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## PATRIARCHAL *VERSUS* SOCIALISTIC REMEDIES

THE recent publication in Berlin of a second ponderous work upon employers' methods of dealing with labourers and the labour question brings into new relief the hopes and the chances of 'patronage' as a remedy for industrial troubles. In 1889 Professor Post, of Hanover, brought out his first volume, *Musterstätten Persönlicher Fürsorge von Arbeitgebern*, &c. It was the result of much study in other countries as well as in Germany. This volume, in which only children and youths are considered, attracted such attention from high quarters, that the author was given a place in the Ministry of *Handel und Gewerbe*. He was made the business manager of the 'Centralstelle für Arbeiter-Wohlfahrts-Einrichtungen.' A monthly organ, *Wohlfahrts-Correspondenz*, was established, to which some of the best-known specialists in social questions became contributors. In April, 1892, a conference was held at which both Ministers Von Berlepsch and Von Bötticher were present and active. It was proposed to gather all the important experience that employers, in every country, could show, and to put this experience into such order that it could be brought to the direct attention of all employers. It was said, 'If sufficient technical knowledge is brought to bear upon these problems; if a hundred of the best experiments are soberly and accurately described; if trustworthy plans are drawn of all types of tenements, bath-houses, cooking apparatus, water-closets, &c.; if the same is done for the various forms of profit-sharing, savings institutions, sanitary measures, arbitration and conciliation boards: if, finally, these attempts to improve the relation between employer and employed are regularly discussed by the most competent and practical men and are then authoritatively brought before the whole body of employers, inviting their criticism, suggestion, and co-operation, a permanent influence and result will follow.' Herr Minlos, a wealthy retired merchant, was moved in Hamburg to

experiment with coffee houses and cooking for the poorer class. He has for some years devoted the chief part of his time to this problem. After some defeats success has come. It has spread to Berlin, where one may see some of the most hopeful achievements of this kind in existence. As I had been with Herr Minlos upon his daily round of inspection and heard much of his experience and the minuter details of the work, it is pleasant to testify to the excellence of the report which Professor Post and Dr. Albrecht give of this work in the new volume. Its excellence is in the technical accuracy with which the report is adapted to its end. Any employer who wished to try some scheme of feeding his men would have put at his disposal the best experience and in the precise form most serviceable for him. The Centralstelle exists to make all that this experiment promises definitely attainable by all who are interested in it. Large numbers have already visited Berlin to examine these coffee houses simply because their attention has been directed to them by Professor Post. Herr Freese in Berlin introduced into his factory in 1884, as a result of a new factory ordinance, an *Arbeiterausschuss*, in which representatives of the workmen meet the employer regularly for a discussion of whatever concerns their common interests. Varying in form, a considerable number of these 'parliaments of business' now exist.<sup>1</sup>

Herr Freese seems to have reaped so definite an advantage from this relation that 'he has been plagued with visitors' who came to inquire into its workings. These two illustrations may adequately show the purpose of this organised scheme. For the housing of the working men, above a hundred pages are given to detailed description of actual experiments: large numbers of minutely drawn plans of tenements, cottages, &c., together with costs and whatever of success or failure the various experiences offer. As at the new society in Paris, one may have put at his command the most diverse and the most trustworthy plans and suggestions for various needs and circumstances. If we add to this some dozen other forms of patronage like profit-sharing savings banks, insurance, relief, libraries, &c., we have the plan as a whole. It must be added that it is so organised as to be a systematised educational force, having at its command facilities which make possible at least a very considerable extension of 'employers' remedies.'

<sup>1</sup> *Arbeiterausschüsse in der Deutschen Industrie*, Leipzig, 1890. According to Professor Sering, Herr Peters, near Elberfeld, was the first to form such a board between 1860 and 1870.

There are special reasons why this larger and more positive attempt to organise and propagate these conciliatory institutions by employers in Germany is of interest. Nowhere is the antagonism among social remedies more sharply defined than between such patronal schemes and Socialism. '*Patriarchalism*' is getting a kind of popularity which threatens to become as dismally monotonous as '*Manchesterthum*.' With the steady increase both in force and fecundity of the socialistic movement, patronage has taken the field. The honour thus of putting the employer upon his good behaviour must be given to the Socialists.

