead of issuing credit in the shape of bonds of large denomination, the Council issued it in notes of small denominations of pounds and shillings. Does anyone mean to assert that that credit which is eagerly purchased by a banker would be refused by a bricklayer or stonemason? Supposing the London County Council was empowered to issue its credit in one-pound notes, as well as large amounts, and supposing it was compulsory that these notes were good in payment of rates. Is there any question as to their being acceptable? The plan is so simple and so safe that at first it seems amazing it should have been so long out of employment."[761]

"Of course gold will drain off abroad—if the foreigners don't follow in our footsteps at once. If the demonetised gold is withdrawn—well, we can have a new currency by nationalising the railways and paying the shareholders 'in current coin'" (which means in unconvertible notes), "not in redeemable, interest-bearing bonds. So long as solid wealth rests behind our issue, our financial policy is sound. Of course, the railway and other shareholders will want fresh investments; they won't find them, because no

man will pay interest to usurers when he can monetise his credit at the mere cost of banking and exchange. They must therefore spend it, and the currency will never be restricted henceforward. And this national ownership of exchange can be operated to compel every monopolist to sell his monopoly to the nation."[762]

This insane project is called by the writer, "A scientific way to Socialism."[763]

Surely science is the most abused word in modern language. The creation of money by unlimited issues of paper secured by the national possessions was tried on the grandest scale at the French Revolution. The "assignats" were secured on the national domains, and their security seemed absolute to the revolutionaries. The great Mirabeau had stated on September 27, 1790: "Our assignats are not ordinary paper money. They are a new creation for which there is no precedent. What constitutes the value of metal money? Its intrinsic value. Now I ask you: Does paper which represents the foremost of the possessions of a nation such as France not possess all the characteristics of intrinsic and generally accepted value which metal money possesses?"[764] The "assignats" speedily fell to a discount, although dealing in them at a discount was made punishable with twenty years' imprisonment with hard labour, [765] and they fell ultimately to waste-paper value. A pair of boots worth thirty francs in gold cost 10,000 francs in paper. On paper all were immensely rich. Yet the masses were starving. Unfortunately people cannot live by consuming unlimited quantities of credit notes. They can become prosperous neither by robbing the rich nor by calling a shilling a sovereign, but only by producing more. Greater wealth means

simply increased consumption, and increased consumption, unless based on increased production, can only be effected by intrenching upon and diminishing the national capital, the national reserve store of food, clothing, tools, &c., and thus causing widespread misery and starvation.

FOOTNOTES:

[751] Bebel, *Woman in the Past, Present, and Future*, p. 192.

[752] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 90.

[753] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 100.

[754] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 103.

[755] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 157.

[756] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 14.

[757] Jowett, *The Socialist and the City*, p. 44.

[758] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 57.

[759] McLachlan, *The Tyranny of Usury*, p. 1.

[760] *Ibid.* pp. 10, 17.

[761] *How to Finance Municipal Enterprises*, pp. 3-5.

[762] McLachlan, *The Tyranny of Usury*, p. 20.

[763] *Ibid.*

[764] *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, vol. xxxv. p. 39.

[765] Roscher, *System*, p. 227.

CHAPTER XXI[ToC]

SOME SOCIALIST VIEWS ON FREE TRADE AND PROTECTION

In his thoughtful book on Socialism, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., the Socialist leader, attributes the rise of the Socialist movement in great Britain to various causes, one of which is "the reaction against Manchesterism."[766]

Socialists, generally speaking, are opposed to Free Trade. Neither the moderate nor the revolutionary sections of British Socialism have a good word to say for it. The Socialist leaders, looking at the question of Free Trade and Protection from the worker's point of view, have arrived with Lecky at the conclusion that the whole Liberal Free Trade agitation is one of the greatest political impostures which the world has witnessed,[767] a view which, by the by, was also expressed by Bismarck.[768]

Socialists are not under any illusion as to the causes which led to the introduction of Free Trade into Great Britain, and they sneer at the humanitarian cant with which its promoters successfully surrounded it. One of the leading

Socialist books states with regard to this point: "Protection was no longer needed by the manufacturers, who had supremacy in the world-market, unlimited access to raw material, and a long start of the rest of the world in the development of machinery and in industrial organisation. The landlord class, on the other hand, was absolutely dependent on Protection. The triumph of Free Trade therefore signifies economically the decay of the old landlord class pure and simple, and the victory of capitalism. The capitalist class was originally no fonder of Free Trade than the landlords. It destroyed in its own interest the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and it would have throttled the trade of the colonies had it not been for the successful resistance of Massachusetts and Virginia. It was Protectionist so long as it suited its purpose to be so. But when cheap raw material was needed for its looms, and cheap bread for its workers; when it feared no foreign competitor, and had established itself securely in India, in North America, in the Pacific; then it demanded Free Trade."[769] "Protection at home was needless to manufacturers who beat all their foreign rivals, and whose very existence was staked on the expansion of their exports. Protection at home was of advantage to none but to the producers of articles of food and other raw materials, to the agricultural interest, which, under the then existing circumstances in England, meant the receivers of rent, the landed aristocracy."[770]

The Free Trade manufacturers, who were chiefly interested in cheapness of production, cared little what became of the workers. "The individualist devotees of *laisser faire* used to teach us that when restrictions were removed, free competition would settle everything. Prices would go down, and fill the

'consumer' with joy unspeakable; the fittest would survive, and as for the rest—it was not very clear what would become of them, and it really didn't matter."[771]

The doctrines and the boasts of the Free Traders are usually treated by the Socialists with contempt. "Cobdenites ascribe every known or imagined improvement in commerce, and the condition of the masses, to Free Trade. Things are better than they were fifty years ago: Free Trade was adopted fifty years ago. *Ergo*—there you are. There is not a word about the development of railways and steamships, about improved machinery, about telegraphs, the cheap post and telephones, about education and better facilities of travel."[772]

The unsoundness of the fundamental doctrine of Free Trade, "Buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market," has frequently been exposed by Socialists. Mr. Blatchford, for instance, in a book of his of which more than a million copies have been sold gives prominence to Cobden's pronouncement in the House of Commons in which he expounded the celebrated maxim: Buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market: "To buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest, what is the meaning of the maxim? It means that you take the article which you have in the greatest abundance and with it obtain from others that of which they have the most to spare; so giving to mankind the means of enjoying the fullest abundance of earth's goods."[773] Mr. Blatchford then comments upon Cobden's doctrine as follows: "Let us reduce these fine phrases to figures. Suppose America can sell us wheat at 30*s.* a quarter, and suppose ours costs 32*s.* 6*d.* a quarter. That is a gain of 1/15th in the cost of wheat. We get a loaf for

3*d.* instead of having to pay 3-1/4*d.* That is all the fine phrases mean. What do we lose? We lose the beauty and health of our factory towns; we lose annually some twenty thousand lives in Lancashire alone; we are in constant danger of great strikes; we are reduced to the meanest shifts and the most violent acts of piracy and slaughter to 'open up markets' for our goods; we lose the stamina of our people, and we lose our agriculture."[774]

Most Socialists recognise that under the Free Trade *régime* Great Britain has sacrificed her safety and her strength to profit. "Did you ever consider what it involved, this ruin of British agriculture? Don't you see that if we lose our power to feed ourselves we destroy the advantages of our insular position?"[775] "Don't you see that the people who depend on foreigners for their food are at the mercy of any ambitious statesman who chooses to make war upon them? And don't you think that is rather a stiff price to pay to get a farthing off the loaf? No nation can be secure unless it is independent; no nation can be independent unless it is based upon agriculture."[776] "We must buy wheat from America with cotton goods; but first of all we must buy raw cotton with which to make those goods. We are therefore entirely dependent upon foreigners for our existence."[777]

"The present national ideal is to become 'The workshop of the world.' That is to say, the British people are to manufacture goods for sale to foreign countries, and in return for those goods are to get more money than they could obtain by developing the resources of their own country for their own use. My ideal is that each individual should seek his advantage in co-operation with his fellows, and that the people should make the best of their own country

before attempting to trade with other people's."[778] "The Free Traders tell me that under their glorious system of free exchange nations naturally occupy themselves in those industries which produce the most wealth. Thus, if Great Britain, by employing a million men in growing corn, can produce 50,000,000*l.* a year, while she can produce 51,000,000*l.* by employing the men in getting coal. Great Britain will 'naturally' employ those men in getting coal! Sending her coal abroad, Great Britain can get 1,000,000*l.* a year more wealth. What a beautiful doctrine! Enormous increase in wealth. Foreigners can send us 51,000,000*l.* of corn for our coal, while Great Britain could only grow 50,000,000*l.* Free Trade for ever! It never occurs to the Free Traders to ask: 'Is it better to have a million men working in the bowels of the earth, or a million men tilling the surface?"[779]

"The idea is, that if by making cloth, cutlery, and other goods we can buy more food than we can produce at home with the same amount of labour, it pays us to let the land go out of cultivation and make Britain the 'workshop of the world.' Now, assuming that we can keep our foreign trade, and assuming that we can get more food by foreign trade than we could produce by the same amount of work, is it quite certain that we are making a good bargain when we desert our fields for our factories? Suppose men can earn more in the big towns than they could earn in the fields, is the difference all gain? Rents and prices are higher in the towns; the life is less healthy, less pleasant. It is a fact that the death-rates in the towns are higher, that the duration of life is shorter, and that the stamina and physique of the workers are lowered by town life and by employment in the factories. And there is another

very serious evil attached to the commercial policy of allowing our British agriculture to decay, and that is the evil of our dependence upon foreign countries for our food. The plain and terrible truth is that even if we have a perfect fleet and keep entire control of the seas, we shall still be exposed to the risk of almost certain starvation during a European war. As I have repeatedly pointed out before, we have by sacrificing our agriculture destroyed our insular position. As an island we may be, or should be, free from serious danger of invasion. But of what avail is our vaunted silver shield of the sea if we depend upon other nations for our food? We are helpless in case of a great war. It is not necessary to invade England in order to conquer her. Once our food-supply is stopped, we are shut up like a beleaguered city, to starve or to surrender. Stop the import of food into England for three months and we shall be obliged to surrender at discretion. And our agriculture is to be ruined and the safety and honour of the Empire are to be endangered that a few landlords, coal-owners, and moneylenders may wax fat upon the vitals of the nation."[780] "For over half a century we have been committing industrial suicide. By laying waste our own land and throwing ourselves upon the mercy of the foreign food-producers, we have been deliberately sacrificing the millions and the future to the millionaires and the moment."[781]

The celebrated cheapness argument of the Free Traders has little attraction for Socialists. "'Ah,' says the Free Trader, 'but think of the cheaper grocery and the cheaper boots!' Yes, let us think of them. What good does it do me, my countrymen, one of the unemployed, to think of the wealth of the Rothschilds, or the cheap boots and the cheap bread

and the cheap clothes of those who benefit by these things? I am one of the nation. Are these things that are so good for the nation good for me? How can these cheap wares do me any good, who have no money at all? The fact is that Free Trade and cheap goods are only good for certain individuals. They are good for those who benefit by them."[782]

Cheapness means low wages. Cheapness may benefit that strange and mythical figure the abstract "consumer" of the text-books, but need not benefit the working man. Very likely it will harm him, because "Cheap goods mean cheap labour, and cheap labour means low wages. You have nothing but your labour to sell, and you are told that it will pay you to sell that cheaply."[783] "All commodities are produced by labour, therefore to drive commodities down to their cheapest rate must result in cheap labour."[784] Cheapness may fill those with joy who have money in their pocket and who do not care how cheap goods are produced. But incidentally the policy of Free Trade and of *laisser faire*, the policy of cheapness which benefits the consumer and takes no notice of the producer, encourages and causes sweating and untold misery to the workers. "Do you ever consider the lives of the people who make these marvellously cheap things? And do you ever think what kind of homes they have; in what kind of districts the homes are situated; and what becomes of those people when they are too ill, or too old, or too infirm to earn even four shillings as the price of a hundred and twelve hours' work?"[785]

Free Trade may have been beneficial in Cobden's time, when Great Britain was the chief manufacturing country in the world. But what is its effect under the changed conditions of the present

time, and how will these changes affect her industries and her workers? "In the early days of our great trade the commercial school wished Britain to be the 'workshop of the world,' and for a good while she was the workshop of the world. But now a change is coming. Other nations have opened world-workshops, and we have to face competition. France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and America are all eager to take our coveted place as general factory, and China and Japan are changing swiftly from customers into rival dealers. Is it likely, then, that we can keep all our foreign trade, or that what we keep will be as profitable as it is at present?"[786] "Suppose we lost a lump of our export trade. Suppose the Japanese, Chinese, or Americans capture some of our markets. Where should we get our food? If we could not sell our exports, we could not buy imports of food. We are walking on thin ice, my countrymen. And if competition became keener, what would the champions of Free Trade do to meet it? They would say: 'We must sell our manufactures, or you will get no food. To sell our manufactures we must reduce the price. To reduce the price we must reduce the cost of production. To reduce the cost of production we must cut down wages.'"[787] "Free Trade means *laisser faire* all round, not only in regard to inanimate commodities, but in respect to that most important commodity of all—human labour power. Chinese, Japanese, Indians, negroes are all permitted under complete Free Trade to compete freely on their lower standard of life against the white man."[788] "A demand for a general reduction of wages is the end of the fine talk about big profits, national prosperity, and the 'workshop of the world.' The British workers are to emulate the thrift of the Japanese, the Hindoos, and the Chinese, and learn to live on boiled

rice and water. Why? So that they can accept low wages and retain our precious foreign trade. Yes, that is the latest idea. With brutal frankness the workers of Britain have been told again and again that, 'If we are to keep our foreign trade, the British workers must accept the conditions of their foreign rivals,' and that is the result of our commercial glory! For that we have sacrificed our agriculture and endangered the safety of our Empire."[789]

The assertion of the Free Traders that Free Trade has made Great Britain prosperous is treated with scorn. "The Free Traders say we, the nation, are richer under this system than we should be under Protection. By employing ourselves in those occupations in which we can produce the cheapest article, we earn the most wealth in money value.—In money value.—They do not consider the twelve million underfed, the hundreds of thousands of unemployed. The nation, *we*, are richer. That is the test. Well, my countrymen, I think it is a damnable doctrine, and its results are damnable. The Free Traders boast of our wealth. Are twelve million underfed, a million starving children, a million paupers, an infantile death-rate of 150 per 1,000—are these signs of wealth? The question is not 'Is the nation wealthy?' but 'Are the people wealthy?' Judged by this standard, how poor a nation is this, my countrymen! The Free Traders tell us that we earn more wealth under Free Trade than we should under Protection. Again I ask: Who are *we*?"[790] A Socialist weekly lately said: "Great Britain, I understand, has recovered its prosperity; our exports are going strong, and our imports have nothing much to complain about. Prosperity? Why, Great Britain is simply rolling in—statistics."[791]

Socialists rightly demand that the effect of British fiscal policy should be judged not by its effect upon the wealth of the few, but upon the employment of the many, and they clearly recognise the destructive effect which Free Trade has upon the national industries. "Under Free Trade it is possible for a foreign trader to take trade away from a British trader. If for any reason we lost an important trade, or several small trades, our unemployed would naturally grow. The Free Trade theory that the capital and the labour in the lost trades will find other employment is simply theory. Suppose they didn't. The Free Trader has no answer except: Look at our enormous wealth. My countrymen, looking at another man's wealth does not feed me, clothe me, and house me."[792] "When men are thrown out of work, by competition, or depression, or any cause, they do not so easily 'transfer their services to some other new employment.' It is easy to make them do so—on paper. And when they do get a fresh job, is it always as good as the one lost? Do they not often lose all their belongings, and get into debt, while looking for that new employment which the Free Traders talk about so glibly? and do not capitalists often lose a good deal of capital before they give up the fight for the trade? Nevertheless, say the Free Traders, we, the nation, are richer under this system than we should be under Protection. By employing ourselves in those occupations in which we can produce the cheapest article, we earn the most wealth in money value."[793] To this argument the Socialists reply: "Does your moral law say it is right that men should be thrown on the streets to starve because other men in other countries produce goods 2-1/2 per cent. cheaper?"[794]

The statistics of an enormous foreign trade, which

Free Traders triumphantly display for the edification of the masses, give, according to the Socialists, little consolation to the unemployed and ill-employed workers. "Figures, be they never so dazzling, and numbers, be they never so round, will not feed the hungry, house the homeless, or bring light and warmth into the drear, precarious lives of the mass of our people. The increase of trade means only an increase of production, and not necessarily of persons employed or wages gained. With the rapid concentration of industries and the perfection of labour-saving devices, production has been enormously increased without any corresponding increase of employment; in some cases, with an actual decrease of employment. What the workers are interested in is not the mere growth of profitable trade, but the extent to which the industries of their country afford them and their families a security of livelihood, and the reasonable comforts and recreations which their labour has more than earned."[795]

Most Socialists frankly own that Free Trade has been a failure. "In the House of Commons on March 12th, 1906, Mr. P. Snowden, M.P., said: 'Sixty years of Free Trade had failed to mitigate or palliate to any considerable extent the grave industrial and social evils which Free Traders and Protectionists alike were compelled to admit. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman had admitted them when he said that 30 per cent. of our population were on the verge of hunger. He contended that whatever improvement had been effected in the condition of the people during the last sixty years was due to other causes than Free Trade."[796]

During 1907 the complaints among the Socialists

about the effect of Free Trade upon employment have become louder. The fact that British unemployed workmen furnished an apparently inexhaustible supply of strike-breakers to Continental employers, that men fought like wild beasts at the registry offices in order to be allowed to act as strike-breakers in Hamburg and Antwerp, has shown the great prevalence of unemployment. Commenting hereon a Socialist monthly said in bitter irony, under the heading "British Blacklegs": "The intervention in the Antwerp dock-workers' strike of British workmen as blacklegs is a striking commentary on the prosperity of the people of this country. Under Free Trade we have been told—*ad nauseam*—by Liberal politicians that the British working-man is the most prosperous and well-fed human being on the face of the earth. He, with wages nearly double those of the best-paid Continental workman, with all kinds of provisions infinitely cheaper—thanks to Free Trade—than they can be procured elsewhere, is indeed 'God's Englishman.' It would be as unkind as rude to suggest that these honourable politicians had been lying. The only alternative conclusion to be arrived at is that the British workman is a most disinterested being, willing to sacrifice his prosperity and comfort in order to compel the miserably paid dockers of Antwerp and Hamburg to submit to the conditions against which they have revolted."[797] The action of Mr. Haldane, the present Secretary of State for War, in dismissing a large number of workmen from Woolwich Arsenal and giving a contract for 100,000 horseshoes for the British Army to an American firm on account of greater cheapness, prompted the following verses:

Mr. Haldane was smiling and

suave
As his views upon horseshoes
he gave;
He will buy from the Yanks
(Who take orders with
thanks).
And believes that much money
he'll save.

How thankful we all ought to
be
That this most kind and careful
M.P.
Thus shows Woolwich men
They will be employed when
They're off to the States—
Q.E.D.[798]

Some Socialists take a very pessimistic view of the economic position of Great Britain. Mr. Hyndman said that "Great Britain had lost her commercial and industrial supremacy. The United States now stood first, Germany second, and Great Britain was forced into third place."[799] Many years ago some far-seeing Socialists had prophesied the coming industrial decline of Great Britain. "The notion that Britain can hold a monopoly of engineering, or of any other trade, must be given up. Britain cannot; countries that have been almost wholly agricultural are rapidly becoming manufacturers too."[800] Of late these pessimistic forecasts have become louder and more frequent. The progress of industrial countries can be measured, to some extent, by their output of coal, and "at no distant date Germany will probably also surpass our output and we will be relegated to third place."[801] This event will very likely take place about 1910. The statistics published by the

British Board of Trade are deceptive. They leave out Germany's very large and constantly growing output of lignite, which amounts to about 60,000,000 tons per annum, and which increases Germany's coal output, as stated by the Board of Trade, by about 50 per cent.

British Socialists have found out that the Free Trade doctrine with its hypothetical "consumer" for a centre is opposed to science, to experience, and to common-sense. "The present system of trade is, in my opinion, opposed entirely to reason and justice. Nearly all our practical economists of to-day put the consumer first and the producer last. This is wrong. There can be no just or sane system which does not first consider the producer and then widely and equitably regulates the distribution of the things produced."[802] They recognise that Free Trade has caused ill-balanced production, and that, through the stagnation and decay of industries, men who ought to be engaged in production have been forced into more or less unprofitable and more or less useless employments. "What this country is rotting for is the want of more and better producers of necessaries—more and better market-gardeners, fruit-growers, foresters, general farmers, wool-workers, builders, and useful makers generally. Instead of which, the present system is giving us more and more non-producers—more and more shopkeepers, middlemen, commercial travellers, advertising agents, dealers, and wasters generally. According to the last census returns, we find that whilst the agricultural class shows a terrible decline, and the industrial class has barely kept pace with the population as a whole, on the other hand the commercial, or selling class, shows an increase of over 42 per cent. inside ten years."[803]

Free Trade has been tried and has been found wanting, and a return to Protection, which is in accordance with the needs of the times and the spirit of the workers, especially of the trade unionists, is inevitable. "Capitalist Free Trade is a manifest failure. Trade unionism is, in its essence, a very sturdy form of Protection, as we can see, if not here in Great Britain, certainly in America and in Australia."[804] "Society is constantly changing its form of living: every day some supposed old truth goes into the limbo of forgotten things, and, looking around us, those who have eyes to see and ears to hear may see and hear on all hands the death-knell of the old Manchester school of political economy."[805]

The claims of Free Trade and the cheap-food cry are disregarded and treated with contempt. "Free Traders talk about the folly of Protection. But Free Trade itself is a form of Protection. It protects the strong and the cunning against the weaker and the more honest. It protects the cheap and nasty against the good."[806] The founder of modern Socialism had stated already in 1847: "What is Free Trade under the present conditions of society? Freedom of capital."[807] Free Trade undoubtedly directly protects capital and leaves labour unprotected. "Your food will cost you more! I am to bow down to the idol of cheapness. I, one of the unemployed. What is cheapness to me, who have no money at all?"[808] "Your Manchester school treat all social and industrial problems from the standpoint of mere animal subsistence."[809] Declarations such as "The Social-Democratic Federation stands for universal free trade or free exchange and for the abolition of all indirect taxation,"[810] and "The only form of Protection advocated by the Social-Democratic

Federation is the protection of the proletariat against the robbery and exploitation of the master-class"[811] have not the ring of seriousness about them.

Only very rarely are utterances in favour of Free Trade to be found in Socialist writings. However, frequently the demand is made that Tariff Reform and Socialism must go hand in hand, and doubt is expressed whether the Tariff Reform agitation is carried on for the benefit of the manufacturer or for that of the workers. "Mr. Chamberlain is not a Socialist. His Government will not be a Socialist Government. His plan would protect only the rich. This fiscal fight is a fight between capitalists as to who shall make the profits. It is not a fight for the benefit of the 'nation.' That is what they tell you. The capitalist who loses his trade through foreign competition is a Tariff Reformer. He wants Protection. The capitalist who depends on cheap foreign imports for raw material is a Free Trader. He does not want his prices raised."[812] "Preferential trade is the proposal of individual capitalists who desire to make profits out of our Imperial connections."[813]

The Fabian organ looks at Free Trade and Protection merely as a business proposition. "We care nothing for abstract Cobdenite economics, and are quite willing to welcome Tariff Reform if its advocates show us that it can be used as a lever for raising the standards of life and labour. The Labour party is therefore eminently wise in seeing how far it can be used for their advantage. Protectionism of the Australian Labour party is the right kind of Protectionism—Labour-Protectionism: a very different thing from the Capital-Protectionism which is (with a few exceptions) the characteristic mark of

Tariff Reformers in this country."[814]

Some revolutionary Socialists are in favour of Free Trade because they hope that it will bring on a revolution in Great Britain. Their great leader, Karl Marx, taught sixty years ago, when Free Trade was being introduced: "The Protective system is nothing but a means of establishing manufacture upon a large scale in any given country. Besides this, the Protective system helps to develop free competition within a nation. Generally speaking, the Protective system in these days is conservative, while the Free Trade system works destructively. It breaks up old nationalities and carries the antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie to the uttermost point. In a word, the Free Trade system hastens the social revolution. In this revolutionary sense alone I am in favour of Free Trade."[815] Those Socialist revolutionaries who wish to increase the misery of the people, hoping that unbearable poverty, owing to increasing unemployment and consequent want, will at least madden the people and cause a revolution—they remember that the great French revolutions were also brought about by unemployment and consequent widespread misery—are the most determined champions of Free Trade.

FOOTNOTES:

[766] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 16.

[767] Lecky, *History of the Eighteenth Century*, quoted in *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 81.

[768] Ellis Barker, *Modern Germany*, p. 531.

[769] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, pp. 80, 81.

[770] F. Engels in Marx, *Discourse on Free Trade*, p. 5.

[771] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 90.

[772] Blatchford, *God and My Neighbour*, p. 154.

[773] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 33.

[774] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 33.

[775] *Ibid.* pp. 33, 34.

[776] *Ibid.* p. 35.

[777] *Ibid.* p. 34.

[778] *Ibid.* p. 12.

[779] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, p. 100.

[780] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, pp. 97, 98, and 118.

[781] Hall, *Land, Labour, and Liberty*, p. 11.

[782] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, p. 82.

[783] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 92.

[784] *Ibid.* p. 97.

[785] *Ibid.* p. 97.

[786] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 100.

[787] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, p. 103.

[788] *Justice*, November 23, 1907.

[789] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 100.

[790] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, pp. 102, 103.

[791] *Clarion*, October 25, 1907.

[792] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, pp. 96, 97.

[793] *Ibid.* p. 101.

[794] *Ibid.* p. 104.

[795] *Labour Leader*, January 12, 1906.

[796] *National Union Gleanings*, vol. xxvi. January-June 1906, p. 220.

[797] *Social-Democrat*, September 1907, pp. 519, 520.

[798] *Battersea Vanguard*, November 1907, p. 5.

[799] *Report, 27th Annual Conference Social-Democratic Federation* 1907, p. 29.

[800] Mann, *The International Labour Movement*, p. 8.

[801] Jones, *Mining Royalties*, p. 14.

[802] Blatchford, *Competition*, p. 9.

[803] Hall, *Land, Labour, and Liberty*, pp. 9, 10.

[804] *Justice*, November 23, 1907.

[805] George Lansbury, *The Principles of the English Poor Law*, p. 16.

[806] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, p. 104.

[807] Karl Marx, *A Discourse on Free Trade*, p. 39.

[808] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, p. 100.

[809] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 15.

[810] H. Quelch, *The Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 11.

[811] *Ibid.*

[812] Suthers, *My Right to Work*, p. 119.

[813] J. Ramsay Macdonald, *Labour and the Empire*, p. 97.

[814] *New Age*, October 10, 1907, p. 369.

[815] Karl Marx, *A Discourse on Free Trade*, p. 42.

CHAPTER XXII[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND EDUCATION

The attitude of Socialists towards education is a peculiar one. They see in it apparently less an agency for distributing knowledge and discovering ability than an instrument for the propagation of Socialism and an institution for relieving parents of all cost and responsibility for the maintenance and the bringing up of their children. Hence most Socialists, in discussing education, consider it rather from the point of view of those who are desirous of State relief than from the point of view of those who wish for good education.

Among the "Immediate Reforms" demanded by the Social-Democratic Federation, the following embody its education programme: "Elementary education to be free, secular, industrial, and compulsory for all classes. The age of obligatory school attendance to be raised to sixteen. Unification and systematisation of intermediate and higher education, both general and technical, and all such education to be free. Free maintenance for all attending State schools. Abolition of school rates; the cost of education in all State schools to be borne by the national

Exchequer."[816] An influential Socialist writer demands: "Education should be fee-less from top to bottom of the ladder, the universities included."[817] In accordance with the Socialist views regarding the relation of the sexes, which are described in Chapter XXV. "Socialism and Woman, the Family and the Home,"[818] most Socialists demand co-education and identical education for both sexes. "Under Socialism boys and girls will receive exactly the same training and exercise in the fundamentals of a liberal education. Success in examinations of whatever character shall bring equal reward and distinction. There will be no separation into boys' classes and girls' classes. The instruction being the same, they shall receive it at the same time."[819] "Education will be the same for all and for both sexes. The sexes will be separated only in cases in which functional differences make it absolutely necessary."[820]

Socialists see in the schools chiefly a means whereby to abolish parental responsibilities and to secure "free State maintenance" for all children. In claiming free State maintenance, Socialists grossly exaggerate with regard to the number of underfed children. "It is doubtful if half the children at present attending school are physically fit to be educated, and medical men of eminence have unhesitatingly expressed the opinion that the alarming increase of insanity, which is one of the most terrible characteristics of modern social life, is largely, if not entirely, due to the attempt to educate those who are too ill-nourished to stand the mental strain that even the most elementary school-training involves. As a remedy for this, the Social-Democratic Federation advocates a complete system of free State maintenance for all children attending school. This is an essential corollary of compulsory education. Only

complete free maintenance will meet the requirements of the case."[821] "All children, destitute or not, should be fed, and fed without charge, at the expense of the State or municipality. We propose that the regular school course should include at least one meal a day. Thus only can we make sure that all the children who need feeding will be fed."[822] "To cram dates into the poor little skulls of innocent children when you ought to be cramming dates down their throats is not a right thing to do, especially when you remember that the most precious thing in this world is a human life, and when you realise that you are murdering systematically thousands of children every year because they cannot get proper food—they cannot even get pure milk in the great cities of our land. One of our first duties in this nation is to see that every child has a right to the best and most ample provision for its physical needs. That should be the primary charge upon the nation. I am not here to-night to discuss the great question of the State maintenance of children. Personally I am absolutely in favour of it."[823] Experience of other nations has taught that the institution of free meals for necessitous school-children is immediately and very grossly abused by unscrupulous parents easily able to feed their children. From Milan, for instance, we learn that "When in 1900 this service began, meals were given on only 133 days out of a possible 174 days of school attendance. The outlay was then set down at 98,300 francs. During the second year, however, free meals were served on 153 days and cost 149,337 francs. In 1903 the free meals cost the municipality 247,766 francs and 277,603 in 1904. The outlay will now exceed 300,000 francs, and the number of pupils who manage to establish their claim to be fed gratuitously is ever increasing."[824]

British experiments of free feeding on a smaller scale have shown that "In the large majority of cases the children who are sent to school hungry are so sent, not by honest and poor parents, but by those who have an imperfectly developed sense of parental responsibility and are willing to shuffle out of the duty of providing for their children if they think anybody else will undertake it for them. These parents are not in need of assistance—they are perfectly well able to feed their own children; but if free meals can be had for the asking, they are not too proud to tell the child to ask. It relieves the mother of the trouble of preparing a meal for the child, and the money saved can be used for some more attractive form of personal expenditure."[825] At Birmingham, for example, numerous applications were made by the teachers to the relieving officers on behalf of children under their care, but when inquiries were made into the circumstances of the parents it was found that many of them were earning over thirty shillings a week, and in one case the parent was in constant employment with an average wage of 3*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* a week.[826] In Bolton, where during the winter of 1904-5 a charitable society provided free meals for children in certain centres of the town, it was found that the parents of some of the children who were partaking of the free meals so provided, and even reported as being underfed, were in receipt of as much as from 2*l.* to 3*l.* a week.[827] In Fulham (London) "More than one hundred names were sent to the Boards of Guardians of children who were adjudged to be underfed and were receiving meals from public charity. In hardly one of these cases did the relieving officer consider the complaint well founded. One family was found by him to be earning an income of 4*l.* 4*s.* a week, and yet the

children were sent to share in the charitable meals."[828] "Some of the parents who sent their children to the Johanna Street school in Lambeth said that they did not give their children food before going to school as they knew that if they did not do so they would receive it at the school, as the children of other people got food there and they did not see why theirs should not too."[829] The fact that Socialists grossly exaggerate in giving the proportion of underfed school children, and in ascribing the cause of underfeeding solely to the poverty of parents, is clear to all who have studied the problem of poverty. Mr. Cyril Jackson, the chief inspector of public elementary schools, for instance, in summarising the evidence of the women inspectors appointed to inquire into the age of admission of infants into elementary schools, says: "The question of underfed children cannot fail to be touched in the course of such an inquiry. It is interesting to find a general agreement that it is unsuitable rather than insufficient feeding that is responsible for sickly children. Want of sufficient sleep, neglect of personal cleanliness, badly ventilated homes, are contributory causes of the low physical standard reached."[830]

Some Socialists, though only a few, have been honest enough to express similar views. A Fabian tract, for instance, says: "We have said that universal free feeding appears to be the only way in which the evil of improper (as distinct from insufficient) feeding can be removed. At present many children whose parents get fairly good wages cannot feed their children properly, either because they do not know what is the best food to give, or because they have not the time or the skill to prepare it. Manifestly the case of these will not be met by any system which feeds only the patently starved and

destitute child. But it will be met both directly and indirectly by a universal system; directly, because the children, whatever they get at home, will at least get proper food at school; indirectly, because it will serve to educate the next generation of mothers in the knowledge of what is the best and most economical way of providing for their families. This is not the place to go into the very large question of what is the ideal diet for a child. All that need be insisted on here is that the provision should be bought and prepared under expert advice, and that consideration of cheapness should never be allowed to count as against the needs of nourishment. Every child should receive at least one solid meal in the middle of the day, and perhaps a glass of hot milk on arrival in the morning."[831]

The "hungry children" argument is a valuable one for purposes of agitation, and it is used by the Socialists to the fullest extent. The workers are told: "The children are too ill provided for to be educated. This is not because the worker is idle or thriftless, but actually because he is too industrious and produces so much that his labour as a producer is at a discount. It is objected that to provide free State maintenance for all the children would be to destroy parental responsibility. But it is too late in the day to urge this objection, seeing that the State has taken upon itself the education of the children and is prepared to undertake, and does undertake, their maintenance and bringing-up when the parents are so careless of their responsibilities as to neglect them entirely."[832] "The old-fashioned prejudice fostered by the capitalists and their hangers-on that it is degrading to accept anything from the State is fast dying out"[833]—That workmen who are daily told by their leaders that it is unreasonable to expect that

they should bring up their children frequently desert their family is natural. Every year many thousands of wives and children are deserted. At every police station the names of such men may be seen posted up, and those desertions are undoubtedly largely due to Socialistic teaching.

The real object of the Socialists in demanding free maintenance for the children is not humanity. In making that demand they do not even think of the welfare of the children, as the following extracts will prove, which clearly reveal the real object of their demands. "Free maintenance for children should be accepted by trade unionists as tending to raise the standard of comfort. All should demand it with the object of personally benefiting themselves."[834] "In nine cases out of ten it is the hungry child who breaks the back of the strike. Let them feel assured that their children's dinner is secure, and they will continue the struggle to a victorious end."[835] "Free maintenance for children would be a tax on that surplus wealth which the capitalists and the aristocracy share between them. To the worker free maintenance for his children would be equivalent to an additional income. His standard of living would rise. No doubt the capitalist would reduce his wages as much as possible, but the worker would then be able to fight him on more equal terms. His children being well cared for, he would be able to hold out against the capitalist for an indefinite period."[836] "We counsel the workers to accept the offer as a small payment on account of a huge debt, but to accept it with no more gratitude than is shown by the class which is maintained in luxury, parents and children alike, by the collective industry of the workers. By dint of organisation they may be able very soon to exact payment of a more substantial

sum—State maintenance, to wit."[837]

The doctrines above given have unfortunately been accepted by many organised workers. A resolution of the Trades Union Congress at Leeds, in September 1904, asserted:

"That having regard to the facts (*a*) that twelve millions of the population are living in actual poverty, or close to the poverty line; (*b*) that physical deterioration of the people is the inevitable result of this; (*c*) that it is impossible to teach starving and underfed children, this Congress urges the Government to introduce, without further delay, legislation instructing education authorities to provide at least one free meal a day for children attending State-supported schools."

A resolution passed at the Scottish Miners' Conference on December 30, 1904, stated:

"That this Conference is in favour of State maintenance of children, but that in the meantime we identify ourselves with the movement in favour of free meals for school children."

Resolutions passed by the National Labour Conference on the State maintenance of children, at the Guildhall, City of London, Friday, January 20, 1905, declared:

"That this Conference of delegates from British Labour Organisations, Socialist and other bodies, declares in favour of State maintenance of children as a necessary corollary of universal compulsory education and as a means of partially arresting that physical deterioration of the industrial population of this country which is now generally recognised as a grave national danger. As a step towards such State maintenance this Conference, supporting the decision

of the last Trades Union Congress upon this question, calls upon the Government to introduce without further delay such legislative measures as will enable the local authorities to provide meals for children attending the common schools, to be paid for out of the National Exchequer; and in support of this demand calls attention to the evidence given by Dr. Eichholz, the official witness of the Board of Education on the Committee on Physical Deterioration, in which he stated that the question of food is at the base of all the evils of child degeneracy, and that if steps were taken to ensure the proper adequate feeding of the children the evil will rapidly cease."

