

A WORD ON SOCIALISM.

ADDRESSED TO SOCIALISTS AND TO THOSE WHO MAY BECOME SO.

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(Translated expressly for The Single Tax Review by L. H. Berens.)

III.

SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM.

THE TEACHINGS OF KARL MARX.

What has been said in the previous chapters against the validity of Socialism, is not likely at once to convince Socialists of the fallability of their accepted doctrines. Least of all is it likely to convince those who have come to regard the so-called Scientific Socialism as an inexhaustible source of indisputable truths. These will assure us that dozens of times Socialism has been the subject of similar criticism without suffering the least injury. That up to now Socialism has always come off victorious in every controversy with its opponents. Consequently, they hold, truth must be on its side.

But every little sect contends exactly the same about its pet dogmas. That any doctrine has long held its ground in the minds of its adherents, may be due either to the fact that it is true, or contains some rudiment of truth, or to the fact that the source of its errors has not yet been sufficiently revealed and avowed.

The avowed remedial and ameliorative purpose of Socialism appeals so strongly to all who recognize the injustice and dire evils of the existing order of things, that its foundations, its fundamental doctrines and teachings, are for the most part taken for granted, or accepted without such examination as would be given to teachings claiming to be scientific in any other department of thought.

As everybody knows, the so-called Scientific Socialism is based upon the teachings of Karl Marx, and is, therefore, often briefly termed Marxian. All other prior Socialist theorists are regarded as overthrown, as Utopians who only deceived themselves and others. But Karl Marx, we are assured, established Socialism upon an indisputable and scientific foundation. (His best known book, *Das Kapital*, its English translators assure us, "is often called on the Continent 'the Bible of the working class.'")

Social Democracy is avowedly based upon the teachings of Karl Marx, whose work its adherents hold in awe and reverence, regarding it almost as holy and sacred, and laboriously endeavoring to conform their actions to its teachings or its teachings to their actions. This, however, they find somewhat difficult; for the perverse scientific jargon Karl Marx employs reveals as little meaning as possible, often, indeed, making it impossible to know

what meaning, if any, he really wanted to convey. When the German Socialists, the enthusiastic students and most intimate friends of Karl Marx, met in the early seventies of the last century to build up a political programme they thought to be based upon his teachings, they received from him the crushing judgment that the programme they had so carefully and laboriously prepared as "throughout most objectionable and demoralizing to the party." Instead of answering, "Then you are nothing but a quack who has led us all astray," the poor simpletons only prostrated themselves still more before the man whom apparently they still regarded as their intellectual hero and leader. Even to this day a Prussian court-historian may criticise more freely the Prussian kings than dare any Socialist writer the works and character of Karl Marx. The wise saying of an enlightened Englishman that the uncritical adoration and canonization of any man is the surest sign of a weak and uncultivated mind, remains apparently unknown to social Democrats.

Of all Socialist theories the so-called Scientific Socialism, and more particularly the works of Karl Marx, will be the most unsympathetic to the critical and impartial reader. In the older Socialist writers one often finds lucid and beautiful language, a deep sympathy with the poor and oppressed, a clear and positive presentation of their thought. Of such things there is no trace in the so highly praised works of the founder of Scientific Socialism. In all his endless writings one cannot find a single paragraph which makes the heart beat faster, nor a single sentence inspired by the pure air of a self-forgetting enthusiasm, where we feel ourselves uplifted on the wings of a great genius to a higher and better atmosphere. True it is that Marx voiced the claims of the disinherited, but always and ever in such a way as to arouse little or no sympathy. A crabbed, pedantic, distorted style, devoid of lucidity and clearness, poisonously chiding, upbraiding, scolding, scoffing and sneering, without a spark of manly indignation; such is the key-note of the writings to which the apostles of Social Democracy would have us look as an inspiring revelation.