As these agitators have driven the State to so much active and fatherly care, so have they driven scores of employers in sheer self-defence to every expedient that seems likely to link the private interest of the employed to their own. More and more the success of the employer's business and his peace of mind depend upon this. To the extent that his workmen can be induced to save enough to secure some pittance of interest or rent-bearing property the employer feels safe. An employer writes: 'If I can induce one-half of my men to invest money in my tenement houses, I will take my chances with the Socialists.'

The most imposing development of modern patronage, that of *La Réforme Sociale* in France, has essentially the same origin. Both the older Le Play school and that of MM. Demoulin and de Tourville seem in theory and practice to have one enemy in view—collectivism. Le Play's earlier social studies and his relations to Reynaud show the origin of his antagonism to communal forms of society. His entire theoretic conception of government, property, family and corporations is elaborately distinct in its opposition to communism. On the practical side, too, singularly interesting results of this philosophy may be seen wherever it has been thoroughly incorporated by precept and example into business. Among the labourers in the mills of Léon Harmel in France, there has been the kind of organised instruction, through a series of years, about the nature of property, interest, rent, &c., together with an actual opportunity for investments of small sums, which has produced a 'capitalistic public opinion' among the labourers which the Socialists have found instructive. They have been allowed to lecture there, but in every case were so met by the workmen that the efforts to produce dissatisfaction failed.

At Montceau-les-Mines, one of the largest employers of labour in the country, M. Chagot, has turned in despair from the same

enemy to M. Harmel and his methods. In two of the northern departments the employers have united for the same purpose of educating the labourer into intelligent and sympathetic co-operation with the managers and owners. Other and broader terms than *patronage* are used for this movement, like *la régénération sociale*, but the foe is a militant collectivism. There, as in Germany, the Socialist pours out the same acrid and contemptuous criticism upon all these benevolent efforts. In France the movement of the employers, being so largely religious in its nature, is far vaguer than in Germany, where it has become rapidly definite, practical and perfectly conscious of the kind of opponent with whom it has to do. This result is due partly to the fact that Socialism is there developing in such strict fidelity to the abstractly simple principles upon which it rests. The French Socialists are broken into warring factions that are only brought together into spasmodic sympathy of action by some event which threatens the common cause, or by some occasion, like the Panama scandal, which offers rare game for their hunt. It is thus impossible that any counter-movement should get distinctness of outline. The English Socialism is 'opportunist' to an extreme that is the despair of those to whom the *Méhrwerthstheorie* is a final revelation. The strength of the German leadership is in nothing more interesting than in its unity of agreement upon the central abstract principles of Marx. This gives to the movement every character of a settled dogma, behind which the minds of the faithful do not seek to peer. One hears, as in a church service, the constant repetition, night after night, of the same thoughts, the same prophecies, the same confident and dogmatic assertion about the capitalistic dissolution and the dawning of a social order 'controlled by all for the good of all.' Though heard for the hundredth time, there is not the slightest lessening of devout interest among the listeners. Few religions ever made greater demands upon the sources of most implicit faith than the most effective and popular of these speakers. The very abstractness of the principles works with a kind of magic upon the imagination of the believers. For what is strictly a part of the Socialist dogma, the orators appeal far less to the intelligence than to the emotions. In attending during more than two years in different parts of Germany scores of these meetings, the feeling has deepened that much of the real strength of the propaganda is in its metaphysic and distinctively legendary quality.

When the leaders admit, as they eventually must, that the *Méhrwerthstheorie* suffers by having as little correspondence to

the facts as the 'iron law,' they must either not tell the 'little ones,' or must replace the surplus value theory by another legend.