A Socialist has worked out in a widely read book the cost of free education and State maintenance, which will require a yearly expenditure of 458,750,000*l.*, a sum four times as large as the entire national Budget. This outlay does not deter him. Combining the State schools with State workshops, he promises that they will yield a profit of exactly 105,850,000*l.* a year.[838] This scheme should recommend itself to Chancellors of the Exchequer in search of a few millions.

Another imaginative Socialist would make the abolition of all existing languages part of his educational scheme: "Socialism will steadfastly aim at the adoption of a universal language, be it English or volapuk. All the modern languages—and for the matter of that, the ancient also—are but jungles of verbiage which retard, rather than facilitate, human thought and progress. They have grown up anyhow; but what we now want is a made language, constructed on scientific principles, and so easy of comprehension that any intelligent person can

acquire it in a few months."[839]

Across the educational, as most other, proposals of British Socialists should be written in large letters, Utopia!

FOOTNOTES:

[816] See Appendix.

[817] Davidson, *Democrat's Address*, p. 5.

[818] See p. 330.

[819] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, pp. 39, 40.

[820] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 218.

[821] Quelch, *The Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 8.

[822] Fabian Tract, *After Bread, Education*, No. 120, p. 9.

[823] Kirtlan, *Socialism for Christians*, p. 8.

[824] *Free Feeding of School Children*, p. 23.

[825] Cox, *Socialism*, p. 16.

[826] *Local Government Board Report*, Cd. 3105, p. 495.

[827] *Ibid.* p. 506.

[828] *Times*, March 17, 1906.

[829] Cox, *Socialism*, pp. 16, 17.

[830] *Cd.* 2726, p. iii.

[831] Fabian Tract, *After Bread, Education*, No. 120, p. 14.

[832] Quelch, *Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 9.

[833] *Socialism and Trade Unionism*, p. 5.

[834] *Socialism and Trade Unionism*, p. 5.

[835] Fabian Tract, *After Bread, Education*, No. 120, p. 11.

[836] *Socialism and Trade Unionism*, p. 5.

[837] Watts, *State Maintenance for Children*, p. 4.

[838] Richardson, *How It Can Be Done*, pp. 50-61.

[839] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 166.

CHAPTER XXIII[ToC]

THE ATTITUDE OF SOCIALISTS TOWARDS PROVIDENCE, THRIFT, AND TEMPERANCE

Socialism thrives upon the poverty, unhappiness, and misery of the workers. Starving and desperate men may easily be aroused to rebellion. Contented men will not become Socialists. Therefore it lies in the interest of the professional Socialist agitators to maintain poverty and misery among the masses, and if possible to increase it. With this object in view, many Socialist agitators oppose all measures which

are likely to turn the propertyless wage-earner—the "wage slave" as the Socialists like to call him, in order to exasperate him—into an owner of property, a small capitalist. That might make him a contented man. Therefore, as we have seen in Chapter XVIII., the Socialist leaders strenuously oppose "for scientific reasons" the creation of peasant proprietors. They distinctly encourage improvidence and oppose, also "for scientific reasons," providence, thrift, and abstinence among the workers. The philosopher of British Socialism informs us: "Thrift, the hoarding up of the products of labour, it is obvious, must be without rhyme or reason, except on a capitalist basis,"[840] and the Socialists do not wish the workers to become capitalists.

Some Socialists were indiscreet enough to confess that they opposed providence, thrift, and temperance among the workers, as practised especially by the members of trade unions, co-operative societies, and friendly societies, because these are likely to elevate the masses and rob the Socialist leaders of supporters. We read, for instance: "The so-called thrift and temperance movements are essentially antagonistic to Socialism."[841] "The trade co-operator canonises the bourgeois virtues, but Socialist vices, of 'over-work' and 'thrift.'"[842] "Co-operation, though regarded by the individual trader as an enemy, does not necessarily enter into conflict with the capitalist at all. Indeed, so far as it transforms workmen into shareholders, it forms a bulwark for capitalism, the same as the creation of small landholders or any other class of small proprietors would do."[843] "Co-operation, as carried on in England, is an obstacle and a danger to the Socialist cause. Being capitalist concerns pure and simple, co-operative societies are subjected to the

same influences as all other capitalistic ventures."[844] "The friendly societies are the least promising of any of the democratic movements from the political point of view. The doctrine of 'thrift' also has been preached very vigorously to them. There is at present little prospect of the friendly societies identifying themselves with the general political labour movement of the country."[845] The Anarchist Congress of 1869 at Marseilles stated very truly: "La coopération démoralise les ouvriers en faisant des bourgeois."[846]

Now let us take note of the "scientific" arguments with which British Socialists oppose providence, thrift, and sobriety among the workers.

"Under present circumstances, the more frugal, thrifty, and abstemious working people as a class become, the more cheaply they have to live, the more cheaply they have to sell their labour power to the capitalist class, wages being determined by the cost of subsistence."[847] "Temperance, thrift, industry only serve to make labour an easier or more valuable prey to capital. If they reduce the cost of living in any particular, they but reduce the cost of labour to the capitalist."[848] "If *all* the workers were very thrifty, sober, industrious, and abstemious they would be worse off in the matter of wages than they are now."[849] "The mere cheapening of the cost of living only tends to reduce wages, and thus cannot advantage the worker."[850] "If *all* workers were to become teetotalers and vegetarians, wages would inevitably fall to the wretched level, perchance, of Oriental countries like India and China, where thrift in every form is carried to incredible lengths."[851] "Is it not proved that the Hindoos and the Chinese, who are the most temperate and the most thrifty people

in the world, are always the worst paid? And don't you see that if the Lancashire workers would live upon rice and water, the masters would soon have their wages down to rice and water point?"[852]

The foregoing arguments, which are based on the "Iron Law of Wages," of which a refutation has been given in Chapter IV.,[853] may sound plausible to the unthinking workman. They may infuriate him and therefore serve the ends of the Socialist agitator, but they are utterly false and dishonest, as all Socialist leaders know. Wages depend partly on the supply and demand for labour, partly on the productiveness of labour. In machineless countries, such as China and India, the average worker produces very little, and the supply of workers is unlimited. Hence their wages are low. If the Socialistic arguments were right, Chinese and Hindoos could double or treble their wages by becoming drunkards, and English navvies could earn 5*l.* a week by agreeing among themselves to drink champagne instead of beer. If the cost of subsistence determined the rate of wages, the wages for all workers in London ought to be approximately the same. In reality, however, we find that wages range in London from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 18*s.* per week. The most skilled workers receive the highest, the least skilled the lowest, wages. It is therefore evident that wages are determined by the cost of subsistence only in the case of the least skilled workers, provided an unlimited supply of such workers and unrestricted competition among them for work drive down their wages to the bare existence level.

Providence, thrift, and temperance are habitually attacked by Socialists not only on "scientific" but also on moral and philosophical grounds. For instance,

Mr. Keir Hardie tells us: "As for thrift, much which passes for such at present is little different from soul-destroying parsimony. Men and women starve their years of healthy activity that they may have enough to keep alive an attenuated old age scarcely worth preserving."[854] In other words, he advises the workers to spend all they earn and to become paupers in their old age. A very influential Socialist writer says: "A man by starving his mind and his body is able to save money. He borrows books instead of buying them. He starves his emotional nature by neglecting to go to the theatre, because to go to the theatre costs money. He doesn't go to concerts because concerts cost money. He is a teetotaler, not so much because he wishes to keep his stomach clean and his head clear, but because his ideal men are teetotalers, grad-grinds, who mortify the flesh in order to save. And the money is saved with a bad intention. The aim is either to start independently in business, or else to secure shares in the undertaking paying the highest dividends compatible with security. The object of this man is to leave his class behind him, and to live *upon* labour rather than *by* it"[855]—According to this authority it would be immoral for the rural labourer to save in order to be able to till his own field and to live in his own cottage; it would be immoral for the artisan to endeavour to have a workshop and a house of his own; it would be immoral for the worker to put his savings into a savings-bank or a friendly society, or some limited company, and to live upon his savings during his old age. It would almost seem as if from the Socialist point of view the only moral way of obtaining property was by plundering the rich. "Waste all you earn and die in the workhouse" is at present their advice to the worker, and the worker

who follows that advice and who lives from hand to mouth easily becomes a pauper. For him a short spell of unemployment means starvation and despair. This is evidently a state of affairs which Socialist agitators favour because it will increase their following.—Another prominent Socialist writer says: "Among the many quack remedies for poverty, the most venerable and the most illusive is thrift or saving. The habit of saving is always represented by the rich as the highest of social virtues; but it is one they are careful rarely to practise themselves"[856]—If the rich are so wasteful, how is it then that the national capital, held by the rich, as the Socialists tell us, has increased from 4,000,000,000*l.* to 12,000,000,000*l.* during the last sixty years, notwithstanding huge capital losses caused by suffering industries? The decay of agriculture alone has caused a capital loss which approximates 2,000,000,000*l.*

The great co-operative movement in England was created by the celebrated Rochdale Pioneers, the name given to the weavers of Rochdale who started it. On a rainy night in November 1843, twelve men met in the back room of a mean inn and commenced the co-operative movement by organising themselves as "The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers." They agreed to pay twenty pence a week into a common fund, but only a few of these twelve men were able to pay their pence that evening. They began by buying a little tea and sugar at wholesale prices, which they sold to their members at little more than cost. In a year their number had grown to twenty-eight, and they had collected 28*l.*, with which they rented a little store and stocked it with 15*l.* worth of flour. During the first year they made no profit. In its second year the society had seventy-four members, 181*l.* in funds, 710*l.* of business, and made

22*l.* profit, 2-1/2 per cent. of which was used as a fund for education.[857]

Gradually but constantly growing, this movement has branched out in every direction, and the result is that there are now in Great Britain 1,685 co-operative societies with 2,263,562 members. These co-operative societies are manufacturers, ship owners, bankers, brokers, factors, merchants, millers, printers, bookbinders, and shopkeepers of every kind on the largest scale. The rapidly growing assets of the various undertakings represent a value of about 50,000,000*l.*, the combined nominal capital comes to 42,813,348*l.*, and the yearly net profits amount to about 11,000,000*l.*, or to more than 35 per cent. per annum on the subscribed capital. In 1905 the net profits amounted to 37.4 per cent., in 1906 to 36.4 per cent. on the share capital.

Capitalised at 4 per cent, the co-operative societies represent an investment value of about 300,000,000*l.*, or about 100*l.* per co-operator. The societies maintain an army of 107,727 employees. Their progress during the last decade may be seen at a glance from the following figures:

	Total Trade of British Co-operative Societies.
1896	£58,729,643
1901	88,394,304
1906	110,085,826[858]

Already the income of the co-operative societies is twice as large as the interest paid on the whole of the deposits in the British savings-banks. There is no reason why the co-operative movement should not further grow and increase, and it is to be hoped that it will further extend in every direction to the benefit of the industrious and thrifty workers. There ought to be no propertyless workers in Great Britain.

The British co-operative societies have proved to the dismay of the Socialists that working men may improve their position unaided and may become capitalists. They have proved that thrift and ability create prosperity, and they have therefore incurred the hatred of the Socialist agitators. The philosopher of British Socialism complains: "Co-operation so far from being Socialism is the very antithesis of Socialism. Trade co-operation is simply a form of industrial partnership, in which the society of co-operators is in the relation of capitalist to the outer world. The units of the society may be equal amongst themselves, but their very existence in this form presupposes exploitation going on above, below, and around them."[859] The editor of "Justice" seems to regret that co-operation encourages and rewards ability and thrift, for he says: "Co-operation is most valuable to those among the workers who are best off. The artisan earning a regular weekly wage has not only a better opportunity of becoming a member

of the co-operative society than the more precariously employed and more poorly paid labourer, but the advantage to him is greater by reason of his having more money to spend at the store. In many cases the poorer members have to sell out, and then the affair becomes simply a joint-stock company of the more fortunate, the race being once more to the swift, the battle to the strong."[860] "The ordinary workman can if he likes become a shareholder in the "co-op." So he may become a shareholder in a railway if he likes; but this does not make the capitalist domination of our railways less a fact. In a co-operative store, as elsewhere, the man with 2*l.* a week is worth just twice as much as the man with 1*l.* Co-operation as a factor in social progress has effected nothing, and is absolutely valueless except to a certain extent as an educational influence."[861]

Some Socialist writers show their hatred of the co-operative societies and the co-operators by bitter and almost vicious attacks upon them. One of them complains: "Instances of successful co-operation *in production* have, as yet, been very few, and their moral results disappointing. Their general tendency has been, not to raise the workers as a class, but to raise a certain number of prudent—I had almost said selfish—workmen *out* of their class, and so to constitute a *Labour Caste*. Such co-operators employ and exploit other workmen even more mercilessly than the capitalist employers, and in struggles between Labour and Capital their sympathies have nearly always been on the side of the capitalists."[862] Another says: "The Rochdale Pioneers hire and fleece labourers in the usual manner. Experience teaches, indeed, that such associations are the hardest taskmasters. Their

interest becomes identified with Capital; and if ever circumstances should make it easier for the smarter labourers to start companies of the kind successfully, the creation of a *Labour Caste* would be the result. In a general dispute between Labour and Capital these associations, instead of being a vanguard of Labour, will go over to the side of Capital. The sons of Rochdale Pioneers, living in luxury, and imitating the airs and fashions of the wealthy of all times, point the moral. Where, then, is the gain to the labouring class? No, instead of advising workmen to save and to invest their savings in such risky enterprises, it would be much better to advise them to put their savings into their own flesh and bone."[863]

The foregoing extracts, and many similar ones which might be given, display a regrettable hatred of ability, providence, and thrift—qualities which, it is true, are not easily reconcilable with the tenets of Socialism.

The British nation spends on intoxicating drink about 160,000,000*l.* per annum. Out of this enormous sum—a sum much larger than the national Budget—between 100,000,000*l.* and 120,000,000*l.* is spent by the working class alone. Drink is a fearful evil in Great Britain. The average working man spends every year two months' earnings in drink, and as there are many moderate drinkers and abstainers, there must be many who spend three months' earnings and more—that is, one-quarter of their wages, sometimes one-half, and sometimes more than one-half, on intoxicants. According to some of the foremost authorities on social science, and according to some of the most prominent medical men, drink is chiefly responsible for poverty,

underfeeding, ill-health, and racial degeneration. Nevertheless, the British Socialists, instead of condemning drunkenness, rather encourage, or at least excuse, this terrible vice; and again, the universally discredited Iron Law of Wages is solemnly brought forth to prove "scientifically" that sobriety and abstinence on the part of the workers would not benefit the workers but the capitalists. "We are not prepared to admit that, if all workers were to become teetotalers, as I am, the 140,000,000*l.* now spent on intoxicants would benefit the workers to any appreciable extent. On the contrary, all economists tell us that wages always tend towards the minimum subsistence point—the level at which the wage-slave is willing to subsist and to reproduce his kind."[864]

The Iron Law of Wages has been abandoned by all scientists because of its manifest absurdity. However, supposing the Iron Law of Wages were true, it would not by any means follow that general abstinence would lead to a lower rate of wages. Non-abstemious wage-earners live frequently in the most wretched homes, and are dressed in rags because they spend all they can spend in drink. If they should become sober, they would find better houses, better clothing, better furniture as indispensable as drink is now to them. In reality abstinence, instead of lowering wages, would probably increase them very considerably in accordance with the increased productive power of the worker. It is a general experience that the steady and abstemious worker commands a higher wage than his more or less drunken, unreliable, and untidy colleague.

Socialists are fond of excusing drunkenness by arguing that the worker gets drunk "because he is

physically and mentally exhausted, used up with the day's work";[865] "because the wretched social condition of the mass of workers of this country—the long hours, the uncertainty of work, the insufficient food and clothing, and degrading home-life, which are their daily portion—makes drunkards."[866] Another well-known writer states: "If thousands of the workers drink to drown the cares and sorrows of their dreary, degraded, wretched existence, they do so at the expense of going without some of the merest necessaries."[867] This is, unfortunately, only too true. But it is not true that "Our damnable, infernal, profit-mongering system manufactures and produces drunkards because huge profits can be made out of the business for the brewer and the publican."[868]

The above statements, which excuse drunkenness as something natural and unavoidable in Great Britain, are untrue. All civilised countries are based upon the private possession of capital, and in all large profits can be made by brewers and publicans. Now, if it were true, as has been stated in the foregoing, that hard work and long hours cause drunkenness, drunkenness should be greater in the United States, Germany, and France than in Great Britain, for in these countries and most others workers work much harder and work much longer hours than in Great Britain. The British nation should therefore be the most sober nation, but it is in reality the most drunken nation, a fact which is known to all who have studied this question.

The majority of British Socialist leaders apparently desire to keep the workers drunken, for every suggestion that the worker might improve his position by greater moderation in drinking is

passionately denounced by them. In a speech Andrew Carnegie mentioned that "he had employed forty-five thousand men at one time, and his experience was that the man who drank was good for drinking and for nothing else. He had nothing to do with the man who drank. He did not believe in the Submerged Tenth, but what he wanted to do, remembering he was a working man himself, was to take an honest, sober, well-doing, hard-working man by the hand and help him if he could. He only wanted to help those who could help themselves." Commenting on this speech, one of the Socialist weeklies said: "According to the foregoing, no drunkard, no matter how chronic, could display a greater specimen of human demoralisation than does that reported speech of Dr. Andrew Carnegie depict himself; soulless beyond imagination almost, in spite of his self-advertised respect and sympathy for the honest, sober working man." In the same article we read: "Total abstainers are capable of viler actions than those of certain drunkards, while the profoundest depth of ignorance and incapacity to think are attributes of millions of total abstainers."[869] When Mr. John Burns advised the workmen to help themselves by abstaining from drink and gambling, the whole Socialist press raged, and he was called a traitor to the cause and an agent of capitalism.

Only rarely does a Socialist rebuke drunkenness. In "Socialism for Christians" we find a passage: "As long as you have a democracy sodden in drink you will have a democracy under the hoofs of capitalists. There is no hope for the democracy as long as it is content to grovel before the great pewter pot which it has made into a god."[870] However, that passage was not penned by a professional Socialist, but by a

clergyman, an outsider, and an amateur in Socialism.

While British Socialist leaders try to degrade the masses and to increase their misery by encouraging them to waste a very large part of their wages in drink, instead of spending the money on necessary food and clothing, on sufficient living room and furniture, foreign Socialists try to elevate their followers and to combat the drinking evil among them. The foremost Belgian Socialist, who constantly agitates against drunkenness, wrote:

"How often have we not found in Socialist pamphlets, or in our newspapers, statements such as the following: 'Misery produces alcoholism,' or 'Drink is a consequence of capitalism, and will only disappear with the capitalistic system itself.' These are comfortable theories indeed, but they unfortunately come in conflict with the facts. The labourer must not only regard alcohol as one of the causes of poverty, demoralisation, and degeneration, but as a canker which destroys his strength and powers of resistance. We therefore address to all our comrades this warning: The more earnest you are and the stricter towards yourself, the greater will be the authority you bring to bear upon the branding of this evil. Everything which decreases the consumption of alcohol increases the helping powers of labour movements, raises the moral tone of the working class, and gives it fresh strength in its struggle for emancipation. Therefore all Socialistic societies should break away from out-of-date ideas with regard to alcoholism, and leave off expecting results from a social revolution which they themselves can attain to-day. It is our bounden duty to declare war against alcohol. War to the knife, for it is all the more dangerous as it dwells in our midst

in the guise of friendship. When addicted to drink, the working class cannot do what must be done. Alcohol, by its paralysing qualities, naturally leads to fatigue, negligence, weakness, and impotence. Only those who can rule themselves are able and worthy to rule the world."[871]

The German Socialist leaders also endeavour to elevate their followers by fighting drunkenness. At the Congress at Essen in 1907, a resolution was unanimously passed by the German Social-Democratic party in which various recommendations were made to the Government regarding the diminution of drunkenness, and which concluded with the words: "The working-class organisations are invited to suppress in their meeting all compulsion to consume alcoholic liquors, to put a stop to its sale in schools, in registry offices, and in places where collections are made for strikers, and to inform children and young men by word of mouth and by the Press of the danger of alcohol, and to watch over drinking habits which lead to the abuse of alcohol."[872] A German Socialist periodical recently wrote: "Workers who drink neglect their duties towards their family, drink away their wages, bring disorder into their unions, lose the sympathy of the quiet and industrious citizens, become the slaves of the public-house, and damage Socialism. Therefore Socialists should abstain absolutely from drinking intoxicating drinks. Ordinary capitalism exploits the proletariat, but does not poison them too in their own persons and in their posterity. But alcohol does both; it lames the power of a whole nation and leads to the degeneration of the race, as does opium in China. The drinker loses his self-respect, his higher aims as a human being. It must be made a fundamental principle of the German Social-

Democratic party that the proletariat can vanquish capital only after it has first vanquished drink. The sooner that victory is won, the sooner the fate of society will be decided."[873]

Continental Socialist leaders recommend to their followers thrift, sobriety, and co-operation. British Socialist leaders, who have taken the whole of their doctrines from the Continent, condemn "on scientific and moral grounds," thrift, sobriety, and co-operation.

FOOTNOTES:

[840] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 95.

[841] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism*, p. 40.

[842] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 94.

[843] Quelch, *Trade Unionism*, p. 16.

[844] *Social-Democrat*, April 1907, p. 212.

[845] Penny, *Political Labour Movement*, p. 11.

[846] Roscher, *Politik*, p. 575.

[847] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism*, p. 41.

[848] Quelch, *Economics of Socialism*, p. 16.

[849] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 127.

[850] Quelch, *Economics of Socialism*, p. 16.

[851] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 107.

[852] Blatchford, *Britain for the British*, p. 129.

[853] See p. 53 ff, *ante*.

[854] Keir Hardie, *Can a Man be a Christian on a Pound a Week?* p. 13.

[855] Leatham, *The Class War*, p. 8.

[856] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 105.

[857] Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, pp. 358 and 1195.

[858] *Labour Gazette*, December 1907.

[859] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 94.

[860] Quelch, *Trade Unionism*, p. 10.

[861] *Ibid.* p. 13

[862] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 109.

[863] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 51.

[864] Muse, *Poverty and Drunkenness*, p. 3.

[865] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 11.

[866] Muse, *Poverty and Drunkenness*, p. 12.

[867] Glyde, *Britain's Disgrace*, p. 20.

[868] *Ibid.* p. 20.

[869] *Forward*, November 16, 1907.

[870] Kirtlan, *Socialism for Christians*, p. 15.

[871] Vandervelde, *Drink and Socialism*, pp. 3, 8.

[872] *Social-Democrat*, October 1907, p. 620.

[873] *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, November 1907, pp. 332, 337.

CHAPTER XXIV[ToC]

SOCIALIST VIEWS ON LAW AND JUSTICE

Most Socialists have a very strong objection to the existing laws. "Law is only a masked form of brute force."[874] "The laws to-day are defences of the foolish rich against the ignorant and hungry poor. The laws to-day, like the laws of the past, make more criminals than they punish. The laws keep the people ignorant and poor, and the rich idle and vicious."[875] "The laws were made by ignorant and dishonest men; they are administered by men ignorant and selfish; they are dishonest laws, good for neither rich nor poor; evil in their conception, evil in their enforcement, evil in their results."[876]

Most Englishmen are proud of the English judges because of their learning, high character, and integrity. To many Socialists the judges are the most contemptible and mercenary of men. The philosopher of British Socialism informs us: "It is an undoubted truth that no judge can be strictly an honest man. The judge must necessarily be a man of inferior moral calibre. A judge, by the fact of his being a judge, proclaims himself a creature on a lower moral level than us ordinary mortals, and this without any assumption of moral superiority above the average on our part. He deliberately pledges himself, that is, to be false to himself. He may any day have to pass sentence on one whom he believes to be innocent. He lays himself under the obligation of administering a law which he may know to be bad

on any occasion when called upon, merely because it is a law. He makes this surrender of humanity and honour for what? For filthy lucre and tawdry notoriety. Now, I ask, can we conceive a more abjectly contemptible character than that which acts thus?"[877]

The cause of the hatred with which the British Socialists contemplate the law and the judges is obvious:

They're blocking up the
highway; yes, they think
to keep us back
By piling barriers of law and
falsehood on the track;
We'll break the barriers down,
and burn them into
cinders black,
As we go
marching
to
liberty.
[878]

Come every honest lad and lass!
Too long we've been kept
under
By rusty chains of fraud and
fear—
We'll snap them all asunder!

That robbers' paction styled the
Law
To frighten honest folk, sirs,
We'll set ablaze and fumigate
The country with the smoke,

sirs.[879]

When Jack Cade, whom the Socialists praise as a social reformer, marched at the head of the insurrectionists into London, one of his first acts was to burn the stored-up documents of the law, an act which Shakespeare immortalised in his "Henry VI." in the following words:

"Cade: Is not this a lamentable thing, that of the skin of an innocent lamb should be made parchment? that parchment, being scribbled o'er, should undo a man?... Away, burn all the records of the realm: my mouth shall be the parliament of England.

"John (*aside*): Then we are like to have biting statutes, unless his teeth be pulled out.

"Cade: And henceforward all things shall be in common."[880]

Socialism will abolish the law: "The great act of confiscation will be the seal of the new era; then, and not till then, will the knell of Civilisation, with its rights of property and its class-society, be sounded; then, and not till then, will justice—the justice not of Civilisation but of Socialism—become the corner-stone of the social arch."[881] Therefore one of the first acts of Socialist government will be "the abrogation of 'civil law,' especially that largest department of it which is concerned with the enforcement of contract and me recovery of debt."[882]

Socialists never tire of denouncing the barbarity of the existing law. According to their religious views given in Chapter XXVI. (see p. 360), man is an irresponsible being. He does not know the difference

between right and wrong, between good and evil. Therefore it is according to their opinion unjust and cruel to punish criminals. "The Christian regards the hooligan, the thief, the wanton, and the drunkard as men and women who have done wrong. But the humanist regards them as men and women who have been wronged."[883] "Human law, like divine law, is based upon the false idea that men know what is right and what is wrong, and have power to choose the right."[884] "Man becomes that which he is by the action of forces outside himself."[885] "All human actions are ruled by heredity and environment. Man is not responsible for his heredity and environment. Therefore all blame and all punishment are unjust. Blame and punishment, besides being unjust, are ineffectual."[886]

"To the Socialist, for every crime committed the State, or the society in which it is committed, is as much or more responsible than the individual."[887] "A society that employs the gallows and the 'cat' pretty much deserves all it gets at the hands of criminals. If the criminal, when he gets the chance of doing so with impunity, commits the crime for which the gallows or the lash is reserved, society has only itself to thank."[888]

From the foregoing considerations it logically follows that "a Socialist administration would treat delinquents with the utmost leniency consistent with the existence of society."[889] "A man of average sense ought to be able to protect himself against fraud. Theft only requires the restitution of the stolen property plus an addition, such as the Roman law provided. The ideal condition of a community is that the remorse following the commission of a crime should be an adequate preventive of its

commission"[890]—By its attitude towards crime, Socialism should secure for itself the enthusiastic support of the criminal classes. By abrogating the enforcement of contract and the recovery of debt, it should secure for itself the equally enthusiastic support of all fraudulent debtors. Conspirators and revolutionaries since the time of Catiline have opened the gaols and have relied on criminal desperadoes for the realisation of their ambitions. It is worth noting that most Anarchists also recommend the abolition of law and the law courts.[891]

Until the ideal Socialist commonwealth has been firmly established, and "until the economic change has worked itself out in ethical change, it is clear that a criminal law must exist. The only question is whether its basis shall be a mass of anomalous statutes and precedents or a logical system."[892] Bax decides that the logical system and the Code Napoléon is to be introduced after the Socialist revolution.[893] The fact that the people do not know the French laws apparently does not matter.

Many Socialists complain that British laws, and American laws too, are not collected and codified. Hence the citizen does not, and cannot, know the law. "What is called 'the law' is something that no lawyer can learn in a lifetime, both on account of the bulk of the Reports, and because he never can be absolutely certain what is good and what is bad law. The profession chooses rather than ascertains the law."[894] Owing to lack of a code of laws, the law is uncertain and exceedingly costly. Hence the poor man can obtain justice only with difficulty, if at all. Besides, "The fear of litigation is a weapon society places in the hands of the rich man to coerce the poor man, irrespective of the merits of the case, by

dangling ruin before him."[895] There is much justification for these complaints.

We have seen in former Chapters that Socialism teaches that property is theft and that rich men are criminals. In the present Chapter we have learned that criminals are men wronged by society. The Socialist conception of law and justice should recommend itself to all criminals, and all criminals should be Socialists.

FOOTNOTES:

[874] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 107.

[875] Blatchford, *Not Guilty*, p. 258.

[876] *Ibid.* p. 259.

[877] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 108.

[878] *Independent Labour Party Song Book*, p. 17.

[879] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 19.

[880] *King Henry VI.*, Part II. Act IV. Scenes 2 and 7.

[881] Bax, *The Ethics of Socialism*, pp. 82, 83.

[882] *Ibid.* pp. 85, 86.

[883] Blatchford, *God and My Neighbour*, p. 100.

[884] Blatchford, *Not Guilty*, p. 19.

[885] *Ibid.* p. 23.

[886] Blatchford, *Not Guilty*, p. 251.

[887] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 146.

[888] *Ibid.* p. 105.

[889] Bax, *Ethics of Socialism*, p. 59.

[890] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 104.

[891] See Stirner, *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*; Bakounine, *Dieu et l'État*; Kropotkine, *Paroles d'un Révolté*, &c.

[892] Bax, *The Ethics of Socialism*, p. 88.

[893] *Ibid.* p. 89.

[894] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 138.

[895] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 147.

CHAPTER XXV[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND WOMAN, THE FAMILY AND THE HOME

Men in all classes of society save and endeavour to become owners of some property, not so much for their own sake as for the sake of their wives and of their children, whom they wish to leave "provided

for." Married men are notoriously more provident and thrifty than unmarried ones. Property is the defence of the family. The fundamental aim of Socialism is the abolition of that private property which is the prop of the family. Consequently every prudent head of a family is likely to resist Socialism, and thus there exists a natural and innate hostility between Socialism and the family.

Besides, the idea of the family is not easily reconcilable with the idea of the Socialistic State. The maintenance of the family requires private capital, and the present capitalistic and individualistic system of society, the modern State and modern civilisation, are based upon the family and have sprung from it. The citizen of the modern civilised State places the interest of his family above the interest of the community. Socialism wishes to reverse the situation and to subordinate the interest of the family to the interest of the community.

Socialism strives after equality among the citizens. Therefore many British Socialists are avowed communists, as will be shown in Chapter XXIX. Now it is clear that a perfect equality among the citizens cannot be created by abolishing merely the institution of private property. The man who envied his neighbour for the exclusive possession of his property may, after the abolition of private property, envy him for the exclusive possession of a particularly attractive wife. Therefore most of the great thinkers since Plato who have mapped out systems for the equalisation of fortunes, have logically insisted on the community of wives.

Lastly, the subordination of the private family under the State, the control of work and food for all by the State, must logically lead also to State control

of the increase of the population. Two thousand two hundred years ago, when in Athens the idea of the equalisation of fortunes had come to the front, Aristotle wrote: "Whoever would regulate the extent of private fortunes must also regulate the increase of families. If children multiply beyond the means of supporting them, the intention of the law will be frustrated and families will be suddenly reduced from opulence to beggary, a revolution always dangerous to public tranquillity."[896] At the same time Aristophanes showed in his comedy "Ecclesiazusae" that the community of goods would necessarily lead to the community of wives.

The assertion of the opponents of Socialism that Socialism means the dissolution of the marriage tie and the abolition of the family has been met with an indignant denial by many Socialists: "Socialism does not 'threaten the sanctity of the home.' Socialism has no more to do with the marriage laws than Toryism has."[897] "No party—neither Socialist nor non-Socialist—has openly identified itself with the views of its prominent members on this question. The idea that marriage, as an institution, ought to be abolished has never received the sanction of any political organisation in Great Britain."[898] "No Socialist entertains the remotest idea of 'abolishing' the family, whether by law or otherwise. Only the grossest misrepresentation can fasten upon them such a purpose; moreover, it takes a fool to imagine that any form of family can either be created or abolished by decree."[899]

The above is confirmed by an official declaration of recent date. At a meeting of the National Council of the Independent Labour Party, which took place in London on October 4 and 5, 1907, the following

resolution was adopted:

"The National Council of the Independent Labour Party repudiates the attack upon Socialism on the ground that Socialism is opposed to religion, and declares that the Socialist movement embraces men and women of all religions and forms of belief, and offers the most complete freedom in this respect within its ranks. It further repudiates the charge that Socialism is antagonistic to the family organisation, and reminds the public that the disintegration of the family, which has been in progress for some generations, has been owing to the creation of slums, the employment of children in factories, the dragging of mothers into workshops and factories, owing to the economic pressure created by low wages, sweating, and other operations of capitalism which the anti-Socialist campaign is designed to support, and which it is the purpose of Socialism to supplant."

Now let us compare with these emphatic denials addressed to the general public the deliberate statements of the intellectual leaders of British and foreign Socialism regarding marriage and the family, addressed to their followers.

