
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.)

Chapter V. (Continued.)**SOCIALIST POLITICS.**

German Socialist Democrats have earned so little respect for themselves and their teachings that even in the States where the majority vote for Socialist candidates they have been thrown out of Parliament as uninvited guests. As some sort of consolation enlightened Socialist doctrinaires thereupon proceed to write learned books on "The Way to Power," prophesying a noble struggle and an ultimate glorious victory. Prophesying is cheap and endless. But those who know anything of politics in Germany know well enough that this is but another illusion. A party on the way to power does not indulge in impudent prophesying. Those only console themselves with prophesies who in their inner hearts know themselves condemned to impotency.

Power is not to be gained by prophesying and pompous bragging. Power is only to be earned by courage, insight, determination and strength of character. Earn the respect of others and you will gain power without convulsively and greedily seeking it.

A few electoral victories, gained by every means of corrupt practice, have sufficed to turn the heads of the German Social Democratic Party. Their arrogance has been such as temporarily to unite the most antagonistic political groups. Vain arrogance on the part of the powerful is a sign of a vulgar character. But what betokens arrogance on the part of those who have no real power, who are so intoxicated with the mere prospect of power that they can scarcely contain themselves? "Heaven forbid!" answered a German Socialist Democrat, when asked whether Social Democracy could take over political dominion. This prayer will be widely re-echoed.

An empty, barren mediocrity, a dull stupidity, with just sufficient intelligence to repeat in due order certain poll-parrot phrases they have learned by rote, runs through more than nine-tenths of the German Socialist literature, making its perusal a tiresome torment. Every attempt at original thinking is as anxiously avoided as if it were punishable by death. No new thought, no expression of manly indignation, through all its desert waste. Its writers seem to have attained the height of their bravery when daring to contend that the Government is but the paid clerks of the possessing classes. Or when, as if seeking a martyr's death, they venture to declare that the neck of Society of today must be twisted or its neck broken. Then they turn over and go to sleep once more.

But what good can be expected from a party which seeks its mental nourishment from an incomprehensible, cabalistic wilderness of incoherent words, and turns away scornfully from every new thought that comes to them from more reliable sources? How can Germany be set free by a party which would fetter the mind with heavier chains than those ever forged by an infallible Church, and which during a generation of incessant activity has inspired no work which will stand the test of time.

Russia has ever been the most fertile soil for Socialism. The aimless brooding which characterizes the Russian people found a welcome satisfaction in the vague, confused and confusing, thought of Marxian Socialism. In Russia the feeling of the unassailability of the institution of property is far weaker than in the countries of Western Europe. Therefore the doctrine that property was nothing but legally acquired and legally protected plunder, found congenial soil. But a short time ago a group of Revolutionary Socialists in Poland was broken up because, according to the testimony of some of its members, their group, by experimenting with "the expropriation of the ex-propiators," had evolved into a band of ordinary robbers.

The war in Manchuria gave the Russian Socialists an opportunity little likely to recur again for centuries, and proved of what stuff these people were made who speak so slightly of society as it exists. For a time they persuaded themselves that the Russian Empire was to be the first field for Socialist dominion. A noisy shriek of joy over the so-called Russian Revolution was daily voiced in the Socialist press of all countries. The writers were apparently inspired by the hope that their Russian comrades were to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them all. Idle dream! The so highly praised Russian Revolution soon proved itself nothing but a swindle, a veritable bomb-swindle. Even the most corrupt and discredited Government in Europe had an easy victory over the movement which daily proclaims its invincibility.

It is tragic when a human being is killed for his convictions. But it is almost impossible to have any sympathy with people in whose heads brood such boundless crudity, urging them to deeds of such useless and criminal frenzy. It is not surprising that such people who had an incomparable opportunity to emancipate the Russian nation could only make use of it to their own ruin and undoing.

During the last few years the French Socialists have united; that is to say, they have followed the example of their German comrades, and their inevitable brawls are carried on within the limits of one and the same party. In the meanwhile, however, Parliamentary methods have become too slow and boring for some of their enlightened leaders, and these have devised other means to destroy "the mad capitalistic system of production." According to them Trade Unions are to be the instrument of solving the Social Problem, and the means, the General Strike, Sabotage, Syndicalism, and direct action. What is then to take place is still unrevealed. The French Trade Unions are still young and weak, easily influenced and easily led, or misled. That the well-led, long experienced and well disciplined British and American Trade

Unions have never yet hit on the elevating and sublime ideas of their French prototypes, is easily explicable on the ground that they are only narrow-minded bourgeois ignorant of the modern class-war. That the results of these new tactics have been mainly negative is attributed to the fact that the "capitalistic murderers" have command of the military forces of the State. Therefore militarism must be abolished! Iron logic. If only there were no guns, you could smash windows to your heart's desire. But if you attempt to do so today, there is a great risk of getting a bullet through your head. Murder! Murder! they cry hysterically when, in consequence of their own senseless fancies, some poor devil, carrying out their ideas, is shot down. But when the "murderous Capitalistic Government" dares to withhold its pension from one of their number, then the picture is slightly altered. Limitless indignation that the "cursed band of murderers" should dare to withhold the payment of pensions. Capitalistic money doesn't stink. Paris is doomed to darkness through a two hours strike of electricians. "Darkness arising from the depth of the capitalistic system of production," as eloquent Comrade Jaures announces prophetically. After taking this dreadful revenge on the "mad, capitalistic, murderous society," things are allowed to go on as usual.

Socialists prefer to describe the military forces as the watch-dogs of Capitalism. And just as beggars are always more concerned to get rid of watch-dogs than with the restoration of their rights as men, so, too, Socialists are far more concerned with the abolition of militarism than with the restoration of the equal rights of all to the use of the earth.

(To be continued.)

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE POOR IS THEIR POVERTY.

(Prov. 10, 15.)

(For the Review.)

By ARTHUR H. WELLER.

One Sunday evening I heard an address on poverty by a preacher whose sympathy with the victims of social injustice is beyond question. He took for his text a verse from Proverbs "The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty," and he based his remarks on "Round About a Pound a Week," a book that describes with great wealth of detail the conditions under which respectable, sober people live in Lambeth (London) whose incomes average the sum of 22s. a week. The dreary streets were portrayed—the awful monotony of which is rarely relieved even by a drunken brawl—and the daily tragedies of poverty within the wretched, cramped, insanitary houses, where the most rigid economy cannot save the children from the inevitable penalties of insufficient food, air, clothing and