Lassalle's co-operative associations have been cast out and his famous iron law has lost favour, but the root idea of Marx has risen into commanding influence. Attempts like those of Fischer and Kautsky to popularise Marx signally fail, but they are strong because they fail. Their effect upon the masses is to deepen and intensify the simple faith that wage-dependence is slavery. The superb organisation of the Socialist propaganda, the power of their press, the skill and ability of their orators, furnish a machinery so efficient for the spread of this agitation against the employer class that we can understand the new solicitude for organised resistance. When the great employer, 'König Stumm,' recently appealed anew for patronal activity in order to secure contentment among the labourers, a Socialist sheet said: 'Zufriedenheit ist das grösste Laster, keine Dummheit, keine Brandweinpest, kein Anderes Laster kann ein Volk so sehr—so zurück bringen wie Zufriedenheit.' Something more is meant here than in Lassalle's famous words ending, 'euer verdamnte Bedürfnisslosigkeit.' There is express hostility to the little investments which ever *tend* to a sense of contentment. Profit-sharing has for the same reason been made a frequent object of contemptuous criticism. Co-operation, as being more democratic, has had kindlier treatment, but the falling away of the German party from this part of Lassalle's programme shows a strictly logical development of the doctrine proper. It will have no compromise, but only war upon principle with the wage system. Such are the issues which the employers have to face. The type of patronage with which we have to do presents a variety of remedies far too various to be characterised by any 'snap judgment,' whether of praise or blame. Socialists see in it only a belated and quite childish attempt to humour the working men into docility and subserviency. With acuteness, not without justification, they point to the many resemblances between these efforts of the employer and some form of charity. With something like terrific effect the economists have been exploited for those sentences and passages in which such semi-charitable institutions—tenements, cheap meals &c.—are conceded to be an impediment to a rise of wages, if not, a positive means of lowering them. If this belief has become popular among the working men, the economists may be thanked for it. 'If you could keep those d——d professors still, we should have no bother with the labourers,' is a sentence I once

heard from one who had done much to further this type of improvement among his men. The elaborate citations of Prof. Post himself from high economic sources could fairly be interpreted into concessions which imply far profounder and quite other remedies than those which patronage offers. The scornful treatment of the movement by Professor Herkner in Dr. Braun's *Socialpolitisches Centralblatt*, No. 20, 1892, and the attitude of so conspicuous a factory inspector as Dr. Woerrishoffer, indicate the same fact of a dangerously respectable hostility to mere patronage which powerfully reinforces the opposition. The dismal history of many of these experiments—like Mülhaus—is used with some force and directness against the likelihood of any future success at all adequate to the requirements. The objections and enmities centre upon one point:—the uniform aim of patronage is to increase the dependence of the labourer upon his employer. It is charged that the employer does not appeal to the real faith and ambition in the labourer, to his sense of independence, his passion for freedom, his craving for self-control and direction. In the recent strikes among the German miners the central difficulty, as at Carmaux, concerned a question of violated 'class sentiment.' The miners, both upon the Saar and Rhine, made their bitterest complaints against what they felt to be a lack of consideration in dealing with them and their organisations. Immeasurable folly may mark much of this new sensitiveness in the labour world, but it is sheer dulness to ignore its existence. Wherever this troublesome sensitiveness shows itself the Socialists attempt to organise it into a political force. At Carmaux there was enough of this injured group feeling left over to secure the election of the Socialist Jaures to a place among the Deputies. The Rhine miners have been driven back to their work by measures which the *Frankfurter Zeitung* pronounces tactless in the extreme. A Dortmund correspondent says: 'The strike was a stupid one, but what shall be said of the manner in which the officials are browbeating the men and their claims?' A certain kind of victory over 10,000 labourers, if they are left with a sense of bitterness, is of questionable value if the men have at last an organised political leadership through which their sentiments can get such direct and telling expression. When the 'great patron,' Von Stumm, demands more sharp and energetic handling (*Schneidigkeit*) against the strikers, he is thanked quite sincerely by the Socialists, and reminded that 30,000 copies of a kindred speech were printed 'to let the labour world know what their fatherly protectors think about them.' The Socialists

were only too eager to debate the issues before the voters on the precise lines laid down by employers who spoke of the labourers as children to be kept docile by charity institutions and good advice.

