The American Books

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SOCIALISM IN AMERICA

BY
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TO
CAROLINA AND ARTURO GIOVANNITTI

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John Macy was born in Detroit, Michigan, in 1877. He graduated from Harvard in 1899 and taught English there for a year. For seven years he was on the editorial staff of the *Youth's Companion*, and for two years was literary editor of the *Boston Herald*. He became a Socialist in 1909; in 1912 he was for some months secretary to Doctor Lunn, the Socialist mayor of Schenectady, New York. In 1905 he married Anne M. Sullivan, the teacher of Miss Helen Keller; he compiled the biographical supplement to Miss Keller's "Story of My Life." He has written a "Life of Poe," a "Guide to Reading," and "The Spirit of American Literature."

PREFACE

THIS book is an informal sketch of the Socialist movement intended for readers who know little about the subject. It is not a come-to-Socialism tract designed to convert non-Socialists. Most of the arguments are inter-Socialist, that is, they are on one side or another of questions on which Socialists disagree among themselves. The outsider may step in, see what the row is about, and then step out again. I am a member of the Socialist party and of the Industrial Workers of the World, but I have no official position in either. I express only my own opinions or the opinions of others which happen to appeal to me. Since I did not invent Socialism, I have drawn most of my ideas from other people, but I have not thought it necessary in a short essay to make specific acknowledgments. I take this occasion, however, to praise and recommend to the general reader "Socialism As It Is," by William English Walling, and

"American Labor Unions," by Helen Marot. They contain everything that is worth while in this book—and much more—except what has developed since they were published.

J. M.

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SOCIALISM IN AMERICA

CHAPTER I

SOCIALISTS AND THE WAR

IN OCTOBER, 1914, after three months of war in Europe, there appeared in the New York *Call* a political advertisement signed by the Socialist candidate for governor in which the voter was instructed that a vote for Socialism was a vote against war. In the same paper and in other Socialist publications were printed bitter attacks on the European Socialists for their surrender of principle to the dominant nationalism, equally fierce defences of their course as wise or necessary in the circumstances, and predictions as to the probable effect of international disaster on international Socialism. Through all the turmoil of opinions persisted a single idea about which the disputants seemed to show anything like unanimity: the idea that despite failure, backsliding, or treachery, a greater war, the class war, must be prosecuted to its triumphant conclusion. Socialists, like other human beings, were stunned by the murderous explo-

sion, and for some weeks one knew not whether to admire the promptness with which they recovered their wits and began to put forth explanations of immediate facts and restatements of ultimate theory, or to distrust, along with all other journalism, expressions of beliefs so suddenly rushed into verbal form. Some knew too much; everybody knew too little. American Socialists, who through no virtue of their own were not in international conflict, and Italian Socialists, who, partly thanks to their vigorous influence on their government, lived in a country nominally at peace, were able to maintain the attitude of critical onlookers. In the belligerent countries most of the Socialists and labor organizations abandoned important principles and went with their governments. Only a minority held fast, saw clearly through the smoke, and spoke amid the noise of war the message of true Socialism. In the prevalent madness Socialist reason, whether or not it is conspicuously steady in time of peace, shook in its seat.

Before the beginning of hostilities Socialists in all nations protested against the threatening war. They had subscribed to the general anti-war resolution of the International Socialist

Congress of 1907 and to the resolution of the special International Congress convoked during the first Balkan War in 1912. These resolutions emphatically commit the Socialists to use every means possible to prevent war and to try by the menace of revolution to compel the governments to keep the peace. The following significant sentences occur:

"By simultaneously rising in revolt against imperialism and every section of the international movement offering resistance to the government, the workers of all countries are bringing public opinion to bear against all warlike desire. Thus a splendid coöperation of the workers has been brought about which has already contributed much to maintain the peace of the world. The fear of the ruling classes that a revolution of the workers would follow the declaration of a European war has proved an essential guarantee of peace." This represents the belief and the intention of a majority of the Socialists of the world before the war, and many still hold at least in theory to the resolutions of the International Congresses.

After the war broke out many Socialists receded from the international position in the direction of nationalism, and the rest were

impotent against the storm. In England the Independent Labor Party, which is a revolutionary minority, opposed the war, continued to attack Sir Edward Grey, and refused to take part in the recruiting campaign. The Italian Socialists seem to have played their part well. They had much to do with keeping Italy neutral for eight months. They almost unanimously opposed the Triple Alliance and backed with the threat of revolution their determination that Italy should not support the Germans against France. When it became evident that if Italy went into the war she would be on the side of the Allies, some of the Socialists favored war against Austria, but most of them held out for neutrality until the last. In Russia the Socialist deputies refused to approve the war appropriations and left the chamber when the budget came to a vote. In Russia it takes courage to be a Socialist. Five of the deputies who persisted in their anti-war propaganda have been charged with treason and exiled for life. Liberty-loving France and democratic England should be proud of their ally.

American Socialists, though relieved from the responsibility of action and privileged to stand in a neutral and critical position, are, like other

Americans, not free from racial and national prejudices. They belong to many races, and for good or for evil they have carried into American Socialism interests sympathetic with European localisms. Those of German stock approve or but moderately disapprove the action of the German Socialist politicians who voted for the war appropriations in the Reichstag. Added to these are many American Socialists, of whatever origin or racial allegiance, who have learned their Socialism from German sources and have been taught to regard German Socialism as the great exemplar of revolutionist theory and practice. The profoundest philosophers and most stalwart men of action in Socialist history were Germans or born to the German language; German immigrants were the first teachers of Socialism in America; and the German Socialist party receives the largest vote of all the Socialist parties of the world. Therefore the German brand of Socialism is the original, pure article; all other kinds are imitations and owe their virtue to their success in imitation. And although German Socialists may make mistakes, what the party as a whole votes to do is right, and what the representatives, elected by a majority of Socialist voters, decide

to do is right. If Marx is to be revised the German comrades alone are qualified for the task, and any Irishman, American, Italian, or Russian who pretends to pull German Socialist theory to pieces and reconstruct it is an undisciplined upstart. The German deputies as a whole voted public money into the Kaiser's war chest. To accuse them of the crime of being accessory to murder before the fact is a stupid piece of bourgeois moralism. It is perfectly proper to praise the valiant minority of the German Socialist deputies who protested in vain against the action of their comrades, for they, even the minority, were duly elected German Socialist deputies and therefore right. But the actions of the Socialist group, dominated according to true German democratic principles by the majority of duly elected German Socialists, were more right. At worst they were guilty of nothing but a momentary recadency due to great pressure of circumstance and the need of saving the German party intact.

Opposed to the apologists for the German politicians is a group of American Socialists who are sympathetic with the national aspirations of the Allies and whose opinions are therefore

colored by the same prejudices that corrupt Socialist thought in the nations that are fighting against Germany. As individuals these Americans are anti-German; as Socialists they argue that the triumph of German militarism will result in the retardation of all that is valuable in German Socialism, and they are able to cite in support of this idea the retort of the Italian Socialists to the German Socialists who went to enlist the aid of Italian Socialists in the German national cause against Russian barbarism. The Italians said in effect, "A plague on both your houses! But of the two evils, backward and unwieldy Russian militarism is less of a menace than a victorious, well-organized German militarism." To such American Socialists it seems that the failure of the German Social Democracy is final proof, if finality were needed, of the power of the German Government, and that the chief duty of the revolutionist in every country is to assist in the overthrow of that government, even though the debacle carry with it a large numerical section of the German Social Democracy and a large part of its influence and ideas.

Complicated with the motives of the anti-German American Socialists is a belief held be-

fore the war that German Socialism, as it has developed in practice, is not a pure and exemplary product, but spurious and adulterated. The German Socialists have not backslid on an avalanche of world war; they had little worthy to backslide from; their decadence began and reached low depths long ago. They have not suddenly become bankrupt; political Socialism in Germany has been bankrupt for years; it needed only the shock of a great crisis to throw it into the hands of a receiver. If that kind of Socialism is done for, all the better for real Socialism. Bury the corpse on the battlefield, no matter whether the grave is dug by French or German soldiers. Recover from the ruin the true body and spirit of the German revolution of older days, and start again. Authority is dead, long live reality!

At this point the argument is taken up by non-political and anti-political Socialists, and concurred in by other Revolutionists, Anarchists, Syndicalists, Industrial Unionists, who are with the Socialists as against militarism, royalism, capitalism, imperialism, but are opposed to Socialists in so far forth as Socialists ally themselves with governments, reformers, liberals, and bourgeois institutions. This is the most

difficult confusion of bedfellows to disentangle limb from limb, smooth out and lay on their pillows so that one can see them. We shall perhaps understand their alliances and hostilities a little later. For the moment consider them in relation to this war. They say (one can lump them and disregard their differences) that the failure of the German Socialists and also of the French, British, and Belgian Socialists is not a local and momentary phenomenon. All political Socialism has gone to the devil, returned to the bosom of the father that begot it. What, they say, did you expect of the German Socialists? Did you not know that they had most of them ceased to be Socialists in any real sense of the word? We told you long ago that they had the insidious disease, reformism, opportunism, which had undermined their system. Because great numbers got the disease and because those great numbers were recruited from the working class, the little farmer, the little trader, the best people on earth, you saw strength; but we saw weakness in your very numbers, weakness and death. The lesson to be drawn from the Suedekums and Guesdes, and the thousands for whom their names happen to stand, is that all political action is a delusion,

a swindle, a snare, a corrupter. The Germans put time, money, heart, and brains into building up the greatest so-called Socialist party that the world has seen. In the crisis that party is worthless; in the long run it is worthless; in all other countries similar parties are worthless. We welcome the war if only because it will teach you well-meaning but misguided Socialists that politics is a disease.

Thus the failure of the European Socialists, not only in Germany but in other belligerent countries, is used as an argument to prove that political Socialism is and must always be a failure. The logic of this is not quite perfect. Moreover, the political Socialists are not the only revolutionists who have been swamped. Many skeptics as to the value of political action and preachers of "direct action" have shouldered the gun or refilled the fountain pen in defence of their country. French syndicalists, notably, have become the staunchest of patriots and have exchanged the sword of revolution for the sword of France.

The shock of war has shattered some Socialist hopes, strained the fabric of Socialist theory, and subjected to fiery test the metal of the men and women who call themselves Socialists.

Workmen who have affirmed that the exploited of all lands have common interests and that the exploiters of all lands are their common enemies are on the battlefields shooting each other. Each national group excuses its murderous denial of oft-repeated professions on the ground that it is engaged in a holy defensive war. The German Socialist is fighting to save his home and wife and children from the barbaric hordes of Russia. The French Socialist is defending his home and wife and children against the barbaric Prussianism of Germany. The Belgian Socialist, with whom everybody, including the German, has at least a sportsman's sympathy, is obviously in arms against the invader. Even the English Socialist makes a case for England as a defendant nation. "We regard this war as a war of self-defence. If England or Belgium had stood on one side now, no one would have cared if a victorious Germany had swallowed us up later. Only those extreme internationalists who think it a matter of no importance if one nation tries to tear the very tongue from the mouth of another nation and blot out all that is distinctive in its habits of life could refuse to fight against the German aggressor." That might have been uttered by

a member of the British Cabinet. It was written by a British revolutionist, Mr. Arthur D. Lewis. I do not know how he stands with his fellow Socialists in England, but he is a competent student of revolutionary unionism and politics. In times like these the only smile that is seemly upon the human countenance is the smile of irony.

The apostasy of the majority of Socialists in the murdering nations has given great satisfaction to the political masters and their literary apologists. And when your enemy praises your conduct you can be dead sure that you have done wrong. Every German professor, psychologist, journalist, military expert, and clergyman who argues for the Fatherland points with pride to the magnificent unity of Germany, to the laying aside of party differences, yea, even to the loyalty of the Social Democrats. The entire empire marches to one tune and therefore its cause is just and holy. If a minority of unreconciled Socialists tried to pipe a different tune, the censor has taken care of them. France, too, is united as never before. Hervé, who served a term in prison for treasonous antimilitarism, is now as patriotic a warrior as the rest. And Great Britain is united (excepting

some of the pesky Irish) in a coagulated mass of anti-Germanism. Mr. Lewis, whose views happen to be nearest at hand for purposes of quotation, says that the anti-war manifesto of the Independent Labor party was the work of the National Council and does not express the views of the bulk of the members. "No section of anti-war opinion has had confidence enough in its cause to call any public meeting to explain its views. . . . The sentiment of the people is always divided in England. In our lifetime it was never so unitedly in favor of any war as it is in favor of the present war." So we have splendid national units fighting with an annihilating determination, and in unity lies not only strength but right. Every nation is right because of its homogeneity of purpose. Kaiser and proletarian embrace fraternally and train their guns upon Guesde, the uncompromising French Marxian, his arms linked in the dance of death with Winston Churchill and the Russian Czar.

Each member of each group of national Socialists is justified in sticking a bayonet into a Socialist of another national group on the simple ground that he is defending his home. (His home probably belongs to the landlord.) He

is justified on much higher grounds, on impersonal idealistic grounds, grounds that are the cloudy floor of heaven. He is fighting for the liberty of mankind. German freedom means the freedom of the world. In Germany the Social Democratic idea has developed more highly than in any other country. Therefore it would be good for mankind if Germany prevailed. But in France and England liberal institutions flourish beyond anything known in military semi-feudal Germany. Therefore disaster to France and England entails disaster to liberalism, to democracy, to all that the world has won and must maintain if we are to advance to genuine democracy, to Socialism. Each group of Socialist murderers is killing the other group for the good of the slain, certainly for the ultimate triumph of the most advanced Socialist ideas. Compared with the state-mad Socialists, Dr. Eliot and Dr. Münsterberg are feeble champions of political liberty and culture. Each group is sure that the enemy is reactionary and backward. The German Socialists, it is true, do not pretend that England and France and Belgium are less democratic than Germany, but look at their ally, Russia the unspeakable! The Russian Socialists, consistent enemies of

the Russian Government and free from palaver, make no claims to superior culture and political liberty on behalf of their Fatherland. Plechanoff, a Russian Socialist, a profound German-taught Marxist, holds that the "victory of Germany means the setback of progress in Western Europe and the definite, or almost indefinite, triumph of Russian despotism." But this is not because Russian democracy is superior to German; it is because the German autocracy is, in times of international peace, allied with the Czar to keep the people down, and the Russian despotism is easier to beat than such despotism as a victorious German Government would impose on the Russian people. Dr. Steinmetz, the distinguished German-American engineer, maintains that a victory of Russia and consequent dominion over Germany "threatens destruction to all that Socialism has accomplished by submergency under an autocracy based on the illiterate masses."

So though the Socialist behind the machine guns, like other good people, deplores the necessity of war and does not believe in war as a method of propagating his ideas, he can nevertheless wipe his bloody hands with a clear conscience and bind up his wounds with the salving

thought that he is serving humanity: for the triumph of his nation will bring to the other nation wider liberty and more and better Socialism than his unfortunate alien comrade has ever known before.

When a movement is in a state of confusion, obscured and torn by the madness of the larger world that surrounds it, one does not expect it to give expression to its clearest and best ideas. Yet it is just when a movement is caught unawares, shaken, and driven to action stripped of non-essentials, that we can best estimate its strength and weakness. The war will have a profound influence on Socialism; it may even revolutionize the revolutionists. Socialism may have some influence on the immediate course of the nations after peace is reëstablished, and it will certainly influence their course in a more or less distant future. What Socialist ideas promise to emerge integral from this conflict? What other conflicts do they lead to? What did the political candidate mean by asserting that a vote for Socialism is a vote against war? What is meant by international Socialism? Does capitalism cause war? If Socialists are against war, what do they mean by the class war? Are they mere humanitarian pacifists with an after-

noon-tea ideal of society? Where did they get their ideas? What, in particular, do they amount to in America and what are they likely to amount to? To answer these questions let us take a look at them as they were or seemed to be before the war.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF SOCIALISM

SOCIALISM has its origin in the revolt of the working classes against the exploiting classes. That revolt is a fact, not a theory, and the measure of the extent and intensity of that fact is the measure of the extent and intensity of the Socialist force. The living force was begotten by the practical needs of multitudes of people; it does not owe its existence to economists, philosophers, prophets. Philosophers, economists, prophets, poets, exhorters, have been its school teachers and biographers; they have given it method of thought and manner of speech; they have put into communicable literary form the aspirations of its obscure will, armed it with argument, and helped it to self-conscious organization. The recorders of its life have not been uniformly concurrent in their testimony; the schoolmasters have been of many minds and have fought each other with every weapon known to human controversy.

The resultant multiplicity of ideas has been an excellent thing for the movement, for it has given to Socialism an unlimited variety of interpretations and tactics to choose from and test; it has made alliances between one or another aspect of Socialist thought and almost every science, every art, every branch of human activity; and it has ensured the freedom of Socialism as a whole from subservience to any one thinker.

From the multitude of ideas embodied in Socialist history, literature, and practical tactics, emerge only two or three that are essential. The most important idea is the Class Struggle.

Throughout history economic classes have fought with each other by force of arms and force of mind for mastery of the world or share in the mastery of the world. All the wars of history are of two kinds: (a) contests between members of the same class and their followers, between duke and duke, king and king, state and state, government and government; and (b) contests between classes within the same state, territory, or jurisdiction. The second type of war is known as a revolution if the revolting class succeeds; it is a "rebellion" if the revolting class fails. Revolution may be implicated in wars of the first type, may cause

them or grow out of them. But revolution always has a special object, the oversetting of one economic class by another. The triumphant class may be apparently larger or smaller than the vanquished. When imperial Rome succeeded republican Rome there was a shift of power from a more numerous to a less numerous master class. When the barons beat King John into subjection there was a shift of power from a less numerous to a more numerous master class. The Cromwellian war was the attempt of the country squire and farmer to wrest power from the aristocratic landlord and his allies, the city merchant and the monarchy. Its immediate result was the substitution of a new dynasty for the old. Its revolutionary result was realized later, in 1689, when with the Declaration of Rights the modern Parliament, representing all the owning and business classes, was more or less definitely established.

The French Revolution is a bewildering tangle of interstate and interclass conflicts. The middle class (the Third Estate) forced the king, the clergy, and the nobility to yield some of their privileges and set up an insecure republicanism. In this they were helped by the peasants and the mob. (In history, including the contem-

poraneous history recorded in to-day's newspaper, "mob" almost always means working people.) The middle-class parties fought it out, leading the mob to revolution within revolution. Directory followed Committee of Public Safety; every provisional government was striking its rivals with one hand and conducting foreign wars with the other hand; until finally Napoleon with the army behind him swept republicanism out of the council chambers and established a military dictatorship. After his fall the middle classes, which he had the wit to foster and make use of, were the dominant power. The peasants merely changed masters; the middle-class business landlord succeeded the feudal landlord. And the city workers had found a master stronger than king or emperor; for meanwhile a greater revolution than any suggested by the name of Robespierre or Napoleon had taken place. Invention and commerce had brought the industrial era of the nineteenth century.

Recall another revolution which is nearer to us, the American Revolution. American merchants, landowners, and other patriots felt that they could do business better without the interference of the British Government. So they

led the tax-ridden and mismanaged colonies against their British owners. The revolt of a dependent territory is rather like an international war than a civil war and shows fewer of the motives of a class war. This is true of the successful American Revolution, of the unsuccessful rebellion of the Southern Confederacy, of most insurrections of subject states against imperial states; class interests are present but they are merged in the national interests. In the American Revolution it was the landlord and trading classes who were most interested in flinging off the British yoke. The condition of the non-owning classes in America was little changed. They lived as before, working, paying taxes and rent. The state governments remained. For four years after the war there was no organized national government. Then the national government was formed by a committee of the well-to-do; the mass of the people took little interest in it and had little to say about it. The founders of our republic contrived a modified form of the British Government, and it has been working badly ever since.

For the moment, however, we are not judging the value of governments, certainly not attempting to write their intricate history. We

wish simply to remind ourselves that there have been wars between states and within states in which the contestants belonged to the same economic class—king, duke, lawyer, merchant, artisan, laborer of one country or province pitted against king, duke, lawyer, merchant, artisan, laborer, of another country or province. The greatest of such wars blackens the earth to-day. There have also been wars in which dissimilar, unequal classes fought with each other for dominion of the soil on which they both stood.

The two kinds of war often go together; the demarcations of the nations involved or of the classes involved are not always sharp. But the two types of war are clearly discernible in history. It is invariably true that whenever a nation changes radically its form of government, not its size, its several statutes, its personalities, but its essential *form*, what has happened is that an economic revolution has taken place; a class, defined by its relations to property, has won a dominant or partial control of national affairs such as it has not hitherto enjoyed. The most deep-reaching revolution that the world has ever known occupied more than a hundred years and made itself felt in every corner of the

civilized world. It was the industrial revolution which brought in, not suddenly but gradually, the age in which we now live, the age of the bourgeois. The business man succeeded the feudal lord. The capitalist became king. And the king is still in the counting-room counting other people's money. Property is empire, and the man of property sways nations. The propertied classes are actually and potentially numerous; the members must share their power with each other. The political expression of their divided, share-holding power is the modern republic, the constitutional monarchy.

If it is true that the modern world is a business world, that the class that rules is the class that owns, then, as it seems to backward-looking lovers of the old times, mankind must have become sordidly materialistic; our attitude toward the things of the world must have suffered an evil change; human nature must have degenerated and enslaved itself to "commercialism." In point of fact there has been no such change in the nature of the animal, for the simple reason that the human being has always been "commercial" and "materialistic"; that is, he has always been impelled and controlled by his need to get a living and his desire to make a better

living. He has got his living by using natural resources or by taking something away from somebody else. All human history is the history of man the worker and man the owner, and ownership howsoever acquired has been the basis of all political power, the determinant of laws, customs, tribal migrations, national contests, religious rivalries, class hostilities, military and political campaigns. Every war is an economic war; every political revolution is an economic revolution. The possessors of things have always been the monarchs, no matter how they came to be possessors, no matter what form their possessions took, cattle, slaves, land, ships, shoes, or dollars.

This is called the Economic or Materialistic Interpretation of history, and its synthesis is a philosophic abstraction made in Germany and known as Economic Determinism. The plain English of the idea is that the bread-and-butter needs of man have shaped his history; if you want to know the explanation of any historical event, find out who wanted to get something, what he wanted to get, and whether he was strong enough to get it. Like all philosophic abstractions, Economic Determinism is merely a formula by which the imagination can assem-

ble and understand a multiplicity of facts; it is a crucial generalization like Darwin's theory of natural selection. It does not embrace and account for all facts, and it is threatened by the danger which menaces all principles, the danger of becoming inflexibly phrase-hard.

The men who found or devised this key to history were not fools; they were not mere closet philosophers; they were practical men widely acquainted with all sorts and conditions of life. They did not regard the human being as an abstraction or a monster. His face did not appear to them as a slice of bread with a lump of butter in the middle of it. They knew that his procreative organs are not a book of birthrate statistics. They understood that when he artistically carves the handle of his hunter's knife he has other motives than the desire to sell the knife to somebody else or to make it a more effective weapon. They held simply that the economic motives give shape and direction to other motives, that economic opportunity decides which of man's many ideas shall prevail. This is true of individuals; it is more clearly true of groups, parties, classes, nations. Tell us how men live, under what conditions they work, and we will tell you what they

think. Republicanism was just as fine an idea in itself ten centuries ago as it was one century ago, but it did not tally with the methods of life, the system of ownership, of ten centuries ago. It did not become a force in the world until there arose an economic class strong enough to establish it. Socialism is as fine an idea now as it will ever be; but it will not dominate the world unless and until a strong enough body of people have economic motive and power to compel the world to accept it. The Rights of Man and the Divine Right of Kings are not sacred and eternal principles made in the heaven of the Christian God or in the heaven of the Goddess of Reason; they simply represent the interests of different classes of people; and the moral, legal, idealistic triumph of one or the other idea depends on the economic triumph of one or the other class. England is fighting Germany not for liberty, truth, honor, and the inviolability of national pledges, but for English commercial interests. Germany is in arms, not for Culture and Kaiser, but for German commercial interests.

It is not always true that people as individuals or classes or nations fight for what turns out to be their economic interest in the long

run; it is not always true that they are conscious of their interests or their motives; indeed, a good deal of the stress and strife of mankind is half blind. People do not know enough to see where their interests ultimately lie. Governments go into suicidal wars; capitalists compete with each other to the point of exhaustion and die in harness without having enjoyed their money; workmen knife each other on the battlefield, in the shop, in the union hall, and in the voting booth. On the other hand, individuals and groups sometimes deliberately sacrifice their economic interests to other interests, go to the stake or the poorhouse with their eyes wide open. For example, Marx himself might have made his peace with the German authorities and enjoyed a comfortable living as editor of a harmless liberal journal. Instead he preferred exile and poverty and had his watch and coat in pawn while he was working out the materialistic conception of history. But the human soil in which his ideas were to bear the fruit of action was class interest. He called upon the workers of the world to unite because "the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains; they have a world to gain." Unite to get something, to take the world away from the other fellow; unite,

not to found a religion or make justice prevail over injustice; unite, not because it is sweet to follow the ideal of truth, liberty, and brotherly love; unite for the practical object of conquering the world. If there had not been a proletariat whose interest was served by Marx's ideas, we never should have heard of him. His idea, the Socialist idea however modified, will be a dead idea in forgotten books unless it is true that it is to the interests of the workers to unite and take possession of the world; and it will be a live idea just so long as any considerable body of workers are making a conscious or unconscious effort in the direction he indicated, whether or not they ever heard his name.

