

be never altered for the better designedly." Although Lord Bacon had never heard of the "stand-patter" by name, he was evidently well acquainted with the type.

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LABOR AND PROTECTION.

A protective tariff bears the same relation to revenue raising that pocket picking does to stealing; and among the knowing ones, it has the same object and the same effect.

Like the orthodox sinner, it is conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity.

About two-thirds of our national revenues are squandered for worse than useless battleships and preparations for war. War itself has not one single virtue, and if taxes were levied upon monopolies, or the things created by government, instead of upon consumption, or the things created by labor, it would do more to discourage war and the rumors of war and the preparations for war and the war spirit so industriously inculcated by that element in society that profits by war, than all other efforts toward the abolition of war combined.

When the country gets into trouble, either domestic or foreign, and soldiers are needed to engage in martial strife, the first men who are called for, and the only class—in any great numbers—that can be depended upon to take up arms and lay down their lives in its defense, are the laboring men. These are the real defenders of the country in every and all senses of the word. And yet, if the protectionist doctrine is true, these people who can defend themselves and all others in time of war are wholly incapable of defending themselves alone in time of peace. And who is it that pretends to protect these helpless and unfortunate working men? It is men who do not make wealth, but who do make laws.

And what is it they would protect them against? Starvation, nakedness, the inclemency of the weather? But the only real antidote for these is food, clothing, houses and fuel; and labor produces them all.

And since it is men, and the things that men make, that they have to be protected against, what kind of men are they? Are they workers or loafers? No protectionist has ever pretended that the laboring men of America have to be protected against the loafers, either domestic or foreign; yet, if the truth were known it would be discovered that the social loafer is the real enemy of the laboring man, and not the social worker.

How can labor be protected against the very

things that labor produces here and everywhere for the satisfaction of man's desires?

It will be noted that the same quality of mind that believes that this nation can be industrially destroyed by the over-importation of wealth from abroad, thinks also that it can be vastly injured by the over-production of wealth at home. Yet wealth is the only re-agent for poverty. They also think that our present floodtide of prosperity cannot last because they take it for granted that prosperity, like the tides, must always ebb and flow, unmindful of the fact that if there is one single stable thing in society, with a constantly upward trend, by reason of increasing population and unceasing needs, it is the demand for wealth. Why should society oscillate between prosperity and adversity when the source of all demands for labor is as constant as human propagation?

Must it not be because the source of all prosperity, all wealth, all life, and all human energy, is sunlight, air and land, and that the first two are utterly impossible to mankind without land? But the latter, held as it is as the private property of an ever diminishing fraction of mankind, containing as it does the beginning and the end of everything that satisfies his material needs and desires, held out of use as a large portion of it is to exact a higher and still higher tribute from the workers for the privilege of working, ultimately in conditions in which the dearest thing in the world is the world itself, while the cheapest thing is men. This is why, and the only competent and true reason why, labor harbors the utterly fallacious notion that it needs protection.

HENRY H. HARDINGE.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE GERMAN ELECTIONS.

Zurich, Switzerland, February 14.—When on the 13th of December last the Imperial Diet of Germany was dissolved on account of its refusing a credit deemed necessary by the Government for carrying on the war in Southwest Africa, the Socialist members hailed the dissolution with a storm of applause. They had voted solidly against the Government, and they were sure that however the Government and the other parties might fare in the coming elections, their party would be on the winning side. And this feeling was nearly as strong among the politicians of other parties as among the Socialists themselves.

The growth of the Socialist party had been unparalleled in the political history of Germany. The omnipotent Bismarck had tried in vain all means to put a check upon its growth. And circumstances seemed now more favorable to them than ever before. But in spite of an enormous and most vigorous

agitation, the elections have reduced the number of Socialist members of the Reichstag from 79 to 43. Many electoral districts which the Socialists had held for more than 20 years and which they regarded as absolutely safe, were lost in the first ballot. Most of these were won back by the Liberals, who in turn lost some seats to the Conservatives. Also the Catholic party, the so-called Centre, has gained several seats. The Government has now a majority for its colonial enterprises, but it has failed to weaken the Catholic party, against which the dissolution was chiefly aimed. This party has come out of the election stronger than ever, having carried 104 seats, against 101 in the old Reichstag. It is chiefly a middle-class party, with some democratic and socialist tendencies. It has always used its powers with wise moderation, which is one of the chief sources of its strength. The Conservative groups, that is, the pure-blooded reactionaries, number 80; the different Liberal groups 101. There are still a dozen other parties, comprising about 60 members; and as even so rich a choice does not satisfy some people, there are still about ten members who keep aloof from partisanship altogether. I doubt if there is anything in the world so strangely mixed as German politics.