The celebrated "Manifesto" issued by the founder of modern international Socialism declares: "On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes. Bourgeois marriage is in reality a system of wives in common, and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalised, community of women."[900] The founders of British Socialism state: "Even now it is necessary

that a certain code of morality should be supposed to exist, and to have some relation to that religion which, being the creation of another age, has now become a sham. With this sham, moreover, its accompanying morality is also stupid, and this is clung to with a determination, or even ferocity, natural enough, since its aim is the perpetuation of individual property in wealth, in workman, in wife, in child."[901]

"Like every other institution of existing society, marriage, as we know it, is a consequence of private property. The primitive swag-monger could think of no better method of keeping his swag together after his death than by making the child of a particular slave-wife his heir. The chief pre-eminence of the Sultana of the harem lay in the fact that she acted, so to speak, as the conveyancer of the estate."[902] The spokesmen of the Social-Democratic Federation say: "What is the position of Socialism towards the question of marriage as at present constituted? The existing monogamic relation is simply the outcome of the institution of private or individual property. It has developed, in proportion to the accentuation of the institution of private, as against communal, property. When private property ceases to be the fulcrum around which the relations between the sexes turn, any attempt at coercion, moral or material, in these relations must necessarily become repugnant to the moral sense of the community."[903]

The foregoing statements lead to the inevitable conclusion that "The transformation of the current family form into a freer, more real, and therefore a higher form, must inevitably follow the economic revolution which will place the means of production and distribution under the control of all for the good

of all."[904]

Another authority informs us "Socialism, Communism, or whatever one chooses to call it, by converting private property into public wealth and substituting co-operation for competition, will restore society to its proper condition of a thoroughly healthy organism, and ensure the material well-being of each member of the community. It will, in fact, give life its proper basis and its proper environment. Socialism annihilates family life, for instance. With the abolition of private property, marriage in its present form must disappear. This is part of the programme."[905] A distinguished Fabian proclaims: "The Socialist no more regards the institution of marriage as a permanent thing than he regards a state of competitive industrialism as a permanent thing."[906] The leading book of the Fabian Society states: "The economic independence of women and the supplanting of the head of the household by the individual as the recognised unit of the State will materially alter the status of children and the utility of the institution of the family."[907] The leading periodical of the Fabians says: "Of all the stupid theories regarding the family, the most stupid is the belief that it is natural. On the contrary, the trinitarian family organisation is plainly a work of art, a deliberate device of man's. Nothing is more plain than the fact that the hierarchy of the family has been employed, and is still employed, as a model for the hierarchy of the State and of human society generally; in other words, as a prop of aristocracy."[908] A leading member of the Independent Labour Party tells us: "I do not believe it is desirable to cultivate the family idea as at present understood, which in the main is designed to teach

the children to think more of their own family than any other; I want to see the broader family life of society taught in the spirit of the West Country motto, 'One for all and all for each.'"[909]

Marriage is, according to many Socialists, not only incompatible with Socialistic progress, but is also immoral. The philosopher of British Socialism, going a step further than did Marx in his Manifesto, endeavours to prove that marriage and prostitution are equally immoral. "Both legalised monogamic marriage and prostitution are based essentially on commercial considerations. The one is purchase, the other hire. The higher and only really moral form of the marriage relation which transcends both is based neither on sale nor hire. Prostitution is immoral as implying the taking advantage by the woman of a monopoly which costs her no labour for the sake of extorting money from the man. But the condition of legal marriage—maintenance—does the same."[910] This opinion is shared by the leading American Socialist writer, who says: "The one has sold her person for money under cover of marriage, the other has done the same thing outside marriage."[911] Other Socialists express similar opinions: "The present marriage system cannot be claimed by anyone as a success. Complete economic independence of women will, however, solve the question. Under Communism will and affection will be supreme. Marriage will be infinitely holier and more permanent than it is to-day."[912] "Mere legal matrimony and familism could not survive the communalisation of property, and it may be well so. Marriage as we know it is merely one of the many unwholesome fungi that grow out of the reeking, rotting corpus of private property, and it would not be difficult to conceive of a sexual order infinitely

more angelic."[913]

There is no reason why an "infinitely more angelic sexual order" should not replace marriage as at present conceived and constituted, for "Marriage is no more a Christian ethic than it is a Mohammedan ethic, or a Japanese custom. We have already 'considered' the marriage laws and altered them. Where, then, is the immorality in demanding a further consideration? Our notions concerning the relations of men and women have changed with the changing times, and at each stage we have reached a more exalted plane of understanding. What right have we to assume, therefore, that the future does not hold a nobler ideal than our present one?"[914]

The direction in which inter-sexual relations should be changed in order to attain a nobler ideal than the present one is obvious: "What we need is freedom from the restraints of an artificial existence; liberty to make the most of our inherent capacity, and human longing for a higher life will do all the rest."[915] "Socialism will strike at the root at once of compulsory monogamy and of prostitution by inaugurating an era of marriage based on free choice and intention, and characterised by the absence of external coercion. For where the wish for the maintenance of the marriage relation remains, there external compulsion is unnecessary; where it is necessary, because the wish has disappeared, there it is undesirable."[916] "The present marriage system was based on the general supposition of the economic dependence of the woman on the man, and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be

necessary between the parties as regards livelihood; while property in children would cease to exist, and every infant that came into the world would be born into full citizenship and would enjoy all its advantages, whatever the conduct of its parents might be. Thus a new development of the family would take place, on the basis not of a predetermined life-long business arrangement to be formally and nominally held to, irrespective of circumstances, but on mutual inclination and affection, an association terminable at the will of either party. There would be no vestige of reprobation weighing on the dissolution of one tie and the forming of another."[917]

Many Socialists, led by Bax, the philosopher of Socialism in Great Britain, and by Bebel, the head of the Social-Democratic party in Germany, take a very broad and a very primitive view with regard to marital relations and to the greater freedom in these relations in the Socialistic State of the future: "The whole of our sexual morality (as such), in so far as it has a rational, as opposed to a mystical, basis, is nothing but a 'plant' to save the ratepayers' pockets by fixing the responsibility for the maintenance of children on the individuals responsible for the procreation of them. To the consistent Socialist, the sexual relation is, *per se*, morally indifferent (neither moral nor immoral) like any other bodily function, but it may easily become immoral *per accidentem*, i.e., from the special circumstances under which it takes place, and whereby it acquires the character of an act of injustice or treachery, such as seduction of a friend's wife or daughter."[918] A very influential Socialist writer asks: "Is chastity a virtue, and is there such a vice as unchastity?" and he answers his question by quoting the above statement of Bax.[919]

"If it be asked, Is marriage a failure? the answer of any impartial person must be—monogamic marriage is a failure—the rest is silence. We know not what new form of the family the society of the future, in which men and women will be alike economically free, may evolve and which may be generally adopted therein. Meanwhile, we ought to combat by every means within our power the metaphysical dogma of the inherent sanctity of the monogamic principle. Economic development on the one side and the free initiative of individuals on the other will do the rest."[920]

Bebel thinks, "The satisfying of amatory desires is a law which every individual must fulfil as a sacred duty towards himself, if his development is to be healthy and normal, and he must refuse gratification to no natural impulse. The so-called animal passions occupy no lower rank than the so-called mental passions. A healthy manner of life, healthy employment, and a healthy education in the broadest sense of the word, combined with the natural gratification of natural and healthy instincts, must be brought within the reach of all."[921] Freedom of love is to be equal to men and women: "In the choice of love woman is free just as man is free. She woos and is wooed and has no other inducement to bind herself than her own free will. The contract between the two lovers is of a private nature as in primitive times. The gratification of the sexual impulse is as strictly the personal affair of the individual as the gratification of every other natural instinct. No one has to give an account of him or herself and no third person has the slightest right of intervention."[922]

A prominent British Socialist shares Bebel's views: "For the non-childbearing woman the sex-

relationship, both as to form and substance, ought to be a pure question of taste, a simple matter of agreement between the man and her, in which neither the society nor the State would have any need to interfere, a free sexual union, a relation solely of mutual sympathy and affection, its form and direction varying according to the feelings and wants of the individuals."[923] The founders of British Socialism agree with the foregoing opinion. "Under a Socialistic system contracts between individuals would be free and unenforced by the community. This would apply to the marriage contract as well as others, and it would become a matter of simple inclination. Nor would a truly enlightened public opinion, freed from mere theological views as to chastity, insist on its permanently binding Nature in the face of any discomfort or suffering that might come of it."[924]

"Socialists expect that, under Socialism, the terrible evil of prostitution will disappear. If it does not, it will be either because women are still denied political power, or because their votes have decided that the prostitute must remain. But if, as at present, the 'unfortunate woman' be regarded as a necessity in those days of advanced thought and increased opportunities, then her status must be raised. She must not be an acknowledged necessity and a scorned outcast at the same time, as is the case now. Her position in the State will be clearly defined. She will be held to be performing a necessary social service. Whether this idea meets with favour or not, it is the only fair, the only possible, solution, if the prostitute is to remain."[925]

"In a Socialistic State, no woman will be economically dependent upon any one man, father,

brother, or husband. Her living will be assured to her by the community. Marriage will not make her the more dependent. If she should have children, she will be salaried, or otherwise supported, according to the number and the healthiness of her offspring. If no children are born to her, she will be at liberty to occupy herself with some other profitable work—not necessarily household labour, certainly not household labour all the time—for that will be reduced to a minimum. But she will engage in such useful work as her special tastes will direct. A free woman, she will thus be able to give her love freely."[926] "The 'subjection of woman' being at an end in consequence of her economic emancipation, actions for breach of promise or seduction, as well as prostitution itself, will be rendered meaningless. When a woman sues for breach of promise she is really suing for loss of a lucrative situation. When she plies for hire on the public street, she does so because the scourge of starvation is laid on her shoulders. Remove that scourge, and instead of the hideous commerce between lust and lucre we shall, in all cases, have the fair exchange of genuine human love for love."[927] "Free as the wind, the Socialist wife will be bound only by her natural love for husband and children."[928]

Men and women being sexually free in the Socialist State of the future, the law will take cognisance neither of breach of promise, seduction, prostitution, and desertion of the family, nor of even graver offences against the present code of morality. The philosopher of British Socialism informs us: "Society is directly concerned—(1) with the production of offspring, (2) with the care that things sexually offensive to the majority shall not be obtruded on public notice, or obscenity on 'young

persons.' Beyond this, all sexual actions (of course excluding criminal violence or fraud) are matters of purely individual concern."

"Offences connected with sexual matters, from rape downwards, may be viewed from two or three different sides, and are complicated in ways which render the subject difficult of discussion in a work intended for promiscuous circulation. Here, as in the last case—viz. of theft or robbery—we must be careful in considering such offences to eliminate the element of brutality or personal injury, which may sometimes accompany the crime referred to, from the offence itself. For the rest I confine myself to remarking that this class also, though not so obviously as the last, springs from an instinct legitimate in itself but which has been suppressed or distorted. The opinions of most, even enlightened, people on such matters are, however, so largely coloured by the unconscious survival in their minds of sentiment derived from old theological and theosophical views of the universe, that they are not of much value. This is partly the reason why the ordinary good-natured bourgeois, who can complacently pass on by the other side after casting a careless look on the most fiendish and organised cruelty in satisfaction of the economic craving—gain—is galvanised into a frenzy of indignation at some sporadic case of real or supposed ill-usage perpetrated in satisfaction of some bizarre form of the animal craving—lust. Until people can be got to discuss this subject in the white light of physiological and pathological investigation rather than the dim religious gloom of semi-mystical emotion, but little progress will be effected towards a due appreciation of the character of the offences referred to. It is a curious circumstance, as illustrating the change of

men's view of offences, that an ordinary indecent assault, which in the Middle Ages—in Chaucer's time, for instance—would evidently have been regarded as a species of rude joke, should now be deemed one of the most serious of crimes."[929]

"When a sexual act, from whatever cause, is not, and cannot be, productive of offspring, the feeling of the majority has no *locus standi* in the matter. Not only is it properly outside the sphere of coercion, but it does not concern morality at all. It is a question simply of individual taste. The latter may be good or bad, but this is an æsthetic, and not directly a moral or social question."[930] "No social and secular argument readily presents itself against the act for which the brilliant and wretched Wilde is to-day the associate of felons. In view of the exclamations of bated horror over this offence, and the tacit assumption that it stands second only to murder in its enormity, it may be worth while to point out that, tested by a non-theological ethic, it is not quite certain that such practices are immoral at all."[931] "It has been well said that there are few laws so futile as those that profess to seek out and punish acts—normal or abnormal—done in secret and by mutual consent between adult persons. There are also few laws more unjust when the acts thus branded by law are the natural outcome of inborn disposition and not directly injurious to the community at large. The Moltke-Harden case brings these considerations clearly before us afresh, and compels us to ask ourselves whether it would not be possible to amend our laws in the direction not only of social purity and sincerity but of reason and humanity."[932]

The "social purity" of Socialism would be the purity of Sodom and Gomorrah. It would be

unrestricted bestiality.

The majority of Socialists who have seriously considered the marriage problem in the Socialist State of the future—Marx, Lassalle, Rodbertus, and others, consider only the economic problems—have pronounced themselves in favour of free love in some form or the other. In this the conclusions of the Socialists agree with those of the Anarchists.[933] Indeed, "collective" marriage and other abominations have been freely practised during a long time in the Socialist colonies of North America, such as Oneida and Wallingsford.[934] Some Socialist thinkers, such as Saint-Simon and Enfantin, following the footstep of Plato, condemn marriage for life and recommend the organisation of procreation by the State. Others, such as Fourier, favour polygamy and polyandry. Others, such as Bellamy[935] and Kautsky,[936] believe that the people will remain attached to marriage as at present constituted. Others again find consolation in the fact that "despite the marital customs of the East, there is in the average human animal a strong monogamous instinct."[937] Anton Menger compares free love with free competition, and therefore objects to it[938] for the same reason for which Aristophanes objected to it in his "Ecclesiazusae" 2200 years ago. He thinks that free love would benefit the young, strong and good-looking, and believes that the doctrine of free love owes its rise to hatred of Christianity among Socialists,[939] monogamous marriage being a Christian institution.

Socialists propose to break all the bonds which at present connect woman with her husband and her children, and to put her into an artificial and unnatural position calculated to unsex her. "For the

first time since the world began, woman will in every respect be the equal of man. She will be the guardian of her own honour, and marriage will assume an entirely novel character. All unions will be unions of affection and esteem, and children, as of old, will primarily be the children of the mother. Her right to select the father of her own children is absolute. In such a society all children will be equally 'legitimate,' and the Seventh Commandment will become practically obsolete, because the economic circumstances in which it was formulated will have passed away. She will be the complete arbiter of her own destiny. Her unsullied conscience will be the foundation of a purer morality than is at present even conceivable."[940] The principles expressed in the foregoing recall to one's mind the decree of the French Convention, dated June 28, 1793, which runs as follows: "La nation se charge de l'éducation physique et morale des enfants abandonnés. Désormais ils seront désignés sous le seul nom d'orphelins. Aucune autre qualification ne sera permise"; and the principle of the French Code, "La récherche de la paternité est interdite," will become a principle of British law. The State will have to become the protector of the husbandless mothers and the fatherless children.

"Woman stands to gain much from the growth of a Socialist State. Among the free communistic services the right of the wife to maintenance during the period of maternity will quickly find a place."[941] "For every child born, the State will make provision. Either the mother will be paid so much per child so long as it lives and thrives, as her wages for important work done for society in bearing and rearing it" (it should be noted that children will belong no more to their parents but to "society," that

childbearing will be "work" paid for by "wages," and that the breeding of children will become as much a business on the part of independent women as is now the breeding of cats and dogs for profit), "or her absolute independence of her husband will be secured in some other way. The State doctor (a woman for this office) will prescribe and care for the child from the moment of its birth, and State nurses will be in attendance to see that the mother is in need of nothing for her own and the child's well-being."[942] "Socialism will simply be the scientific development of those natural tendencies which augment the happiness or improve the comfort of the people. It is conceivable that every child shall come under the care of the administrative assembly. The right of the child is not interwoven with parental responsibility. They are separate considerations. Only a madman will hold that in the event of its parents being unmindful of their duties a helpless little one should be allowed to suffer. The fact of its being is the child's title to whatever provision society is able to make for it."[943] "Socialism therefore teaches men to expect a communal watchfulness over infant life. If parents refuse, or are unable, to meet the requirements of the case, the State will supply the deficiency."[944] "A State that truly represents its members will legislate generously for those who announce frankly and without cant that they have no desire for the care of children."[945]

In the Socialist State of the future, people could therefore get rid of new-born babes far more easily than they now can of puppies and kittens. The institution round the corner would be the general foster-mother. Hordes of fatherless and motherless children would throng the State nurseries. The words "father" and "mother" would lose their meaning.

However, we are told that "Socialism would begin by making sure that there should not be a single untaught, unloved, hungry child in the kingdom."[946] Love would evidently also be "organised" by the authorities.

Some Socialists fear that, under a *régime* of free love and free State maintenance for mothers and children, life will become a riot, that husbands will constantly change wives and wives husbands, and that, owing to the absence of all responsibility on the part of the parents for their offspring, over-population and consequent pauperisation will take place. Therefore some Socialists think that "A time will come when the patriot will consider it to be his duty, not to kill as many enemies as possible in time of war, but to restrict his family as far as possible in time of peace."[947] Socialist daydreamers seem to be unaware that the best preventive against over-population lies in the duty of parents to bring up and educate their children, a duty which they wish to abolish.

As Aristotle pointed out 2200 years ago, the all-regulating State would also have to regulate the increase of population. "If the State is to guarantee wages, it is bound in self-protection to provide that no person shall be born without its consent. The State is to sanction the number of births; all others are immoral, because anti-social. As national wealth increased, a larger number of births would be allowed, or a larger sum would be expended on such as were allowed. An unsanctioned birth would receive no recognition from the State, and in times of over-population it might be needful to punish, positively or negatively, both father and mother. As such births may be due to ignorance or inefficiency

of some check system, it would be the duty of the State to scientifically investigate the whole system of checks, and to spread among its citizens a thorough knowledge of such as were harmless and efficient in practice."[948]

The State would control procreation. Intending couples would apparently have to take out a procreation licence, which would be granted only to those able to pass a searching examination. "Marriage between the mentally weak will not be allowed. Imbeciles, lunatics, and those with dangerous and ineradicable criminal tendencies will not be permitted to reproduce their species at all."[949]

Unfortunately the writer fails to specify how unauthorised reproduction of the species would be prevented, and how contravention of the procreation laws would be punished. These details are furnished by another writer. "All those actually certified as degenerates must be prevented from procreating. Society has not only a right but a duty to protect itself against such by-products, and it can only do this by State control of marriage."[950] "Marriage without a satisfactory medical certificate should be subjected to a penalty which would be in effect prohibitive. In certain cases asexualisation and sterilisation should be applicable under special safeguards and conditions."[951]

Free love has apparently its limitations and its dangers. The procreation inspector might make an irreparable mistake.

There are, of course, Socialists who think that the family ought to be preserved, and who oppose State nurseries. One of them writes: "The State, in its own interests, will do everything it can to develop

individuality in its children. The barrack school and State nursery—never much more than the Utopian dreams of amiable people—are condemned by up-to-date psychologists. The personal touch and affection of the mother, the surroundings and ethics of a small community, the sense of continuity which comes to the maturing child's mind from a personal organisation like the family, are all invaluable to a State which must take as much care of its citizens of to-morrow as it does of its citizens of to-day."[952] Mr. Macdonald's views on Socialism are hardly orthodox, and he has been denounced by thorough-going Socialists as an agent of the bourgeoisie.

As women may be the strongest opponents to the dissolution of the family, Socialists addressing themselves to women try to persuade them that they are forced into matrimony by necessity, that marriage is a degradation to them and to their children, and that Socialism will elevate them and make them free and happy. "The average young woman of the working class, who is not herself employed in some well-paid occupation, has nothing but marriage to which to look forward. She gives herself and all she has or is in exchange for such board as her husband's means permit."[953] "For the sake of bread and shelter she marries and becomes the unpaid cook and housekeeper of a husband and the mother of his children."[954] "Woman has been degraded, the mother has been kept down; so the children have been born with slavish instincts, ready to creep for any favour, and only just awakening to the need for self-assertion and independence of action."[955] Socialism will change all that, for "Socialism means freedom for women, just as it does for men."[956]

What is the Socialistic conception of "freedom for women"? What are its privileges and its advantages? "In considering the position of the woman Socialist, one great central fact must be borne constantly in mind. What she will be, what she will do, how she will live—all will depend upon one great fact, the greatest fact in Socialism—a fact which constitutes Socialism—namely, that she will be economically free."[957] "The new order will make husband and wife equals simply by enabling the wife to earn her living by fitting employment."[958] "A living will be assured to every woman."[959] "In the new community woman is entirely independent, a free being, the equal of man. Her education is the same as that of man except where the difference of sex makes a deviation from this rule and special treatment absolutely unavoidable. She works under exactly the same conditions as a man."[960] "Under a Socialist *régime* every profession will be open to women as to men."[961] "Socialism means enfranchising them, giving them the vote, so that they can lift their voice alongside with men's voice and fight with the same weapon for a better, happier life."[962] "It is only by removing the disabilities and restraints imposed upon woman, and permitting her to enter freely into competition with men in every sphere of human activity, that her true position and function in the economy of life will ultimately be ascertained."[963] "Socialism alone offers woman complete economic emancipation, with all that that implies. It provides her with suitable work, and it pays her exactly as men are paid. It educates her as men are educated, and protects her in pregnancy with tender regard; and, in so doing, Socialism will raise the whole level of society to a height of moral grandeur never yet attained and hardly ever dreamed of by the most

optimist of poets and philosophers."[964]

Apparently Socialists will elevate downtrodden woman by compelling her to work for a living, and it is doubtful, as will be seen in Chapter XXXVI., whether she will be allowed to select her task or whether she will have to work under a system of forced labour. She will be given that freedom and liberty which is now called licence by the abolition of all the laws of morality. In the words of an exceedingly straightforward Socialist, "Independence for women will mean a heavy sacrifice for them, for it will mean for them compulsory work."[965] In return for such work they will be given full sexual license and the vote.

There is another aspect to be taken note of with regard to the emancipation of woman. Many Socialists, in giving to woman equality with man as a wage-earner and voter, wish to unsex her completely. They wish to deprive her of those privileges which she possesses at present owing to her sex. The philosopher of British Socialism informs us: "The law nowadays makes no distinction of persons between men. True; but it makes distinctions between men and women, and where law draws no distinction, practice does. 'Benefit of clergy' is superseded by 'benefit of sex.'"[966] "The tendency of the bourgeoisie world, as expressed in its legislation and sentiment, has been towards a factitious exaltation of the woman at the expense of the man—in other words, the cry for 'equality between the sexes' has in the course of its realisation become a sham, masking a *de facto* inequality. The inequality in question presses, as usual, heaviest upon the working man, whose wife, to all intents and purposes, now has him completely in her power. If

dissolute or drunken, she can sell up his goods or break up his home at pleasure and still compel him to keep her and live with her to her life's end. There is no law to protect him. On the other hand, let him but raise a finger in a moment of exasperation against this precious representative of the sacred principle of 'womanhood,' and straightway he is consigned to the treadmill for his six months amid the jubilation of the 'Daily Telegraph' and its kindred, who pronounce him a brute and sing pæans over the power of the 'law' to protect the innocent and helpless female. Thus does bourgeois society offer sacrifice to the idol 'equality between the sexes.' For the law jealously guards the earnings or property of the wife from possible spoliation. She on any colourable pretext can obtain magisterial separation and protection."[967] Bax concludes that if the law is right in flogging men it should flog women too, for "the brutality and cowardice of the proceeding is no greater in the one case than in the other."[968]

The abolition of the marriage tie may mean that general barracks will take the place of private houses. Is the home worth preserving? Most Socialists think it is not. "It may be doubted after all whether it is necessary to regard 'the home' in the sense in which the phrase is here used as the final and immutable form of social organisation. Humanity does not stand or fall by the arrangement whereby families take their food in segregated cubicles."[969] "The entire preparation of food will be undertaken by society in the future. The private kitchen will disappear."[970] "Instead of a hundred kitchens and fires and cooks, we shall have one. Instead of a hundred meals to prepare, we shall have one. Instead of a hundred homes being made to reek of unsavoury dishes, or the detestable odour of bad

cooking, the offensive effluvia will be confined to one building. Under Socialism domestic duties will be reduced to a minimum."[971] "We set up one great kitchen, one general dining-hall, and one pleasant tea-garden."[972] Only a few Socialists are in favour of individual houses, believing that "Each house should be self-contained."[973]

The proposals of British Socialists regarding woman, the family, the home, and marriage are not new. They were tried in the French Revolution, and the consequences of the experiments recommended by the philosophers of the Revolution were as follows:

"The legislation of the Revolution diminished the paternal authority and converted the family into a republic. Marriage became a contract which could be broken at will by either party, a contract which allowed of short notice and which could be concluded for any space of time. People married for a year, sometimes only for a month. They married for fun or for profit, and marriages were dissolved and others contracted if it paid to do so."[974] The French police reports tell us: "The depravity of morals is extremely great, and the new generation is growing up in a state of disorder which promises to have the most unfortunate and most far-reaching consequences to future generations. Sodomy and Sapphic love flourish with the same shamelessness as prostitution, and the progress of all these vices is terrifying."[975] From another source we learn: "Society has become terribly depraved; fornication, adultery, incest, and murder by poison or violence are the fruits of philosophism. Things are as bad in the villages as in Paris. Justices of the peace report that immorality has spread to such an extent that

many communes will soon no longer be inhabitable by decent people."[976] This is the new and the better world towards which Socialism is steering.

FOOTNOTES:

[896] Aristotle, *Politics*, Book ii. Chapter v.

[897] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* p. 2.

[898] Russell Williams, *The Difficulties of Socialism*, p. 13.

[899] Kautsky, *The Socialist Republic*, p. 23.

[900] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, pp. 19, 20.

[901] Morris and Bax, *Socialism: Its Growth and Outcome*, p. 9.

[902] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 164.

[903] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 39.

[904] Bax, *The Religion of Socialism*, p. 145.

[905] Oscar Wilde, "The Soul of Man under Socialism," *Fortnightly Review*, February 1891.

[906] Wells, "Socialism and the Middle Classes," *Fortnightly Review*, November 1906.

[907] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 200.

[908] A.R. Orage in the *New Age*, November 21, 1907.

[909] Lansbury, *The Principles of the English Poor Law*, p. 10.

[910] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 160.

[911] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 151.

[912] Benson, *Woman, the Communist*, p. 16.

[913] Davidson, *Gospel of the Poor*, p. 149.

[914] Russell Williams, *The Difficulties of Socialism*, pp. 14, 15.

[915] *Ibid.* p. 15.

[916] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, pp. 159, 160.

[917] Morris and Bax, *Socialism; Its Growth and Outcome*, p. 199.

[918] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, pp. 114, 115.

[919] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 30.

[920] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 160.

[921] Bebel, *Woman*, pp. 44, 86.

[922] Bebel, *Woman in the Past, Present, and Future*, pp. 229, 230.

[923] Karl Pearson, *The Ethic of Free Thought*, p. 108.

[924] Morris and Bax, *Manifesto of the Socialistic League*, p. 100.

[925] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 56.

[926] *Ibid.* pp. 59, 60.

[927] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 165.

[928] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 61,

[929] Bax, *The Ethics of Socialism*, p. 62.

[930] *Ibid.* p. 126.

[931] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 24.

[932] "The Moltke-Harden Case" in the *New Age*, November 14, 1907.

[933] For details on this subject see Bebel, *Woman*; Meslier, *Le Testament*, 1864, ii. 226; Dezamy, *Code de la Communauté*, 1842, p. 266; Godwin, *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, ii. 507; Owen, *The Marriage System*, 1838, p. 66; Owen, *Manifesto*, 1840, p. 56; Owen, *What is Socialism?* 1841, p. 40; Morris, *News from Nowhere*, 1899, p. 90; Tucker, *Instead of a Book*, 1897, p. 15; Grave, *Société Future*, ch. xii.; Charles Albert, *L'Amour Libre*, 1899, p. 191, &c.

[934] See Nordhoff, *Communistic Societies*, 1875, p. 275; Noyes, *History of American Socialism*, 1870, p. 623; Hinds, *American Communities*, 1902, p. 196.

[935] *Looking Backward*, ch. xxiv.

[936] *Erfurter Programm*, 1892, p. 145.

[937] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 32

[938] Menger, *L'État Socialists*, 1904, p. 187.

[939] *Ibid.* p. 188.

[940] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, pp. 164, 166.

[941] Benson, *Woman the Communist*, p. 15.

[942] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, pp. 48, 49.

[943] Russell Williams, *The Difficulties of Socialism*, p. 9.

[944] Russell Williams, *The Difficulties of Socialism*, p. 10.

[945] *New Age*, Letter to Editor, November 14, 1907.

[946] Blatchford, *What is this Socialism?* p. 7.

[947] A. Menger, *Volkspolitik*, p. 51.

[948] Karl Pearson, *Socialism and Sex*, pp. 12, 108.

[949] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 49.

[950] Victor Fisher, *The Babies' Tribute*, p. 14.

[951] Victor Fisher, *The Babies' Tribute*, p. 15.

[952] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 98.

[953] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 64.

[954] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 13.

[955] *Ibid.* p. 42.

[956] *Independent Labour Party Leaflet*, No. 5.

[957] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 37.

[958] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 148.

[959] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 57.

[960] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 229.

[961] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 86.

[962] *What Socialism means for Women*, p. 1.

[963] Keir Hardie, *Citizenship of Women*, p. 6.

[964] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 113.

[965] Menger, *L'État Socialiste*, p. 191.

[966] Bax, *Ethics of Socialism*, p. 66.

[967] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 116.

[968] *Ibid.* p. 117.

[969] *After Bread, Education*, p. 10.

[970] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 227.

[971] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 70.

[972] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 49.

[973] Jowett, *The Socialist and the City*, p. 60.

[974] Vandal, *L'Avénement de Bonaparte*.

[975] *Rapports de police publiés par Schmidt*, iii. p. 389.

[976] Roussel, *Un Evéque assermenté*, p. 298.

CHAPTER XXVI[ToC]

THE SOCIALIST ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHRISTIANITY AND RELIGION

What is the attitude of Socialism towards Christianity and religion?

A clerical apologist of Socialism informs us that "Socialism is founded on the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man."[977] Another reverend gentleman states: "Socialism in the first place means combination, bringing together

men for the building up of a sacred, holy life on this earth. It means the building up together of the different elements of human life. It is, in the grand words of the New Testament, which we were told Socialists did not believe in, 'No man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself.'"[978] A third clergyman tells us that "The ethics of Socialism are identical with the ethics of Christianity."[979]

Some British Socialist leaders explain that Socialists are good Christians, and that Socialism attacks only the Church and professed Christians, but not religion. "Much of what is regarded as anti-Christian Socialist doctrine is only an attack upon the Churches and professed Christians, and, so far from being anti-Christian, is, as a matter of fact, inspired by the ethics of Christ's teaching."[980] Other British Socialist leaders say that Socialism, not being a religious doctrine, has no concern with religion and does not meddle with it. "A charge against Socialists is that they are Atheists whose aim is to destroy all religion and all morality. This is not true. It is true that many Socialists are Agnostics, and some are Atheists. But Atheism is no more a part of Socialism than it is a part of Toryism, or of Radicalism, or of Liberalism."[981] "Socialism has no more to do with a man's religion than it has with the colour of his hair. Socialism deals with secular things, not with ultimate beliefs."[982]

It is quite true that "there is at present no consensus of Socialist opinion on religious questions,"[983] but it is hardly honest on the part of Socialist leaders to assert that Socialism has nothing to do with religion. The leading journal of the Fabian Society frankly confesses: "There is the argument that Socialism has nothing whatever to do with subjects

such as religion and marriage. But if Socialism is a theory of the State, nothing human is alien to it. It may be true that no one of the specific theories of religion or marriage so far put forward by Socialists has any claim to be regarded as the Socialist view; but there is all the difference in the world between such an admission and the denial that Socialism has any concern with the questions at all."[984]

Some Socialists proclaim that Socialism will carry out the will of Christ upon earth. Mr. Keir Hardie, for instance, says: "Christ laid down no elaborate system of either economics or theology. No great teacher ever did. His heart beat in sympathy with the great human heart of the race. His words are simple and not to be misunderstood when taken to mean what they say. His prayer—Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven—was surely meant to be taken literally Are our opponents prepared to assert that in Heaven there will be factories working women and children for starvation wages; coal-mines and private property in land, dividing the population of Heaven into two classes, one revelling in riches and luxury, destructive of soul and body, the other grovelling in poverty, also destructive of all that is best in life? If not, how can they consistently support the system which inevitably produces that state of things upon earth?"[985]

Other Socialists frankly confess that Socialism is absolutely incompatible with Christianity and all other religions; that Socialism can succeed only if religion be abolished, and that therefore religion must be abolished. The philosopher of British Socialism states: "Socialism utterly despises the 'other world' with all its stage properties—that is, the

present objects of religion. It brings back religion from heaven to earth."[986] "As to the ethical teaching of Christ, with its one-sided, introspective, and individualistic character, we venture to assert that no one acquainted with the theory of modern scientific Socialism can for one moment call it Socialistic. Socialism has no sympathy with the morbid, eternally-revolving-in-upon-itself transcendent morality of the Gospel discourses. This morality sets up a forced, to the vast majority impossible, standard of 'personal holiness' which, when realised, has seldom resulted in anything but (1) an apotheosised priggism, *e.g.* the Puritan type, or (2) in an epileptic hysteria, *e.g.* the Catholic saint type."[987] Mr. Blatchford states: "I have been asked why I have 'gone out of my way to attack religion.' In reply I beg to say that I am working for Socialism when I attack a religion which is hindering Socialism, that we must pull down before we can build up, and that I hope to do a little building, if only on the foundation. I oppose the Christian religion because I do not think the Christian religion is beneficial to mankind, and because I think it an obstacle in the way of humanism."[988] Another very influential writer says: "Personally I feel called upon to attack Christianity as I would any other harmful delusion. I do not believe in the theology of Jesus any more than I do in his sociology. It is no use pretending that Socialism will not profoundly revolutionise religion. The change in the economic basis of society is the more important thing to strive for; but if the triumph of the Socialist ideal does not crush supernatural religion, then we shall still have a gigantic fabric of falsity and convention upon which to wage war. Happily Christianity becomes less and less of a power every day. So far, indeed, from

Christianity being able to support Socialism, it goes hard with Christianity to stand by itself. As a support to Socialism it would surely prove a broken reed."[989]

A Socialist poet proclaims:

The name of Christ has been
the sovereign curse,
The opium drug that kept us
slaves to wrong,
Fooled with a dream, we bowed
to worse and worse.
"In heaven," we said, "He will
confound the strong."
O hateful treason that has
tricked too long!

Had we poor down-trod
millions never dreamed
Your dream of that hereafter
for our woe,
Had the great powers that rule,
no Father seemed,
But Law relentless, long and
long ago
Had we risen and said, "We will
not suffer so!"

"O Christ, O You who found the
drug of heaven,
To keep consoled an earth that
grew to hell,
That else to cleanse and cure its
sores had striven,
We curse That name!"[990]

There is an eminently practical reason for the hostility of Socialists to Christianity. Religious people are not likely to become Socialists. "Christianity is like a set of manacles fastened upon the minds of those who believe in it. It is vain for us to look for aid from the Church and Christianity. It might be

supposed that a hungry Christian would rebel against his hunger as readily as a hungry Atheist. But it is not the case."[991]

The belief in a life after death also is incompatible with Socialism, and must therefore be combated: "We are compelled to abandon the belief in immortality. He who is given to meditating on his latter end and for whom the question of a post-physical future life for himself as an individual is of primary importance, is, generally speaking, indifferent where not positively hostile to social ideals."[992] "The moment this belief in an after-death existence is erected into a dogma, the moment it comes to be looked upon as an article of faith, which it is a duty to hold, or at least which it is the evidence of an ignoble disposition of mind not to hold, then it becomes an enemy to be combated."[993]

The practical teachings of Christ are directly opposed to the practical teachings of Socialism: "Jesus said, 'Blessed are the poor.' Socialism recognises that wealth is a good thing, and it exists for the purpose of securing a better share of it for the 'blessed' poor. Socialism declares that all ought to work; but Jesus did no manual work after he was thirty years of age, and he encouraged his disciples to leave their occupations, to wander about and to beg, and this last feature of discipleship has in all ages been well maintained. Socialism incites the workers of all countries to unite for the prosecution of the class war; but Jesus approved of obedience, contentment, and humility of spirit."[994]

Socialism has no use for Christianity. "To-day we have to settle down to our primers and our programmes, our Blue-books and our social experiments, just as if Jesus had never lived, or

perhaps all the more because he lived. We get no assistance from Him. His followers are our enemies in every country which owns His influence—and the worst enemies of all because ever professing friendship."[995]

Christianity is, according to Socialists, an outworn creed. "As Marx says, 'The religious world is but the reflex of the real world. Christianity, like all religions, is but an expression of material conditions, a direct outcome of social relations, the unsubstantial image of a world reflected in the muddy pool of human intellect. Jesus varies with the ages. Redeemer of Roman slave; War-God of Crusader; General Overseer of Manufacturing Capitalist."[996] Besides, Socialists resent "the continual reference of ideal perfection to a semi-mythical Syrian of the first century when they see higher types even in some now walking this upper earth, but in vulgar flesh and blood and without the atmosphere of nineteen centuries to lend enchantment to them."[997]

Lastly, Christianity has been a failure: "The success of Christianity as a moral force has been solely upon isolated individuals. In its effects on societies at large it has signally and necessarily failed."[998] "Holiness! Your religion does not make it. Its ethics are too weak, its theories too unsound, its transcendentalism is too thin. There ought to be no such thing as poverty in the world. The earth is bounteous: the ingenuity of man is great. He who defends the claims of the individual, or of a class, against the rights of the human race is a criminal. A hungry man, an idle man, an ignorant man, a destitute or degraded woman, a beggar or pauper child, is a reproach to society and a witness against existing religion and civilisation. In such a world as this, friend Christian,

a man has no business reading the Bible, singing hymns, and attending divine worship. He has not time. All the strength and pluck and wit he possesses are needed in the work of real religion, of real salvation. The rest is all 'dreams out of the ivory gate and visions before midnight.'"[999] "In a really humane and civilised nation there should be and need be no such thing as poverty, ignorance, crime, idleness, war, slavery, hate, envy, pride, greed, gluttony, vice. But this is not a humane and civilised nation, and never will be while it accepts Christianity as its religion."[1000]

Our belief in God also must be abandoned, but if we continue believing in God it follows that man is not responsible for his actions, that he cannot do wrong: "Man is what God made him; could only act as God enabled him or constructed him to act. If God is responsible for man's existence, God is responsible for man's act. Therefore man cannot sin against God."[1001] "If God is all-knowing, He knew before He made man what man would do. If God is all-powerful, He need not have made man at all, or He could have made a man who would be strong enough to resist temptation. Or He could have made a man who was incapable of evil. If God had never made man, then man could never have succumbed to temptation. God made man of His own divine choice and made him to His own divine desire. How then could God blame man for anything man did? Man might justly say to God: 'I did not ask to be created. You knew when You made me how I should act. If You wish me to act otherwise, why did You not make me different? I was fore-ordained by You to be and to do what I am and have done. Is it my fault that You fore-ordained me to be and to do thus?' The actions of a man's will are as mathematically fixed at

his birth as are the motions of a planet in its orbit. God, who made the man and the planet, is responsible for the actions of both."[1002]

"Divine law says that certain acts are good and that certain acts are evil; and that God will reward those who do well and will punish those who do ill. And we are told that God will so act because God is just. But I claim that God cannot justly punish those who disobey, nor reward those who obey His laws. If God created all things, He must have created the evil as well as the good. Who, then, is responsible for good and evil? Only God, for he made them. He who creates all is responsible for all. God created all: God is responsible for all. He who creates nothing is responsible for nothing. Man created nothing: man is responsible for nothing. Therefore man is not responsible for his nature, nor for the acts prompted by that nature. Therefore God cannot justly punish man for his acts. Therefore the Divine law, with its code of rewards and punishments, is not a just law and cannot have emanated from a just God."[1003]

"I do not pretend to say whether there is, or is not, *a* God, but I deny that there is a loving Heavenly Father who answers prayer. I deny the existence of Free Will and possibility of man's sinning against God. I deny that Christ is necessary to man's salvation from Hell or from Sin. I do not assert or deny the immortality of the soul. I know nothing about the soul, and no man is, or ever was, able to tell me more than I know."[1004] "I do seriously mean that no man can, under any circumstances, be justly blamed for anything he may say or do. That is one of my deepest convictions."[1005]

Mr. Blatchford's philosophy excuses, and therefore encourages, every action based upon a bad impulse,

every vice and every crime, and his creed should find the unqualified approval of habitual criminals and loafers.