The class struggle is a fact. The economic interpretation of history is a way of accounting for the fact, of explaining the great revolution which has already been, and it is a way of predicting what the next revolution will be. The Socialist is any one who wishes that in the contest of classes the working class shall prevail to the destruction of all other classes, so that there shall be no class in the world but workers; and that everything above ground and underground upon which the human race depends for a living shall be owned and administered by society as

a whole without regard to race, creed, color, or previous condition of servitude or mastery. Any one who so wills, wishes, hopes, or believes is a Socialist. It makes no difference whether he belongs to any Socialist party or revolutionary group. It makes no difference whether one so believing is pauper or millionaire, male or female, under or over twenty-one years of age, criminal or qualified voter, or whether he is clearly conscious of his beliefs or merely acts instinctively in accordance with Socialist aims. When the Socialist speaks of The Revolution and of himself as a revolutionist, he means the revolution that is to come, in which the working class shall overthrow all other classes, and he means that he wants that revolution to happen. He bases his future upon an examination of the past and the present. The world of the present is the world as the last successful class struggles left it, the world of the dominant bourgeois, the world of capitalism.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC CLASSES

SINCE the beginning of history the world has been owned and mastered by a minority. There are instances of communism, but though they are instructive in showing, if nothing more, that man can own communistically, they belong to primitive stages of society or are naïve experiments within advanced society. In the great epochs of history emperors, oligarchies, military and commercial castes and landlords have been the proprietors of the earth. To-day the world is largely owned and managed by capitalists. The modern state, its government, its industries, its educational and religious institutions can be comprehended under the term capitalism.

Before capitalism the European world was feudal. Early in the Middle Ages it became partly capitalistic. To-day it is partly feudalistic, witness czars, kaisers, dukes, popes, archbishops. No condition of society breaks off with sharp cleavage from another. The

revolution from feudalism to capitalism occupied centuries of time. The basis of feudalism was the ownership of land and the system of tenure. Princelings of various magnitude possessed territories and the people thereon were vassals to the lord. They tilled soil that they did not own, fished in streams that they did not own, put to sea in ships that they did not own, guarded a castle that they did not own and went at the behest of their master upon marauding expeditions into neighboring domains. Tillage and pillage tell half the story of the Middle Ages. The lords were loosely federated for mutual protection and for the same reason dependent on greater lords up to the king.

Three or four classes of people were in some degree free from bondage to the land and its local owner. Among the relatively free classes were the professional soldiers, mercenaries who were hired by whatever master could pay them or promise them plunder; artists, priests, and clerics who, whatever their dependence on the church and the courts, were not actually bound to the land; traders who went from country to country and laid the foundations of international commerce and banking (the pursuit in which the nationless Jew perforce discovered his

genius); and artisans who owned their tools, whose skill supported them anywhere and who sold or traded what they made.

The transformation of the world from feudalism to capitalism was brought about by the rise of the trader, the artisan, and the peasant, the classes that produce or manage the exchange of production. The condition of the purely parasitic classes has undergone changes, but not revolutionary changes, and they have not as classes contributed to the revolution by forcing themselves into new relations with the rest of society. The soldier is just what he always was, either a professional mercenary or a slave forced by his master to bear arms, or a volunteer impelled to serve a master by loyalty, fear, stupidity, hate, or sheer love of a fight. The learned, the intellectual, the artistic, who have always enjoyed privileges, are in much the same case in which they have always been: they preach, write, paint, and teach for hire, and the substitution of publisher and public for patron, of salary for pension or seat below the salt, is a substitution which other classes have imposed upon them and not one which they have demanded for themselves. They serve all classes, usually the master that feeds them.

Revolution is brought about by the classes that produce, own, and exchange the world's food, clothes, and houses. The trading class was the first and most potent enemy of feudalism, and its emergence and final almost complete dominion of the earth marks the passage of society from medievalism to capitalism. The trader handled commodities for profit. He as a class always made profit or he would not have existed. He therefore grew rich. Good crops or poor crops, artisans making goods or soldiers destroying them, the trader went on accumulating the surplus of the world. His was the only class bent on accumulation. The artisan and peasant could not grow rich by the labor of their hands, even if they had not had on their backs the soldier, the clergyman, the lord. Crops could fail and ruin the landowner. War and extravagance put kings in debt. The commercial class gradually became the mortgagee of every other class. Even the traditional landowning class had to yield and go into business, join the trading class, or become impoverished. Mr. John Smith, banker, buys the baronial castle, and the modern lord is a director of the Consolidated Soap Company, Limited. Traders and landowners form a natural alli-

ance to make money out of other people at home; they get control of the government and use the army of patriots to conquer lands inhabited by black and brown people.

The peasant wants to own land. The landed gentry are poor business men who spend too much time in the social life of the city and in the army. The business man, the trader, and banker supplants the baronial landlord, and takes tribute from the peasant in rents. Thus the small farmer and the hired field hand succeed the serf; all the produce now goes to the owner or tenant and the worker takes wages, whereas under the old system part of the produce went to the serf to keep him alive and part to the lord and his retinue to keep them in good fighting trim. The peasant is a wage-earner or little farmer, and the landlord is a business man.

The artisan, intelligent, independent, skilful, possessor of his tools, made keen by town life and contact with other workers, becomes a power in the cities. He organizes in guilds and makes himself felt in business and politics. Whether or not a cordwainer was ever Lord Mayor of London, we may be sure that to Elizabethan audiences who saw Dekker's merry play, "The Shoemaker's Holiday," the rise of

the cobbler, Simon Eyre, to exalted station did not seem a violation of history. The richness of the guildhalls that have survived in many European cities attests the wealth of the guilds. And the abundance of excellent work in stone, wood, metals, and fabrics proves not only the skill of the craftsmen but their great number; it must have taken millions of competent artisans to work the stone and wood now visible in the buildings of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance—a small part of all that were built.

The relative freedom of the skilled worker has continued to the present day and has increased in one direction; for in precapitalistic times the caste system decreed that a carpenter should always be a carpenter. This is still the case in countries like Germany and Russia where feudalism is not yet dead. On the other hand, in modern times in "democratic" countries the skilled workman can sometimes get ahead, set up in business, and join the exploiting classes. There are so many instances of this in American life that the story of the poor boy who became famous is a commonplace. This is one reason why the skilled worker has the "psychology," as we say, of the small capitalist, is a conservative or a very moderate radical, and takes

little interest in the unskilled, the down and out. In another direction the freedom of the skilled worker as a class has been curtailed. The machine has put many old manual crafts out of existence and has taken from every craft some process that once required skill of hand. The revolution which overtook progressive countries a century ago and which is now so nearly complete all over the world that its last chapter can be written to-morrow was in large measure a mechanical revolution. The god that came out of the new machine was not a painted artifice, mocking reason and theology, but a real god who has ruled human destinies. Among the great men whose names are symbols of the era, even if they did not make it, at least equal to Napoleon, Washington, Pitt, Voltaire, Goethe, are Watt, Fulton, Stevenson, Ampère, Faraday, Wheatestone, Jacquard, Arkwright. The nineteenth century hums with invention, and the racket of loom and lathe is louder than war itself. The workman lays aside his hand tools and takes his place at a machine in a factory. The machine becomes ever more complex in its action and at the same time ever simpler to guide; so that women and children and ignorant men are competent to tend it. And who owns the machines?

The class that has inherited, accumulated, or appropriated the capital of the world, capitalists great and small, any one of whatever origin, who by hook, crook, theft, or genius has a cent's worth of stock in the factory. The revolution that has overtaken the manual worker has not been brought about wholly by effort of his; it has been a change in the process of production. It has restricted his liberty by forcing him to use tools owned by somebody else. It has taken something away from his oldtime independence. But it has enormously increased his numbers and his potential influence on other classes.

To make this potential influence actual is the aim of the Socialist movement. And Socialists hold that if the working class is to realize its power objectively it must first realize inwardly where its interests lie and how they can be served. This is what Socialists mean by class consciousness. If there is to be a revolution the workers must intend it. When the Socialist says that the revolution is inevitable, he does not mean that it will happen like the rise of the sun without effort on our part, and that we have nothing to do but sit still and wait for it to come. He means that the human will reacts on circumstances and derives its purposes from them, and

he believes that circumstances are such that the workers will not endure them but will strive to have them changed. Moreover, the Socialist thinks that owing to the spread of education, the increased facilities of communication, present and future class movements will be more clearly purposive than class actions of the past. We base our hopes on the possibility that more and more people will understand how society is constructed and how it can be reconstructed. That is why the Socialist is an agitator. It may please some Socialists to retire to a sublimely fatalistic altitude and say, "We did not make the class struggle, we merely interpret it." As a matter of fact every active Socialist is doing all he can to sharpen the class war, to give it definition and intensity.

The condensed Socialist formula divides mankind into exploiters and exploited, capitalists and workers, those who receive more than they contribute to production, and those who contribute more than they receive. This division is generally recognized in the phraseology common to all classes; everybody speaks of capital and labor, employers and employees. Most people take the division for granted as something natural, like heat and cold, and are resentful

only of the more violent contrasts between the fabulously rich and the miserably poor. The Socialist sees that the trouble with society is inherent in the division itself, and that the obvious evils, Mr. Rockefeller and the bread line, are only magnified manifestations of the essential evil.

The politically and economically effective classes are not so simply to be accounted for under a convenient dualism. There are many classes whose interests and controlling circumstances are not identical one with another; these classes have made alliances for the pursuit of a common aim against a common enemy, and the allies have come to blows and made realignments. There are large capitalists and small capitalists, skilled craftsmen and unskilled factory hands, large farmers, small farmers, and hired men, professional men and salaried business men in moderately comfortable circumstances. Add to these, in European countries, clergy, nobility, and monarchy, which retain in some degree the power inherited from pre-republican days.

It is the combination and recombination of these classes which have made the history of the nineteenth century. Because the coalitions of interest are not permanent, reaction follows re-

bellion, and we see humanity moving in a strange see-saw, marching and countermarching, so that advance in any one general direction is apparent only to the eye that surveys long stretches of time. No class so far has worked out its own destiny unassisted by other classes, free from the necessity of making concessions to other classes. We cannot find in history a pure class movement which attained its ends without compromise, without concessions wittingly yielded or yielded under compulsion. In the French Revolution the peasants and the townsmen had a common enemy, the aristocrat. Neither the peasant, who hated the landlord, nor the revolutionary or pseudo-revolutionary citizen of the Jacobin club saw the other clearly. Together they struggled for a new order and deposed tyrants. But when the peasant, after a confused fracas, found that he could be a little landowner, he became conservative, shrewd, narrow, parsimonious.

It is one of the ironies of class struggles, as it is of national struggles like the one which now horrifies the world, that the contestant often fights like a demon or a hero for a prize that some one else captures. In the American Revolution the embattled farmer and the city merchant

and the rich or prospectively rich landowner made common cause against British rule. After the war a thousand agrarian insurgents under Daniel Shays were suppressed by the state troops of Massachusetts, some of whom were farmers and all of whom were patriotically financed by the merchants of Boston. And it is notorious that this country, which next to France most eloquently phrased the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity, was the last country in the civilized world to rid itself of black slavery. It is less notorious but quite as significant that in the fight to maintain slavery many of the Southern soldiers were poor whites who had about as much hope of owning a slave as they had of owning Commodore Vanderbilt's new house in New York.

To-day we see a similiar confusion of activities between the classes and their allies. The Socialists are avowedly, and we may assume sincerely, engaged in promoting the ascendancy of the working class. Yet the Socialists include many members of the small business and small landowning and professional classes. One result of this is to add to the so-called working-class movement numerical strength from other classes and to contribute to prol-

etarian effort the intelligence which, owing to leisure, good living, and education, the middle classes possess in higher degree than the working classes. Another result is the corruption of the working-class movement by middle-class interests and traditions. It is a little ridiculous, a little pathetic, to hear workingmen yelling their heads off at the election on the Socialist ticket of a clergyman, a lawyer, a school teacher, or some other intellectual Socialist. The intelligent revolutionary workman resents this intrusion of the so-called "intellectual," and justly distrusts writing and talking "leaders." But the real trouble is not that the intellectual makes himself conspicuous and commands those who, with the unconscious snobbery of the humble, call themselves "the rank and file." An intellectual, a member of the moderately privileged classes, may be a self-sacrificing and useful revolutionist. The trouble is not so much in wrong leadership as in wrong following, not so much in a misleading demagoguery as in a diluted constituency. The working-class impulse confounds itself with other no doubt worthy impulses. Reformism swamps revolution and washes the color out of it. Socialism becomes mere progressivism. The

working class in getting the support of other classes is deflected from its aims. The proletarian rebel and the highly honorable Commissioner of Public Works sit down together to consider whether the Superintendent of Streets is a grafter and whether John Jones or Abraham Weininsky would not be a better man. What, indeed, has this to do with the Revolution?

Of the relation of revolution to reform we shall have something to say later. For the moment we are trying to understand this class question. We portray it as a confusion because it is confused. If you consider the three chief divisions of the working class at the present hour in America, you will see that the agriculture worker and the city worker are not conscious of the same objective, that the land question and the factory question, at present unsolved, are not in all respects the same question, that the successful organized worker and the less successful mill hand or roaming job hunter are not in sympathy, and that the middle class has at once enriched and poisoned the blood of working-class revolt. The Socialist party in Germany is nothing more in its majority vote and its actual deeds than a liberal, anti-monarchical, anti-military party. The Socialist party in America is

dominated for good and for evil by the middle class, and it has yielded for good or for evil to the little farmer. Its numerical strength at the present time is not in Lawrence or Pittsburg, where exploitation is obvious, but in agricultural states where exploitation, however grinding, is more indirect. The immediate hope of the political Socialist is success, not in factory-black Massachusetts, but in rural Oklahoma. Political Socialism has succeeded Populism and Single-taxism as the protest of the agrarian homesteader against the railroad, that is against highly developed exploiting capitalism. And as for revolutionary unionism, it seems to thrive better at the present moment among the lumber jacks, the miners, the longshoremen, the nomadic, devil-may-care season chasers of the West than among the slaves of the most advanced industrial centres. A brief history of American Socialism will put us in the way of understanding the present confusions.

CHAPTER IV

SOME AMERICAN HISTORY

THE United States is the only great country whose independent political life began in the age of business, and whose government, habits, ideals, were from the start a clear business proposition. In a real sense it was free, unhindered by loyalty to church or empire, relatively undisciplined by tradition. The prevalent idea was a fair field and every man for himself, that is, every white man. The country was divided into three sections, North, South, and West. The North was engaged in agriculture, fishing, hunting, trading, and rudimentary manufacture; the South with feudal slavery was wholly agricultural; the West was undeveloped, an empire for which North and South contended. Land was cheap. If a man could not prosper in the settled communities, he could go into the wilderness and struggle with nature for a livelihood. The open West afforded an outlet for discontentment, tended to keep wages high in the growing in-

dustrial centres of the East, and fostered in the American workman before the war an intense individualism. This was admirable in its way, but it had the effect of delaying the formation of labor organizations such as were already well established in England. Moreover, the distance between American cities kept the workers from realizing a common interest, made them provincial in their political and economic activities. Even to-day, in spite of the gain in rapidity and ease of communication, the geographical distribution of the American working class makes organization more difficult than it is in the thickly settled countries of Western Europe.

Before 1840 the infant industries of the North Atlantic States had produced an infant labor movement. It was a lusty infant, significantly strong enough to inspire a counter union of Boston merchants and traders. These gentlemen, whose heirs still own countless millions of bonds and stocks in mines they have never seen and railroads they have never ridden on, met the labor unions with all the moral indignation of outraged capital, and resorted to blacklisting, boycott, and indictment for conspiracy. The war between capital and labor was on.

The early unions were not revolutionary in

their aims. They were craft unions modelled on the English unions and often organized by veteran unionists from England. They fought more or less successfully for better wages, shorter hours, and the abolition of legislation aimed at unionism. They laid the foundations for that great section of American labor now comprehended in the American Federation of Labor and the brotherhoods of railroad employees. The first traces of revolutionary spirit in the American labor movement are coincident with the arrival in this country of immigrants, mostly from Germany, who fled the oppressive reaction that followed the abortive revolution of 1848. Through the middle of the century there is a bewildering succession of more or less Socialistic unions and political parties, none of which proved permanent as a separate entity, but all of which helped to keep alive the spirit of working-class revolt. The Civil War absorbed the energies and enthusiasms of all classes. The working people fell in line under the flag of nationalism, just as they are doing in Europe at the present time. When the country emerged from as disgraceful and futile a war as was ever fought, finance, industry, and labor were all disorganized. The war had put

the Northern business man in the saddle and inaugurated the riotous age of Yankee enterprise, a marvellous age of energy, courage, skill, graft, stupidity, and incompetence.

It is worth while to pause a moment to note two or three points in the relations between the Civil War and labor, facts not well known to readers of conventional histories. While the business men, politicians, and publicists of England were for the most part on the side of the South, the working people of England were with the North, even the weavers who suffered poverty when the cutting off of the cotton supply forced the closing of the mills. The International Workingman's Association sent Lincoln a manifesto expressing their sympathy and support. The document was drafted by Karl Marx, and throughout the war Marx roused the workers of England to combat the British Government, which was hostile to the North.

In all his speeches, whenever the issue was raised, Lincoln, although he was the political expression of Northern capitalism, placed himself unequivocally on the side of the workers. His address to the German workers of Cincinnati, February, 1861, is entirely satisfactory to the most uncompromising Socialist: "I

agree with you, Mr. Chairman, that the workingmen are the basis of all governments, for the plain reason that they are the more numerous." As early as 1847 he wrote: "Inasmuch as most good things are produced by labor, it follows that all such things of right belong to those whose labor has produced them. But it has so happened in all ages of the world that some have labored and others without labor enjoyed a large proportion of the fruits. This is wrong and should not continue. To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly so as possible, is a worthy object of any good government." In 1859 he said: "They hold [Lincoln includes himself] that labor is prior to and independent of capital; that, in fact, capital is the fruit of labor and could never have existed if labor had not first existed; that labor can exist without capital, but that capital could never have existed without labor. Hence they hold that labor is the superior—greatly the superior—of capital." A report of a speech which he made in 1860 contains these sentences: "Mr. Lincoln thanked God we have a system of labor where there can be a strike. Whatever the pressure, there is a point where the workman may stop."

Lincoln's opinions do not make a truth true, but these utterances reveal painfully the decadence of mind of American statesmen since the war, of those very statesmen who point with pride to the founder of the party they have debauched. They have not caught up with Lincoln in fifty years.

During the period before and after the Civil War the problem of white labor was confused with the more obvious problem of black labor. Wendell Phillips was probably right in attributing the backwardness of our labor movement as compared with that in European countries to the fact that the issues of free labor were complicated with the evil of black slavery. When the anti-Slavery Society disbanded in 1870 Phillips was the only one of the old abolitionists who realized that an even greater contest than the war against black slavery was still to be fought out. The next year he drafted the platform of the Labor Reform party which is thoroughly good Socialism: "We affirm as a fundamental principle that labor, the creator of wealth, is entitled to all it creates. Affirming this, we avow ourselves willing to accept the final results of the application of a principle so radical, such as the overthrow of the whole

profit-making system, the extinction of all monopolies, the abolition of the privileged classes, universal education and fraternity, perfect freedom of exchange, and best and grandest of all, the final abolition of that foul stigma upon our so-called Christian civilization, the poverty of the masses."

I find no record that Phillips was acquainted with the Socialist literature of Europe. No doubt some of the workmen in the party who talked with him had learned their principles in Europe or from European pamphlets, but Phillips seems to have thought the matter out for himself. The party came to nothing. Phillips became as unpopular with the first families of Boston as he had been before the war when a mob of the same first families attacked him for preaching abolition—the mob in silk hats which he lashed with invective. An aristocrat and a capitalist, he was the last effective voice of rebellion in Massachusetts. Since he died there has not been in Boston a native revolutionary idea about labor or any other subject. The Back Bay bourgeois with a little stale culture, in forced alliance with the grafting politician, manages the mills, the churches, the schools. Independent thought is

carefully discouraged. Active rebellion is answered by the militia and the jail. It was only the other day that the Lawrence strike revealed to an ignorant legislature and a complacent plutocracy the rottenness of a state that was once the home of radical thinkers. At present there is some hope that in spite of forty years of intellectual degeneracy, in spite even of the fatuity of the Socialist party of Massachusetts, revolutionary thought may flourish again in Boston.

The intellectual degeneracy of the entire United States after the Civil War is one of the most disheartening facts in the history of civilization. It is impossible for any one person to assess the achievements of all departments of thought. But consider two important branches of intellectual activity with which we are all more or less familiar, statesmanship and literature. The generation that came to maturity after 1860 did not contain a single statesman of first-rate quality, with the possible exception of John Hay. Men of distinction in other fields of endeavor than politics were sometimes elected to office, but they were not statesmen either by natural gift or by training. A pathetic example is Grant, whose naïve ignorance of affairs

made him, and through him the nation, an easy victim of the thieves. Our other presidents were amiable nonentities, or, like Cleveland, useful agents of the magnates. The Senate became a notorious club of millionaires. The House of Representatives was a bleating flock of sheep, herded by cunning shepherds of the tariff. The congressional records and biographies of forty years may be searched in vain for any capable discussion of the real issues of life. It would be impossible to find in the contemporary cabinets of Europe men so little informed about anything deeper than bookkeepers' economics.

Literature, which reflects the soul of a nation, fell upon evil days. Before the war, when the population of the country was twenty million, there were five or six important men of letters. A generation later, when the population had doubled, there was only one first-rate literary genius, Mark Twain.

For our grandfathers we can have some respect. For the work of our fathers we cannot have great filial admiration. They made or permitted a shoddy, corrupt civilization. They had but one idea, to get rich. Now, the pursuit of money and the constructive enterprise

which it inspires are wholesome and normal; they have animated all healthy periods of all nations. The trouble with the generation which is now happily passing is that it did little else than strive for individual fortune. Its heroes, its representative products, typical though grotesquely exaggerated, are Morgan, Rockefeller, and Carnegie. It made America the happy hunting-ground of swindlers. It built ugly cities, which it mismanaged until American graft became a byword in the world. It set up universities which look like shoe factories, and placed over them commercial persons whose chief function was to cajole millionaires. It subordinated science to the uses of trade. The history of railroads for the last fifty years is a scandalous record of physical and financial wrecks. Capitalism, uncontrolled, lawless even by its own definition of law, blossomed in a rank abundance unknown in any other country at any other time. And because it is held that the fullest development of capitalism is the ripest soil for Socialism, revolutionists all over the world, prophets as unlike as Tolstoy and the youngest American syndicalist, have believed that America would be the first nation to be captured by the revolution.

One effect of the failure of the generation which is now fortunately dying was to disillusionize the radical thinkers of all countries as to the value of the republican form of government. Immigrants who thought that monarchy was their trouble at home discovered that essential liberty was not greater in America than in the old countries of Western Europe. Thinkers had opportunity to meditate the fact that even backward Russia produced a body of literature compared to which American literature is a puerile school composition. Worse than that—for genius may be an accident—the common run of American thinking was of inferior quality. Something in our free institutions militated against real freedom. The American, in an atmosphere reported to be high and open, was timid, awfully afraid of the opinions of his neighbors, willing to take the stupidest abuses lying down, a pusillanimous Sunday-school scholar whispering below his breath matters which Europeans in manly fashion discuss aloud. The freedom of the press when tested proved to be seriously restricted, and freedom of speech in many parts of the country was so far abrogated that it was necessary to get arrested and make a fight

through the courts to resecure a traditional privilege. The American bourgeois thumping his chest and proclaiming himself an independent citizen of the greatest country in the world was servilely receptive of European ideas, especially superficial ideas. And clever business man as he was, he would pay an extra price for anything with a foreign label on it. Perhaps he knew the quality of his own goods. The vices of ignorance, timidity, lack of intellectual courage were not confined to the middle and upper classes. Emma Goldman, who knows at first hand working people in many countries, says that the American workman reads less and thinks less than his European brothers. Whatever the virtues of our republican institutions, whatever the influence of those institutions upon our habits of thought and ways of life, people with their eyes open now understand that republicanism in itself means little and that it has obviously not had the effect of making the American in any respect a superior person. On the one hand, American revolutionists see that our peculiar institutions are not worthy of special respect, and, on the other hand, European revolutionists see that it is not worth while to fight for the establishment of

similar institutions in their own land, certainly not at the cost of diverting much strength from the essential struggle for the freedom of the working class.

Parallel to the amazing growth of American capitalism there grew up several parties and organizations in opposition to capital or to some aspect of it. Not all of these organizations were socialistic, not all of them were strictly proletarian.

Besides the Labor Reform party of Massachusetts, already mentioned, there were two other labor movements, short lived but memorable, before the last quarter of the nineteenth century. One was the National Labor Union, of which the Labor Reform party was a sort of political wing. This flourished from 1866 to 1870. It is significant because its declaration of principles was socialistic, because it sought to unite workers in a national body, and because its leaders were Americans. The other was the International Workingmen's Association founded by Germans and inspired by the International in Europe of which Karl Marx was the central figure. The political disturbances which culminated in the Franco-Prussian War and the communes in Paris and other cities put an end

to the old International and forced the removal in 1872 of its General Council from London to New York. The American International died in 1876. The value of it was that it introduced to Americans the ideas of Marx and other European revolutionists.