Surely those who love the people, who would redeem the people from their present thralldom, would take pains to write so that the people could understand them. Of any such desire Marx was evidently entirely free. Every simple and homely word is replaced by some high-flown foreign word. Instead of beggars we find "proletariat;" tools and machines are transformed into "means of production"; quarrels between employer and employed become "class-wars"; stores of wealth become "accumulations of capital", land becomes "the external conditions of labor," and so on. Not in the plain homely understandable language of true wisdom does Marx speak to us, but in the pompous jargon of a juggling quack, who would deceive us by mystic, meaningless, cabalistic incantations. His writings reveal too often an unbearable vanity, a self-pleasing parade of learned verbosity, a bitter hatred of any who might hide or lessen his fame. Kindness of heart or love of truth, according to the testimony of reliable judges, were foreign to his character.

Marxism, however, has one great advantage over all other Socialist sys-

tems. Not the advantage of greater clearness, insight and depth, nor of greater knowledge of men and affairs, but the advantage that the author himself avoids and explicitly forbids any practical application of his own theories.

According to the teachings of Karl Marx, Socialism is not to be called into existence by brave, self-sacrificing deeds, but must automatically evolve as do the worms in the puddle. One must necessarily await the end of the capitalistic system of production. But when or how it will come to an end, Marx does not tell us. His less prudent disciples Bebel and Hyndman have repeatedly indulged in prophecies on this point, but their experiences in this direction have not proved very promising. The older Socialist writers deemed it their duty to attempt to find and to formulate what seemed to them the best and most promising proposals for the realization of Socialism, even though these might soon prove themselves utterly impractical. Karl Marx avoided their error, and took care that his theories should never be contradicted by facts. According to his teachings Socialism will come because come it must, whether we sacrifice ourselves willingly on its behalf, or with self-seeking apathy await the inevitable course of events, whether we behave ourselves well or ill, whether we do right or do wrong, act justly or unjustly one towards another.

What, then, is the theory of Scientific Socialism, of the one Socialist system that still holds the field? From the writings of its founder it is far from easy to gain any clear and coherent train of thought. Certain it is, however, that its primary doctrine is that everything that happens is due to material causes. The cravings of hunger are assumed to be the main cause of the progress of humanity. The Socialism of Karl Marx prides itself on seeking in material causes the explanation of all historical doings. If this were true, if it were true that hunger and love are the only driving forces in the history of the world, why should the history of mankind be so much more interesting and instructive than the history of any other of the animal species? Why is it, then, that humanity is distinguished by a spiritual or moral or social progress? The morality of the wolf-pack and their social habits are the same today as they ever were; the morality and social habits of mankind are ever changing, ever striving to realize and to reflect their altered higher and broader conceptions of morality and of social duty.

In any case, however, what in the name of common sense has any theory of historical materialism to do with the question why today the poor lack bread? To what is the present poverty of the masses of mankind to be attributed? This is the first question that confronts the sociologist of today, to which he is called upon to give a clear and decided answer. To the fact, answers Karl Marx, that production is carried on for the market, not for needs, for sale, not for use, and that in consequence the products of labor take the form of commodities and acquire a value, a use-value and an exchange-value, and that "use-values are only produced by capitalists, because, and in so far as, they are the materials substratum, the depositories of exchange

value.”* The exploitation of the workers comes into being, he tells us, because the manufacturers who carry on the capitalistic system of production press out of the workers “a surplus value” by forcing them to work longer hours than is necessary for the production of either of the “use-value” or the “exchange-value.” Have you understood all this, reader? This reproduction of the Marxian theory may be questioned; for to reproduce it correctly seems beyond human capacity, at least until it is changed into uncritical admiration of such wonderful acuteness. One thing, however, is certain, namely, that Marx does not seek the cause of poverty in some established social wrong and injustice, but in some incomprehensible learned hocus-pocus the simple understanding of the people will never enable them to comprehend.

Social progress, according to the teachings of Scientific Socialism, is called into being by class wars. One class is continuously displacing another class from its dominion and its possessions, and passing laws in its own interests. Of the right of which our moralists teach, Scientific Socialism will know nothing, still less of the theory of inalienable natural rights, on which political philosophers have hitherto always attempted to build up their political philosophy. The right of the Statute Books, according to its teachings, is not something unchangeable, above all parties and above all criticism, as idealists have taught, but is simply the authoritative expression of the power and special interest of the temporary predominating class. Might, in short, makes right and gives rights. The idea that there are any inalienable and unchangeable natural rights finds no place in the Marxian philosophy.