This recent skirmish with the miners is mentioned because it shows so accurately what the essential difficulties are with which *Patriarchalism* has to reckon. If the problem were merely a material one that could be measured by any possible increment to the wage which any form of production could afford, it would be relatively simple. This seems, however, almost the least of the factors. These Westphalian miners have a wage that is actually three times higher than vast numbers of labourers in East Prussia, where the Socialists' complaint is that 'the ox is not more contented.' When we add that the growing democracy and modern conditions have aroused in the labourer's life so many new ambitions, and that somehow he *has become convinced that through politics he may do much to realise these ambitions*, we have at least an approximate measure of the fact with which we are dealing. Much madness may be in the methods adopted to reach their ends. Still it is momentous that in such numbers the labourers simply believe at last that something far better than patronage can offer is within their reach. It is this profound change which makes so idle all comparison of patronage in the past, with patronage in the present; of patronage in Austria with patronage in Australia and America; or of patronage in a great city with patronage in an isolated country district.

The temper and spirit of the wage-earners as a class will be more and more determined by city standards and conditions; will be determined in a word where the influence is highest and best organised, and where it is most haughtily opposed to all 'employers' remedies.' What chance then has the neo-patriarch in this struggle? The issues are no longer to be scouted because of the vagueness of Socialism; they are a part of active politics. The Socialists say to the labourer, 'The employers bring their petty schemes to keep you deferential and contented under a system which leaves you neither manly independence nor economic security. The schemes are as helpless as they are hopeless. You on the other hand hold a method which brings self-respect as well as mastery over the sources of social influence.' It is at least infelicitous that such terms as "patriarchal" should be allowed to do service in this bout with Socialism. No conceivable explaining it into modern conceptions can rid the term of implications that are an affront to every democratic sentiment.



M. Cheysson, in a recent issue of *La Réforme Sociale*, has shown with great skill that *patronage* as used by the Le Play followers, represents a movement as advanced as it is free. Prof. Post's definition is quite as broad: "Der von mir gemeinte, will Befreiung—will erlösen aber nicht loslösen, will kein Unterthanen,' &c. These definitions must be accepted, but they mark a certain fatal limit to the movement so far as it seeks its end of disarming the Socialist, or, more accurately, of preventing the rest of the labourers from becoming Socialists. The very fact that this movement has taken shape; that it has become positive, with a body of principles, an organ and a new literature, shows how clearly it must make itself seen as an employer's method, rather than a labourer's method. It is impossible longer in Germany to assume any theory of Bastiat harmonies. Whatever measure of truth it contains the economists have done a perfect work for the Socialists by sharp and constant emphasis upon the points of conflict between employer and employed. The employed, without making nice and saving distinctions, take their academic instructors at their word. Socialistic lectures, press and literature are filled with these 'admissions of the *bourgeois* economists.' But even more than this, the greater the precision of organisation in the employers' movement, the more striking and apparent will become the contrast between the *principles* upon which respectively these two methods rest. This distinction might seem unimportant if this struggle of patronage and Socialism for the mass of the labourers were not so practical in its issues. From the moment that Socialism begins to become a serious political factor, say 1874, the clearest head among the leaders, Bebel, made it appear that the real difference between them and their opponents was one of principle. It has already been shown that this policy of preaching a kind of vague metaphysic in the form of 'principles,' has worked, in its effects upon the emotions of the masses, not unlike a religion, and whatever of opportunism comes with more definite political responsibilities, thus far, the distinction and importance of principles based upon class interests have been kept supreme. As a matter of tactics no one would question the wisdom of this consistency. It has worked so unfailingly to the advantage of Socialism moreover, that no party in the Reichstag could be said in any way (except on a theory which the State and the economists had cast out) to represent the mass of the employed. The Radical Party, which in France is so closely in touch with the Socialists, is in Germany almost further removed from them

than any other in Parliament. The Volkspartei cannot be said to fill this gulf. Thus the Socialists can go before the people with the claim which *seems* justified: "We alone represent your real interests." There is a very curious justification of the success of this policy which one may see repeatedly in mixed assemblies of working men where Socialists are in a minority. I have seen no case in which the Socialists did not put their opponents upon the defensive. The appeal was so effectively direct to class pride and feeling as to produce something like shamefacedness on the part of the defence. This of course proves nothing as to the real merit of the case, but it signifies much for the practical issues between patronage and Socialism.