The oldest Socialist party still surviving is the Socialist Labor party. This was organized in 1874 as the Social-Democratic Workingmen's party and it assumed its present name in 1877. It was composed of political refugees and foreign workmen; less than an eighth of its members were born Americans. It reached the height of its power in 1898 when its candidates received more than 80,000 votes. Its numerical growth has been checked by the rise of the younger Socialist party, and the death in 1914 of its greatest leader, Daniel de Leon, may result in its dissolution. Whether it lives or dies, American Socialism owes much to it. It has been an austere, dogmatic, uncompromising schoolmaster, carrying its principles so erectly as to lean over backward. It has chastised the flabbier and more genial Socialist party, and with an arrogance at once admirable and futile, it has rebuked the American workman for the slightest deviation from the strait and narrow

path. With decreasing hope of winning the plums or honors of office, the old guard has stood face forward, willing to die but never to surrender. It has numbered among its members some of the ablest theorists and doughtiest fighters, and has compelled the respect of rival organizations with which it has been in continuous acrimonious controversy.

The Knights of Labor began as a secret organization, a combination of labor union and fraternal order. In 1881 it emerged from secrecy, and by 1886 is said to have had a membership of half a million. Its platform was vigorously Socialistic, but its immediate activities were limited to demanding the conventional reforms that are the commonplace of all labor unions, such as workingmen's compensation, factory inspection, mechanics' lien, the eight-hour day. It was wrecked by corrupt politicians within and without. The Socialist Labor party tried to capture it and make it revolutionary, and succeeded in defeating Mr. T. V. Powderly as Master Workman. It is significant that Mr. Powderly, once a mechanic, became a lawyer and found a comfortable berth with the Republican party. The rise of the American Federation of Labor forced the tottering Knights

to disband, and the leaders divided what was left in the treasury.

The Single Tax movement, founded by Henry George, is a sort of agrarian Socialism. It was the product of conditions peculiar to the undeveloped capitalism of the West and it is a distinctly American contribution to economic thought. George saw the small people of the great rich West oppressed by the railroad octopus and the benefits of the fairly democratic Homestead Act nullified by land speculators. He and his followers proposed the nationalization of the land, railroads, and mines. The instrument by which this is to be affected is a system of taxation by which land values and only land values are to be taxed for revenue, and by which all ground rent shall revert to the government; the result, it is conceived, would be the abolition of landlordism. But upon the ground thus nationalized capitalism is to have full swing, and the relation between owners of capital above ground and wage-workers is not to be essentially changed. The Single Taxer is a middle-class reformer concerned almost wholly with the question of land; his enemy is the present system of rent. The Socialist is bent on abolishing all modes of capitalist exploitation, rent, interest, and profit.

Moreover, the Socialist sees that land and railroads owned by a government which is owned by capitalists could easily develop into a more oppressive property tyranny than the present individualist system of ownership. So Single Taxer and Socialist part company. Marx called the George idea a "socialistically fringed attempt to save the rule of capitalism." George's "Progress and Poverty" is a great book, and his ideas have found acceptance with Tolstoy, prophet of a backward agrarian civilization, and with the land-nationalist liberal reformers of Great Britain. The Georgian indictment of corporate wealth is eloquent enough to warm the cockles of any true Socialist heart. But on analysis it becomes evident that Single-Taxism is only one of the cries of the little farmer and little capitalist against the big fellow. It is the ally of the radical Democrat and petty progressive who wants the trust broken up into pre-capitalistic fragments, whereas the Socialist is no more hostile to the trusts than he is to the little manufacturer with a capital of fifty thousand dollars.

It is amusing to remember that the Socialist Labor party in 1886 joined the local labor unions and the Single Taxers to support Henry George for the mayoralty of New York City. The

result was the defeat of the Republican candidate, a young man named Theodore Roosevelt, and the election of the Democrat. Mr. Roosevelt amply repaid his score later by some articles in the *Outlook* against Socialism which had the effect of converting to Socialism at least three young men whom I happen to know. More sinister than the rather comic alliance between the rigidly orthodox Socialist Laborites and the followers of Henry George is the present-day concession of the Socialist party to the small farmer. The programs of the western sections of the party in agricultural states have little to say about the abolition of private title to land, and an amended paragraph in the national program affirms that the party "is not opposed to the occupation and possession of land by those using it in a useful and bona fide manner without exploitation." The true Socialist idea is community ownership of all land. And the Socialist Labor party took its younger rival sharply to task for having dropped Socialism from its platform and put in its place an emasculated form of the late lamented Single Tax.

The contest between Anarchists and Socialists is one of the most exhilarating chapters in the

history of revolutionary thought. Anarchists and Socialists understand each other's activities and theories, so that their disputes are more stimulating if not more conclusive than disputes between bourgeois and revolutionist. For when the apologist for capitalism attacks the Anarchist he usually shows, to repeat Mr. Haywood's little joke, that he does not know the difference between Anarchism and arnica. And in this country what he knows of Socialist theory is barely enough to furnish forth a silly newspaper editorial.

The Anarchist library is a very rich body of literature. In England it begins at least as far back as William Godwin and Shelley. Huxley very neatly proved that Spencer was an Anarchist. In America, Thoreau, a solitary rebel, who seems not to have been well acquainted with his European contemporaries, worked out for himself ideas acceptable, as far as they go, to Tolstoy and Miss Goldman. Kropotkin, the most famous living Anarchist, calls Proudhon, the Frenchman, the founder of his faith. But Plechanoff, the Russian Socialist, reminds us that before Proudhon elaborated his theory the German philosopher, Max Stirner, in "The Person and His Property" had made a much more consistent and thorough exposition. In

Russia, where the despotism of government is brutally and primitively oppressive to every form of liberty, the simple anti-government spirit of Anarchism has found its most numerous and valiant disciples. The Anarchists divided on the question of tactics into two groups: pacific propagandists like Tolstoy, who sought to convert the world by a sort of do-nothing evangelism; and propagandists of the deed who tried to rid the earth of tyrants by assassination. They hoped, as Mark Twain approvingly put it, to make a throne so uncomfortable that a czar would rather sit on a three-legged stool in his backyard.

Through the middle of the nineteenth century Anarchists and Socialists contended for the soul of the workman. The contest dramatized itself in the wrestling match between the Titans, Marx, the Socialist, and Bakunin, the Anarchist. In the early seventies, when the International Workingmen's Association was on its last legs, the Anarchists were finally ousted. Many of them came to this country and began to indoctrinate the working people. In 1886 in Chicago there was an open-air meeting of working people, the object of which was agitation for the eight-hour day. The world has since come

to believe that the eight-hour day is good business, but in those ancient times the idea was treason and threatened the august structure of law and order. The police, stupid trouble-makers, were trying to disperse the crowd. Somebody, still unknown, threw a bomb and killed a policeman. Several men were arrested, charged with murder. Some were hanged, some were imprisoned. Years later Governor Altgeld reviewed the trial, decided that it was unjust, and pardoned the prisoners. There was nothing to do for those that had been hanged. Some of them had no more connection with the bomb than this paragraph has with the fate of the next police commissioner who shall be blown up in Petrograd. Some of the men were not Anarchists nor believers in any form of violence. In the American mind, thanks to the ignorant American press, they were all classified as Anarchists, and thereafter the word Anarchist became a shiveringly disreputable word. The Anarchist was represented in cartoons as a demon with a thicket of beard, a lighted bomb in one hand and a revolver or a dagger in the other hand. This conception has no more relation to fact than the revolutionist's caricature of the capitalist as a mass of abdomen and pimply nose.

Anarchists hold that all government is tyranny, inimical to the liberty of the individual and to the highest development of the race. They seek the abolition of the state and the church, of every institution which can be used as a means of exploiting one class of people for the benefit of another class. At the present time government is identical with capitalism. So long as government exists capitalism or some other mode of economic oppression must exist. The Anarchist arraignment of capitalism is much like the Socialist; it contains the same bill of particulars and is not different in tone and spirit. And against the common enemy, in contests of workers with industrial, political, and military bosses, Socialists and Anarchists are often found in temporary unity. But the Socialist believes in taking over the political and industrial system as it is or as it may be when the hour of revolution strikes, and fashioning it nearer to the heart's desire. He thinks that he can prove by his ingenious analysis of history and economics that the natural and inevitable successor of the capitalist state and the capitalist mode of production is a Social Democratic state based upon a communistic ownership and management of productive wealth. To the Anarchist this pro-

posed Social Democratic type of government is only a slight improvement upon the existing order. Not only does it fall far below the ultimately desirable, but it retains all the possibilities of bureaucratic tyranny to which may be added a degree of efficiency and power for evil unknown to the present system. The Socialists have in some measure justified this criticism by allowing themselves to be misled into reform movements which can have no effect but to give capitalism a new lease of life. Despite the continual protests of Socialists, that abominable if unavoidable thing, State Socialism, or state capitalism, with its specious retinue of progressive ideas, government ownership, compulsory insurance, and so forth, has not been kept distinct from revolutionary Socialism. The revolutionary Socialist has no enthusiasm for the Great State of Mr. H. G. Wells and other incurably bourgeois British philosophers. We think that with the coming of Social Democracy most of the functions of government will become obsolete, that the state as a state will disappear, and that the halls of government will be converted from political gambling dens and buncombe factories into the central offices of the world's great industries. We do not believe that

any type of democratic society which the mind of to-day is capable of conceiving can be final and everlastingly satisfactory, and we are perfectly willing to grant that the voluntary communism of the Anarchist, or something better, may succeed the Social Democracy.

However widely divergent Socialism and Anarchism have become, they sprang from the same stock and have in their veins some common blood which only the ultra-sophistic theorists on both sides can repudiate. The Socialist argument that Anarchist and Socialist theories are at the opposite poles of thought, and that, indeed, the capitalist is an Anarchist, is a more or less entertaining exercise in dialectics, but as a matter of human fact it is not true. On the other hand, the Anarchist's scorn of the Socialist as a petty bourgeois politician is justified rather by the impotent conclusion of some unimportant Socialist endeavors than by the larger aims of the best Socialist thought and activity.

The Anarchists have no methodical organization, so that it is impossible to tell how many there are in America. One meets many of them among the working people and among the lecturers, writers, and artists who buzz round the working-class movement. Whatever the value

of Anarchism in itself, it has been of especial service to Socialism by criticising it and sharpening its wits. It has been a useful gadfly stinging the Socialist movement in its weakest parts and helping to keep it awake. The recent rise of industrial Socialism, which has no dealings with politics, has given to Anarchists and non-political Socialists an opportunity to forget their differences and work together for the only cause which they really have at heart, the triumph of the worker.

The shameless purchase of the Republican party and the Democratic party by the financiers, the growth of the trusts beyond the control of a feeble and hypocritical government, the panic of 1893, the notorious corruption of city and state officials, the franchise steals and the disastrous jugglery of stocks gave rise to two or three political revolts among the middle classes. In these revolts the worker took part, but his was not the moving spirit. They were the rebellion of the small producer, the mortgage-ridden farmer, of the outraged little man, unimaginative, harried, ignorant of the political game, whom Mr. Opper caricatures as the Common People. This pitiful citizen was helped and led

by more imaginative honest men, some of them more or less sincere politicians whose sense of decency was roused against the abuses of the men higher up. The literary expression of the revolt was the age of muckraking, and the classic work was Henry Demarest Lloyd's "Wealth versus Commonwealth," a work earlier in time and superior in quality to the articles with which it became profitable ten years ago for popular magazines to stun their gaping readers.

The movement was aimed chiefly against money capital, and it failed because it dealt with a symptom, not with a cause. Manifestations of it were the Greenback party, Populism, and Free Silver Democracy. Populism is still remembered with respect by western Socialists, some of whom came to Socialism by way of the People's party. The People's party merged with the Anti-gold Democrats and lost its identity and its radicalism. Mark Hanna, the supreme genius of boodle politics, bought the election of McKinley, and the first great battle between little business and big business was over.

Many Americans of all classes realized as never before how this country is owned and managed, and they have never quite recovered

their patriotic complacency. The trust had come to stay and the dissolutions enforced by the Government meant nothing but a change of bookkeeping. It was seen that the business world could not return to the era of small enterprise and free competition. Socialists will recall that the most flagrant abuses of the trusts and the loudest outcry against them came at about the moment when the third volume of Marx's "Capital" appeared and revisionists within and without the party began to pull his ideas to pieces. A leading idea of Marx was the centralization of capital. The revisionists proved that the small traders and small landowners not only were not being forced into the proletariat, but were increasing in numerical proportion. And even as they were proving this (they were largely right), behold in America there appeared exactly that concentration of capital power which Marx had predicted. It looked as if Marx had been uncannily long-sighted. And Socialist theory was never so rigid, never so mechanically certain of the automatic action of capital as in the first decade of the twentieth century. The Socialists were almost proud of the trusts. They were like the man whose business agent robbed him of a

hundred thousand dollars and who exclaimed triumphantly: "There, I always told my wife that that man was a rascal, and I'm glad I'm right."

But the Socialists of ten years ago did not reckon with the power of the little business man, the common insignificant citizen, to come back. Middle-class democracy has reasserted itself with a vigor which upset the calculations of some Socialist arithmetic at the same time that it baffled the blind conservatism of old-fashioned capitalism, the Republican party. This middle-class movement embraces all that is connoted by the words "progressivism" and "the new freedom." The fact that Mr. Wilson and Mr. Roosevelt lead different parties is only a superficial play of politics. They are the discordant mouthpieces of ideas and interests fundamentally identical. They demand that capital shall be good for its own sake, and that capitalist politics shall become pure and honorable —in order that it may continue in power. The capitalist system is not to be destroyed, it is to be cleansed of its bad moral and physical habits, assured that pollution is suicidal and that upright, humane, unselfish conduct makes for health, wealth, and a long life. The older

capitalism met the workman with clubs and injunctions, and when confronted with the problem of unemployment, replied simply, "God knows," or more elaborately, "Any man who is willing to work can find a job if he will stop drinking, and in hard times our charities and philanthropies will take care of him; and, by the way, he should keep wages high by voting for the protective tariff which has brought us fifty years of unbroken prosperity, in God we trust." The new capitalism opens its arms to the workman and cries in an ecstasy of ethical generosity: "Our brother, you deserve more of the good things of life. If you don't get them, don't rise up and try to take them. Let us who know more than you improve your conditions. We will take your children out of the mills, shorten the working hours of your wives, give you hospitals, gymnasiums, libraries, pensions, and industrial education that will enable you to produce more at less expense to us. Only be good and don't shoot, for we shall be obliged to deal severely with violence, disorder, anarchy, the destruction of sacred life and property."

To the aged grand dukes of finance the new capitalism administers austere rebukes. It promises government ownership and control of

public utilities, the competition of state capital with private capital, recognition of the fact that infant industries have reached the age of discretion. Progressivism investigates with a zealous thoroughness and open publicity which have ruined the business of the private muckraker. Bewildered millionaires of the old régime are put on the witness stand and required to apologize, not only for being rich, but for giving money away. The current liberalism takes to its bosom every reform that has a righteous sound, especially if it be a reform likely to draw the teeth of rebellion. One of the most humorous tricks of politics was the adoption by the Progressive party of several inessential parts of the Socialist program.

Progressivism or Neo-democracy has not been in power long. Business has not had time to adjust itself to the recent legislation affecting finance, tariff, and taxation. Proposed improvements in the relations between capital and labor have not proceeded beyond the preliminary taking of evidence. The reformistic activities of the Wilson administration have been hampered by the Mexican muddle and the European insanity. So that to some eyes progressivism, as embodied in the present gov-

ernment, seems a short-lived phenomenon, a petulant disturbance of politics and business, without achievement, without consistent plan. And it may be that this wobbling conservative liberalism, unsatisfactory to the revolutionist on the one hand and to the irritated reactionary on the other, will disappear, to be followed by a return of the old financial forces, slightly chastened, and by an increasingly impatient and restless proletarian pressure.

Some Socialists dismiss the new liberalism with too easy contempt. In reality it is their worst enemy, and likely to prove the strongest and longest enduring enemy. It seems short-sighted to underrate the ability of capitalism to reform itself and gain a new lease of life. The capitalism of the future against which the revolutionist must wage war is to be portrayed, not as a big-bellied boodler or a senile hypocrite, but as a young man with the physique of an athlete and an active, fully-informed mind. By making concessions to the little citizen with his enormous numerical power and large total capital, by lifting above the line of privilege and security the skilled organized workmen, by forming an ever-closer allegiance between private capital and public capital, through the

spuriously democratic device of government ownership, the capitalism of to-morrow promises to become more broadly and solidly established than any preceding type of capitalism. The reforming radical wishes to take power away from the too limited, too conspicuously prosperous class and to increase the number of shareholders in the joint stock company of society. But he is not a revolutionist. He is not a communist. He does not want to let *everybody* in. He wishes to maintain the profit system and the wage system. He knows enough to put that system on a basis of efficiency hitherto unrealized. The old bosses do not like him, and in their stupidity they sputter and call him Socialist. But he is the best friend of the bosses of to-morrow.

There remain for consideration three organizations which represent in some form the ideas and activities of the working class: the Socialist party, the American Federation of Labor, and the Industrial Workers of the World.

CHAPTER V

THE SOCIALIST PARTY

THE Socialist party was founded in 1901 by the merging of several fragmentary organizations. Three years later it received a vote of more than 400,000, and by 1912 the Socialist vote had grown to nearly a million. No doubt some of the votes were cast by non-Socialists who wished to record their discontent with the capitalist parties. On the other hand, it should be remembered that some Socialists vote for the older Socialist Labor party, other Socialists cannot vote because they are women or foreigners, and still others do not vote either because they are opposed to politics or because they are indifferent.

In 1912 the enrolled membership of the party was about 120,000. Some Socialist candidates have been elected to municipal and state offices and two have been elected to Congress, first Mr. Victor Berger of Wisconsin, who was defeated after one term, then Mr. Meyer London

of New York who is serving at present. Owing to our system of election, under which the numerically minor parties fail of representation, the Socialist strength is not adequately expressed by the number of successful candidates. On the other hand, there are probably few instances in which a Socialist has been elected by the vote of Socialists alone, unassisted by the non-partisan or "independent" voter who has grown dissatisfied with the other parties. So far the Socialists have not had an effective minority in any American legislative body.

The chief service of Socialist officials, indeed of all political Socialists at the present time, is to propagate revolutionary principles. Mr. Berger's efforts to bring before the nation through a congressional investigation the facts of the Lawrence strike were sufficient to justify his election, and there can be few revolutionists of any shade of opinion, even his worst enemies inside and outside the party, who do not acknowledge his service. But Socialists are not the only politicians who can be trusted to demand and carry out such investigations. The progressive Senator from Washington, Mr. Poindexter, was as prompt and zealous as Mr.

Berger in forcing a nation-wide publication of the scandalous conditions in Mr. Lodge's commonwealth. The other measures proposed or supported by Mr. Berger lay wholly within the safe territory of bourgeois reform, such as old age pensions, reduction of the tariff, woman suffrage. This is partly due to the personal limitations of Mr. Berger, whose Socialism is rather diluted, and partly due to the practical limitations imposed upon Socialist thought by the capitalist form of government. In the state legislatures the activities of Socialists have been similarly confined to the promotion of reforms intended to benefit the workers, such as the abolition of child labor and the restriction of the enjoining power of the courts.

Some Socialists hold that when we elect to any legislative body a formidable minority, not to say a majority, we shall be in a position to attack the fundamental laws of capitalist property, and then the fur will begin to fly. Other Socialists hold that the revolutionist has no real place in the seats of government as it is at present constituted, and that a position of authority is intellectually if not morally corrupting to the Socialist and tends to wean him from the working class whose interests he is supposed

to serve. There are conspicuous examples in Europe of Socialists or quasi-Socialists who, once in power, turned against the workers, like the notorious Briand in France, or like the Labor members of the British parliament who were made impotent by the cleverer politicians of the older parties.

In America Socialists have not yet had opportunity to show how effective they can be in legislation or how far continued political success may deflect them from their avowed revolutionary aims. Many of the most courageous and most highly respected Socialists stand for election with the express understanding that they are not seeking office but are using the political campaign with all the publicity that surrounds it for the sole purpose of preaching Socialism. This is the position of Mr. Debs whose admirable personality, appealing to many types of Socialists, has been the greatest individual force in building the party up and holding its antagonistic elements in a formal unity. At the present time it seems advisable for the Socialists to sit in the political game if they can. It may be a rotten game, dangerous to the pure soul of Socialism, but it is a game that we all have a stake in whether we like it

or not. An organization that cannot be exposed to corruption without succumbing is not meant for this world. The Socialists should try to capture every office in sight from selectman to president. Even if they cannot compel positive revolutionary legislation, they can perform a negative function by preventing the machinery of government from operating for the benefit of capitalists. For example, a Socialist sheriff could refuse to be the servant of mill owners as against employees; a Socialist judge could decline to grant an injunction against a labor union and might enjoin the bosses from hiring armed thugs and detectives; and a Socialist mayor might give notice that in time of strike the police would be on the side of the strikers.

So far as I know there is no instance in which American Socialists have held control of a city long enough to do anything of great importance. And it seems that in most instances where they have won a temporary ascendancy they have not made aggressive and courageous use of such power as they might have wielded. I was once an insignificant member of the Socialist administration of Schenectady, New York. That administration is a minor episode in the history of

American Socialism, and so not worth discussing at length. Yet because it is one of the cases of Socialist practice which I happen to know at first hand and because it is probably a fair specimen of what local Socialists do and fail to do, a post-mortem examination may be illuminating just here, before we proceed to the broader Socialist program. I do not pretend that at the time my wisdom was greater than that of my companions in the Schenectady experiment. None of us knew so much during the life of the young thing as we think we have learned since its death.

In the first place, the Socialists of Schenectady did not win a complete victory; that is to say, some members of the administration were not even nominal Socialists. Five of the thirteen members of the Common Council were Democrats or Republicans. Since an affirmative vote of two thirds of the members of the council was necessary to authorize a bond issue, some of the larger plans of the Socialists for improving the city depended on getting the consent of one of the opposing aldermen. I do not recall any serious instance of obstruction placed by the minority in the path of Socialist schemes, and indeed most of the schemes were of such

moderate nature as not to invite the attacks of an alarmed conservatism. But the situation illustrates a difficulty in Socialist political action which is likely to become acute when Socialists gain a foothold in basic legislative bodies. In order to pass measures favorable to the working class they will have to resort to political trading, to swap votes with their opponents, and they will thus be put in the position of supporting measures which, however harmless, are not in accordance with Socialist principles. It will probably be long before the Socialists make a clean sweep of any important governmental unit. Meanwhile, they are subject to the demoralizing temptation of dickering with the enemy. They become tarred with the brush which they hope ultimately to burn. Only exceptional clarity of mind and courage can prevent political Socialism from becoming lukewarm in spirit and prematurely senile.

The Schenectady Socialists, who, I assume, were good representatives of American Socialism, were not notable for clarity of mind or courage. They were conscientious and patiently laborious; the best of them did not spare themselves in their efforts to do what they thought was right; they were animated by devotion to a

cause and the thrill of recent triumph. But they were uneducated. By this I do not mean what the bourgeois in his fat pride means when he speaks of the "ignorant workman." During those two years the City Hall of Schenectady probably sheltered more science and culture, at least more genuine interest in science and culture, than the dingy building had ever before contained. The city government had been in the hands of such deplorable duffers and grafters that men of mediocre intelligence and decency could with half an effort have given the city a better administration than it had had. The Schenectady Socialists were uneducated from the revolutionists' point of view. Some of them had come into the movement but a short time before they were elected. They had not had opportunity to receive the benefits of the admirable discipline which Socialist thought is capable of imparting. They were not drenched in the spirit of revolution. They wasted the sessions of the party caucus in discussing picayune business, a habit which they had perhaps got in meetings of the Socialist local; for Socialist locals are so anxious to preserve a sort of town-meeting democracy that they bestow on little affairs time which should be devoted to

education, to preparation for the handling of larger issues.

It is only fair to say that Schenectady is a disgracefully backward city, and the Socialists, before they could think of important forward-looking measures, had to clean up a mess that a moderately self-respecting community would have removed a generation earlier. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that a city is not a self-governing unit; it is subject to the fundamental laws of state and nation. A Socialist administration within a capitalist society cannot do anything essentially socialistic. It is like a bonfire on an iceberg: the brighter it burns the more quickly it releases the element that extinguishes it. When the Schenectady Socialists tried so simple and inoffensive a thing as the establishment of a municipal ice and coal service, a state court killed it with an injunction. This was valuable as showing that the courts are on the side of exploitation and opposed to the interests of the people. It was, I think, the only thing the Schenectady Socialists did for which capitalist society had to spank them.

For the rest their activities were annoyingly cautious, and they failed to do the few things that a Socialist city administration may do which

are more or less in accordance with larger Socialist aims. For example, they should have made the public schools vehicles of Socialist propaganda and so at public expense have indoctrinated the young with revolutionary gospel. Instead of that they appointed a non-partisan schoolboard, and did nothing with the mighty power of the common schools. Then they should have bonded the city to the limit and raised taxes for public improvements. Instead of that they adopted the short-sighted policy of economy and low taxes, partly because it was necessary to bid for the support of the property owner, and partly because some of the Socialists themselves were little property owners with the habits of mind of the middle class. It is natural for workmen and clerks to think in nickels instead of millions. The belittling experience of comparative poverty or the fear of poverty restricts the imagination and cramps the very vision of a better society which is supposed to be Socialist vision. The lesson to be drawn is that Socialists, who seem destined to gain control of many cities and to gain them before they have much voice in state and national politics, should use their locals and their literature as schools for the working out of the larger problems of administration, so that

when they come into office they shall be bolder than the capitalist reformer and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Socialism.