Though the Socialists have lost about 36 seats, they have still actually increased in votes by 8 per cent. upon the previous election. Compared with the total of votes cast, they have decreased by 2 per cent. Their defeat is chiefly due to a revival of Liberalism, which has increased in votes about 30 per cent. As I remarked in a letter to *The Public* last year, our Liberal parties have changed their attitude towards the labor movement, which they formerly declined to consider at all. The reward has come more speedily than I expected. It seems as if the German people were gaining confidence in Liberalism again. It is now up to the Liberal parties to make good their promises. Our Liberals are still a very mixed lot of people, including men from the standpatter brand of Republicanism in America to the most progressive democrats. The progressive element has in Mr. Barth and Mr. Nauman two excellent leaders who are doing their best to lead in the direction in which Liberalism in England has proceeded with such unprecedented success.

It must not be imagined that the defeat of the Socialists is a defeat of socialism. Socialism in the strict sense, that is, nationalizing the means of production, never has been seriously discussed in German politics. The Socialist party is the standard-bearer of radicalism in Germany, a radicalism the more pronounced and far-reaching the more it is powerless to fulfill its promises. And in this party, as in every radical party, two kinds of radicalism are inextricably mixed. There is in it a radicalism that springs from love of justice, that attacks the present order because the present order revolts its moral feeling, because it sees harm and injustice done to its fellow-men. But there is also that other kind of radicalism that springs from selfishness, that arouses hatred for the sake of hatred, and indulges in slander and malice. The unprecedented growth of the Socialist party during the last 20 years has fostered this kind of radicalism by attracting doubtful elements who seek only their own selfish ends, and has spoiled even some of those formerly animated by a better spirit. I believe that this is the

chief cause of the defeat of the Socialists. People have realized that the Socialist party is unworthy the cause it stands for. Its haughtiness showed that its heart was not sound, and its pride revealed its weakness. The general voice is that it was the arrogance of the Socialist party that caused its defeat. People have got disgusted with its rude attacks upon the guilty and the innocent alike, and have resolved to deal a blow at its pride. It is bad that this means a blow at radicalism too, but things had developed in such a way that any other solution was impossible.

Whether the Socialist party will take home this lesson is still doubtful. But there is no doubt that the socialist movement will remain quite ineffective. Its very success has proved better than anything else the unsoundness of socialism. The larger the Socialist parties grow, the less talk there is about the nationalization of the means of production. It is only to be regretted that so many well-meaning, earnest people are misled by a false ideal, and are wasting their energies in useless palliatives. Now they must see the result of their labor and sacrifices swept away by a caprice of the voters as by a tide of the sea. But such is the inevitable result of efforts based upon a theory that is not built upon the rock of justice.

There have been some voices in the Socialist party who have predicted the catastrophe. For some years past the right wing of the party under the leadership of Mr. Bernstein has been trying to reform its platform and to lead it away from the Marxian doctrine. Their efforts have been in vain. They were voted down by the worshippers of success who could not see any faults of their own. If they will see them now remains to be proved.

Whilst the right wing in the party has been suppressed, the left wing has not been satisfied. A little group of its most radical believers has been for some time very harshly criticising its tactics. They accuse the party of keeping its ideals too much in the background. They point to the fact that the institution of private property which socialism designs to abolish, is, in spite of the growth of socialism, as safe as ever before. The spoil of politics is, in their opinion, debasing the party, and it is therefore necessary to keep out of politics altogether.

GUSTAV BUESCHER.

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Papa: "Karlchen, look what you have done; upset the inkpot all over my desk."

Karlchen: "Yes, papa; Anna wasn't looking after me properly."—*Meggendorfer Blatter*.

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"Such reasoning," said General F. D. Grant, in a military argument, "reminds me of the reasoning of old Corporal Sandhurst. Corporal Sandhurst was one day drilling a batch of raw recruits. 'Why is it,' he said to a bright-looking chap, 'that the blade of your saber is curved instead of straight?'"

"The blade is curved," the recruit answered, 'in order to give more force to the blow.'

"Nonsense," said the corporal. 'The blade is curved so as to fit the scabbard. If it was straight, how would you get it into the curved scabbard, you idiot?'"—*Rochester Herald*.