Views similar to those of Mr. Blatchford are expressed by many other Socialists. We read, for instance: "It was pleasant to believe that a benevolent hand was guiding the steps of society; overruling all evil appearances for good; and making poverty here the earnest of a great blessedness and reward hereafter. It was pleasant to lose the sense of worldly inequality in the contemplation of our equality before God. But utilitarian questioning and scientific answering turned all this tranquil optimism into the blackest pessimism. Nature was shown to us as 'red in tooth and claw': if the guiding hand were indeed benevolent, then it could not be omnipotent, so that our trust in it was broken: if it were omnipotent, it could not be benevolent; so that our love in it turned to fear and hatred."[1006]

As long as childhood pines in
City slum;
As long as Landlords steal
their racking rent;
As long as Love and Faith to
gold succumb;
As long as human life in war
is spent;
While false religion teaches
men to pray
To a false Tyrant, whom they
misname God;
Whose "Holy Will" is—so they
glibly say—
The poor should suffer 'neath
His chast'ning rod;

As long as men do buy and sell
the soil,
And thereby make their
fellow men their
slaves;
While selfishness exacts its
cruel spoil;
While yet the poor are
ground into their
graves;
Until these crying wrongs are
made to cease
Nowhere upon this earth can
there be peace.[1007]

Although the Socialists have declared war against the Christian religion and the Christian Churches, they freely quote the Scriptures and the Fathers if it suits their purpose, and shamelessly misuse the name of Christ. In support of their maxim "Property is theft," they quote St. Jerome's saying: "Opulence is always the result of theft: if not by the actual possessor, then by his predecessors."[1008] They quote Christ in support of their demand for the abolition of private property, marriage and the family. "Christ abolished all private property, and with it the State. He abolished all distinctions of race, rank, sex, and intellect. He made the first last and the last first, acknowledging only devoted *service* as true greatness; the only law, the Law of Love. In His sweeping condemnation of egoism in every form it seems doubtful if He did not even lay iconoclastic hands on marriage and the family, as they existed and exist. In the resurrection they neither marry nor give in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven. Woman (to His mother), what have I to do with

thee? Whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven the same is My brother, and sister, and mother."[1009] They use the name of Christ for electioneering purposes. At a West Ham election, for instance, the electors received leaflets which stated "If you vote for the Municipal Alliance you vote against God. If Christ were in Plaistow Ward, Christ would vote for Coe."[1010]

Professor Schäffle, perhaps the most fair-minded and moderate scientist who ever criticised Socialism, was perfectly right in stating: "Socialism of the present day is out-and-out irreligious, and hostile to the Church. It says that the Church is only a police institution for upholding capital, and that it deceives the common people with a 'cheque payable in heaven,' that the Church deserves to perish."[1011] The above words were written with regard to German Socialism, and British Socialism is far more irreligious, violent, and revolutionary than is the German variety.

FOOTNOTES:

[977] Rev. E.T. Russell in *Forward*, November 23, 1907.

[978] Rev. L. Jenkyns Jones in *Forward*, November 16, 1907.

[979] Rev. Frank Ballard in *Socialism: A Cancerous Growth*, p. 19.

[980] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 99.

[981] Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 4.

[982] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 101.

[983] *New Age*, October 10, 1907.

[984] *Ibid.* p. 10.

[985] Keir Hardie, *Can a Man be a Christian on a Pound a Week?* p. 18.

[986] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 52.

[987] *Ibid.* p. 97.

[988] Blatchford, *God and My Neighbour*, p. 189.

[989] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 14.

[990] Francis Adams, *The Mass of Christ*, p. 12.

[991] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 14.

[992] Bax, *Ethics of Socialism*, pp. 192, 193.

[993] *Ibid.* pp. 196, 197.

[994] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 6.

[995] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 16.

[996] *Socialist Standard*, December 1, 1907.

[997] Bax, *The Religion of Socialism*, p. 90.

[998] *Ibid.* p. 98.

[999] Blatchford, *God and My Neighbour*, p. 194.

[1000] *Ibid.* p. 197.

[1001] *Ibid.* p. 124.

[1002] Blatchford, *God and My Neighbour*, pp. 135, 136.

[1003] Blatchford, *Not Guilty*, pp. 11, 12.

[1004] Blatchford, *God and My Neighbour*, p. 122.

[1005] *Ibid.* p. 137.

[1006] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 27.

[1007] *The Deadly Parallel*, October 1907.

[1008] Wheatley, *How the Miners are Robbed*, p. 13.

[1009] Davidson, *Gospel of the Poor*, p. 149.

[1010] *Times, Municipal Socialism*, p. 42.

[1011] Schäffle, *Quintessence of Socialism*, p. 116.

CHAPTER XXVII[ToC]

THE RELIGION OF SOCIALISM

We have seen in Chapter XXVI. that Socialism makes war upon Christianity and upon religion, that it strives to eradicate religion out of the people's hearts. Now the question arises: How do Socialists propose to fill the void? What do they intend to put into the place of that religion which they wish to destroy?

"Socialism involves a change which would be almost a revolution in the moral and religious attitude of the majority of mankind."[1012] "Religion will share the fate of the State. It will not be 'abolished,' God will not be dethroned, religion will not be 'torn out of the people's hearts.' Religion will disappear by itself without any violent attack."[1013] "The establishment of society on a Socialistic basis

would imply the definitive abandonment of all theological cults, since the notion of a transcendent god or semi-divine prophet is but the counterpart and analogue of the transcendent governing class. So soon as we are rid of the desire of one section of society to enslave another, the dogmas of an effete creed will lose their interest. As the religion of slave industry was Paganism; as the religion of serfage was Catholic Christianity, or Sacerdotalism; as the religion of Capitalism is Protestant Christianity or Biblical dogma, so the religion of collective and co-operative industry is Humanism, which is only another name for Socialism."[1014] "The religion of the future is to be the religion of the common life. It will have for its ideal the complete organic unity of the whole human race. And this religion will be a political religion. It will be a religion which will seek to realise its ideal in our industrial and social affairs by the application and use of political methods. The popular conception of politics as something apart from religion is a cunning device of the devil to serve his own ends; just in the same way as the popular impression that politics is something apart from bread and butter, and shorter hours, and better homes, and better industrial conditions. There can be no separation between politics and religion. The religion of the future will be an application of the moral truths of religion through politics to our industrial and social conditions."[1015]

To root out the very memory of Christianity, Socialists would abolish the Sunday. "We would surrender once and for all this chimerical notion of one day of universal rest and institute three days a week, or, if necessary, more, as days of partial rest, *i.e.* on which different sections of the community would be freed from labour in turn."[1016]

This proposal, like so many Socialist proposals, reminds us of the French Revolution, which also simultaneously abolished the Christian religion and changed the calendar. The month was divided into three periods of ten days. The tenth day, the "*decadi*," replaced Sunday.[1017] The people were compelled to rest on *decadi* and to work on Sunday. Peasants who on Sundays did not bring their vegetables to market were prosecuted.[1018] Policemen who on *decadi* heard suspicious noises broke by force into houses to find out whether people were "desecrating" *decadi* by work, and the people complained, "Where is the liberty you promised us when we may not even dance on any day we like?"[1019]

The French Revolutionaries destroyed the statues and pictures in the churches. British Socialists at present only propose to replace the effigies of Christ and the saints by Socialist heroes: "Let the painters, sculptors, poets, and musicians do honour to the heroes of humanity, the apostles of science and progress, as they have heretofore lavished their taste and skill and imagination on a conventional Jesus, an ideal Madonna and imaginary saints, and Gospel scenes; let statues arise to Bruno, Vanini, Servetus; let the historian and the biographer recount with loving wealth of detail their struggles, controversies, flights, imprisonments, and martyrdoms; let poets and painters cast the halo of romantic art around Caxton, Galileo, William the Silent, Milton, Harry Vane, and great masterful Cromwell; let hymns be sung to Copernicus, Newton, Harvey, to Massaniello, Danton, Garibaldi, Delescluze, to Grace Darling, Sister Dora and Father Damien."[1020]

"To the Socialist, Marx has said the last word that need be said on the subject of the relation of

Socialism and religion. 'The religious reflex of the real world can only finally vanish when the practical relations of everyday life offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellow men.' Material conditions rule. 'The English Established Church will more readily pardon an attack on thirty-eight of its thirty-nine articles than on one-thirty-ninth of its income.' This is as true to-day as when written in 1867."[1021] Among the "Immediate Reforms" demanded by the Social-Democratic Federation is, of course, "the disestablishment and disendowment of all State churches."[1022]

British Socialists, like the French Revolutionaries, have issued numerous travesties of the Christian church service. The following are extracts from a widely read "Socialist Ritual."

"A Catechism for the Mob

"*Q.* What is thy name? *A.* Wageworker.—*Q.* Who are thy parents? *A.* My father was called Wageworker—my mother's name is Poverty.—*Q.* Where wast thou born? *A.* In a garret under the roof of a tenement house which my father and his comrades built.—*Q.* What is thy religion? *A.* The Religion of Capital.—*Q.* What duties does thy religion lay upon thee with regard to society? *A.* To increase the national wealth—first through my toil, and next through my savings, as soon as I can make any.—*Q.* What does thy religion order thee to do with thy savings? *A.* To entrust them to the banks and such other institutions that have been established by philanthropic financiers, to the end that they may loan them out to themselves.

We are commanded to place our earnings at all times at the disposal of our masters."

"A Litany

for the use of the respectable classes. Edited by Edward Carpenter.

"O God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.—Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take thou vengeance of our sins. Spare us, good Lord; spare us whom thou hast brought into honour and good position through the precious blood of the toiling masses, and be not angry with us for ever: Spare us, good Lord.—From all evil and mischief, from the crafts and assaults of the thief and the burglar, from poverty and the everlasting damnation of the workhouse: Good Lord, deliver us.—From bad trade and bogus dividends, from shady and unprofitable investments, from all unsuccessful speculation and losses, whether on the turf or in the City: Good Lord, deliver us."

"The Capitalist's Ten Commandments

"I am Capital, thy Master, that brought thee out of the Land of Liberty into a State of Slavery. Thou shalt not become thine own Master, nor have any other Masters but me. Thou shalt commit murder for my sake only. Thou shalt give thy daughters in prostitution

and thy wife in adultery to me."

The Latest Decalogue

Thou shalt have one God only, who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency.
Swear not at all, as for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse.
At Church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend.[1023]

The foregoing representative statements and extracts clearly prove that the teachings of Socialism, far from being in harmony with Christianity, are incompatible and directly hostile not only to Christianity but to all religion. The philosopher of British Socialism has very truly said, "Socialism has been well described as a new conception of the world, presenting itself in industry as co-operative Communism, in politics as international Republicanism, in religion as atheistic Humanism, by which is meant the recognition of social progress as our being's highest end and aim."[1024] As there is very little difference between "atheistic Humanism" and Atheism pure and simple, Socialists have really no right to complain if their opponents, relying on

Bax's high authority, reproach them with being Atheists. The excerpts given above show that the religion of Socialism is a political and economic one. Its character and principles may be found in the publications of the Labour Church Union and of the Socialist Sunday School Union. The prospectus of the Labour Church Union contains the following declaration of principles:

"(1) That the Labour Church exists to give expression to the religion of the Labour movement. (2) That the religion of the Labour movement is not theological, but respects each individual's personal convictions upon this question. (3) That the religion of the Labour movement seeks the realisation of universal well-being by the establishment of Socialism—a Commonwealth founded upon justice and love. (4) The religion of the Labour movement declares that improvement of social conditions and the development of personal character are both essential to emancipation from social and moral bondage, and to that end insists upon the duty of studying the economic and moral forces of society."

It will be noticed that the words Christianity, God, morality, virtue, &c., do not occur in the foregoing statement.

Now let us study the details of the Socialist religion. These details are taken from a statement of the aims, methods, &c. of the Socialist Sunday Schools, published for the enlightenment of the public by the Glasgow and District Socialist Sunday School Union, the principal Socialist Sunday School Union of Great Britain. In that official publication we read: "Socialism, which the children are taught, is an idealism. It has been described as 'the highest flight of the ideal into the realm of the practical.' It is a

faith—a faith based on the divine brotherhood and sisterhood of humanity—irrespective of class, colour, or creed. It is a religion—a religion greater than creeds or dogmas. It is a religion of love! Its followers and disciples are lovers of mankind! Its worship is service to humanity! Socialism has absorbed not only all the essential spiritual elements contained in the Christ teaching, but it has also, as Christianity itself has done before it, absorbed all the highest altruistic teaching of the ages. But Socialism has done something more—it has struck a new note, deep-sounding, far-reaching, and its vibrations are stirring in the hearts of the nations! Socialism has proclaimed its tenets, declaring the only possible ways and means whereby the sacred rites of the religion of love can be observed, and without which there can be no realisation of the divine sentiment —'the brotherhood of man.'

"The Church, the State, and the people alike, in so far as they sanction and sanctify unrighteous social conditions, are equally guilty of breaking the very first laws of brotherhood, and thereby of violating the pure and holy religion of love. When the Sun of Social Justice—Socialism—has arisen in its full glory, all the artificial and unnatural causes of evil and error will have been rooted out from the pathway of human progress. The sons and daughters of men may then, without mockery, stand before the great throne of love and worship the beauty and the wonder and the glory of the earth, sky, and sea, as brothers and sisters in one holy unity, and be more worthy to fathom the deeper mystery. Thus Socialism, or the law of the religion of love, unfalteringly maintains: That private property in land is public robbery. It is public robbery because, the land being the source of all the necessaries of life, it should belong equally to

all, by birthright of our common inheritance in the brotherhood of the world. 'Let them know that the earth from which they were created is the common property of all men, and that therefore the fruits of the earth belong indiscriminately to all. Those who make private property of the gift of God, pretend in vain to be innocent, for they are the murderers of those who die daily for want of it.' Such is the terrible and unassailable dictum of one of the great founders of the early Christian Church, Saint Gregory I. Private property in capital—whether in money, railways, mines, factories, machinery, tools, &c.—is public robbery. It is public robbery because it creates and divides the human family into classes. Classes of rich and idle people who claim and hold all these things as by right—and classes of hirelings who are thus forced to pay for the use of them—as rent in land, interest in capital, profit on labour. This means that the hireling classes require to give all the work of their hands and brains in order to secure a small share of the things which they need to live, and which they themselves have produced out of Nature's ample store. And this at once hinders the possibility of any unity of brotherhood or sisterhood and breaks the law of love."[1025]

It will be noticed that in this lengthy statement God is mentioned only for party purposes, and that the chief aim of the "religion of love" is to sow hatred and to incite to plunder.

The Labour Church Union and the Socialist Sunday Schools use the same form of the Socialist Ten Commandments, which are as follows:

"Love your schoolfellows, who will be your fellow-workers in life. Love learning, which is the food of the mind, and be grateful to your teacher as to your

parents. Make every day holy by good and useful deeds and kindly actions. Honour good men, be courteous to all, bow down to none. Do not hate or speak evil of anyone, do not be revengeful, but stand up for your rights and resist oppression. Do not be cowardly, be a friend to the weak and love justice. Remember that all the good things of the earth are produced by labour. Whoever enjoys them without working for them is stealing the bread of the workers. Observe and think in order to discover the truth. Do not believe what is contrary to reason, and never deceive yourself or others. Do not think that he who loves his own country must hate and despise other nations, or wish for war, which is a remnant of barbarism. Look forward to the day when all men will be free citizens of one fatherland and live together as brothers, in peace and righteousness. Socialism is the hope of the world."

Here also the words Christianity and God do not occur.

We are officially told that "Socialist Sunday Schools are intended to serve as a means of teaching economic causes of present-day social evils and of implanting a love of goodness in the child mind."[1026]

The following extracts from the "Red Catechism" serve to show how "love of goodness" is inculcated in the Socialist Sunday Schools:

"*Q.* Is there any difference in the teachings at Socialist Sunday schools and other Sunday schools? *A.* Yes.—*Q.* What is taught in Christian schools? *A.* Christian morals and capitalist teachings.—*Q.* What is meant by the term 'employing men for profit'? *A.* Capitalists, when they pay wages, make the workers produce three or four times the amount they pay

them. The extra which the men produce over their wages is called profit.—*Q.* What evidence is there that the workers earn a great amount and get very little? *A.* The national amount of wealth produced every year is two thousand millions and the amount paid out in wages is only five hundred millions, showing that the poor are poor because they are robbed.—*Q.* Who creates all wealth? *A.* The working class.—*Q.* Who creates all poverty? *A.* Our capitalist society.—*Q.* Who are the workers? *A.* Men who work for wages.—*Q.* What class of men get into Parliament? *A.* The capitalist and aristocratic class? —*Q.* How is that? *A.* Because the workers are opposed by men interested in keeping them poor.—*Q.* How many children are there in London who go to school insufficiently fed and clothed? *A.* It is stated as many as 100,000; a number equal to the population of a small county.—*Q.* To what class do these poor starving children belong? *A.* The working class.—*Q.* Is it not the working class which creates all wealth? *A.* Yes.—*Q.* Do the rich trouble about the poor children of London who are ill-fed and clothed? *A.* No.—*Q.* What is a pauper? *A.* One who lives upon others, while being able to work?—*Q.* Are the rich class able to work? *A.* Yes; because they are well cared for when young and grow up strong?—*Q.* Do they work? *A.* No; they consider it menial and beneath them.—*Q.* Then they are paupers? *A.* Yes.—*Q.* Do the rich and their children live at the expense of those who work? *A.* Yes.—*Q.* What does machinery enable the workers to do? *A.* To produce wealth quicker.—*Q.* Do the workers benefit by machinery? *A.* No. On the contrary. It generally reduces their wages and throws them out of work.—*Q.* Why is that? *A.* Because the machinery is controlled by the capitalist class.—*Q.* What is a

wage-slave? *A.* A person who works for a wage and gives all he earns to a capitalist.—*Q.* What proportion does a wage-slave receive of what he earns? *A.* On the average about a fourth. The slave and serf always had food, clothing, and shelter. The wage-slave, when he is out of work, must now starve or go into the workhouse and be made miserable, or commit suicide.—*Q.* What is the remedy for wage-slavery? *A.* Socialism.—*Q.* Who pays the rent? *A.* Father and mother.—*Q.* Who demands the rent? *A.* The landlord.—*Q.* Can you say how much the landlord takes from the wages of father, generally for rent? *A.* Yes; a fourth.—*Q.* That is sheer robbery, is it not? *A.* Yes; but working men cannot help it.—*Q.* Why is that? *A.* Because the landlord class have a monopoly of land and houses, and workmen have no land and are too poor to build for themselves."[1027]

With this mendacious stuff the "Religion of Love" systematically poisons the innocent minds of little children. The religion of Socialism is indeed a political religion, as Mr. Snowden, M.P., has stated.

FOOTNOTES:

[1012] Ball, *The Moral Aspects of Socialism*, p. 23.

[1013] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 213.

[1014] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 81.

[1015] Snowden, *The Christ that Is to be*, pp. 6, 7.

[1016] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, pp. 58, 59.

[1017] Mignet, *Revolution Française*, ch. viii.

[1018] Sciout, iii. 176.

[1019] Sciout, iv. 386.

[1020] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 16.

[1021] *Socialist Standard*, December 1, 1907.

[1022] See Appendix.

[1023] *A Socialists' Ritual*, pp. 7-16.

[1024] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 81.

[1025] Glasier, *Socialist Sunday Schools*, p. 9.

[1026] Glasier, *Socialist Sunday Schools*, p. 10.

[1027] Hazell, *The Red Catechism*, pp. 3-10.

CHAPTER XXVIII[ToC]

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM

The position of the Christian Churches and of Christian ministers towards Socialism is one of considerable difficulty. Socialism and Christianity are two words which are not easily reconcilable. Chapters XXVI. and XXVII. show that the attitude of British Socialists, not only towards Christianity but towards all religion, is in the main a hostile one. Their attitude is only logical. Socialists see in religious men and in religious corporations obstacles

to their revolutionary and predatory progress. However, as many Socialists have declared that the teachings of Christ and of Socialism are identical, some large-hearted Christian ministers have tried to reconcile Christianity and Socialism. Working under the banner of Christian Socialism, these are rather trying to exercise practical Christianity than to assist the Socialist agitation, as may be seen from their programmes given in the Appendix.

Many Christian Socialist ministers are pious and worthy men whose actions are wise and moderate. Others have adopted an attitude of hysterical enthusiasm and admiration towards Socialism. Whilst the former have only a few adherents, some of the latter have rapidly secured for themselves a considerable Socialist following, and if one takes note of their views, one cannot help doubting whether their motives are entirely disinterested. The following utterances, for instance, one would expect from the mouth of a Soudanese dervish or an Indian fakir, but not from the pen of a Christian minister:

"Socialism is the Greatest Movement for Justice and Brotherhood that this old Planet has ever known. Socialism is the Greatest Passion for the Release and Freedom of the Human Soul that this world has ever felt. Socialism is the Greatest Urge of the Average Man to stand erect, independent, and free, without a Master and without a slave, that the human race has ever experienced.

"The Spirit of the Lord of Life within me, burning as a fierce flame in my bones, saith 'Speak unto the people these words': There is only one Sacred Thing beneath the stars—Human Life. Human Life is the Incarnation of the Desire of the Lord of Life. Behold! He awaits the Full Expression, the Complete

Emancipation, the Perfect Freedom of that Human Life, as Life, in all its undisclosed majestic meanings. And it doth not yet appear what it shall be! The Average Man at your side in the street, next door—the average woman, any woman, the child, any child—Behold here is the Sacred One. Love, Worship, and Bless in the name of the Lord of Life. 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.' No artificial, conventional, social, or financial dignity can make that Human One worthy; no present degradation or humiliation can finally obscure that Radiant One. 'I see through your sham tinsel and title; I see through the dirt and despair to the Human One shining there,' saith the Living Truth. 'The worship that passeth these Darlings of My Heart and leaveth them—that worship I am against,' saith the Lord of Life. O stand erect now, just where you are, just as you read these words. Thou hast no Superior! Thou art very Beautiful! Thou art the Freedom Incarnate, whose Heart-beat shall dissolve all slaveries and Injustice. I Love thee, O Thou Human One. There is only one Sacred Thing beneath the stars—Human Life. Whatever hurts, harms, makes cheap, blights, hinders, enslaves, subordinates, or profits off Human Life is Wrong tho' demanded by ten thousand priests, tho' framed in a thousand laws, tho' hoary with ten thousand years. Whatever hurts the Son of man—that—that is the Blasphemy. Whatever helps, releases, emancipates, makes free, glorifies, makes sacred, enlarges, enricheth Human Life, that is the Right and Good, tho' persecuted by private interests; that is the Truth, tho' withstood by dead men's creeds. Whatever emancipates the average man—that—that is the coming of the Lord. The Fundamental fact of Life is Bread. Man doth not—

cannot live by Bread alone. But man cannot live without Bread. In the eating of Bread, behold the Divine Democracy of Human Life. The necessity of eating Bread—there is the Universal Sacrament—all are present—all partake. Behold, the Supper of the Lord is—just Bread—our common Daily Bread. Why is this Bread Sacred? Not in itself. No! Why, then? It is the food of the Sacred Ones—the Human Ones. It is the Food of the Incarnation of the Lord of Life. And the first Basic Sacred Ceremony of Man is—Labour in securing that Bread—the Fact of Bread-Getting. If that is not Just, True, Right, Good, a Blessing—then nothing is. All else is measured here. You cannot build a Sacred Ceremony in the superstructure of Human Life if the Basis in Bread-getting is a Lie, a Fraud, a Cheat, a Theft, a Slavery, a Service to the Gain-god—Mammon, a Gamble with Human Flesh. Nay, verily! 'I will not hear your prayers, your chants, your liturgies, your praises; My soul hateth even your solemn meeting,' said the Lord of Life, if thou wilt not see Me in these Human Ones as they struggle for Bread, if thou wilt not make thy Bread-getting Just, and Holy, and Good, and True.

"And now, O Capitalism, Thou art doomed! I am against thee, saith the Spirit. O Capitalism, I have weighed thee in My balances—thou art found wanting. O Capitalism, thou hast gambled with the Land that I gave to all for Bread. O Capitalism, thou hast gambled with the great machines that are for the bread-getting of the people. O Capitalism, thou hast made Human need an asset of thy gains. Thy Purse is filled with Bloody Coin. Thy Store-Houses burst where the many Hunger. The Little Ones cry in the streets whilst thou hidest thy Plunder. I am against thee, O Capitalism, I am against thee! Thou hast gambled with the very Bodies and Souls of men

in thy Mad Mammonism. Thy fierce Profit-Hunger Hath rejoiced in the Hunger of Man. I am against thee, O Capitalism!

"Behold! the Day Dawns! I see Justice arise. I see the Land redeemed! I see the Titans of Iron, the machinery of shops, used for man! I see the Toilers go forth to their labours and return with the product of their toil! I see Capitalism lie prone! I see Mammonism fallen! I see the Profit of the Many Arise! I see Freedom! I see Brotherhood! I see the Socialist Age! I see the Commonwealth of Man! 'Tis the coming of the Lord of Life."[1028]

Much of the foregoing is printed in half-inch letters. At the end of these wild utterances we read in letters an inch tall: "Rally, Rally, Rally! Great Social Crusade! Rally, Rally, Rally!"—which unpleasantly reminds one of the shouting butcher's insistent cry, "Buy, Buy, Buy!" to be heard in crowded thoroughfares on Saturday nights.

The moderate Christian Socialists cannot help opposing the most important item in the Socialist programme. For example, "The Christian Social Union asserts that it has not the slightest sympathy with confiscation." In fact, "the whole question of expropriation is tacitly ignored in the literature of Christian Socialism."[1029] "The Christian who believes in the words: 'Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth,' cannot easily be a Socialist, and a Christian minister cannot easily approve of the spoliation of the Church."[1030] Professor Flint stated quite correctly: "What is called Christian Socialism will always be found to be unchristian in so far as it is socialistic, or unsocialistic in so far as it is truly

and fully Christian."[1031]

Christian Socialist leaders urge Socialists to join the Christian Socialist movement. "Every Socialist who understands how deeply religion has been concerned in every movement that has ever won the enthusiasm of men, every Socialist who realises how enormous is the work before him, must welcome the assistance of this ancient and imperishable organ of love and justice. And every Christian who rejoices in the singular growth of religious zeal in recent years must long to see all that huge force given to the service of the Humanity which Jesus Christ has taken up into the Godhead. For the man that loves much is a Socialist, and the man that loves most is a saint, and every man that truly loves the brotherhood is in a state of salvation."[1032] These words seem rather perfunctory and laboured.

By far the largest number of Socialists regard the Christian Socialist movement with suspicion and dislike. The philosopher of British Socialism, Mr. Bax, for instance, wrote contemptuously: "The leaders of the Guild of St. Matthew wish to accomplish vast changes through 'a clarified Christianity'?—a Christianity which shall consist apparently of the skins of dead dogmas stuffed with adulterated Socialist ethics." A leading Socialist weekly wrote of the early Christian Socialists: "Whether their labours were largely beneficial depends on the way one looks at these things. We have no doubt that for the capitalist class these labours were eminently beneficial, and that is why Maurice and his friends are held in such great esteem by them. For the working class, however, their labours spelt slavery, and ought always to be remembered when similar attempts to 'Christianise'

Socialism are made by the 'servants' of the Church. Here, as in many other things, the motto of the worker must be 'I fear the Greeks, even when they come with gifts.'"[1033]

FOOTNOTES:

[1028] *The Social Crusade to Herald the Message of Truth and Freedom to this Age, conducted by Rev. J. Stitt Wilson, M.A.*, November 1907.

[1029] Woodworth, *Christian Socialism in England*, p. 161.

[1030] *Church and Socialism*, p. 39.

[1031] Flint, *Socialism*, p. 441.

[1032] Dearmer, *Socialism and Christianity*, pp. 22, 23.

[1033] *Justice*, October 19, 1907.

CHAPTER XXIX[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

Socialism is not a simple but a complex movement. It contains a powerful strain both of Communism and of Anarchism. In fact one might almost divide all Socialists into two classes: Communist Socialists and Anarchist Socialists. A study of the history of Socialism, Communism, and Anarchism shows that all three movements have much in common. It shows instances of Socialistic parties branching out and having Communist and Anarchist offshoots, and shows instances of Anarchist and Communist groups combining under the red banner of Socialism.

Owing to its intimate historical and sentimental connection with Communism and Anarchism, Socialism is hostile to the State, and many Socialists desire its downfall: "The expropriation of all the private proprietors of the means of production being effected, society starts on a new basis. The conditions of existence and of human life are changed. The State Organisation gradually loses its foundation. The State expires with the expiration of a ruling class, just as religion expires when the belief in supernatural beings or supernatural reasoning powers ceases to exist."[1034] "The first act wherein the State appears as the real representative of the whole body social—the seizure of the means of production in the name of society—is also its last independent act as State. The interference of the State in social relations becomes superfluous in one domain after another and falls of itself into desuetude. The place of a government over persons is taken by the administration of things and the conduct of the processes of production. The State is not 'abolished,' it dies out."[1035] "The representatives of the State will have disappeared along with the State itself—ministers, parliaments, standing armies, police and *gens-d'armes*, law courts, lawyers and

public prosecutors, prisons, rates, taxes and excises—the entire political apparatus. The great and yet so petty parliamentary struggles have given place to administrative colleges and administrative delegations, whose function it is to settle the best methods of production and distribution."[1036] "The Co-operative Commonwealth will incorporate the whole people into society. The whole people does not want, or need, any government at all. It simply wants administration—good administration,"[1037]

The arguments contained in the foregoing extracts are exceedingly shallow. The various authorities quoted tell us in more or less involved language that the State disappears because "governments" will be replaced by "administrations." Unconvincing verbiage apart, the only change which would take place would be a change of name. Countries would be ruled by Socialist governments instead of by non-Socialist ones. The State could disappear only with the disappearance of nations and of frontiers, with the advent of the "Brotherhood of Man." The first Socialist State might of course proclaim the Brotherhood of Man in accordance with the precedent set by the French Revolution, but other nations might feel as little inclined to join it as during the time when bloodthirsty demagogues ruled France in the name of Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, with the liberal assistance of the rifle and the guillotine.

What is Communism? John Stuart Mill tells us: "The assailants of the principle of individual property may be divided into two classes—those whose scheme implies absolute equality in the distribution of the physical means of life and enjoyment, and those who admit inequality, but grounded on some

principle, or supposed principle, of justice or general expediency, and not, like so many of the existing social inequalities, dependent on accident alone. The characteristic name for the former economical system is Communism."[1038] "Palgrave's Dictionary of Political Economy" says: "Communism is the theory which teaches that the labour and the income of society should be distributed equally among all its members by some constituted authority."[1039]

Let us now take note of some Socialist views on Communism. "Laurence Gronlund, whose 'Co-operative Commonwealth' has been styled the New Testament of Socialism (as the 'Capital' is its Old Testament), has tried to distinguish between Socialism and Communism by describing Communism as meaning 'each according to his needs,' and Socialism 'each according to his deeds.'"[1040] "As soon as the principle of equality is applied to Socialism, Socialism becomes 'Communism.'"[1041] "Socialism and Communism are very generally confounded, but they are quite distinct economic systems. Socialists seek only to control the instruments of production—Land and Capital; Communists leave nothing to the individual which he can call his own. St. Paul was a Socialist, Christ a Communist."[1042]

Many so-called Socialists are in reality avowed Communists who look forward to the introduction of Communism more than to the advent of Socialism. They see in Socialism merely an intermediate stage towards their final goal. "If the millennial haven of Communism is to be reached by mankind generally, it must be through the disciplinary portal of Socialism."[1043] "Communism, the final goal of Socialism, is a form of Social Economy very closely

akin to the principles set forth in the Sermon on the Mount."[1044] "Socialism and freedom 'gang thegither.' Socialism implies the inherent equality of all human beings. It does not assume that all are alike, but only that all are equal."[1045] "Between complete Socialism and Communism there is no difference whatever in my mind. Communism is, in fact, the completion of Socialism; when that ceases to be militant and becomes triumphant it will be Communism."[1046] "The vision of freedom is an ever-expanding conception of life and its possibilities. The slave dreams of emancipation, the emancipated workman of citizenship; the enfranchised citizen of Socialism; the Socialist of Communism."[1047]

Some Socialists champion Communism because Communism, the equality of all, is "natural," whilst individualism is "unnatural": "Capitalistic individualism has no prototype in Nature and is therefore unnatural. But some opponent will say, 'It is here, and therefore it must be a natural product.' The answer is simple. It is here, but it is one of Nature's failures. We have seen how, low down in the organic scale, Nature makes many failures in order to achieve one success. Sometimes even millions perish in order that one of high type may survive. Nature always accomplishes her purposes in the end. We know that her aim is Communism, for some of the higher species have already reached it, and all are tending towards it."[1048] The assertion, "We know" (who are we?) "that Nature's aim is Communism," can hardly be called a sufficient scientific proof of the foregoing proposition. Other Socialists assert that Communism is in accordance with the Bible: "Christ's teaching is often said to be Socialistic. It is not Socialistic, but it is Communistic,

and Communism is the most advanced form of the policy generally known as Socialism."[1049]

A Socialist Bible student and very prolific writer says: "Can anything be conceived more diametrically opposed to the principle laid down by Christ than the present system, based as it is on the principle of competition? 'You are all brothers,' says Christ, and if all are brothers, then it needs no philosopher to tell us that all should work together for the common good."[1050] In support of this doctrine that Communism is in accordance with the Bible, the said writer quotes Acts iv. 32-35, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."[1051] The Socialist can quote Scripture for his purpose—and misquote it too. Therefore the pious Socialist writer leaves out the lines which follow: "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price."[1052] Will there be no Ananiases in the Socialist Commonwealth? Besides, the early Christian Communism was voluntary and dictated only by charity. It certainly was not enjoined as a religious duty.[1053] Lastly, the first Christian experiment in Communism proved immediately a failure, probably because there were many Ananiases, and because Communism is opposed to human nature and leads to poverty and strife, not to prosperity and peace. Hence, St. Paul founded no more Communist settlements, but

collected everywhere for the "poor saints at Jerusalem" in order to relieve them in their "deep poverty," as may be seen in Romans xv. 26-27, 1 Corinthians xvi. 1-3, 2 Corinthians viii. and ix. To misquote Scripture in support of Socialist Communism with an attitude of deep piety is not only in bad taste, but also dishonest. It is cant and hypocrisy.

Another prolific Socialist writer, under the title "Was Jesus a Socialist?" tells us that Socialism "claims complete equality of rewards for all members of society, not on any theologico-metaphysical ground, such as the Christian abstract principle of brotherhood, but because it sees men to have on the whole the same natural endowments, and the same natural needs."[1054] Have they? Considered merely as two-legged animals requiring only food, warmth, and shelter, men have not even the same physical needs.

It is very difficult to make out a good case in favour of Communism, an equal reward for all, a doctrine which will be attractive only to the lowest rank of workers, the lazy, and the inefficient. Therefore Socialist Communists endeavour to make Communism appear more palatable to the active and the efficient by the lavish use of poetry and hyperbole. For instance, we learn: "He who makes the canvas is as useful as he that paints the picture. He who cleanses the sewer and prevents disease is as useful as the physician who cures the malady after it has been contracted."[1055] To learn painting or medicine requires at least ten years' study; sewer-cleaning requires no study. The offer of equal rewards for an hour's work at painting, at amputating in a hospital, and at cleaning sewers

must be very attractive to sewermen. Will it prove equally attractive to surgeons and painters? Socialism is to be world-wide. Will the highly skilled British trade unionist agree to work side by side with unskilled Chinamen and for equal wages?

In youth, as I lay dreaming,
I saw a country fair.
Where Plenty sheds its blessing down,
And all have equal share.
There Poverty's sad features
Are never, never, seen;
And each soul in the Brotherhood
Scorns cunning arts or mean.
[1056]

I think skilled workers will hardly hail with enthusiasm the day of liberty and equality and of sewermen's wages all round, poetry notwithstanding.