Curiously enough, the Socialists of Schenectady were most effective, most valuable to the working-class movement, not in their own city, but in the neighboring town of Little Falls. Here a strike broke out among the textile workers. It was a spontaneous strike led by unorganized girls. The Industrial Workers of the World organized it, and the Socialists of Schenectady helped to win it by contributions of money and supplies and by personal service. The work of Socialists in a contest between laborers and owners is worth while, and it can be immensely more worth while than it has been if the Socialists will understand that ten dollars for a strike fund is better than ten votes for an alderman. In their own city the Socialist administration of Schenectady missed the chance of a decade. The employees of the General Electric Company struck for the reinstatement of two fellows. It was a great strike in point of numbers and it might have been a great strike in point of fact; for the Schenectady Socialists might have said to the strikers: "Go to it; the entire machinery of the city is behind you; if anybody's head is

broken by a policeman's club, this time for once in history it will not be a striker's head; now that you are on strike demand something really worth getting, especially an increase of wages." Instead of that the strike was settled amicably in the mayor's office; the two workers were reinstated, and the strikers had missed a good opportunity. The manager of the General Electric Company may well have retired to his private office and winked at himself in the glass.

The chief use of Socialist organizations is to distribute revolutionary literature and to support the workers in industrial battles. Some Socialists point with querulous pride to the fact that they have contributed money to strikes led by Industrial Workers of the World, and yet the Industrial Workers rather ungratefully attack them. It is even so, brothers. In an open fight the Socialists do drop their pennies with a generous hand into the war chest of the workers, whether the workers be industrial unionists or members of the American Federation of Labor. If the Socialists did not do that, they would have little excuse for existence. Many people, not hired workers and therefore disqualified for membership in labor unions of any kind, are, in any immediate contest, on the side of the workers as

against the capitalists. Such people can be organized by the Socialist party, and their resources, financial and intellectual, can be collected and directed to the uses of the workers. If in addition to that, as a supplementary interest to gain members and secure adhesion, the Socialists wish to conduct political campaigns, that is a fair and honorable ambition. Up to the present time the political campaigns of the Socialists have had few results visibly advantageous to the working class. They have not won and held even a small city long enough to show what they can do. In a three-party contest they sometimes get in for a term. Then at the next election the Republicans and the Democrats unite against them and defeat them. This serves to prove the Socialist contention that the old capitalist parties, though of two bodies, have but a single heart, and that from the point of view of the working class the difference between them is negligible. To prove such things, to challenge the old parties and reveal their faults, is a useful service for any minority party to perform. But it is open to question whether the Socialist party as at present organized is advancing the cause of Revolutionary Socialism.

CHAPTER VI

PROGRAM OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

LET us now examine the program of the Socialist party, the ideas which it pretends to stand for. What Socialists have done depends on their power, on the extent to which society has permitted them to put thought into action. What they would like to do lies wholly in the region of unrealized ideals. What is the Socialist party avowedly driving at? I will quote its national platform of 1912 paragraph by paragraph with comments:

1. The Socialist party of the United States declares that the capitalist system has outgrown its historic function, and has become utterly incapable of meeting the problems now confronting society. We denounce this outgrown system as incompetent and corrupt and the source of unspeakable misery and suffering to the whole working class.

If the reader remembers the imperfect remarks in the second chapter of this book, he

will understand what is meant by "historic function." Much Socialist thought is an analysis of history; it discovers that one economic form of society follows another, and predicts that the Socialist form is the next one due to arrive. Socialists are sometimes a little confusing in their moods and tenses. Obviously the capitalist system has not outgrown its historical function so long as in point of historic fact it continues to function. And it is, beyond peradventure of a reasonable doubt, going full blast. The intention, put more colloquially, is something like this: "It is about time we had a better system than capitalism; the Socialist system is better and we'll back it to push capitalism off the earth, the sooner the better." It is not true that the capitalist system causes misery and suffering to the "whole working class." The more prosperous of the skilled workmen are quite comfortable; that is why they are conservative, are vigorously assailed in the Socialist press as aristocrats of labor, are indifferent to the larger part of the workers, and inclined to play the capitalist's game.

2. Under this system the industrial equipment of the nation has passed into the absolute control of a plutocracy which exacts an annual tribute of

millions of dollars from the producers. Unafraid of any organized resistance, it stretches out its greedy hands over the still undeveloped resources of the nation—the land, the mines, the forests, and the water powers of every state in the Union.

As has been pointed out, the Socialist is not the only enemy of the controlling plutocracy. Another enemy, quite as indignant and at present more effectively organized, is the little business man, the ordinary decent citizen, expressing himself politically through progressivism and "new democracy." The Socialist believes that the best efforts of the democratic reformer, with his program of conservation and nationalization of undeveloped resources and his game of "trust busting," can result only in a partial limitation of the power of great capital. So far middle-class insurgency has not succeeded in staying those "greedy hands"; it has only slapped them on the wrist. Bourgeois insurgency rebels against obvious economic evils and does not get at the fundamental problem. The Socialist hopes to undermine the whole structure, not only the towering plutocracy, but the system on which the plutocracy rests. Though at present the plutocracy can afford to be "unafraid of any organized resistance," and

though nothing but a final revolution can end its existence, yet it is likely that the plutocracy will meet and partly surrender to a growing middle-class opposition before we are very far on the way to Socialism.

3. In spite of the multiplication of labor-saving machines and improved methods of industry that cheapen the cost of production, the share of the producers grows ever less, and the prices of all the necessities of life steadily increase. The boasted prosperity of this nation is for the owning class alone. To the rest it means only greater hardship and misery. The high cost of living is felt in every home. Millions of wage-workers have seen the purchasing power of their wages decrease until life has become a desperate battle for mere existence.

There is a whole volume of economics compressed into that paragraph, and it is as true as a compressed statement can be. Note that the condemnation of the capitalist system need not depend on a decrease of the worker's *absolute* share in the fruits of production. It would be enough to show that the *relative* share does not increase or does not increase fast enough, in order theoretically to knock out the capitalist system. The bourgeois who argues that the workman is better off than he used to

be forty years ago is not justifying the system. The worker is not better off *relatively* to the total amount of wealth that is produced. Open plumbing cost much money in our grandfather's time; to-day every Mike and Hans of us ought to have a bathroom. The decrease in the purchasing power of wages has not made the desperate battle for existence. The workers have always had a desperate battle for existence, more desperate at some periods than at others, and they will keep on having it until they turn on the masters and make a desperate battle of resistance.

4. Multitudes of unemployed walk the streets of our cities or trudge from state to state awaiting the will of the masters to move the wheels of industry.

It is not quite true that the masters can at will move the wheels of industry. They are themselves the slaves of the system which produced them and by which they most conspicuously benefit; they run industry just so long as they can make a profit. Their will would lead them to keep the wheels turning twenty-six hours a day; they are limited by the market, which they cannot control. That is the central weakness of the profit system, and it is one of

the reasons why as a plain matter of business we think the "control" of industry should be taken out of the hands of industrial masters and put into the hands of a collective industrial society. The terrible problem of unemployment during 1914–15 has roused even the master class and their political agents to form committees and consider measures of relief. They cannot do anything with the problem as a whole, because unemployment will exist as long as they do. The evil is inherent in the capitalist mode of production.

5. The farmers in every state are plundered by the increasing prices exacted for tools and machinery and by extortionate rents, freight rates, and storage charges.

That statement would be just as true if instead of "farmers" it read "merchants" or "manufacturers." It does not distinguish between hired farmer and owning farmer. The reason is that the Socialist party is very tender of the feelings of the small agricultural landowner in the West. Of all forms of productive capital farm land is the least highly organized; it is therefore subject to the control of more highly organized capital, manifested in mort-

gages, banks, railroads, harvest machinery corporations. In its official expression, and it seems in its political policy, the Socialist party is not quite distinct from agrarian Populism. The Socialist should regard farm land exactly as he should regard a tool, and ask only whether the owner uses it himself and gets the full product of it, in which case there is no exploitation; or whether he hires somebody else, in which case he is an exploiter; or whether he lets it to somebody else, in which case he is an exploiter. The hired man is an exploited employee just like the factory hand, and his employer, however poor, is an exploiter.

6. Capitalist concentration is mercilessly crushing the class of small business men and driving its members into the ranks of the propertyless wage-workers. The overwhelming majority of the people of America are being forced under a yoke of bondage by this soulless industrial despotism.

It is difficult to get figures to justify this statement. Besides, it is not very important. Solicitude for the small business man may be left to little Democrats and Progressives. If the small business is declining, the class that once owned the small business becomes the

department heads of the large business, technically wage-earners but with the training, interest, and feelings of the employing classes. It is doubtful if there is much change in the numerical ratios between the classes. Individuals pass from one class to another, but the relative size of each class remains fairly constant from year to year.

7. It is this capitalist system that is responsible for the increasing burden of armaments, the poverty, slums, child labor, most of the insanity, crime, and prostitution, and much of the disease that inflicts mankind.

Guilty on the first four counts. As to insanity, crime, prostitution, and disease, a woful economic system is not solely responsible for them, or for any definable part of them. But it aggravates them by maintaining unnecessarily evil conditions under which they flourish. You indict your enemy in a more telling fashion if you do not accuse him of all the sins wherewith the faces of God and man are blackened. Socialists should make it clear that they hope a Socialist society will not only undo the evils essential to capitalism but correct some other evils, too. In other words, we are striving

not simply for a less evil world, but for one immensely better in almost every aspect of human life. Socialists prove enough for the present if they show that economic prosperity is the basis of decent living and good health. This is true not of every individual but of society as a whole. Vice may cause poverty, but the prevailing current of cause and effect is from poverty to vice. Not every girl who works for five dollars a week becomes a prostitute, but the temptation to become a prostitute is lessened with an increase of wage. This view of the matter is not peculiar to Socialists; it is accepted generally by students of social conditions. The old idea that the way to be good was to get religion and prepare for heaven is disappearing from modern social ethics, though Mr. Billy Sunday and the employers who back him are trying to keep it alive.

8. Under this system the working class is exposed to poisonous conditions, to frightful and needless perils to life and limb, is walled around with court decisions, injunctions, and unjust laws, and is preyed upon incessantly for the benefit of the controlling oligarchy of wealth. Under it also the children of the working class are doomed to ignorance, drudging toil, and darkened lives.

People who doubt the truth of the charges here made need not take the word of Socialists, but can find evidence in investigations made by non-revolutionary students of social conditions; for example, the reports of the various commissions on child labor and such works as the Pittsburg Survey conducted by the Russell Sage Foundation. In drawing a portrait of the present world Socialists may be guilty of distortion and exaggeration, but they do not have to go out of their way to find damaging facts; they are perfectly willing to base their case on evidence presented by official and non-partisan documents. Some of this evidence is, for obvious reasons, not widely distributed to the general public, but there is more than enough of it for the diligent investigator.

9. In the face of these evils, so manifest that all thoughtful observers are appalled at them, the legislative representatives of the Republican, Democratic, and all reform parties remain the faithful servants of the oppressors. Measures designed to secure to the wage-earners of this nation as humane and just treatment as is already enjoyed by the wage-earners of all other civilized nations have been smothered in committee without debate, and laws ostensibly designed to bring relief to the farmers and general consumers are juggled and transformed into

instruments for the exaction of further tribute. The growing unrest under oppression has driven these two old parties to the enactment of a variety of regulative measures, none of which has limited in any appreciable degree the power of the plutocracy, and some of which have been perverted into means for increasing that power. Anti-trust laws, railroad restrictions and regulations, with the prosecutions, indictments, and investigations based upon such legislation, have proved to be utterly futile and ridiculous. Nor has this plutocracy been seriously restrained or even threatened by any Republican or Democratic executive. It has continued to grow in power and insolence alike under the administrations of Cleveland, McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft.

And it may be added that so far the administration of the reform Democrats under Mr. Wilson has done little. Capital has not been shaken in its essential security, but it has grown less insolent in manner and has become timid and whining. Its chief representatives have been put on the witness stand by the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations and forced to confess that they know amazingly little about the great industries of which they were once supposed to be Napoleonic captains. The statements in the foregoing paragraph underrate the ability of capitalists and their political repre-

sentatives to learn their work better and to shape ameliorative measures in sheer self-defence. And the paragraph contains a self-contradiction on this point, for it alleges that in all other civilized countries wage-earners are accorded more humane and just treatment than in America. Now, in none of those countries has Socialism prevailed; so that whatever has been done has been the work of the capitalist class. Is there any reason why our masters should not catch up with the masters in Europe and perhaps go them one better? The more virtuous and humane capitalism becomes, the harder it will be to defeat.

10. In addition to this legislative juggling and this executive connivance, the courts of America have sanctioned and strengthened the hold of the plutocracy as the Dred Scott and other decisions strengthened the slave power before the Civil War.

In the Supreme Court of the United States is vested a power unknown in any other constitutional government—the power to annul the enactments of the representatives of the people on the ground that they are unconstitutional. Anything is "unconstitutional" which the gentlemen of the court happen not to believe

in, and the great number of five-to-four and six-to-three decisions is proof that decision depends not on a scientific application of law but on the private cerebrations of the individuals who chance to compose the court. The members of the court are prosperous lawyers bred in a tradition which antedates modern industrial facts and trained to worship the sacred cow of property. The court is therefore of all branches of government the strongest sustainer of established privilege; it is an obstacle not merely to real radicalism but to moderate progress. Its history, as written by Mr. Gustavus Meyers, in three carefully documented volumes, will be a revelation to patriots who fancy that this country is governed by the people. An example of the remoteness of the court from modern economic thought is its recent decision in the case of the Kansas Labor Union Statute. Kansas had passed a law forbidding an employer to attempt by threat of discharge to prevent an employee from joining a labor union. The court held that this law was contrary to the constitutional right of liberty of contract, which applied to this case means that in hiring a worker an employer can make any conditions that suit him and that if the worker

does not like the conditions he is quite free to take the job or leave it. Three justices dissented from this view, and the opinion of Mr. Justice Holmes shows that a little ray of real sunlight can penetrate even the gloomy temple of the law.

11. We declare, therefore, that the longer sufferance of these conditions is impossible, and we purpose to end them all. We declare them to be the product of the present system in which industry is carried on for private greed instead of for the welfare of society. We declare, furthermore, that for these evils there will be and can be no remedy except through Socialism, under which industry will be carried on for the common good and every worker receive the full social value of the wealth he creates.

The purpose to end all these evil conditions is laudable, but the longer sufferance of them is not only not impossible, but necessary for some time to come; the best that can be hoped for in the immediate future is a relatively slight though considerable improvement. The worker has a long road of endurance still to travel before he is ripe for revolution. The proposition that every worker shall receive the "full social value" of the wealth he creates is a compressed Marxian tablet that needs to be dissolved before it can

be taken by the person not accustomed to Socialist economics. What is meant by full social value of wealth? Economic wealth is produced by labor, and the economic value of a commodity is measured by the amount of labor contained in it. Then, if it takes me ten hours to do a piece of work, is my product equal in value to your product which has taken ten hours of work? Not at all. The unit of value is not the labor time nor the labor efficiency of the individual, but the normal time required to accomplish a certain process. The value of the pair of shoes which it has taken me a week to make is determined by the average productivity of a labor hour in all the shoe factories of the world. Value is a social function. This is an important idea in Socialist economics, and the Socialist can scarcely utter the word value without thinking "social value." That is why the word appears in the foregoing paragraph. From such a manifesto it might as well have been omitted. Indeed much Socialist economic theory is not essential to practical Socialism; it does not help in the fight or even make a map of the campaign. If the entire formidable library of Socialist economics were destroyed, and bourgeois economics with it, the actual Socialist movement

would not be seriously retarded. A completer knowledge of economics than that of Marx himself would not inspire a workman to closer union with other workmen or more determined revolt against his masters. In discussing, printing, and distributing economic theories Socialists have spent much energy which might better have been devoted to practical tactics. It is indeed a valuable thing to encourage workmen to read and think about economics or any other theoretic subject. But for a workman to know and to feel *that* he is exploited it is not necessary that he should understand the doctrine of surplus value, which explains *how* he is exploited. For practical purposes "profits" is just as good a word as "surplus value." That the worker does not get the "full" value of the work he does is an evident fact that needs no argument. The worker may not have thought of his condition at all, but if he is to be made conscious of it, the only school of economics that he need attend is the shop where he works, and the only teacher that he needs is the hated "agitator," a more enlightened fellow worker who should show him quite simply the relation between his pay envelope and the boss's new palace on Fifth Avenue.

12. Society is divided into warring groups and classes, based upon material interests. Fundamentally this struggle is a conflict between the two main classes, one of which, the capitalist class, owns the means of production, and the other, the working class, must use these means of production on terms dictated by the owners.

This is clear enough. The working class can dictate, too, and the efficacy of its dictation is commensurate with the effectiveness of its organization.

13. The capitalist class, though few in numbers, absolutely controls the Government—legislative, executive, and judicial. This class owns the machinery for gathering and disseminating news through its organized press. It subsidizes seats of learning—the colleges and the schools—and even religious and moral agencies. It has also the added prestige which established customs give any order of society, right or wrong.

The numerically small capitalist class remains in control because it allies with itself, through interest and education, numerically large classes, including the more favored of the wage-earning class. The subsidizing of church, press, and school is not effected by deliberate bribery, but is largely automatic. In many

cases capitalist interests buy or establish newspapers, just as Socialists conduct newspapers and shape the news and editorials to their own purposes. But most of the influence brought to bear by capitalism on the vehicles of publicity is unconscious and operates whether or not any capitalist or group of capitalists gives a thought to it. The editor is not bought; it is not necessary to buy him. The reason that he holds the position of editor is that he is quite honestly the sort of man likely to have "satisfactory" opinions. If two men are sitting at a subordinate desk, one a revolutionist, the other a conservative, and a vacancy occurs higher up, which of the two will be promoted? The subservience of the newspaper to the local advertiser is a minor matter, a cynical joke in most newspaper offices, where the managing editor is often affectionately referred to as "the madam." That the capitalist papers are capitalist in thought is not due to any sinister organization of the press; the reason lies in the fact that most of the members of the community for which the ordinary newspaper is manufactured are capitalistic in thought. The newspaper is a low order of prostitute; the rich and the powerful can afford to ignore its cheap charms or can avail themselves of its poor services for

nothing; its real customers are the millions who support it, and for whose entertainment it will do anything for a penny. The editor, good soul, makes a speech at an uplift banquet on the ethics of journalism, writes a moral editorial on the degradation of the city government, and then calls up the business office to find out why a story concerning a local manufacturer of clothing, whose tailors are on strike, must be stopped.

Schools and colleges are sometimes but not often directly tampered with by the powers that be. Institutions of learning are naturally museums of conservatism, as Francis Bacon discovered three centuries ago. Here again the sort of man who would find himself at home in the academic life and have no more vigorous ambition than to be professor of economics or literature or history is the sort of man who would be temperamentally incapable of thinking a revolutionary thought or of entertaining any idea which was not already old enough to have become innocuous. A professor who has once established himself in one of our large universities probably would not be disturbed by the authorities if he had the unlikely misfortune to receive or conceive a revolutionary idea. By revolutionary idea I mean an idea which affects the

social structure; in laboratory sciences, of course, a man is perfectly free. There is one academic American Socialist whom we call the million-dollar professor. He made speeches which it was dangerous for employees of a neighboring factory to hear. He was invited to resign. After his resignation the owner of the factory gave the university a million dollars. This is merely a *post hoc*, not a *propter hoc:* you cannot prove anything by it. Prof. Scott Nearing recently lost his place in the University of Pennsylvania no doubt on account of the revolutionary nature of his economics. The protest against his dismissal came not only from revolutionists, but from university professors all over the country who spoke in the name of academic liberty. Professor Nearing's case is unusual, as indeed his independence of thought is unusual among teachers. Capitalists need not lie awake nights plotting how to control the professorial mind; it does not need controlling and it is not worth controlling. If it ever broke loose and began to sow the seeds of social discontent in the youthful breast, it would be planting in sterile soil. For most students come from the middle and upper classes; the children of the working people, ninety-nine out

of a hundred, do not even go through the high school. Nothing could be more solidly conservative than American undergraduate youth. Many Russian students are rebels. But American universities can be trusted not to bring forth a revolutionary brat—their twilight sleep is perpetual.

Religious and moral agencies are more important, for they have an immediate hold on the poor, on the working people. Religion is an enormous force compounded of the deepest emotions and the most unshakable traditions of ordinary humanity. Once convince a sincere man that Socialism or republicanism or any other *ism* is against his religion, and you have shut his mind to that *ism* and all its teachings. Knowing this, the masters of the world have always pressed into their service existing forms of organized religion. Nearly all if not quite all religious wars have been contests for possession between secular powers which made use of religious impulses and roused the multitudes to take up the sword under the banner of one or another kind of Christ. The devotion of British Protestant lords to lands which had once belonged to the Church of Rome was slightly stronger than their intellectual interest in the

Thirty-Nine articles. In struggles between a radical class and a conservative class established religion is found invariably on the side of the conservative, because the established class owns the livings and manages the church treasury. Not merely Socialism but every revolutionary political and economic idea has had to fight the church, or some branch of it. The Protestant churches of America split on the slavery question and pounded each other with texts from the Bible. In war between nations God on one side fights with God on the other, and this so absorbs his attention that he does not for the moment attend to the Pope's prayer for peace. When rascally revolutionists attack government God's attention is not so divided. He is always on the side of government, and naturally the revolutionist grows suspicious of God, or still trusting him, mistrusts the priests who hold the lieutenant-governorship of these earthly provinces. A hundred years ago republicanism had to fight the church, because the church itself upheld the divine right of kings; and all that queer mummery of the Reign of Terror in which God was abolished and Reason solemnly elected to succeed him until Robespierre restored the Supreme Being and became his high priest—all

that theatrical nonsense was political, and only secondarily a matter of religious or philosophical conviction. In Italy the Garibaldian hatred of priests was the hostility of liberalism to political reaction. To-day the Roman Church is openly opposed to Socialism. In 1891 Leo XIII issued an encyclical letter on labor in which he condemned Socialism as he understood it. Leading officials of the church in this country have delivered sermons or lectures against it. Catholic societies such as the Knights of Columbus have drawn up anti-Socialist resolutions and have been active in anti-Socialist propaganda.

Therefore the Socialist is against organized religion, especially the most powerful organization of all, the Roman Catholic. It is an issue which had better be sharpened and not blurred with timid explanations. Whoever is not for us is against us. And whoever is avowedly against us we should treat openly as an enemy. The Socialist party should challenge the church officially as many individual Socialists attack it in unofficial newspapers. The official position of the party is that Socialism is a political and economic affair and that religion is a private matter. This is obviously true, and moreover there are communicants of the Catholic Church

and of other churches enrolled in the party. Subscription to the class struggle and renunciation of other political parties are the only qualifications for membership. Similarly the Industrial Workers of the World make no issue of religion; the only qualification for membership is membership in the self-defined class of wage-earners. The question is not raised whether a member worships one god, no god, or six gods. At the same time, since the church has definitely declared its attitude toward Socialism, both industrial and political Socialists ought openly to proclaim what so many of them feel and what the economic relationships of the church establish in fact, that between us and the church there is war, and that it will be war until the church purifies itself from its corrupt allegiance with the lords of the earth and retires from a purely mundane conflict with which as a spiritual body it has no business to meddle. If the priests put the cross in the path of the social revolution, sooner or later the cross will be battered.

The damning charge by which priestcraft tries to discredit Socialism is that it is atheistic. It is atheistic; it is as atheistic as a railroad train or a tariff bill. It has nothing whatever to do

with religion. But it has very much to do with the vested funds of the church and with the social position of popes, priests, kings, dukes, lawyers, journalists, and other parasites. Socialist literature is full of atheistic, anti-religious ideas. There are two reasons for this. One is the political and economic reason suggested by the foregoing. The other reason is that any new idea, especially a dangerous one (and it is not many years since it took courage to be a Socialist), attracts to itself independent spirits, who are temperamentally inclined to question all authority. The kind of mind which questions the holiness of the state and loses reverence for the king is the kind of mind that loses respect for academic and ecclesiastical authority. Many of the most brilliant Socialists had emancipated themselves from religious credulity before they met Socialist theory. Rebellion is to a great extent a matter of character, especially among those whose reason or feeling leads them to adopt an idea, as distinguished from those who have an idea forced upon them by economic circumstance. And many of the writers and speakers in the Socialist movement belong to the first class. They are born converts to minority ideas; they are incurable

cranks, restless skeptics, and inquisitors of mouldy traditions. Some of them cannot write on Socialism and flay capitalism without taking a shot at some other thing in the established order which they happen not to like. That is why Socialist literature is such a curious compound of economics and impertinent *isms*.

If essential Socialism is indifferent to religions, it is indifferent in both directions, neither against it nor for it. Nothing could be sillier, more inept than what is called Christian Socialism, and the Church of the Social Revolution, an artificial hybrid, made by persons who being both Socialists and Christians force a false union between their two devotions. There is no more sense in it than there would be in Mohammedan Socialism or Buddhist Socialism or Christian Science Socialism. There is no relation between Jesus and Socialism; he never heard of it. His attention was centred on preparing for another world; Socialism is strictly confined to making this world a better place to live in; it teaches workmen that they had better get what they can right here and now while this little job lasts and secure their immortality in a line of grandchildren who shall be better fed and better educated than the living sires.