A further illustration is in the relative weakness of the Conservative trade unions (Hirsch-Duncker Gewerkvereine) and the far more numerous and active Fachvereine, which are extremely Socialistic in all their tendencies.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hirsch thought in 1873 that his groups would tend to absorb the Socialist groups, and Prof. Held was evidently of the same opinion. These older Gewerkvereine were supposed to work in considerable if not entire sympathy with employers and their aims. The result is melancholy enough. At the present moment there may possibly be 58,000 members, while those of more Socialistic tendencies have something like 400,000 members. The unconcealed habit of many patronal firms of turning off at once any workman who is known to take a Socialist paper or to express active sympathy with the party (as by joining the Lese-Vereine) may be a necessity of the situation, but it has ultimate results of most questionable character. It not only embitters the man and his friends, but has the effect of setting the two groups of workers over against each other. This haste to be rid of those who express certain opinions about the wage-system can hardly secure a favourable interpretation on the part of those who are disaffected or even in doubt. These men go with their grievance straight to the Fachvereine, where their story furnishes the very

<sup>1</sup> When Professor Held wrote in 1873 his book on the *Arbeiterpresse* of that time, he put first of three leading ideas which characterised the eighteen or twenty papers then existing, the growing and definite purpose to unite in independent groups through which their own interests could be defended against the employer—'Und zwar zunächst immer ein Gegensatz zum Arbeitgeber.' It is certain that this purpose has been organised into far greater precision of conscious antagonism since that date. There is now no such contrast that can be drawn between the trade union papers and the Socialistic ones. It would probably understate the fact if we said the Socialistic press is five times as strong as in 1873, and this express enmity toward all attempts to identify labour with existing forms of capitalistic production has become a recognised power.

material which the malcontents turn so adroitly to their own advantage.<sup>1</sup>

A final difficulty which patronage will encounter may be mentioned, though it is vague and admits of little positive proof. No one who has closely watched the organised propaganda of German Socialism will question its rather portentous reality. The part which *feeling* and *sentiment* play in the social question is every day greater and more pervasive. The origin or justification of these new cravings does not here concern us, but only the incontestable fact that a massive force of sentiment has been aroused into formidable activity. Religious institutions no longer control or satisfy it, but its demands were never greater than at present. Here, I conceive, patronage will find its chief embarrassment. Its literature, its reports, its appeals are dry and common-place. They promise mere variations from the same old round that the labourer knows too well—labourers' committees and regulations, wage reform, profit sharing, premiums, savings institutions, improved tenements and nourishment, relief, insurance, etc. These, according to Prof. Post and Dr. Albrecht are the 'Patriarchalische Beziehungen in der Grossindustrie.' We need not deny them the highest value. They may indeed measure approximately such possibilities of improvement as are alone open to the mass of the labourers. The fact will yet remain that they do not appeal strongly to the new energies of hope and aspiration which multitudes of labourers have come to cherish with a kind of religious passion. Patronage scarcely touches the sentiment and the imagination. It is easy to show that these expectations are unreasonable or even ridiculous. I am only concerned to show here that they exist in increasing force, and that patronage must reckon with them. It is mere blindness on the other hand to deny that Socialism has touched the imagination; that it works with power upon emotions which are as legitimate as they are daring in their claims.

In the now vast bulk of Socialistic literature, no element is more prominent than its distinctively imaginative quality. An academician of such strength and subtlety as Melchior de

<sup>1</sup> Only the other day, I was talking with a leading Socialist in Freiburg, Baden, in whose workshop the Socialist Labour Bureau is carried on, when a workman, just turned off because of a speech at a club, came in and presented to Herr Kreuter the book of his own Fachverein, in which his record as workman was given, together with the assurance, by the Committee, that the case was genuine. Herr K. showed me the book, with the remark, 'This is the way they come! What do you think of a society that feels itself so weak that it can't keep men at work if they believe and teach that the present bourgeois "*Harmonieduselei*" may be made over into something better?'

Vogüé admits that Socialism has not only captivated the attention, but has caught the idealist. No recent words of more significance have been written than "Le socialisme a capté le courant d'idéalisme qui se réformait partout durant ces mêmes années. Une conspiration tacite, inconsciente, s'est nouée entre des gens que tout sépare, depuis le proletaire, qui se rue violement contre la machine sociale, jusqu'aux conducteur patentés de cette machine : *la conspiration commence à la haine d'en bas, et finit à la vague pitié d'en haut*, elle réunit les efforts des hommes d'action et les complaisances de l'homme de pensée," etc. How few men of the type here referred to are any longer moved by Guizot's remedy, "Enrichissez-vous" ? In Germany more than mere general signs of such changes can be seen—the new dramatic movement in Berlin with a Socialist membership, according to Prof. Adler, of 15,000 ; the appearance of a drama of such power as *Die Weber* ; the widening sale of revolutionary songs and the increasing space given in the Socialist press to the 'angry poets,' old and new. However far from the gray realities of the world's work all this may be, we see the kind of obstacle which patronage has to meet.