Other Socialists try to recommend Communism by a ridiculous and dishonest play upon words: "He who declares himself an enemy of Communism declares himself an enemy of common interest, an enemy of society and mankind. Whoever wishes to annihilate Communism will have to destroy the common roads, the schools, he will have to destroy the public gardens and parks, he will have to abolish the public baths, the theatres, the waterworks, all the public buildings; he will have to destroy the railroads, the telegraphs, the post-office. For all these belong to Communism."[1057] It would be as logical to say, "He who opposes Socialism will have to destroy the Royal Society, and all clubs, for all these are social institutions." The Social-Democratic Federation says

about Communism: "Has there not always been the aggregation of wealth in the hands of a few in all stages of human society?—Certainly there has been a tendency to such concentration throughout history. In what did tribal society differ from civilised society?—Briefly, it differed in that its underlying principle was that of social solidarity and Communism. We may instance such examples as survived in the village communities of India before the establishment of British institutions; in the Russian Mir, in its older form; in the Arab tribal organisation and the Javan village communities."[1058] That "primitive Communism" of "tribal society," the organisation of savages and semi-savages, of the decadent and of the unfit, Socialists wish to foist upon a highly cultured nation. The above arguments, penned by the philosopher of British Socialism and the editor of "Justice" in recommendation of Communism, suffice to condemn it.

We have a survival of ancient Communism in the Russian Mir, and to the Mir is the great backwardness of Russian agriculture chiefly to be attributed.[1059] The Russian peasants, recognising the disadvantages of the Communist Mir, are gradually abandoning it and converting common into individual properties. Nevertheless some Socialists have the hardihood to ascribe the universal disappearance of ancient Communism to the tyranny of man, not to the logic of facts and the action of Nature which replaces inefficient by efficient organisations. "There have been attempts in all ages to introduce some system of holding things in common in order to alleviate and soften the hard struggle with Nature for food, clothing, and shelter. This voluntary Communism rendered the workers too

independent for the governing classes, and the jealousy of Church and State invariably destroyed it as the Russian village communes are now being destroyed by the Government."[1060]

Another Socialist quotes with approval the pronouncement of Gregory the Great "Let them know that the earth from which they spring, and of which they are formed, belongs to all men in common, and that therefore the fruits which the earth brings forth must belong, without distinction, to all."[1061] China suffers from over-population and is very poor. Would the writer give to the Chinese a share of Great Britain's wealth since "the earth and its fruits belong without distinction to all?"

Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., who has apparently a somewhat elementary knowledge of ancient history, and who seems to rely for information on a primer such as "Little Willie's First History Book," recommends Communism because "In Sparta there were not only common lands, but also a common table, whilst dogs and horses were practically common property also. Sparta, which kept its Communism almost to the end, was also the Republic from which came the immortal heroes who made the pass of Thermopylae one of the great inspirations of the world."[1062] The Spartans were barbarians among the Greeks. Spartan Communism was founded on slavery and on the virtual community of women. Slave-murder, child-murder, rape, and theft were legally enjoined, and that is the community which Mr. Keir Hardie bids us consider as our model. Mr. Keir Hardie concludes: "We have seen how mankind when left free has always, and in all parts of the world, naturally turned to Communism. [Has it? When, and where?] That it will do so again is the

most likely forecast of the future which can be made, and the great industrial organisations, the Trade Unions, the Co-operative Movement, the Friendly Orders, the Socialist organisations and the Labour party are each and all developing the feeling of solidarity and of mutual aid which will make the inauguration of Communism a comparatively easy task as the natural successor to State Socialism."[1063]

The ideas of Socialists with regard to Communism are incredibly confused. For instance, we find in the same book the following contradictory statements describing Socialism: "Socialism is the common holding of the means of production and exchange, and *the holding of them for the equal benefit of all*"[1064] (the italics are in the original), and "To distribute the gifts of Nature justly according to the labour done by each in the collective search for them. This desire is Socialism."[1065] These absolutely contradictory statements, telling us that Socialism is both individualistic and that it is also Communistic, are taken from the fundamental book of the Fabian Society, the most scientific body of Socialists, and they have been reprinted again and again down to the edition bearing the imprint "43rd Thousand."

Socialism is eternally between the horns of a dilemma. It promises to make all men happy. If it rewards men by results, the inefficient and the lazy will be dissatisfied. If it rewards all men alike (Communism), the efficient, able, and energetic will be dissatisfied. Reward by result will, in the absence of self-regulating commercial demand and supply, require an autocratic and absolute authority which arbitrarily apportions the unequal rewards of labour.

It would be the tyranny of the few over the many, and would mean the abolition of democracy. Communism, equal rewards for all, would lead to the tyranny of the many over the few, and would stifle all motives to excel. Well might the Fabians ask: "Since we are too dishonest for Communism without taxation or compulsory labour, and too insubordinate to tolerate task work under personal compulsion, how can we order the transition so as to introduce just distribution without Communism and maintain the incentive to labour without mastership?"[1066] Unfortunately for the Socialists, that question is unanswerable. It is likely always to remain so, and the impossibility of answering it makes Socialism impossible. However, since Socialists wish to array the masses against the classes, the poor against the rich, they naturally incline, for tactical reasons rather than from honest conviction, to Communism, the worst of all tyrannies, and the most retrograde and inefficient of economic organisations.

"Communism in proposing the appropriation of the results of the unequally productive labour for a uniformly equal distribution according to needs, seeks to establish a universal and monstrous appropriation by one set of persons of the surplus value belonging to others. Socialism would, in short, do to a far greater degree the very thing with which to-day it so indignantly and bitterly reproaches capitalism."[1067] Whilst Mr. Keir Hardie and his numerous followers enthusiastically support a free Communism in which "the rule of life will be—From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs,"[1068] "the Fabian Society resolutely opposes all pretensions to hamper the Socialisation of industry with equal wages, equal hours of labour, equal official status, or equal authority for everyone.

Such conditions are not only impracticable, but incompatible with the equality of subordination to the common interest which is fundamental in modern Socialism."[1069]

The Communistic idea is not yet dead. The short-sightedness and folly of mankind is such that Communism, in spite of a record of more than 2,000 years of universal failure, is still a power to be reckoned with. Visionaries like Saint-Simon and Owen, and madmen like Fourier, are still able to lead the people astray.

Fourier taught that Communism would alter not only man but the physical world as well. The duration of the human race on earth would be 80,000 years, divided into two periods of ascending and two of descending vibrations. Lions would be taught to draw waggons, as a symbol of the victory of man over Nature. Human life would on an average last 144 years. The aurora borealis, which now rarely appears in northern regions, would become permanently visible and be fixed at the Pole. It would give out, not only light, as at present, but also heat. It would decompose the sea water by the creation of citric boreal acid and convert it into a kind of lemonade which would dispense with the necessity of provisioning ships with fresh water. Oranges would grow in Siberia and tame whales would pull becalmed sailing-ships. The full indulgence of human nature in all its passions would produce happiness and virtue. Society would harmoniously be organised in groups (phalanxes) of 1,600 persons to inhabit a large palace called a phalanstery. If England would introduce these phalanxes, her labour would become so productive that she could pay off her national debt in six months

by the sale of hens' eggs. Labour would be organised and occupation be changed every two hours. Workers would be taken in carriages to and from their work, and agricultural labourers would work under tents so as to be protected against the rain. The relations between the sexes would be of the freest. All should freely satisfy all their passions, and all passions would naturally combine in one grand harmony. The world would become a huge Republic which would be governed from Constantinople, and French would be the universal language.[1070]

Notwithstanding the evident insanity of Fourier's proposals, and the almost equally extravagant proposals of Owen, more than a hundred phalansteries and other Communistic settlements were founded in Great Britain and elsewhere, especially in the United States. Their failure was universal and their immorality was very great.[1071] "The trouble with all the Fourierite communities was that they were fanciful and theoretical schemes, not simple and natural growths. They had little definite religious spirit to hold them together. They had little business headship. At the least discouragement and misfortune they melted away. Only religious communism, the facts seem to prove, can be successful."[1072] Only the communism of the convent and of the monastery, the equality of all based on a fervent religious belief, on a firm discipline, on an equal and absolute poverty, and on the almost insurmountable difficulty of re-entering the world, has hitherto proved practicable from the time of the Essenes to the present day.

FOOTNOTES:

[1034] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 178.

[1035] Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, pp. 76, 77.

[1036] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 212.

[1037] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 123

[1038] Mill, *Political Economy*, Book iii. ch. i. par. 2.

[1039] *Palgrave's Dictionary of Political Economy*, vol. i. p. 297.

[1040] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 89.

[1041] Menger, *L'État Socialiste*, p. 35.

[1042] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 93.

[1043] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 94.

[1044] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 36.

[1045] *Ibid.* p. 9.

[1046] Morris, *Communism*, pp. 11, 12.

[1047] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 77.

[1048] Connell, *Socialism and the Survival of the Fittest*, p. 19.

[1049] Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 5.

[1050] Ward, *Are All Men Brothers?* p. 19.

[1051] Ward, *All Things in Common*, p. 5.

[1052] Acts v. 1, 2.

[1053] Acts v. 4.

[1054] Leatham, *Was Jesus a Socialist?* p. 5.

[1055] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 159.

[1056] *Clarion Song Book*, p. 27.

[1057] Sorge, *Socialism and the Workers*, p. 8

[1058] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, pp. 20, 21.

[1059] See Simkhowitsch, *Die Feldgemeinschaft*, 1898; Haxthausen, *Studien*, &c.

[1060] Benson, *Socialism*, p. 4.

[1061] Ward, *All Things in Common*, p. 1.

[1062] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 17.

[1063] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, pp. 96, 97.

[1064] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 212.

[1065] *Ibid.* p. 4.

[1066] B. Shaw, *The Impossibilities of Anarchism*, p. 17.

[1067] Schäffle, *The Impossibility of Social Democracy*, p. 60.

[1068] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 89.

[1069] *Report on Fabian Policy and Resolutions*, p. 7.

[1070] See Fourier, *Œuvres*; Pellarin, *Fourier*; Sargant, *Social Innovators*.

[1071] See Noyes, *History of American Socialism*; Nordhoff, *Communistic Societies of the United States*.

[1072] Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, p. 319.

CHAPTER XXX[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM

Socialism is, on the whole, hostile to the State. All Socialists hate the State as at present constituted, because it protects the property which they wish to seize. However, many Socialists hate not only the State in its present form. They have become doubtful whether private capital or the State is the greater evil. They long for liberty, and would not welcome the restraint of any State, and least of all that of the absolute, all-regulating, and constantly interfering Socialistic State. Hence many Socialists have become Anarchists. Socialists may be divided into two classes —Communists and Anarchists—and Prince Kropotkin, the foremost Anarchist leader living, described the two Socialistic sections as follows: "A section of Socialists believes that it is impossible to attain Socialism without sacrificing personal liberty on the altar of the State. Another section, to which we belong, believes, on the contrary, that it is only by the abolition of the State, by the conquest of perfect liberty by the individual, by free agreement, association, and absolute free federation, that we can reach Communism."[1073] Many Socialists, seeing the enemy rather in the State than in private capital, express their passionate hatred of the State: "The State at present is simply a huge machine for robbing

and slave-driving the poor by brute force."[1074] "The Parliament ever cries for more money, more money for the service of the State. Just heavens! Of what service is the State? Of very little service to honest, industrious men,"[1075] The philosopher of British Socialism frankly confesses himself a revolutionary Anarchist: "As an international revolutionist I have always been strongly sympathetic with all movements for local autonomy as most directly tending to destroy the modern 'nation' or centralised bureaucratic State."[1076] "It is quite true that Socialism will have to take over the accursed legacy of existing national frontiers from the bourgeois world-order; but Socialism will take it over merely with the view of killing it off and burying it at the earliest possible moment. The modern nation or centralised State is a hideous monstrosity, the offspring of capitalism in its various phases; in its present shape the outcome of the developed capitalism of the great industry. We quite admit that in form it may, and probably will, survive the earlier stage of Socialism, but its ultimate disappearance is none the less certain. The sentiment of the national patriotism will then, let us hope, be reduced to its last expression—the holding of annual dinners, or some harmless festivity of this sort, such as is affected by the natives of certain English counties resident in the metropolis. The Nationalist movement, therefore, is an old Radical 'plank' which clearly no longer belongs to us as Socialists."[1077]

The Socialist-Anarchist hates State government in every form. To him a Social-Democratic State is quite as hateful as any other form of government: "The State is the evil, the inveterate foe of labour—be the Government Autocratic, Bureaucratic, or Social-Democratic. For what, after all, is our vaunted nose-

counting, majority-ridden Democracy but an expansion of the old-time tyranny of monarch and oligarch, inasmuch as the Governmentalist, whatever his stripe, is doomed to act on the two root principles of statecraft—force and fraud? And, obviously, so long as that is so, his particular profession of political faith is almost a matter of indifference."[1078] "What was, what is the State, wherever it exists, but a community of human beings barbarically held together by a well-drilled gang of magistrates, soldiers, policemen, gaolers, and hangmen?"[1079] Mr. Blatchford, who is apparently never quite sure in his mind whether he is a Socialist, a Communist, or an Anarchist, gives voice to his Anarchist sentiments in the words: "Rightly or wrongly, I am opposed to godship, kingship, lordship, priestship. Rightly or wrongly, I am opposed to imperialism, militarism, and conquest. Rightly or wrongly, I am for universal brotherhood and universal freedom."[1080]

Another influential Socialist writer exclaims: "What is freedom but the unfettered use of all the powers which God for use has given?"[1081]—a sentiment which is heartily endorsed by all Anarchists. However, the unfettered use of all powers means that the will of the individual, not the will of society, is the supreme law. It means the denial of the supremacy of society, the State, government. Similar sentiments are expressed with greater energy and greater fulness by many Socialist writers. Mr. Davidson, for instance, says: "In the new order every man (woman, of course, included) will be his own legislator. In the state of ultimate and universal freedom to which we aspire, when the greatest of all tyrants, poverty, is slain and plenty sits on the throne which the lean monster has so long usurped—it may well be that there shall be no necessity for any law

except that which the purified conscience of every individual man and woman will readily supply. Then will have come the true Golden Age, the millennium of Christian Anarchism."[1082]

The claims, programme, and aims of Socialism and Anarchism are curiously alike. Prince Kropotkin, the leading exponent of Anarchism, writes: "Anarchy appears as a constituent part of the new philosophy, and that is why Anarchists come in contact on so many points with the greatest thinkers and poets of the present day. In fact, it is certain that in proportion as the human mind frees itself from ideas inculcated by minorities of priests, military chiefs, and judges, all striving to establish their domination, and of scientists paid to perpetuate it, a conception of society arises, in Which conception there is no longer room for those dominating minorities. A society entering into possession of the social capital accumulated by the labour of preceding generations, organises itself so as to make use of this capital in the interests of all, and constitutes itself without reconstituting the power of the ruling minorities. Acknowledging as a fact the equal rights of all its members to the treasures accumulated in the past, it no longer recognises a division between exploited and exploiters, governed and governors, dominated and dominators, and it seeks to establish a certain harmonious compatibility in its midst not by subjecting all its members to an authority that is fictitiously supposed to represent society, not by trying to establish uniformity, but by urging all men to develop free initiative, free action, free association."[1083]

There is little difference between the Anarchism of Proudhon, Bakounin, and Kropotkin, and the

Socialism of many British Socialists. The economic doctrines of Socialism and Anarchism are practically identical. Socialism has taken the most important doctrines from Proudhon,[1084] and, owing to the similarity of their views and aims, Socialists and Anarchists are commingling and fraternising. Anarchists see in Socialists a wing of the great Anarchist army of destruction, and Socialists see in Anarchists associates and friends and partners in the revolution and general pillage which both movements equally strongly desire to bring about. Therefore a leading Fabian Socialist tells us: "Kropotkin is really an advocate of free Democracy, and I venture to suggest that he describes himself as an Anarchist rather from the point of view of the Russian recoiling from a despotism compared to which Democracy seems to be no government at all, than from the point of view of the American or Englishman who is free enough already to begin grumbling over Democracy as 'the tyranny of the majority' and 'the coming slavery.'"[1085] If Kropotkin is a "Democrat," then Ravachol, Vaillant, Henry, Pallas, and Bresci were also merely Democrats.

British Anarchists are closely watching the British Socialist Labour movement, which they wish to lead into Anarchist channels. Thus we learn from an Anarchist monthly: "The question of the position to be taken in relation to the labour movement is certainly one of the greatest importance to Anarchists. It does not suffice for us to form groups for propaganda and for revolutionary action. We must convert as far as possible the mass of the workers, because without them we can neither overthrow the existing society nor reconstitute a new one. And since to rise from the submissive state in which the great majority of the proletarians now

vegetate to a conception of Anarchism and a desire for its realisation, is required an evolution which generally is not passed through under the sole influence of the propaganda; since the lessons derived from the facts of daily life are more efficacious than all doctrinaire preaching, it is for us to take an active part in the life of the masses and to use all the means which circumstances permit to gradually awaken the spirit of revolt, and to show by these facts the path which leads to emancipation. Amongst these means the Labour movement stands first, and we should be wrong to neglect it. In this movement we find numbers of workers who struggle for the amelioration of their conditions. They may be mistaken as to the aim they have in view and as to the means of attaining it, and in our view they generally are. But at least they no longer resign themselves to oppression nor regard it as just—they hope and they struggle. We can more easily arouse in them that feeling of solidarity towards their exploited fellow-workers and of hatred against exploitation, which must lead to a definitive struggle for the abolition of all domination of man over man."[1086] Anarchists therefore constantly try to influence the British Socialist Labour movement. When, for instance, in the autumn of 1907 the possibility of a railway strike was being discussed, Anarchists did their best to bring about a revolutionary struggle: "The railway crisis must have shown very clearly that if the men had but the will, they have the power to bring about at any time a revolutionary situation in the struggle of labour against capital. Some day they will have to do this, for the conditions of the conflict will leave them no choice. They will perhaps learn also that the glorification of a man like Bell—whose fooling of

their cause is his method of advertisement—means putting powers into one man's hands that no man ought to possess. Nothing could be more absurd than the prolongation of this 'crisis' which has been done so that one man might have the centre of the stage, while hundreds of thousands of men toil on in suspense. Bell is everything: the workers are mere cyphers. Yet this man is mistrusted by many; and everyone knows how on occasion he can join the feast of the directors and be one of them. And if generalship were needed, what an ass this would be to attempt to lead the men to victory! Successful strikes are never made by the farcical tactics of a Bell. Recognition, forsooth! They'll recognise you when you strike. Workers, watch your leaders!"[1087]

In view of the connection existing between British Socialism and Anarchism, it is but natural that Socialists have become the apologists of Anarchism. "The vulgar notion that Anarchism is a synonym for disorder is as nearly as possible the reverse of the truth. It is Governments and Laws that do all the mischief. They produce the very evils they pretend to remedy."[1088] "Verily the State is the evil. Back to the land. Back to the simple life. Away with Governments, palavers, Dumas, and Courts of Law. Long live the Commune."[1089]

Anarchists contend that the "Social Revolution" for which most Socialists strive will become an Anarchist revolution: "If the workers succeed by revolt in destroying the mutual insurance society of landlords, bankers, priests, judges, and soldiers; if the people become masters of their destiny for a few months, and lay hands on the riches they have created and which belong to them by right—will they really begin to reconstitute that blood-sucker,

the State[1090]?" "On the day when ancient institutions splinter into fragments before the axe of the proletariat, voices will be heard shouting: Bread for all! Lodging for all! Right for all to the comforts of life! And these voices will be heeded. The people will say to themselves: Let us begin by satisfying our thirst for the life, the joy, the liberty we have never known. And when all have tasted happiness we will set to work; the work of demolishing the last vestiges of middle-class rule, with its account-book morality, its philosophy of debit and credit, its institutions of mine and thine. 'While we throw down we shall be building' as Proudhon said, 'we shall build in the name of Communism and of Anarchy."[1091] Anarchists are authorities on revolutions. Very likely Prince Kropotkin's view is right.

There are two kinds of Anarchists: Philosophic Anarchists who propagate their views by speech and pen, and Anarchists of action who propagate their views by dynamite and dagger, and the former are responsible for the crimes of the latter. Many British Socialists defend not only philosophic Anarchism, but also that form of Anarchism which finds its expression in murder.

Leading British Socialists refer, for instance, to the four Anarchists, Spies, Fischer, Engel, and Parsons, the heroes of the Chicago bomb outrage, who were responsible for the death of six policemen and for the wounding of about sixty, and who were hanged in November 1886 in Chicago, as "martyrs,"[1092] and British Socialists are urged to follow the glorious footsteps of the Chicago Anarchists:

> Then on to revolution, boys!
> Keep Freedom's highway
> broad.

The path where Spies and
Parsons fell—as
fearlessly they trod;
And though we fall as they fell
—millions follow on the
road,
To carry the Red
Flag to
victory.
[1093]

The sympathy which British Socialists feel for the Chicago Anarchists arises from the similarity of their aims. The programme of the American Anarchists was, according to the Pittsburg proclamation, as follows:

(1) Destruction of the existing class rule, by all means, *i.e.* by energetic, relentless, revolutionary, and international action. (2) Establishment of a free Society based upon co-operative organisation of production. (3) Free exchange of equivalent products by and between the productive organisations without commerce and profit-mongery. (4) Organisation of education on a secular, scientific, and equal basis for both sexes. (5) Equal rights for all without distinction of sex or race. (6) Regulation of all public affairs by free contracts between the autonomous (independent) communes and associations resting on a federalists basis.[1094]

The attitude of many leading British Socialists towards the murdering of monarchs and statesmen may be gauged from the following extracts: "On the occasion of the assassination of any potentate or statesman, the public opinion of the possessing class and its organs is lashed up to a white heat of artificial fury and indignation against the

perpetrator, while they have nothing but approbation for the functionary—military or civil—who puts to death a fellow-creature in the course of what they are pleased to call his duty. Evidently force and bloodshed, when contrary to the interests of the possessing class, is a monstrous crime, but when it is in their favour it becomes a duty and a necessity."[1095] "We believe the 'potting' of the 'heads' of States to be a foolish and reprehensible policy, but the matter does not concern us as Socialists. We have our own quarrel with the Anarchists, both as to principles and tactics, but that is no reason why, as certain persons seem to think, we should put on sackcloth and ashes, and dissolve ourselves in tears because, say, M. Carnot or the head of any other State has been assassinated by Anarchists. What is Carnot to us or we to Carnot, that we should weep for him? We do not specially desire the death of political personages, while we often regret their slaying on grounds of expediency, if on no others. But at the same time Socialists have no sentimental tears to waste over the heads of States and their misfortunes. To the Socialist the head of a State, as such, is simply a figure-head to whose fate he is indifferent—a ninepin representing the current political and social order."[1096]

We're low, we're low, we're
very very low.
And yet when the trumpets
ring.
The thrust of a poor man's arm
will go
Through the heart of the
proudest king.[1097]

The "Socialist Annual" contains in its calendar

pages numerous items under the heading "For the Working Class to Remember," which is filled with Socialist dates such as "birth of Mr. Blatchford," and with the records of the most conspicuous Anarchist, Nihilist, and Revolutionary crimes. Details regarding the deeds of Orsini and Louise Michel, Jack Cade and Wat Tyler, the execution of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, the assassination of Presidents Lincoln, McKinley, and Carnot, the attempt on King Alfonso, and other facts are there recorded—"for the working class to remember." Earlier or later the Socialist-Communist-Anarchist agitation in Great Britain may, and very likely will, lead to Anarchist outrages.

FOOTNOTES:

[1073] Prince Kropotkin, *Anarchism*, p. 16.

[1074] B. Shaw, *The Impossibilities of Anarchism*, p. 24.

[1075] Davidson, *The Democrat's Address*, p. 15.

[1076] Bax, *Paris Commune*, p. 35.

[1077] Bax, *Essays in Socialism*, pp. 98, 99.

[1078] Davidson, *Christ, State, and Commune*, pp. 16, 17.

[1079] *Ibid.* p. 6.

[1080] Blatchford, *God and My Neighbour*, p. 195.

[1081] Thompson, *That Blessed Word Liberty*, p. 13.

[1082] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 172.

[1083] Kropotkin, *Anarchism*, p. 8.

[1084] Brockhaus, *Konversations Lexikon*, vol. i. p. 578.

[1085] Shaw, *The Impossibilities of Anarchism*, p. 26.

[1086] *Freedom*, November 1907.

[1087] *Freedom*, November 1907.

[1088] Davidson, *Christ, State, and Commune*, p. 22.

[1089] *Ibid.* p. 31.

[1090] Kropotkin, *Anarchism*, p. 19.

[1091] Kropotkin, *The Wage System*, p. 15.

[1092] See Leatham, *Lives of the Chicago Martyrs*.

[1093] *Social-Democratic Federation Song Book*, p. 35.

[1094] Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, p. 63.

[1095] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 31.

[1096] Bax, *A Short History of the Paris Commune*, p. 78.

[1097] *Independent Labour Party Song Book*, p. 33.

CHAPTER XXXI[ToC]

SOCIALISM AND REVOLUTION

The "Socialist Catechism" contains the following passage: "*Q.* How are forms of government changed so as to readjust them to the economical changes in the forms of production which have been silently evolving in the body of society? *A.* By means of revolution.—*Q.* Give an instance of this? *A.* The French Revolution of 1789."[1098]

Many British Socialists are revolutionaries. They hope to introduce Socialism into Great Britain by revolutionary means. They have studied the French revolutions, and have become pupils of the French revolutionary leaders. "Socialism is essentially revolutionary, politically and economically, as it aims at the complete overthrow of existing economic and political conditions. We should organise and be prepared for what might be described as a revolutionary outbreak. The economic changes which are taking place, and the corresponding

changes in other conditions, are bringing about a revolutionary transformation in human society, and what we have to do is to help on this development, and to prepare the way for it."[1099] "We Socialists are not reformers; we are revolutionists. We Socialists do not propose to change forms. We care nothing for forms. We want a change of the inside of the mechanism of society; let the form take care of itself."[1100] British Socialism was founded by revolutionary Communists. Marx was a revolutionary. "For a number of years the late William Morris, the greatest man whom the Socialist movement has yet claimed in this country, held and openly preached this doctrine of cataclysmic upheaval and sudden overthrow of the ruling classes."[1101] That idea has been revived by modern British Socialists, many of whom believe that "The only effective way to induce the ruling class to attempt to palliate the evils of their system is to organise the workers for the overthrow of that system."[1102] "In the International Socialist movement we are at last in the presence of a force which is gathering unto itself the rebel spirits of all lands and uniting them into a mighty host to do battle, not for the triumph of a sect, or of a race, but for the overthrow of a system which has filled the world with want and woe. 'Workers of the world, unite!' wrote Karl Marx; 'you have a world to win and nothing to lose but your chains.' And they are uniting under the crimson banner of a world-embracing principle which knows nor sect, nor creed, nor race, and which offers new life and hope to all created beings—the glorious gospel of Socialism."[1103]

In many respects the French Revolution has served as a model to British Socialists of the Anarchist-

Revolutionary type. They have adopted its outward emblems, its songs, and its most effective catch-phrases: "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity was the brave and splendid legend inscribed on the blood-red banners of the French Revolutionists. And in strange ways the oppressed and hunger-maddened people sought to realise their ideal. It is still the battle-cry of the English Socialists—indeed, of the world-wide Socialist movement."[1104] In the Socialist song-books a translation of the "Marseillaise" is to be found, which is sung at Socialist gatherings:

Shall hateful tyrants, mischief-breeding,
With hireling hosts, a ruffian band,
Affright and desolate the land,
While Peace and Liberty lie bleeding?
To arms! to arms, ye brave!
The avenging sword unsheathe!
March on! March on! all hearts resolved
On Liberty or death.[1105]

In the eyes of many British Socialists the French Revolution was not sufficiently democratic, not sufficiently radical, not sufficiently violent. We are told that the French revolutionaries were soft-hearted men, and that our sympathy with their innocent victims, such as Queen Marie Antoinette, is quite uncalled for. "The Revolution was in its conception, its inception, and its results a middle-class revolution. The revolution was inaugurated by the Parliament of Paris—a pettifogging legal

assembly. Marie Antoinette was but one fine useless woman among the millions, and she personified the heedless prodigal selfishness of autocracy. We of the Socialist movement, who are full of the idea of social service, of making a full return to society for the bread we eat, the clothes we wear out, and the house-room we occupy, how can we be expected to think so much of the suffering of one idle extravagant woman and so little of the age-long privation and torture of the hard-working useful mothers and sisters of France? The crimes of ignorant, passionate democracy, of which Burke and Carlyle have made so much, are as a drop in the ocean by comparison with the deliberate enormities perpetrated by enlightened cold-blooded autocracy, from Herod to Nicholas. The democracy has always been pitiful, extremely pitiful. Even the September massacres, carried out by the lowest of the low in an enraged and degraded and terror-stricken populace, are brightened by golden patches of clemency and love such as the annals of class punishment nowhere reveal."[1106]

The outbreak of the Paris Commune of 1871, having been less a "middle-class" revolution, is considered by Socialists with greater approval than the French Revolution of 1789. The philosopher of British Socialism writes: "The Commune of Paris is the one event which Socialists throughout the world have agreed with single accord to celebrate. Every 18th of March witnesses thousands of gatherings throughout the civilised world to commemorate the (alas! only temporary) victory of organised Socialist aspiration over the forces of property and privilege in 1871."[1107] Another leading Socialist writer says: "Year by year as the 18th of March comes round, it is the custom with Socialists to commemorate the

proclamation of the Commune of Paris. As a Socialist I am a friend of the Commune."[1108]

What was the Paris Commune, and what did it do? In the words of an impartial publication, "The Communard chiefs were revolutionaries of every sect, who, disagreeing on governmental and economic principles, were united in their vague but perpetual hostility to the existing order of things. History has rarely known a more unpatriotic crime than that of the insurrection of the Commune."[1109] "The Commune was an insurrection which initiated a series of terrible outrages by the murder of the two generals Lecomte and Thomas.... The incapacity and mutual hatred of their chiefs rendered all organisation and durable resistance impossible.... The Communists were committing the most horrible excesses: the Archbishop of Paris, President Bonjean, priests, magistrates, journalists, and private individuals, whom they had seized as hostages, were shot in batches in prisons, and a scheme of destruction was ruthlessly carried into effect by men and women with cases of petroleum. The Hôtel de Ville, the Palais de Justice, the Tuileries, the Ministry of Finance, the Palace of the Legion of Honour, that of the Council of State, part of the Rue de Rivoli, &c., were ravaged by the flames; barrels of gunpowder were placed in Notre Dame and the Pantheon ready to blow up the buildings, and the whole city would have been involved in ruin if the national troops had not gained a last and crowning victory."[1110]

Socialists have nothing but praise for the Communards, who killed and burned, desecrated the churches and devastated the town. They speak with enthusiasm of the leaders of that outbreak as of heroes who fought for the "Brotherhood of Man," and

they exalt them above the saints of early Christianity. The philosopher of British Socialism exclaims: "Limitless courage and contempt of death was displayed in defence of an ideal, the colossal proportions of which dwarf everything in history, and which alone suffices to redeem the sordidness of the nineteenth century. Here was a heroism in the face of which the much-belauded Christian martyrs cut a very poor figure."[1111] "It was in the Commune that we saw manifested as never before the strong compelling force of a secular altruism. Without hope of heaven and without fear of hell, men lived and died for the idea of a brotherhood of self-governing and self-respecting men and women."[1112]

Even the murderous Paris Commune was too moderate for the taste of many British Socialists, who favour sterner measures. The philosopher of British Socialism informs us; "The Commune had one special fault, that of a fatuous moderation in all its doings. Probably never since history began have any body of men allowed themselves and theirs to be treated as lambs in the slaughterhouse with more lamb-like forbearance and absence of retaliation than the Commune and its adherents; we have seen this illustrated by the incredible fact that up to the last, amid all the slaughterings of Communists, the vast majority of the hostages and prisoners in its hands remained unscathed."[1113] "One of the most unfortunate characteristics of the leaders of the Commune was their sensitiveness to bourgeois public opinion. The first thing for the leader of a revolutionary movement to learn is a healthy contempt for the official public opinion of the 'civilised world.' He must resolutely harden his heart against its 'thrills of horror,' its 'indignation,' its 'abomination,' and its 'detestation,' and he must learn

to smile at all the names it will liberally shower upon him and his cause."[1114]

Whilst the revolutionary criminals who ruled by murder and arson were heroes and martyrs, the defenders of law and order were criminals according to British Socialists: "The thirst of the well-to-do classes for the blood of the Communards was insatiable. The latter were tried and shot in batches."[1115] "The Communards, desperate as they were, only faintly imitated the wholesale savagery of the regular troops."[1116] Peaceful M. Thiers, being at the head of the government, was "probably the cleverest, most hypocritical, and most unscrupulous villain that ever denied the pages of history."[1117]

Although Socialists pose as democrats, they do not believe in majority government.[1118] Being aware that they will hardly be able to gain over the majority of the people to their revolutionary and visionary plans, they may, like the Paris Commune, try to force Socialism upon an unwilling majority. Therefore the attempt of the Parisian Socialists to overrule France is not condemned but regretted by the British Socialists: "The revolt was open to the objection that may be urged against most insurrections. It was an attempt to impose the will of a minority on a large majority of the people. The Socialists in the Commune must have realised at times that the people of France were not prepared for even the small instalments of Socialism which they sought to introduce. The revolutionists may have thought to impose their policy upon France by a mere *coup de main*."[1119]

The attitude of Socialists makes it appear possible that the revolutionary outbreak of 1871 will not be the last. The next revolutionary attempt may

conceivably take place in Great Britain. "One man with an idea in his head is in danger of being considered a madman; two men with the same idea in common may be foolish, but can hardly be mad; ten men sharing an idea begin to act; a hundred draw attention as fanatics, a thousand and society begins to tremble, a hundred thousand and there is war abroad."[1120] "Whilst our backers at the polls are counted by tens, we must continue to crawl and drudge and lecture as best we can. When they are counted by hundreds, we can permeate and trim and compromise. When they rise to tens of thousands, we shall take the field as an independent party. Give us hundreds of thousands, as you can if you try hard enough, and we will ride the whirlwind and direct the storm."[1121]

FOOTNOTES:

[1098] Joynes, *A Socialist Catechism*, p. 13.

[1099] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 37.

[1100] De Leon, *Reform or Revolution*, p. 3.

[1101] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 23.

[1102] *Socialist Standard*, October 1, 1907.

[1103] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 86.

[1104] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 10.

[1105] *Independent Labour Party Song Book*, p. 20.

[1106] Leatham, *French Revolution*, pp. 13, 14.

[1107] Bax, *Paris Commune*, Preface.

[1108] Leatham, *The Commune of Paris*, p. 3.

[1109] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xxviii. p. 480.

[1110] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xviii. p. 294.

[1111] Bax, *Paris Commune*, p. 59.

[1112] Leatham, *The Commune of Paris*, p. 18.

[1113] Bax, *Paris Commune*, p. 74.

[1114] *Ibid.* p. 88.

[1115] Leatham, *The Commune of Paris*, p. 13.

[1116] *Ibid.* p. 19.

[1117] Bax, *Paris Commune*, p. 86.

[1118] See Chapters XV. and XXX. *ante.*

[1119] Leatham, *The Commune of Paris*, p. 15.

[1120] Morris, *Art, Labour, and Socialism*, p. 24.

[1121] Shaw, *The Fabian Society and its Early History*, p. 28.

CHAPTER XXXII[ToC]

STATE SOCIALISM

Most Socialist agitators in Great Britain oppose and condemn State Socialism for two reasons: firstly, because, owing to their Communist and Anarchist leanings, they oppose and hate the State as such, as has been shown in the Chapters on "Socialism and Communism," "Socialism and Anarchism," "Socialism and Revolution"; secondly, because with the introduction of State Socialism their occupation would be gone. Socialist agitators do not wish others to govern the State. They wish to govern it themselves. The welfare of the masses is to them apparently only a secondary consideration. Hence most British Socialist agitators condemn the State Socialism of Germany, though it has greatly benefited the masses, and perhaps because it has greatly benefited the masses. They also condemn the British Post Office, although, being not overburdened with scruples, they praise it to the skies as a Socialistic model institution when it happens to suit them. In fact, most Socialist leaders condemn all existing Government institutions, ostensibly because they are capitalistic enterprises which are run at a "profit," and because they "exploit" their workers. It would of course be fatal to the Socialist agitators had they to preach the gospel of envy and hatred, of destruction and pillage, to the contented.