With the toil-not Sermon on the Mount Socialism is rather less in sympathy than is practical capitalism. If Jesus was a proletarian he was to that extent one of us; but the "Call of the Carpenter" is not a guide in the conduct of the battle against the modern wage system. It may be pungently humorous to suggest that it is a long, long way from a poor carpenter to a magnificent cardinal, but the suggestion is quite irrelevant to Socialist theory and tactics.

As I write this there arrives the latest number of the *International Socialist Review*, in which Mr. Debs puts some posers to the Catholic organization, the Knights of Columbus. On a lecture tour Mr. Debs found, in every place where he was advertised to speak, handbills warning people against him as an infidel, a friend and defender of Gorky, the champion of free love and the enemy of religion, the home, morality, and the Christian life. The bill was signed "The Knights of Columbus." Mr. Debs says the effect was to pack his houses, but he always draws a crowd, even without free Catholic advertising. He asks: "How does it happen that every plutocrat, every labor exploiter, every enemy of union labor, every grinder of the faces of the poor, every devourer

of widows' houses, and every corrupt politician in the land is a friend of the Knights of Columbus and a foe of the Socialist movement? Did Mark Hanna, E. H. Harriman, John D. Rockefeller, John Pierpont Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, August Belmont, James J. Hill, and other Wall Street magnates and captains of industry, all Protestants, contribute financially in support of the Knights of Columbus, and to what extent? What interest has Wall Street in building up and patronizing the Knights of Columbus? What interests have Protestant capitalists in the religion of Catholic wage-slaves? Who pays the salaries and expenses of the gentlemen who travel over the country under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus to defame Socialists and warn the faithful against the Socialist movement?" Who has the answer to these interesting little questions and others which Mr. Debs puts to religious financiers and their dupes?

In a recent address to the Knights of Columbus in Boston, Bishop Anderson is reported by the Boston *Herald* to have said: "The church [his church, of course] is the greatest conservative force that this country has. Against the lawless she upholds the laws of God; against

the Anarchist she defends the right of government; against the Syndicalist she preaches law and order; against the tyranny of capital and the tyranny of labor she preaches Christian justice and Christian charity and Christian peace. Like her divine Founder, her voice is raised for the welfare of the individual and for the salvation of all, but never, never in calumny, nor discord, nor strife, nor hatred. Witness on the contrary what many of these preachers who attack the church are doing. In their blindness they are playing into the hands of those who would overthrow and destroy this whole government, for, instead of standing for law and order and justice, they have preached Socialism from their pulpits, they have allowed the leaders of strikes and revolutionists to speak in their churches, thus encouraging and making heroes out of these demagogues and enemies of society."

There we are, all listed, Anarchists, Syndicalists, Socialists, leaders of strikes, and liberal ministers who let us speak in their churches. The auxiliary bishop of the popish diocese of Boston says that his church is against them all. That is as much as we need to know. We could not, if we tried, phrase a more clear and severe

indictment of the church than that which the bishop himself has drawn. What do Roman Catholic leaders of strikes make of the declared hostility of their church?

15. The working class, which includes all those who are forced to work for a living, whether by hand or by brain, in shop, mine, or on the soil, vastly outnumbers the capitalist class. Lacking effective organization and class solidarity, this class is unable to enforce its will. Given class solidarity and effective organization, the workers will have the power to make all laws and control all industries in their own interest.

This paragraph is on all fours with the teachings of the Industrial Workers of the World; it contains no word about political party organization, but simply says "effective organization and class solidarity."

15. All political parties are the expression of economic interests. All other parties than the Socialist party represent one or another group of the ruling capitalist class. Their political conflicts reflect merely superficial rivalries between competing capitalist groups. However they result, these conflicts have no issue of real value to the workers. Whether the Democrats or the Republicans win

politically, it is the capitalist class that is victorious economically.

Why "superficial" rivalries? The rivalries may be profound and represent the economic struggles of other classes than the working class.

16. The Socialist party is the political expression of the economic interests of the workers. Its defeats have been their defeats, and its victories their victories. It is a party founded on the science and laws of social development. It proposes that, since all social necessities to-day are socially produced, the means of their production shall be socially owned and democratically controlled.

It is difficult to make some people understand that Socialism means social ownership, and not division or redivision of property; and that the only property which Socialism proposes to touch is producing property, not Mike's diamond-studded gold watch or Tony's seaside villa.

17. In the face of the economic and political aggressions of the capitalist class the only reliance left the workers is that of their economic organizations and their political power. By the intelligent and class-conscious use of these they may resist successfully the capitalist class, break the fetters of wage

slavery, and fit themselves for the future society which is to displace the capitalist system. The Socialist party appreciates the full significance of class organization and urges the wage-earners, the working farmers, and all other useful workers everywhere to organize for economic and political action, and we pledge ourselves to support the toilers of the fields as well as those in the shops, factories, and mines of the nation in their struggle for economic justice.

The Socialist party avowedly stands for all kinds of trade unions, craft unions, and industrial unions; but its papers and best-known spokesmen quarrel with the methods of both types of union. Of this more later.

18. In the defeat or victory of the working-class party in this new struggle for freedom lies the defeat or triumph of the common people of all economic groups, as well as the failure or the triumph of popular government. Thus the Socialist party is the party of present-day revolution, which marks the transition from economic individualism to Socialism, from wage slavery to free coöperation, from capitalist oligarchy to industrial democracy.

It is by no means certain that the defeat or triumph of the working class political party is identical with the defeat or triumph of the

common people of all economic groups. The political road is not the only highway over which the common people can march to victory or on which they can be halted in defeat. The Socialist party claims too much and should make it clear that political action is only one way to the revolution.

CHAPTER VII

PROGRAM OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY—CONTINUED

THE platform then pledges the party and its elected officers to a program of "measures calculated to strengthen the working class in its fight for the realization of its ultimate aim, the Coöperative Commonwealth, and to increase the power of resistance against capitalist oppression." That is, the program does not pretend to be a preliminary constitution for the Socialist commonwealth, or to limit itself to purely socialistic ideas; it sets forth what ought to be done now to strengthen the working class in its efforts to establish Socialism. If this is understood, then it does not matter so much which of the demands are socialistic and which are merely reformistic.

The first demand is for Collective Ownership. 1. "The collective ownership and democratic management of railroads, wire and wireless telegraphs and telephones, express services,

steamboat lines, and all other social means of transportation and communication and of all large-scale industries." 2. "The immediate acquirement by the municipalities, the states, or the federal Government of all grain elevators, stockyards, storage warehouses, and other distributing agencies, in order to reduce the present extortionate cost of living." 3. "The extension of the public domain to include mines, quarries, oil wells, forests, and water power." 4. "The further conservation and development of natural resources for the use and benefit of all the people: (a) by scientific forestation and timber protection; (b) by the reclamation of arid and swamp tracts; (c) by the storage of flood waters and the utilization of water power; (d) by the stoppage of the present extravagant waste of the soil and of the products of mines and oil wells; (e) by the development of highway and waterway systems." 5. "The collective ownership of the land wherever practicable, and in cases where such ownership is impracticable, the appropriation by taxation of the annual rental value of all land held for speculation." 6. "The collective ownership and democratic management of the banking and currency system."

No Socialist who has passed the primer stage of education believes that government ownership under any existing type of government is socialistic. Government ownership may be a terrific tyranny over the employees, and it may be wretchedly inefficient. But it seems wise to the party at the present time, or as soon as may be, first to extend the function of government and then capture the government. This is one way of centralizing ownership, the more easily to seize it. Moreover, the period of government ownership is one to which other forces than the Socialist force are urging us and through which we must pass to emerge to something better. Some Socialists and all non-Socialist advocates of government ownership believe in the direct purchase of public utilities by bond issues, like the purchase of the German railroads by the government. Other Socialists believe in partial confiscation, in the issue of bonds of a limited duration, so that stock and bond owners may have a few years to prepare themselves and their children for the extinction of their securities. Other Socialists believe in dispossession without compensation, in confiscation as complete and immediate as the destruction of black-slave property. It is likely that long before the

Socialists are strong enough to cast the deciding vote on these questions the Government will have extended vastly its ownership of existing industries and will have entered upon hitherto unattempted enterprises, of which the Panama Canal may serve as an example. This will mean a relatively smaller income, but greater security for the plutocracy; the substitution of solid government bonds for uncertain stocks. The identity between the Government and the industrial master will be more nearly complete, and perhaps the two-headed beast will be easier to aim at if more difficult to slay. It will be a more compact, highly organized phase of capitalism, the last phase. But it will be wide as the poles from Socialism. Ignorant men, business persons, and journalists speak of government ownership as "socialistic." A proof that it is not is the fact that the present administration is considering a bill to take over the whole Bell telephone system.

The Socialist party platform next demands the "immediate government relief of the unemployed by the extension of all useful public works. All persons employed on such works to be engaged directly by the Government under a workday of not more than eight hours and not

less than the prevailing union wages. The Government also to establish employment bureaus; to lend money to states and municipalities without interest for the purpose of carrying on public works, and to take such other measures within its power as will lessen the widespread misery of the workers caused by the misrule of the capitalist class." This is an emergency measure of doubtful value. Is it a good thing to habituate the workers to look to the Government for employment? When a shoe factory shuts down will the unemployed stitchers and lasters lay bricks on a new post office building or shovel dirt on a new canal?

There follow in the platform what are called Industrial Demands: "the conservation of human resources, particularly of the lives and well-being of the workers and their families, (1) by shortening the workday in keeping with the increased productiveness of machinery, (2) by securing to every worker a rest period of not less than a day and a half in each week, (3) by securing a more effective inspection of workshops, factories, and mines, (4) by forbidding the employment of children under 16 years of age, (5) by the coöperative organization of industries in federal penitentiaries and workshops for the

benefit of convicts and their dependents, (6) by forbidding the interstate transportation of the products of child labor, of convict labor, and of all uninspected factories and mines, (7) by abolishing the profit system in government work and substituting either the direct hire of labor or the awarding of contracts to coöperative groups of workers, (8) by establishing minimum wage scales, (9) by abolishing official charity and substituting a non-contributory system of old age pensions, a general system of insurance by the state of all its members against unemployment and invalidism, and a system of compulsory insurance by employers of their workers, without cost to the latter, against industrial disease, accidents, and death."

Most of these proposals are in accordance with the advanced labor legislation programs of non-Socialist organizations, the American Federation of Labor, the Progressive Party, and all reformistic groups whose aim is to conserve and improve the wage system, not to destroy it. There is nothing essential in these demands which enlightened capitalism will not reluctantly yield or even advocate from motives of self-interest. Business is learning that it pays to take care of the working class as it pays to take care of

machinery and horses. Improved labor conditions may have two conflicting effects on the revolutionary impulse of the workers. Easier conditions and better living may dull the edge of rebellion, and that is one reason why progressive capitalism has begun to show such tender concern for the welfare of the workers. On the other hand, the more vigorous and healthy the working class becomes, the more leisure and strength it has for intelligent organization. Good fighters are not to be looked for among harassed, depressed, underfed people. There is a point, hard to define, at which oppression conquers the spirit and no longer arouses effective opposition. On the whole it seems that the risk of drawing the teeth of discontent is inconsiderable as compared with the desirability of improving the conditions of the workers in every possible way, through every possible agency.

The program passes to what are called Political Demands: 1. "The absolute freedom of press, speech, and assemblage." We had fondly believed that our wonderful constitution guaranteed us this liberty, but the number of free speech fights in which revolutionists have engaged seems to indicate that a constitutional guarantee is worthless in itself. The bosses,

who revere the constitution when it suits their interest, ignore it when it happens to be on the side of the workers. In time of strike the police have invaded the strikers' halls, and they have arrested men for speaking on street corners and commons. The legal flunkies who serve the bosses do not charge the offenders with the crime of speaking; they find some other charge such as "blocking traffic" or "inciting to riot"; but what they are trying to do is to stop the speech of a strike leader or agitator and put him in jail. In some cities where the authorities have tried to smother agitation Socialists and Industrial Workers have flocked to the place for the express purpose of filling the jails and tiring the authorities out. They often succeed. These contests are valuable in that they teach the workers that the administration of the law is partial and that we have only so much freedom as we are able to take and willing to fight for.

The press is hampered in various ways. Sometimes editors are arrested and jailed by local authorities. Sometimes the post office finds a pretext for interfering with a publication like the *Appeal to Reason* which has a nation-wide circulation. The usual result is that the post

office backs down and the readers of the *Appeal* are stirred to work for more subscriptions. In the broader contest for freedom of publication against the obscene ignorance of Comstockery and watch-and-wardism, Socialists have been active, often taking up cudgels for those who in a benighted land suffer for propagating ideas which are freely discussed in intelligent countries—ideas in many cases quite remote from Socialism. The Socialist believes in throwing all the gates of knowledge wide open; his own printed propaganda is no longer in normal times seriously hindered by the powers, but he takes special pleasure in baiting the bourgeois and often goes out of his way to promote the circulation of ideas which legal stupidity and moral hypocrisy try to suppress.

2. "The adoption of a gradual income tax, the increase of the rates of the present corporation tax and the extension of inheritance taxes, graduated in proportion to the value of the estate and to nearness of kin—the proceeds of these taxes to be employed in the socialization of industry." All direct taxation is confiscation. Society now makes the individual hand over some of his property. Theoretically there is no reason why the rich should not be taxed out

of existence, and a gradual socialization of industry brought about.

3. "The abolition of the monopoly ownership of patents and the substitution of collective ownership, with direct rewards to inventors by premiums or royalties." No Socialist conceives a society in which the inventor, the Edison, shall not be amply rewarded. To-day the richest fruits of invention go to the capitalist, not to the inventor, and it is notorious that many of the great inventors have been poor. This plank is of questionable strength; it touches on one limited and special kind of property and not the fundamentals of the property system.

4. "Unrestricted and equal suffrage for men and women." All Socialists in all countries believe in woman suffrage, but many Socialists consider it of secondary importance. It is a problem which can be left to the ladies of the bourgeoisie; Socialist women have a very much greater work to do. When the anti-suffrage people advertise that woman suffrage and Socialism are the same thing, they are guilty of an inaccuracy which is unfair, not to the Socialists, all of whom are willing to subscribe to votes for women, but to many suffragists who would not touch Socialism with a pair of rubber

gloves. Socialists are generally sympathetic with most that is comprehended in the term "feminism." They believe with Ibsen that the two most important facts of our time are the revolt of women and the revolt of labor. But the Socialist puts emphasis on the economic liberty of women and maintains that if in a free industrial society she has opportunity to work and receive the full fruits of her work she will be released from many other forms of subjugation. Socialists are interested in the emancipation of workingwomen because that is inseparable from the emancipation of workingmen. As Socialists assess in varying measure the value of votes for men, so they hold varying opinions about the relative value of votes for women. Whatever power they ascribe to the ballot, they are more concerned to see it in the hands of workingwomen who have to face the problem of wages and working conditions than in the hands of well-to-do ladies whose prosperity makes them immune from the grosser injustices of the law. Socialists have made many contributions to feminist literature, but the leaders of purely feminist thought and the chief workers for equal suffrage are not Socialists but middle-class women like Ellen Key

and Mrs. Pankhurst, admirable women who are in sympathy with the working class but who approach the subject from the point of view of sex and not from the point of view of the class struggle, the true Socialist point of view.

5. "The adoption of the initiative, referendum, and recall and of proportional representation, nationally as well as locally." Any extension of political democracy is desirable from the Socialist point of view, and liberals and revolutionists join hands against standpatters in the effort to make legislative agents more immediately sensitive to the will of the people. The opposition of conservative politicians to the initiative, referendum, and recall attests the value of these measures. Proportional representation is advantageous to any minority party: the idea is that if the Prohibitionists cast 1,000,000 votes, the Socialists 2,000,000, the Progressives 2,000,000, the Democrats 5,000,000, and the Republicans 6,000,000, the number of congressmen should be in corresponding ratio, namely, 1:2:2:5:6.

6. "The abolition of the Senate and the veto power of the President." This proposal aims to simplify the machinery of government. As a practical matter the proposed simplification

would not in itself increase the influence of Socialists upon legislation.

7. "The election of the President and the Vice-President by direct vote of the people." A change dictated by common sense and having as its proponents many non-Socialists. Not very important.

8. "The abolition of the power usurped by the Supreme Court of the United States to pass upon the constitutionality of the legislation enacted by Congress. National laws to be repealed only by act of Congress or by the voters in a majority of the states." The judges did not usurp the power; it was tacitly yielded to them by the legislative branches of government.

9. "The granting of the right of suffrage in the District of Columbia with representation in Congress and a democratic form of municipal government for purely local affairs." This may be of interest to the Socialists of Washington, but it is a minor local affair and seems out of place in a national program.

10. "The extension of democratic government to all United States territory." This seems to be primarily directed at the Philippines and to be consonant with other Socialist expressions of anti-imperialism.

11. "The enactment of further measures for the conservation of health. The creation of an independent Bureau of Health with such restrictions as will secure full liberty for all schools of practice." Everybody will favor the first proposition. The second proposition is an illustration of the tendency of Socialists to tamper with particularities of government which are not fundamental in the general program. Some "schools of practice" should not have full liberty, for they are fraudulent. But their liberty should be curtailed by publicity and education rather than by restrictive legislation. Under a rational equitable economic system the temptation to fraud of any sort would be much less than at the present time. There is a prevalent notion that if Socialists get in the saddle they will proceed to regulate the individual within an inch of his life and out-Prussianize the Prussians. In order to dispel this notion and make it clear that rigid goose-step Socialism is not what we are aiming at, Socialists should refrain, at least for the present, from meddling with minor details of legislation and administration. When we get to the river we shall have to build a bridge, but it is not time yet for the engineers to make more than the preliminary drawings.

12. "The separation of the present Bureau of Labor from the Department of Commerce and Labor and its elevation to the rank of a department." This has already been done by the capitalist politicians; the gain to labor is not yet evident.

13. "Abolition of the federal district courts and the United States Circuit Courts of Appeals, state courts to have jurisdiction in all cases arising between citizens of the several states and foreign corporations. The election of all judges for short terms." The first two sentences deal with technical politico-legal problems, the solution of which seems to have slight bearing either upon democratic politics or upon the well-being of the workers. The election of judges for short terms would, it is believed, bring the courts into more responsive intimacy with the wishes of the common people.

14. "The immediate curbing of the power of the courts to issue injunctions." A favorite device of the employers in time of strike is to ask a court to enjoin the labor leaders in such a way as to cripple their activity. As against workmen an American court will do almost anything that the employers want done. This is not because the judges are corrupt—state and federal judges

are no doubt an inflexibly upright class of men—but because the kind of man who becomes judge thinks like a capitalist in terms of property and is out of touch with the workers. An example of the sweeping power of the injunction is the imprisonment of Mr. Debs and his associates during the Pullman strike. His account of it is not without humor: "In our cases at Chicago an injunction was issued at a time when the American Railway Union had its great struggle for human rights, and they were triumphant in restraining myself and my colleagues from doing what we never intended to do and never did do; and then we were put in jail for not doing it. When that injunction was served on me, to show that I acted in good faith, I went to two of the best constitutional lawyers in Chicago and said, 'What rights, if any, have I under this injunction? I am a law-abiding citizen; I want to do what is right. I want you to examine this injunction and then advise me what to do.' They examined the injunction. They said, 'Proceed just as you have been doing. You are not committing any violence; you are not advising violence, but you are trying to do everything in your power to restrain men from the commission of crime or violating the law.' I

followed their advice and got six months for it." The Supreme Court confirmed the sentence. Socialists are not the only ones who accuse the courts of giving the workers a raw deal; Judge Lyman Trumbull said: "The doctrine announced by the Supreme Court in the Debs case places every citizen at the mercy of any prejudiced or malicious federal judge who may think proper to imprison him."

15. "The free administration of justice." At the present time the poor man is at a disadvantage as against the rich man who can employ expensive lawyers. When a workman on strike gets into the clutches of a court it is all up with him unless the working people and their sympathizers contribute the money necessary for an elaborate legal conflict. And working people have not much money to spare. As a result of the strike of the silk workers in Paterson, New Jersey, Patrick Quinlan is at this writing in jail for a crime that he did not commit. A dissenting judge of the Court of Appeals which has confirmed the sentence has defined Quinlan's real crime, "entertaining an ostracized economic faith which labored for the abolition of the present wage system." It costs too much money to fight the numerous cases like Quin-

lan's. The demand for the free administration of justice is a practical one.

16. "The calling of a convention for the revision of the Constitution of the United States." It is difficult to see what would be gained by that; at the present time the Constitution would be "revised by its friends."

The program concludes: "Such measures of relief as we may be able to force from capitalism are but a preparation of the workers to seize the whole powers of government in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole system of socialized industry and thus come to their rightful inheritance." The socialization of industry is not a matter of rightfulness or of inheritance; it is purely a matter of power. So far political Socialism has not succeeded in forcing from capitalism a single measure of relief. As a matter of expediency capitalism has granted many measures of relief and is likely to grant many more until it puts into force all the non-revolutionary proposals embodied in the Socialist program. If capitalist legislation yields at all to the pressure of the working class, it feels that pressure in the practical economic contest and it has not up to the present time been even threatened by the Socialist at the ballot box. From

1912 to 1914 the Socialist party vote in the United States fell off from about 900,000 to about 600,000. This is partly due to the fact that 1912 was the year of a presidential election. It is also due to the fact that the party has lost some of its fighting spirit, has become orthodox, conservative, humdrum; its stupidly unsympathetic attitude toward revolutionary unionism has alienated from it many who once regarded it as a useful instrument. It has sunk so low as to do things for which the capitalist press has praised it (an indication if not a proof of decay), notably its removal from the National Executive Committee of Mr. Haywood and its adoption of the notorious clause against sabotage and violence, of which more hereafter. Whether it will rid itself of its reactionary elements or whether it will be superseded by a new and more militant organization remains to be seen. At the present time it is less of a force in the world of labor than the trade unions.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OLDER TRADE UNIONS

THE largest and oldest unions are those which compose the American Federation of Labor and the independent brotherhoods of railway employees. The Federation reports a membership of about 2,000,000; the brotherhoods number 70,000 engineers, 50,000 conductors, 90,000 firemen, 135,000 trainmen. The Federation is the growth of thirty years; it may be likened to a middle-aged man whom success has rendered self-confident and at the same time cautiously conservative. It includes 110 national and international unions, each of which represents one craft or group of allied crafts, for example the United Garment Workers of America, the International Brotherhood of Foundry Employees, United Textile Workers of America. Three of the unions are industrial in their composition, that is, their membership is determined not by the process in which the individual engages but by the general industry to

which he contributes; these are the coal miners (United Mine Workers), the metal miners (Western Federation of Miners), and the Brewery Workers. The several unions are self-governing, in a way somewhat analogous to the autonomy of the political states, and the Federation as a whole settles disputes between the component unions and shapes the general policy.

The federated unions embrace the oldest and the most highly skilled crafts. There are 30,000,000 wage-earners in the United States. We may assume that half of these are amenable to organization. It will be seen that not more than one seventh of the organizable workers of this country are directly affected by old-fashioned unionism. The Federation is the upper stratum of labor; it has won a definite position in society by years of effort and it has been too little inclined to extend hard-earned privileges to the vast majority of unskilled workers. This is the charge brought against it by Socialists and revolutionary unionists. But the influence of the organization reaches beyond its own membership, its activity helps to determine the condition of labor as a whole. The Federation is an expression and a cause of the rise of the working class during the past generation. It has com-

pelled the respect of other classes (and it makes little difference whether that respect is hostile or friendly), and it has been a school in which the workman has learned to manage his own affairs and so to discover himself as potentially capable of managing the affairs of the world.

The purpose of the Federation is not revolutionary but meliorative. Its watchword is "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work." That is, it postulates a partnership between capital and labor and it demands of capital only a fair share of the fruits of production in return for which it promises dutiful service and friendly dealing. Revolutionary unionism and Socialism aim at the destruction of capitalism; they insist that there is no determinable fair day's pay or fair day's work, that labor should take all it can get and should be content with nothing less than the whole. The federated unions have been unquestionably successful in realizing their declared purpose to make advantageous bargains with employers. Organized workers usually get better wages and enjoy better conditions of work than unorganized workers in the same or similar trades. The steel workers, whom the Steel Trust has prevented from organizing, receive lower wages than their neighbors, the organized mine

workers, who are about the same class of men. When the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers' Union became powerful it raised the average wage from $2.40 for ten hours to $4.50 for eight hours. But each gain of a particular trade is offset to a degree which cannot be calculated by the fact that a large share of the resultant increased cost of production reverts upon the working class as a whole. The employer pushes the expense on to the consumer, and he is not unwilling to have his shop unionized if his competitors' shops are unionized, too. The objection to trade unionism as it has so far developed is that it is a caste movement within the working class, that it frankly allies itself with capital in a contractual partnership which ignores other workers, is even inimical to them.

To make itself an acceptable partner of capital and to increase its authority over its members and its competitors, the craft union enters into time contracts with employers, and each union makes its own contracts without regard to the contracts of associated unions. The result is that one union may be on strike while a brother union in the same general industry is sticking to the job in fulfilment of its contract. Thus one union "scabs" on another

rather than break faith with an employer; the union man works side by side with a non-union man, at the same time perhaps contributing to the strike fund of his fellow-worker whose place the non-union man has taken.