On the other hand the real strength and hope of the employers' remedy is that it is first in the field. The overwhelming majority of labourers are still 'unspoiled.' Patronage as an instructive and organised movement is not only recent, but in Germany it has a sort of structural alliance with the entire labour legislation of the Empire. Patronage cannot be fairly judged independent of this relation to State powers, local and central. Important parts of the actual social legislation could have neither result nor meaning, unless employers took definite and positive steps toward some form of remedy. Not only does this patriarchal movement take for granted the existence of a disturbing force economically, but the laws and ordinances already existing assume the same fact. When once the *Arbeitsordnung* exists (see especially § 134c—2, § 134d, etc.), there must follow some such co-operation between employer and employed as to realise its provisions. German labour legislation admits that the humbler workers are often exploited by the strong and successful. It assumes the necessity of legal and of voluntary organised effort to make the struggle fairer. The purpose of the State to enforce whatever the *general* welfare demands, as against any individual or private interest, never got such constant and practical illustration as in the difficulties which rise under this new labour legislation. When so

powerful a man as 'King Stumm' criticises the recent strikes among the miners from the standpoint merely of the owners and directors of mines, the Minister of the Interior tells him that the Government will continue to act from another and higher standpoint—the *social* one. There is much more practical consistency in this 'ethical attitude of the State' than is often believed, nor can it be doubted that much enthusiasm may be awakened if, as confidently hoped, local initiative and voluntary co-operation go hand in hand with the State. The first glance at patronage shows that, given the *man*, it succeeds. Leclaire, Godin, Boucicaut, Krupp, Dollfus or David Peters would have succeeded with any conceivable form of business or with no form.

If patronage is to be generalised into a power, the employer must not be merely moralised, as the positivists would have him; he must have the technical knowledge which successful patronage implies. To make such knowledge easily accessible to all, is the aim of this German movement. It is believed by those whose opinions have weight, that the influence of performing the mere necessary duties under the new social legislation is slowly producing a different type of employer—an employer with a more intelligent *socialised* sympathy. To the extent that this is true, we have the conditions which make patronage permanent and efficient.

Of one certain result, much may fairly be made. These improvements show, in scores of cases, that the higher standard of comfort and living which patronage introduces becomes an economic as well as moral force of real importance. Whether it is 'scientific cooking,' baths, proper housing or the care given to the children, we have introduced an influence which furnishes its own proof of excellence. In the very midst of the labourers, to establish firmly a higher standard, not of individual merely but of *family life*, is doubtless to erect the most unassailable of all barriers against Socialism. The best results found among the instances given by Dr. Post are of this kind. A large employer in Berlin, Herr Roesicke gives evidence of the influence upon labourers that have once fairly lived in the atmosphere of a 'generous and intelligent patronage.' 'If once used to proper food, a bath-house, good ventilation, they refuse blankly to put up with meaner furnishings.' The strongest testimony however is from the mothers whose children have had the advantages which give not only pride but hope to the parents. At these points patronage is to be put to its severest test. Can it so spread the example that the strong majority of labourers will

acknowledge its excellence? This task is no less formidable than that of *proving* to the mass of wage-earners that a broad and elastic system of improvements can do more for the labourers than the Socialists can do.

From the standpoint of the employer there are unpleasant hints that the victory will be neither easy nor early. Yet, even if Socialism has at present a strength in politics greater than that of any other party, not one eighth of the labourers can in any conceivable sense be called Socialists.

The opportunity of the employer would seem to be ample enough. The enormous powers of property are his. He has possession still of the strongest social forces. If with such advantages he fails in the struggle, the failure will be deserved and the field must be cleared for a hardier and a worthier leadership.

JOHN GRAHAM BROOKS