"The State of to-day, nationally and locally, is only the agent of the possessing class."[1122] "Mere nationalisation or mere municipalisation of any industry is not Socialism or Collectivism; it may be only the substitution of corporate for private administration; the social idea and purpose with which Collectivism is concerned may be completely absent."[1123] "Mere Statification, as we may term it,

does not mean Socialism. The State of to-day is mainly an agent of the possessing classes, and industrial or commercial undertakings run to-day by Governmental bodies are largely run in the interests of these classes. Their aim in all cases is to show a profit, in the same way as ordinary capitalistic enterprises. This profit accrues to the possessing classes in the form of relief of imperial or local taxation, mainly paid by them, interests on loans, &c. In other words, these industrial undertakings are run for profit and not for use, and their employees are little, if at all, better off than those of private employers."[1124] "The modern State is but the organisation which capitalist society gives itself in order to maintain the external conditions of capitalist production against the attacks both of the workmen and of individual capitalists. The modern State, whatever its form, is essentially a capitalist machine."[1125] "State administration is very far from being the same as a Socialistic administration, as is sometimes erroneously supposed. The State administration is just as much a system of capitalistic exploitation as if the institutions in question were in the hands of private undertakers."[1126] "A bureaucracy—that is, a body of permanent officials, entrenched in Government departments, according to whose piping ministers themselves have willingly or unwillingly to dance—is totally incompatible with the very elementary conditions of Socialistic administration."[1127] "Bismarckian State control is brusque and baneful, and is certainly not the desire of the true Socialist."[1128]

"State ownership, State tyranny, State interference exist to-day. We have to bear them now; we have to submit to them now; we have to pay for them now. The people, as such, own nothing. And the Socialists

demand that the people shall own everything. Not the 'State,' the 'People.' So great is the difference between the word 'State' and the word 'people.'"[1129] "Do you propose that all these means of production which are now owned by individuals, by this class, as you say, should be made the property of the Government, like the Post Office and the telegraph system are in this country, and the railways as well in some others, or that they should be owned by municipal bodies, as waterworks, tramways, gasworks, and so on, are in many cases already?—No. Socialism does not mean mere Governmental ownership or management. The State of to-day, nationally or locally, is only the agent of the possessing class; the Post Office and the other State-owned businesses are run for profit just as other businesses are; and the Government, as the agent of the possessing class, has, in the interests of its employers, to treat the employees just as other employees are treated. The organised democratic society contemplated by Socialists is a very different thing from the class State of to-day. When society is organised for the control of its own business, and has acquired the possession of its own means of production, its officers will not be the agents of a class, and production will be carried on for the use of all and not for the profit of a few."[1130] "The Post Office to-day is an organised sweating-den. The Government get the largest possible amount of work for the lowest possible wages. That is capitalist wage-slavery under Government control."[1131] "The country postman has to walk excessive distances for miserable wages in order that the profit on the Post Office may be filched from the employees and from the public by the Chancellor of the Exchequer."[1132]

The Fabians, on the other hand, advocate State

Socialism, but they are a small minority. "The Socialism advocated by the Fabian Society is State Socialism exclusively."[1133] Some Socialists would welcome State Socialism in the hope that it would prepare the way for free Communism. Mr. Keir Hardie, for instance, says: "State Socialism with all its drawbacks, and these I frankly admit, will prepare the way for free Communism, in which the rule, not merely the law of the State, but the rule of life will be—From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."[1134]

"Socialists only believe in the fraternal State. Paternal State Socialism all Socialists unanimously oppose."[1135]

FOOTNOTES:

[1122] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, p. 8.

[1123] Ball, *The Moral Aspects of Socialism*, p. 9.

[1124] Bax, *Essays in Socialism*, p. 7.

[1125] Engels, *Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science*, p. 71.

[1126] Bebel, *Woman*, pp. 198, 199.

[1127] Bax, *Essays in Socialism*, p. 9.

[1128] Ben Tillett, *Trades Unionism and Socialism*, p. 14.

[1129] *Clarion*, October 18, 1907.

[1130] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism of Socialism*, pp. 8, 9.

[1131] Hyndman, *Social-Democracy*, p. 22.

[1132] *Fabian Election Manifesto*, 1892, p. 3.

[1133] *Report on Fabian Policy*, 1896, p. 5.

[1134] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 89.

[1135] Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, p. 1262.

CHAPTER XXXIII[ToC]

THE SOCIALIST ORGANISATIONS: THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS AND THEIR POLICY

The Social-Democratic Federation is the most honest and straightforward of the various Socialist organisations. Its aims are revolutionary, as the following statement proves:

"The Social-Democratic Federation is a militant Socialist organisation whose members—men and women—belong almost entirely to the working classes. Its object is the realisation of Socialism—the emancipation of the working class from its present subjection to the capitalist class. The means by which it seeks to attain that end are: agitation, education, and the organisation of the working class into a class-conscious political party—that is, a party

clearly conscious of the present position of the workers as a subject class, in consequence of all the means of production being owned and controlled by another class, and clearly conscious of its duty and mission to free them from that position by the conquest of all the powers of the State, and by making all the means of production collective common property, to be used for the benefit of all instead of for the profit of a class. To this end the Social-Democratic Federation proclaims and preaches the class war."[1136]

"According to the report for the year ending March 1907 it has 186 branches and affiliated societies. One of its members sits in Parliament as a member of the Labour party, and about 120 are members of various local bodies. Its gross income and expenditure through, out the country is estimated at 15,500*l.* It has a weekly paper, 'Justice,' and a monthly magazine, 'The Social-Democrat.'[1137] "In its own estimation "Justice" is "the most respected of Socialist newspapers."[1138]

The various Socialist organisations do not love each other. The Fabian Society caustically remarks: "The Federation runs a newspaper called 'Justice' which has not hitherto been worth a penny to any man whose pence are so scarce as a labourer's, and which has made repeated attacks on the ordinary working-class organisations without whose co-operation Socialists can at present do nothing except cry in the wilderness. The branches are expected to sell this paper at their meetings."[1139] "The Social-Democratic Federation is virtually the oldest Socialist society and is certainly the most conservative. It was founded as the Democratic Federation about 1880, and adopted its present name in 1884. Mr. H.M.

Hyndman, its most prominent member, imported its doctrines—which were of German origin—and the S.D.F. (as it is familiarly called) has ever since endeavoured to maintain an unshaken faith in all the teachings of Karl Marx. In fact, the S.D.F. changes its doctrines not with the times, but a dozen years or so after; so that it is always rather out of touch with the actualities of politics and attracts the type of mind that prefers clear-cut principles to practical political progress."[1140]

Other Socialist organisations which are less straightforward than the Social-Democratic Federation hide their identity and object under misleading titles. The Independent Labour Party, for instance, is a purely Socialist party notwithstanding its name. "Its object is, an Industrial Commonwealth founded upon the Socialisation of land and capital. Its methods are the education of the community in the principles of Socialism; the industrial and political organisation of the workers; the independent representation of Socialist principles on all elective bodies."[1141] "No one will find much difference in the programmes of the Social-Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party."[1142] "The Independent Labour Party, commonly called the I.L.P., which must be carefully distinguished from the Labour party, is much the largest, and politically the most important, Socialist organisation. It was founded at Bradford in 1892, by Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., and others, and it has from the first advocated Socialism of the English type and endeavoured to work in harmony with trade unionists. The Labour party is mainly due to its initiative, and through its members in trade unions it largely controls the policy of the party. In August 1907 it had over 700 branches, of which 155 had

been formed in the preceding six months. Its operations have recently expanded with extraordinary rapidity, its central office expenditure for the years ending February 28 having been 955*l.* in 1905, 1,817*l.* in 1906, and 3,552*l.* in 1907. It does a very large business in the publication and sale of pamphlets and books, and has a weekly paper, "The Labour Leader." At the general election of 1906, eighteen of its members were returned to Parliament, all belonging to the Labour party, and two more have since been elected, one for the Labour party, and one, Mr. Victor Grayson, as an independent Socialist. Over five hundred of its members sit on town councils and other local bodies. The total membership is estimated at 40,000, and its income and expenditure at perhaps 100,000*l.*"[1143] "The Independent Labour Party was formed in January 1893. As years have passed the Independent Labour Party has steadily strengthened its programme, until it is to-day entirely Socialist, but it has not quite got rid of the strain of opportunism, at elections its independence being more in evidence in its name than in its conduct."[1144]

Wishing to secure Socialist and non-Socialist adherents, and masquerading as a Liberal Labour party, the attitude of the Independent Labour Party is not a straightforward one. One of its competitors states: "The Independent Labour Party has continued its policy of bargain-making with capitalist politicians. The leaders at times call themselves Socialists, and at other times protest against frightening their supporters by introducing the word into resolutions. At the general election, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald at Leicester, and Mr. James Parker at Halifax, were amongst the candidates who entered into compacts with the Liberals. At the Amsterdam

International Congress they voted for a resolution extolling the 'tried and victorious policy based on the class war,' and on their return to England referred to the class war as a 'shibboleth' and as a 'reactionary and Whiggish precept, certain to lead the movement away from the real aims of Socialism.'"[1145]

The Fabian Society is the least open and the least straightforward Socialist organisation. Ostensibly it adopted its curious name because "for the right moment you must wait, as Fabius did most patiently when warring against Hannibal, though many censured his delays; but when the time comes you must strike hard as Fabius did, or your waiting will be in vain, and fruitless."[1146] In reality the misleading title was probably adopted because the Fabian Society habitually and on principle sails under a false flag, wishing not to arouse suspicion as to its objects.

The object of the small but powerful Fabian Society is a peculiar one: "Founded on a small scale in 1884 and actually the oldest of the three great Socialist organisations, the Fabian Society has never aimed at a large membership or endeavoured to become a political party. Its work has been mainly educational, its endeavour to translate the principles of Socialism into practical politics suited to English conditions. From the first it refused to accept Marxian teaching. The Fabian Society is not a political body, in that it allows its members complete freedom to adopt any method of carrying out the principles they profess. Hence its members in Parliament belong to the Liberal or the Labour party, and they sit as Progressives on London local bodies. The Society is mainly middle-class, and the majority of its members belong to London, where fortnightly

meetings are held for the discussion of Socialism. Its great force lies in the ability of many of its members, some of whom, Mr. Bernard Shaw, the dramatist; Mr. Sidney Webb, the political writer; Sir Sydney Olivier, now Governor of Jamaica, have belonged to it from the start; whilst others, such as Mr. H.G. Wells and the Rev. R.J. Campbell, are more recent recruits. Recently it has greatly increased its membership, now nearly 2,000, and has formed substantial branches in the Universities and in many large towns. Eleven of its members sit in Parliament."[1147]

"The chief object to which the Society devotes its resources is the education of the people in political, economic, and social subjects. To effect this purpose it must in the first place educate itself by the discussion of those problems which from time to time appear ripe for solution. Its members therefore undertake the study of such problems, and lay the results before the Society, where they are considered from various points of view. Finally the conclusions adopted and generally approved by the members are published, usually in penny tracts, and by this means made available for the information of all. The Society further endeavours to promote social amelioration by the dissemination of information about existing institutions, in order that better use may be made of the powers already possessed by local administrative authorities, now too often neglectful of their obligations. The same ends are sought to be attained by means of circulating libraries supplied to Working-men's Clubs, Co-operative Societies, Trade Unions, and similar bodies, and by the publication of lists of best books on social and political subjects. The Society also at times engages trained lecturers to give courses of lectures during the winter months on social politics to working-class and other

organisations. The members of the Society who control its policy are Socialists; that is to say, are committed to the theory of the probable direction of economic evolution which is now often called Collectivism."[1148]

"The object of the Fabian Society is to persuade the English people to make their political constitution thoroughly democratic, and so to socialise their industries as to make the livelihood of the people entirely independent of private Capitalism. The Fabian Society endeavours to pursue its Socialist and Democratic objects with complete singleness of aim. For example: It has no distinctive opinions on the Marriage Question, Religion, Art, abstract Economics, historic Evolution, Currency, or any other subject than its own special business of practical Democracy and Socialism. It brings all the pressure and persuasion in its power to bear on existing forces, caring nothing by what name any party calls itself, or what principles, Socialist or other, it professes, but having regard solely to the tendency of its actions supporting those which make for Socialism and Democracy and opposing those which are reactionary. It does not propose that the practical steps towards Social Democracy should be carried out by itself, or by any other specially organised society or party. It does not ask the English people to join the Fabian Society. The Fabian Society does not claim to be the people of England, or even the Socialist party, and therefore does not seek direct political representation by putting forward Fabian candidates at elections. But it loses no opportunity of influencing elections and inducing constituencies to select Socialists as their candidates."[1149]

"The Fabian Society, far from holding aloof from

other bodies, urges its members to lose no opportunity of joining them and permeating them with Fabian ideas as far as possible."[1150] "The typical Fabian is an uncompromising Socialist and Democrat; but he holds aloof from no association that can possibly be induced to push in his direction. Instead of wasting time in forming new sects, he tries to inoculate with his Socialism the existing organisations—the political clubs, the caucuses, the trade unions, the Press, the co-operative societies, and the rival party leaders."[1151]

Whilst the other Socialist organisations rely chiefly on direct driving force, the Fabian Society relies chiefly on subtle, indirect action and on intrigue. One of its most prominent men boasted: "In 1888 it only cost us twenty-eight postcards, written by twenty-eight members, to convince the newly-born 'Star' newspaper that London was aflame with Fabian Socialism."[1152] "Our policy has been to try to induce some of these regular papers to give a column or two to Socialism, calling it by what name they please. And I have no hesitation in saying that the effect of this policy as shown in the 'Manchester Sunday Chronicle,' the 'Star,' the London 'Daily Chronicle,' and other more exclusively working-class papers, notably the 'Clarion,' has done more for the cause than all the time and money that has been wasted on 'Justice' since the 'Star' was founded. Our mission is to Socialise the Press as we hope to Socialise Parliament and the other estates of the realm, not to run the Press ourselves."[1153]

Owing to these peculiar methods, by which they secured the support of many people who did not know they were Socialists, the Fabians have been very successful in their policy: "In 1888 we had not

been found out even by the 'Star.' The Liberal party was too much preoccupied over Mr. O'Brien's breeches and the Parnell Commission, with its dramatic climax in the suicide of the forger Pigott, to suspect that the liveliness of the extreme left of the Radical wing in London meant anything but the usual humbug about working-class interests. We urged our members to join the Liberal and Radical Associations of their districts, or if they preferred it, the Conservative Associations. We told them to become members of the nearest Radical club and co-operative store and to get delegated to the Metropolitan Radical Federation and the Liberal and Radical Union if possible. On these bodies we made speeches and moved resolutions, or better still, got the Parliamentary candidate for the constituency to move them, and secured reports and encouraging little articles for him in the 'Star.' We permeated the party organisations and pulled all the wires we could lay our hands on with our utmost adroitness and energy; and we succeeded so far that in 1888 we gained the solid advantage of a Progressive majority, full of ideas that would never have come into their heads had not the Fabian put them there, on the first London County Council. The generalship of this movement was undertaken chiefly by Sidney Webb, who played such bewildering conjuring tricks with the Liberal thimbles and the Fabian peas that to this day both the Liberals and the sectarian Socialists stand aghast at him."[1154] Fabians rely for their success chiefly on their artfulness. "Always remember that, even if you cannot convert a man to Socialism, you may get his vote all the same."[1155]

Fabian middle-class Socialism differs from the democratic Socialism of the larger Socialist organisations which appeal to the working class:

"The Socialism advocated by the Fabian Society is State Socialism exclusively."[1156] "We have never advanced the smallest pretensions to represent the working classes of this country."[1157] Therefore the Fabians are very cordially hated by the Democratic Socialists. The Social-Democratic Federation blames them for their "cynical opportunism."[1158] Another organisation declares: "The Fabian Society poses as a Socialist organisation, for we are told that this Society 'consists of Socialists.' It is indeed composed of middle-class men who naturally deny the class struggle, profess to believe in permeating the capitalist class with Socialism, and hold that the tendency of society is towards government by the expert-Fabianism therefore tends towards the rule of the bureaucrats or that section of the educated middle-class. The Fabians are the cult of the civil service and are Socialists neither in name nor in fact."[1159]

Let us now consider the genesis and character of the great Labour party.

Formerly Socialists and trade unionists marched and fought apart. However, "On the 27th February, 1900, a joint Socialist and Trade Union Conference met in the Memorial Hall, London. One hundred and seventeen delegates were present representing sixty-seven Trade Unions, seven representing the Independent Labour Party, four the Social-Democratic Federation, one the Fabian Society. The result was the formation of the Labour Representation Committee,"[1160] simultaneously representing trade unions and Socialists. "At the General Election of 1906, the Labour Representation Committee ran fifty candidates for Parliament and returned thirty. That year its name was changed to

the Labour Party."[1161] The Labour party therefore unites trade unionists and Socialists. The Fabian Society and the Independent Labour party have joined it. Only the Social-Democratic Federation has so far kept aloof from it.

The Labour party, being chiefly composed of trade unionists, is fond of posing as a non-Socialist party. It is true that "Mr. Keir Hardie, the Labour leader, said they did not want Toryism, Liberalism, or Socialism, only Labourism, but the same Keir Hardie sits as a delegate on the International Socialist Bureau."[1162] "Many of the Labour members in Parliament are avowed Socialists. The working-class movement already is largely a Socialist movement, and is in continual process of becoming more so. With the speculative side of Socialism the average man with us has but small concern; it is its common-sense which appeals to him. By inherited instinct we are all Communists at heart."[1163]

"The Labour party, which now has thirty-one members in the House of Commons, is not purely Socialist, but twenty-three or twenty-four of its M.P.s, and nearly all its elected executive, are Socialists. It has no official programme; but in view of its membership its policy is and must be Socialist. This is not because the majority rules. It is because the Socialist section has a policy and the non-Socialist section approves of that policy so far as it can be translated into Bills or resolutions to be laid before Parliament. There is no anti-Socialism in the Labour party. There is far more difference between sections of Liberals or Conservatives than there is between Socialist and non-Socialist Labour men. All these bodies are working more or less together for the same great ends."[1164] The connection between

organised Labour and organised Socialism is further illustrated by the important letters printed on pages 141-143 of this book.

The demands and semi-official programme of the Labour party are practically identical with those of avowed Socialists, as may be seen from the following statement of its Secretary:

"We are in favour of the special taxation of land values, of a minimum income-tax on earned incomes, and a super-tax on a graded scale on all incomes over, say, 1,000*l.* This is described as robbing the rich. That does not express either the purpose or the spirit of the Labour party however. We call it—securing for the public values created by the public. Our critics, if they are to have any effect on intelligent public opinion, must understand this cardinal point in our creed, this axiom in our programme-making. We do not regard taxation as a taking by the State of property which belongs to other people, but the appropriation of property which ought to belong to itself. This theory of taxation goes very far, and its full application involves the complete destruction of parasitic classes. It can only be applied slowly, but as people get clearly to understand that socially-created values should be socially-owned values, many of our most recondite problems, like overcrowding, waste-lands, high rating, will be in a fair way to settlement."[1165]

The foregoing shows that the Labour party, like the most predatory Socialist, wishes to tax all private capital out of existence. "The Labour party is not as yet a purely Socialist organisation, because any attempt to make it such would disrupt it."[1166] However, its rank and file are rapidly being permeated with Socialism.

The following table shows the composition of the Labour party and its numerical strength and growth:

"Growth of the Labour Party

	Trades Union Membership	Socialist Membership	Total
1900-1	353,070	22,861	375,931
1901-2	455,450	13,861	169,311
1902-3	847,315	13,835	861,150
1903-4	956,025	13,775	969,800
1904-5	885,270	14,730	900,000
1905-6	904,496	16,784	921,280
1906-7	975,182	20,885	*998,338

*This total includes 2,271 co-operators"[1167]

Apparently only one-fiftieth of the members of the Labour party are Socialists, but in reality their proportion is very much larger, because only a few working men with Socialistic leanings have actually joined a Socialist party. "When the daily Press states that out of a million affiliated members of the Labour party there are only 17,000 Socialists, its readers naturally inquire, 'How then is it that there are at least twenty Socialists among its thirty M.P.s?' The reply is that as the trade union candidates were elected by the ballot of the members of their respective societies, it must be supposed that those candidates with Socialist views were the most acceptable to the majority of members. This situation was strikingly reflected in the results of the election of 1906. The votes cast for declared Socialists

account for 232,378, or 70 per cent. of the total Labour Representation Committee poll of 331,280, whilst of the whole Labour poll, comprising that of the L.R.C., Scottish workers, miners, trades union group, and Socialists, the votes for declared Socialists accounted for 274,631 out of 530,643, or nearly 52 per cent."[1168] "The Labour party is not a Socialist party yet, but those who possess an ear for the great changes now taking place in the depths of the nation will understand that the Labour party is going to be a Socialist party one day."[1169]

It seems likely that the more or less Socialist Labour party in Parliament will soon absorb practically the whole trade union group. "Of the eighteen miners' representatives in the House of Commons fifteen are in the trade union group. In October 1907, at the Conference of the Federated Miners' Associations, a resolution was adopted declaring that the time had come for joining the Labour party and ordering a ballot of the whole Federation area to be taken. It is practically a foregone conclusion that the proposal will be carried, in which case the fifteen miners' representatives now sitting on the Ministerial benches will cross the House and practically double the effective power of the Labour party as against the Government. The trade union group will then practically cease to exist. The railway servants have decided that all their candidates at the next election must join the Labour party. Therefore Richard Bell must sign the constitution of the Labour party or retire in favour of someone who will. Of the remaining seven members of the group W.C. Steadman is the only recognised leader of trade unionism."[1170]

Apart from the larger Socialist parties described in

the foregoing, there are two smaller organisations composed of revolutionary Socialists of the most violent type, whose Socialism is a misnomer for Anarchism. They are "The Socialist Party of Great Britain" domiciled in London, and "The Socialist Labour Party" (an American importation), domiciled in Edinburgh. Their programmes, as those of the other Socialist organisations, will be found in the Appendix.

The numerous Socialistic organisations mentioned in this Chapter oppose and fight one another. Many Socialists recommend that a united Socialist party should be formed, but it is clear to all who are acquainted with the inner history of British Socialism that "the vital differences that exist among Socialist parties as to tactics—as to the way to attain Socialism—cannot be glossed over by a few expressions of brotherly love."[1171] The Socialists are divided among themselves, and the rivalry and enmity between some of the sections is deep-seated and bitter. Nominally they differ with regard to the policy to be pursued, but in reality their differences seem to be rather of a personal nature. Socialist leaders, though they have the words "democracy," "freedom," "liberty," and "love" constantly on their lips, are apt to be very autocratic as soon as their sphere of political influence is threatened by competition, and as soon as their private property, their political capital which they have created, is threatened with "socialisation." The men who so glibly recommend the world-wide brotherhood of man, and the socialisation and co-operation of the world, cannot even co-operate among themselves although they pursue the identical immediate aim: the plunder of the well-to-do. It is an old experience that revolutionaries always end in cutting one

another's throats.

Some Socialist groups have been formed owing to very peculiar and very unsavoury circumstances. A comparatively innocent though psychologically highly interesting and characteristic Socialist new formation has recently occurred in that ally of the Socialists, the Women's Social and Political Union. "In September 1907 a bombshell was thrown into the camp of the Women's Social and Political Union by the extraordinary action of Mrs. Pankhurst, who, as 'the founder,' announced that she had discharged the Executive Committee of the Union."[1172] In the words of an opponent: "Mrs. Pankhurst tore up the constitution, robbed the branches and members of all control over the National Committee, abolished the annual conference, and elected herself and a few personal friends as an autocratic permanent committee answerable to no one in the world and to sit at her pleasure."[1173] The consequence of this personal squabble among leaders for supremacy was of course the splitting up of the party, and the aggrieved ladies formed a new party, the "Women's Freedom League."

Socialists never tire of declaiming against competition, and of praising co-operation. At present there are two "competitive" Women's Freedom societies. If they continue pushing the identical article of agitation, all custom will go to the larger party. Therefore we may expect that, unless the breach is healed, the two parties will agree to differ "on the basic principles of women's freedom" and will recommend slightly different political mixtures.

The example of France, Germany, and other countries shows that the jealousy and envy of leaders and party tyranny is nowhere greater than among

Socialists. It will not be easy for British Socialists to found a united party, especially as it is more difficult to create unity among individualistic Englishmen, who are by their nature impatient of restraint, than among Frenchmen and Germans, who are more used to co-operation and who through their military training have learned the necessity of discipline and the duty of obedience.

FOOTNOTES:

[1136] Quelch, *The Social-Democratic Federation*, p. 3.

[1137] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1908, pp. 74, 75.

[1138] *Annual Report, Social-Democratic Federation Conference 1906*, p. 2.

[1139] Shaw, *The Fabian Society*, p. 23.

[1140] The Secretary of the Fabian Society in *Daily Mail Year Book*, 1908, p. 72.

[1141] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1906, p. 73.

[1142] *Report of the Twenty-sixth Annual Conference, Social-Democratic Federation, 1906*, p. 1.

[1143] *Reformers' Year Book, 1908*, p. 73; *Daily Mail Year Book, 1908*, p. 72.

[1144] *Annual Report, Social-Democratic Federation Conference, 1906*, p. 3.

[1145] *Manifesto of the Socialist Party of Great Britain*, p. 2.

[1146] *Capital and Land*, Motto.

[1147] Secretary of Fabian Society in *Daily Mail Year Book, 1908*, p. 72.

[1148] Official Circular: *The Fabian Society*.

[1149] *Report on Fabian Policy*, 1896, p. 3.

[1150] *Ibid.* p. 4.

[1151] *Scottish Leader*, September 4, 1890, reprinted by Fabian Society and issued in form of a leaflet.

[1152] Shaw, *The Fabian Society*, p. 26.

[1153] *Ibid.* p. 24.

[1154] Shaw, *The Fabian Society*, pp. 18, 19.

[1155] *How to Lose and How to Win an Election*, p. 1.

[1156] *Report on Fabian Policy*, 1896, p. 5.

[1157] Shaw, *The Fabian Society*, p. 23.

[1158] *Annual Report, Social-Democratic Federation Conference, 1906*, p. 2.

[1159] *Manifesto, Socialist Party of Great Britain*, p. 11.

[1160] Macdonald, *Socialism*, p. 52.

[1161] *Ibid.* p. 53.

[1162] *Manifesto, Socialist Party of Great Britain*, p. 13.

[1163] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, pp. 33, 34.

[1164] Secretary, Fabian Society, in *Daily Mail Year Book*, 1908, p. 73.

[1165] R. Macdonald, M.P., in *Daily Mail Year Book*, 1908, p. 109.

[1166] *Manifesto, Socialist Party of Great Britain*, p. 3.

[1167] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1908, p. 8.

[1168] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1907, p. 51.

[1169] *Social-Democrat*, October 1907, p. 607.

[1170] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1908, p. 23.

[1171] *Socialist*, December 1907.

[1172] *Independent Labour Party Year Book*, 1908, p. 28.

[1173] *Forward*, November 23, 1907.

CHAPTER XXXIV[ToC]

THE GROWTH AND DANGER OF BRITISH SOCIALISM

Up to a recent date the Socialists in Great Britain had neither power nor influence. Whilst Germany, France, and other countries had large Socialist parties, British Socialism was practically unrepresented in Parliament. Many Englishmen thought that the free British democracies did not offer a soil favourable to the growth of Socialism, whilst many Socialist leaders believed that England possessed ideal conditions for effecting a social revolution because no other country contains, proportionally, so large a propertyless proletariat as England.[1174] In view of the large number of propertyless people in Great Britain and the nervous

restlessness of the race since it has become a race of town-dwellers we cannot wonder at the rapid growth of British Socialism, and we must look forward to its further increase.

The following most interesting table gives a picture of the growth of the Socialist vote in the three most Socialistic countries on the Continent of Europe, and in Great Britain. It shows that Socialism has apparently passed the zenith on the Continent of Europe, but that it has not yet reached maturity in Great Britain.

	"Germany	
	Votes	Members of Parliament
1867	30,000	8
1878	437,158	9
1887	763,123	11
1890	1,427,298	35
1893	1,876,738	44
1896	2,107,076	57
1903	3,010,472	81
1907	3,258,968	43

	France	
	Votes	M Par
1887	47,000	
1889	120,000	
1893	440,000	
1898	790,000	
1902	805,000	
1906	896,000	

	Great Britain	
	Votes	Members of Parliament
1895	46,000	0
1900*	65,000	2
1906*	335,000	30

	Belgium	
	Votes	M Par
1894	320,000	
1900	344,000	
1902	467,000	
1904	463,967	

1906	469,094

*This is the vote of the Labour party candidates, not all of w
Socialists."[1175]

A glance at the above table shows that the Socialist vote in Great Britain is as yet insignificant by comparison with other countries, and it seems likely to increase very greatly. More than a third of the Australian House of Representatives and Senate consists of Socialists. May not proportionately as large a Socialist party arise in Great Britain, especially as no political party can outbid the Socialists? The Socialist danger is probably greater in Great Britain than it is in France, Germany, or Belgium. In those countries a vast body of freehold peasants exists who are absolutely opposed to revolutionary schemes. Besides, owing to the fact that the majority of Continental workers have a substantial stake in the country, either in the form of land, houses, or other property, Continental Socialism is comparatively moderate, whilst it is violent, Anarchistic, and revolutionary in Great Britain, where the majority of workers possess far less property than the majority of French, German, and Belgian workers. The German Socialists, since Germany's unity, have gone the way of Lassalle, the patriot Socialist. "They have ceased to denounce the churches. From a necessary evil or a mere stop-gap, the present State has become to them gradually, and perhaps unconsciously, their own State."[1176] It is true that the Socialist vote is ten times larger in Germany than in Great Britain. Nevertheless the danger of Socialist troubles of the very gravest kind is perhaps greater in England than in Germany, especially as unemployment is far greater in Great

Britain than in Germany.[1177] It seems that Great Britain will pass through bad industrial times, and it should not be forgotten that the French Revolutions of 1789 and of 1848 were made by unemployed workmen upon whom Socialist and Communistic doctrines had taken a firm hold; that the distress caused by the siege of Paris led to the rising of the Commune in 1871; that between 1837 and 1848 the Chartist movement in Great Britain rose and declined in almost exact correspondence with the variations in the economic distress of the people.

The present aspect of Great Britain resembles the aspect of pre-Revolution France, owing to the unequal distribution of property. "Almost three-quarters of the soil of France belonged to the nobility and the clergy, or to 350,000 people. The whole of the rest of the nation possessed less than one-third of the soil."[1178] The absence of a sturdy property-owning lower middle-class, the disappearance of the yeomen, is a source of instability and weakness to Great Britain. Vast numbers of British workers live from hand to mouth. They are being inflamed by Socialist agitators against the wealthy, and they are being promised an equal share in the whole wealth of the nation. In case of very acute distress, either through purely economic causes or through a war with a strong naval power, which might lead to starvation in a country which is absolutely dependent on foreign countries for its food, a revolutionary outbreak in the overgrown towns of Great Britain seems by no means impossible. The revolutionary centre of the world may conceivably move from Paris to London.

The Socialists in Great Britain may not always remain a chaotic multitude led by rival agitators who

fight and intrigue against one another. Socialists believe: "So soon as Socialism becomes popular, great statesmen and philosophers will arise and take their stand boldly with the people in their fight for industrial freedom."[1179] There are more than 2,000,000 trade unionists in Great Britain, and Socialism is spreading rapidly among them. "Already the working-class movement is largely a Socialistic movement and is in continual process of becoming more so."[1180] The political character of the trade unionists is changing owing to the influence of Socialism and of the new unions. "The differences between the 'old' and 'new' unions are becoming more and more accentuated. The former adhere to the 'No politics' cry, *i.e.* no working-class politics, and still pin their faith to the Liberal or even Tory party; while the latter, like their Continental comrades, understand that their emancipation can only be achieved by means of political action as a class."[1181] "It is not possible for the working-class movement to dissociate itself from the Socialists, or from Socialism, because Socialism, however vaguely the fact may yet be recognised, is as essentially the political expression of that movement as Toryism was the political expression of landlordism and Liberalism is that of the bourgeoisie. In other words, there can be no working-class movement as such without Socialism."[1182] "It is true that the present Parliamentary Labour party is committed to independence on 'Labour questions only,' but no one has yet defined what is a 'Labour question,' and still less has anyone attempted to show what political questions are not labour questions."[1183] The letters printed on pages 141-143 of this book show that Socialism and Labour are commingling.

Socialism and Socialist influence have grown far

more rapidly in Great Britain than is generally known. Their growth can be gauged not so much by the result of the General Election of 1906, and of some startling by-election results, as by the reports of the Socialist societies, and especially by the sale of their literature. Therefore the following facts indicating the growth of British Socialism should prove to be of considerable interest.

The Independent Labour Party reported at its yearly meeting held at Derby on April 1 and 2, 1907:

"No department of our activities has been more encouraging in its work this year than that of literature. Last year our literature sales amounted to 1,200*l.*, which was 600*l.* more than the previous twelve months. This year they amount to 2,830*l.*, or 1,600*l.* more than last year. The sales of books and pamphlets are nearly double that of last year. This is a magnificent result. Many branches have established literature stalls in the markets or public streets of their towns, and have met with much success. The fruits of this propaganda are certain, and will be reaped sooner or later by the branches concerned. The income is larger than has been the case in any former year, and amounts to the sum of 6,064*l.* 12*s.*, as against 1,884*l.* 7*s.* 9*d.* for last year. The excess of assets over liabilities amounts to 3,729*l.* 2*s.* 5*d.*, as against 1,511*l.* last year. The financial position of the party is thus becoming increasingly solid and stable."[1184]

Since the time when that report was given, the Independent Labour Party has continued its rapid growth, as may be seen from the following "Facts of Progress" recently published by that party. "At the time of the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the Independent Labour Party, held at Derby at Easter

1907, there were then in existence 545 branches of the party. Now (November 1907), there are 709 branches. Gain in seven months, 164 branches. There are few Parliamentary constituencies in the United Kingdom without branches, and it is hoped before the present year to make even these omissions good. There are now six branches of the Independent Labour Party in Ireland, and more to follow. The Independent Labour Party has now 845 of its members on local governing bodies, endeavouring to put into operation locally the principles for which the party stands. During the summer nearly 2,000 meetings have been held each week throughout the country. Twenty-two special organisers have been at work for this last six months."[1185]

The latest reports of the other Socialist Societies give a picture of a similarly great activity, and of a similarly rapid growth.

It is true that the funds of the Socialist organisations are comparatively small, but it must not be forgotten that "1,000 men who subscribe 1*d.* are stronger in the poll than one man who subscribes 1,000*l.*"[1186] Besides, the Independent Labour Party has since 1893 spent more than 250,000*l.* for purposes of propaganda. That is a large sum to be spent in agitation. Furthermore, it is significant that many Socialist pamphlets and books have been sold in more than a hundred thousand copies, and a few even in more than a million copies. The Socialist periodicals have a considerable circulation. "The circulation of the 'Clarion' alone is 74,000."[1187]

The danger of British Socialism lies not only in its rapid increase among the workers, but also in the fact that it is making converts among the large class of people who possess no settled conviction of their

own, and who are easily carried away by a plausible catch-phrase. The persons who count are the multitude of loose thinkers who are drifting towards Socialism without knowing it. "Politicians who have no suspicion that they are Socialists are advocating further instalments of Socialism with a recklessness of indirect results which scandalises the conscious Social-Democrat."[1188] "Year by year more legislation is proposed of which the effect is to draw upon the earnings of the efficient for the benefit of the inefficient. Year by year Parliament makes life harder for those whose labour benefits the State and easier for those who are a drag upon it."[1189] "There is in fact no definite and declared Socialist party in the present House of Commons, and yet what may be called the spirit of Socialism pervades the whole House to a greater extent than in any previous Parliament."[1190] For instance, Mr. Rutherford, M.P., in an anti-Socialistic speech brought forward a "Democratic Tory Programme" which, in the words of a Socialist periodical, was "cribbed almost bodily from the Socialist programme. He advocated among other reforms-nationalisation of the railways, State provision of work for the unemployed, payment of Members, manhood and womanhood suffrage, the suppression of adulteration, town planning on the German system, crime to be treated as a disease, compulsory closing of slums, taxation of site values, and State powers to purchase any site at the price on the rate-book, a national system of insurance against accident and sickness, feeding and clothing poor children, free opening of secondary schools and universities."[1191] In giving prominence to this "anti-Socialist" speech the "Labour Leader" sarcastically remarked: "The items do not, of course, take us quite as far as we Socialists would go; but they are fairly

good to be going on with. Ours is to once again cordially welcome Mr. Rutherford as champion against Socialism."[1192]

A further danger consists in this, that many Socialists in Parliament and out of it like to sail under a false flag, in accordance with the tactics usually employed by the Fabian Society (see *ante*, Chapter XXXIII). Socialist publications inform us: "Among Socialists who stood and were elected as official Liberals are P. Alden, Clement Edwards, and L.G. Chiozza Money."[1193] "Many Liberals, like Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Masterman, Mr. J.M. Robertson, not to speak of the Liberal-Labour group, are committed to Socialist or semi-Socialist legislation. Many Liberal newspapers, we cannot fairly deny, are avowedly on the side of Socialism. The Liberal rank and file are also in the majority of instances quite favourable to the general principles of municipalisation and Labour legislation. Above all, as has so often been predicted by us, the two political camps of landlordism and capitalism are bound to combine together against Socialism, and they can only do so effectively under the Imperialist, Tariff Reform, anti-Land Reform, and anti-Municipalisation flags. The Liberal party cannot attempt single-handed to withstand us."[1194] Socialism often poses as Liberalism and is accepted as such by the unwary.