How, then, is the solution of the Social question, of the abolition of poverty in the midst of plenty, ever to be achieved? Simply by the so-called working classes gaining control of all the means of production, natural and man-made, and taking possession of the property of the rich. According to the Marxian theories, trade and manufacture on a large scale must inevitably within a short time crush out all smaller trades and manufacturers. By this process all wealth will accumulate in the hands of a few big capitalists. When the rest of the population is impoverished and bereft of all power, then the final act is to be accomplished, the expropriation of the expropriators, or, in plain English, the dispossession of the possessing propertied classes. Then, instead of the present class-rule and class-dominion, the uncontrolled dictatorship of the proletariat is to be established. All the means of production, transportation and exchange will be nationalized, the carrying on of all the multifarious business of the country will be carried on by the State, which will distribute also the fruits of the industry of the whole community—either according to needs, the ideal of Communism, or according to the value of services rendered; on this fundamental and important point there is as yet no unanimity of opinion among Socialists and Socialist Doctrinaires.

Though Karl Marx himself did come to realize that, to use his own words,

*Capital. p. 166.

"The expropriation of the mass of the people from the soil forms the basis of the capitalist mode of production;"* that "the expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil, is the basis of the whole process"† yet according to the accepted teachings of Scientific Socialism, the poverty of the industrial masses of the people is not attributed to this expropriation, to the fact that they have been robbed by law and statute of their equal rights to the use of the soil, to the use of the inexhaustible sources and forces of Nature. It is boldly attributed to what they term "the capitalist mode of production." Thus, instead of attacking a cause, "the basis of the whole process," they attack an effect, ignoring the self-evident truth that it is only by removing causes that one can hope to remove their effects. This leads them farther and farther astray, till they come to argue, as they do argue today, that it is not freedom and justice that must be secured to the workers, but that the State, the god of their idolatry, with thousands of protective laws, must look after them and provide for their wants, as parents look after and provide for the wants of the most helpless children. It is not our rights that the State must restore to us, but it must keep us in leading strings, must dictate to us what we must do, and how we must do it, must take over all trade and industry, establish a despotism such as the world has never seen, turn upside down everything as it exists today.

The capitalists are the people who have everything; the Socialists are the people who would like to have everything. "There shall be in England seven half-penny loaves sold for a penny; the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops; and I will make it a felony to drink small-beer." Clothed, hidden and disguised, in pompous, high-flown learned jargon, such are the demands of the Scientific Socialism of today.

IV.

SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM (Continued).

THE ESSENCE OF THE MARXIAN TEACHINGS.

The moral sense is fundamentally identical with the social instincts, "the truth thus formulated by Charles Darwin deserves the most serious consideration of every student of Ethics and of Social Science. Social life arises out of human needs; morality arises out of human relationships."‡ Hence it is that Social Science necessarily concerns itself almost solely with moral questions, with the relationships of the units of society one towards another, with the question of human rights and of human duties, and primarily with the distinction between mine and thine, or between mine, thine and ours. Hence it

*Capital. p. 793. †Ibid. p. 739.

‡In his book, "Toward the Light," (Swan, Sonnenspeins "Social Science Series," price 2/6) more especially in Chapters XI and XXI, Mr. L. H. Berens dwells at some length on the close relationship, if not identity, of the Science of Ethics and the Science of Social Life.

is more than questionable whether any teachings diametrically opposed to accepted conceptions of morality, of right and wrong, which regards 'property' solely as legally acquired plunder, which practically denies any distinction between mine and thine, or between mine, thine and ours, can possibly render any valuable aid to the science of sciences, Social Science. They may teach us how to destroy the existing social habitation, but not how to build up a better, more enduring and more equitable one.

Such consideration should not be lightly ignored even by those who have convinced themselves of the correctness of the Marxian theories and teachings, and who in their superior wisdom are so apt to look down on all other thought. As has already been shown, these theories and teachings are not based upon any clear, understandable, indisputable principles, nor do they base their appeal on the better and nobler impulses of human nature, but on the basest and most ignoble passions, predominant only amongst beggars and slaves.