Since the word "scab" appears here for the first time, let us explain it. A scab, a strike-breaker, is the worst offender against the working class. And scabbing, according to labor union ethics, is the worst crime known. You may with impunity call a workman a liar, a thief, and a drunkard. But if you call him a scab you administer an insult which, if deserved, will make him ashamed, and if undeserved entitles him to kill you. There is some ground for arresting and jailing a striker who yells "scab" at the black-leg, for it is the filthiest word in the vocabulary of labor; unlike another epithet it is not palliated even by a smile. Workers have their own code of ethics, based on the needs and experiences of their life and at least as staunchly adhered to as the code of the "gentleman." The horrified derision with which workers received Dr. Eliot's definition of a strike-breaker as a hero cannot be understood by those who dwell in his Olympian aloofness from the world of labor. It was as inconceivable as if a worker had seen

heroism in the act of the student who broke into the college printing office and stole the examination papers. Scabs are recruited from the poorest, most cowardly workers, workers driven by hunger to take any job under any conditions or bribed by the extra wages which employers offer in time of strike, or men untouched by the feeling and discipline of the working class. The reason that the scab is a darling of the capitalist and of professional beneficiaries of capitalism is too obvious to require explanation.

If, as is charged, craft unions scab on each other, the fault is partly in the method of organization, and it is partly infidelity to class ethics. An example of what may result from the contract system and the autonomous structure of craft unions is to be found in the strike of the Chicago pressmen two or three years ago. The printers and stereotypers struck in sympathy with the pressmen, but they were ordered back to work by their international unions because they had broken their contracts with their employers! To correct this disunionism Socialists and industrial unionists within the Federation have advocated the abolition of the narrower compartmental lines and reassemblage of existing local units on a broader departmental

scale. But a system of organization built up on a laborious past and conscious of a large measure of practical achievement is reluctant to change its form. Craft unionists hold, moreover, that without a change in organization there will come an increasing voluntary solidarity between the units of the Federation. Indeed, labor is being compelled to feel, if not to see, its interdependence, and there may be an increase rather than a decrease of the spirit which prompted the railroad brotherhoods, conservative and independent as they are, to refuse to carry the militia into the strike district of Colorado.

The Federation is doubtless stiffened in its conservatism by the attacks made on it by Socialists, Syndicalists, and Industrial Workers. If the vote of the delegates to the convention of the Federation in 1912 is a measure of the sentiment of the membership, about one third of the organized labor of America is in sympathy with the Socialist idea. And nearly one half of the enrolled membership of the Socialist party belongs to the American Federation of Labor. In the last year or two the influence of Socialists in the conventions of the Federation seems to have diminished, and the President, Mr. Gompers, once a member of the Socialist Labor Party, but

now the staunchest of conservatives, appears to be more firmly seated than ever upon the well-upholstered throne of craft union labor.

The position of the Federation toward political Socialism is equivocal. There was a time when the Federation could ward off Socialist attack by refraining from politics altogether, maintaining its integrity as a "pure and simple" labor organization. But more recently the officials of the Federation have gone openly into politics and use their influence with the members to favor the candidacy of any politician of whatever party who pledges himself to support measures beneficial to labor. Since a Socialist candidate usually has little chance of election, opportunism directs the Federation to choose the least objectionable candidate offered by the capitalist parties. One result of this has been that the Democratic and Republican parties have put up and elected many union men. A more important result is that candidates of all persuasions have kept an eye on the labor vote and have urged or permitted the passage in Congress and the state legislatures of laws framed in the interests of labor. None of these laws is revolutionary, but many of them are important, and taken as a whole they show

the power of labor unionism to check through existing legislative machinery the most obvious abuses of capitalism.

One enactment of the last Congress is worth noting, the amendment of the anti-trust law to exempt labor unions. The so-called Sherman Act was designed to prevent commercial conspiracy in restraint of trade; it was aimed at monopolistic agglomerations of capital and was not in its conception concerned with labor or combinations of labor. More than ten years ago the hatters of Danbury, Connecticut, boycotted a non-union shop. Under the Sherman Act they were charged with conspiracy to hinder interstate commerce. The customers of the shop were in other states than Connecticut. After years of contest judgment was found against the men and damages of $240,000 were awarded the manufacturers; the Supreme Court has recently upheld this decision. The case has wide bearings, for when it was established that boycott was a conspiracy under the Sherman Act, the way was open to make every activity of a labor union a conspiracy, if it damaged the business of a manufacturer engaged in interstate commerce. The very life of legalized union labor was at stake. It was a

clever piece of legal chicanery. The sixty-second Congress passed a measure exempting labor from prosecution; of course Mr. Taft vetoed it. The last Congress passed it again and Mr. Wilson signed it. The amendment reads: "The labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce, and nothing contained in the anti-trust laws shall be construed to forbid the existence and operation of labor, agricultural or horticultural organizations, instituted for the purposes of mutual help and not having capital stock or conducted for profit, or to forbid or restrain individual members of such organization from lawfully carrying out the legitimate objects thereof; nor shall such organization, or the members thereof, be held or construed to be illegal combinations or conspiracies in restraint of trade under the anti-trust laws."

The legal status of boycott is determined now by the ruling of state courts, and in most of the states it is held to be a conspiracy. Missouri, Montana, and California are the only exceptions. There is, however, a sort of negative boycott in continuous operation. One of the weapons of the labor union is the union label, which is an assurance to the consumer

that the goods are made under union conditions, and to workers and sympathizers that the shop is "fair." Many workers will not buy goods that have not the union label, thus maintaining a general partial boycott. If labor may not publish an "unfair" list or name specifically firms that "we don't patronize," it may publish a fair list by means of the label and in other ways. The workman holds that the boycott is a natural and proper weapon, and that to forbid it is to infringe on the right to freedom of speech. If it is a crime, so once on a time were many activities of workmen, including picketing of a struck shop, nay, even the strike itself.

The policy of the Federation is one of compromise and inch-by-inch progress. It is concerned with the working conditions of to-day and an immediate to-morrow. Since it does not intend to destroy capitalism, capitalists will probably cease to wage their ultra-reactionary fights against conservative labor, and will rather cherish the partnership and use the Federation as a buffer between themselves and insurgent labor. It is significant that Mr. Gompers receives a salary from the Civic Federation, a capitalist organization ostensibly devoted to the promotion of industrial peace. Mr. John

Mitchell used to belong to the same distinguished society, but the United Mine Workers compelled him to withdraw. The miners are the most revolutionary members of the Federation. They made it a rule that no member of the union could belong to the Civic Federation. When the American Federation of Labor passes a similar rule applying to all members of all trades, there will be less justification for the charge brought by revolutionary workmen that it has become a labor aristocracy and that many of its officials are "labor fakers."

CHAPTER IX

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

THE Industrial Workers of the World was organized in 1905 by revolutionary Socialists and believers in the principles of industrial unionism. The first years of the new union were spent in a confusion of factional fights and realignments and it was not until the strike of the steel workers at McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, in 1909, that the I. W. W. emerged as a force to be reckoned with by friend and by foe alike. Later strikes, notably that at Lawrence, have given it increased influence and notoriety. The membership has never been great, probably not over 100,000 at the highest, and many of the members belong to nomadic and uncertain trades and are out of touch with the organization for months at a time. It is the spirit of the movement rather than its numerical strength which commands admiration and hatred. And it is this spirit, rather than technical peculiari-

ties of organization, which differentiates it from the other unions.

The I. W. W. is an indigenous product, a home-grown child of American labor conditions; the founders were men of long and bitter experience in American labor conflicts. The reason that the membership includes so many foreigners, especially in Eastern manufacturing centres, is simply that foreigners preponderate among the unskilled mill workers where the organization has been conspicuously active. The assimilation of Industrial Unionism to European Syndicalism is the spontaneous confluence of similar motives and purposes. Syndicalism is revolutionary unionism of any sort, regardless of the form, craft classification, or method of federation of the union. The Industrial Unionist, in complete sympathy with the spirit of Syndicalism, lays emphasis on the form of the union, holding that the old craft unions are in their essential structure hostile to the solidarity of labor. He preaches the ideal of "one big union" and is undismayed by the fact that the signs of universally inclusive associations of workmen are at present only dimly perceptible. In practice it is not the form but the substance that counts. The Western Fed-

eration of Miners is the greatest industrial union in America and is satisfactory in form; the revolutionary unionist is dissatisfied with its conduct and regards its entrance into the American Federation of Labor as a sad case of backsliding.

The original manifesto of the I. W. W. proclaims the failure of old methods and the need of new: "The employer's line of battle and methods of warfare correspond to the solidarity of the mechanical and industrial concentration, while laborers still form their fighting organizations on lines of long-gone trade divisions. The battles of the past emphasize this lesson. The textile workers of Lowell, Philadelphia, and Fall River; the butchers of Chicago, weakened by the disintegrating effects of trade divisions; the machinists on the Santa Fé, unsupported by their fellow-workers subject to the same masters; the long-struggling miners of Colorado, hampered by lack of unity and solidarity upon the industrial battlefield, all bear witness to the helplessness and impotency of labor as at present organized. This worn-out and corrupt system offers no promise of improvement and adaptation. There is no silver lining to the clouds of darkness and despair settling down upon

the world of labor. This system offers only a perpetual struggle for slight relief from wage slavery. It is blind to the possibility of establishing an industrial democracy, wherein there shall be no wage slavery, but where the workers will own the tools which they operate and the product of which they alone should enjoy."

At the start the new organization attacked the established Federation, and the two have been fighting each other heartily ever since except for temporary truces in which during a crisis they have joined hands against some especially violent manifestation of capitalism. Both kinds of unions have the same immediate enemy. A strike is a strike, and the cause of it and the method of conducting it are determined by the conditions and needs of the hour, not by the ultimate philosophy of the union which is engaged in it. Mill workers organized in the American Federation and those organized in the Industrial Workers are both striving for the same thing here and now: shorter hours and higher pay. What chiefly distinguishes the I. W. W. from its older rival is its youthful aggressiveness and the open advocacy of methods which have in point of fact been practised more or less tacitly throughout the history of

organized labor. Yet the final philosophy of the I. W. W. is important because of its inspiriting value as propaganda; it embodies an ideal vague enough to merit the complimentary reproach of "Utopianism," yet definite enough to cause the arrest and imprisonment of those who preach it. The test of a working-class ideal is not only the damage it does to the owning classes when put into practice, but the amount of perturbation it excites in the minds of the owning classes.

The preamble of the I. W. W. reads:

"The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

"Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

"We find that the centring of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against an-

other set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class has interests in common with their employers.

"These conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

"Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,' we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wage system.'

"It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the every-day struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially, we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old."

This declaration of purpose is in complete harmony with the spirit of the greatest revolu-

tionary pamphlet in Socialist literature, the Manifesto of the Communist Party, issued by Marx and Engels in 1848. The manifesto ends with these words: "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible [note *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. Workingmen of all countries unite!"

One might think that the political disciples of Marx would have welcomed the I. W. W. The best of them did. But many of the leading spokesmen of the Socialist party attacked the new union. One reason is that only wage-workers are admitted to the I. W. W., and there is no place in it for lawyers, ministers, and other middle-class people, as there is in the Socialist party.* Such persons resented the appearance

*Membership in the I. W. W. of a middle-class person like myself is anomalous. The workers in a local union took me in in spite of my protest that the admission of a parasitic journalist is contrary to the spirit of the I. W. W. Since I am technically a wage-earner and not an employer of labor I could be admitted under the rules. Probably there are not enough others like me in the organization to do it serious harm.

of an organization which promised to attract to itself the fighting strength of the Socialist movement and in which they could have no influence. Mr. Victor Berger, Mr. John Spargo, Mr. Morris Hillquit, and Mr. Robert Hunter have all written vigorously against the I. W. W., and whenever these four gentlemen agree in combating any idea on which there is difference of opinion among Socialists, it is a safe bet that that idea is a good one.

In 1912 the Socialist party attempted to commit suicide by adopting the famous amendment to its constitution which provides that "any member of the party who opposes political action or advocates crime, sabotage, or other methods of violence as a weapon of the working class to aid in its emancipation shall be expelled from membership in the party." With this virtuous resolution the Socialist party crossed its hands upon its breast, lifted its eyes piously to heaven, and rejoiced in the plaudits of the bourgeoisie. That any one who opposes political action should belong to a party avowedly organized for political action is absurd enough. The attitude toward politics of those within the party who insist on the superiority or the positive value of so-called direct action is rather one of indif-

ference than opposition. Their position is defined by Mr. Haywood, against whom the clause was aimed by the politicians of the party. He is reported to have said, "I advocate the industrial ballot alone when I address the workers in the textile industries of the East where the great majority are foreigners without political representation. But when I speak to American workingmen in the West I advocate both the industrial and the political ballot."

As for "crime, sabotage, or other methods of violence," some of us have been advocating these things under certain conditions as publicly as we know how and are still awaiting expulsion from the party. There are a few cases in which the use of force contrary to the law has resulted favorably for the workers. At McKees Rocks in 1909 the strikers were attacked by the Pennsylvania constabulary, the notorious "cossacks." A striker was killed. The strike committee then announced that for every striker killed by the cossacks a cossack would be killed by the strikers. At the next assault a number of strikers were killed and wounded. An equal number of the constabulary were killed and wounded and the cossacks were driven from the streets and forced to take refuge in the shops

of the company. After that there was no more killing on either side during the strike. And the strike was successful. In Colorado when the miners were forced to take up arms against the hirelings of the coal company, disguised as militia, they were breaking the law. The machinists and other unionists of Colorado recruited regiments. The president of the State Federation of Labor carried arms from one camp to another. The Cigar Makers, the Typographical Union, and the Building Trades of Denver appropriated money to supply the miners with guns and ammunition. All these acts were criminal. What friend of labor, except a chicken-hearted Socialist, can fail to approve them or to advocate similar acts under similar conditions?

The truth is, conditions very seldom arise under which workers can gain anything by resorting to arms or violence of any kind. They cannot afford arms, they are not drilled, and they are helpless before even an amateur army equipped by the state and the masters. In armed contest it is the blood of the workers that is spilled. Their deadliest weapon is the idle hand. And their most effective discipline is control of their tempers and refusal to be pro-

voked by the militia, thugs, and gunmen whom the employers use to stir up trouble. At the beginning of the Lawrence strike the mayor made a plea for peace. Mr. Ettor, one of the prominent organizers, concurred and gave the idea a turn which was probably new to the political servant of the mill owners. "By all means," he said, "make this strike as peaceful as possible. For a strike to be peaceful, for a strike to be successful, there must be solidarity in the ranks of the strikers. Division is the surest means to violence; violence necessarily means the loss of a strike. You can hope for no success on any policy of violence. Therefore, instead of taking the mayor's advice and staying away from the mills, you should urge all the workers to shut down completely all the mills. Then there will be solidarity and no occasion for disturbance among you. Remember, the property of the bosses is protected first by the police, then the militia. If these are not sufficient, by the entire army. Remember that you, too, are armed—armed with your labor power, which you can withhold and stop production." The first act of violence was committed by the bosses. The strikers picketed the mills en masse. As they approached the bridges leading to the Atlantic

and Pacific Mills streams of water were turned on them from fire hose on the neighboring roofs: it was a cold day in January. The men became infuriated and rushed the bridges and broke windows in the Pacific Mills. In the scrimmage that followed nobody was seriously hurt. But thirty-six of the strikers were arrested. More than that, the authorities had the excuse they needed for calling the militia. Every serious act of violence, every infringement of peace, every interference with personal liberty was the work of one or another of the legal and industrial and military forces arrayed against the strikers. While the workers held together and kept their heads, the legal machinery went crazy; the story of the crowning insanity, the arrest and trial of Mr. Ettor and Mr. Giovannitti on the charge of being accessories to the murder of a girl striker (one of their own people!) need only be referred to in order to answer the question, "Who is violent?"

When Mr. Haywood went to help the Paterson silk workers who were on strike he was summoned to the police station, and a conversation somewhat like the following ensued: "Mr. Haywood," said the lieutenant, "we are here to maintain law and order, to keep the peace, and

we intend to keep it." "Lieutenant," replied Mr. Haywood, "excuse me, but if peace is kept during this strike, it will be I and not you who will keep it." Policemen and militia cannot keep the peace if strikers are minded to break it. Indeed, policemen and soldiers are a cause of disorder, for their presence irritates the hotheads and the reckless whom it is often difficult for strike committees to subdue.

The question of the use of violence in the labor war is wholly a question of policy, of expediency, of tactic, not a question of ethics, as it seems to be in the minds of moralistic Socialists. The bosses own machine guns, and the workers cannot hope with their present equipment to prevail by armed force.

The only weapon of practical value to the workers which is officially discountenanced by political Socialists is sabotage. Thanks in some measure to their opposition sabotage has achieved a sort of literary distinction greater than its real importance. It is an old weapon, in use even before it got a fancy French name, but so far it has remained a subordinate weapon. It appeals to the imagination because of the possibilities which it suggests for the use of cunning and cleverness. Sabotage is any deliberate

act of a worker, individually or in concert with other workers, to diminish production by slacking work, damaging goods, or impairing the efficiency of a machine. It methodizes and makes self-conscious the instinctive disposition of a worker to give poor service in return for poor treatment. In its simplest form it is a sort of passive strike. The active strike means the cessation of pay as well as of work and is expensive to the strikers. Sabotage, in the form of striking on the job, keeps the worker on the pay roll and at the same time retards or confuses production to the disadvantage of the owner, who may finally become aware that it is more profitable to grant the demands of the men than to suffer their costly resentment. In some industries workers are obliged to practise a continuous sabotage as a defence against the natural effort of employers to "speed up"; in order to meet the ingenuities of that most diabolical of modern inhumanities, "efficiency engineering," the workers tacitly or openly agree to a limit of speed within which the less vigorous workers can endure. It is the humble, no doubt erroneous, opinion of workers that their health and comfort are more important than the stockholders' dividends, and with their deepening recognition

of the fact that they alone are indispensable to production they are coming to entertain the more dangerous opinion that the machines belong to the workers, anyhow, and are to be used as the workers are pleased to use them. It is just here that the property ideas of the revolutionary workers and the property ideas of society embodied in the law are at odds. For advocating sabotage in New Jersey you can be sentenced to hard labor in prison, which is on the whole a more severe punishment than to incur the displeasure of the Socialist party.

In time of strike sabotage may consist in putting the machines out of commission in order that they may not be operated by scabs. The intention is to cripple a machine temporarily but not damage it beyond repair. It is obvious that strikers wish to go back to work after they have won or lost the fight, and unless they are enraged or reckless they can be trusted not to destroy the machines, "their" machines, with which they make their living. Those who fancy that the militia is necessary to guard mills in time of strike are deluded. In the first place, workers bent on blowing up a mill could easily circumvent a more powerful army than the pathetically un-

trained boys who compose our state militia. In the second place, and more to the point, strikers for selfish reasons want the mills to be in fair running order when they are ready to go back to work. When miners keep the pumps going and prevent the flooding of a struck mine they are not acting in a spirit of loyalty to the owners or to the grand ideal of property: they are merely refraining from a destruction that would mean starvation to the workers of the district. I find no printed record of a single case in America in which a factory was rendered incapable of operation by the cunning displacement of delicate parts, though I have heard workmen of all ages and persuasions tell of such cases. This type of sabotage is an exquisite theoretical refinement of industrial warfare larger in the telling than in the deed.

Damage, not to the producing machine but to the product, is common enough. A Boston department store carried a line of shoes which a member of my family was in the habit of buying. One day the salesman told her that she could get no more of that make, and on being pressed he explained that there had been an unsuccessful strike in the factory and that after the strike an entire shipment of shoes

had been defective so that they had to be returned. It is worth noting that at that time the I. W. W. had made no headway among the shoeworkers and that probably the sabotant workers were organized in the American Federation. I have heard that since the Paterson strike thousands of yards of imperfect silk have been turned out and that the mill owners cannot make an open complaint about it, for that would be to advertise themselves to their jobbers in the wrong way. There are other stories worth telling, not because they are relatively important in the story of labor, but because they enliven the grim struggle with a certain acrid humor. One of the funniest cases of sabotage, or a near cousin to it, was the Boston Tea Party. This instance of the destruction of product is recorded in the schoolbooks for the edification of the children of the bourgeoisie; any act of rebellion which is associated with a successful revolution becomes respectable with age. The device of spoiling goods so that the manufacturer cannot sell them, so that he will have to bribe his men by better terms to call the game off—that is not in the schoolbooks yet, even in the Socialist Sunday-school books.

It is naughty to put a great engine to sleep,

but it is not naughty, it is a necessity of business, for the manufacturer to shave down materials and adulterate them until the consumer squeals. Sabotage is a reflex of capitalistic production; it reveals the appalling fact that the worker, especially the machine worker, has no interest in his product; his only concern is not to let his work get so bad that he loses his job. Similarly the capitalist has only indirect interest in the quality of the product; his concern is to keep his goods just satisfactory to his customers so that he can hold them against competition. The rivalry of merit operates, but it is less potent than the negative competition of production cost. Just because capitalist society is a tangle of fake, lies, adulteration, business chicanery, and obligatory dishonesty, the saboteur can perpetrate his little fraud and cheat the boss. By putting extra materials and extra labor time into a product, that is, making it as good as the manufacturer advertises it to be, the worker can cut down profits. By telling the truth about what goes into canned goods the worker can turn the customer's stomach and distress the righteous manufacturer. By carrying out with scrupulous exactness the rules which the management imposed on the men the

workers of one of the Italian railway systems disorganized the service. The sabotage of supererogation has its humors. The power of sabotage lies in its continuous possibility. It is a perpetual threat which may have the effect of making the masters more respectful of the men. Anything which does that is from the worker's point of view a good thing.

Another idea which is favored by industrial unionists and opposed by some political Socialists is the general strike. The word "general" is so vague as to mean little in itself. The phrase is often used of a big strike, one which includes many workers, such as the anthracite strike which tied up the entire industry. To the Syndicalist and the industrial unionist the phrase means something more than that, it means an ultimate strike of all the workers which is one day to bring capitalism to its knees. Such an ultimate strike lies wholly in the realm of speculation, for the workers are far from the solidarity and universality of organization which would make it possible. If the workers arrive at the degree of organization on which the general strike is postulated, they will, it seems, have become strong enough to get what they want without striking, without stopping

a single wheel in the machinery of production. The general strike may not work if it is tried. That seems to be the only argument against it, and a similar argument can be brought against any program the testing of which must be deferred to an indefinite future. A strike of sufficient magnitude to destroy capitalism is at least as likely to come as a majority of political Socialist voters. Advocates of the general strike point out that it will not be necessary to enlist a willing majority of all workers, but it will be sufficient to paralyze the fundamental industries on which all the others depend, chiefly coal, steel, and transportation. The value of the idea now is psychological. Solidarity and industrial unionism are abstractions that have to be argued into concreteness. But every workman knows what a strike is, and nothing gives the workman more sense of his power, makes him feel his oats more keenly, than a vigorous strike. So that to preach "General Strike" to him is to extend in his imagination a definite idea with which he is familiar; General Strike is at least a good slogan, a stimulating way of saying class organization.

In its final conception of the society of the future, the I. W. W. is serenely visionary. It

foresees and hopes for the destruction of the political state and the substitution therefor of an industrial commonwealth. Common affairs will be administered by delegates from the trades, and, as Mr. Haywood picturesquely puts it, Washington will be converted from a political junk shop to an industrial workshop. Since everybody will be a producer and everybody a consumer, it will make no difference whether the community is conducted from the point of view of consumer or producer. The emphasis on the producer in I. W. W. philosophy is due to the fact that at the present time producer and consumer are not identical. These ideas are purely academic in this year of grace, and they are not the ideas with which the I. W. W. makes converts and goes about its work.

In practice the I. W. W. is a strike-making and strike-managing organization. It finds its opportunity in a spontaneous strike like that at Lawrence and that at Little Falls, New York. In such cases the workers, goaded to rebellion by intolerable conditions, strike in a blind, haphazard way; their spirit is admirable but they are disorganized and inexperienced in strike tactics. The I. W. W. sends its veterans to the scene of trouble and they give order and

method to the battle and try to establish a permanent union. After the strike some of the members stick to the organization; others, only half awakened to the possibilities of unionism and unable to see beyond the contest of the moment, drop out. Every strike develops new leaders and tacticians; but there is so much to do in all parts of the country, there are so many unleavened masses of workers to be educated and inspired, that the experienced leaders are overworked.

It is one of the principles of I. W. W. organization that a "leader" shall have no authority except such as he can exert by personal persuasion. The conduct of the strike is left to a committee elected by the strikers, and that committee must refer important questions to the strikers in mass meeting. In a crude form the principles of industrial democracy are thus taught on the spot. In the older labor organizations it is customary for the workers to vote plenary power into the hands of their officers and then do as their officers direct. One result of this has been the creation of the labor autocrat, the well-paid delegate, who is in a position to "order" the men back to work in return for certain little attentions on the part of the bosses.