A further danger of British Socialism lies in the fact that it leads to the deterioration of the national character. "The strength of every community must finally depend on the character of the individuals who compose it. If they are self-reliant, energetic, and dutiful, the community will be strong; if, on the contrary, they have been taught to rely upon others

rather than on themselves, to take life easily and to avoid unpleasant duties, then the community will be weak. Teach men that they owe no duty to their families, no duty to their country, and that their only responsibility is to humanity at large, and they will quickly begin to think and act as if they had no responsibility to anyone but themselves."[1195] "Many workmen are being ruined morally and materially by Socialistic doctrines, because directly a man becomes imbued with the idea that he is not receiving full recompense for his labours he thinks himself justified in doing as little as he can for his employer. The consequence is that his labour, which is to him his stock-in-trade, depreciates in value and when business slackens down he is one of the first to get the 'sack.'"[1196]

FOOTNOTES:

[1174] See Karl Marx, *Capital*; Yorke, *Secret History of the International*; Stegmann und Hugo, *Handbuch*, p. 177; Kautsky, *Social Revolution*.

[1175] Macdonald, *Socialism*, pp. 125, 126.

[1176] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xxxii. p. 666.

[1177] Ellis Barker, *Modern Germany*, p. 546.

[1178] Block, *Dictionnaire Général*, vol. ii. p. 822.

[1179] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 8.

[1180] *Ibid.* p. 34.

[1181] Aveling, *Working-Class Movement in England*, p. 40.

[1182] *The Socialist Annual*, 1907, p. 38.

[1183] *Ibid.* p. 39.

[1184] *Independent Labour Party Annual Report Conference*, pp. 10, 12, 9.

[1185] *Labour Leader*, November 29, 1907.

[1186] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1906, p. 80.

[1187] *Clarion*, December 20, 1907.

[1188] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 188.

[1189] Lord Balfour of Burleigh in the *Times*, October 3, 1907.

[1190] Cox, *Socialism*, p. 7.

[1191] *Labour Leader*, October 18, 1907.

[1192] *Ibid.*

[1193] *Reformers' Year Book*, 1907, p. 58.

[1194] *Labour Leader*, October 11, 1907.

[1195] Cox, *Socialism*, p. 20.

[1196] Daw, *Socialism Unmasked*, p. 7.

CHAPTER XXXV[ToC]

HOW THE PROGRESS OF SOCIALISM MAY BE CHECKED

What can be done to check the growth of Socialism? Some most interesting statistics supplied by the German Social-Democratic party will furnish the best reply to that question. An analysis of the electorate of Magdeburg and Bremen, two typical commercial and industrial towns, gave the following result:

Composition of Electorate

	Magdeburg Numbers Per cent.	Bremen Numbers Per cent.
1. Capitalists	4,491 = 8.08	5,085 = 8.34
2. High officials	559 = 1.06	197 = 0.32
3. Medium officials	2,304 = 4.35	615 = 1.01
4. Lower officials	4,364 = 7.75	3,567 = 5.85
5. Professional men	1,422 = 2.55	1,047 = 1.72
6. Newer middle-class	3,924 = 7.06	4,882 = 8.01
7. Independent artisans	3,704 = 6.67	5,196 = 8.53

8. Bakers and grocers	932 = 1.57	1,124 = 1.84
9. Older middle-class	2,787 = 5.01	4,074 = 6.68
10. Clerks and bookkeepers	3,121 = 5.62	5,247 = 8.61
11. Working men in State and municipal employment	1,424 = 2.55	1,415 = 2.32
12. Working men in privateer employment	26,423 = 47.73	28,573 = 46.77
	55,563 = 100	61,062 = 100[1197]

Commenting upon the foregoing table, a German Socialist periodical wrote: "An analytical comparison of the electorate of Hamburg and Bremen reveals an extraordinary similarity in its social composition. It shows that the workers form hardly a majority of the population. They can be victorious only when they march hand in hand with professional men, the lower officials, and the newer middle-class. However, not all working men are Socialists. At the last election 3,000 working men in Magdeburg, and 2,500 working men in Bremen, voted against Social-Democracy. The patriotic anti-Socialist working-men's associations are rapidly increasing their

membership. A thousand workmen, one-third of the whole occupied at the Krupp-Gruson Works in Magdeburg, have joined the anti-Socialist working-men's associations. The 'working-men's associations for fighting Social-Democracy' have grown in a surprising fashion."[1198]

The lower middle-class forms the strongest bulwark against the progress of Socialism, and Socialists know it. The philosopher of British Socialism, for instance, wrote: "The proletariat proper, the class which bears the future Socialist world in its womb, by no means at present everywhere outweighs, numerically, all other classes. On the contrary, so far as I am aware, this is only the case in Great Britain and some of the North American States, and even in these countries the majority is not large. The bulk of the non-proletarian sections of the democracy are by no means proletarian or Social-Democratic, even in their instincts, let alone Socialistic in their convictions. The predominating, or at all events most influential, elements in the non-proletarian democracy are what, for brevity, I have rather loosely termed the clerk and the shopkeeping class: in other words, they who are, or hope to become, small capitalists, the small middle-class. This last section of the 'people' or the democracy is, as such, the most formidable, because the most subtle, enemy with which the Socialist movement has to contend. The aim of the small capitalist, and of him who hopes to become one, is security and free play under the most advantageous conditions for his small capital to operate. On this account the little bourgeois, the small middle-class in its various sections, is the great obstacle which will have to be suppressed before we can hope to see even the inauguration of a consciously Socialist

policy. It must be destroyed or materially crippled as a class before real progress can be made."[1199]

Whilst many Socialists wish to destroy the lower middle-class, others, especially the Fabians, endeavour to convert it to Socialism, and to set it on against the wealthy. They argue: "The commercial clerk with his reading, his writing, his arithmetic, and his shorthand is a proletarian, and a very miserable proletarian, only needing to be awakened from his poor little superstition of shabby gentility to take his vote from the Tories and hand it over to us. The small tradesmen and ratepayers who are now allying themselves with the Duke of Westminster in a desperate and unavailing struggle—against the rising rates entailed by the eight hours day and standard wages for all public servants, besides great extensions of corporate activity in providing accommodation and education at the public expense, must sooner or later see that their interest lies in making common cause with the workers to throw the burden of taxation directly on to unearned incomes."[1200] "It only needs one evening's intelligent discussion of this monstrous state of affairs to make a beginning of a really sensible and independent organisation of the middle classes for their own defence and for their escape from between the two millstones of organised Labour and organised Plutocracy, which are at present grinding the last penny in the pound out of them."[1201] It is estimated that there are in England 500,000 clerks.[1202] With the object of permeating this large section of the middle class with Socialism, a new monthly paper, the "Clerk," has recently been started under Fabian auspices.

Socialism is undermining the lower middle-class,

and it is unconsciously being assisted in this policy by short-sighted anti-capitalistic Parliamentary legislation, which, as usual, hits hardest the smaller capitalists. If Great Britain wishes to erect a dam against the rising tide of Socialism, she must strengthen the lower middle-class in town and country by well-devised legislation, and she should before all re-create her peasantry. Great Britain should encourage the accumulation of small capitals by encouraging thrift. At present thrift is discouraged by the difficulty which small savers experience in obtaining satisfactory investments. The low interest of 2-3/4 per cent. paid by the British savings-banks—Continental savings-banks give 4 per cent.—is quite inadequate; and the British Company Laws are so bad and sound investments so scarce that the small investor who wants a higher return than 2-3/4 per cent. is almost certain to lose his money if he buys stocks or shares. Leasehold investments are very unsatisfactory, because the object bought automatically reverts to the landlord, and small freehold properties are as a rule unobtainable under the present system of land-holding. Therefore the first and most important step to encourage thrift should be to enable the small saver to invest his savings profitably and securely in land and houses where it is under his own control. Co-operation also should be encouraged. Co-operative banking, which is highly developed in Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy, but almost unknown in Great Britain, would at the same time greatly benefit the small investor and the small *bonâ-fide* borrower.

FOOTNOTES:

[1197] *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, September 1907, p. 325.

[1198] *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, September 1907, pp. 325, 326.

[1199] Bax, *Essays in Socialism*, pp. 40, 41.

[1200] Shaw, *The Fabian Society*, p. 26.

[1201] *New Age*, November 1907, p. 23.

[1202] *Clerk*, January 1908.

CHAPTER XXXVI[ToC]

IS SOCIALISM POSSIBLE?—A GLANCE INTO THE SOCIALIST STATE OF THE FUTURE

The realisation of Socialism, the creation of a Socialistic commonwealth in which private property does not exist, seems impossible. Socialists entirely leave out of their calculations two elementary factors:

Nature, and Human Nature

A State devoid of private property is an unthinkable proposition. Private property is not a fortuitous creation, but a natural growth. It is founded not merely upon law, but upon immemorial

custom which owes its rise to a fundamental human instinct, an instinct which has been a characteristic of the human race in all countries, and which is as old as humanity itself. The instinct of acquisition, of accumulation, and of property is common to all men from Central Africa to the poles. It is equally strongly developed in the most civilised nations and among savages.

However, supposing that the instinct of acquisition, of accumulation, and of property, which is found not only among all races of mankind but even among the higher animals, could be overcome, would human nature allow of the creation of a co-operative commonwealth based on voluntary co-operation, not on compulsion? Could the brotherhood of man be made a reality, and would men co-operate without strife in that mutual friendship and good-fellowship which one finds but rarely, even among those who are connected by the closest ties of affection and blood relationship, unless self-interest acts as the determining factor? Did not Plato found his ideal commonwealth upon perfectly wise and virtuous men? "Does not 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?"[1203]

"Who is more ready to tilt against society than the average Socialist? And if the individuals in it are so deeply imbued with a double dose of original sin as not to be able to handle any part of distribution and exchange, it follows that you cannot trust the

individual."[1204] "In a social State you must consider two things—man and his surroundings. You often forget man, because you think it easier to alter his surroundings. The real question is: Can you produce men fit for the new social State?"[1205]

"Socialism postulates an intelligent democracy."[1206] "The proletariat will require high intelligence, strong discipline, perfect organisation of its great masses. We may expect that it will only succeed when it will have developed these qualities in the highest degree."[1207] "Socialists demand a higher morality than any now to be found."[1208] "It is incumbent upon Socialism to recognise the existence of an intellectual motive, and it must place that motive above the economic, because without it the economic struggle would be devoid of any constructive value; it would be a mere tug-of-war; it would never bring us to Socialism. It would lead to a scramble for the spoils and mutual throat-cutting."[1209] "If 'each for all and all for each' be nothing more than a text for a banner or a motto for a wall; if its truth has not captured the hearts and minds of men and women in that new society, we shall be an official-ridden people with our eye on the best posts in the State for ourselves or our sons; and we shall be as pitiable in our spiritual deformity as we are in our economic bondage."[1210] "Socialism demands more than that we should merely import Socialistic institutions into our midst. It insists on a moral regeneration of society of the most complete and searching kind in order to make a lasting foundation for the political and social changes we many of us long to see."[1211] "Convey it in what spirit we may, an appeal to class interest is an appeal to personal interest. Socialist propaganda carried on as a class war suggests none of those ideals of moral

citizenship with which Socialist literature abounds, 'each for all and all for each,' 'service to the community is the sole right of property' and so on. It is an appeal to individualism" [which seems to be a euphemism for envy and cupidity], "and results in getting men to accept Socialist formulæ without becoming Socialists."[1212]

Unfortunately there is nothing ideal and elevating in the Socialist teachings, as the previous chapters show. Socialism appeals to all the passions and to all the vices, such as hatred, jealousy, envy, cupidity. It encourages, or at least excuses, wastefulness, improvidence, profligacy, and drunkenness. Its aim is plunder.

The voluntary co-operation of all for the benefit of all presupposes the existence of wise, virtuous, and unselfish citizens. Do the people in England, or in any other country, possess these high qualities, or are these qualities likely to be created by the teachings of the Socialists? A distinguished Socialist despairingly exclaimed: "That spirit which animated the apostles, prophets, martyrs, is alive in Japan to-day. Is it alive in us as a nation? If not, if we have replaced it to any extent by some selfish opposite, by any such diabolically careless sentiment as 'after me the deluge,' then we as a nation have lost our soul, sold it for mere individual prosperity, sold it in some poor cases for not even that, for mere liquid refreshment, and we are on the down grade."[1213] Another Socialist wrote: "We are all of us great-great-grandchildren of the beasts. We carry the bestial attributes in our blood, some more, some less. Who amongst us is so pure and exalted that he has never been conscious of the bestial taint?"[1214] "Descendants of barbarians and beasts, we have not

yet conquered the greed and folly of our bestial and barbarous inheritance. Our nature is an unweeded garden. Our hereditary soil is rank."[1215]

The Socialists themselves acknowledge that Socialism presupposes a nation composed of ideal individuals, industrious, gentle, mutually helpful, unselfish, forbearing, and wise. They also acknowledge that men are the descendants of barbarians and beasts. Do Socialist agitators really believe that they can convert the descendants of barbarians and beasts into ideal beings by constantly preaching to them the gospel of hatred, envy, selfishness, self-indulgence, and plunder, and by even encouraging them to continue poisoning themselves and their descendants by over-indulgence in alcoholic drink?[1216] Surely "the defective natures of citizens will show themselves in the bad acting of whatever social structure they are arranged into. There is no political alchemy by which you can get golden conduct out of leaden instincts."[1217]

It is clear to most thinking Socialists that human nature, as at present constituted, will make the realisation of Socialism impossible. How do Socialists, then, propose to meet the difficulty? Very simply. By bold assertions and prophecies. That which all religions and all philosophers have been unable to accomplish during 3,000 years, Socialists will effect as by the touch of a magician's wand. "Socialism will change human nature. The opportunity makes the man. Socialism will take away the desire for accumulating riches. Under such conditions the possession of riches will be a superfluous burden which no sane man will wish to bear."[1218] "As soon as high purpose, intense human attachments, are the springs of action and resolve,

discipline will come into our movement to crush out base selfishness, vanity, and personal ambition,"[1219] This is very nice, but how are "high purpose" and "intense human attachment" to be made the "springs of action"? Unfortunately the writer keeps the secret to himself.

The philosopher of British Socialism states: "Socialism only calls for enlightened selfishness. But the fact that this selfishness is enlightened and recognises that it can serve itself by serving the common interest will completely change its character, so that it will cease to be the narrow selfishness of to-day, which so often defeats its own ends. Selfishness passing through the refining fire of economic change ceases to be selfishness and becomes Socialism."[1220] If selfishness ceases to be selfishness and becomes Socialism, then it changes merely its name, and Socialism and selfishness are identical, which is quite correct. Other Socialist leaders prophesy: "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."[1221]

"Selfishness will become public spirit."[1222] "The desire to serve the common life, to advance its welfare, will be the highest ambition of the individual."[1223] "Just as the nightingale sings in the evening shades, or the lark trills in the summer sky, so man in natural surroundings" [does Socialism create "natural" surroundings or unnatural ones?] "will seek to gratify his higher nature. Socialism will create a condition of things favourable to the development of the higher type of individuality."[1224] "This is the religious aspect of

labour. It is dignified, ennobling. That is the divine ideal, the aspect concerning labour which God intended should be realised. Just think of it! The ordinary working man as divinely taught and inspired as the prophets and seers of old, and having the capacity to understand the sublimest truths and the profoundest philosophy concerning human life and the eternal destinies."[1225]

The statements given above, with their superlatives, their laboured philosophy, their lyrics, hysterics, and prophecies, are singularly unconvincing. The manner in which the simple question, "How do you propose to fit actual human nature into your scheme?" is answered by the Socialists, proves that they find that question unanswerable. History teaches us that revolutions based on plunder, euphemistically called confiscation, expropriation, or socialisation, have indeed altered human nature, but they have altered it for the worse. All revolutions have hitherto caused a fearful depravation of manners and led to the most hideous crimes—and will a Socialistic revolution prove an exception? Why should it be an exception? Are its teachings such as make it seem likely that a Socialistic revolution will prove an exception? An attempt to establish the Socialist Commonwealth would undoubtedly lead, not to a revolution, but to a series of revolutions, to Anarchism and to civil war. The tragedy of the great French Revolution might be acted over again.

Now let us look into some practical questions which the Socialist State of the future will have to settle. Let us, for instance, inquire:

How Will Labour Be Remunerated?

Many Socialists think that different workers should get different wages: "The citizens shall be consciously public functionaries, and their labours shall be rewarded according to results."[1226] "Socialism does not propose that everyone shall have an equal share of the product of collective labour."[1227] How, then, is the amount of the unequal wages to be calculated? Some Socialists, following Marx, propose to determine wages by means of labour-time. "Ascertain the time taken to produce two commodities and we know their relative exchange value. And this quality tallies with market valuations. So far as creating value is concerned, then, one man creates as much value as another, and on the basis of equal labour-time equal value, Socialists rest their argument of social equality."[1228] "The working time which the making of an article requires is the only scale by which its social value can be measured. Ten minutes of social work in one branch are exchangeable for ten minutes of social work in another. It will be easy to calculate how much social working time each single product requires."[1229] A hunter hunts all day and shoots a deer. A fisher fishes all day and catches a sprat. Will the hunter exchange his deer for the sprat, on the principle of equal labour-time? Will highly skilled workers be satisfied to receive the same wages as the most unskilled labourers? Will equal labour-time pay for all not lead to universal dawdling, shrinkage in production, and consequent starvation? Would workers not strive to get the maximum pay for the minimum work? To prevent dawdling, could it be ascertained how long it should take to repair a machine, paint a picture, amputate a leg, plough an acre?

It is manifestly impossible to pay men of varying capacity and productive power equal labour-time wages. Therefore many Socialists, especially the Fabians, maintain: "The principle of inequality of payment must be recognised. It is a necessary consequence of inequality of ability."[1230] "Every man should receive from the Commonwealth a fair equivalent in payments or services for the payments or services which the Commonwealth receives from him. It is not possible to say exactly how much each citizen has contributed to the wealth of the State, and absolute economic justice is therefore impossible."[1231] The question now arises how is the "fair equivalent for services rendered" to be determined? Many Socialists teach the doctrine that "the labourer is entitled to the entire product of his labour."[1232] Should the labourer be given an equivalent to the product of his labour *minus* various necessary expenditures? Could the value of the labour of an individual be calculated at all in the complicated processes of modern industry? What is the value produced by a day's labour of a ploughman, a railway porter, a postman, a book-keeper, a policeman, a machine-minder? Mr. Bax very sensibly argues: "What does each man produce of himself as an individual? Show me how much cotton any given factory operative has produced in the course of a year? I don't mean the amount of wages the capitalist has given him for the exploitation of his labour power during that period—but the actual product of his labour in the manufactured article. You could not do so, because his labour, like all modern labour, is associated; and the work of the individual producer is completely and indissolubly merged in that of the group (factory, mill) to which he belongs, which is again

inseparable from that of the machinery employed in the process and from that of other groups."[1233]

It is impossible to calculate the exact value of service to the community by work in a factory or a field as soon as the wages system based on demand and supply has ceased to exist. Besides, differential pay will be impossible, because none will be satisfied with the pay received, except those who receive the highest pay. Therefore the same Fabian Society which in other writings, such as those quoted in the foregoing, advocates unequal payment, concludes: "Inequality of pay would be odious; the impossibility of estimating the separate value of each man's labour with any really valid result, the friction which would arise, the jealousies which would be provoked, the inevitable discontent, favouritism, and jobbery that would prevail: all these things will drive the Communal Council into the right path—equal remuneration of all workers."[1234] The Fabians, like so many other Socialists, cannot apparently quite make up their mind whether to plunge into the Scylla of equal pay or into the Charybdis of unequal pay. Therefore they plunge alternately into the one or the other.

Many Socialists are in favour of equal pay: "The credits granted to the citizens will be equal in all cases, without reference to skill, intelligence, or the nature of the service performed."[1235] "The labours of the bus driver or the mangler will be appraised just as highly as those of the Prime Minister, with this difference perchance, that if it can be clearly shown by statistics that buscraft uses up the life energy of a man more rapidly than statecraft, four hours of busmanship shall count, say, as five of statesmanship."[1236] Equal wages should logically be

followed by equal treatment for all. "An anti-Socialist will say, 'How will you sail a ship in a Socialist condition?' How? Why, with a captain and mates and sailing-master and engineer (if it be a steamer) and A.B.s and stokers, and so on, and so on. Only there will be no first and second and third class among the passengers, the sailors and stokers will be as well fed and lodged as the captain or passengers, and the captain and the stoker will have the same pay."[1237]

So confused are the minds even of the leading Socialists with regard to the important question of the remuneration of labour that Mr. William Morris, one of the founders of British Socialism, in a poem first recommends individualistic Socialism and pay according to results:

For that which the worker
winneth shall then be his
indeed,
Nor shall half be reaped for
nothing by him that
sowed no seed.

Two lines later in the same poem he recommends Communism and equal pay for all, regardless of the work done:

[454]

Then all Mine and Thine shall be
Ours, and no more shall
any man crave
For riches that serve for
nothing but to fetter a
friend for a slave.[1238]

The above extracts show that confusion reigns in the Socialist camp regarding the settlement of the

Wage Question.

Wage-earners are not philanthropists. Highly skilled men will not be content with wages equal to those of unskilled labour, not even in the name of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. In the absence of a free demand and supply, which automatically graduates wages in accordance with the social value of the work done, its attractiveness or unattractiveness, &c., it cannot scientifically, though it can perhaps autocratically, be determined how wages should be graduated. When it comes to the fixing of differential wages in the Socialist State of the future, quarrels will immediately arise, which will lead to strife and rebellion, for all workers will use arguments such as the following ones recently put forward by Mr. Smillie, President of the Lanarkshire Miners' County Union. In reply to the reproach that miners, by unduly high wages, increased the cost of coal to the poor, Mr. Smillie answered: "Miners are being blamed in some quarters for the high price of coal. Their wages at present range from 6*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* per day, or from 30*s.* to 2*l.* 5*s.* per week when broken time is taken into consideration. Will anyone grudge an income of this kind to a worker whose labour is of a most uncomfortable and exhausting nature, and who takes his life in his hand from the moment he steps into the cage until he reaches the surface again? The miner recognises that high-priced coal means pinching and suffering in the homes of the poor, and he has real sympathy for this class, but he argues that the true value of coal must include a reasonable sustenance for those who risk their lives in its production."[1239] If miners claim higher wages than other workers because their work is uncomfortable and dangerous, railway workers, sailors, and many

others will raise the same claims; fishers and butchers will claim higher wages because their work is disgusting; factory workers because their work is sedentary and monotonous; waiters because it is menial; postmen because they have to walk; drivers because they have to sit still; washerwomen because they have to stand; farm labourers because they have to work in the cold; bakers because they have to work in the heat, &c. All workers would of course demand the maximum pay, and who could adjudicate on all the rival claims? The Wages Question seems likely to prove insoluble.

How Will Labour Be Organised and Directed?

We are told: "Labour will be organised on principles of perfect freedom. Everyone decides for himself in which branch he desires to be employed. If a superfluity of workmen occur in one branch and a deficiency in another, it will be the duty of the executive to arrange matters and readjust the inequality."[1240] In accordance with the variations in demand and supply and the rise and decay of industries, the introduction of labour-saving machinery, &c., labour requires continual redistribution. That redistribution is at present automatically effected largely through the rise and fall of wages. A rise in the wages of industries which require more labour, and a decline in the wages of industries which require less labour, cause labour to turn from shrinking to growing industries. When wages are no longer fixed with reference to commercial demand and supply, how will the periodical and necessary redistribution of labour be effected? Some Socialist leaders think: "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 over-production will be impossible."[1241] In other words, the beautiful schemes of remuneration independent of the laws of supply and demand discussed in the foregoing would immediately break down. In order to redistribute labour, workers would either have to be compelled by direct force to work in those trades which required additional labour, or their wages or hours of work would arbitrarily be altered in order to effect the necessary changes by economic pressure—that is, by reducing their food. In other words, commercial demand and supply would break down the Utopian regulations of the Socialist Commonwealth as soon as they had been framed.

While some Socialists wish to distribute and redistribute labour by arbitrarily changing wages and hours of labour, some of the more logical and scientific Socialist leaders are frankly in favour of compulsory labour: "We already see official salaries regulated, not according to the state of the labour

market, but by consideration of the cost of living. This principle we seek to extend to the whole industrial world. Instead of converting every man into an independent producer, working when he likes and as he likes, we aim at enrolling every able-bodied person directly in the service of the community for such duties and under such kind of organisation, local or national, as may be suitable to his capacity and social function. If a man wants freedom to work or not to work, just as he likes, he had better emigrate to Robinson Crusoe's island or else become a millionaire. To suppose that the industrial affairs of a complicated industrial State can be run without strict subordination and discipline, without obedience to orders, and without definite allowances for maintenance, is to dream, not of Socialism but of Anarchism."[1242] "Everyone should have a legal right to an opportunity of earning his living in the society in which he has been born; but no one should or could have the right to ask that he shall be employed at the particular job which suits his peculiar taste and temperament. Each of us must be prepared to do the work which society wants doing, or take the consequences of refusal."[1243] And what consequences would refusal to do the allotted work at the allotted pay entail? Either dismissal, which would mean starvation—for the State, as the sole employer, would control all employment and all the food—or bodily chastisement, or imprisonment. There could be no strike on the part of dissatisfied workers, for the State—that is, the officials—holding all the wealth, would be able to starve them out in a week.

Socialists admit: "Mankind is as lazy as it dares to be."[1244] "In the average man there is a strong tendency to mere idleness and aimlessness which,

but for the compulsions and temptations of existing circumstances, might run to great lengths. The trouble is that, while the average man is willing to work occasionally where his choice is free, he considers his lot a hard one if necessity compels him to continue regularly at a given task. He is willing to work at almost anything save that at which he is asked to work. It is a common thing to hear even good workmen profess a dislike to their trade."[1245]

How will shirking and idling be prevented in the Socialist Commonwealth when men are no longer compelled by economic necessity and free competition to do their best?

The leading American exponent of Socialism prophesies that workers will work no longer in order to live in comfort, but that they will henceforth see in work a semi-religious duty, which they perform owing to their strong sense of beneficence: "In the New Commonwealth the butcher will be conscious and satisfied that 'the essential thing is not that he shall have a living, but that meat shall be supplied.' The work of the citizen will be the willing performance of social office. He will be a worker whose best efforts, best ardour, and highest aims will be drawn out by his sense of the beneficence of his work, even though it be such a coarse routine of manual labour as machinery should soon remove altogether from human hands. He will be habituated to regard his wages, not as a *quid pro quo*, but as the provision made by society to enable him to carry out his labour."[1246] Will the "sense of beneficence" induce men who are not satisfied with the condition and remuneration of labour to transport milk and other provisions during the night so that the townspeople may have them early in the morning?

Will men be induced by their sense of duty to clean the sewers? To ask these questions is to answer them. Bebel puts the question, "What becomes of the difference between the industrious and the idle, the intelligent and the stupid?" and answers, "There will be no such difference, because that which we associate with these conceptions will have ceased to exist."[1247] "If there is one vice more certain than another to be unpopular in a Socialist community, it is laziness. The man who shirked would find his mates making his position intolerable even before he suffered the doom of expulsion."[1248] Arguments such as the above should really not be placed before grown-up people. They are only fit for the nursery.

The tendency towards lazing and idling, the desire to make money without exertion, is strongly developed in Great Britain. "The essence of gambling is the craving to obtain something from others without giving an equivalent."[1249] Perhaps in no country is betting and gambling in every form so much in evidence as it is in Great Britain. Betting on the turf, missing-word competitions, limerick competitions, &c., draw every year many millions of pounds from the pockets of millions of British workers. How then can the natural tendency of men to loaf and idle and to live rather by their wits than by their work, which is strong in all men, be overcome in the Socialist State of the future? The fundamental book of the Fabian Society, the most scientific Socialist body in Great Britain, tells us: "A very small share of the profits arising from associated labour acts as a tremendous stimulus to each individual producer,"[1250] and it suggests, as do many Socialist writers, that the workers will do their best because they know that the more they produce the greater will be their individual share in the

general production. Great Britain has 12,000,000 workers. Therefore a worker will make as his own share an extra sovereign if by extra exertion he succeeds in producing an extra 12,000,000*l.* worth of goods, a feat the accomplishment of which will require several thousand years. That is a "tremendous stimulus" to the individual producer! Can any argument be more foolish than the foregoing one?

An influential Socialist writer tells us: "The credits granted to the citizens will be equal in all cases, without reference to skill, intelligence, or the nature of the service performed; but no credits will be given to the able-bodied shirkers, who will thus be starved into doing their share of the world's work without other compulsion."[1251] Other Socialist writers have put forth similar views. This is a cheerful outlook for the free citizens of the free Socialist Commonwealth. The workers will become "wage-slaves" in the fullest sense of the term. They will have to submit to forced labour, arbitrary wages, and arbitrary hours of labour, and those who do not produce as much as the official overseers require—and they may have a private grudge against some unfortunate worker who does his best—will be starved until they work harder. The lot of savages ruled by the knout, the kourbash, and the sjambok will be preferable to the lot of men ruled by starvation in the free Socialist Commonwealth of the future. The former have at least some liberty, while the latter will be kept by officials, who will distribute food and force them to work by rewards of food alternated by starvation, like performing dogs and apes.

To carry on the business of the country the Socialist Government would have to drop the principle of perfect freedom and to rely on coercion,

and it would be justified in doing so. If, as Mr. Blatchford has repeatedly told us, "man has no right to himself because he did not make himself," if man belongs not to himself and his family, but to "society," it logically follows that society may compel him to work, apportioning to him his task and his pay, without reference to his wishes. Society being represented by its officials, elected or appointed, these officials would absolutely dispose of the people. Great Britain would be ruled like a gigantic convict prison.

The spirit in which even moderate Socialists already contemplate the freedom of the individual may be seen from an address on Sweated Labour which Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., delivered in Glasgow in autumn 1907. He said: "There was no use tinkering with the problem. Personally, he was not in favour of home work at all. To eliminate it might seem a cold-blooded way of dealing with sweating, but it was the only way that would give definite and final results. He would, however, proceed carefully and scientifically. Home work had got extremes, but one section was much riper for treatment than the other, and he would begin with the worst. The first difficulty was to find out the sweated workers. It was certain that a great percentage escaped detection by sanitary inspectors. Now his proposal was that, instead of the sanitary inspectors hunting for the home worker, the home worker should hunt for the inspector; and this he sought to accomplish under the Bill introduced last session, by making it necessary for the home worker to take out a licence and by making it obligatory on the employer to keep an absolutely complete list of his workers. The factory inspector must have right of access, and a certificate must be obtained from him for a separate

licence. The casual home-worker would be discouraged." In other words, factory inspectors should apparently be authorised to break without a search warrant into private houses. They should certainly be empowered to prosecute a working man if he defended the privacy of his house by refusing the inspector admittance. That measure would abolish the sanctity of the home. The "Right to Work," which the Socialists so loudly champion, would be taken from the home-worker, and one cannot help asking: Is that high-handed measure devised for the benefit of the sweated or for that of the highly paid workers, represented by Mr. Macdonald, who wish to abolish the competition of underpaid home-workers? Sweated labour can be abolished and must be abolished, and it can be abolished, as I may show in another book, without destroying the home. If Mr. Macdonald should have his way, the Socialist principle, "Property is robbery," will have to be supplemented with the principle "Liberty is tyranny."

The unchecked absolutism of a Socialist State will hardly be palatable to Socialist workers who have been told that Socialism means freedom, and these see the only solution in the establishment of Anarchism: "The damnable idea of being marshalled and drilled or numbered and docketed like any other merchandise in a state of glorified capitalism is not the Socialist's ideal, but its antithesis, no matter what the capitalists and their protagonists, the pseudo-Socialists, choose to name it. We don't want to be driven to the gate of the municipal or other factory to hustle and elbow our fellows out of the way so that we may catch the official's eye in the mad and sordid scramble for mere belly food, for a mere animal subsistence. With the advent of Socialism, the

whole of the capitalist State and its superstructure will collapse, with its cant of living wages, its Brotherhoods of Man, and the rest of its nauseous humbug."[1252] "If the worker continues to be paid in wages, he necessarily will remain the slave or the subordinate of the one to whom he is forced to sell his labour force; be the buyer a private individual or the State—it would still be an odious tyranny."[1253] "Socialism will entail compulsory service on all able-bodied members of the community, or rather the State. For that is what we shall have; the State with its hosts of functionaries, its big pots and its little pots, and its never-ending officialism and petty tyrannies. Organisation must either be compulsory or free. If compulsory, you have the military spirit with all its attendant evils; if free, you have the Anarchist spirit with all the advantages that arise when the fetters that hinder individual initiative and development are removed."[1254]

The foregoing should suffice to show that the Socialist State could organise work only by relying on forced labour and by creating the most unbearable despotism which the world has seen, or by "organising" the chaos of Anarchism, and it is difficult to say which of the two would be the more hideous solution.

How will the Socialist State Be Governed?

Socialists tell us rather vaguely: "Socialism means the elevation of the struggle for existence from the material to the intellectual plane. Socialism will raise the struggle for existence into a sphere where competition shall be emulation, where the treasures

are boundless and eternal, and where the abundant wealth of one does not cause the poverty of another."[1255] "State employment, when the State itself is only an organised democracy and class distinctions cease, means not slavery, but freedom."[1256] "Freedom and equality will then be no longer empty and cheap phrases, but will have a meaning; when all men are really free and equal, they will honour and advance one another."[1257] "In Socialistic administrations there are no employers, no superiors, no oppression; all are equals and enjoy equal rights."[1258] "Under Socialism all the work of the nation would be managed by the nation."[1259] "Under Socialism the State, as we have known the State in the past, will have disappeared; for under Socialism there will be no classes, but all the people will form one class, and the Government and organisation will be democratic, each individual having an equal voice in directing the affairs of the common life."[1260] "The State will no longer be the bureaucratic State of to-day, but a democratic State assisted directly by the whole people."[1261] "All adult members of the commune, without distinction of sex, take part in the necessary elections, and determine to what persons the conduct of affairs shall be entrusted. There is no such thing as a hierarchical system."[1262] "Appointments will be made from below. In the Post Office Department, for example, the letter carriers will elect their immediate superiors; these, we will say, the post-masters; and these, in their turn, the Post-Master General."[1263]

In other and plainer words, the Socialist State would, according to the authorities quoted, be ruled by the same system by which it is ruled at present, although elections might be more numerous, and although the suffrage might be given a wider basis.

Now if the system of government remains the same as it is at present, is there any reason for anticipating better results than those obtained at present? Will the elected administrators no longer place personal and party interests above national ones? And will not the infinitely greater range of administrative functions make it more difficult to exercise control and to allocate responsibilities, and thus make irresponsibility, favouritism, dishonesty, and the evasion of punishment more easy and more frequent? Is a larger number of voters likely to pick out abler administrators than a small one? Does not the elective system, according to the Socialists themselves, cause the scum to rise to the top, and result in the election of plausible windbags?[1264] Are the people's votes never won by any other means than the testimony of results? Will there no longer be the fascination of eloquence, the attraction of boundless promises, the glamour of prejudice, the tie of party, the pressure put by an Association upon its members? If amateurs show now little ability in administering a few comparatively simple things, is it likely that results will be better when they have to administer everything? Will not amateur government prove an absolute failure?

Most thinking Socialists clearly foresee that the Socialist State of the future could not possibly be administered by amateurs; that it would have to be administered by experts, by permanent officials; that Socialism would mean the death-knell of elected governors, and therefore of democracy, as may be seen in Chapter XV. of this book. The philosopher of British Socialism tells us: "Socialism aims at the supersession of democracy, as of every other form of government. The will of the majority of an ideal democracy, a social democracy, must, as regards its

special expressions, be subordinate to the general moral canon of a Socialist Commonwealth. That in affairs of management, of tactics, of administration, or in decisions requiring special knowledge, authority, in its nature dictatorial, is necessary, all must admit. There must be a controlling, an authoritative voice in direction; so much must be clear, one would think, to all practical or reasonable persons when once stated. The real point to determine is the nature and limits of that amount of dictatorial power which, we must admit, is essential in any organised community of which we can at present conceive. *Social Democracy*, while it means all *for* the people, does not mean the impossible absurdity that everything should be directly regulated *by* the people, *i.e.* by a direct popular vote."[1265] These views seem irrefutable, and it follows that not only for economic reasons, but for political reasons as well, the establishment of the Socialist State will lead to the establishment of a "dictatorial authority."