The fact that the so-called Scientific Socialism, as expounded in the works of Karl Marx, is framed in accordance with the attributes specially peculiar to the beggar and the vagabond, gives the key to the explanation of its glaring contradictions, over which so many of its students have hitherto puzzled themselves in vain.

A beggar is one who has given up his rights as man, and who wanders over the face of the earth as a slave without a master. He demands no rights to the earth; he wills neither house nor home, for he avoids every fixed point which will bind him to right and duty. He will know nothing of things that might be useful to him, but worries himself incessantly and needlessly about a thousand things that cannot possibly affect him. He weaves for himself a pompous beggar-philosophy, which has no relation to the realities of life, and fills his mind with empty vain illusions. He expects no kindness from us, but is very insulted if we are suspicious of him; he is slighted and looked down on, but is nevertheless plagued with a peculiar conceit and self-love. He is utterly without balance, and is blown to and from by the most contradictory impulses. He has an instinctive aversion to everything simple, straightforward, clear and true, but obstinately clings to what is false, unworthy and degrading. He likes to hear about his rights, but is very impatient if reminded of his duties. For he is governed by a quite childish covetousness—and covetousness hates nothing worse than the idea of duty.

The distorted theories and perverse teachings of Karl Marx are entirely suited to the character of the beggar and the instincts of the rabble. The beggar is impudent but cowardly; he only has courage when he knows himself to be in an overwhelming majority. Therefore it is that Karl Marx teaches that some time or other the great majority of the community must become beggars, or as he pompously expresses it, proletarians. The beggar only thinks of revolting against his conditions when hunger plagues him; therefore Karl Marx teaches that the great masses of the propertyless classes must become more and more miserable before the Socialist state of the future can be called into being. The beggar recognizes no idea of right and has no conception of

rights, therefore it is that begging and stealing are so near akin to one another. He takes what he can and where he can, indifferent to whether he is acting rightly or wrongly. Thus also Marxism demands for the workers not only that to which they have a demonstrable right, but also everything else. Just as envy and hatred toward those more fortunately placed than themselves is the driving force of beggars, so it is the driving force of the class hatred engendered and fostered by the Marxian inspired social movement. Just as the envious beggar when confronted with the possessions of the rich cannot repress the burning desire to possess himself of them; so Marxism, too, the day it attains to power threatens the possessing classes with the expropriation of the expropriators—or, in plain English, with the taking away of their property irrespective of its character or whether it has been honestly earned or dishonestly appropriated. Just as the beggar when at a safe distance denounces the rich with the lowest abuse, so Marxism denounces existing society with poisonous accusations, while still whining for charity and protection, and lacking the courage to undertake any serious action against it. And just as hungry beggars dream themselves to be kings, popes and emperors, with unrestricted power and hordes of helpless slaves; so Marxism, too, dreams of a utopian Socialist State which its adherents will arrange according to their hearts' desire, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the Rule of Beggardom.

Regarded as a scientific theory the teachings of Karl Marx are vague, misty and confused; but all their contradictions are removed, all their riddles are solved, when once it is realized that they are based upon and appeal to the basest impulses and passions of human nature. Then it is easy to understand why Marxians attribute all historical action, the noblest as well as the most degrading, to the low causes of envy and of hunger, and why nothing arouses their animosity so much as clear conceptions of right and wrong. Then we see the reason of their pompous, incomprehensible, but threatening mode of expressing themselves, couched in the lowest jargon of the wandering vagabond. Then we can understand the gradual promotion of their baseless doctrines to the dignity of "Scientific Socialism," concurrent with the impatient, domineering unscientific attitude of its apostles toward those who venture to think differently. Then we know the reason why "Scientific Socialism" finds such fruitful soil amongst the most beggarly and submissive nations of Eastern Europe; and why it is far less acceptable to those who have conquered their political freedom by brave deeds, than to those whose most cherished weapon is the treacherous bomb. Then we commence to realize the Marxian teachings are so often associated with unsavory vagabond ideas, such as those of Free Love, as also their instinctive animosity to the sentiment of honor, and all other elements of sober law and peaceful order. Why Social Democracy has never succeeded in purifying itself, or of uplifting itself to a high moral standpoint, though so numerous are the good and well-meaning men who have been driven into its camp by the crying needs of the people. Then we come to understand why Social Democracy never speaks to the people of their rights and duties, but always of their claims, and why

its teachings so powerfully attract the most characterless and unripe elements of the population. It is a well known fact, quite recently again confirmed by two humane and educated German scholars, who for a time travelled round the country as wandering artisans, that in that country at least the habitual vagrant is almost without exception a rabid Socialist.