The I. W. W. teaches the workers self-reliance and holds that if the workers learn here and now to control their own affairs they have already made a step toward owning and controlling the earth. During the Lawrence strike Mr. Ettor was obliged more than once to yield to the other members of the committee. And after the bosses had put him in jail they found that they had made a mistake, for the strike went on without him. He and the others had formed a working committee of fifty-six members, representing twenty-seven languages, which acted as a whole and with which the bosses had to treat as a whole. Behind it was a substitute committee of fifty-six ready to take the place of the first committee if its members were put in jail.

The I. W. W. has no money. The dues are low, not more than fifty cents a month, so that the accumulation of a surplus is impossible. The purpose is to enable the poorest workers to belong to the organization and also to save the organization from corruption. Where there is no money there is no temptation in the way of a weak official. But the danger to be avoided is not merely the corruption which involves personal dishonesty. Money is the mother of

conservatism. The war chests of the older labor unions, with their high initiation fees and dues, were intended to be a source of strength but have proved a source of weakness. They have made men and leaders cautious and unwilling to sacrifice a tangible prosperity for a problematic gain. Unions which combine insurance, sickness, and death benefits with the other functions of unionism are less inclined to fight than to dicker. The labor unions of Great Britain, on which our older unions are modelled, spent up to 1910 less than a tenth of their income on strikes. The record in America is probably not much different.

The I. W. W. trusts labor as a whole, exalts its latent potency, and places in certain scarred leaders a confidence this side idolatry; but, beyond personal confidence, it has certain knowledge that none of its members is getting much swag because there is little swag to get. It can also be sure that anybody who works for the union must be serving for other reasons than allurement of wages. The organizers receive three dollars a day and mileage when they are on the job. The general organizer and the general secretary each receive ninety dollars a month. The revolutionary unionist

maintains that even if the president of the American Federation of Labor is a saint, the fact that he receives $7,500 a year from the Federation and another salary from the Civic Federation alienates him from the working class. No matter how honest he is, the labor leader who receives a salary far above the standard of reasonably good living, who is slapped on the back by capitalists, and hailed by the newspapers as a truly wise guide of the working class, is a lost soul. Though he may retain the loyalty of the more prosperous workmen he is liable to lose whatever contact he may have had with the less prosperous, and his reactionary policies confirm the tendency of the workmen whom he influences to look down upon and neglect the unorganized mass.

The I. W. W. deals with material which is at once most difficult and most inspiring, the unskilled, the unnaturalized, women, children, seasonal job chasers, and unemployed. It is inspiring because of its needs, its miseries, its courage, and endurance. It is difficult because it has only begun to hear the message of unionism and because its whole attention is absorbed in the daily struggle for a living. If the American Federation should march by it

would present itself as an army of white men, healthy-looking citizens decently dressed, officered by proud fellows on horseback with sashes across their chests. The I. W. W., reviewed from the grand stand, would be a dusty army of men, women, and children, speaking twenty languages, not very well dressed, but enlivened with some splashes of color and officered by a few picturesque figures on foot. There would be the textile workers, men, women, and girls, mostly from the Eastern States, then the forest and lumber workers, harvesters, "blanket stiffs" from the South and West, marine and transport workers from both seacoasts, and a few propaganda leagues and local unions that have not numerical strength to form a national union. One would be struck by the youthful appearance of the marchers, for the I. W. W. is young in fact and in spirit, and it has the virtues and the defects of youth.

How did this young thing in ten years become such a bogy man, incurring the enmity of political Socialists, conservative labor men, and respectable citizenry in general? Not by its numerical strength; the disparity between the membership of its scattered locals and its great plan for organizing the world should console

its enemies. Not by the number or extent of its victories in the struggle for higher wages; all its strikes have been local and have not realized anything like nation-wide or trade-wide organization; indeed they have come no nearer to catastrophic universality than many strikes of the old labor unions. Not because it has proposed an order of society which implies a subversion of the present order; the Socialists have done that all over the world years before the I. W. W. came into existence. The contribution of the I. W. W. to date is simply this: it has taught labor and capital and politics that the real power of labor must be exerted at the seat of production. It has compelled the old labor unions to consider the need of reorganization, the need of organizing women, children, wops, negroes, and bums. It has reminded political Socialism of what it is supposed to have known long ago and seems to have forgotten, that its only hope of winning is through a united working class, and that the natural place for the working class to unite is where it works. And with a corporal's guard of leaders and a rag-tag army it has forced from capitalism and all its agents a gratifying intensity of hatred which civic-federationized union-

ism and vote-hunting Socialism have long since ceased to enjoy. Whether the I. W. W. increases in power or goes out of existence, the spirit which animates it is the spirit which must animate the labor movement if it is to have a revolutionary function. The I. W. W. possesses in simple and concentrated form all that is essential in Socialism and would call itself Socialist, as many of its members do in fact call themselves, were it not that the word has a political connotation irrelevant or hostile to revolutionary unionism.

CHAPTER X

INTERNATIONALISM AND MILITARISM

IT HAS been the boast of Socialists that they are part of a world organization which transcends the boundaries of nations. They maintain an International Socialist Bureau and send delegates to International Congresses. It is a common idea among them that the interests of the working people of one nation are not antagonistic to the interests of the working people of another nation, and that to meet the growth of international capitalism there must be a crescent solidarity between the Socialist parties of the world. The International Congresses have been the occasion of some fine speeches and stimulating debate about general tactics and policies, and they have had at least the sort of value which can be attributed to international congresses of physicians, scientists, or others associated in a common work. But International Socialism has so far remained a name and a form, an affair of speech and

printer's ink, rather than a working reality. The reason is that the Socialists of the various countries have never rid themselves of the nationalistic spirit; the components of the International represent divergent, even hostile, ideals. By making alliances with their several governments they have made almost impossible a true alliance between themselves as spokesmen for international labor. Long before the present war the so-called "principles of International Socialism" had ceased to be a standard, conformity to which determined the validity of a debatable Socialist idea. The war has exploded the fiction and opened our eyes suddenly to what we might have seen before, that participation in existing government, except for the purpose of weakening and thwarting it, is incompatible with world-wide solidarity. If a party gets a small *share* in government and seeks a larger share, it commits itself to the support of the governmental unit as an entity, no matter how antagonistic it may be to the current method of conducting the government. A Socialist parliamentarian becomes imbued with a sense of proprietorship in the very institution which he is trying to revolutionize, and he will, however reluctantly, rush to its defence

against a similar institution across the frontier. Moreover, many of the Socialist representatives are small property owners with an inevitable interest in special local possession, the value of which depends on the maintenance of the civil institution which surrounds and protects it. There may some time be a real Workingmen's International, but the Socialist International never has been that and never could be.

True Socialism is anti-governmental, "anti-statist," anti-patriotic, anti-nationalist, and anti-militarist. At bottom these "antis" are one and the same thing; they cannot be separated from each other or from essential Socialism. The most eminent Socialists of the last century were avowed enemies of the state. This was partly because the state openly prosecuted them and made many of them wanderers without a country, and also because the form of state against which they rebelled was a monarchical tyranny like Prussia. Thus their purely socialistic distrust of government was blent with a republican animosity to crowned rulers—a distrust which the American bourgeois is supposed to share. Though Marx and Engels were both scornful of the alleged democracy of Great Britain and the United States, yet there was a

period during which American Socialists, especially those who had suffered from the older tyrannies of Europe, somewhat relented their hostility to government in its republican form and even hoped that liberal institutions would prove relatively amenable to the influence of Socialist thought. An expression of the lingering confidence of German-bred Socialists in republicanism is Mr. Victor Berger's naïve announcement that "in America for the first time in history we find an oppressed class with the same fundamental rights as the ruling class—the right of universal suffrage." The thick-and-thin political Socialist is perforce obliged to emphasize the power of the ballot, even to shut his eyes to the fact that the influence of financial interests on legislative bodies, residence and property qualifications, the disfranchisement of women, nomadic workers, aliens, and negroes, blunt the edge of "universal" suffrage as a working-class weapon. There is no doubt that every extension of political democracy gives Socialist thought a little more elbow room; it would be difficult for a democracy, no matter what the economic interests of its officials, to pass and make effective such repressive measures as those with which the monstrous Bismarck sought un-

successfully to smother the German Social Democrats. Every Socialist wishes to see the governments of Germany and Russia and Austria transformed from monarchies to republics; it would be worth even a little effort to abolish the kings of England and Italy, not because they do much damage but because they are useless and expensive ornaments. But democracy, present-day democracy, is the expression of middle-class liberalism and has been established and extended by the middle class in their interests and not for the benefit of the working class. When the British Government only a few years ago freed the ballot from property qualifications it had no fear of creating a proletariat vote which should act in the interests of labor; the measure simply brought more fish to the liberal net. It is possible that in a democracy the political and economic opportunities of labor are broader than in a monarchy, but certainly American labor has not availed itself of whatever superior opportunities it may enjoy; at least this is the judgment of the Socialist party, for, remember, its platform declares that our Government has failed to pass measures "designed to secure to the wage-earners of this nation as humane and just treat-

ment as is *already enjoyed* by the wage-earners of all other civilized countries." What is the matter with the country where "for the first time in history we find an oppressed class with the same fundamental rights as the ruling class?" There is a screw loose somewhere in this new democratic machine.

In a democracy the line between liberalism and Socialism ought to be most clearly drawn. There is some excuse in a despotism for a temporary amalgamation of middle-class republican interests and pure Socialist principles. In Germany many adherents of the Social Democracy are in fact no more than advanced liberals who have no other party through which to express themselves; in England they would be radical liberals; in this country progressives. They are soft and shifty stuff for Socialism to build on. We have some of them in this country. They are the hither edge of democracy and leave off where essential Socialism begins. They do not belong with us, and they can best serve us by keeping out of our ranks. The multitudes of them in Germany account for the fact that the German Socialist vote is much greater than in other countries. Many American Socialists were deceived by those German

multitudes. They were confirmed in a deluded admiration of what was really a weakness in German Socialism, because they had learned justly to admire the great strength, the magnificent militant spirit of the Socialists of the Bismarckian period. Those old Socialists are still our teachers and will help to inspire any future revolution, no matter what becomes of their economic theories or what tactics unknown to them the conditions of the future may demand. In Germany they still have worthy followers, Mehring, Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, and Clara Zetkin, and perhaps one in four of the millions who have called themselves Socialists. The war will undoubtedly strengthen their position with the proletariat. Rosa Luxemburg is in the clutches of the military authorities and is enjoying a taste of the prison life which she has known before. It seems like the good old times when it meant something to be a Socialist. The government honors her while the majority of docile junker-led Socialists disgrace her. On them and their political counterparts in this country Socialism must turn its back or it will die in the swamp of parliamentarism and nationalism.

The reconstruction and purification of Socialism must be postponed until after the war;

European Socialists cannot be expected to think clearly in seas of blood. But American Socialists can make a preliminary review of their own case and get one or two principles well in mind wherewith to meet their European comrades emerging from the deluge and perhaps to prepare more intelligently for the next deluge. The first principle is that Nationalism and Socialism cannot live in the same world. Nothing could be more unlikely than that this war will result immediately in decrease of armaments: nothing could be more hypocritical than the pretence that the Allies are fighting against militarism. Already in this country there is a strong movement to increase the army and navy. "Our turn next" is not the expression of an idle fear. Whether our turn ever comes or not, many people are determined to prepare for it, and an era of militarism seems inevitable. Perhaps the Socialists can do nothing to prevent it, but they can try—no determined minority relaxes effort even though it is convinced that the effort will meet with immediate defeat. And if they are to try they can profit by the present war. While the nations were at peace the irreconcilability of Nationalism and Socialism was not undeniably evident. All the great governments except

Russia and Japan permitted the political activity of Socialists and the distribution of Socialist literature; the state had ceased to be the sworn enemy of Socialism. When two or three years ago the Kaiser called his Socialist subjects "Germans without a Fatherland," his remark had no practical effect, it was merely a puff of tepid air, like the phrase "undesirable citizens" which Mr. Roosevelt applied to Haywood, Moyer, and Pettibone while they were on trial for their lives. The divine rulers did not openly proceed against Socialism. When the state ceased active hostility Socialism forgot its hostility to the state, went about its local reform affairs, and lost its fighting spirit. There grew up among the later Socialists an unwarranted belief that the socialization of industry could be accomplished through the instrument of existing governments. Socialism became confounded with State Capitalism, and the slogan often found in Socialist periodicals and pamphlets, "Let the Nation Own the Trusts," implying the continued existence of the nation as a political entity, misled the younger Socialists into the blunder of identifying their movement with an enlargement of the power of the Government.

Municipal ice plants and the Panama Canal

have exactly nothing to do with Socialism. Socialists welcome the conversion of private enterprise into public, because they see that this is the next stage of capitalism and they wish to see it arrive and depart as soon as possible; they also feel that when the industrial enemy and the political become more closely joined, an indivisible monster with two heads, he will be, though increasingly strong, at least easier to see and to attack; he will arouse and compel to organization the power that will slay him. But every rapprochement between capital and government must put the state at greater distance from the interests of the proletariat. The Socialists should begin now to spread the propaganda that class solidarity within the state depends on class solidarity beyond the state, and is therefore antagonistic to state unity. The state belongs to the masters and it must belong to them until it is destroyed, or so completely transfigured as to bear no resemblance to the present political government. The services that the state performs for the benefit of the entire people, such as the conduct of necessary public works, are as nothing compared with the services which it offers to the economically privileged and the corresponding repressive damage

it does to the workers. All Socialists believe that ultimately the state of to-day will become obsolete and will be succeeded by a coöperative commonwealth, the outlines of which are necessarily vague. But such belief is not enough. To keep Socialism vigorous in any country and to enable it to be in any true sense international, the professors of it should set to work at once to undermine faith in the state and to cleanse their own systems, if they cannot cure others, of the superstition of nationalism.

The emotional expression of nationalism is patriotism. Patriotism may be the last refuge of scoundrels; it is the first refuge of exploiters and military persons. It is a difficult thing to attack because it is interwoven with wholesome affections. To tell a man that love of country is pernicious is to shock him because it violates tender associations. But fondness for a particular town or countryside, the house where one was born, the church where one was married, is not what we mean by patriotism. We mean loyalty to an artificial geographic and political unit which happens to surround the little house where one was born. It may or may not correspond with a racial or linguistic unit. The people in it may live there because they like

to, or they may live there because they cannot get away. It may be a beautiful place or a wretched wilderness. But it has, every country in the world, one invariable characteristic: its existence is based upon real or potential military force. It has another characteristic: it belongs to part of the people who live in it, not to all the people. Both these characteristics hold as true of poorly armed democracies like the United States as they do of well-armed despotisms like the German Empire. All the people in every country are taught from childhood to obey, in some situations they are made to *swear* to obey, the rulers and the laws. Copybook texts, sermons, songs, legends, flags, Fourth-of-July orations, speeches in Congress, and other works of art all inculcate love of country and obedience to law.

Whenever the rulers for any reasons, good, bad, or indifferent, determine that the country shall go to war, some men from all classes put on uniforms, either because they choose to or because they are obliged to do so by other men in uniform. On the volunteer no sympathy should be wasted; he is a patriot and has a right to get shot, though his death may be a little rough on his family. The man who is obliged

to fight is in a different situation: if he is killed, he is murdered by the rulers of his country. In America we have no conscription, but in time of war men can be drafted. And there is a United States statute, known as the Dick Military Law, which provides for the possible compulsory enlistment of every citizen of military age and for making the President dictator.

Socialists are in the habit of saying that the employers send the working people to fight their battles while the employers stay home and gather the fruits of victory. This is not the whole truth. In great wars all classes furnish soldiers. But except in wars, like the American Civil War, which call forth emergency armies and in which death is busy and promotion rapid, the workingman remains a private. Moreover, since the working class is most numerous, it furnishes a greater total number of victims than the other classes. And the working class which is nearest to the privation line in time of peace suffers most poignantly from the poverty and industrial disturbance that war entails. Whether or not *any* section of the working class *ever* benefited by *any* national war is a debatable question, probably to be answered in the negative.

Now the Socialist is anti-militarist wholly from considerations which affect the working class. That class sheds blood, suffers poverty, and gets nothing in return. Therefore it should not fight in international wars. The only thing it can reasonably be expected to fight for is itself. And the enemy is at hand all the time. Since patriotism is one of the motives that lead to enlistment, Socialists should carry on a tireless anti-patriotic propaganda among the working people. This would be much more effective than Mr. Allan Benson's plan to take the power to declare war out of the hands of Congress and put it directly up to the people by referendum; for not all the people can vote, and the working class ought not to *consent* to war even if outvoted by the other classes and part of their own. This is a practical question, as I say, to be considered, like every question peculiar to Socialists, from the point of view of the working class and from no other point of view. The Socialist is not a humanitarian, not a pacifist, though in emotional and declamatory moments he may talk like the president of a peace society. Socialist literature contains enough and to spare of idealogical appeal to humanity and brotherhood. Mr. H. G. Wells,

a romantic Socialist, addresses his stimulating discourses to the spirit of "good will" in man. The spirit of good will is a motive in the human breast, but the only will which preserves an existent state of society or inaugurates a new state is reciprocal interest between numbers of individual wills associated for a common end. It is refreshing to find recent I. W. W. literature summoning workers to get together "not because we love each other, but because we need each other."

The Socialist should not lend himself to any of the bourgeois peace programs, to "limitation of armament," international arbitration enforced by a world police, the creation of a citizen army, or that silliest of pseudo-feminist ideas, a "birth strike." (I mean, of course, a birth strike against war; limitation of births for economic reasons is another question.) His business is with the working class, and his immediate business is to instruct the workers that they have nothing to gain by international war, that they are fools to contribute their strength to the quarrels of other people. This is a simple idea, practical, common sense, matter of fact.

The profitlessness, the economic burden, the horror of war are not its only bad aspects from

the worker's point of view. National armament is a weapon in the hands of the masters against the workers whenever by direct or indirect means the workers threaten capitalist institutions; the soldier not only defends our fair shores against the invasion of superior foreign enemies such as Spain and Mexico and China, but shoots workers on strike, and sometimes, quite accidentally of course, kills their women and children. It is a perfectly "fair" game, certainly quite human, for people who believe in a certain thing to fight for it. The bourgeois who believe in nationalism and capitalist property *ought* to go into the army. It would be a ghastly just spectacle if the stockholders of a struck mill got out and defended it with guns. But the workman in a uniform, obedient to the state, is a monstrosity, guilty of a class-suicidal act.

The revolutionary workman cannot hope at the present time to control the actions of governments, to decide whether "we" shall build eight battleships or one, to sit about the peace-conference table and cut the world up into chunks. He can deal only with his fellows, and he and the Socialists, if the Socialists are really with him, can and must teach anti-militarism to

his class, not in the name of truth, justice, brotherly love, and peace on earth, but in the name of class self-protection.

Socialist thought has been full of contradictions about the use of armed force in working-class revolt; it is no wonder that these contradictions persist during the present chaos when everybody is gasping for breath and the reorganization of opinion has only just begun. It has been a common though not universal belief among Socialists that if they achieve a political majority and proceed to the enactment of laws inimical to the owning classes they will be met by armed opposition, that the masters will intrench themselves behind the military power and it will be necessary to dislodge them by force. Socialists put the burden of violence upon the supporters of capitalism, and point out that if now the capitalists resort to trickery and fraud in politics for temporary advantages and fall back on militia, detectives, and thugs in industrial skirmishes of relatively small importance, they will stop at nothing if the time ever comes when their rule is seriously threatened. The chief fear of representative Socialists seems to be not that when the final hour strikes the revolution may be fearfully bloody and cata-

clysmic, but that an outraged working class, imperfectly organized, may fling itself into a premature and abortive contest with the better disciplined forces of capitalism. A successful revolution gives courage to the triumphant, and its success is in itself a warrant of the fitness of the revolutionists to assume power; an unsuccessful revolt is disheartening, and if undertaken by a rising class not yet prepared it reacts fearfully upon that class and postpones its development. Nearly all Socialists preach peace as a present policy and point a virtuous finger at the sanguinary sins of capitalism. Yet all of them face the possibility of a final resort to arms. Mr. Victor Berger, whose temper is not usually of the most flaming red, wrote in 1909: "Each of the 500,000 Socialist voters, and of the 2,000,000 workingmen who instinctively incline our way, should, besides doing much reading and still more thinking, also have a good rifle and the necessary rounds of ammunition in his home and be prepared to back up his ballot with his bullets if necessary. . . . I deny that dealing with a blind and greedy plutocratic class as we are dealing with in this country, the outcome can ever be peaceable, or that any reasonable change can ever be brought

about by the ballot in the end." No member of the I. W. W., which Mr. Berger loves not, would quarrel with these revolutionary and admirably treasonous words. We all have the legal right to possess unconcealed weapons, but to advise the working class to arm itself is not precisely in conformity with the law of the land, not to speak of that higher and more sacred law, the constitution of the Socialist party. Even so cautious a legalist as Mr. Hillquit has promised that if the votes of a Socialist majority should be nullified by force he would leap to the barricades as valiantly as another.

The practical answer seems to be that the relative efficacy of hand weapons has diminished with the development of war machinery. In old days the possession of sword and musket made every man a potential soldier, capable of becoming with a little practice the equal of the professional soldier. That time has gone by. The individual weapon is still potent but it is no match for the machine gun. It has seldom happened that strikers have gained much by fighting *vi et armis* against even such poorly trained and numerically weak militia as confronts us to-day, and only the hardiest workers, such as miners, inured to danger and accus-

tomed to powder and dynamite and living in open country, can hope to return shot for shot the fire of the hired murderer. Even if the labor unions could afford to equip themselves with the most advanced engines of destruction the Government would take good care to monopolize the armament factories and prevent their products from falling into unofficial hands. The tendency is unmistakably toward a perfecting of the mechanics of war, an increase in the number of soldiers and an improvement in their training. The masters who sincerely or hypocritically urge "national defence" will strengthen the barricade of militarism against the increasing economic power of the working class. The worker can meet the situation negatively by refusing to bear arms and perhaps positively by refusing to manufacture them.

Some Socialists have swallowed, hook, bait, and sinker, the plan proposed by Mr. Roosevelt of a "citizen army" à la Suisse. For, they say, if every man is a soldier then no man will be at a disadvantage in the presence of another. If every man and every woman, down to the youngest of employed girls, were taught to shoot, society might find itself in a

state of armed neutrality, at continuous deadlock. But aside from the consideration suggested above, that the equipment in possession of the Government must be superior to that in possession of the workers, and that the newest machine gun in the streets of a city could slaughter a crowd of strikers, it should be remembered that an army, however enlisted, is always subject to the command of the governing classes. The Swiss army does not differ in spirit from other armies. It happens not to have been engaged in international warfare, but that has nothing to do with the way it is recruited. It is used to break strikes. Its officers are necessarily drawn from the prosperous classes. The best Socialists of Switzerland oppose the military appropriations for this democratic soldiery as stubbornly as the best Socialists of Germany oppose the appropriations for the Kaiser's imperial cannon fodder. A soldier smells as bad under one government as another. The worker in uniform is subjected to a discipline which is degrading to him as a man and is bad for the working-class corner of his soul. In the shop he may be ordered about, cursed, and kicked, but even the most cynical boss does not pretend that maltreatment is good for the

man. In the army he is taught that to sweat through stables and empty kitchen slops is an act of patriotism, and that to touch his hat to another man is good conduct. In the shop he can organize with his fellows and more or less effectively protest against abuse. In the army he surrenders the commonest rights of a civilian, and if he strikes he is guilty of mutiny.

In this connection it is pertinent to note the attitude of the military mind toward members of the civil service. When the street cleaners in New York City went on strike, the *Outlook*, at that time the vehicle of Mr. Roosevelt's opinions, laid down the law as follows: "Men who are employed by the public cannot strike. They can, and they sometimes do, mutiny. Then they should be treated, not as strikers, but as mutineers. . . . They are not in any respect on the same basis as the employees of a private employer. They are wage-earners only in the sense that soldiers are wage-earners." This principle, which is typically capitalistic, expresses in terms of loyalty to government the older principle, once universally held by private employers, that the strike is a crime. Private employees won the "right to strike" simply by striking. It may be necessary for public

employees to win a similar right by taking it. The extension of government ownership of public utilities which is already clearly in sight means a multiplication of the number of workers who will be classified as public servants and subject to punishment if they "mutiny." The new capitalism promises to be more rather than less militaristic than the old. Even if the capitalist governments from motives of common sense, good business, economy, humanity, or what not, contrive an international harmony which will permit the reduction of armament, they will maintain their armies against the domestic enemy, a rising proletariat. The high-sounding sanctions, loyalty, patriotism, public welfare, and obedience, will be used to bind the workers to their tasks. Therefore there is nothing for the workers to do but to strike at the root of the evil and teach each other as soon as may be that obedience to government either in the shop or out of it is the first law of hell.

We have already had examples of the internal tyranny of militarism. The strike of the employees of the French government-owned railroad is notorious. The ministry under the leadership of the renegade "Socialist," Briand, declared that as the railroads were an essential

part of national defence, the strike of the employees was an act of treason against the state. This declaration was a threat which did not materialize in serious punitive measures. The modest demands of the men were granted and Briand and his associates were compelled to resign. The chief result of the strike was to force the whole world of labor to consider the question of the right of government employees to organize and strike: it revealed the size of the club which any government, whether republican or monarchical, can wield over the head of labor. Not only can the worker be drafted into the regular army, but his daily work, however pacific it may be in itself, can by legislation be incorporated under military service, and in no other uniform than shirt and overalls he may wake some fine morning to find himself a soldier and the factory office a recruiting station.