If Socialism be introduced, the fall of democracy and the establishment of absolutism cannot possibly be avoided. Democratic States are ruled by public opinion. The voice of an individual does not carry very far. Therefore public opinion can be formed only by means of an independent Press. An independent Press is the strongest, one might almost say the only, guarantee of national liberty. As long as there are numerous independent papers owned by private people, papers which represent all shades of opinion, everyone who has something to say can always freely express his opinion in one set of papers or the other. A striking speech is read the next day by the whole nation; a striking injustice to a single individual, or a Government blunder, may be taken

up by the whole nation. The disappearance of private property will necessarily mean the disappearance of the free Press, and therefore of public opinion. All newspapers would be owned, edited, and printed by the Government, and is any Government likely to assist a hostile opposition by printing its views, and to assist in bringing about a revolution, probably accompanied by bloodshed and its own destruction? Such a thing has never been. Such a thing will never be. People might be dissatisfied and be ill-treated by the Socialist Government; they might be starved to death or shot by the thousand; there might be risings and rebellions and civil war in some parts of the country; the fleet might be defeated and the colonies lost—yet not a word need appear in the Socialist Government Press.

Some Socialists are childish enough to argue: "Though the printing press will be a collective institution, it will be available to all. Anyone, whatever unpopular opinions he may entertain, however hostile to the administrators he may be, will be entitled to have anything decent printed, provided he is ready to pay for the work done, or to guarantee, or induce his friends to guarantee, that the cost will be defrayed."[1266] "It would always be open to individuals or to groups of individuals to publish anything they pleased on covering the cost of publication. With the comparative affluence which would be enjoyed by each member of the community, anyone who really cared to reach the public ear would be able to do so by diminishing his expenditure in other directions."[1267]

The Government would certainly neither print, nor circulate through its post-office and newsagents, matter which it would consider to be dangerous to

its existence or seditious. The assertion that a private individual in the Socialist Commonwealth might at his own expense circulate his views throughout the country—there would be no more millionaires but only wage-earners—is like asserting that a bricklayer might with his savings pay off the British National Debt.

Lacking an independent public opinion, elections could be managed by the officials through the official Press in their own interest; elections would become a sham, and would no doubt soon fall into disuse. The official class would become a caste of hereditary rulers governing millions of serfs.

The foregoing makes it clear that in political as in economic matters the Socialist State must fall a prey to the most complete absolutism which the world has known, an absolutism which probably, through a series of revolutions and civil wars, would at last end in anarchy. At present a dissatisfied worker can change his employer, he can get justice in the Law Courts, and in extreme cases he can put his grievances before the nation. In the Socialist State there would be only one authority—the all-controlling and all-powerful State, or rather an all-controlling and all-powerful bureaucracy. The nation would be composed of two classes: permanent officials possessing absolute power, and ordinary citizens possessing neither power nor right; overseers and workers; slave-drivers and slaves; and the only way of escaping the tyranny of the State—for absolute and unchecked power has always led, and will always lead, to tyranny—would be by committing suicide. As in Rome under the rule of Nero and Caligula, suicide would be the only way to liberty.

A leading Socialist wrote with unconscious humour: "The Utopist needs no knowledge of facts. Indeed such a knowledge is a hindrance. For him the laws of social evolution do not exist. He is a law unto himself; and his men are not the wayward, spasmodic, irregular organisms of daily life, but automata obeying the strings he pulls. In a word, he creates, he does not construct. He makes alike his materials and the laws within which they work, adapting them all to an ideal end. In describing a new Jerusalem the only limits to its perfection are the limits of the writer's imagination.... Humanity will rise to heights undreamed of now; and the most exquisite Utopias, as sung by the poet and idealist, shall to our children seem but dim and broken lights compared with their perfect day. All that we need are Courage, Prudence, and Faith. Faith above all."[1268] Every reader of this book will no doubt heartily agree with the latter remark. Socialists are wise to appeal rather to blind faith than to plain common-sense.

The philosopher of British Socialism tells us: "Socialism is the great modern protest against *un*reality, against the delusive shams which now masquerade as verities."[1269] Another Socialist leader asserts: "Socialism is a scientific scheme of national government entirely wise, just, and practical."[1270] A third leader affirms: "Socialism is neither more nor less than the science of Sociology."[1271] The "Socialist Catechism" asks: "How may Socialists reply to the taunt that their scheme is impracticable? By quoting the opinion of John Stuart Mill that the difficulties of Socialism are greatly overrated; and they should declare that, so far from being an impracticable Utopian scheme, it is the necessary and inevitable result of the historical

evolution of society."[1272]

Socialism stands condemned, not so much by the criticism of its opponents as by the doctrines and proposals of its leaders, and these are the men who aspire to rule the universe and who claim: "We mean the establishment of a political power in place of the present class-State, which shall have for its conscious and definite aim the common ownership and control of the *whole* of the world's industry, exchange, &c."[1273]

I think the readers of the foregoing pages will be inclined to believe that Socialism is methodised insanity.

FOOTNOTES:

[1203] Kautsky, *Social Revolution*, p. 41.

[1204] Socialism, *For and Against*, p. 7.

[1205] Clemenceau, in Jaurès' *Practical Socialism*, p. 11.

[1206] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 12.

[1207] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 42.

[1208] Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 5.

[1209] Macdonald, *Socialism and Society*, p. 126.

[1210] Ethel Snowden, *The Woman Socialist*, p. 7.

[1211] Ford, *Woman and Socialism*, p. 2.

[1212] Macdonald, *Socialism and Society*, pp. 122, 123.

[1213] Sir Oliver Lodge, *Public Service* v. *Private Expenditure*, p. 11.

[1214] Blatchford, *Not Guilty*, p. 37.

[1215] *Ibid.* p. 251.

[1216] See *ante*, Chapter XXIII.

[1217] Herbert Spencer, *The Man versus the State*, p. 43.

[1218] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 9.

[1219] Ben Tillett, *Trades Unionism and Socialism*, p. 14.

[1220] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism*, p. 30.

[1221] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, p. 43.

[1222] Joynes, *The Socialist Catechism*, p. 14.

[1223] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 11.

[1224] *Ibid.* p. 18.

[1225] Ward, *Religion and Labour*, pp. 7, 8.

[1226] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 77.

[1227] Kautsky, *The Social Republic*, p. 32.

[1228] Hazell, *Summary Marx's Capital*, p. 6.

[1229] Bebel, *Woman in the Past, Present, and the Future*, p. 193.

[1230] Sir Oliver Lodge, *Public Service versus Private Expenditure*, p. 10.

[1231] *New Age*, November 21, 1907.

[1232] See *ante*, p. 61 ff.

[1233] Bax, *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 81.

[1234] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, pp. 163, 164.

[1235] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 91.

[1236] Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, p. 170.

[1237] Morris, *Communism*, pp. 14, 15.

[1238] *Independent Labour Party Song Book*, p. 40.

[1239] *Forward*, October 12, 1907.

[1240] Bebel, *Woman in the Past, Present, and Future*, pp. 183, 184.

[1241] Kautsky, *The Social Revolution*, pp. 16, 17.

[1242] Sidney Webb, *Socialism True and False*, pp. 17, 18.

[1243] *Socialism and Labour Policy*, p. 7.

[1244] *The Economics of Direct Employment*, p. 6.

[1245] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, pp. 102, 103.

[1246] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 169.

[1247] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 194.

[1248] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 167.

[1249] Ward, *The Ideal City*, p. 7.

[1250] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 167.

[1251] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 91.

[1252] *Socialist*, December 1907.

[1253] Kropotkin, *Anarchism, its Philosophy and Ideal*, p. 15.

[1254] *Freedom*, October 1907.

[1255] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 1.

[1256] Hyndman, *Socialism and Slavery*, p. 10.

[1257] Sorge, *Socialism and the Worker*, p. 14.

[1258] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 199.

[1259] Blatchford, *Real Socialism*, p. 14.

[1260] Snowden, *The Individual under Socialism*, p. 12.

[1261] Jaurès, *Practical Socialism*, p. 6.

[1262] Bebel, *Woman*, p. 181.

[1263] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 126.

[1264] Thompson, *Hail Referendum*, pp. 3, 4.

[1265] Bax, *Essays in Socialism*, pp. 75, 76.

[1266] Gronlund, *Co-operative Commonwealth*, p. 135.

[1267] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, p. 159.

[1268] *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, pp. 149, 169.

[1269] Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. ix.

[1270] Blatchford, *Merrie England*, p. 100.

[1271] Hyndman, *Socialism and Slavery*, Preface.

[1272] Joynes, *The Socialist Catechism*.

[1273] Bax and Quelch, *A New Catechism*, p. 9.

CHAPTER XXXVII[ToC]

CONCLUSION

The leading Socialists claim that Socialism is at the same time a scientific doctrine and a practical policy. A perusal of this book should suffice to prove that it is neither the one nor the other. On its scientific side it consists of twenty catch-phrases which are very effective for propaganda purposes, but which are contrary to general experience and to common-sense. On its practical side it consists of a number of fantastic proposals which are likewise contrary to general experience and to common-sense.

Socialism has two faces. The one which is turned towards the cultured and towards the non-Socialists of the middle class constantly asserts that Socialism is a scientific and perfect system of well-ordered government and co-operation, which will evolve order and harmony out of the chaos of individualism and of competition, and which will raise men to the highest level of perfection. The other, which is turned towards the masses, and which is by far the more important, is purely predatory in character. It appeals to all the passions of the multitude. It denounces law, religion, charity, thrift, temperance, and all existing institutions. It preaches envy, hatred, greed, selfishness, violence, civil war, and general plunder. It sets class against class, and creates among its supporters a frame of mind which makes not for harmony, order, and co-operation, but for disorder, revolution, and anarchy.

The followers of Socialism do not see in it a science. "With the speculative side of Socialism the average man has but a small concern; it is its common-sense which appeals to him. By inherited

instinct we are all communists at heart."[1274] The attraction of Socialism to the masses lies in its promise of the spoliation of the rich and of the general division of their wealth. It is true that Socialists habitually and very emphatically protest that Socialism is not a system of robbery and of general division. It is true that Socialists merely propose that all private property should be transferred to the State by expropriation—which is a euphemism for confiscation—and that the State should manage it for the general good of the masses. However, that is a distinction without a difference. Property is valuable because of the income which it yields. Therefore it comes for all practicable purposes to the same, whether the Socialist leaders propose dividing all the private property or all the income derived from that property. A prominent Socialist writer has asked: "Is not honesty—the sense of right of possession in the fruits of our labour—the very basis of Socialism?"[1275] Regretfully one must answer that question with a very emphatic "No."

Socialism is not a system of organisation and of national co-operation, but merely a plan of spoliation and of general division. That may clearly be seen from the fact that the Socialist leaders have not the slightest desire to create a Socialistic model commonwealth, and thus demonstrate the practical value of their highly speculative doctrines, in a new country where Socialism could be introduced peacefully, easily, and without a revolution, where co-operation and exchange would be comparatively simple because wants are simple, the commodities produced are few, and the opposition of vested interests would be *nil*. In spite of all these great advantages, the Socialist leaders prefer introducing Socialism into old countries where the confiscation

of the existing property seems a shorter way to wealth than work, and where confiscation will have the most satisfactory results to the despoilers.

We have seen that the various Socialistic organisations agree on hardly one point in their constructive policy. However, they absolutely agree in their main purpose—spoliation. On that point there is absolute unanimity among all the British Socialists, and they condemn State Socialism (see Chapter XXXII.) because State Socialism would not mean confiscation and general division. Besides, it would not enable the Socialist leaders to overturn the State and to seize the reins of Government. British Socialism is purely destructive in character, and if Socialism should ever be established in Great Britain it would lead not to national co-operation, but to civil war among the various Socialistic sections for the spoils, and to a series of sanguinary *coups d'état* similar to those which arose out of the great French Revolution.

The "scientific" proposal of transferring all private property to the State, and of using that property for the common good, merely circumscribes the word and act of confiscation and of general division. Therefore we may say that Socialism has no scientific basis, unless we choose to call science a collection of fallacies expressed in involved terms so as to deceive the simple. Karl Marx was not a scientist but a professional demagogue and revolutionist, and his merit from the Socialists' point of view consists only in this, that he elaborated a formula of roundabout spoliation and general division, which he took from his Anarchist predecessors, and gave it a much needed, though rather transparent, cloak of scientific respectability.

Socialism is, in the first place, a business proposition. Therefore, if it were practical, it should appeal particularly to business men. However, it is noteworthy that the loudest champions of British Socialism are not business men, of whom but few are to be found in the Socialist ranks, but pushing writers in search of self-advertisement, whose special domain is the highly spiced and the sensational, writers who, knowing that many people mistake eccentricity for genius and paradoxical absurdity for brilliancy, have discarded common-sense, let their imaginations run riot, and outbid one another for notoriety.

The complaints of the Socialists about the unequal distribution of wealth are as old as is humanity itself. Since the earliest times demagogues have endeavoured to obtain a following by working upon the misery, envy, short-sightedness, and passions of the poor, by promising them equality and boundless wealth to be obtained by the simple process of seizing and dividing up the property of the well-to-do. The identical arguments and proposals which are now put forward in the name of Marx, and of modern "scientific" Socialism, as something new and original may be found throughout literature since the very dawn of history.[1276] However, history teaches us that, although countless Socialistic experiments have been made, all attempts at enriching the poor by spoliation and at creating an artificial equality among men have proved a failure. They have invariably ended in national ruin, and have left the masses poorer and more miserable than ever. The reason of this universal failure is obvious. Man cannot reconstruct Nature. He may violate, but cannot alter, the laws of Nature. Inequality rules throughout Nature, and it seems as little possible to

equalise the fortunes, as it is to equalise the bodily and mental powers, of men. We all are the slaves of Nature. The inequality of natural gifts and the division of labour are the principal causes of the division of men into classes and of the unequal distribution of wealth. Nature is only governed by obeying her. We can certainly diminish poverty, but we cannot, for any length of time, maintain an artificial equality among naturally unequal men.

The first duty of the State, as of the individual, is self-preservation. British Socialism, being by those teachings which it addresses to its supporters a revolutionary doctrine in the worst sense of the term, and therefore a purely destructive factor, must unconditionally be resisted and combated. However, at the same time all that can be done must be done to alleviate the distress of the British masses, which is undoubtedly very great, and which makes them exceedingly receptive to the revolutionary doctrines of Socialism. As it would require too much space to deal with the social problem in Great Britain in its entirety, only a few of the most important points can be touched upon.

The greatest scourge of the British worker is no doubt irregular and ill-paid employment. The first step to improve his position is therefore to improve employment. Hence the most urgent reform is the revision of Great Britain's economic policy. Great Britain's present economic policy, Free Trade, was based upon the supposition that Great Britain, as Cobden prophesied, was, and always would remain, the workshop of the world; that other countries were compelled to buy British manufactures because British manufactures were as necessary to them as foreign foodstuffs are now to Great Britain. In 1846,

when Free Trade was introduced, there was some reason for that supposition. Before the advent of electricity manufacturing was based exclusively upon coal. Great Britain's absolute predominance in manufacturing for the markets of the whole world immediately before the introduction of Free Trade may therefore best be seen from the following table:

Production of Coal in 1845[1277]

	Quantity produced. Tons	Percentage of world's production
Great Britain	31,500,000	64.2
Belgium	4,960,077	10.1
United States	4,400,000	8.9
France	4,141,617	8.4
Prussian States	3,500,000	7.0
Austrian States	659,340	1.4
	49,161,034	100

The above table shows that Great Britain produced two-thirds of the world's coal, and the coal of most other countries was supposed to be unsuitable for manufacturing purposes. However, Great Britain produced not only two-thirds of the world's coal, but she produced likewise two-thirds of the world's iron, she consumed two-thirds of the world's cotton, and

she possessed two-thirds of the world's shipping. Her railway mileage was greater than that of the whole Continent of Europe.[1278]

Times have changed. Great Britain is no longer the workshop of the world. British manufactures are no longer indispensable to foreign countries. In the present age of steel, the production of steel is the best index of a nation's manufacturing eminence, and how greatly conditions have changed, and are still changing, to England's disadvantage may be seen from the following figures:

Output of Steel

	United States. Tons	Germany. Tons	Great Britain. Tons
1890	4,277,000	2,127,000	3,679,000
1906	23,246,000	11,135,000	6,462,000

Great Britain, which formerly produced nine-tenths of the world's steel, produces now little more than one-tenth of the world's steel.

As Great Britain has to buy vast quantities of food and raw material from foreign countries, she must sell to foreign countries vast quantities of manufactured goods. However, market after market is being closed to her industries by ever-rising tariff walls, and the profits from her exports have been greatly diminished through foreign competition. Her home market has been reduced through the decay of her agriculture and the shrinkage of her agricultural population, and it is systematically spoiled by combinations of foreign manufacturers. Foreign

syndicates determine not only the price of British wheat and meat, but of British iron and other manufactures too, and they endeavour to ruin the British industries completely. Great Britain, far from being the world's manufacturer, has become the world's dumping ground. From the richest country in the world she is rapidly becoming one of the poorer countries of the world. Her industries are suffering, and the result is bad times, low wages, irregular employment, unemployment, poverty, and distress. It is noteworthy that, on an average, unemployment among the skilled workers in free-trade Great Britain is always five times greater than it is in protectionist Germany;[1279] that British emigration per million is eleven times larger than German emigration; that German savings-banks deposits are four times larger than British savings-banks deposits, and that the former increase ten times faster than the latter.[1280]

What can be done to improve the position of the British workers? Emigration on the largest scale has proved a palliative, but no remedy. During the last twenty years almost five million people have left Great Britain. Yet the labour market is as over-stocked, and unemployment and poverty are as great, as ever. Besides, the United States and the British colonies may not always be able to absorb the vast and ever-growing numbers of British unemployed workers. Employment and wages depend upon the prosperity of industries, and the prosperity of industries depends on a sufficiency of markets. The British industries have not a sufficiency of markets. Therefore the British population suffers from irregular employment, unemployment, and consequent want and misery; and want and misery among the British masses are likely to continue increasing and ever increasing until Great Britain

adapts her economic policy to the altered circumstances of the time, protects the industries by which her workers live, and secures a sufficient outlet for their productions by preferential arrangements with the self-governing Dominions. Under the shelter of Protection at home and with the aid of preferential arrangements throughout the empire, Great Britain will be able vastly to extend her manufacturing industries. Great Britain has unrivalled facilities for manufacturing. Whilst the manufacturing centres of the United States, Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, and other countries lie far inland near their coalfields, Great Britain has the unique advantage of being able to manufacture on the seashore, where coal, iron, great manufacturing towns, and excellent harbours lie in close proximity. The potentialities of the British industries under fair conditions and under the wise care of a fostering Government are boundless.

Under the shelter of Protection the rural industries of Great Britain may be revived, especially if the British peasantry be re-created. A hundred years ago the great agricultural authority, Arthur Young, wrote: "The magic of property turns sand into gold. Give a man a bleak rock, and he will turn it into a garden. Give him a nine years' lease of a garden, and he will convert it into a desert." Since the time when these words were written most European countries have created a freehold peasantry by buying out the landed proprietors and settling the rural labourers on the land, and Great Britain will be wise in following their example.

The tripartite question of Fiscal Protection for the home market, of an Imperial Customs Union, and of Imperial Federation is not a party question. It is a

question of life or death for Great Britain. It may soon become a question of prosperity or starvation for the masses. Great Britain stands at the parting of the ways. She must either protect and re-create her industries, federate with her colonies, and make the British Empire a reality, or sink into insignificance, and history knows no instance of a great nation becoming a small one without the most intense suffering to the masses of the people. Great Britain must either adopt that constructive and protective national policy which the greatest statesmen and Empire builders of modern times—Richelieu, Cromwell, Colbert, Lord Chatham, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, Stein, and Bismarck—have pursued, or she will share the fate of the great commercial world empires of the past, from Phœnicia to the Netherlands. She must either follow the policy of Mr. Chamberlain, build up the Empire and make it strong and prosperous, or that of revolutionary demagogues, who will wreck the Empire and drag Great Britain through plunder and ruin to destruction and anarchy.

The experience of other industrial nations allows us to conclude that a wisely framed protective tariff will save the British industries and improve employment and wages. But better wages alone will not improve the position of the workers. A large part of the British working class must alter their personal habits, and especially their drinking habits. At present every rise in wages leads immediately to a great increase in the Drink Bill, and therefore benefits rather the brewer than the worker. "The strongest answer to the theory that poverty causes drink is the statistical fact that as wages rise general drunkenness follows, insanity increases, and criminal

disorders due to drink keep pace with all three. Wherever one seeks for information dispassionately, one sees that drink does cause poverty to a greater extent, overwhelmingly so, than that poverty causes drink. Poverty is due to intemperance in varying degrees from twenty-five to fifty-one per cent, of cases and areas investigated."[1281] "The Committee on Physical Deterioration in 1904 declared that if the drink question were removed three-fourths of the difficulty with regard to poverty and deterioration would disappear with it."[1282] The drinking section of the working class spends 18*l.* 15*s.* 4*d.* per family on drink,[1283] a sum much larger than that spent on rent. "There are two great causes of physical deterioration—these are dirt and drink. The former is responsible for nearly every form of disease. The latter is the direct cause of the vast number of defects."[1284] "The most urgently needed public health reform of the present day is not so much one of environment as one of personal life."[1285]

Many British workmen are incredibly wasteful. When one visits public-houses and working-men's clubs, when one goes to racecourses, football or other matches, and music-halls, the British workers seem to be the richest in the world. When one looks at their homes, their clothes, and especially their savings, they seem to be the poorest in the world. British working men drink, waste, and gamble to a much greater extent than foreign working men. Therefore not only the higher paid American workers, but also the lower paid French, German, and Swiss workers, are better housed, better clothed, and better fed—and are therefore better off and healthier—than British workers.[1286] Besides, as their savings are much larger they are better able to stand a short spell of ill-luck or of bad times.

Whether a working man is prosperous or poor, happy or unhappy, depends—under fair conditions of employment, which Protection should create—perhaps more on his personal habits and on those of his wife than on the actual amount he receives in wages. Social reform, to be effective, must be assisted in the home. The worker must aid the social reformer. Outside assistance alone will little benefit wasteful and improvident men who refuse to help themselves.

FOOTNOTES:

[1274] Keir Hardie, *From Serfdom to Socialism*, pp. 33, 34.

[1275] Leatham, *Socialism and Character*, p. 96.

[1276] See Mencius' Works in Legge's *Chinese Classics*; Euripides, *The Suppliants*; Aristotle, *Politics*, vii. 5; Aristophanes, *Ecclesiazusae* and *Plutus*; Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus*, 9; Livius, ii. 32; Sallust, *Catiline's Conspiracy*, 20, 23, 37-39; Virgil, *Georgics*, i. 125; Tibullus, i. 3, 35 Propertius, ii. 13, iii. 5, 11; Seneca, *Epistles*, 90, &c.

[1277] Taylor, *Statistics of Coal*, p. xxi.

[1278] See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 8th edition, 1853-1860, articles: Cotton, Iron, Railways; Meyer, *Konversations Lexikon*, 1839-1855, article: Grossbritannien; Porter, *Progress of the Nation*, 1847; MacCulloch, *British Empire*, 1846; MacCulloch, *Dictionary of Commerce*, 1847; Macgregor, *Commercial Statistics*, 1844-1850,

&c.

[1279] See *Board of Trade Labour Gazette* and *Reichs Arbeitsblatt*.

[1280] Ellis Barker, *Modern Germany*, 546 ff.

[1281] Burns, *Labour and Drink*, pp. 15, 18.

[1282] Newman, *The Health of the State*, p. 189.

[1283] Whittaker, *Drink Problem*, p. 10.

[1284] McMillan, *The Child and the State*, p. 4.

[1285] Newman, *Health of the State*, p. 194.

[1286] See *Reports of the Mosely Industrial Commission to the United States*; *The Brassworkers of Berlin and of Birmingham*; *The Gainsborough Commission, Life and Labour in Germany*; Horsfall, *The Improvement of the Dwellings—The Example of Germany*; Marr, *Housing Conditions in Manchester*; *City of Birmingham, Report of the Housing Committee*; Steele, *The Working Classes in France*; Rowntree and Sherwell, *The Temperance Problem*; Rowntree, *Poverty*; the publication of Charles Booth, &c.

APPENDIX[ToC]

OFFICIAL PROGRAMMES OF THE SOCIALISTIC ORGANISATIONS

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION

Programme and Rules as revised previous to the Annual Conference held at the Labour Institute, Bradford, Easter 1906

Object.—The Social-Democratic Federation is a part of the International Social-Democracy. It believes:—

1. That the emancipation of the working class can only be achieved through the socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, and their subsequent control by the organised community in the interests of the whole people.

2. That, as the proletariat is the last class to achieve freedom, its emancipation will mean the emancipation of the whole of mankind, without distinction of race, nationality, creed, or sex.

3. That this emancipation can only be the work of the working class itself,[1287] organised nationally and internationally into a distinct political party, consciously striving after the realisation of its ideals: and, finally,

4. That, in order to ensure greater material and moral facilities for the working class to organise itself and to carry on the class war, the following reforms must immediately be carried through:—

Immediate Reforms

Political.—Abolition of the Monarchy.

Democratisation of the Governmental machinery, viz. Abolition of the House of Lords, Payment of

Members of Legislative and Administrative bodies. Payment of Official Expenses of Elections out of the Public Funds, Adult Suffrage, Proportional Representation, Triennial Parliaments, Second Ballot, Initiative, and Referendum. Foreigners to be granted rights of citizenship after two years' residence in the country, without any fees. Canvassing to be made illegal. All elections to take place on one day, such day to be made a legal holiday and all premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors to be closed.

Legislation by the people in such wise that no legislative proposal shall become law until ratified by the majority of the people.

Legislative and Administrative independence for all parts of the Empire.

Financial and Fiscal.—Repudiation of the National Debt.

Abolition of all indirect taxation and the institution of a cumulative tax on all incomes and inheritances exceeding 300*l.*

Administrative.—Extension of the principle of Local Self-Government.

Systematisation and co-ordination of the local administrative bodies.

Election of all administrators and administrative bodies by Equal Direct Adult Suffrage.

Educational.—Elementary education to be free, secular, industrial, and compulsory for all classes. The age of obligatory school attendance to be raised to 16.

Unification and systematisation of intermediate

and higher education, both general and technical, and all such education to be free.

State Maintenance for all attending State schools.

Abolition of school rates; the cost of education in all State schools to be borne by the National Exchequer.

Public Monopolies and Services.—Nationalisation of the land and the organisation of labour in agriculture and industry under public ownership and control on co-operative principles.

Nationalisation of the Trusts.

Nationalisation of Railways, Docks, and Canals, and all great means of transit.

Public ownership and control of Gas, Electric Light, and Water supplies, as well as of Tramway, Omnibus, and other locomotive services.

Public ownership and control of the food and coal supply.

The establishment of State and municipal banks and pawnshops and public restaurants.

Public ownership and control of the lifeboat service.

Public ownership and control of hospitals, dispensaries, cemeteries, and crematoria.

Public ownership and control of the drink traffic.

Labour.—A legislative eight-hour working day, or 48 hours per week, to be the maximum for all trades and industries. Imprisonment to be inflicted on employers for any infringement of the law.

Absolute freedom of combination for all workers, with legal guarantee against any action, private or

public, which tends to curtail or infringe it.

No child to be employed in any trade or occupation until 16 years of age, and imprisonment to be inflicted on employers, parents, and guardians who infringe this law.

Public provision of useful work at not less than trade union rates of wages for the unemployed.

Free State Insurance against sickness and accident, and free and adequate State pensions or provision for aged and disabled workers. Public assistance not to entail any forfeiture of political rights.

The legislative enactment of a minimum wage of 30*s.* for all workers. Equal pay for both sexes for the performance of equal work.

Social.—Abolition of the present workhouse system, and reformed administration of the Poor Law on a basis of national co-operation.

Compulsory construction by public bodies of healthy dwellings for the people; such dwellings to be let at rents to cover the cost of construction and maintenance alone, and not to cover the cost of the land.

The administration of justice and legal advice to be free to all; justice to be administered by judges chosen by the people; appeal in criminal cases; compensation for those innocently accused, condemned, and imprisoned; abolition of imprisonment for contempt of court in relation to non-payment of debt in the case of workers earning less than 2*l.* per week; abolition of capital punishment.

Miscellaneous.—The disestablishment and disendowment of all State Churches.

The abolition of standing armies, and the establishment of national citizen forces. The people to decide on peace and war.

The establishment of international courts of arbitration.

The abolition of courts-martial; all offences against discipline to be transferred to the jurisdiction of civil courts.

INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY

Constitution and Rules. 1907-8

Object.—An Industrial Commonwealth founded upon the Socialisation of Land and Capital.

Methods.—The education of the community in the principles of Socialism.

The Industrial and Political Organisation of the Workers.

The Independent Representation of Socialist Principles on all elective bodies.

Programme.—The true object of industry being the production of the requirements of life, the responsibility should rest with the community collectively, therefore:

The land, being the storehouse of all the necessaries of life, should be declared and treated as public property.

The capital necessary for industrial operations should be owned and used collectively.

Work, and wealth resulting therefrom, should be

equitably distributed over the population.

As a means to this end, we demand the enactment of the following measures:

1. A maximum of 48 hours working week, with the retention of all existing holidays, and Labour Day, May 1, secured by law.

2. The provision of work to all capable adult applicants at recognised trade union rates, with a statutory minimum of sixpence per hour.

In order to remuneratively employ the applicants, Parish, District, Borough, and County Councils to be invested with powers to:

(*a*) Organise and undertake such industries as they may consider desirable.

(*b*) Compulsorily acquire land; purchase, erect, or manufacture buildings, stock, or other articles for carrying on such industries.

(*c*) Levy rates on the rental values of the district, and borrow money on the security of such rates for any of the above purposes.

3. State pensions for every person over 50 years of age, and adequate provision for all widows, orphans, sick, and disabled workers.

4. Free secular, moral, primary, secondary, and university education, with free maintenance while at school or university.

5. The raising of the age of child labour, with a view to its ultimate extinction.

6. Municipalisation and public control of the drink

traffic.

7. Municipalisation and public control of all Hospitals and Infirmaries.

8. Abolition of indirect taxation and the gradual transference of all public burdens on to unearned incomes with a view to their ultimate extinction.

The Independent Labour Party is in favour of adult suffrage, with full political rights and privileges for women, and the immediate extension of the franchise to women on the same terms as granted to men; also triennial Parliaments and second ballot.

THE LABOUR PARTY

has no official programme. A semi-official programme, contained in a statement of its Secretary, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., will be found on page 425 of this book.

THE FABIAN SOCIETY

Basis.—The Fabian Society consists of Socialists.

It therefore aims at the reorganisation of Society by the emancipation of Land and Industrial Capital from individual and class ownership, and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit. In this way only can the natural and acquired advantages of the country be equitably shared by the whole people.

The Society accordingly works for the extinction of private property in Land and of the consequent

individual appropriation, in the form of Rent, of the price paid for permission to use the earth, as well as for the advantages of superior soils and sites.

The Society, further, works for the transfer to the community of the administration of such industrial Capital as can conveniently be managed socially. For, owing to the monopoly of the means of production in the past, industrial inventions and the transformation of surplus income into Capital have mainly enriched the proprietary class, the worker being now dependent on that class for leave to earn a living.

If these measures be carried out, without compensation (though not without such relief to expropriated individuals as may seem fit to the community), Rent and Interest will be added to the reward of labour, the idle class now living on the labour of others will necessarily disappear, and practical equality of opportunity will be maintained by the spontaneous action of economic forces with much less interference with personal liberty than the present system entails.

For the attainment of these ends the Fabian Society looks to the spread of Socialist opinions, and the social and political changes consequent thereon, including the establishment of equal citizenship for men and women. It seeks to achieve these ends by the general dissemination of knowledge as to the relation between the individual and Society in its economic, ethical, and political aspects.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Object.—The establishment of a system of society

based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds that society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (*i.e.* land, factories, railways, &c.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the

conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation, and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

PLATFORM OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR PARTY

The Socialist Labour Party is a political organisation seeking to establish political and social freedom for all, and seeing in the conquest by the Socialist Working Class of all the governmental and administrative powers of the nation the means to the attainment of that end.

It affirms its belief that political and social freedom are not two separate and unrelated ideas, but are two sides of the one great principle, each

being incomplete without the other.

The course of society politically has been from warring but democratic tribes within each nation to a united government under an absolutely undemocratic monarchy. Within this monarchy again developed revolts against its power, revolts at first seeking to limit its prerogatives only, then demanding the inclusion of certain classes in the governing power, then demanding the right of the subject to criticise and control the power of the monarch, and finally, in the most advanced countries this movement culminated in the total abolition of the monarchical institution, and the transformation of the subject into the citizen.

In industry a corresponding development has taken place. The independent producer, owning his own tools and knowing no master, has given way before the more effective productive powers of huge capital, concentrated in the hands of the great capitalist. The latter, recognising no rights in his workers, ruled as an absolute monarch in his factory. But within the realm of capital developed a revolt against the power of the capitalist. This revolt, taking the form of trade unionism, has pursued in the industrial field the same line of development as the movement for political freedom has pursued in the sphere of national government. It first contented itself with protests against excessive exactions, against all undue stretchings of the power of the capitalist; then its efforts broadened out to demands for restrictions upon the absolute character of such power, *i.e.*, by claiming for trade unions the right to make rules for the workers in the workshop; then it sought to still further curb the capitalist's power by shortening the working day, and so limiting the period during

which the toiler may be exploited. Finally, it seeks by Boards of Arbitration to establish an equivalent in the industrial world for that compromise in the political world by which, in constitutional countries, the monarch retains his position by granting a parliament to divide with him the duties of governing, and so hides while securing his power. And as in the political history of the race the logical development of progress was found in the abolition of the institution of monarchy, and not in its mere restriction, so in industrial history the culminating point to which all efforts must at last converge lies in the abolition of the capitalist class, and not in the mere restriction of its powers.

The Socialist Labour Party, recognising these two phases of human development, unites them in its programme, and seeks to give them a concrete embodiment by its demand for a Socialist Republic.

It recognises in all past history a preparation for this achievement, and in the industrial tendencies of to-day it hails the workings out of those laws of human progress which bring that object within our reach.

The concentration of capital in the form of trusts at the same time as it simplifies the task we propose that society shall undertake, viz. the dispossession of the capitalist class, and the administration of all land and instruments of industry as social property, of which all shah be co-heirs and owners.

As to-day the organised power of the State theoretically guarantees to every individual his political rights, so in the Socialist Republic the power and productive forces of organised society will stand between every individual and want, guaranteeing that right to life without which all other rights are

but mockery.

Short of the complete dispossession of the capitalist class which this implies there is no hope for the workers.

SPEED THE DAY.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL UNION

The Union consists of members of the Church of England who have the following objects at heart:—

1. To claim for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice.

2. To study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time.

3. To present Christ in practical life as the living Master and King, the enemy of wrong and selfishness, the power of righteousness and love.

THE CHURCH SOCIALIST LEAGUE

Principles.—The Church has a mission to the whole of human life, Social and Individual, Material and Spiritual.

2. The Church can best fulfil its social mission by acting together in its corporate capacity.

3. To this end the members of the League accept the principles of Socialism.

Object.—To secure the corporate action of the Church on these principles.

Method.—1. To cultivate by the regular use of prayer and sacraments the life of brotherhood.

2. Members undertake to help each other in

fulfilling the object of the League by speaking and lecturing and in other ways.

3. Members shall co-operate as far as possible to secure the consideration of social questions at their various Ruridecanal and Diocesan Conferences and the election of Socialists on these and other representative bodies.

4. Members shall work for the disestablishment of the patron and the substitution of the Church in each parish in conjunction with the Church in the diocese in the patron's place.

5. To secure the representation of the wage-earning classes upon all the representative bodies of the Church.

GUILD OF ST. MATTHEW

Objects.—1. To get rid, by every possible means, of the existing prejudices, especially on the part of "Secularists," against the Church, her sacraments and her doctrines: and to endeavour to "justify God to the people."

2. To promote frequent and reverent worship in the Holy Communion, and a better observance of the teaching of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

3. To promote the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation.

FOOTNOTES:

[1287] This paragraph is not to be understood as debarring individual members of the possessing classes from participating in the work of the movement.

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