In the light of this view we can readily understand why Scientific Socialism has never a word to say about the fundamental rights of the people. Of the restoration, recognition and enforcement, of the equal rights of all to the use of the earth, Social Democracy has never yet mustered sufficient courage to say a single word. Quite the contrary, Social Democrats have repeatedly manifested their animosity to this clear and inspiring idea; they would gladly kill this fundamental social thought by silence, by ignoring it, or by indicating their aversion to any such clear and positive conception, and to the steps demanded to enforce it, though by so doing they treacherously betray the best interests of those who have trusted them. Social Democrats instinctively feel that in this thought there is something fundamentally antagonistic to their own beggar-like tendencies and politics. Instead of making clear to the workers their rights as men, they have adopted a sham radicalism, which makes believe that it will accomplish the greatest things, and yet prides itself when it has succeeded in begging a few crumbs as charity or relief. The demands of others they sneeringly refer to as "mere palliatives," and yet the whole of their political activity is devoted to claiming such palliatives; for they turn a deaf ear to more radical measures. Hence it is that Social Democracy has never succeeded in representing the real interests and vital needs of the poor, of the disinherited and dispossessed, based as these are on indisputable moral claims and the deepest feelings of right. If these interests are daily gaining increased recognition; if their unquestionable claims and indisputable rights are daily becoming better known and more fully recognized; this has only been gained in face of the bitterest opposition of the adherents of the so-called Scientific Socialism. Socialism demands everything in theory, but gains nothing substantial in practice; it checks the progress of Liberalism, of Radicalism and Democracy, rallies and strengthens the forces of Reaction and of Privilege, but itself is doomed to impotency—only in the heads of visionary dreamers can it still conjure up the idea that its triumph is near at hand.

The practical politics the Socialist Party adopts in every Parliament, or Representative Assembly, to which they have gained entrance, fully confirms this explanation of Socialism. Though occasionally steadied in some few countries by the influence of old and trusted Labor Leaders who would scorn to avow themselves Socialists, it is manifestly without direction and without compass, allowing opportunity, popular gusts of fashion to direct their course. One leader has one favorite hobby-horse, another a quite different one. In their politics we may search in vain for any firm will, knowing the end it aims at, for any guiding thought or inspiring ideal, for any unchangeable principles to which they hold firmly and from which they will not budge. Their one

thought on every question seems to be "How far dare we go?" They present no claims for which honor and principle forbids them to abate a single point. As a matter of fact, they present no claims based upon a clear and indisputable feeling of right.

The doings of Socialist politicians are determined only by considerations of prudence. "The bourgeois politicians would only laugh at us if we made any great demands," they say. But think, pray, why do they laugh at you!

What are your politics? A petty bargaining and paltry peddling for things of no importance, of no real, permanent value; in which nobody is really interested, which arouses no real enthusiasm amongst the people, but serves only to make them more discontented and more confused, as well as to increase the covetousness of the powerful interests against which they have continuously to contend; which undermines all clear ideas of morality, all feelings of right; which degrades the representatives of the people to delegates of separate classes and of particular interests—such is the social politics of today. And just those who pose as the pioneers and apostles of a better social order have mainly contributed and are mainly responsible for this degeneration. As an excuse for their opinions they have invented and proclaimed the cynicism that right is but an expression of the will of the powers that be. If this were really so, why are they so indignant at the injustice which is the lot of the workers of today? If this were true, if right were merely the expression of the will of the powers that be, how can those who have power be accused of wrong or do wrong?