In this country we have had at least one celebrated case of the intervention of the *national* army in behalf of the bosses and against the strikers. This was the Pullman strike of twenty years ago which made Mr. Debs famous. The strike had succeeded in tying up several lines centring in Chicago. Against the protest of the mayor of Chicago and the governor of

Illinois, the President, Mr. Cleveland, sent United States troops into the struck territory. It is not insignificant that Jay Gould commended the election of Mr. Cleveland as a man in whose hands the business interests of the country would be "safe." The railroad managers called for troops and the President did his duty and obeyed. The pretext was that the strike interfered with the carrying of the mails. This pretext was somewhat weakened by the willingness of the employees to man and move all mail cars, all cars, indeed, except Pullmans. The use of the troops soon became evident—to stir up trouble and intimidate the strikers. Not that the troops themselves were disorderly or were guilty of a single act outside the bounds of legality; that is not the way the thing is worked; but under the protection of their presence somebody set fire to some cars, not good and valuable cars, but old and worthless ones—just enough to make a case against the strikers. The story of the strike is told in the report of the commission appointed by Mr. Cleveland himself and headed by the late Dr. Carroll D. Wright. That report affirms that the strike was peaceful and no property was injured before the arrival of the troops.

The militant American Railway Union of that

time has been succeeded by the ultra-conservative brotherhoods which are relatively prosperous, reluctant to strike, and apparently satisfied to settle their disputes under the provisions of the Erdman Act. So that there has not been any strike of railway workers so extensive as that of 1894, and therefore there has been no occasion to use United States troops to maintain interstate traffic. But railway employees will be obliged some day to consider their relations to military government. The decision of the board of arbitration to which in 1912 the locomotive engineers of fifty-two lines submitted their demands for increase and standardization of wages is ominous. The board not only refused the demands but recommended that railway employees be denied the right to strike. "A strike in the army or navy is mutiny, and universally punished as such. The same principle is applied to seamen because of the public necessity involved. A strike among postal clerks, as among the teachers of our public schools, would be unthinkable." We shall hear more and more of that idea as the contest between labor and capital grows more acute. What if hundreds of thousands of men, denied the right to strike, strike anyway? How will

they be punished and who will take their places? The only government strong enough to contend with a large, well-organized body of strikers is a military government.

One of Mr. Ettor's favorite epigrams during the Lawrence strike was: "The policeman's club and the militiaman's bayonet cannot weave cloth. It requires textile workers to do that." At the present time the soldier as a soldier is not an effective strike breaker; he acts as a protector of the non-military scab. But the time may come when the fighting army will be trained as an industrial army, and the prospect of factories, mines, and roads run in an emergency by soldiers is not fantastic. If we can believe reports, there is almost no kind of civilian work that the German army cannot do whenever and wherever it arises to be done. The combination of military and industrial and mechanical training is not an unheard-of thing in American army posts, and there is no limit to the extent to which this combination might be carried. It is conceivable—who will call it unlikely?—that the new militarism, brother of the new capitalism, may develop a different, and from some points of view a better, more useful type of soldier. He may be less stupid and therefore more dangerous

than the old type of soldier, whose portrait has been drawn by the treasonous hand of Mr. Bernard Shaw.

"The soldier," says Mr. Shaw in the preface of "John Bull's Other Island," "is an anachronism of which we must get rid. Among people who are proof against the suggestions of romantic fiction there can no longer be any question of the fact that military service produces imbecility, ferocity, and cowardice. . . . For permanent work the soldier is worse than useless; such efficiency as he has is the result of dehumanization and disablement. His whole training tends to make him a weakling. He has the easiest of lives; he has no freedom and no responsibility. He is politically and socially a child, dressed prettily and washed and combed like a child, excused for outbreaks like a child, forbidden to marry like a child, and called Tommy like a child. He has no real work to keep him from going mad except a housemaid's work; all the rest is forced exercise in the form of endless rehearsals for a destruction and terrifying performance which may never come off and which, when it does come off, is not like the rehearsals. . . . The rules are plain and simple; the ceremonies of respect and submission are

easy and mechanical as a prayer wheel; the orders are always obeyed thoughtlessly, however inept and dishonorable they may be. . . . No doubt this weakness is just what the military system aims at its ideal soldier being: not a complete man, but a docile unit or cannon fodder which can be trusted to respond promptly and certainly to the external impulse of a shouted order, and is intimidated to the pitch of being afraid to run away from a battle."

Socialists in all countries have tried to counteract the stultifying effects of military discipline by circulating literature among the soldiers; they have even gone so far as to preach mutiny in the form of "military strike," thus carrying industrial terminology into military service, and they have threatened that in case of war working people with arms might make another use of them than that intended by the government. There is no evidence that this teaching has been effective in disorganizing any army in the world or in preventing international war; certainly it has all been swept away in the whirlwind that tears Europe to-day. The only cases in which soldiers have shown that their loyalty to the working people may exceed their loyalty to government have been in internal strifes. A

French regiment which refused to march against the wine growers in the south of France became heroes in the eyes of Socialists. A similar defection on a smaller scale was the resignation of policemen in Columbus, Ohio, who refused to be used by the bosses against the striking street-railway employees. For this they were soundly berated by Mr. Roosevelt, the *Century Magazine*, and other voices of capitalism, and were of course commended by the labor press.

Socialists in the American army have sent letters which have been published anonymously in the Socialist press, setting forth the evil conditions of army life and giving the lie to the fine fashion plates and alluring chromos of foreign lands which grace the recruiting stations. Either the writers have learned their Socialism after they enlisted or they were driven into the army by lack of civil employment. It is one of the curses of unemployment that men in desperation go into any occupation that promises a living. Some of the privates are in hard straits, poverty stricken and discouraged when they enter the army, and since army life provides them with food and clothes, and military gymnastics teaches them to walk erect, the officers with some show of reason can point

proudly to the ennobling influence of army discipline which "makes a man of a fellow." If there were enough moderately good jobs to go round, it would be difficult in time of peace to find men enough to fill the ranks even of the small American army. Except when the presence of an enemy stimulates recruiting, the existence of armies depends directly on one of two things or both: obligatory service, which is an intolerable tyranny, and a glutted labor market. The industrial democracy which Socialism aims to establish would abolish conscription and prevent involuntary unemployment. It is on these grounds and some adjacent and inseparable grounds that Socialism erects its claim to be the only cure for war. For Socialists believe that war is very largely if not wholly a result of economic maladjustment.

Perhaps not wholly. If we examine the causes of war alleged by Socialists we find some transpositions of cause and effect, some things left out, and a tendency to claim too much for the Socialist remedy. The chief thing left out, it seems to me, is the very simple fact that human beings like to fight. The bellicose spirit is in the blood of man. It is not wholly true to represent the armies of the world as driven herds goaded

by officers and drugged by patriotism and flung at each other willy nilly. The "thirty million trained and licensed murderers" of John Davidson's terribly splendid song have some will in the matter, and it is in the nature of many of them to long for a fight with somewhat the same longing that makes men fence and spar and wrestle. The elimination of the belligerent impulse cannot be entirely effected by the best possible economic and political readjustment. It is conceivable that in a completely socialized world one large geographic section or economic group might find itself at odds with another and attempt to fight it out by force, and the rest of the world might have to intervene. The best that the Socialist can say, and it is more than sufficient for his argument, is that in a world industrially democratized many of the now prevalent motives for war would be removed and the likelihood of bloody conflict would be greatly reduced. At the present time the proper and reasonable message of Socialism to the worker is not, "Peace at any price; it is wicked to kill," but "Do not be fool enough to fight other people's battles; if you fight at all, fight for your own class."

An illustration of the tendency of Socialists

to claim too much and explain too simply is Mr. Allan Benson's chapter, "Socialism the Lone Foe of War." Socialism is not the only foe of war, and the obverse of that statement is that capitalism is not the sole cause of war. There have been intertribal and intercommunity wars, wars of migration compelled by hunger, of which capitalism was not the moving cause, or even a contributory cause. Capitalism in modern times produces, deliberately wills, or unwittingly fails to prevent international wars because capitalism takes a national form. It has not yet risen above group interests, but continues to use the disparate governments in competitive business. The only mode of capital which has arrived at a partial internationalism is banking, and the banker is the one kind of capitalist least likely to lose by war. When trading and manufacturing capital become international, that is, when business men learn that it is more profitable to saw wood than to fight, we are likely to enter a period of capitalism opposed to international war and united for its last and most important war: the war against the workers.

Socialism is the foe of war only in so far as it is international in intention and in fact. That is the answer to the political advertisement

quoted at the beginning of this book. A vote for Socialism is not a vote against war so long as Socialism identifies itself with national issues. Moreover, the vote is not the only weapon of protest. In a book published before the war, a book commended by Mr. Debs and other representative Socialists, Mr. Benson says: "The Socialist press can shoot and is shooting around the world. When the working class controls its printing presses war will end. [Does 'its' refer to the world or the working class?] Do you really want war to end, or is a string attached to your wish? If you mean business, you can help end it. But if you want the privilege of aiding in this great work for humanity, you will have to vote the Socialist ticket." Such a statement as that is too simple, too narrow. In the first place, Mr. Benson has the journalist's excess of confidence in the power of the press. In the second place, Socialist war against war cannot be confined to casting ballots. The working class, organized and aware of what it has to gain and lose, can check, if not prevent, international war by withholding its hand from profitless contest; it can threaten with internal revolution a government which is about to go to war; and it can do this

without controlling the press and without casting a ballot.

In the present crisis some Socialists expected too much of their comrades and have not recovered from the shock of disappointment. They say with a writer in the *International Socialist Review* that "the Socialist proletariat of Europe in all the belligerent countries ought to have refused to march against their brothers across the frontiers, and that such refusal would have prevented the war and all its horrors, even though it might have led to civil war. Such a civil war would not, could not possibly have resulted in such a loss of Socialist life as this international war has entailed, and each Socialist who fell in such a civil war would have fallen knowing that he was battling for the cause he had worked for in days of peace, and that there was no possibility of the bullet or shell that laid him low having been sent on its murderous way by one to whom he had pledged the lifelong love of comrades in the International Army of Labor."

There is no way of proving now what the effect would have been had every Socialist in Europe stood to the guns of internationalism and refused to take up national arms. Even

if all so-called Socialists are counted in, they constitute at best only a strong minority, and without them, in spite of them, the governments could have enlisted powerful armies. The crime of nationalistic Socialists against true Socialism is not that they did not prevent the war, but that they did not to the limit of their strength try to prevent it. If the Socialists of this country and all countries are to avoid committing a similar crime in the future they must at once cleanse themselves of the disease of nationalism and its concomitant parliamentarism. This does not mean that they should refrain from politics, but that on all political issues they should take the anti-national position.

National interests are excitants to war. The exclusion of Asiatics and other undesirable immigrants for the alleged benefit of the American labor market, the Monroe Doctrine, protective tariffs, are all nationalistic and their inevitable corollary is militarism. With respect to these issues there can be but one consistent Socialist position. And that position is the reverse of the position taken by the Milwaukee *Leader*, which represents a considerable number of Socialists. The *Leader* says: "If the time has come to check immigration, which there is

every indication that a majority of the American people believe [the majority of the American people are *not Socialists*], a literacy test would have as much merit as any other arbitrary method of checking the human flood from the more backward lands of Europe. . . . With the European war threatening to bring a vast army of immigrants to our shores at its conclusion, American workingmen are fearful of the consequences to them. They feel that they are entitled to protection. The American labor market, which is now insufficient to give employment to the workers, may be demoralized by the accessions of millions of additional immigrants. . . . The people of the United States are under no obligation to provide homes for Europe's war victims." That may be good Americanism, good business, and it will find favor with the aristocrats of labor, but regarded as the utterance of Socialists it is atrocious. The only way in which the American proletarian can wish to limit immigration is to warn his fellow proletarian in a foreign land not to be deceived by the false promises of manufacturers' agents and steamship companies as to American opportunities; that is, discourage immigration for the immigrant's sake by telling

him the truth, not by building up a wall to exclude him.

It may be retorted that a journalist sitting comfortably at a typewriter is not the person to determine how or whether the American workman facing the problem of daily bread shall protect himself and seek his own advantage. True enough. Neither this journalist nor the journalists of the *Leader* count for much. But contrast with the *Leader's* reactionary opinions the position of those who have some right to speak for the unemployed and the unskilled, who have suffered with them and met their daily difficulties. In a pamphlet issued by the I. W. W. Publishing Bureau appears this paragraph:

"The Industrial Workers of the World is an international movement; not merely an American movement. We are 'patriotic' for our class, the working class. We realize that as workers we have no country. The flags and symbols that once meant great things to us have been seized by our employers. To-day they mean naught to us but oppression and tyranny. As long as we quarrel among ourselves over differences of nationality we weaken our cause, we defeat our purpose. The practice of some craft unions is to bar men because of nation-

ality or race. Not so with the I. W. W. Our union is open to all workers. Differences of color and language are not obstacles to us. In our organization the Caucasian, the Malay, the Mongolian, and the negro are all on the same footing. All are workers, and as such their interests are the same. An injury to them is an injury to us."

These are merely so many words in a pamphlet, but they are the right words; they face in the direction which Socialism must take if it is to conquer the world. And they are in accordance with the resolution of the State Committee of the Socialist party of New York. The resolution notes the appearance in the Socialist movement of a tendency to nationalism, which divides the inhabitants of the earth into separate and distinct races; to nationalism it opposes Socialism, which "stands for unison and endeavors to bring about the uplift of all humanity, regardless of creed and color," and it affirms that "we positively refuse to recognize or participate in any attempt to draw the Socialist movement into nationalistic channels." If the Socialist party in this country, and in all the world, adopts the internationalist principle and lives up to it, it may recover

from the stroke of paralysis which has laid it on its back. Only sincere revolutionists will find themselves at home in it, and it will definitively part company with nationalists, reformists, and dabblers in petty politics.

CHAPTER XI

PRODUCTION AND PROPERTY

SOCIALIST thought has entered almost every department of human activity and left its trace there; and it has levied upon almost every art and science for material in support of its tenets. From William Morris, Walter Crane, and Alfred Russel Wallace there has been an unbroken succession of poets, painters, and men of science who have been Socialists of a sort, who have lent their powers to Socialism and have embodied Socialism in their thinking. Mæterlinck and Anatole France and Mr. Howells are to some degree with us. And among the younger writers, whose names are not yet known, Socialism of some color is as much the fashion as a flowing tie. The boast of Lassalle that the culture of the world belongs to Socialism is not quite warranted because there is an immense amount of culture of great value which has not been deeply affected by Socialist ideas. But it is more nearly true than it was in Las-

salle's time that the genius of the world is permeated with Socialist thought, and the Socialist in an arrogant mood can taunt the non-Socialist with the intellectual sin of being out of the trend.

To those who are interested in the philosophic bearings of Socialism I recommend Mr. William English Walling's "Larger Aspects of Socialism." It is a stimulating book which guides the reader into vast libraries, and if, as I think, it contains much that has no more to do with Socialism than with astronomy or bridge whist, that does not impair its value as a provocative criticism of various modern ideas. In this sketch I have refrained from excursions into literature, philosophy, and technical economics. The substance of Socialism is a practical matter, a "business proposition." Modern writers on the subject have been pleased to call their Socialism "scientific"; indeed, like most of their contemporaries, they have overworked the word "scientific" which for fifty years has had a eulogistic connotation. They have won the double distinction of being rebuked by their enemies for their dreamy idealism and for their sordid materialism, and they can afford to chuckle at the contradiction. They have been idealistic in that

they have labored, many of them at great personal sacrifice, to bring about a better state of society. They have been scientific in that they have tried to deal systematically with matters of fact. The facts that chiefly interest them are comprehended under economics; their investigations in this science are marvels of industry and insight. Economic facts are unalterably materialistic. An idealistic overcoat is thin against the storm. The ideal promises-to-pay found in such abundance in the workman's weekly envelope are good because they are backed by tangible property. The Socialist idea is most acceptable, most sensible, when it is reduced to its lowest terms.

The Socialist aim is to revolutionize work and the fruit of work, which is production, especially that part of production called capital, which by the application of work is capable of further production. It intends to substitute for a society in which part of the people do necessary work a society in which all people shall do necessary work. In order to effect this it seeks to abolish private ownership in all forms of production which are indispensable to economic reproduction. It is a human probability that these changes will be promoted by those to

whom they would be advantageous and will be resisted by those to whom they would be disadvantageous. The proposed changes would be advantageous to those who now pay tribute to others for the privilege of earning their living, and would be disadvantageous to those who live wholly or to any considerable degree at the expense of others. Socialists believe that ultimately all humanity would be benefited, but just at present our imperfect knowledge of human nature advises us that the capitalists will not directly assist us in the painful operation of socializing their wealth.

If the foregoing propositions are as clear as I hope they are, they phrase the gist of the Socialist idea, the core of all the interminable arguments relating to the class struggle, surplus value, capitalism, exploitation, wage slavery, and so on. The idea is simple, but the practical imposition of the idea upon society is exceedingly complex because it involves the concerted efforts of millions of human beings.

In their conception of a revolution in the methods of work and the relation of workers to their product, Socialists and industrial unionists make no distinction between manual labor and intellectual labor. At the present

time the manual worker gets the short end of the loaf, so that revolutionists are prone to lay stress on his value to society and the disproportionate burden that he bears. This is sometimes puzzling to the merchant, the stockbroker, or the lawyer who, after a hard day spent in accumulating money, gray hairs, and wrinkles, reads in his evening paper the report of a preposterous speech by a Socialist agitator.

Work is any activity of mind or muscle which produces economic wealth. Much so-called work, which to the doer seems hard and important, is unproductive, wasteful, and would be superfluous in a sanely regulated society. Some of it is nothing but gambling, a struggle to transfer wealth from one pocket to another without increasing it. The competitions of the market, from the stock exchange down to the rival corner drugstores, are stupid extravagances. Society supports, in addition to the obviously idle, millions of busy people whose contribution to production is as valuable as throwing dice for drinks. Socialists have no quarrel with any activity in which human beings choose to engage so long as it does not interfere with production and does not receive the reward to which true production is entitled. We hold

not that the laborer is worthy of his hire, but that he is worthy of his product and that no one else is worthy of it. We believe in a real sense the old copybook commonplace that all useful work is honorable. Our radical revision of economics involves many changes in the social relations of humanity. We refuse to believe that the habits of mankind are immutable or that the nature of the human being imposes arbitrary limitations upon the capacity of the race to readjust the relations between the worker and his work. The world, which within a year can turn itself upside down to the damage of almost every living individual, can, within a period the length of which none can guess, completely revolutionize itself for the benefit of the whole. If we do not believe that the latent possibilities of reorganization and reconstruction are at least as strong as the possibilities, shamefully demonstrated, of disorganization and destruction, we may as well give up the game of life.

The problem of inaugurating and completing the great change which we propose is tremendous, but the human and social nature of the change is easily apprehended if we envisage it in simple illustrations.

A friend of mine whose annual income is at

least twenty-five thousand dollars has bought a farm. He has rebuilt the house and planted the grounds with things lovely and useful. The other day five of us drove out to visit him, five sons of luxury in a plutocratic motor car. As we purred up his driveway he stepped from behind a clump of shrubbery. His face was sweaty, his hair was tousled, his trousers and boots were befouled, and he carried a dung fork on which he leaned in an attitude of labor at ease while he grinned at our banter. He showed us a vegetable garden which he had planted himself, hundreds of fruit trees which he had helped to set out, and a stone wall which he had laid at odd moments all alone while his men were busy with other tasks. He is a man of great physical vigor, and there is no doubt that his muscular efforts have been truly creative, something more than the dabbling of the gentleman amateur. Why at the approach of his swell friends did he not run away and wash and dress? Because he was proud of his work, proud of the evidential muck, proud of his Tolstoyanly picturesque uncleanliness. He was proud because the work was his, because it was done for itself and for himself, because he did not have to do it. There was no social stigma upon it. Suppose that

this pretty farm belonged to another gentleman, and that he, our friend, having lost his fortune, had been obliged by hunger to sell the labor of his hands. And suppose that he, once prosperous, now reduced to the position of a hired man, had seen us rolling up in a motor car. Would he have stepped forth to meet us, swinging his dung fork with obvious pride, or would he have slunk off behind the barn? In the supposed case, the kind if not the quantity of work would have been the same as in the actual case, no more dirty, no more degrading as a physical activity.

I have just read some wonderful letters from a French scholar who is in the trenches. The man is an artist, a psychologist, a philosopher. His descriptive phrases flash against a cold blue irony. The fine-handed man of books, who has never known real poverty or physical hardship, is now Corporal X up to his waist in filth. With the decent simplicity of the French mind he records the filth, and behind the recorded horror he intimates the indescribable. His letters are proof that his delicate imagination has not been coarsened by weeks of wallowing in muck. He has no sense of heroics. His speculative mind is calm and cheerful, sustained

by a sort of realistic wisdom. It is no disgrace for this cultivated professor to be a muddy corporal, the equal of city workmen and peasants. Society honors the man who plunges into the nastiness of war. If our professor survives, an exquisite lady will kiss him without waiting for him to wash his face. His mother, who made sacrifices to put him through the university and watched him rise to the top of his profession, may be breaking her heart at the thought of his danger, but she is not grieving because her son is a failure, sunk to the low levels of labor.

Imagine a time of peace. Paris is being rebuilt. A great sewer is under construction. See our professor at work in the pit with the other sweaty diggers. His mother must account to herself for a son who has not got on in the world. And the exquisite lady will be listening to another lover. Yet the sewer is more useful than the trench. And the work of building it is less disgusting. Labor ceases after a few hours and there are baths near and clean clothes for the evening. What is the difference between a shovel in peaceful Paris and a shovel on a bloody frontier? The difference is in the social relation, not in the degree of physical dirt and discomfort.

Once I drove from a great London hospital to a club which was so exclusive that a bomb from a Zeppelin would have frozen on the doorstep. My companion was one of the most distinguished men in England. He was an aristocrat in blood and in intellect. He was rich by inheritance and by his own labors. For his services to humanity governments had hung his breast with stars, and universities had strung letters after his name. Over whisky and soda we talked of many things. I recall that when he spoke of the outrageous revolt of the dock hands his words were crisp with hostility. He viewed life from the seats of the mighty. His occupation? That morning he had thrust his hands up to the elbows in the diseased bowels of a man. He had been doing something which the ordinary layman cannot witness without nausea. A dirty job, but the kind of job that had made my friend, Sir James Arnold, the greatest surgeon in England.

When we foolish dreamers propose that some day the necessary work of the world shall be democratized, those who at present handle paper and piano keys instead of picks and shovels imagine themselves and their descendants reduced to the army of swinking Italians in

the ditch. "Who," they cry, "will do the dirty work?" The only fair answer is, "Everybody." And the implications of that answer are not repulsive but cheering if you think them out. Waive the important question, to which mechanical engineering is already giving the answer, whether much dirty work will not be eliminated or accomplished by more efficient hands than those of flesh and bone. Assume that mankind will always have malodorous work to do. The curse of it can be removed if it is shared by the able-bodied, if no man is forced to endure an excessive amount of it, and, above all, if the doing of it does not indicate social inferiority. We would not have our talented professor spend all his time in the noble public work of building a sewer. It would be poor human economy to waste Kreisler in a trench, even a constructive trench. But if we all lent a hand and did each a limited chore, everybody would have leisure and surplus energy for skilful labor and the arts. And we should release from helotism some Kreislers who have never held a violin in their hands.

It is not necessary or possible to plan in advance any of the administrative details of a future democratic society. I, for one, shrink from William James's suggestion that we all be

drafted for a certain amount of service in the army of peace; the hoof of governmental tyranny shows under the hem of that idea. It is enough to recognize that society debases some kinds of work which might be disposed of cheerfully and expeditiously, and that there is no task, however disagreeable in itself, which any healthy man would not tackle with a smile, provided his fellow-workers did their parts and regarded him as their equal.

The capitalistic method of production is wasteful of labor and wasteful of laborers. It condemns millions of men to unemployment or semi-employment and sends women and children into the mills. It violates the commandments of its own new god, Efficiency, and it has always been unfaithful to the minor god of its lip worship, Humanity. It cannot afford to tear down all rotten tenements and unsanitary factories and rebuild them, but it can afford hundreds of millions for battleships. The capitalist method of production works without foresight in a fever of competition, piling up masses of goods to which the masses of workers have but a limited access. One result of competition in production is the armed competition of governments, and whether or not war is the inevitable result of

that competition, so inevitable that the capitalist rulers cannot prevent it, whether or not capitalism is the sole or chief cause of war, certain it is that the world plunges periodically into a chaos of carnage which seems but a hideous exaggeration of the warfare of competitive production. Socialism accuses capitalism of incompetence, of doing bad work with an unnecessary expenditure of effort. And it offers to get things better done and more easily done by substituting coöperative production for competitive.

More serious than the failure of capitalism to direct human effort to abundant and well-planned production is its failure to distribute the results of production with anything like equity. The present equipment and the present methods of work, stupid as they are, could produce enough and to spare of the necessities of life. The appalling thing is that the workers, on whose backs the other classes sit, do not enjoy the very goods which would not exist without their labor. Consider the wages in two of the great industries; the figures have been worked out by Dr. Scott Nearing, whose statistics are not of the lying sort. In 1910, 60 per cent. of the iron and steel workers received less than $750. In Lawrence half the men and four fifths of the women re-

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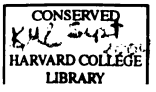
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