Socialist representatives and Socialist newspapers often speak of a *right* to work, of a *right* to education, of a *right* to a home worthy of human beings. But as they use it the word right is but a euphemism for begging. For, however disguised, it is begging to demand to be given anything to which one can show no clear, unequivocal and indisputable claim. Is it not contrary to common sense that a free man should be supposed to have a *right* to demand that another shall provide him with work, that another shall educate his children, and provide him and them with a suitable dwelling. Such demands might be made on behalf of slaves or serfs, but not of free-men from free-men. Those who can voice such demands are not ripe for freedom, and only prostitute the sacred word right.

What our politicians call by the fine-sounding name of "social-politics" (Social-politik), is, in fact, only beggar-politics (Betel-politik). For what are free meals in our State schools, free burials, endowment for births, national and local contributions for the maintenance or relief of the unemployed, or for insurance against sickness, death and unemployment; what are all these things but alms begged from the good hearts and grudging will of the rich? Can such politics be conducive to the development of a free, self-reliant and self-respecting people? To be brought up, fed, clothed and educated at the expense of the State, at the expense of others on whom we have no special claims—can such things leave anything but painful, depressing, and dependent feelings, destructive of self-respect and self-reliance? If such assistance were

obligatory on all, it would be a very different matter. But when they are the lot only of one class, then this class must feel themselves branded as dependent and unfree. It is difficult to understand how people are prepared to force upon the workers things they would indignantly refuse for themselves.

Can we be surprised that such social-politics arouses so little real interest amongst the workers; that its benefits are only received with sullen indifference? Is it to be imagined that the faintest spark of enthusiasm can be aroused in the people by factory laws, or by proposals to enforce contributions by the State to old-age pensions and cost of insurance? Certainly there are many things for which with the best will in the world one cannot become enthusiastic, but which are yet needful and useful. Insuring the workers against sickness and accident is most useful. But to place the main cost of such insurance upon the State, is an act either of plunder or of beggary. True it is that the State today takes far more from the working classes than it gives them. But this cannot be made good by asking alms and doles of it for anything and everything. The State should be compelled to leave off such wrongdoing. If the workers only received everything that belongs to them, they would no longer need such alms, and would be too independent to accept such doles.

Instead of striving to awaken feelings of pride, of honor, of self-respect, of self-reliance and love of freedom amongst the workers, Socialism strives to deaden them and uproot them. The workers who revolt against accepting such meagre and grudging alms, who with manly indignation refuse to apply to relief funds or for free meals for their children; are reproved for false shame and evil pride. Socialism asks of them that they should be "class-conscious," but not class proud. Is it really false shame and evil pride when a self-respecting working man would rather die of hunger than soil his hands with unearned alms? Those who so mistake the finest impulses of human nature, who do not shrink for the sake of some petty temporary advantage to degrade the workers into beggars, who would thus stifle all feelings of self-respect, pride and honor—can such men be called upon to point the way to a better future?

In one of the most widely read Socialist papers of Zurich we were recently informed that the poor were revolutionists only so long as they were hungry; that as soon as the rich threw them a bone or allowed them to gather up the remains of their meals, all their rights and demands were forgotten till next they felt the gnawings of hunger. No, you Socialists, you libel the workers! A horde of beggars, who hate and avoid honest work, may act in this manner. But the real industrial workers revolt only when their feelings of right are wounded, not from blind greed or wolfish hunger. But tell us, have you ever said a single word to the people of their real, inalienable, eternal and immutable rights? Have you ever attempted to explain to them the essential difference between a right which men should demand and begging of which men should be ashamed? Or have you only stirred up among them a blind covetousness for everything you yourselves deem it good to have? Have you not continuously spoken to them as if the manual workers had a right to everything in

the world, to take everything from their fellow-citizens? Must not such teachings bring all their ideas of right and wrong into confusion? You may be surprised that all your long years of work have not succeeded in developing a generation of dog-like slaves, in whom the greed of the moment would drown every better impulse; but do not try to pass on to the people the guilt—seek it in yourselves, in your own demoralizing teachings and beggar-like practices.

This dimly-felt feeling of the unworthiness of their politics is the cause that from time to time, even in the ranks of Social Democrats, voices have been uplifted against the enervating begging of their Parliamentary Party. Such protests were almost necessarily without results, since those making them did not know and were unable to say what the rights of the disinherited, propertyless classes really were, and hence could not differentiate what they were justified in demanding as rights and what they could only more humbly ask as charity, out of compassion and on humanitarian grounds. The Anti-Parliamentarians rightly contended that it was a disgrace that their representatives should intrigue and conspire with those who rob and plunder the people. But when asked, what, then, should be done, they have no answer. They could but refer to some equivocal Socialist theory, which hides under a revolutionary vocabulary the sentiments of a beggar, the short-sighted selfishness of a slave.

“The eight hour day” is the immediate aim on which Social Democrats lay most stress. This is significant and characteristic. If the workers were slaves, they might also demand an eight-hour working day. By such means, however, the yoke of slavery would not be lifted from their necks. Quite the opposite; if, as is so often contended and as experience seems to prove, a man can get through more work in eight than when working longer hours, then it would be obviously in the interests of slave-owners to work their slaves only eight hours a day. The flaunting red banners which this year were so widely distributed in Zurich displayed the words: “8 hours work, 8 hours leisure, 8 hours sleep!” Otherwise nothing. Have, then, the Socialists nothing else to demand of Society? Oh! Yes! cry the Socialists, we also want Liberty, Justice, Happiness, Dignity, Equality, everything that sound well, beautiful and alluring. In the Socialist State of the future all these beautiful things will be secured—and above all Justice!

Good; but pray tell us meanwhile what is your idea of Justice? or, if that is too difficult, what is your idea of a right? A right is surely no vague figure of speech; a right is something that can be defined, that has definite limits and boundaries. A right does not stretch itself out to infinity—it goes so far and no further. We have never yet been able to ascertain where Socialists draw the line. The best and Most useful of us cannot establish a right to everything in the world. So pray tell us what do you claim as a right of the things of this world, and what you do not.

You are silent! You can give no answer, because your pretended Justice and Equality is but a cover for your boundless covetousness, which would like to have everything and to leave others nothing, so that they should be depend-

ent upon your will. Your one desire is to arrange the world, not in accordance with the dictates of Justice, but according to your own whims and fancies, according to what you deem to be desirable, irrespective of the equal rights of others, which you would tread ruthlessly under your feet. This is the essence of your pretended science; this is the kernel of your beggar-philosophy; this the driving force of your beggar-politics; this is the gist and purport of the Scientific Socialism as taught by Karl Marx and his apostles.

The pretended Science of Socialism is but the rabalistic pettifogings of beggars; its State of the future, but a delusion of beggars. Only as an expression of the aimless, objectless strivings of the man without land under his feet, who would make up for his helplessness by impotent sneers, for his incapacity for rational thinking and doing by pretended deliberation, who, unstable, wanders in the realms of coincidents, "inevitable" accidents and phantasy, who ignores his rights as man, but who clings with the last force of his soul to empty, misleading illusions—only as this is Socialism understandable and to be explained. In the light of this interpretation one can see into the deepest cause of its being, all its problems become clear and all its contradictions solve themselves. For its establishment, growth and development those are mainly responsible who by law and statute have made of the industrial masses of the people serfs without land, who, under cover of the law, have robbed them of their equal and inalienable rights to the use of the earth and to share in the blessings and bounties of Nature.

(To be continued.)

BI-MONTHLY NEWS LETTER.

By **THE EDITOR.**

The eyes of Single Taxers will be directed with the most interest in the coming November to the State of California where the following home rule tax amendment will be voted on:

"Any county, city and county, city or town, may exempt from taxation for local purposes in whole or in part any one or more of the following classes of property: Improvements in, on or over land; shipping; household furniture; live stock; merchandise; machinery; tools; farming implements; vehicles; other personal property except franchises. Any ordinance or resolution of any county, city and county, city or town, exempting property from taxation, as in this section provided, shall be subject to a referendum vote as by law provided for ordinances or resolutions. Taxes levied upon property not exempt from taxation shall be uniform."

A four page leaflet issued weekly, known as *Tax Talk*, keeps the reader supplied with full information and arguments concerning the progress of the movement for this tax amendment in California.